

NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHT

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has picked Srinagar among 49 cities as part of the creative city network under the Crafts and Folk Arts category. "It is a proud moment for all of us. The process of nomination of Srinagar under the UNESCO 'Creative City Network' was undertaken and funded under the World Bank funded Jhelum Tawi Flood Recovery Project. This is the recognition of the historical crafts and arts of the city,". The inclusion is likely to pave way for the city to represent its handicrafts on the global stage through UNESCO. "It's a major recognition for Jammu and Kashmir," Dr. Shah said. The network involves folk art, media, film, literature, design, gastronomy and media arts. Srinagar was among one more city from India competing for the coveted recognition this year. The dossier for its nomination was filed first in 2019 and then again in 2021. Only Jaipur (Crafts and Folk Arts) in 2015, Varanasi and Chennai (Creative city of Music) in 2015 and 2017 respectively have so far been recognised as members of the UCCN for creative cities.

India's power deficit this year 'spiked marginally' to 1.2% due to the 'annual post monsoon pressure' on output, the Government said in a statement on Monday, asserting that the deficit has been 'near about wiped out' in recent years. "The current year, up till October, it (the power deficit) has been 1.2%; the marginal spike being attributable to the annual post monsoon pressure on power output. This is also likely to normalise by the end of the year," the Power Ministry said in a statement, contrasting the figure with deficit levels of up to 16% some years ago. "India had a massive power deficit of 16.6% in 2007-08. Through the multipronged, comprehensive interventions of the government, this deficit is near about wiped out, consistently over the last three years: .4% in 2020-21, .7% in 2019-20 and .8% in 2018-19," the Ministry said.

Stating that a free, open and inclusive maritime region, where legitimate interests of all nations must be respected, is imperative to achieving high growth, Defence Secretary Ajay Kumar said on Monday that India hoped that its maritime neighbours understood, and were sensitive to, India's "legitimate maritime security concerns". "Unprecedented

SOUTH ASIA DESCENT GENE

1. Researchers have identified that the South Asian ancestry gene LZTFL1 is responsible for doubling the risk of respiratory failures from COVID-19. LZTFL1 gene found in 60% of people with South Asian ancestry may explain the excess deaths seen in some of the UK communities and the impact of pandemic during the second wave in India. Even so, the gene is possibly just one factor that could have led to these outcomes, since socio-economic factors also partly explain why some communities were more severely impacted by the disease.

2. While 60% of people with South Asian ancestry carry this gene, 15% of those with European ancestry carry it and 2% of people with Afro-Caribbean ancestry also carry it. So, this gene does not explain the higher death rates that were reported for black people and some minority ethnic communities.

Vulnerability - The study found that the higher risk version of the gene prevents the cells lining the airways and lungs from responding to the virus properly.

3. This means that the presence of this gene changes how an individual's lungs respond to the virus, thereby increasing risk of developing respiratory failure from COVID-19. But while the gene impacts the response of the lungs, it does not impact the immune system, therefore, researchers believe that people carrying this version of the gene should respond normally to the vaccines.

CAUSES OF EARTH'S FIRST MASS EXTINCTION

1. A recent paper has come up with a new reason behind the first mass extinction, also known as the Late Ordovician mass extinction. For decades, the prevailing school of thought in our field is that global warming causes the oceans to lose oxygen and thus impact marine habitability, potentially destabilising the entire ecosystem. But the new paper notes that the cooling climate likely changed the ocean circulation pattern. This disrupted the flow of oxygen-rich water from the shallow seas to deeper oceans, leading to a mass extinction of marine creatures.

2. Upper-ocean oxygenation in response to cooling was anticipated because atmospheric oxygen preferentially dissolves in cold waters. However, a lack of oxygen or anoxia in the lower ocean expanded to the deep oceans during the period. [Generally, anoxia in Earth's history is associated with volcanism-induced global warming.]

