

NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHT

Former U.S. President Donald Trump, banned from social media platforms Facebook and Twitter since the January 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol, has announced that he is launching a social media company, TRUTH Social, to “stand up to the tyranny of Big Tech”. “We live in a world where the Taliban has a huge presence on Twitter, yet your favorite American President has been silenced.”

The United Nations said it had set up a special trust fund to provide urgently needed cash directly to Afghans through a system tapping into donor funds frozen since the Taliban takeover last August. With the local economy “imploding”, the aim is to inject liquidity into Afghan households to permit them to survive this winter and remain in their homeland despite turmoil, it said. Achim Steiner, the UN Development Programme’s (UNDP) administrator said that Germany, a first contributor, had pledged €50 million (\$58 million) to the fund, and that it was in touch with other donors to mobilise resources.

India completed 100 crore doses of COVID19 vaccines, in about nine months since the drive began. Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed his gratitude to doctors, nurses and all those who worked on crossing the milestone. He tweeted, “India scripts history. We are witnessing the triumph of Indian science, enterprise and collective spirit of 130 crore Indians. Congrats India on crossing 100 crore vaccinations.”

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will travel to Glasgow on October 31 to attend the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26), India has conveyed to the British Government this week, sources confirmed. The decision comes even as climate negotiation delegations from the United States, the European Union and the United Kingdom travelled to Delhi to discuss India’s climate goals. Mr. Modi and U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson are expected to jointly launch the “one world, one solar, one grid” initiative at the summit where at least 120 world leaders have confirmed their attendance.

As the United Kingdom’s Carrier Strike Group (CSG) gets ready for one of the biggest joint exercises — Konkan Shakti — with India’s armed forces, its aircraft carrier HMS

BIO-ENZYMES FROM KINNOW

1. Punjab farmers, especially in kinnow belt, have started making bio-enzymes (BEs) from falling kinnow fruits, which, if not would become a total waste. Farmers can collect these dropped fruits from their kinnow fields and prepare bio-enzymes (BEs) at a low cost. Horticulture department experts say nearly 15-20% of the total kinnow production falls from the tree before and during the harvesting period. The fallen fruit is a major challenge for kinnow farmers in the state as one needs to dig up small pits to bury them, otherwise the fallen fruit rot and invite a fly attack on the healthy fruit still on the plants. But now, some farmers are using this fallen fruit to improve the pH level and soil fertility of their land by making BEs from this waste fruit.

2. This waste kinnow can prove a boon to improve soil, water, air, depleting ground water, water contamination and overall ecology. Not only can plant health be improved, it also helps prevent indiscriminate usage of chemical sprays of fungicides and bacterial diseases on crops, especially vegetables, tuber crops and cereals. BEs can be used for a whole year in the form of spray on vegetables and mixing it with field irrigation.

3. Bio-enzymes They are organic solutions produced through fermentation of organic waste including various fruits, vegetable peels and flowers, by mixing in sugar, jaggery/molasses and water. It takes 60-100 days to ferment organic waste. To fasten the fermentation, yeast can be used as culture to prepare it in 45-50 days. BE’s also have a lot of usage in our daily lives.

4. **Kinnow-Often pronounced as Kinoo or Kinu, this fruit is a high yield mandarin and is a hybrid of 2 citrus cultivators ‘King’ & ‘Willow Leaf’. While an orange is a hybrid of citrus reticulata and citrus maxima, kinnow is a hybrid of citrus deliciosa and citrus nobilis.** Developed by HB Frost in 1935, Kinnow is a year-long duration crop and it’s juicier than oranges. It is majorly grown in Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Rajasthan and even Haryana. The main harvesting period is from November-end to March, but some varieties of citrus fruit start coming into the markets in October.

