

KSG:NEWSPAPER CRUX

25TH SEPTEMBER 2021

NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHT

The Union government notified a scheme to promote medical device parks till financial year 2024--2025. The scheme aims to ensure easy access to testing and infrastructure facilities. It is expected that this will bring down the cost of production of medical devices, thereby making them more affordable for domestic consumption, the Department of Pharmaceuticals said in a statement. The financial assistance for a selected medical device park would be 90% of the project cost of common infrastructure facilities for the northeastern and hilly States. For the rest, it would be 70%

The Central government may enlist the National Investigation Agency (NIA) for undertaking a comprehensive probe into the country's largest drug seizure by the Department of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) at Mundra Port in Gujarat. The DRI recently seized almost 3,000 kg of heroin that was originally shipped from Afghanistan and its market value is pegged at around ₹ 21,000 crore. After the seizure, the probe was widened to Andhra Pradesh, as one Vijaywadabased person had imported the consignment. They had connections in Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and other places. Such a large scale smuggling of the expensive drugs via sea route in the country has stunned the Union government.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will announce the nationwide rollout of the Pradhan Mantri Digital Health Mission on September 27, Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said. "Under this, a unique digital health ID will be provided to the people, which will contain all the health records of the person," he said. The Minister released post COVID19 sequelae modules, aimed at capacity building of health workers to manage long term effects of the disease in those who have recovered.

The Supreme Court set aside a Madras High Court observation that the Centre ought not to have provided 10% reservation for economically weaker sections (EWS) in the all India quota (AIQ) medical seats without obtaining the express approval of the Supreme Court. The High Court's remarks in August came while closing a contempt of court case filed by the political party.

STATE FOOD SAFETY INDEX(SFSI)

1.Recently, the Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare released the 3rd State Food Safety Index (SFSI). Highlights of the index: Among the larger states, Gujarat was the top ranking state, followed by Kerala and Tamil Nadu. Among the smaller states, Goa stood first followed by Meghalaya and Manipur. Among UTs, Jammu & Kashmir, Andaman & Nicobar Islands and New Delhi secured top ranks.

2.About the Index: **The Index is a dynamic quantitative and qualitative benchmarking model that provides an objective framework for evaluating food safety across all States/UTs.** The first State Food Safety Index for the year 2018-19 was announced on the first-ever World Food Safety Day on 7th June 2019.

3.The index is developed by FSSAI (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India) to measure the performance of states on five significant parameters of Food Safety. The parameters include Human Resources and Institutional Data, Compliance, Food Testing – Infrastructure and Surveillance, Training & Capacity Building and Consumer Empowerment.

SCO PEACEFUL MISSION 2021

1.Indian Military Contingent recently participated in the 6th Edition of Exercise SCO Peaceful Mission 2021 at Orenburg, Russia. Exercise SCO Peaceful Mission: Joint Counter Terrorism Exercise PEACEFUL MISSION is a Multilateral Exercise, which is conducted biennially as part of military diplomacy between Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) member states.

2.**The aim of the exercise is to foster close relations between SCO member states and to enhance abilities of the military leaders to command multi-national military contingents.** The exercise will enable sharing of best practices between the Armed Forces of SCO nations.

3.About the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO): It is a permanent intergovernmental international organisation. Its creation was announced on 15 June 2001 in Shanghai (China) by the Republic of Kazakhstan, the People's Republic of China, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan, and the Republic of Uzbekistan. It was preceded by the Shanghai Five mechanism.

4.The SCO's main goals are as follows: Strengthening mutual trust and neighbourliness among the member states; promoting their effective cooperation in politics, trade, the economy, research, technology and culture, as well as in education, energy, transport, tourism, environmental protection, and other areas; making joint efforts to maintain and ensure peace, security and stability in the region; and moving towards the establishment of a democratic, fair and rational new international political and economic order.

5.Membership: **SCO comprises eight member states, namely the Republic of India, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the People's Republic of China, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan, and the Republic of Uzbekistan.**

BHARATNET PROJECT

1.The Meghalaya Cabinet has cleared amendments to a tripartite agreement for the implementation of BharatNet project in Meghalaya. The agreement was first signed in 2013 between DOT, Meghalaya government's IT Department and Bharat Broadband Network Limited (BBNL) – the body responsible for implementation of BharatNet.

2.Background-Union Cabinet, in July 2021, accorded approval for the revised implementation strategy of BharatNet through Public-Private Partnership(PPP) mode in 16 States of the country. The strategy includes: The government will provide Rs 19,041 crore as viability gap funding for the project. BharatNet will now extend up to all inhabited villages beyond the gram panchayats (GPs) in the said states. It includes creation, upgradation, operation, maintenance and utilisation of BharatNet by the

The Sri Lanka Deputy High Commission has commenced work on voluntary repatriation of Sri Lankan nationals living in the rehabilitation camps of Tamil Nadu, according to Deputy High Commissioner of Sri Lanka.

Previewing the first inperson summit level meeting between Quad leaders later on Friday, a senior U.S. administration official, who spoke on background, highlighted the expected deliverables from the summit across a range of areas from vaccines to illegal fishing. The official also repeatedly stressed that the Quad is an informal gathering and not a military or security partnership.

