

KSG:NEWSPAPER CRUX

20TH DECEMBER, 2020

NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHTS

- Any exploitation of the North Sentinel Island of the Andamans for commercial and strategic gain would spell the death knell for its occupants, the Sentinelese, a most secluded, particularly vulnerable tribal group (PVTG) who reside in complete isolation on the island, the Anthropological Survey of India (AnSI) has said.
- Researchers have discovered a superhighway network that can help travel through the Solar System at extremely fast speed. The paper published in Science Advances notes that such a route can help comets and asteroids to travel from Jupiter to Neptune's distance in under a decade.
- The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has extended the time limit for constitution of biodiversity management committees (BMC) and preparation of people's biodiversity registers (PBR) in view of the ongoing pandemic.
- A report released by the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) said the population in Indian prisons reduced by 10.42% from April to June due to the COVID19 pandemic.
- Donald Trump's outgoing administration is planning to close the two remaining U.S. consulates in Russia, the State Department confirmed.
- Exporters' body FIEO(The Federation of Indian Export Organisations) suggested a host of steps such as bringing in a double tax deduction scheme and setting up of an export development fund to the Finance Ministry with a view to boosting outbound shipments.
- The U.S. added dozens of Chinese firms, including the country's top chipmaker SMIC and Chinese drone manufacturer SZ DJI Technology Co. Ltd., to a trade blacklist as U.S. President Donald Trump's administration ratchets up tensions with China in his final weeks in office.

UNION MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY LAUNCHED INDIA-AUSTRALIA ECONOMIC STRATEGY REPORT

1. Strategy is an ambitious plan to transform India's trade & economic policies with Australia's economic partnership.
2. Presently, there is tremendous scope for **Australian investment as India eases its FDI norms & opens up different sectors.**
3. India was Australia's eighth-largest trading partner and fifth-largest export market in 2018-19, driven by coal and international education.

RELIANCE INDUSTRIES LIMITED(RIL) AND BP(BRITISH PETROLEUM) ANNOUNCE FIRST GAS FROM ASIA'S DEEPEST PROJECT

1. RIL and BP announced the start of production from the R Cluster which is ultra-deep-water gas field in KG-D6 (Krishna Godavari Dhirubhai-6) block off the east coast of India.
2. It is the deepest offshore gas field in Asia located at a water depth of greater than 2000 meters.
3. **Krishna Godavari(KG) Basin is extensive deltaic plain formed by Krishna and Godavari in Andhra Pradesh** spread across 50,000 sq km and adjoining areas of Bay of Bengal in which these rivers discharge their water.
4. Increased domestic production of natural gas will help to meet 15% of India's gas demand by 2023.

INDIA RAILWAYS ISSUES DRAFT NATIONAL RAIL PLAN(NRP)

1. NRP has been drafted to address the capacity constraints and improve the modal share of Railway & Business.
2. It is a long term strategic plan to plan infrastructural capacity enhancement and be a common platform for all future infrastructural, business and financial planning of Railways.
3. Objectives of the Plan-**To create capacity ahead of demand by 2030. Increase the modal share of Railways from 27% currently to 45% in freight by 2030** as part of national commitment to reduce Carbon emission. Net Zero Carbon emission by 2030.

COALITION FOR DISASTER RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE(CDRI)

1. Recently, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare addressed an event by CDRI.
2. CDRI is a multi-stakeholder global partnership of national governments, UN agencies and programmes, multilateral development banks and financing mechanisms, private sector, and academic and knowledge institutions.
3. It was announced by India's PM at UN Climate Action Summit 2019.
4. **It aims to promote the resilience of new and existing infrastructure systems to climate and disaster risks,** thereby ensuring sustainable development.

NORTH EASTERN REGION POWER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT PROJECT(NERPSIP)

1. Scheme is implemented through POWERGRID, a PSU under Ministry of Power and is being funded with assistance of World Bank fund.
2. Objective of NERPSIP is **total economic development of North Eastern Region(NER) and to strengthen Inter-State Transmission & Distribution Infrastructure** in NER.
3. Beneficiary states-Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Tripura.