3. This deep-sea anoxia affected ocean circulation, which is an important component of the climatic system. The paper concludes that climate cooling may have led to changes in nutrient cycling, primary producer communities which ultimately drove the Late Ordovician mass extinction.

4. Some researchers have pointed out that we are currently experiencing a sixth mass extinction as the result of human-induced climate change.

KADAR TRIBE

1. Some families of Kadar tribe has got pattas for homestead inside the Anaimalai Tiger Reserve (ATR). Kadar is a small tribe of southern India residing along the hilly border between Cochin in Kerala and Coimbatore in Tamil Nādu. Kadars are one of the five primitive tribal groups in Kerala, where they constitute nearly 5% of the State's total tribal population. Economy - The Kadar live in the forests and do not practice agriculture.

2. They build shelters thatched with leaves and shifting location as their employment requires. They have long served as specialized collectors of honey, wax, sago, cardamom, ginger, and umbrella sticks for trade with merchants from the plains. Many Kadar men work as labourers. Language - They speak the Dravidian languages of Tamil and Kannāḍa. Religion - Modern kadars like to known as Hindus. Their favourite deities are Ayappan, Kali and Malavazhi. Primitive polytheism and the worship of invisible gods have considerably disappeared. But a few elders still worship the rising sun.

3. Their customs and conventions indicate that they had been strong animists not long ago. Status - The Kadar tribe has been

expansion” of conventional Navies could start a “new genre” of arms race, he said at the third edition of the Goa Maritime Conclave hosted by the Navy, “While we talk of non-traditional threats, we cannot ignore the impact of expansion at an unprecedented speed of conventional Navies in the Pacific. We are also witnessing enhancement of certain maritime presence and passages in our region, which may not be always be innocent. The negative effects of such rapid expansion are felt far beyond the Pacific,” Mr. Kumar said without naming any country.

The Supreme Court asked the Uttar Pradesh Government’s response to a proposal to appoint a retired High Court judge, possibly who served outside the State, to monitor the investigation into the Lakhimpur Kheri murders and violence. The court highlighted an urgent need to “infuse fairness and impartiality” into the probe. “The investigation is not going the way we expected... We are here to see that a proper investigation takes place. There is a need to appoint a retired High Court judge to monitor it [investigation] without bias,” Chief Justice of India (CJI) N.V. Ramana, heading a Bench also comprising Justices Surya Kant and Hima Kohli, observed.

French portal Mediapart has alleged that Dassault paid at least €7.5 million to middleman Sushen Gupta from 2007 to 2012 through “overbilled” IT contracts with a shell company to secure the €7.87billion Rafale deal with India. It also alleged that despite the existence of related papers since October 2018, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has not yet taken up a probe. A response from the CBI to the allegation is still awaited.

The Ministry of External Affairs summoned a senior Pakistani diplomat and lodged a “strong protest” on the firing upon fishermen by their agency. “Pakistani agency fired upon Indian fishing boat ‘Jalpari’ on November 6 resulting in the death of a fisherman and serious injury to another.

The Army personnel posted in the Kashmir Valley can pursue multiple courses from the University of Kashmir (UoK) now. The Army’s 15 Chinara Corps and the University of Kashmir (UoK), Srinagar, on Monday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that will pave way for the personnel to register with the varsity.

Security czars of Russia, Iran and five Central Asian countries will arrive in Delhi on Tuesday ahead of

listed as a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) in Kerala, but not in Tamil Nadu. A tribe listed in the PVTG allows the tribe to have habitat rights under the Forest Rights Act 2006.

DECLINE IN THE EDIBLE OIL PRICES

1. In a bid to reign in continuous rise in the cooking oil prices since past one year, the Government has taken some active measures. The Government has cut the basic duty on Crude Palm Oil, Crude Soyabean Oil and Crude Sunflower Oil from 2.5% to nil. The Agri-cess on these Oils has been brought down.

2. **To control prices of edible oils, the government has Rationalised import duties on palm, sunflower and soyabean oils, Futures trading in mustard oil on NCDEX has been suspended and Stock limits have been imposed.** Major edible Oils players have cut wholesale prices in order to give relief to consumers during festival season.

