

KSG:NEWSPAPER CRUX

20TH JANUARY, 2021

NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHTS

- The Question Hour, which had been suspended by the government during the monsoon session, will resume when Parliament meets for the Budget session from January 29.
- India will begin to ship out lakhs of doses of the novel coronavirus vaccine to neighbouring countries beginning Wednesday, with the first batches expected to reach Bhutan and the Maldives among several countries by special planes as a grant or gift.
- The Union government has asked WhatsApp to withdraw the proposed changes to its privacy policy, stating that it raised “grave concerns” over the implications of the choice and autonomy of Indian citizens.
- The Supreme Court appointed committee on farmers’ issues has decided to meet the State governments and the State Agricultural Marketing Boards along with the farm unions and cooperatives to seek their views on the farm reform laws, starting January 21.
- A pioneer in cancer care in the country, and the chairperson of the Adyar Cancer Institute, V. Shanta passes away.
- Punjab, Puducherry and Tamil Nadu have registered low coverage of COVID19 vaccination so far, with India reporting 0.18% adverse events following immunisation and 0.002% hospitalisation, the Health Ministry said on Tuesday.
- The Supreme Court sought a status report from the National Green Tribunal appointed River Yamuna Monitoring Committee led by former Delhi Chief Secretary Shailaja Chandra about its recommendations to improve the quality of water and the extent to which the States have implemented their suggestions.

GREAT ADJUTANT STORK

1. In Bihar, **community participation in conversation has increased Greater Adjutant Stork population from 78 in 2007 to nearly 600 in 2020.**
2. This bird has only three known breeding grounds in the world-2 in India (Assam and Bihar) and one in Cambodia.
3. IUCN Status is endangered.

SAQQARA

1. It is **burial ground situated in Egypt.**
2. Egypt uncovered a funerary temple and the oldest coffins ever found in Saqqara (located in south Cairo), unlocking more secrets in the ancient burial site.
3. Saqqara is a home to more than a dozen pyramids.
4. It was a vast **necropolis of the ancient Egyptian capital of Memphis (a UNESCO world heritage site).**

BAD BANK

1. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor has agreed to look at a proposal for creating a Bad Bank.
2. A bad bank conveys the impression that it will **function as a bank but has bad assets to start with.** Technically, a bad bank is an Asset Reconstruction Company (ARC) or an Asset Management Company (AMC) that takes over the bad loans of commercial banks, manages them and finally recovers the money over a period of time.
3. Bad bank is not involved in lending and taking deposits, but helps commercial banks clean up their balance sheets and resolve bad loans.
4. US-based **Mellon Bank created the first bad bank in 1988**, after which the concept has been implemented in other countries including Sweden, Finland, France and Germany.

ROOFTOP SOLAR SCHEME

1. The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) has released an advisory on the rooftop solar scheme.
2. Its objective is **to generate solar power by installing solar panels on the roof of the houses**, the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy is implementing Grid-connected Rooftop Solar Scheme (Phase II).
3. It aims to achieve a cumulative capacity of 40,000 MW from Rooftop Solar Projects by the year 2022. In a grid-connected rooftop or small Solar Photovoltaic (SPV) system wherein the DC power generated from the SPV panel is converted to AC power using the power conditioning unit and is fed to the grid.
4. **The major objective of the programme is to promote the grid-connected SPV rooftop and small SPV power generating plants among the residential, community, institutional, industrial and commercial establishments.**

CENTRAL SOIL AND MATERIAL RESEARCH STATION (CSMRS)

1. A review meeting of CSMRS was conducted. It is an attached office of Department of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation, Ministry of Jal Shakti.
2. It deals with field and laboratory investigations, basic and applied research, and problems in Geotechnical engineering, construction materials and allied fields.
3. It deals with fields **relevant to river valley projects within India and neighbouring countries viz. Nepal, Bhutan, Afghanistan, Myanmar etc.**
4. It also provides consultancy to Strategic International projects like Punatsangchu (Bhutan).