

DRDO gives licence to Laurus Labs to make & market 2-DG



- Hyderabad-based pharma player Laurus Labs has received a licence from the Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) for manufacturing and marketing Covid-19 drug 2-Deoxy-D-Glucose (2-DG) in India.
- The licence to Laurus Labs has been granted by DRDO as part of efforts to make the drug affordable and accessible to patients.
- DRDO had recently invited expression of interest (EoI) from other pharma companies for manufacturing this drug and had said it would grant licences to 15 companies on a firstcome, first-served basis.
- Meanwhile, the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research institution Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (CSIR-IICT) has been licencing the know-how for 2-DG synthesis to other companies, including Lee Pharma, Suven Pharma, Anthem Biosciences and Nosch Labs.

RBI announces change in Government securities auction methodo

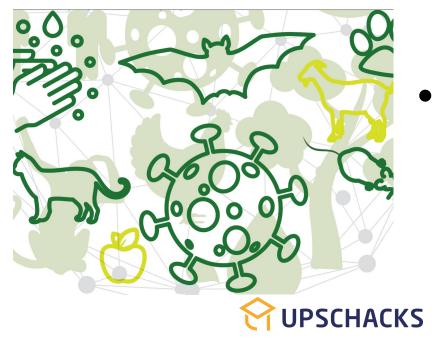


- The Reserve Bank of India has announced a change in Government securities auction methodology for benchmark securities.
- They noted in the latest update that on a review of market conditions and market borrowing program of the government, it has been decided that benchmark securities of tenor 2-year, 3-year, 5-year, 10-year, 14-year tenor and Floating Rate Bonds (FRBs) will be, henceforth, issued using the uniform price auction method.
- For other benchmark securities i.e. 30-year and 40-year, the auction will continue to be multiple price-based auctions, as hitherto.
- The above arrangement will continue till further review, note the bank.

- In a Uniform Price auction, all the successful bidders are required to pay for the allotted quantity of securities at the same rate, i.e., at the auction cut-off rate, irrespective of the rate quoted by them.
- In a Multiple Price auction, the successful bidders are required to pay for the allotted quantity of securities at the respective price/yield at which they have bid.



World Zoonoses Day: 6 July



- World Zoonoses Day is held every year on July 6 to raise awareness of the risk of zoonotic diseases.
- Zoonoses are infectious diseases (virus, bacteria and parasites) that can spread from animals to humans, and vice versa, either with direct contact with animals or indirectly, vector-borne or foodborne.
- It was on July 6, 1885, when Louis Pasteur successfully administered the first vaccine against Rabies virus, which is a zoonotic disease.
- World Zoonoses day observed after Louis Pasteur, a French biologist successfully administered the first vaccine against Rabies virus, which is a zoonotic disease.
- We remembered this day every day to raise awareness against Zoonotic disease.

Trafficking in Persons (Prevention, Care and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2021



- The Ministry of Women and Child Welfare invited suggestions and comments for its Trafficking in Persons (Prevention, Care and UPSCHACKS Rehabilitation) Bill, 2021.
- The Bill has increased the scope of the nature of offenses of trafficking as well as the kind of victims of these offenses, with stringent penalties including life imprisonment, and even the death penalty in cases of an extreme nature.

Need for Anti-Trafficking bill:

- Trafficking in persons is a serious crime affecting a large number of people across the globe.
- The Trafficking in Human Beings (THB) is a crime committed in order to target, lead or drive a human being into an exploitative situation with the aim to make profits.
- Human trafficking not only affects women and children but also men.
- Such exploitation may take many forms, for example commercial sexual exploitation, child labour, forced labour, bonded labour or illegal organ removal etc.

- India is witnessing cross-border as well as internal (intracountry from one state to another) trafficking.
- Traffickers often exploit the vulnerabilities of people my making false promises of a new job, better income, better living conditions and support to their families etc.
- Once trafficked, the victims fall prey to many forms of unfair treatment such as forced prostitution, forced labour, forced begging, forced marriages, drug peddling, child pornography etc.
- However, in India, the offence of trafficking is dealt with under different laws.
- These laws regulate trafficking for specific purposes. For instance, the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1986 deals with trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Similarly, the Bonded Labour Regulation Act, 1986 and Child Labour Regulation Act, 1986 deal with exploitation for bonded labour.
- India's efforts to protect victims of trafficking vary from state to state, but remain inadequate in many places.