India said it rejected comments made by China's Foreign Ministry blaming it for "trespassing" across the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and causing last year's clash in the Galwan Valley. It was China's "provocative behaviour" that led to the worst violence on the border in decades, it stated.

A fresh offensive by the Myanmar military in areas near the border with India has triggered fears of more people crossing over to Mizoram. Officials in the northeastern State said more than 11,500 Myanmar nationals have taken refuge since February when the country's military staged a coup. Some of the refugees have been moving back and forth depending on the situation in Myanmar.

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) on Friday signed an estimated ₹22,000 crore deal with Airbus Defence and Space S.A., Spain, for 56 C295MW transport aircraft to replace the Indian Air Force's ageing 56 Avro aircraft that were procured in the 1960s. This is the first project of its kind in which a military aircraft will be manufactured in India under technology transfer by the private sector.

Reducing import duty on electric vehicles (EVs) will help boost domestic demand by enabling automobile manufacturers to bring in more models, thus paving the way for local manufacturing.

India and the UAE have formally started negotiations for a free trade agreement and the first round of talks will begin from Thursday with an aim to conclude it by end-December, a move aimed at boosting trade and investments between the countries.

concessionaire who will be selected by a competitive international bidding process.

3.Significance-The PPP model will leverage private sector efficiency for operation, maintenance, utilisation and revenue generation, and is expected to result in a faster rollout of BharatNet. Extension of reach of BharatNet to all inhabited villages with reliable, quality, high speed broadband will enable better access of e-services offered by various central and state government agencies. It will also enable online education, telemedicine, skill development, e-commerce and other applications of broadband.

4.About BharatNet: BharatNet Project was originally launched in 2011 as the National Optical Fibre Network(NOFN) and renamed as Bharat-Net in 2015. It seeks to provide connectivity to 2.5 lakh Gram Panchayats (GPs) through optical fibre. It is a flagship mission implemented by Bharat Broadband Network Ltd. (BBNL). The objective is to facilitate the delivery of e-governance, e-health, e-education, e-banking, Internet and other services to rural India.

5.The larger vision of the project is: To establish a highly scalable network infrastructure accessible on a non-discriminatory basis. To provide on demand, affordable broadband connectivity of 2 Mbps to 20 Mbps for all households and on demand capacity to all institutions. To realise the vision of Digital India, in partnership with States and the private sector.

VIPER MISSION

1.NASA has chosen a landing site for the Volatiles Investigating Polar Exploration Rover (VIPER). The site is on the western edge of Nobile crater, near the lunar south pole. The crater was named after Italian polar explorer Umberto Nobile.

2.Background: NASA, in July 2021, announced that it will launch its Volatiles Investigating Polar Exploration Rover, or VIPER, in 2023. NASA is undertaking the mission to understand if it is possible for human life to sustain there, by using locally available resources.

3.About the mission: VIPER is a mobile robot. It is the first resource mapping mission on any other celestial body. NASA's Commercial Lunar Payload Services (CLPS) will be providing the launch vehicle and lander for what's going to be a 100-day mission.

4.Objectives of the mission: To explore the Moon's South Pole region. Help create lunar resource maps. Evaluate the concentration of water as well as other potential resources on its surface.

5.Significance of the mission: VIPER's findings will inform "future landing sites under the Artemis program by helping to determine locations where water and other resources can be harvested" to sustain humans over extended stays.

IMO URGED TO ACT ON BLACK CARBON MISSIONS

1.With Arctic summer ice reaching its 12th lowest ever extent, the Clean Arctic Alliance has called for urgent cuts to black carbon emissions from shipping, ahead of the 77th Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) meeting (MEPC 77) at the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in November.

2.About the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC): In order to ensure that a proactive stance is taken by in order to protect and safeguard the interests of the marine environment and ecosystem, the IMO has established the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC). The committee seeks to provide a solution for the problem of air pollution caused by the constant and heavy traffic of ships in the oceanic areas.

3.The committee in its sessions also seeks to provide required revisions to the existing MARPOL stipulations and guidelines. The creation and enforcement of PSSAs (Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas) and other special oceanic zones is also an area that is looked into by the environment protection organisation.

4.What is black Carbon? What are the concerns? Black carbon results from the incomplete combustion of fossil fuels and biomass. BC is produced both naturally and by human activities as a result of the incomplete combustion of fossil fuels, biofuels, and biomass. Primary sources include emissions from diesel engines, cook stoves, wood burning and forest fires. It is a short-lived pollutant that is the second-largest contributor to warming the planet behind carbon dioxide (CO2).

The Taliban have asked to address world leaders at the United Nations in New York this week and nominated their Dohabased spokesman Suhail Shaheen as Afghanistan's UN Ambassador.

SAMUDRA SHAKTI

- 1.Samudra Shakti is a bilateral exercise between the navies of India and Indonesia that was conceived in 2018.
- 2.**The exercise aims to strengthen the bilateral relationship, enhance mutual understanding and interoperability in maritime operations between the two navies.**