

NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHT

Three Republican Senators have introduced an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act FY2022 — an annual defence budget Bill — to make it harder for the executive branch of the U.S. government to impose sanctions on members of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) for buying Russian arms. The move comes as India is expected to take delivery of the S-400 Triumf missile defence system from Moscow — possibly this month or next, potentially attracting sanctions under U.S. domestic law, the Countering Americas Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) of 2017.

Leaders at the COP26 global climate conference in Glasgow have pledged to stop deforestation by the end of the decade and slash emissions of the greenhouse gas, methane, to help slow climate change. The inability of major powers so far to agree more broadly on rapid reductions in the use of fossil fuels, the main cause of man-made global warming, has upset the poorer, smaller countries likely to suffer its worst effects. Surangel Whipps Jr, President of Palau, a Pacific state of 500 low-lying islands under threat from rising sea levels, told the leaders of the G20 industrial powers in a speech: “We are drowning and our only hope is the life ring you are holding.” Nearly 90 countries have joined a U.S.- and EU-led effort to slash emissions of methane 30% by 2030 from 2020 levels, a senior Biden administration official said ahead of a formal announcement on Tuesday. The Global Methane Pledge, first announced in September, now covers emissions from two-thirds of the global economy, according to the U.S. official. Among the signatories is Brazil — one of the five biggest emitters of methane, which is generated in cows’ digestive systems, in landfill waste and in oil and gas production. Three others — China, Russia and India — have not signed up. Australia has said it will not back the pledge.

Fifteen years after the Supreme Court issued directions for police reforms, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has asked the Union Home Ministry and the State Governments to set up police complaints authorities as per the judgment in the Prakash Singh vs Union of India, 2006, case. The NHRC’s core advisory group on criminal justice system reforms has

INFRASTRUCTURE FOR RESILIENT ISLAND STATES

1. India and UK will together launch the initiative for the Resilient Island States (IRIS) for developing infrastructure of small island nations in COP26. IRIS aims to strengthen critical infrastructure in small island states against disasters induced by climate change. IRIS is the first major initiative by India under the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) started in 2019. IRIS seeks to operationalize the CDRI initiative, as Small Island states are the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Major threats to Small Island states - Rising seas, and major weather events such as large storms triggered by climate change.

2. **Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure- CDRI is India’s second international climate initiative by India in 2019; the first was the International Solar Alliance, launched in 2015. CDRI was launched as a global partnership to promote resilient climate-proof critical infrastructure in member countries.** 26 countries, including US, Germany, UK, Australia, Brazil, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Nepal, Bhutan, and Sri Lanka are already part of the coalition. The coalition will not create any new infrastructure - rather, it will serve as a ‘knowledge centre’ for member countries to share and learn best practices with respect to disaster-proofing of infra.

3. It will work towards making existing and upcoming infrastructure in member countries more robust and resilient against climate disasters such as floods, heat, cyclones, forest fires, and rain. The aim of CDRI is to minimise the damage and disruptions. According to CDRI estimates, every one dollar invested in making infrastructure more resilient in low- and middle-income countries can potentially save losses of over \$4 when a disaster strikes.

WOLBACHIA MOSQUITOES

1. Researchers from the World Mosquito Program (WMP) have found a way to fight disease-bearing mosquitoes by breeding *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes, which carries Wolbachia bacteria. Wolbachia is a common bacterium that occurs naturally in 60% of insect species, including some mosquitoes, fruit flies, moths and butterflies. But, it is not found in dengue-carrying *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes, the primary species responsible for transmitting human viruses such as Zika, dengue, chikungunya and yellow fever.

2. Now, the lab-bred mosquitoes with Wolbachia will mate with mosquitoes with dengue, which will produce Wolbachia mosquitoes. Wolbachia bacteria in the mosquitoes prevent viruses like dengue from growing inside them. So even if they bite people, it won't affect them. Trial results showed that deploying mosquitoes with Wolbachia reduced dengue cases by as much as 77% and hospitalisations by up to 86%.

3. **Wolbachia method helps to protect communities from mosquito-borne diseases like Zika, dengue, chikungunya and yellow fever, and does so without posing a risk to natural ecosystems or human health.** According to the World Health Organization (WHO), global dengue infections have risen rapidly in recent decades, with about half of the world’s population now at risk. An estimated 100-400 million infections are reported every year.

INDIA’S FIVE-POINT CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

1. Indian Prime Minister announced as part of a five-point Climate Action plan at the COP26 summit in Glasgow. By 2070, India will achieve the target of net zero emissions. (India’s first commitment to net-zero emissions) [Going ‘Net Zero’ indicates a situation where all the carbon dioxide or greenhouse gases produced by a country is completely absorbed via natural solutions or through the use of advanced technology.]

2. **By 2030, India will increase its non-fossil fuel power capacity to 500 gigawatts (GW) up from 450GW.** By 2030, India will ensure 50% of its energy will be sourced from renewable energy sources.

said there is an “immediate need to set up police complaints authorities at the State/UT and district level” as per the Supreme Court’s directives, according to the minutes of its meeting published. The core group, which met on August 18, recommended to the MHA and the States that the status of compliance should be displayed on the websites of the Ministry and the State Home Departments.