- Each of these laws operate independently, have their own enforcement machinery and prescribe penalties for offences related to trafficking
- Thus a comprehensive law for investigation of all types of trafficking, and rescue, protection and rehabilitation of trafficked victims is required.
- In India, trafficking is primarily an offence under the Indian Penal Code, 1860. It defines trafficking as (i) recruitment, (ii) transportation, (iii) harbouring, (iv) transfer, or (v) receipt of a person for exploitation by use of certain forceful means.
- The legislation will extend to all citizens inside as well as outside India, persons on any ship or aircraft registered in India wherever it may be or carrying Indian citizens wherever they may be.
- Property bought via such income as well as used for trafficking can now be forfeited with provisions set in place, similar to that of the money laundering Act.
- Besides women and children, the draft also extends the protection to transgenders as well.

- The definition of trafficked victim has been changed and now one need not be transported from one place to another to be identified as a victim of trafficking.
- The scope of the Bill vis a vis offenders will also include defence personnel and government servants, doctors and paramedical staff or anyone in a position of authority.
- The draft says that a public servant, police officer, military or paramilitary personnel, doctor or lawyer who "misuses" the relationship with the victim will face life term in jail and a fine of up to Rs 30 lakh, which could be increased by the court.
- While the penalty will hold a minimum of seven years which can go up to an imprisonment of 10 years and a fine of Rs 5 lakh.
- In most cases of child trafficking, especially in the case of the trafficking of more than one child, the penalty will now be life imprisonment.
- According to the draft, an accused could face death sentence if he is convicted for a second time for aggravated form of trafficking law like acting against a child below 12 years or against a woman for the purpose of repeated rape.
 For the first offence, the accused will be punished with rigorous imprisonment for 20 years which extend to life.

- Aggravated form of trafficking includes death or injury caused to a victim or their dependent, victim exposed to AIDS, silicosis or TB, administering chemical substances or hormones for the purpose of early sexual maturity, victim becoming mentally ill or disabled due to trafficking, forced labour and abusing one's position or authority among others.
- Trafficking committed in the garb of "apparently innocuous and legally permitted activities or enterprises" such as massage parlours, spas, placement agencies, travel agencies and circus as well as those subjecting victims to illegal bio-medical research and unauthorised clinical drug trial come under "aggravated" offences.
- The Bill requires the central or state government to set up Protection Homes, to provide shelter, food, counselling, and medical services to victims.
- In order to punish trafficking, the Bill provides for the setting up of investigation and rehabilitation authorities at the district, state and national level.
- Existing Constitutional and statutory provisions against trafficking

Constitutional and Legislative Provision in India are as follows:

- Trafficking in Human Beings or Persons is prohibited under the Constitution of India under Article 23 (1)
- Protection of Children from Sexual offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, which has come into effect from 14th November, 2012 is a special law to protect children from sexual abuse and exploitation.
- The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 (ITPA) is the premier legislation for prevention of trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation.
- Criminal Law (amendment) Act 2013 has come into force wherein Section 370 of the Indian Penal Code has been substituted with Section 370 and 370A IPC which provide for comprehensive measures to counter the menace of human trafficking.
- There are other specific legislations enacted relating to trafficking in women and children:
- Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006,
- Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976,
- Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986,
- Transplantation of Human Organs Act, 1994,

- Sections 366(A) and 372 of the Indian Penal Code, prohibits kidnapping and selling minors into prostitution respectively. Penalties under these provisions are a maximum of 10 years' imprisonment and a fine.
- State Governments have also enacted specific legislations to deal with the issue. (e.g. The Punjab Prevention of Human Smuggling Act, 2012)
- Trafficking in Persons Report 2021 PSCHACKS
- The U.S. State Departmentant has released an annual study called Trafficking in Persons report, 2021 recently.

