

NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHT

India and Israel agreed to resume long pending negotiations on a free trade agreement, as External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar met his Israeli counterpart Yair Lapid in Jerusalem. Both also joined a virtual quadrilateral meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed. The quadrilateral meeting, seen as an outcome of last year's Abraham Accords brokered by the U.S. that saw the UAE and Israel establish diplomatic relations, also underlines India's close relationships with both the West Asian countries and Washington.

When Prime Minister Narendra Modi declares open the Kushinagar International Airport in Uttar Pradesh on October 20, a sizeable Sri Lankan contingent, led by a member of the first family, will be present. Sports Minister Namal Rajapaksa, nephew of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and son of Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, will travel to Uttar Pradesh, along with ministerial colleagues and a group of 100 Buddhist monks to attend the event, according to officials in Colombo.

Amid havoc caused by the torrential rain over the past week leading to floods and landslips, the Kerala Government has constituted an expert committee to regulate the release of water from 81 dams across swollen rivers. Officials said water level in the Pampa, Manimala, and Achencoil rivers remained well over the danger level. While flood waters have begun to slowly recede from Mallappally, the runoff water from Achencoil river flooded areas such as Thumpamon, Kadakkad, and Cherikkal.

The latest spate of attacks in Jammu and Kashmir is a part of the terror outfits' new strategy to derail the measures being taken by the Government to promote industrial development and extend domicile status to various categories of people, making them eligible for jobs and other benefits, according to the National Investigation Agency's (NIA) findings. A blog post uploaded in the last week of September spelt out the strategy to be adopted by terrorists in view of several measures taken by the Government after the dilution of J&K's special status in August 2019 and its subsequent bifurcation into

COP26 CLIMATE CONFERENCE

1.The COP 26 UN Climate Change Conference, hosted by the UK in partnership with Italy, will take place from 31 October to 12 November 2021 in the Scottish Event Campus in Glasgow, UK. According to the UNFCCC, COP26 will work towards four goals: Secure global net-zero by mid-century & keep 1.5 degrees within reach To meet this goal, the countries must accelerate the phase-out of coal, curtail deforestation, speed up the switch to EVs and encourage investment in renewables'.

2.Countries to work together to protect communities and natural habitats, and build defences, warning systems and resilient infrastructure and agriculture to avoid losses. The UNFCCC notes that to deliver on the first two goals, developed countries must make good on their promise to mobilise at least \$100 billion in climate finance per year by 2020. Leaders will work together to 'finalise the Paris Rulebook', which are a list of detailed rules that will help fulfil the Paris Agreement.

3.India's Actions It is time for India to update its Nationally Determined Contributions. NDCs detail the various efforts taken by each country to reduce the national emissions. Aggressively figure out how to transition our coal sector Sector by sector plans to bring about development - Decarbonise the electricity, transport sector and start looking at carbon per passenger mile.

4.Conference of Parties-The Conference of Parties (COP) is a pivotal movement for the world to come together and accelerate the climate action plan. Formation of COP - The COP comes under the United Nations Climate Change Framework Convention (UNFCCC) set up in 1994. The UNFCCC was established to work towards "stabilisation of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere."

5.It laid out a list of responsibilities for the member states which included: Formulating measures to mitigate climate change, Cooperating in preparing for adaptation to the impact of climate change, and Promoting education, training and public awareness related to climate change. COP members have been meeting every year since 1995. The UNFCCC has 198 parties including India, China and the USA.

Dr. S MUTHULAKSHMI REDDI

1.Dr Reddi was the first Indian girl student at Madras Medical College, and the first woman house surgeon in the Government Maternity Hospital, Madras. Dr Reddi was the first woman lawmaker in the country. In 1926, the government nominated Dr Reddi to the Madras Legislative Council, where she was the only woman member of the council. Later, her colleagues elected her as the deputy president to chair the council's proceedings in the absence of the president.

2.Law on prostitution - In 1930, the Madras Legislative Council was discussing a law on prostitution. But Dr Reddi defined prostitute as a person of either sex, instead of the council's definition to include only women. So, the legislative council dropped the reference to women in the definition of prostitution.

