

NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHT

U.S. President Joe Biden kicked off Day One of his Summit for Democracy, calling on countries to make “concrete commitments” to reaffirm their democratic values. Over 100 countries have been invited, as well as civil society actors, members of various parliaments and the private sector. “Democracy doesn't happen by accident. We have to renew it with each generation said Mr. Biden.

The frequency of “very severe cyclonic storms” has increased in recent years over the Arabian Sea. However, this has not measurably increased the threat to India's western coast, as most of these cyclones were making landfall in Oman and Yemen, Science Minister Jitender Singh told the Rajya Sabha. The number of cyclones and stations reporting very heavy and extremely heavy rainfall events have increased in recent years and an analysis of past data of cyclones over North Indian Ocean (Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea) during the period from 1891 to 2020 indicates that the frequency of “very severe cyclonic storms” has increased in the past few years over the Arabian Sea. A very severe cyclone is defined as one with wind speeds touching 220 kmph. It is the fourth highest category of cyclones, just below “extremely severe cyclones”.

As India lumbers on with the formulation of its national suicide prevention strategy, in the works for some years now, The Lancet has published a broad and comprehensive policy paper offering a range of evidence based solutions across sectors to reduce the very high suicide rate in the country. Besides advocating short and medium strategies across sectors, including agriculture, the judiciary, media, education and women's health, apart from mental health, the paper calls for the constitution of a task force for suicide prevention research to create a road map. There is also a need for more robust and realtime data on suicides and attempted suicides, the paper says.

National Green Tribunal has directed Hindalco Industries Limited and Raipur Energy Limited (REL) to pay ₹10 crore interim compensation for violating environmental clearance (EC) norms on the functioning of the opencast mine in Sambalpur district. The coal mine falls in an area designated as critically polluted industrial cluster, having a score of more than 70 that requires extra

WORLD MIGRATION REPORT 2022

1.The World Migration Report 2022, prepared every second year, was published by the UN International Organization for Migration (IOM). The recent report highlights that more people are being displaced by changing climate related disasters than conflicts and violence.

2.In 2020, 144 countries reported new displacement due to disasters, while 42 countries reported displacement due to conflicts. Historically, conflicts and violence have been the biggest trigger for new displacement. But in recent years, this trend has changed.

3.Some 76% of the new displacement in the world was caused by disasters in 2020. Earlier, the World Bank estimated that 143 million would migrate within their countries by 2050 due to climate change related events in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and Latin America.

4.Other Findings - **By the end of 2020, there were 26.4 million refugees globally. Total internal displacement due to disaster, conflict and violence has increased from 31.5 million (2019) to 40.5 million (2020),** despite containment due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

5.The highest number of refugees (8 million) moved from Syria - the fifth biggest source country. Asia reported the largest displacement due to disasters. The Philippines experienced the highest absolute numbers of new disaster displacements in 2020. India reported nearly 4 million new displacements due to disasters.

WORLD MALARIA REPORT 2021

1.The World Malaria Report 2021 was released by the World Health Organization (WHO). Each year, World malaria report provides a comprehensive and up-to-date assessment of trends in malaria control and elimination globally. It tracks investments in malaria programmes and research as well as progress across all intervention areas: prevention, diagnosis, treatment, elimination and surveillance.

2.Findings - **The 2021 report is based on information received from malaria-endemic countries in all WHO regions. Global progress against malaria had levelled off even before the pandemic.** But, it was further levelled off due to the Covid-19 in 2020. If speedy action is not taken, the world is in the danger of seeing an immediate resurgence of the disease, mostly in Africa.

3.The report highlighted that the milestones of the WHO Global Technical Strategy for Malaria 2016-2030 have been missed in 2020. The 2030 targets won't be met without immediate attention. There were an estimated 627,000 malaria deaths in 2020, an increase of 12% over 2019. 68% of the additional 69,000 deaths were linked to disruptions in the provision of malaria prevention, diagnosis and treatment during the pandemic.

4.Most of the increase came from countries in the WHO African Region, which accounted for about 95% of cases. India accounted for 83% of cases in the WHO South-East Asia Region.

SWACHHTA UDYAMI YOJANA

1.The National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC), an Apex Corporation of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment launched the Swachhta Udyami Yojana (SUY) in 2014.

2.**This Scheme has twin objective of cleanliness and providing livelihood to Safai Karamcharis and liberated Manual Scavengers to achieve the overall goal of “Swachh Bharat Abhiyan”** SUY extends financial assistance for **Construction, Operation & Maintenance** of Pay & Use Community Toilets in Public Private Partnership (PPP) Mode and Procurement and Operation of Sanitation related Vehicles viz. Garbage Trucks, Suction and Jetting Machine, etc. Quantum of Loan - Under the Scheme for Pay and use Toilets, maximum Rs.25 lacs for setting up of a unit of 10 seater toilet to one beneficiaries/ SHGs in collaboration with reputed organizations.

3.Under the Scheme for Sanitation related vehicles, maximum of

mitigation measures for operating any polluting activity.

The thousands of farmers camped out on the borders of Delhi for over a year will start returning home, with victory rallies to celebrate the achievement of most of their major goals. On Thursday, the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM), a coalition of unions spearheading the protests, called off the agitation, accepting the Central Government's latest offer to resolve their pending demands.

The Isak-Muivah faction of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland, or NSCN (I-M), has said the "Indo-Naga" political talks will not be meaningful under the shadow of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958.

Alappuzha district was put on alert on Thursday after an outbreak of bird flu was confirmed at Kunnumma South. District Collector A. Alexander said the H5N1 subtype of the Influenza A virus was reported in ducks. Mr. Alexander, who chaired a meeting to take stock of the situation, said steps had been initiated to check the spread of the disease.