KUSHINAGAR

1. Kushinagar Prime Minister inaugurated the Kushinagar international airport, Uttar Pradesh, which will mainly service the Buddhist tourism circuit. In Kushinagar, the Buddha attained Mahaparinirvana (ultimate salvation) in 483 BC and was cremated at Rambhar Stupa. Kushinagar is identified with Kushinara, capital of the ancient Malla republic - one of the 16 mahajanapadas of the 6th -4th centuries BC.

2. The area went on to be part of the kingdoms of the Mauryas, Shungas, Kushanas, Guptas, Harshavardhana, and the Palas. Kushinara is believed to have been inhabited until the 12th century.

3. The first excavations in Kushinagar were carried out by Alexander Cunningham and ACL Carlleyle, who unearthed the main stupa and the 6-metre-long statue of the Reclining Buddha in 1876.

BUDDHISTS TOURISTS SITE

1. Buddhist Tourism Sites Buddhism originated in India and 7 of the 8 main Buddhist pilgrimage sites are in India, but it gets not even 1% of Buddhist pilgrims in the world. In 2016, the Ministry of Tourism announced the Buddhist Circuit as India’s first transnational tourism circuit (India, Nepal and Sri Lanka).

2. Buddhist Circuit includes Bodh Gaya, Vaishali, & Rajgir (Bihar), Kushinagar, Sarnath, and Shravasti (UP), and Lumbini (Nepal).

3. **A Buddhist Circuit tourist train covers all destinations in 14 days, and helicopter services and more airports are in the pipeline.** The push is intended to assert and consolidate India’s position as the original centre of Buddhism, against the claims from China.

DUST MITIGATION MEASURES AT C&D SITES

1. Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining

Queen Elizabeth has an added task — it aims to strengthen military as well as cultural ties with India with an intent to “demonstrate that democracies that have similar views of the world want to work together to keep peace and stability”.

The Union Home Ministry has advised the States to update recent photographs of prisoners released on parole/furlough/premature release in the “ePrisons” and Interoperable Criminal Justice System database to generate immediate alerts and facilitate easy tracking in the event of their violating the law. In an advisory sent to the Chief Secretaries, the Ministry said the States and the Union Territories were advised to review the existing practices and procedures governing grant of parole, furlough and premature release to inmates, as per provisions under the Model Prison Manual, 2016, and guidelines issued by the Home Ministry, the National Human Rights Commission and the Supreme Court.

Even as the Centre investigates allegations that unauthorised genetically modified (GM) rice was exported to Europe, it is yet to decide on a research proposal from its own scientists which would allow plants to be genetically modified without the need for conventional transgenic technology. Scientists at the Indian Agricultural Research Institute are in the process of developing resilient and highyield rice varieties using such gene editing techniques, which have already been approved by many countries, and they hope to have such rice varieties in the hands of the Indian farmers by 2024.

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) retained Pakistan in the ‘greylist’ yet again, observing that it needed to further demonstrate that investigations and prosecutions were being pursued against the senior leadership of UNdesignated terror groups, which include the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), al-Qaeda and the Taliban. At a press meet, FATF President Marcus Pleyer said Pakistan remained under increased monitoring.

The Centre has asked States to lift their hydropower output in a bid to conserve scarce coal supplies, Power Secretary Alok Kumar said, stressing the need to build strategic reserves of imported coal and gas as was being done for petroleum products. “At least in the foreseeable 10 years or so, all the countries, especially major economies, will be dependent on fossil fuel supplies for base load and for grid balancing,” Mr. Kumar noted. “We will never be able to insulate ourselves from these supply

Areas (CAQM) has been taking up for strict compliance of dust mitigation measures at Construction & Demolition (C&D) sites. Dust emanating from C&D sites is a major consistent source of air pollution.

2.The statutory directions were issued by CAQM to the authorities of the NCR states and Delhi to reduce dust from C&D sites includes imposing and collecting Environmental Compensation (EC) from the Violators of dust mitigation norms at the C&D sites, and Vehicles found violating the prescribed dust abatement norms during transportation of materials relating to C&D waste.

