

NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHT

India will support “all efforts” to restart the peace process between Israel and Palestine, Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla conveyed to the UN Security Council meeting which also witnessed tabling of an important resolution on Afghanistan. “Given our long-standing and firm commitment to the establishment of a sovereign, independent and viable state of Palestine, within secure, recognised and mutually agreed borders, living side by side with Israel in peace and security, India will remain fully supportive of all efforts to restart the peace process,” Mr. Shringla, said.

The Supreme Court has held that the power of the State to pass an externment order or a direction barring certain people entry to specified areas should be exercised only in “exceptional cases”. The rights to free movement and residence across India cannot be curtailed on flimsy grounds, a Bench of Justices Indira Banerjee and V. Ramasubramanian held in a judgment.

The Railways plans to operate 102 Vande Bharat trains by March 2024. Days after Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the operation of 75 Vande Bharat trains, the Ministry of Railways has floated tenders for manufacturing 58 rakes, each comprising 16 coaches. Tenders have already been floated for making 44 rakes. Railway officials say 102 Vande Bharat trains would be commissioned by early 2024. The Train18, later named Vande Bharat Express, was rolled out by the Integral Coach Factory, Chennai.

Citing a latest report by the Haryana State Pollution Control Board (HSPCB) showing discharge of highly toxic and untreated leachate into the forest area behind Bandhwari landfill here, the environmentalists have demanded that the contract of Ecogreen, the company handling waste management in Gurugram and Faridabad, be suspended and action taken against the Municipal Corporation of Gurugram. In a letter to Chief Secretary Vijai Vardhan, and senior officials of the HSPCB and Forest Department, the environmentalists said the leachate testing report for the sample

CASTE-BASED CENSUS

1.JD (U) party in Bihar passed resolutions calling for caste census to be conducted in India. Many parties across the political spectrum have supported this proposal. So far, the Government of India has decided as a matter of policy not to enumerate caste-wise populations other than SCs and STs in Census. How have caste details been collected so far? **While SC/ST details are collected as part of the census, details of other castes are not collected by the enumerators.** The main method is by self-declaration to the enumerator. So far, backward classes commissions in various States have been conducting their own counts to ascertain the population of backward castes.

2.Kind of caste data is published in the Census? Every Census in independent India from 1951 to 2011 has published data on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, but not on other castes. Before that, every Census until 1931 had data on caste.

3.SECC 2011-**The Socio-Economic Caste Census of 2011 was a major exercise to obtain data about the socio-economic status of various communities.** It had two components: a survey of the rural and urban households and ranking of these households based on pre-set parameters, and a caste census. However, only the details of the economic conditions of the people in rural and urban households were released. The caste data has not been released till now.

4.Difference between Census & SECC: The Census provides a portrait of the Indian population, while the SECC is a tool to identify beneficiaries of state support. **Since the Census falls under the Census Act of 1948, all data are considered confidential, whereas all the personal information given in the SECC is open for use by Government departments to grant and/or restrict benefits to households.**

5.Pros of caste census: The precise number of the population of each caste would help tailor the reservation policy to ensure equitable representation of all of them. Concerns associated: There is a possibility that it will lead to heartburn among some sections and spawn demands for larger or separate quotas. It has been alleged that the mere act of labeling persons as belonging to a caste tends to perpetuate the system.

HURRICANE IDA

1.Hurricane Ida made landfall in Louisiana on Sunday. It is an extremely dangerous Category 4 storm, forcing those who did not flee to brace themselves for the toughest. The Atlantic Hurricane season runs from June to November and covers the Atlantic Ocean, the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico, while the Eastern Pacific Hurricane season runs from May 15 to November 30.

2.**Hurricanes are categorized on the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale, which rates them on a scale of 1 to 5 based on wind speed.** Hurricanes that reach category three or higher are called ‘major hurricanes’ because of their potential to cause devastating damage to life and property.

3.What are hurricanes and how do they form? Tropical cyclones or hurricanes use warm, moist air as fuel, and therefore form over warm ocean waters near the equator. As NASA describes it, **when the warm, moist air rises upward from the surface of the ocean, it creates an area of low air pressure below.** Air from the surrounding areas rushes to fill this place, eventually rising when it becomes warm and moist too.

4.When the warm air rises and cools off, the moisture forms clouds. This system of clouds and winds continues to grow and spin, fuelled by the ocean’s heat and the water that evaporates from its surface. As such storm systems rotate faster and faster, an eye forms in the centre. Storms that form towards the north of the equator rotate counterclockwise, while those that form to the south spin clockwise because of the rotation of the Earth.

INDIA AND RUSSIA TIES AMIDST UNCERTAINTIES IN AFGHANISTAN

1.Amid unprecedented developments in the region, India and Russia have a series of engagements lined up in the next few

collected earlier this month confirmed the presence of certain toxins on a much higher side than the permissible limits.

A week after the Government of India cancelled all existing visas for Afghan nationals wanting to travel to India, and instituted the “e-visa only” system after reports emerged that Taliban gunmen had stolen many passports, the sole Indian visa agency has denied that any passports were lost or misplaced.

Over a period, the number of women associated with handspinning of yarns for Pashmina shawls has dwindled significantly in Kashmir, but a rare initiative to double the wages and ensure round the year orders is likely to see the re-engagement of women artisans in a critical production process of the world famous handmade shawls. The Centre For Excellence (CFE) has been set up by shawl trader Mujtaba Kadri, who owns the ‘Me&K’ brand.

