

### NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHT

A major current in the Atlantic, the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC) may be near a tipping point. A study published in Nature Climate Change shows that it may have become unstable over the last century. AMOC maintains temperature equilibrium of Europe and influences world weather. The Gulf Stream is a part of AMOC.

Scientists have found viruses in the glaciers of China's Tibetan Plateau that are over 15,000 years old. These survived by remaining frozen. The study, published in Microbiome, analysed the genetic codes of 33 such viruses of which some 28 were completely new. They further deduced that the viruses must have originated with soils or plants and not with humans or animals.

When the Indian government, under 'Liberalised Pricing and Accelerated National Covid19 Vaccination Strategy', earmarked for the private sector 25% of total monthly covid19 vaccines produced in the country, it did not seem to have considered the evidence. In India - a mixed healthcare system - though the private sector provides a majority of curative and diagnostic services, when it comes to preventive and promotive services, the private sector's contribution is relatively small. In the almost four decade old universal immunisation programme of India, private facilities deliver 10% to 15% of total vaccines. The share of the private sector in mass vaccination campaigns such as Japanese encephalitis, polio, measles, etc has been even smaller. The trust of the citizen in government health service delivery has been further eroded. It is call for urgent policy corrections to regain the trust.

The Pensilungpa Glacier located in Ladakh's Zaskar Valley is retreating due to increase in temperature and decrease in precipitation during winters, a recent study has found. Since 2015, the Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology (WIHG) at Dehradun, an autonomous body under the Department of Science and Technology, has been working on various aspects on glaciology - glacier health (mass balance) monitoring, dynamics, discharge, past climatic conditions, speculation for future climate change and its impact on glaciers in this region.

### PERMANENT FORUM OF PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT

1.The United Nations General Assembly has approved a resolution establishing a Permanent Forum of People of African Descent. The Forum focuses on the themes of recognition, justice and development.

2.About the Forum: **The forum will provide expert advice on addressing the challenges of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance.** It will serve as "a platform for improving the safety and quality of life and livelihoods of people of African descent" and their full inclusion in the societies where they live.

3.It was given a series of mandates. They include helping to ensure "the full political, economic and social inclusion of people of African descent," and providing recommendations on addressing racism to the Geneva-based Human Rights Council, the General Assembly's main committees and UN agencies.

4.**The forum will consist of 10 members: five elected by the General Assembly from all regions, five appointed by the Human Rights Council** following consultations with regional groups and organizations of people of African descent. The resolution calls for the forum's first session to take place in 2022.

### SUPREME COURT RULES ON FUTURE RETAIL VS AMAZON

1.The Supreme Court upheld the enforcement of an order by the Singapore International Arbitration Centre (SIAC)'s emergency arbitrator that puts on hold the Future Group's deal with Reliance Industries Limited.

2.**Singapore International Arbitration Centre It is a not-for-profit international arbitration organisation based in Singapore, which administers arbitrations under its own rules of arbitration and the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) Arbitration Rules.**

3.Significance of Supreme Court's Order: Dismissed FRL's argument that the "Emergency Arbitrator is not an arbitral tribunal" under the Arbitration and Conciliation Act of 1996.

4.It upheld the validity of the EA award. The judgment laid down that the award is "exactly like an order of an arbitral tribunal" contemplated under Section 17 of the 1996 Act. Hence, an award by the EA was like an order under Section 17(1) (interim measures ordered by an arbitral tribunal) of the Act.

### ABANINDRA NATH TAGORE

1.The year-long celebrations marking 150 years of Abanindranath Tagore will be started soon, with a host of online workshops and talks paying tributes to the leading light of the Bengal School of Art.

2.Abanindranath Tagore took birth in a family of Tagores of Jorasanko in Kolkata in 1871. He was a nephew of Rabindranath Tagore.

3.Abanindranath's Ideology: In his youth, Abanindranath received training in European and Academic style from European artists. However, during the last decade of the 19th century, he developed a distaste for European naturalism (which represented things closer to the way one sees them - inspired by the principles of natural science).

4.Contribution to Indian Freedom Struggle: **In the last decades of the nineteenth century, a new art movement emerged which received its primary stimulus from the growing nationalism in India.** In Bengal, a new group of nationalist artists gathered around Abanindranath Tagore.

5.He was arguably the first major exponent of an artistic idiom that sought to modernise the Mughal and the Rajput styles in order to counter the influence of Western models of art under the colonial regime.

### SORRY STATE OF TRIBUNAL

1.The Supreme Court (SC) expressed displeasure against the Central government by asking whether it intends to "close" tribunals across the country by not filling up vacancies that have been pending for years.

Researchers from IIT Madras and IISER Kolkata have developed a method to detect minute quantities of chemicals in solution. They use a variation of absorption spectroscopy that surpasses the systemic limits imposed by conventional absorption spectroscopy. With this technique, they can, in principle, illuminate the insides of cells and detect minuscule quantities of substances present there.

China's declaration this week that it would provide 2 billion doses of vaccines to the world by yearend marks a stepped up effort by Beijing to take the lead in international vaccine cooperation and position itself as representing developing countries, amid growing concerns over widening vaccine inequity with the West.

