

KSG:NEWSPAPER CRUX

26TH MARCH, 2021

NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHTS

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has steered through Parliament the Finance Bill of 2021, which includes 127 amendments. Among the major changes is a tweak in the proposal to tax income on PF contributions over ₹ 2.5 lakh a year. Responding to MPs' concerns on the tax, she said that nearly 93% PF(Provident Fund) account holders will be covered by the ₹ 2.5 lakh per year limit, while a mere 1% were abusing the system.
- The Rajya Sabha cleared the legislation to establish the National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NBFID), which was announced in the Budget speech by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman as the principal development financial institution (DFIs) for infrastructure financing.
- The Joe Biden administration highlighted the strength of U.S.-India ties in its March 19 meeting with Chinese officials in Alaska, underlining how it has increasingly come to view India as central to its broader objectives in dealing with China in the Indo-Pacific region.
- The Centre has ordered State welfare boards for building and other construction workers (BOCW) not to distribute household and other articles to workers and instead stick to transferring monetary assistance into their bank accounts.
- The Philippine military ordered the deployment of more navy ships to the South China Sea on Thursday amid a growing diplomatic row over a fleet of Chinese boats parked near a disputed reef.
- The Supreme Court asked the government to clarify on the status of 55 recommendations made by the Collegium for judicial appointments to High Courts six months to nearly a year-and-a-half ago.

WORLD DEVELOPMENT REPORT 2021:DATA FOR BETTER LIVES

- 1.The **World Bank group report gives 5 messages** to improve life of poor-Need for enhanced data governance and social contract for data, increasing data use and reuse to realize greater value.
- 2.To create more access to data, Foster trust through safeguards that protect people from data misuse, Work towards an integrated national data system.
- 3.The report also points that the **"I paid a bribe" online initiative by the Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy in India has developed into one of the largest crowd sourced anti corruption platforms in the world.**

THE NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR ALLIED AND HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONS BILL,2020

- 1.The National Commission for Allied and Healthcare Professions Bill, 2020 was passed unanimously by the Lok Sabha. The Bill seeks to regulate and standardise the education and practice of allied and healthcare professionals.
- 2.The group of allied professionals is large and the **Bill is trying to regulate this field by providing dignity to their roles.**
- 3.Allied Health Professional: The Bill defines an 'allied health professional' as an associate, technician, or technologist trained to support the diagnosis and treatment of any illness, disease, injury, or impairment.
- 4.National Commission for Allied and Healthcare Professions: **The Bill sets up the National Commission for Allied and Healthcare Professions.**

THE CONSTITUTION(125th AMENDMENT) BILL,2019

- 1.The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) informed the Lok Sabha that presently, there is no proposal to implement Panchayati Raj System in Sixth Schedule areas of Assam.
- 2.In January 2019, the Constitution (125th Amendment) Bill, 2019 was introduced in the Rajya Sabha **to amend the provisions related to the Finance Commission and the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution.**
- 3.The Sixth Schedule relates to the administration of tribal areas in the states of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram.
- 4.Proposed Amendments: **Village and Municipal Councils:** It provides for Village and Municipal Councils in addition to the District and Regional Councils. **Governor may make rules for devolution of powers and responsibilities** to the Village and Municipal Councils.

SUEZ CANAL

- 1.A large cargo ship named 'Ever Given' got stuck near the southern end of the Suez Canal due to a mishap caused by bad weather. This is causing a huge jam of vessels at either end of the vital international trade artery.
- 2.The Suez Canal is an artificial sea-level waterway running north to south across the Isthmus of Suez in Egypt, to connect the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea. The canal separates the African continent from Asia.
- 3.It is one of the **world's most heavily used shipping lanes, carrying over 12% of world trade by volume.**
- 4.As per Suez Canal Authority (SCA) data, in 2020, nearly 19,000 ships, or an average of 51.5 ships per day, with a net tonnage of 1.17 billion tonnes passed through the canal. In 2015, Egypt announced plans to further expand the Suez Canal, aiming to reduce waiting times and double the number of ships that can use the canal daily by 2023.