The Defence Acquisition Council, which met on Tuesday, cancelled a tender for procurement of naval guns from the U.S. and added the quantity to an existing upgraded Super Rapid Gun Mount (SRGM) being manufactured by Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd. (BHEL). The council accorded Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) for capital acquisition and modernisation proposals estimated at ₹7,965 crore. A defence source said the SRGM was earlier proposed to be procured under the U.S. Foreign Military Sales (FMS) category. “But now this will be given to BHEL to promote ‘Make in India’. This measure will result in a saving of ₹3,000 crore,” the source said.

The Centre has decided to scrap the system of caste based wage payments in the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) scheme after complaints from State Governments. In an order dated November 1, the Finance Ministry directed the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) to “revert to the previous system of generating single muster, single FTO [or Fund Transfer Order] and transferring money into a single NeFMS [or National Electronic Fund Management System] account”.

India launched an ambitious initiative for developing the infrastructure of small island nations, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi saying it will give a new hope, a new confidence and satisfaction of doing something for the most vulnerable countries facing the biggest threat from climate change. Mr. Modi was joined by his British counterpart Boris Johnson on the second day of the COP26 climate summit here. The launch of Infrastructure for Resilient Island States (IRIS) was also attended by Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison and UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.

India said that climate finance cannot continue at the levels decided in 2009, and emphasised that it should be at least \$1 trillion to meet the goals of addressing climate change. Speaking at the Ministerial meeting of Like-Minded Developing Countries (LMDC) at the 26th international climate

3. India will reduce its carbon emissions by 1 billion tonnes from business as usual by 2030. By 2030, India will reduce its carbon intensity goal - measured as carbon dioxide emissions per unit of GDP - by less than 45% (increased from 35% to 45%).

ROME'S G20 SUMMIT

1. The leaders of the world's twenty major economies gathered in Italy's Rome on Saturday for a two-day summit centred on the issues of climate change, Covid-19 and economic recovery. What is G20? The G20 is an international forum that brings together the world's 20 leading industrialised and emerging economies including India. Its members account for more than 80% of world GDP, 75% of global trade and 60% of the population of the planet. The forum has met every year since 1999 and includes, since 2008, a yearly Summit, with the participation of the respective Heads of State and Government. Ministerial meetings, Sherpa meetings (in charge of carrying out negotiations and building consensus among Leaders), working groups and special events are organized throughout the year.

2. **How the G20 works?** The G20 does not have a permanent secretariat. Its agenda and activities are established by the rotating Presidencies, in cooperation with the membership. A “Troika”, represented by the country that holds the Presidency, its predecessor and its successor, works to ensure continuity within the G20. The Troika countries are currently Saudi Arabia, Italy and Indonesia.

3. **What is the current Rome summit about?** The activity of the Italian Presidency has been based on three interconnected pillars of action – People, Planet and Prosperity. The agenda included the biggest issues facing the global community, including the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, a major tax agreement, and steps to address concerns regarding global economic growth and stability. At the end of two days of working sessions and side events, the G20 Leaders adopted the Rome Declaration. Health - To mitigate the pandemic, the focus was on vaccine production and distribution. The members assured support to WHO's target of inoculating 40% or more of the global population against COVID-19 by 2021, and at least 70% by mid-2022.

4. **The G20 leaders were committed to boost the supply of vaccines in developing countries to overcome supply and financing constraint. Climate Change - The Group leaders recommitted their nations to providing \$100 billion a year toward adaptation, mitigation, and green technologies, focusing on the needs of developing countries.** Leaders for the first time acknowledged the use of carbon pricing mechanisms and incentives” as a possible tool against climate change. Global finance - The G20 leadership agreed to impose multinationals with a minimum 15% tax to create a more stable and fairer international tax system. This OECD-led reform enjoys the support of 136 countries, which account for more than 90% of global GDP, and is likely to enter into force in 2023 or after. Nations such as the U.S. are divided as it would impact the tech titans of Silicon Valley and it might face implementation delays.

5. **Global economy –** Rising inflation, increased energy prices, and supply chain bottlenecks are affecting the world economy which is still reeling from Covid-related disruptions. G20 leaders ensured not to withdraw the national support measures. They also pledged to remain vigilant to the global challenges such as disruptions in supply chains. Development aid - Leaders set a new target of channelling \$100bn towards poorest nations, coming from the \$650bn pot made available by IMF. The timely, effective and coordinated action across major nations will be a ray of hope for global recovery.

BASIC COUNTRIES

1. The BASIC group was formed as the result of an agreement signed by the four countries on November 28, 2009.

2. They are a bloc of four large newly industrialized countries – Brazil, South Africa, India and China.

3. **The four committed to act jointly at the Copenhagen climate summit, including a possible united walk-out if their common minimum position was not met by the developed nations.**

4. This emerging geopolitical alliance, initiated and led by China, then brokered the final Copenhagen Accord with the United States.

conference under way in Glasgow, Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav also called upon the LMDC countries to work closely to protect their interests.

On the second day of COP26, an initiative by India and the United Kingdom to tap solar energy and have it travel seamlessly across borders was announced. It includes a group of Governments called the Green Grids Initiative — One Sun One World One Grid group — and was announced at COP26 by summit host United Kingdom's Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. In the presence of other heads of government, including U.S. President Joe Biden, the two Prime Ministers presented the One Sun Declaration, endorsed by more than 80 countries, setting out the group's aims.

5.Subsequently, the grouping is working to define a common position on emission reductions and climate aid money, and to try to convince other countries to sign up to the Copenhagen Accord.