

NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHT

Tanzanian novelist Abdul razak Gurnah, 72, won the 2021 Nobel Prize in Literature “for his uncompromising and compassionate penetration of the effects of colonialism and the fate of the refugee”, the award giving body said. Based in Britain, Mr. Gurnah is the first African writer to win the award since the Zimbabwean Doris Lessing in 2007, and only the second writer of colour from sub Saharan Africa, after Nigeria’s Wole Soyinka, who won in 1986.

A study done by researchers of the Indian Institute of Technology-Madras (IITM) has found that contaminants, including pharmaceutically active compounds, personal care products, plastics, flame retardants, heavy metals and pesticides, pollute the Cauvery. This underscores the need to regularly monitor the river and its tributaries for pharmaceutical contamination, the researchers said. The contamination is particularly serious because India is the second largest pharmaceutical manufacturer.

The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency announced a new China focused unit. CIA Director William Burns said in a statement that the new China Mission Center will address the challenge China poses to all of the U.S. spy agency’s mission areas. “CMC will further strengthen our collective work on the most important geopolitical threat we face in the 21st century, an increasingly adversarial Chinese government,” he said.

NATO expelled eight members of Russia’s mission to the military alliance, saying that they were secretly working as intelligence officers and halved the size of Moscow’s team able to work at its headquarters. “We can confirm that we have withdrawn the accreditation of eight members of the Russian Mission to NATO, who were undeclared Russian intelligence officers,” a NATO official said.

The Supreme Court gave the Uttar Pradesh Government 24 hours to file a status report identifying the accused in the First Information Report (FIR) registered on the Lakhimpur Kheri violence, and whether they have been arrested or not.

The Supreme Court has asked the

COAL SHORTAGE IN INDIA

1.India’s thermal power plants are facing a severe coal shortage, with coal stocks having come down to an average of 4 days of fuel across an increasing number of thermal stations.

2.What is the current status of coal stocks? Coal fired plants makeup nearly 70% of India’s power source mix. On October 4, 16 thermal power plants with a power generation capacity of 17,475 MW (mega watts) had zero days of coal stock. An additional 45 thermal power plants with a power generation capacity of 59,790 MW had coal stock only for up to two days.It is way below the government recommendations of holding 14 days worth of coal stock. The non-pithead plants or plants which are not located close to coal mines have critical levels of stock i.e under 8 days.

3.What is the reason behind India’s coal shortage? **Increased power demand - A sharp uptick in power demand as the economy recovers from Covid-19 pandemic coupled with supply issues have led to coal shortage. India consumed 124 billion units of power in August 2021 compared to 106 billion units of power in August 2019.** Supply crunches - Lower than normal stock accumulation by thermal power plants in the April-June period is another reason.Continuous rainfall in coal bearing areas in August and September caused fewer despatches of coal from coal mines. Fall in imports – There has been sharp fall in imports due to high international prices. Non-payments of coal dues - The non-payments of coal dues by States such as Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh also resulted in inadequate supplies.

4.What will be the impact of coal shortage? The electricity shortages could delay India’s economic reopening. It might lead to downscaling of business productions. India’s population and under developed energy infrastructure will mean the power crisis could hit long and hard.

5.What measures is the government taking to address the situation? **The Power Ministry has constituted a Core Management Team to monitor and manage the fuel on daily basis to improve supplies to power plants. Coal India, the state-owned miner claims that it has ramped up supplies to thermal power plants by nearly 12 per cent annually.** The government is pressing thermal plants with captive coal mines to boost their coal output to meet their own demand. The Power Ministry is trying to expedite the start of production from a number of mines that already have all requisite clearances. The government has also boosted the number of rakes of coal being transported to thermal power plants daily.

DEEP BRAIN STIMULATION

1.In the US, a patient with severe depression was treated successfully using ‘customised’ deep brain stimulation (DBS) technique for this patient’s case. The doctors tried to reset the depressive brain patterns by recognising and tapping the brain circuits linked with these patterns. DBS is a surgical procedure in which electrodes or leads are implanted into certain brain areas.

