

KSG:NEWSPAPER CRUX

27TH APRIL, 2021

NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHT

- Food security schemes such as ration provided to children through anganwadis, Public Distribution System and midday meal scheme in primary schools need to be ramped up systematically and urgently. For migrants stuck in cities without work, community kitchens (such as Amma canteens) are required. The most vulnerable will need more predictable and stable support than ever before.
- United States Secretary of the Treasury Janet L. Yellen's proposal for global coordination of corporate taxation has huge implications. She has proposed a global minimum tax rate. If the major world economies agree and the U.S. Congress approves the increased tax rates, it would constitute a reversal of the trend in tax policies since the collapse of the Soviet Bloc 30 years back.
- The Madras High Court expressed its displeasure with the Election Commission of India (ECI) for having failed to ensure that political parties adhered to the COVID19 protocol during the recent Assembly election campaign in Tamil Nadu. It warned the Commission that the counting of votes, scheduled for May 2, would be postponed if appropriate safety measures were not put in place, and the court informed of the same by April 30.
- India has been ranked 49th in the Chandler Good Government Index (CGGI), which classifies 104 countries in terms of government capabilities and outcomes.
- In a major technological breakthrough, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) said it has developed single crystal blade technology and supplied 60 of such blades to the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) as part of their indigenous helicopter development programme for helicopter engine application.

FOSS4GOV INNOVATION CHALLENGE

- 1.The Ministry of Electronics & IT (MeitY) has announced FOSS4GOV Innovation Challenge to accelerate adoption of Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) in Government.
- 2.It doesn't mean software is free of cost. The term "free" indicates that the software does not have constraints on copyrights. It means that source code of the software is open for all and anyone is free to use, study and modify the code. It allows other people also to contribute to the development and improvement of the software like a community.
- 3.The Free and Open Source Software may also be referred to as Free/Libre Open Source Software (FLOSS) or Free/Open Source Software (F/OSS). Examples of FOSS include MySQL, Firefox, Linux, etc.
- 4.It will harness the innovation potential of the FOSS community and start-ups to solve critical issues in Government Technologies (GovTech).

GROUNDWATER DEPLETION AND CROPPING INTENSITY

- 1.In a recent study, it has been found that groundwater depletion in India could reduce winter cropped acreage significantly in years ahead. The researchers studied India's three main irrigation types on winter cropped areas: dug wells, tube wells and canals.
- 2.The researchers also analysed the groundwater data from the Central Ground Water Board. Wheat, barley, peas, gram and mustard are grown in winter.
- 3.Groundwater is a critical resource for food security, accounting for 60% of irrigation supplies in India, but unsustainable consumption of groundwater for irrigation and home use is leading to its depletion.
- 4.Groundwater depletion in India could result in a reduction in food crops by up to 20% across the country and up to 68% in regions projected to have low future groundwater availability in 2025.

WAYS AND MEANS ADVANCE

- 1.The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to continue with the existing interim Ways and Means Advances (WMA) scheme limit of Rs. 51,560 crore for all States/UTs upto September 2021, given the prevalence of Covid-19.
- 2.The WMA scheme was introduced in 1997. Purpose: **To meet mismatches in the receipts and payments of the government. Features: The government can avail immediate cash from the RBI, if required. But it has to return the amount within 90 days.** Interest is charged at the existing repo rate.
- 3.If the WMA exceeds 90 days, it would be treated as an overdraft (the interest rate on overdrafts is 2 percentage points more than the repo rate). The limits for WMA (for Centre) are decided by the government and RBI mutually.
- 4.A higher limit provides the government flexibility to raise funds from RBI without borrowing them from the market.

TRACHOMA

- 1.Gambia has become second African state to eliminate Trachoma, after Ghana.
- 2.Trachoma is a neglected tropical disease and the leading infectious cause of blindness worldwide. It is caused by repeated infection of the eye with the bacterium *Chlamydia trachomatis*.
- 3.It is contagious, spreading through contact with the eyes, eyelids, and nose or throat secretions of infected people.
- 4.World Health Organisation has set a target for global elimination of trachoma by 2030. India eliminated trachoma in 2017.