3. Despite international commodity prices being high, interventions have been taken by Central Government along with State Governments’ proactive involvement have led to reduction in prices of edible oils. Also, the government is taking steps to improve the production of secondary edible oils, especially rice bran oil to reduce the import dependence.

COAST GUARD SHIP SARTHAK

1. In a significant boost to the maritime safety and security of the nation, the indigenously built Indian Coast Guard Ship ‘Sarthak’ was commissioned and dedicated to the nation. ICGS Sarthak will be based at Porbandar in Gujarat and operate on India’s Western Seaboard under the Operational and Administrative Control of the Commander, Coast Guard Region (Northwest). ICGS Sarthak is commanded by a Deputy Inspector General and has complement of 11 Officers and 110 men.

2. **ICGS Sarthak is 4th in the series of 5 OPVs being built by Goa Shipyard Limited for the ICG. These OPVs are multi-mission platforms capable of undertaking concurrent operations.** The 105-meter-long ship displacing 2,450 tons is propelled by two 9,100 kilowatt diesel engines designed to attain a maximum speed of 26 knots.

3. The ship is fitted with state-of-the-art equipment, machinery, sensors and weapons which enables it, To function as a command platform and To undertake mandated Coast Guard charter of duties including search & rescue, combating maritime crimes and preserving & protecting the marine environment.

MISUSE OF UAPA

1. The Supreme Court’s judgment in Thwaha Fasal vs Union of India, has deconstructed the provisions of the UAPA against blatant misuse. What is the UAPA about? The Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) was enacted in 1967 and was strengthened by the Union government in 2008 and 2012. The UAPA is meant to deal with matters of profound impact on the ‘Defence of India’ and address threats to the very existence of our Nation. The Act introduces a vague definition of terrorism to encompass a wide range of non-violent political activity including political protest.

2. The Act empowers the government to declare an organisation or an individual as “terrorist” and ban it. Even being a member of such a proscribed organisation becomes a criminal offence. It deprives the accused of the right to bail and this made them to live long under detention. Unlike the Criminal Procedure Code, the UAPA under Section 43D(2), permits keeping a person in prison for up to 180 days, without even filing a charge sheet.

3. **What is the judicial trajectory in this case?** The trial judge granted bail to both the accused in September 2020 after initial rejections of the plea. The High Court, in appeal, confirmed the bail of Allen (the accused) but denied it to Thwaha. The Supreme Court upheld the trial judge’s finding that the materials do not show any “intention on the part of both the accused to further the activities of the terrorist organisation”. The top court confirmed the bail granted to both the students. The Court said that mere association with a terrorist organisation is not sufficient to attract the offences alleged.

4. **Why is the judgement so significant?** Presumption of guilt - Instead of presumption of innocence, the UAPA holds presumption of guilt of the accused. According to Section 43D(5), jail is the rule and bail is often not even an exception. Many individuals including Sudha Bharadwaj, Siddique Kappan and Stan Swamy were denied bail based on a narrow interpretation of the bail provision. The Court in this case has refused to

the “Delhi regional security dialogue” on Afghanistan, chaired by National Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval, who will also meet his counterparts bilaterally. Officials involved in the dialogue said the meeting, in which Pakistan and China have declined to participate, would seek to share a “common understanding of concerns” shared by Afghanistan’s neighbours due to the Taliban takeover on August 15, and build consensus on the way forward to deal with threats. “The high level dialogue will review and deliberate upon measures to address relevant security challenges and support the people of Afghanistan in promoting peace, security and stability. India has called for a unified international response to address the security and humanitarian challenges facing Afghanistan,” said a statement by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), referring to India’s traditional “close and friendly ties” with the people of Afghanistan.

construct this Section in a narrow and restrictive sense. It has tried to mitigate the error committed in NIA vs Zahoor Ahmad Shah Watali (2019) which ruled that the burden is on the accused to show that the prosecution case is not prima facie true.