2.These electrodes generate electrical impulses that control abnormal brain activity. The electrical impulses can adjust for the chemical imbalances within the brain that cause various conditions. DBS is the equivalent of using a pacemaker for the heart.

3.Traditional DBS system has 3 components, Electrode is an insulated wire inserted through a small opening in the skull and implanted into a specific brain area. Extension wire is insulated wire that is passed under the skin of the head, neck and shoulder, connecting the electrode to the IPG of the system. Internal pulse generator (IPG) is usually implanted under the skin in the upper chest.

4.**Conditions that are traditionally treated using DBS include dystonia, epilepsy, essential tumour, obsessive-compulsive disorder and Parkinson’s disease.** In treating depression, however, DBS has shown limited success because most devices are only able to deliver constant electrical

government to explain how it zeroed in on the figure of '₹8 lakh' as the annual income criterion to identify Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) among the forward classes of society for grant of 10% reservation in medical admissions under the all-India quota (AIQ). The Supreme Court's query is significant as the One Hundred and Third Constitutional Amendment of 2019, which introduced the 10% EWS quota, is itself under challenge before a larger Bench.

The heaviest semi cryogenic propellant tank (SC120 LOX) ever fabricated by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) has been delivered to the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). The semi cryo-liquid oxygen (LOX) tank — the first developmental welded hardware — is a part of the SC120 stage intended for payload enhancement by replacing the L110 stage in existing MkIII launch vehicle, said a release from HAL.

The State government proposes to take up skilling of students on a massive scale with the help of Microsoft Corporation (India). As many as 1,62,000 students and unemployed youth across more than 300 colleges and skill development centres will benefit from the programme proposed to be rolled out by the Andhra Pradesh State Council of Higher Education (APSCHE) immediately after Dasara.

Reports of intolerance and vandalism raise concerns across the world and in India, said a senior official. Addressing the weekly press briefing, Official Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said the international community continued to insist that the Taliban should fulfil the goals outlined in the UN Security Council Resolution 2593, which expects the Taliban to form an inclusive government and foster freedom and diversity.

India's armed forces are scheduled to carry out an exercise with the U.K.'s Queen Elizabeth carrier strike group later this month as it heads back home after its maiden operational deployment in the Indian Ocean.

The Supreme Court allowed girls to appear in the entrance examination scheduled for December 2021 for admission to the Rashtriya Indian Military College (RIMC). The exam is taken for entry to Class 8 at the RIMC. A Bench led by Justice S.K. Kaul did not agree with the government's proposal to allow girls to sit for the exam next June rather than on December 18, 2021.

The border guarding forces of India

stimulation to one area of the brain.

CORBETT NATIONAL PARK

1.A proposal has been made to change the name of Corbett National Park to Ramganga National Park. Name - Set up in 1936 as India's - and Asia's - first national park, the national park was called Hailey National Park. It was renamed Ramganga National Park (after the river that flows through it) shortly after Independence. In 1956, it was rechristened yet again as Corbett National Park.

2.About - Located in the Himalayan foothills of Uttarakhand, the park encompasses the Patli Dun valley formed by the Ramganga River. It has sub-Himalayan belt ecological characteristics, as it falls in the Shivalik and Outer Himalaya geological provinces. It has dense moist deciduous forest.

3.Ideal Tiger Territory - **Corbett National Park was the place from where Project Tiger was launched in 1973. It is part of the Corbett Tiger Reserve. It has the single largest tiger population in a tiger reserve in the country.** The national park along with the neighbouring Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary makes the critical tiger habitat of the Corbett Tiger Reserve. Other Fauna - Indian Leopards, Barking Deer, Spotted Deer, Sambar Deer, Jungle Cats, sloth, etc.

