

KSG:NEWSPAPER CRUX

27TH JUNE, 2021

NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHT

- On November 13, 2015, a meteorite fell near the town of Kamargaon in Assam, India. It weighed a little over 12 kg and scientists decoded its mineral composition and classified it as a chondrite, a variety of stony meteorite. A new study has now shown that by studying this meteorite and its minerals we may find new clues about the Earth's lower mantle.
- An article in Nature describes over 2,000 nearby star systems at distances of less than 326 light years that could find and observe the Earth, if they were so inclined. The researchers used the Gaia eDR3 catalogue to perform this analysis. If there are curious life forms in these systems, they might want to observe us – aliens from their point of view.
- An article in Science describes how researchers have unearthed, from Neshet Ramla site, fossils dated 140,000 years to 120,000 years ago. These belong to a hitherto unknown species of humans and share resemblances with Neanderthals (teeth and jaw) and archaic Homo (skull). They had no chin and large teeth, which sets them apart from modern humans.
- By 2050 it is estimated that Indian Population will rise to 1.5 billion. As populations age, there is an increasing disease burden of vision related disorders. Several of the most common reasons for blindness or moderate to severe visual impairment – cataract, under-corrected refractive error, glaucoma and diabetic retinopathy.
- While the Army's repeated attempts to replace its ageing fleet of Cheetah and Chetak helicopters continue, there has been a quantum jump in the employment of helicopters of the Army Aviation in the last one year along the northern borders during the ongoing standoff, according to defence sources.

THE WORLD DRUG REPORT 2021:UNODC

- 1.The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), in its World Drug Report 2021, has highlighted that the lockdown restrictions during Covid-19 have accelerated drug trafficking using the Internet.
- 2.By drugs, the Report refers to substances controlled under international drug control conventions, and their non-medical use.
- 3.Around 275 million people used drugs worldwide last year, while over 36 million people suffered from drug use disorders. **Opioids continue to account for the largest burden of disease attributed to drug use.** Rising Web-based Sales Could Transform Global Drug Use Patterns: Access to drugs has also become simpler than ever with online sales, and major drug markets on the dark web are now worth some \$315 million annually.
- 4.Reasons for Increase in Drug Use: It is driven in part by a rise in the use of technology and cryptocurrency payments, operating outside the regular financial system.

6 YEARS OF TRANSFORMATIVE URBAN MISSIONS

- 1.The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) organised an online event to commemorate six years of the three transformative Urban Missions viz. Smart Cities Mission (SCM), Atal Mission for Urban Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) and Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U).
- 2.**Progress/Achievements:** PMAY-U: 1.12 crore houses sanctioned and over 83 lakh houses grounded under PMAY-U. 16 lakh families benefited from PMAY-U's Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme (CLSS). Government investment under PMAY-U created around 689 crore person days of employment translating into around 246 lakh jobs.
- 3.Affordable Rental Housing Complexes scheme under PMAY-U for urban migrants/poor has elicited remarkable response on ground.

AGRISTACK:THE NEW DIGITAL PUSH IN AGRICULTURE

- 1.The Ministry of Agriculture has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Microsoft to run a pilot programme for 100 villages in 6 states.The MoU requires Microsoft to create a 'Unified Farmer Service Interface' through its cloud computing services.
- 2.This comprises a major part of the ministry's plan of creating 'AgriStack' (a collection of technology-based interventions in agriculture), on which everything else will be built.
- 3.About AgriStack: **It is a collection of technologies and digital databases that focuses on farmers and the agricultural sector. AgriStack will create a unified platform for farmers to provide them end to end services across the agriculture food value chain.**

AMBERGRIS

- 1.The Mumbai Police has arrested five people and seized nearly 9 kg of Ambergris.Ambergris, French for grey amber, is generally referred to as whale vomit. It is a **solid waxy substance originating in the intestine of the sperm whale. Ambergris is produced only by an estimated 1% of sperm whales.**
- 2.Chemically, ambergris contains alkaloids, acids, and a specific compound called ambreine, which is similar to cholesterol. It floats around the surface of the water body and at times settles on the coast.
- 3.It is used in the perfume market, especially to create fragrances like musk. It is believed to be in high demand in countries like Dubai that have a large perfume market.