The Taliban’s spokesman says the hardline Islamist group will crack down on Islamic State attacks and expects them to end once foreign forces leave the country. “We hope that those Afghans who are influenced by IS... will give up their operations on seeing the formation of an Islamic government in the absence of foreigners,” Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said.

Nucleararmed North Korea appears to have restarted its plutonium-producing reprocessing reactor in a “deeply troubling” development, the UN atomic agency has said, a possible sign Pyongyang is expanding its banned weapons programme. The development on the 5 megawatt reactor in Yongbyon — North Korea’s main nuclear complex — comes with nuclear talks between Pyongyang and Washington at a standstill.

Changes to the Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvITs) structure and regulations are among crucial modifications required to attract retail investors to the National Monetisation Pipeline, say financial experts. However, infrastructure regulators and SEBI would need to work in tandem for a successful insolvency resolution of an InvIT which may involve a change in the sponsor, investment manager and/or trustee or transfer of an infrastructure asset.

months leading up to the summit between the two leaders. Facts-**Indian pavilion showcasing ‘Make in India’ in the defence sector at the International Army 2021 expo in Moscow. INS Tabartook part in naval exercises with the Russian Navy as part of INDRA-NAVY 2021.** 250 troops from the First Mechanized Regiment will be taking part in the INDRA-ARMY 2021 in Volgograd. 200 strong battalion from 3 Nagas to come for ZAPAD exercises in Russia in September.

2.Uncertainty in Afghanistan and its impact on Indo-Russian ties: The fast-changing developments in Afghanistan have, of course, taken everyone by surprise — unexpected as to their speed, as well as their consequences. Security ramifications: India and Russia are in affected even more due to the rise of Islamic fundamentalist and radical groups. The sanctuary that could be claimed by terror groups — their impact on security interests- both for India and Russia and the impact on normal inter-state relations especially with respect to Central Asia.

3.The additional threats emanating from drug trafficking, organized crime and the flow of refugees. This could potentially upend the very foundations of interstate relations in the broader region.

THE RELEVANCE OF QUAD

1.Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said while stating that unexpected Paradigm shifts affects countries globally that the Quadrilateral grouping has been constituted keeping these things in mind. Facts- **The quadrilateral security dialogue includes Japan, India, United States and Australia. In March 2020, the Quad members held a meeting with representatives from New Zealand, South Korea and Vietnam to discuss their respective approaches to the COVID-19 pandemic.** Instigated by the US, this new grouping of key Indo-Pacific states was called “Quad Plus”.

2.Recent developments and QUAD: Today the enemy no longer needs to enter the border. He can also target our security apparatus from outside the border. Alignment and re-alignment of global powers have added to the already changing security challenges. The changing equations in Afghanistan are a recent and important example of this. These circumstances have forced every country to think on its strategy today.

3.**The stand-off along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China in Eastern Ladakh A positive agenda built around collective action in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief,** monitoring shipping for search and rescue or anti-piracy operations, infrastructure assistance to climatically vulnerable states, connectivity initiatives and similar activities. Quad has been constituted keeping these things in mind.

4.Quad grouping? The quadrilateral security dialogue includes Japan, India, United States and Australia.All four nations find a common ground of being the democratic nations and common interests of unhindered maritime trade and security. Genesis: **The grouping traces its genesis to 2004 when the four countries came together to coordinate relief operations in the aftermath of the tsunami.** It then met for the first time in 2007 on the sidelines of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) summit. The intention was to enhance maritime cooperation between the four nations.

SAMARTH UDYOG BHARAT 4.0 PLATFORM

1.Central Manufacturing Technology Institute (CMTI) Bangalore, under the SAMARTH Udyog Bharat 4.0 Platform organized a webinar on “Expert Talks from Samarth Udyog Centres” to celebrate the Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav.

2.The objective was to listen to the experts of the Samarth Udyog Centres on the indigenous technology developments & the ways for collaborations in the domain of Smart Manufacturing & Industry 4.0.

3.CMTI is a Research & Development organisation under the aegis of the Ministry of Heavy Industries, focusing on providing ‘Technology Solutions’ to the manufacturing sector and assisting technological growth in the country.

4.Smart Advanced Manufacturing and Rapid Transformation Hub (SAMARTH) -**Udyog Bharat 4.0 is an Industry 4.0 initiative of the Department of Heavy Industry, under its scheme on Enhancement of Competitiveness in Indian Capital Goods Sector.**

FORUM FOR DECARBONISATION OF TRANSPORT SECTOR

Indian industry does not seem to share the optimism of the government and the Reserve Bank of India about this year's growth prospects, according to a poll of CEOs conducted by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). Nearly two-thirds of CEOs of large corporates polled by the CII at its national council meeting earlier this month expect India's GDP growth in 202122 to be 9% or less.

Several soldiers were killed and wounded in Houthi strikes on a military base belonging to forces of the Saudi led coalition in southwest Yemen.

1.Forum for Decarbonizing Transport was jointly launched by NITI Aayog and World Resources Institute (WRI), India. WRI India is an independent charity legally registered as the India Resources Trust which provides objective information and practical proposals to foster environmentally sound and socially equitable development.

2.NITI Aayog serves as an advisory think tank for the government and is chaired by the Prime Minister. It replaced the Planning Commission.

3.The forum is a part of the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC)-**Transport Initiative for Asia (NDC-TIA) project, which focuses on developing a coherent strategy of effective policies and the formation of a multi-stakeholder platform for decarbonising transport in the region.**

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5.Aim: To Bring down the peak level of GreenHouse Gas emissions (transport sector) in Asia (in line with a well below 2-degree pathway), resulting in problems like congestion and air pollution.