

KSG:NEWSPAPER CRUX

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NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHT

- If authorities in India are serious about addressing misinformation, they might take a cue from the fact that much of the Indian public clearly recognise that misinformation often comes from the top, and spend less time worrying about activists, journalists, and Twitter, and more time thinking about how to ensure that citizens can trust that the health remedies promoted by their own governments and by prominent political figures are actually safe and effective.
- A Rubber Board research farm on the outskirts of Guwahati now sports the world's first genetically modified (GM) rubber plant tailored for the climatic conditions in the Northeast. The GM rubber has additional copies of the gene MnSOD, or manganese containing superoxide dismutase, inserted in the plant, which is expected to tide over the severe cold conditions during winter.
- Talks between the Afghanistan government and the Taliban have not resulted in any reduction in violence, said External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, pointing out that reports from the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) showed a major increase in violence despite the talks and a U.S. Taliban agreement last year.
- The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has rubbed various organisations in Arunachal Pradesh the wrong way by "renaming" a town in the State and showing it as part of Assam during a programme attended by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on June 17.
- Amid discussions to evolve a consensus on the creation of integrated theatre commands, it is expected that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will make an announcement on it soon and the four proposed commands are likely raised by year end, according to two official sources.

SUICIDE WORLDWIDE IN 2019

1. A report titled Suicide worldwide in 2019 was published by the World Health Organization (WHO). Suicide is defined as death caused by self-directed injurious behavior with intent to die as a result of the behavior.
2. Reducing the global suicide mortality rate by a third is both, an indicator and a target (the only one for mental health) in the United Nations-mandated Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). But the world will not be able to reach this target.
3. **The Covid-19-pandemic has increased mental stress globally. However a crisis was already in place in 2019.** Approximately 7,03,000 people or one in a 100, died by suicide in 2019. The global age-standardized suicide rate was 9.0 per 1,00,000 population for 2019. Africa, Europe and South-East Asia recorded suicide rates higher than the global average.
4. **Suicides in India: India has the highest suicide rate in the Southeast Asian region. A total of 1,34,516 cases of suicide were reported in 2018 in India,** according to the National Crime Records Bureau. While the rate of suicide was 9.9 in 2017, it increased to 10.2 in 2018.

PROPOSAL TO BAN FLASH SALES ON E-COMMERCE SITES

1. The government proposed changes to the Consumer Protection (e-commerce) Rules 2020, banning all "flash sales" in order to monitor the deep discounts offered on e-commerce websites.
2. Conventional flash sales by third party sellers are not banned.
3. **Small businesses complain of misuse of market dominance and deep discounting by e-commerce marketplaces such as Amazon and Flipkart.**
4. The Ministry of Consumer Affairs has been receiving complaints against widespread cheating and unfair trade practices being observed in the e-commerce ecosystem. Other Important Proposals: The e-commerce sites are also directed to ensure appointment of Chief Compliance Officer (CCO), a nodal contact person for 24x7 coordination with law enforcement agencies.

CHINA AS A SECURITY RISK:NATO

1. The recently held North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) summit for the first time has explicitly described China as a security risk. The other two threats identified by the NATO 'declaration' are Russia and terrorism.
2. NATO leaders declared China a constant security challenge and said the Chinese are working to undermine global order.
3. **This is in sync with US President efforts to get allies to speak out with a more unified voice against China's trade, military and human rights practices.**

PLACES IN NEWS

1. **Belarus**-UK has joined US and other countries in imposing fresh sanctions on Belarus after the detention of an opposition in journalist. Belarus is a developing country ranking very high in the Human Development Index. It is bordered by Russia to the east and northeast, Ukraine to the south, Poland to the west, and Lithuania and Latvia to the northwest.
2. **Kunduz**-Taliban in Afghanistan has seized the Kunduz's city entrance. Kunduz is located in the historical Tokharistan region of Bactria, near the confluence of the Kunduz River with the Khanabad River. Kunduz is located at a strategic location, on the main north-south highway linking Kabul to Tajikistan, and east-west Mazar-i-Sharif to Taloqan and Fayzabad.