3.C&D activities generate enormous amounts of dust and contribute significantly to PM2.5 and PM10 adversely affecting the quality of air. To tackle the problem of dust resulting from construction, remodeling, repair and demolition, such activities need to be strictly monitored and inspected regularly for compliance of various dust control measures.

THE CARBON MARKETS CONUNDRUM AT COP26

1.The conclusion of Article 6 of Paris agreement has remained unresolved since the accord was signed and it will be one of the most technical and highly contentious issues at the upcoming UNFCCC COP26.

2.What is Article 6 of Paris agreement? Article 6 of the Paris Agreement introduces provisions for using international carbon markets to facilitate fulfilment of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) by countries. Article 6.2 provides an accounting framework for international cooperation and allows for the international transfer of carbon credits between countries. Article 6.4 establishes a central UN mechanism to trade credits from emissions reductions generated through specific projects. Article 6.8 establishes a work program for non-market approaches, such as applying taxes to discourage emissions.

3.What does the Kyoto protocol say on emission reduction? The Kyoto Protocol aims to limit or reduce the greenhouse gas emissions by three market-based mechanisms – emissions trading, clean development mechanism and joint implementation. Emissions trading – An advanced country “A” can acquire emission units from an advanced country “B” for meeting a part of their emission reduction target.

4.What is the issue regarding carbon markets? Developing countries, particularly India, China and Brazil, gained significantly from the carbon market under CDM of Kyoto Protocol. India registered 1,703 projects under CDM which is the second highest in the world. The ratification of the Paris Agreement would change the scenario of carbon markets. Targets for developing countries - Unlike the Kyoto Protocol, now even developing countries are required to have mitigation targets. CDM transition- If the decision regarding transition of CDM is not favourable, it could lead to a loss of revenue as India holds around 4 billion unsold certified emission reductions (CERs). Several countries like India are demanding to carry forward the old carbon credits earned to meet new climate targets.

5.Accounting rules- Under Article 6.4 of Paris agreement, a country can purchase CER credits from public and private entities to meet its NDC targets but these reductions must represent additional efforts of such entities. Share of Proceeds (SOP) to the Adaptation Fund - While developing countries emphasise that SOP must be uniformly applied to Articles 6.2 and 6.4 to fund adaptation, developed countries want to restrict its application to Article 6.4.

PERFLUOROALKYL AND POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCE

1.Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) are a complex, ever-expanding group of manufactured chemicals. PFAS molecules are made up of a chain of linked carbon and fluorine atoms. As the carbon-fluorine bond is one of the strongest, these chemicals do not degrade in the environment. Uses - PFAS are used to make various types of everyday products.

2.E.g.: They keep food from sticking to cookware, make clothes and carpets resistant to stains, and create effective firefighting foam. They are used in industries like aerospace, automotive, construction, electronics, and military. There are two kinds of PFAS, Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and Perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS). PFOA and PFOS were manufactured for the longest time, and are the most widespread in the environment. Recently, they are being replaced by alternatives, such as GenX.

shocks of imported fuel,” he added, referring to the major supply disruptions due to the soaring global prices of coal, gas and oil.

3.Concerns about the public health impact of PFAS have arisen for the following reasons: Widespread occurrence of PFAS in blood and urine of people. Numerous exposures - PFAS are used in hundreds of products globally, with many opportunities for human exposure. Persistent - PFAS remain in the environment for an unknown amount of time and may take years to leave the body. Bioaccumulation - Different PFAS chemicals may enter the food chain in various ways, gradually accumulating and remaining in a body over time. This occurs due to more intake than excretion of the chemicals.

4.Impacts - People are most likely exposed to these chemicals by consuming PFAS-contaminated water or food, using products made with PFAS, or breathing air containing PFAS. Health effects on humans include Altered metabolism, Fertility and reduced fetal growth, Increased risk of being overweight or obese, and Reduced ability of the immune system to fight infections.