About the report

- The Annual report uses the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA) to define "severe" human trafficking as "sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act" is not 18.
- The definition also includes "the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude".
- It ranks countries in tiers based on their compliance with the minimum standard for eliminating human trafficking according to the TVPA

Key Highlights

- According to the report, Covid 19 pandemic resulted in an increase in vulnerability to human trafficking and interrupted existing anti-traffic efforts.
- It cites a report from the Office of Security and Co-operation in Europe's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and UN Women which highlights that almost 70 percent of trafficking survivors from 35 countries reported that their financial well-being was heavily affected by COVID-19.
- It has determined that governments of twelve countries, including China, had a policy of trafficking in the reporting period (year ending March 31).
- The concurrence of the increased number of individuals at risk, traffickers' ability to capitalise on competing crises, and the diversion of resources to pandemic response efforts has resulted in an ideal environment for human trafficking to flourish and evolve.

Observations on India

 The report says that while India did not meet the minimum standards to eliminate trafficking, the government was making significant efforts, although these were inadequate, especially when it came to bonded labour.

- For India, the report said the government is not meeting the minimum standards to eliminate trafficking but is making significant efforts to do so.
- The government, in the US administration's view, had increased efforts in the latest reporting period relative to the previous one, taking into account the impact of the pandemic on anti-trafficking efforts, resulting in India retaining a Tier 2 classification.
- The report said the efforts included identifying more victims of trafficking and prosecuting more cases.
- Overall anti-trafficking efforts, especially against bonded labor, remained inadequate.

Key statistics on trafficking in India

- According to the National Crime Records Bureau, 8,132 human trafficking cases were reported in India in 2016 under the Indian Penal Code, 1860.
- In the same year, 23,117 trafficking victims were rescued. Of these, the highest number of persons were trafficked for forced labour (45.5%), followed by prostitution (21.5%). The table below provides details of persons trafficked for various purposes (as of 2016).

- Around 80% of the human trafficking across the world is done for sexual exploitation and the rest is for bonded labor.
- India is considered as the hub of this crime in Asia.
- As per the statistics of the government, in every 8 minutes a child goes missing in our country.
- In 2011 about 35,000 children were reported missing.



Anti trafficking bill



- Recently, the Ministry of Women and Child Welfare invited suggestions and comments for its Trafficking in Persons (Prevention, Care and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2021.
- The bill has increased the scope of the nature of offenses of trafficking as well as the kind of victims of these offenses, with stringent penalties including life imprisonment, and even the death penalty in cases of an extreme nature.

Following are the key provisions of the bill:

- Once passed, it will will extend to all citizens inside as well as outside India, such as
- Persons on any ship or aircraft registered in India wherever it may be or carrying Indian citizens wherever they may be.
- A foreign national or a stateless person who has his or her residence in India at the time of commission of offence under this Act, and
- The law will apply to every offence of trafficking in persons with cross-border implications.

Fortification of property

 Property bought via such income as well as used for trafficking can now be forfeited with provisions set in place, similar to that of the money laundering Act.

Scope of the bill

 The scope of the Bill vis a vis offenders will also include defence personnel and government servants, doctors and paramedical staff or anyone in a position of authority.

NIA's role

 It is proposed that the NIA shall act as the national investigating and coordinating agency responsible for prevention and combating of trafficking in persons.

National Anti-Human Trafficking Committee(NAHTC)

- Once the law is enacted, the Centre will notify and establish NAHTC, for ensuring overall effective implementation of the provisions of this law.
- This committee will have representation from various ministries with the home secretary as the chairperson and secretary of the women and child development ministry as co-chair.
- State and district level anti-human trafficking committees will also be constituted.

Penalty

- Imprisonment of 7 to 10 years and a fine of Rs 5 lakh, in most cases of child trafficking
- In the case of the trafficking of more than one child, the penalty is now life imprisonment.
- Where a person is convicted of an offence under this section against a child of less than twelve years of age, or against a woman for the purpose of repeated rape, the person shall be punished with rigorous imprisonment for twenty years.
- It may extend to life, or in case of second or subsequent conviction with death, and with fine which may extend up to thirty lakh rupees.
- The bill also makes it clear a person advertising, printing or broadcasting any material that promotes trafficking will invite punishment.