Pakistan's National Security Adviser has said that no U.S. official or lawmaker asked for a military base in Pakistan, rejecting reports that the Biden administration was seeking American military bases in the country to influence developments in neighbouring Afghanistan.

Iran rejected Western allegations its drones were used in a tanker attack, while accusing Israel of concocting the "scenario" in a bid to undermine the Islamic republic.

The final resting place of Mughal prince Dara Shikoh remains a mystery, with the Archaeological Survey of India saying it has not located the grave within the Humayun's Tomb complex over a year after a committee was formed for the job.

An appeal challenging the legality of the PM Cares Fund in the Supreme Court has alleged that "oceans of money" are being diverted from Ministries, government agencies, departments and other bodies to the fund as "contributions" every day.

Handloom exports should increase from ₹2,500 crore a year to ₹10,000 crore in the next three years, Union Minister of Textiles, Commerce and Industry, Consumer Affairs & Food and Public Distribution Piyush Goyal said. Speaking at the National Handloom Day programme, he said steps need to be taken to increase the production capacities of handloom sector from the current ₹60,000 crore to over ₹1.25 lakh crore to increase exports.

2.About Tribunals:Tribunal is a quasi-judicial institution that is set up to deal with problems such as resolving administrative or tax-related disputes.

3.Tribunals were not part of the original constitution, it was incorporated in the Indian Constitution by 42nd Amendment Act, 1976.Article 323-A deals with Administrative Tribunals.Article 323-B deals with tribunals for other matters.

4.Ignoring Recommendations: Recommendations of names by the selection committees led by sitting Supreme Court judges to fill up the vacancies have been largely ignored by the government.

5.Problem of Non-Uniformity: Added to this is the problem of non-uniformity across tribunals with respect to service conditions, tenure of members, varying nodal ministries in charge of different tribunals.

#### CONSTITUTION(SCHEDULED TRIBES) ORDER(AMENDMENT) BILL, 2021

1.Rajya Sabha has passed the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order (Amendment) Bill, 2021. The bill provides for modifying Part-XVIII of the Schedule to the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950, relating to the state of Arunachal Pradesh.

2.It seeks to amend the constitutional list of Scheduled Tribes as recommended by Arunachal Pradesh.This amendment in the list of Scheduled Tribes, relating to the state of Arunachal Pradesh, will entail **no additional recurring expenditure from the Consolidated Fund of India, on account of benefits likely to be provided to persons belonging to the communities proposed in the Bill.**

3.The Ministry of Tribal Affairs is funding the welfare of 10.45 crores of Scheduled Tribes population (Census, 2011).

4.Further, the Scheduled Tribes are also eligible for benefits under the Scheduled Tribes Component (STC) of schemes under the central government and state governments. The basic objective of Schedule Tribe Component is to channelize/monitor the flow of outlays and benefits from the general sectors in the Central Ministries/Departments for the development of Scheduled Tribes at least in proportion to their population.

5.**Article 342** says that only those communities who have been declared as such by the President through an initial public notification or through a subsequent amending Act of Parliament will be considered to be Scheduled Tribes.

#### RETROSPECTIVE TAX AND CAPITAL GAIN

1.It allows a country to pass a rule on taxing certain products, items or services and deals and charge companies from a time behind the date on which the law is passed.

2.**Countries use this route to correct any anomalies in their taxation policies that have, in the past, allowed companies to take advantage of such loopholes.**

3.Capital Gain **This gain or profit comes under the category of 'income'**. Hence, the capital gain tax will be required to be paid for that amount in the year in which the transfer of the capital asset takes place. This is called the capital gains tax, which can be both short-term or long-term.

4.**Long-term Capital Gains Tax: It is a levy on the profits from the sale of assets held for more than a year. The rates are 0%, 15%, or 20%, depending on the tax bracket. Short-term Capital Gains Tax: It applies to assets held for a year or less and is taxed as ordinary income.**

#### MPLADS

1.MPLAD is a Central Sector Scheme which was announced in December 1993. The objective of the scheme is to enable the Members of Parliament (MP) to suggest and execute developmental works of capital nature based on locally felt needs with emphasis on creation of durable assets.

2.Initially, it came under the control of the Ministry of Rural Development. Later, in October 1994, it was transferred to the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

**Functioning: Each MP is granted Rs. 5 crore under the scheme, adding up to Rs. 3,950 crore a year for 790 MPs, to undertake development projects in their respective constituencies.** Lok Sabha MPs have to recommend the district authorities projects in their Lok Sabha constituencies.

3.Rajya Sabha MPs have to spend it in the state that has elected them to the House. Nominated Members of both the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha can recommend works anywhere in the country.

**The announcements by Faridabad and Gurugram administrations to identify and demolish illegal structures notified under the Punjab Land Preservation Act, 1900, have renewed hope among environmentalists, citizen groups, concerned individuals and NGOs who have been fighting for the survival of the Aravalis and the protection of wildlife and forests in South Haryana.**

**4. Priority Projects:** The projects include asset building such as drinking water facilities, primary education, public health sanitation and roads. **Since June 2016, the MPLAD funds can also be used for implementation of the schemes such as Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Accessible India Campaign (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan), conservation of water through rain water harvesting and Sansad Aadarsh Gram Yojana, etc.**