For women - She worked extensively to abolish the Devadasi system. Her efforts led to the strengthening of the Madras Immoral Traffic Act. She was also able to increase the age at which girls could be rescued from brothels.

3.She championed the cause of reservation for women in elected bodies. Dr Reddi said, "We want reservation not because men would be opposed to our interests, but because women's point of view should be represented by women." She co-founded the Women's Indian Association in 1918. She opened Avvai Home, Chennai (1930) to shelter, protect and educate the orphan girls, deserted women. Also, she opened Cancer Institute, Chennai (1954).

KERALA TO REPLICATE RBK MODEL

1.Kerala Agriculture Minister has said that the state will seek the cooperation of Andhra Pradesh in setting up facilities similar to the Rythu Bharosa Kendras (RBKs) in Kerala. The objective of RBKs is to provide one-stop solution for the farmers, including incentive opportunities and assistance to them Rythu Bharosa

Union Territories (UTs).

With a view to orienting its officers and men posted along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Tibetan culture and also preparing them to better understand the information warfare, the Army has begun a course in Tibetology in a tieup with the Central Institute of Himalayan Cultural Studies in Arunachal Pradesh. "Understanding Tibetan traditions, cultural peculiarities, democracy and political influence and so on empowers our men and officers to understand where we are going and where we are operating," said a senior Army officer at the 5 Mountain Division at Tenga in Arunachal Pradesh. Officers posted in the area would be considered for the course.

Mumbai lost 81% of its open land (barren spaces without any vegetation), 40% green cover (forests & scrublands) and approximately 30% of its water bodies (lakes, ponds, flood plains) between 1991 and 2018, while the built-up area (areas developed upon) rose by 66% in the same period, says a recent study. It concludes that the city witnessed a 2 degree Celsius average temperature rise across 27 years.

Russia said it would halt the activities of its diplomatic mission to NATO after the Western military alliance expelled eight Russians in a row over spying. Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov also said staff at NATO's military mission in Moscow would be stripped of their accreditation from November 1, and the alliance's information office in the Russian capital would be shuttered.

Venezuela's government said it would halt negotiations with its opponents in retaliation for the extradition to the U.S. of a close ally of President Nicolás Maduro who prosecutors believe could be the most significant witness ever about corruption in the South American country.

Tibet activists staged a protest at the Acropolis in Athens against the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics, ahead of the lighting ceremony in Ancient Olympia. Three activists were arrested, according to the Greek police. The activists waved the Tibetan flag, chanting 'Boycott Beijing 2022' and 'Free Tibet', "just 48 hours before the Olympic Torch will be handed to Beijing in the very same place".

The attacks on minority Hindus in Bangladesh are against the values enshrined in its Constitution and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's

Kendras were set up at village secretariats, which will function throughout the year.

2. Supply of Inputs - RBKs supply pre-tested seed, fertilizers, and seedlings to agriculture, aquaculture, and horticulture farmers. All the products are tested at Dr. Y.S.R. Agri Labs and other labs. Farmers must place orders through the kiosks and the Agriculture and Aquaculture departments will deliver the stocks in villages. RBKs will have digital kiosks and an App to help farmers know the real time market prices. Procurement - Agriculture Department is the nodal agency to register all crops being cultivated by farmers, season-wise, in e-crop app.

3. Department of Civil Supplies, Markfed, Oilfed and CCI will coordinate with Agriculture department to that the ensure procurement operations are taken up. Financial Assistance - The government is providing annually Rs 13,500 to each farmer. Out of the total amount, Rs 7,500 is given to the farmers in May for buying crop inputs before the sowing Rs 4,000 and Rs 2,000 is given in October and January, respectively, to meet harvesting expenditure. The state government is also giving free farm insurance cover.