Definition of Exploitation



 It has been defined to include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation including pornography, any act of physical exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or forced removal of organs, illegal clinical drug trials or illegal bio-medical research.

Inclusion of Transgenders

- Along with the protection of women and children, it also protects transgenders as well as any person who may be a victim of trafficking.
- It also does away with the provision that a victim necessarily needs to be transported from one place to another to be defined as a victim.



UDISE+ report 2019-20



- The Union Education Minister has released the UDISE+ report recently.
- United District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) report 2019-20

Following are the key highlights of UDISE+ report:

- Gross Enrolment Ratio(GER):
- GER at all levels of school education has improved in 2019-20 compared to 2018-19.
- Total enrolment in schools has increased in 2019-20 compared to 2018-19 by 1.6%.
- GER increased to
- 89.7% (from 87.7%) at Upper Primary level.
- 97.8% (from 96.1%) at **Elementary** Level.
- 77.9% (from 76.9%) at Secondary Level and
- 51.4% (from 50.1%) at Higher Secondary Level in 2019-20 (from 2018-19).

Enrolment of Girls:

 The enrolment of girls from primary to higher secondary is more than 12.08 crore. This is a substantial increase by 14.08 lakh compared to 2018-19.

Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR):

- It has improved at all levels of school education
- In 2019-20, 96.87 lakh teachers have been engaged in school education. This is higher by about 2.57 lakh compared to 2018-19.
- In 2019-20, the PTR for primary has become 26.5, PTR for upper primary and secondary has become 18.5 and PTR for higher secondary has become 26.1.

Gender Parity Index (GPI):

- Between 2012-13 and 2019-20, the GPI at both Secondary and Higher Secondary levels have improved.
- Improvement of GPI has been most pronounced at the higher secondary level, which has gone up to 1.04 in 2019-20 from 0.97 in 2012-13.

Enrolment of Divyang students:

• It has increased by 6.52% over 2018-19.

Number of students:

- In 2019-20, total students in school education from preprimary to higher secondary have crossed 26.45 crore.
- This is higher by 42.3 lakh compared to 2018-19.

Other improvements

- The UDISE+ report shows a remarkable improvement in the number of schools with functional electricity, with functional computers, internet facility in 2019-20 over the previous year.
- More than 90% schools in India had hand wash facility in 2019-20. This is a major improvement, as this percentage was only 36.3% in 2012-13.
- More than 80% schools in India in 2019-20 had functional electricity. This is an improvement by more than 6% over the previous year 2018-19.
- Number of schools having functional computers increased to 5.2 lakh in 2019-20 from 4.7 lakh in 2018-19.
- Number of schools having internet facility increased to 3.36 lakh in 2019-20 from 2.9 lakh in 2018-19.
- More than 83% schools had electricity in 2019-20, an improvement by almost 7% over the previous year, 2018-19.
 In 2012-13, about 54.6% schools had electricity.
- More than 82% schools conducted medical check-up of students in 2019-20, an increase by more than 4% compared to previous year 2018-19. In 2012-13, about 61.1% schools conducted medical checkups.

- More than 84% schools in India had a library/reading room/ reading corner in 2019-20, an improvement of nearly 4% compared to the previous year.
- In 2012-13, about 69.2% schools had library/ reading room/ reading corner.

Data collection

- The UDISE+ system of online data collection from the schools was developed in the year 2018-19 to overcome the issues related to manual data filling in paper format and subsequent feeding at the block or district level, which was in practice in the UDISE data collection system from 2012-13.
- The present publication relates to UDISE+ data for the reference year 2019-20.



Dalai Lama



- He was born on 6 July 1935, to a farming family, in a small hamlet located in Taktser, Amdo, northeastern Tibet.
- The Dalai Lama's birthday is celebrated as one of the grandest events of Tibetan community.
- He is the 14th Dalai Lama.
- Dalai Lama is a title given by the Tibetan people to the foremost spiritual leader of the Gelug or "Yellow Hat" school of Tibetan Buddhism, the newest of the classical schools of Tibetan Buddhism.
- At the age of two, the child, then named Lhamo Dhondup, was recognized as the reincarnation of the previous 13th Dalai Lama, Thubten Gyatso.
- The Dalai Lamas are believed to be manifestations of Avalokiteshvara or Chenrezig, the Bodhisattva of Compassion and the patron saint of Tibet
- It has been over six decades since he started living in India.
- Tibetans believe the Dalai Lama has control over his re-birth and he can choose the body into which he is reincarnated.

