

KSG:NEWSPAPER CRUX

28TH APRIL, 2021

NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHT

- Instead of being defensive about the crimes of the Ottoman empire, the modern Turkish republic should demonstrate the moral courage to disown the atrocities. It shouldn't allow the past to ruin its present interests.
- The pandemic has demonstrated to us just how iniquitous the existing world order is. We cannot continue to persist with rules granting monopolies which place the right to access basic healthcare in a position of constant peril.
- There is no denying that the perceived delay in the U.S.'s response to the crisis in India, which is not just a bilateral strategic partner but key to the U.S.'s IndoPacific strategy as a member of the Quad, has caused some disappointment in South Block.
- The Biden administration has said the Modi government's orders to remove social media content critical of New Delhi's handling of the COVID19 outbreak is not in sync with the U.S. views on freedom of speech.
- Human Rights Watch said that Israel is committing the crime of "apartheid" by seeking to maintain Jewish "domination" over Palestinians and its own Arab population.
- The Election Commission of India banned victory processions after the declaration of Assembly election results in Assam, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, West Bengal and Kerala on May 2 in view of the COVID19 pandemic.
- Myanmar's junta said it would heed regional pleas to stop violence only when the country "returns to stability", as fresh fighting erupted with a major ethnic rebel group along its eastern border.
- The Asian Development Bank has raised its forecast for India's growth in 2021-22 to 11%, from 8% earlier.

INCREASE IN WORLD MILITARY SPENDING DURING COVID-19:SIPRI

1. According to the latest data published by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), the military spending across the world rose to USD 1,981 billion in 2020, during Covid-19 pandemic.
2. The 2.6% increase in world military spending came in a year when the global GDP shrank by 4.4% largely due to the economic impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.
3. The five biggest spenders in 2020, which together accounted for 62% of global military expenditure were: the United States>China>India>Russia>the United Kingdom.
4. The countries with the **biggest increases in military burden among the top 15 spenders in 2020 were Saudi Arabia, Russia, Israel and US.**

PROJECT DANTAK

1. Project DANTAK which is one of the oldest Projects of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) commemorated its Diamond Jubilee in Bhutan. Over 1,200 DANTAK personnel laid down their lives while constructing important infrastructure in Bhutan.
2. Project DANTAK was established on 24th April 1961. It was a result of the visionary leadership of the third King of Bhutan and then Prime Minister of India Jawahar Lal Nehru. **DANTAK was tasked to construct the pioneering motorable roads. Over the years, the Project has completed approximately 1600 km of blacktopped roads and 120 km of tracks in Bhutan with 5000 meters of bridges over them.**
3. Indo-Bhutan Treaty of Peace and Friendship, 1949: The Treaty provides for, among other things, perpetual peace and friendship, free trade and commerce and equal justice to each other's citizens.
4. In 2007, the treaty was re-negotiated, and provisions were included to encourage Bhutan's sovereignty, abolishing the need to take India's guidance on foreign policy.

POWERGRID INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT TRUST

1. The Power Grid Corporation of India (PGCIL) launched its Infrastructure Investment Trust (InvIT) - PowerGrid Infrastructure Investment Trust (PGInvIT).
2. This is the first time a state-owned entity (PGCIL) is monetizing its infrastructure assets through the InvIT route. This will be only the third InvIT to be listed in the Indian markets, after IRB InvIT and India Grid Trust, both of which went public in 2017.
3. About Infrastructure Investment Trust (InvIT): It is a **collective investment scheme similar to a mutual fund, which enables direct investment of money from individual and institutional investors in infrastructure projects to earn a small portion of the income as return.**
4. It is created to hold income-generating and operational infrastructure assets such as roads, power transmission lines, gas pipelines, etc.

LADAKH IGNITED MINDS:A CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE AND WELLNESS

1. It is the initiative of the Indian Army in association with the Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) **to mentor and guide children from Ladakh for entrance examinations of various medical and engineering colleges across India.**
2. The project will be a full-time residential programme that will run a 12-month mentoring programme.
3. Kanpur-based NGO National Integrity and Educational Development (NIEDO) is the executing agency.