The Kerala Government has moved the Supreme Court seeking a direction to Tamil Nadu not to release a huge quantity of water in the early hours from the 126 year - old Mullaperiyar dam, saying it causes heavy damage to the people living downstream of the dam. A Bench of Justices A.M. Khanwilkar and C.T. Ravikumar is scheduled to hear on Friday the pleas which have raised issues about the dam on the Periyar river in Idukki district.

Members of the Chamundi Betta Ulisi Samiti launched a signature campaign in the city to muster public support to help save the Chamundi Hills and its environment. This is part of an ongoing campaign to urge the Karnataka Government to stop new projects, some of which are inimical to the environment and erode the green cover.

Two years after the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 (CAA) was passed by Parliament, the Union Home Ministry is yet to notify the rules governing the Act. The legislation cannot be implemented without notifying the rules. The Ministry had earlier written to the committees on subordinate legislation of both Houses to grant extension of time up to January 9, 2022 to frame the rules.

Sports, COVID19 and farmers' protest were among the top topics that Indian users looked for and

Rs.15 lacs is given to one beneficiary or in Self Help Group. For both schemes, the loan is given at 4% p.a. interest (Rebate of 1% p.a. for women beneficiaries and rebate of 0.5% for timely repayment) Repayment period -It is to be repaid with the period of 10 years. Moratorium period - 6 months in addition to implementation period of 6 months (Scheme for Pay and use Toilets) or 3 months (Scheme for Sanitation related vehicles).

4.For both the schemes, Maximum subsidy of Rs.3.25 lacs in case of manual Scavengers under Self Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers (SRMS) in accordance with the 'Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013.' No State/ Union Territory wise budget allocations are made under the Scheme as funds are to be provided to the channelizing agencies on the basis of the proposals received from them.

CENTRAL ROAD & INFRASTRUCTURE FUND

1.The Central Road & Infrastructure Fund (CRIF) was given statutory status under the Central Road and Infrastructure Fund Act, 2000 amended by the Finance Act, 2019. Before that the Central Road Fund was governed by the Resolution of Parliament passed in 1988.

2.It is earmarked for various infrastructure sectors such as Transport, Energy, Communication, Water & Sanitation, Social & Commercial Infrastructure, etc., as per the provisions of the CRIF Act, 2000. This Act allows to, Levy and collect a cess for development and maintenance of NHs and improvement of safety at railway crossings, and Levy and collect a duty of excise and duty of customs on motor spirit commonly known as petrol, high speed diesel oil.

3.The Fund shall be utilised for **Development and maintenance of national highways; other State roads including roads of inter-State and economic importance; Development of the rural roads;** Construction of roads either under or over the railways; Erection of safety works at unmanned rail-road crossings, new lines, conversion of existing standard lines into gauge lines and electrification of rail lines; and Undertaking other infrastructure projects.

4.Earlier administrative control of CRIF was under the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, but now it is under the control of the Ministry of Finance.

IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON FOOD PRICES

1.The Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) has said that the average food prices (after adjusting for inflation) in the 11 months of 2021 are the highest in 46 years due to climate change. Findings - Due to disasters, the world is losing up to 4% of potential crop and livestock production. It converts into a loss of some 6.9 trillion kilocalories per year, or annual calorie intake of 7 million adults.

2.In the context of poor-, lower- and middle-income countries, it is a loss of 22% calorie intake daily due to disasters. Reasons - Climate change is fuelling extreme and erratic weather events and prolonging drought and heat waves. These lead to widespread crop damage and also affect crop yields in the long term.

3.Climate change has two impacts on agriculture: It immediately leads to reduction in production and in consumption. Both affect the availability of food and its price, resulting mostly in steep increases. Global food price rise was driven predominantly by wheat, which reported an increase in price due to drought and high temperature in major producing countries, including the US and Canada. Russia, the world's largest exporter of wheat, is estimated to harvest less due to unfavourable weather conditions this season.

4.**Impacts - The price rise impacts the world's poor even more because the pandemic has already pushed millions into the poverty trap. Every third person in the world is not able to have adequate food.** In 2008-18, as agriculture absorbed 26% of medium- to large-scale disasters, the poor-, low- and middle-income countries lost \$108.5 billion in disaster-induced decline in crop and livestock production.

THE HIGH COURT AND SUPREME COURT JUDGE (SALARIES AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE) AMENDMENT BILL, 2021

1.It was passed in Lok Sabha recently. The bill seeks to clarify the process of counting the age of retired judges to determine when they will get enhanced pension. The bill only inserts an

talked about on social media in 2021. While Indian Premier League (IPL) and ICC T20 World Cup filled the top spots in the overall list of queries on Google search, '#Covid19' and '#FarmersProtest' were the most tweeted hashtags on Twitter. IPL, which had topped the trending query list last year as well, was followed by CoWIN, ICC T20 World Cup, Euro Cup, Tokyo Olympics and COVID Vaccine in the top trending query list on search engine Google.

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres will attend the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics, his spokesman said, after the United States announced a diplomatic boycott. The United States said that it would not send a diplomatic delegation in a protest against rights abuses by China. Australia, Britain and Canada also announced diplomatic boycotts.

explanatory note to make the legislative intent clear about the additional quantum of pension. **2.**Additional quantum of pension to retired judges of High Courts and the Supreme Court is being sanctioned on completing the age of 80, 85, 90, 95 and 100 years as the case may be, but there was a confusion about the process of calculating the age.

3.Learning: The salary payable to a Supreme Court Judge was previously, specified in the Constitution in Article 125(1) and the Second Schedule. However, through the 54th Constitutional-Amendment, Parliament has gained the power to determine the salaries of Supreme Court Judges by law.