

KSG:NEWSPAPER CRUX

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NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHTS

- Bihar is set use the cyber crime law to deter individuals from making “offensive comments” against the government, its officials, Ministers, MPs and MLAs.
- The negotiations between Central Ministers and farm unions came to a standstill on Friday with the government saying it had no further concessions to offer beyond the proposal to suspend the three contentious agricultural reform laws for 12 to 18 months. The unions rejected the proposal and reiterated their demand for the repeal of the laws.
- The Central Bureau of Investigation has booked Cambridge Analytica (U.K.) Limited and Global Science Research Limited (U.K.) for alleged illegal harvesting of personal data of about 5.62 lakh Indian users on Facebook through an application.
- Bihar is set use the cyber crime law to deter individuals from making “offensive comments” against the government, its officials, Ministers, MPs and MLAs.
- In yet another outbreak of a mysterious disease in West Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh, 25 villagers were taken ill with epilepsy, convulsions, giddiness, fever and other symptoms on Friday.
- The Union Labour and Employment Ministry’s tableau for the Republic Day parade will depict the recent labour reforms brought by the government, a Ministry statement said.
- India has unveiled a new draft ‘Arctic’ policy that, among other things, commits to expanding scientific research, “sustainable tourism” and mineral oil and gas exploration in the Arctic region.
- President Joe Biden is ordering an expansion of government benefits for hungry Americans, after the coronavirus pandemic ignited the worst hunger crisis the U.S. has seen in modern times.

INDIA VACCINE DIPLOMACY

1. India has decided to ship out doses of the novel coronavirus vaccine to 'neighbouring and key partner countries'. The first batches of vaccine have been already delivered to Bhutan and Maldives by special planes as a grant or gift.
2. Vaccine diplomacy is the **branch of global health diplomacy in which a nation uses the development or delivery of vaccines to strengthen ties with other nations.**
3. Collaborative Effort: It also includes the joint development of life-saving vaccines and related technologies, with the major actors typically scientists coming together to work irrespective of the kind of diplomatic relationship between the participating countries.

GOVERNOR'S DELAY ON MERCY PETITION

1. The Solicitor General told the Supreme Court (SC) that Tamil Nadu Governor will take a decision in the next three or four days on mercy petition of a convict in the 1991 Rajiv Gandhi assassination case.
2. The concept of Mercy Petition is followed in **many nations like the USA, UK, Canada etc. including India.**
3. In India, the power to grant pardon is entrusted to the President and the Governors of various states **under Article 72 and Article 161 of the Constitution.** It adds a human touch to the country’s judicial process by conferring powers to grant pardon or show Mercy to criminals sentenced to death.

RATLE HYDRO ELECTRIC PROJECT

1. The Union Cabinet has given its approval for 850 MegaWatt (MW) Ratle hydropower project on Chenab river in Jammu and Kashmir.
2. It is a **run-of-the-river hydroelectric power station on the Chenab River, Kishtwar district of the Indian Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.** Features: It includes a 133 m tall gravity dam and two power stations adjacent to one another. The installed capacity of both power stations will be 850 MW.
3. In June 2013, the then Indian Prime Minister laid the foundation stone for the dam. Pakistan has frequently alleged that it violates the Indus Water Treaty, 1960.

EGYPT RESUMES SEVERED RELATIONS WITH QATAR

1. Egypt resumed the severed diplomatic and economic ties with Qatar. Egypt was part of an Arab quartet (other members were Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Bahrain) which had accused Qatar of supporting terrorism and being too close to Iran due to which they had imposed a land, air and naval blockade on Qatar in 2017.
2. Recently, Gulf states signed a ‘solidarity and stability’ deal at the 41st Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) summit. Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and UAE are the members of GCC.
3. In this summit, members of the **GCC removed all the sanctions over Qatar and reopened their land, sea and air borders to Qatar.** In solidarity with the Arab quartet (whose three members are in GCC), Egypt too resumed its ties with Qatar.

UV-BRIGHT STARS SPOTTED IN GLOBULAR STRUCTURE NGC 2808

1. Astronomers have spotted rare hot Ultra Violet (UV)-bright stars in the massive intriguing globular cluster in the Milky Way Galaxy called NGC 2808. **India's first multi-wavelength space satellite AstroSat helped astronomers in this.**