GURU GHASIDAS & TAMOR PINGLA TIGER RESERVE

1.Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) approved the Chhattisgarh's proposal to declare the combined areas of the Guru Ghasidas National Park & Tamor Pingla Wildlife Sanctuary as a Tiger Reserve. Approval - The 11th Technical Committee of the NTCA approved the proposal under the Section 38V (1) of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. [Section 38V (1) of WPA, 1972 (Tiger Conservation Plan) - The State Government shall, on the recommendation of the NTCA, notify an area as a tiger reserve.]

2.About the New Reserve - The new Reserve is located in the northern part of Chhattisgarh, bordering Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand. Both Tamor Pingla Wildlife Sanctuary and Guru Ghasidas National Park were identified as reserve forests. Turning Guru Ghasidas into a Tiger Reserve is important as it provides a corridor for tigers to move between Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve (Madhya Pradesh) and Palamau Tiger Reserve (Jharkhand).

3.**Tamor Pingla Wildlife Sanctuary It is located in the Surajpur district of Chhattisgarh, and Moran River surrounds the northern boundary, BongaNalla guards the eastern boundary and Rihand River flows in the western boundary.** The sanctuary experiences a warm and temperate type of climate. It is a part of the Sarguja Jashpur Elephant Reserve since 2011. Fauna - Asian elephants, Bengal tigers, Indian leopards, bears.

4.**Guru Ghasidas National Park It is located in the Narmada Valley dry deciduous forests eco-region of Chhattisgarh.** It was the last known habitat of the Asiatic cheetah in the country. Originally a part of the Sanjay Dubri National Park in undivided Madhya Pradesh, it was created as a separate entity in Chhattisgarh's Sarguja region after the formation of the state in 2001. Fauna - Bengal tiger, Indian leopard, Spotted deer, Sambar deer, wild boar, Nilgai, Chinkara, Civet, Porcupine, Monitor lizard, etc.

IMPLICATIONS OF US-CHINA TRADE WAR

1.The trade-and-technology war between the US and China that began in 2018 has hardly made a reduction in US trade deficit.

2.How the trade war started? In 2018, US President Donald Trump unilaterally imposed a 25 per cent tariff on Chinese imports of around \$34 billion and further tariffs in 2018 and 2019. He accused China for "unfair trade practices" and "technology theft". The trade war was continued by the administration of President Joe Biden and was morphed into a technology war. The US has denied China both the knowledge and inputs for producing frontier goods and services as well as access to markets, affecting semiconductor production and 5G technology.

3.What are the concerns of U.S.?Trade deficit - The broader context of the trade war was the growing merchandise trade deficit of the US which was \$735 billion in 2016. Pandemic reliance - Imports into the US from China in the first half of 2021 were on average 46% higher than in the first half of 2020.

4.Hi-Tech imports - One of the more obvious concerns of US trade policy with regard to China is the growing significance of

and Nepal will conduct regular joint patrolling along the border to control transborder crimes, smuggling of arms, human trafficking and other areas of concern, a statement by the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) said on Thursday. The SSB, a central armed police force, secures the Nepal and Bhutan borders.

Russia will invite representatives of the Taliban to international talks on Afghanistan that it plans to host in Moscow on October 20, President Vladimir Putin's special representative on Afghanistan said.

high-technology imports. Security fears – U.S has recently restricted China's access to semiconductor chips that are essential for new 5G-enabled smartphones. Sanctions have been imposed on Chinese telecom giants ZTE and Huawei for alleged espionage and ties to the “techno-authoritarianism” of the Chinese state.

5. What will be the implications of the U.S. policy towards China? The aggressive strategy by the US is putting the economic territory of the future (whether in the form of communication technologies like 5G or renewable energy solutions) at risk. The trade war has hardly made any reduction on US trade deficit. The macroeconomic processes within the US that were likely to generate trade deficits have to be looked upon rather putting the blame on China.