- He calls himself a "son of India" and somebody who has lived the longest in India as a "guest".
- He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1989.
- His Five-Point Peace Plan for Tibet
- In 1987 in an address to members of the United States Congress in Washington, DC, Dalai Lama proposed a Five-Point Peace Plan for Tibet as a first step towards a peaceful solution of the worsening situation in Tibet.
- The five points of the plan were as follows:
- Transformation of the whole of Tibet into a zone of peace.
- Abandonment of China's population transfer policy that threatens the very existence of the Tibetans as a people.
- Respect for the Tibetan people's fundamental human rights and democratic freedoms.
- Restoration and protection of Tibet's natural environment and the abandonment of China's use of Tibet for the production of nuclear weapons and dumping of nuclear waste.
- Commencement of earnest negotiations on the future status of Tibet and of relations between the Tibetan and Chinese peoples.

His approach with China

- He propagated the middle way approach for a rapprochement with the Chinese government.
- The middle way approach implies that the Tibetan people do not accept the present status of Tibet under the People's Republic of China.



Harit Dhara



- An Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) institute has developed an anti-methanogenic feed supplement 'Harit Dhara'.
- Methane's global warming potential is 25 times that of carbon dioxide (CO2) over 100 years, making it a more potent greenhouse gas.
- Methane is produced by animals having rumen, where the plant material they eat like cellulose, fibre, starch and sugars gets fermented or broken down by microorganisms prior to further digestion and nutrient absorption.
- Carbohydrate fermentation leads to production of CO2 and hydrogen that are used as substrates by archaea, the microbes in the rumen which produce methane.
- This gas is then released through these animals' flatulence, when they belch, or through their manure.
- Tropical plants containing tannins bitter and astringent chemical compounds are known to suppress or remove protozoa from the rumen.

- Harit Dhara has been prepared using condensed and hydrolysable tannin-rich plant-based sources which acts by decreasing the population of protozoa microbes in the rumen.
- It also changes the composition of the volatile fatty acids that are the end-products of rumen fermentation (along with hydrogen and CO2).
- An average lactating cow or buffalo in India emits around 200 litres of methane per day.
- Feeding Harit Dhara not only cuts down their methane emissions by 17-20%, but also results in higher milk production and body weight gain



Unity 22 mission



- Six crew members will be aboard Virgin Galactic flight 'VSS Unity', a suborbital rocket-powered spaceplane which is scheduled to blast off to space on July 11, 2021 from New Mexico.
- Virgin Galactic is set to carry passengers into space on its spaceplane VSS Unity for the first time.
- The Unity 22 mission consists of two pilots and four mission specialists, one of whom is Virgin Galactic founder Sir Richard Branson and Indian-origin Sirisha Bandla.
- As the name suggests, Unity 22 will be the 22nd test flight of VSS Unity, and Virgin Galactic's fourth flight into space.
- The purpose of the test flight is to gather data about the spacecraft, including the cabin environment, seat comfort, passenger weightlessness, and the view of the Earth from the passenger area, as well as the efficacy of the Spaceport America training program for its customers.
- Sir Richard will be tasked with evaluating the "private astronaut experience." and will become the first billionaire to go to space, beating Amazon's Jeff Bezos' space flight (New Shepard rocket) by nine days.

- Ms. Sirisha Bandla is the Vice President of Government Affairs and Research Operations at Virgin Galactic.
- She was born in Tenali, a city in the Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh and was raised in Houston, Texas in the United States of America.
- She will be the fourth Indian to fly into space and the second Indian-born woman to fly into space after Kalpana Chawla.
- The other Indians who went to space include Rakesh Sharma, Kalpana Chawla and Sunita Williams.