CHINA'S HYPERSONIC GLIDE VEHICLE

1. A report says that China launched a Long March rocket that carried a nuclear-capable hypersonic glide vehicle, which circled the globe through low-orbit space before cruising down towards its target. Hypersonic vehicles travel at speeds that are 5 or more times the speed of sound. Glide vehicles are those that are launched into space on a rocket but orbit the earth under their own momentum. Hypersonic Glide Vehicle was being developed by the China Academy of Aerospace Aerodynamics (CAAA) under the state-owned China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation. These vehicles are difficult to track because unlike ballistic missiles, they don't follow the fixed parabolic trajectory.

2. According to the report, the weapon could, in theory, fly over the South Pole. That would pose a big challenge for the US military as its missile defence systems are focused on the northern polar route. Hypersonic systems are extremely costly as they primarily use the scramjet technology that needs to be able to handle high temperatures. [Scramjets are a category of engines designed to handle airflows of speeds in multiples of the speed of sound.] Implications for India - This test by China highlights the threat for India's space assets along with the surface assets.

3. Offence system operating at these speeds would mean requirement to develop defence systems at these speeds, which India is already doing so. But India has already done the 'Anti-satellite (ASAT) missile test to protect its space assets. India's Hypersonic Technologies - Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle; Advanced Hypersonic Wind Tunnel (HWT).

GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX(GHI)-INDIA POSITION'S

1. India's low rank on the Global Hunger Index (GHI) calls for a relook and revision of the policies and interventions made in this regard. What is the GHI? The GHI has been brought out every year by Welthungerhilfe (lately in partnerships with Concern Worldwide) since 2000. A low score gives a country a higher ranking which implies a better performance (low hunger). The reason for mapping hunger is to ensure that the world achieves "Zero Hunger by 2030" - a Sustainable Development Goal of the UN. This is why GHI is not calculated for certain high-income countries.

2. Where does Indian stand in the GHI 2021? India ranks 101 out of 116 countries for which reliable and comparable data exist. India is also far below some of its neighbouring countries. Pakistan was placed at rank 92, Nepal and Bangladesh both at 76. Barring 2020's rank of 94 out of 107 countries, India's rank has been between 100 and 103 since 2017. This year's slide in the rank assumes significance especially in the context of COVID-19. The Indian government has questioned the methodology and claimed that the ranking did not represent the ground reality.

3. How is the GHI arrived at? Four components Undernourishment - Share of the population that is undernourished i.e., whose caloric intake is insufficient Child wasting - Share of children under the age of 5 who are wasted (low weight for their height), reflecting acute under-nutrition Child stunting - Share of children under the age of 5 who are stunted (low height for their age), reflecting chronic under-nutrition Child mortality - Mortality rate of children under the

government needs to ensure an impartial inquiry into the incidents, the UN said. Communal tension continued to remain high in Bangladesh as violence spread to northern district of Rangpur during the weekend. "Recent attacks on Hindus in Bangladesh, fuelled by hate speech on social media, are against the values of the Constitution and need to stop. We call upon the Government to ensure protection of minorities and an impartial probe. We call upon all to join hands to strengthen inclusive tolerant Bangladesh," said Mia Seppo, UN Resident Coordinator in Bangladesh.

age of 5 (partly, a reflection of mix of inadequate nutrition and unhealthy environments).

4.What are the inadequacies? Using a uniform calorie norm to arrive at deficiency prevalence for a diverse country as India fails to recognise the regional imbalances. There is higher emphasis on undernutrition than on hunger and its hidden forms, including micronutrient deficiencies. Recent analysis establishes that 'physical disease environment' at the State level also significantly influences the calorie intake. So, the lower calorie intake may also stem from reduced physical activity, better social infrastructure and access to energy-saving appliances, among others and not necessarily mean only deficiency.

5.Most in Kerala and Tamil Nadu may get counted as calorie deficient despite them being better in nutritional outcome indicators. Conversely, there are States that have a higher average level of calorie intake, such as Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. But, their needs may even be higher than the earmarked level of required calories for India as a whole. Because these States have high prevalence of communicable diseases and low level of mechanisation in the economy. So, it is likely that the existing methodology might underestimate the prevalence of calorie deficiency in these States. All this raises questions on the appropriateness of the calorie component of the index.