INDIAN ARMY MEMORIAL AT CASSINO



- During his four-day visit to the UK and Italy, Indian Army Chief Manoj Naravane will inaugurate the Indian Army Memorial at Cassino in Italy, about 140 km away from Rome.
- The memorial commemorates over 3,100 Commonwealth servicemen who took part in the effort to liberate Italy in World War II.
- Apart from this, 900 Indian soldiers were also commemorated on this memorial
- What was happening in Italy in WWII?
 - Under Benito Mussolini, Italy had joined Nazi Germany in 1936 and in 1940 it entered WWII (1939-1945) against the Allies.
 - But in 1943, Mussolini was overthrown and instead, Italy declared war on Germany. The invasion of Italy by the Allies coincided with an armistice that was made with the Italians.

What was India's involvement in World War II?

- Indian Army was the largest volunteer force during WWII, with over 2.5 million Indians participating.
- These troops fought the Axis powers (Germany, Italy and Japan) as part of the Allies.
- Three infantry divisions of the Indian Army took part in the Italian campaign. These were the 4th, 8th and 10th Indian Divisions.



DISCRETE AURORAS

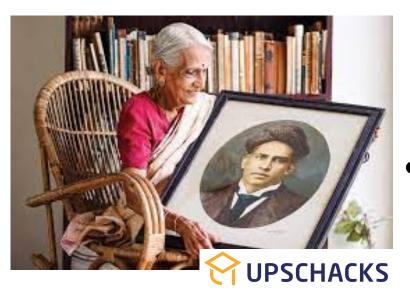


- The UAE's Hope spacecraft, which is orbiting Mars since February this year, has captured images of glowing atmospheric lights in the Red Planet's night sky, known as discrete auroras.
- The data gathered by the oribter "include far and extreme ultraviolet auroral emissions which have never been imaged before at Mars."
- Unlike auroras on Earth, which are seen only near the north and south poles, discrete auroras on Mars are seen all around the planet at night time.

What is the Hope orbiter studying?

- The Hope Probe, the Arab world's first mission to Mars, took off from Earth in July last year, and has been orbiting the Red Planet since February.
- The primary objective of the mission is to study Martian weather dynamics

C. SANKARAN NAIR



- Filmmaker Karan Johar recently announced his decision to produce the biopic of Sir Chettur Sankaran Nair.
- Sir Chettur Sankaran Nair (1857 1934) was an acclaimed lawyer and judge in the Madras High Court. He wrote Gandhi and Anarchy (1922).
- He served as a President of the Indian National Congress in 1897 at the meeting held at Amravati.
- In 1902 Lord Curzon appointed him a member of the Raleigh University Commission. In 1904 he was appointed as Companion of the Indian Empire by the King-Emperor and in 1912 he was knighted. In 1915 he became part of the Viceroy's Council, put in charge of the education portfolio.
- Nair was known for being a passionate advocate for social reforms. In Budasna v Fatima (1914), he passed a radical judgement when he ruled that those who converted to Hinduism cannot be treated as outcastes.
- But what really stood out in his long glorious career is a courtroom battle he fought against the Lieutenant-Governor of Punjab, Michael O'Dwyer.

- Nair had accused O'Dwyer in his book, 'Gandhi and anarchy' for being responsible for the atrocities at the Jallianwala Bagh massacre.
- Consequently, he was fighting against an Englishman, in an English court that was presided over by an English jury.



DELHI SKILL AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP UNIVERSITY



- The Delhi Skill and Entrepreneurship University, with its emphasis on partnerships with industries and relevant skilling, has opened up the admission process for its first batch of students.
- Applications will be starting for 39 programmes, which include full-time and part-time diploma courses, undergraduate degree courses, B.Tech. programmes and two Masters programmes.
- Industry partnerships are an integral part of the university's curriculum.
- An entrepreneurship component is to be a part of all the programmes.
- In every course in the third year, there is an entrepreneurship orientation course. If any student shows interest in starting an entrepreneurship, it will have a special support cell and special course module to help them set up.

• The proposal for a university along these lines had first been announced by Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia in the 2019 budget speech and the bill to set up the university was passed in the Delhi Assembly in December that year.

