

### NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHT

The All India Quarterly Establishment based Employment Survey, in a report released on Monday, said that the overall employment numbers had increased by 29% from the base year of 2013-14. However, in the first quarter of this fiscal (April-June 2021), 27% of the establishments surveyed reported pandemic related retrenchment. The report, released by Labour and Employment Minister Bhupender Yadav, covered 10,593 firms that employed more than 10 workers and were spread over nine sectors that account for 85% of the total employment in such establishments. Overall, employment stood at 3.08 crore in the first quarter, up from 2.37 crore as reported in the Sixth Economic Census (2013-2014).

The right of an institution, whether run by a majority or minority community, to receive government aid is not a fundamental right. Both have to follow the rules of the aid, the Supreme Court held in a ruling on Monday. The Bench said if the government made a policy call to withdraw aid, an institution cannot question the decision as a “matter of right”. An institution is free to choose to accept the grant with the conditions or go its own way, it said. The judgment came in an appeal against a decision of the Allahabad High Court to declare unconstitutional a provision of the Intermediate Education Act.

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) on Monday successfully tested a new version of the Akash surface-to-air missile Akash Prime from the Integrated Test Range at Chandipur, Odisha. “In comparison to the existing Akash System, Akash Prime is equipped with an indigenous active Radio Frequency (RF) seeker for improved accuracy. Other improvements also ensure more reliable performance under low temperature environment at higher altitudes,” a DRDO statement said.

The Madras High Court directed the Union Home Ministry to consider framing appropriate laws, in three months, to prevent illegal immigrants from committing petty crimes, repeatedly, just to stay back in the country. Expressing shock over some illegal immigrants managing to even obtain Aadhaar

### MULTI-MEMBER WARD SYSTEM IN MAHARASHTRA

1.The Maharashtra cabinet recently cleared a plan for multi-member wards in urban civic bodies, excluding Mumbai. With this, the state has reverted to the system of electing multiple councillors or corporators from every ward in all municipal corporations and municipal councils in the state, excluding Mumbai. The state government will promulgate an ordinance to make the amendment.

2.What’s proposed in Maharashtra? **In the new system, voters will elect a three-member panel in each of the wards in municipal corporation areas.** In municipal council areas, voters will elect a panel of two members. In a single-member ward system, a voter votes for one candidate. There will be no change in the number of wards or corporators; the wards will be bunched together only for the purpose of the election.

3.How does it work? **Those contesting from the same party or alliance across the designated multi-member ward will campaign across the two or three wards, although they will file their nomination from individual wards.** If elected, each will represent the individual ward only. Voters, however, will be able to select candidates in their own ward as well as in the other wards clubbed together in the multi-member ward. Although candidates from the same party/alliance in a multi-member ward will be called a “panel”, a voter does not really select a panel, but individual candidates, who can be from the same party or from different parties.

4.**A voter is also entitled to select just one candidate. But for this, the voter has to make a written submission to the presiding officer of the booth.** This is to ensure documentary proof in case a party or candidate goes to court questioning how a candidate got fewer votes than others.

5.Benefits associated with multi-member system: It appears to help a party or alliance maximise its seats. A party can offset weak candidates with strong ones in a multi-member ward. The hope is that the strongest of the candidates will carry the day for the others in the “panel”, even though this is not guaranteed.

### DARK ENERGY

1.An international team of researchers made the first direct detection of dark energy. They noticed certain unexpected results in the XENON1T experiment and write that dark energy may be responsible for it.

2.What is Dark Energy? More is unknown than is known. We know how much dark energy there is because we know how it affects the universe’s expansion. Other than that, it is a complete mystery. But it is an important mystery. It makes up about 68% of the universe. **Dark Energy is a hypothetical form of energy that exerts a negative, repulsive pressure, behaving like the opposite of gravity.** It is causing the rate of expansion of our universe to accelerate over time, rather than to slow down. That’s contrary to what one might expect from a universe that began in a Big Bang.

3.How is dark energy different from dark matter? Everything we see – the planets, moons, massive galaxies – makes up less than 5% of the universe. About 27% is dark matter and 68% is dark energy. While dark matter attracts and holds galaxies together, dark energy repels and causes the expansion of our universe. The existence of dark matter was suggested as early as the 1920s, while dark energy wasn’t discovered until 1998.

### CARTELISATION

1.The Competition Commission of India found that three beer companies had colluded to fix beer prices for a full decade — between 2009 and 2018. As a result, the CCI slapped a penalty of Rs 873 crore on the companies for cartelisation in the sale and supply of beer in 10 states and Union Territories.

2.What is a cartel? **According to CCI, a “Cartel includes an association of producers, sellers, distributors, traders or service providers who, by agreement amongst themselves, limit, control or attempt to control the production, distribution, sale or price of, or, trade in goods or provision of**

cards, the court impressed upon the need to deport every foreigner residing illegally in the country.

The Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA) directed Karnataka to immediately release “some quantity” of water towards making good the shortfall in realisation of the latter’s share of Cauvery water. The release should be as per the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal’s decision of 2007, which was modified by the Supreme Court in 2018.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, after reviewing the construction work of the new Parliament building on Sunday night, said once the project was completed, a digital archive of all the workers involved in it should be set up, a statement from the Prime Minister’s Office said on Monday.

Less than 48 hours after an eviction drive led to the death of two persons, including a minor, in police firing, the Assam government has begun its ambitious farm project in the areas freed from the settlers.

China’s continuing travel ban that has barred travellers from India, including thousands of students, from going to the country for more than one year reflected an “unscientific approach” from the Chinese authorities, India’s Ambassador to China Vikram Misri has said.

After a gap of 14 years, the Indian Air Force (IAF) mesmerised locals in Srinagar with its jets performing aerobatics and aweinspiring manoeuvring in the skies. “It was organised to inculcate the spirit of nationalism among the Kashmir youth,” the spokesman said.

A meeting between industry captains and Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal soon after the national lockdown was announced in 2020, has led to the setting up of the Steering Committee for Local Value Addition, Manufacturing and Exports, or SCALE, aimed at navigating Indian manufacturing away from the importdependence pitfalls exposed by the pandemic. The SCALE includes the top brass from the industry bodies CII, FICCI and Assocham and three representatives from government, with member secretary from the Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), and three industry honchos.

services”.

3. The three common components of a cartel are: An agreement. Between competitors. To restrict competition. Features of a cartel: The agreement that forms a cartel need not be formal or written. Cartels almost invariably involve secret conspiracies. Here, competitors refers to companies at the same level of the economy (manufacturers, distributors, or retailers) in direct competition with each other to sell goods or provide services.

4. What do these cartels do? **Price-fixing. Output restrictions. Market allocation. Bid-rigging. In simple terms, “participants in hard-core cartels agree to insulate themselves from the rigours of a competitive marketplace, substituting cooperation for competition”.**

5. Challenges posed by cartels: Hurt not only the consumers but also, indirectly, undermine overall economic efficiency and innovations. By artificially holding back the supply or raising prices in a coordinated manner, companies either force some consumers out of the market by making the commodity (say, beer) more scarce or by earning profits that free competition would not have allowed. A cartel shelters its members from full exposure to market forces, reducing pressures on them to control costs and to innovate.

#### REPORT ON CHENNAI’S FLOOD

1. Tamil Nadu state government has released a report on the action taken by the government with regard to measures to prevent recurrence of flooding. The report was in response to the National Green Tribunal (NGT) registering a suo motu. The court had done so after newspapers widely reported areas in the city being flooded in addition to an overflow of sewage November 30, 2020.

2. Causes for flooding: **Encroachments, faulty drainage systems and tampering of natural course of water had made the megapolis prone to flooding every year.** Rapid urbanisation of Greater Chennai and its peri-urban areas had led to massive changes in land use patterns, as residential areas had sprung up in farmlands. The changes in land use patterns were done without making the required changes for a proper drainage system to manage the flow of surplus water from traditional tanks as well as flood waters from catchment areas.

3. Irrigation tanks were choked with waste, slush and debris, obstructing the flow of flood water. This also reduced the water-absorbing and groundwater recharging capacity of the marsh.

4. Measures suggested: **Chennai needs an integrated flood management system with proper facilities to drain excess rainwater and desilt channels to prevent floods.** The report recommended an integrated road and street side storm water drainage network, straight cut diversion channels, macro storm water drains, check dams, barrages and anicuts as part of such a system.

#### CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED FOR SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

1. A State-wide campaign has been launched in Rajasthan for demanding passage of the social accountability law in the next Assembly session.

2. **“Social accountability” refers to actions initiated by citizen groups to hold public officials, politicians, and service providers to account for their conduct and performance** in terms of delivering services, improving people’s welfare and protecting people’s rights.

#### GI TAG FOR ASSAM’S RICE WINE JUDIMA

1. Judima has become the first beverage from the north-eastern region to earn the geographical indication (GI) tag.

2. **Judima is a rice wine made from sticky rice, which is steamed and mixed with traditional herbs.**

3. The wine is brewed by the Dimasa tribal community in Assam.

4. It is traditionally made by women. The wine has a distinct sweet taste and takes around one week to prepare and it can be stored for years.

#### LA PALMA ISLAND

1. There was volcanic eruption in the La Palma Island of the Canaries archipelago. La Palma Island of Spain is the most north-western island in the Canary Islands. It was formed as a result of a volcanic formation. Geographical features - La Caldera de Taburiente is a large volcanic caldera (10 km in diameter). It was established as a national park named Taburiente National Park.

**Union Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Sunday said India would need four or five more banks like the SBI to support economic growth. "The way in which the economy is shifting to a different plane altogether, the way in which industry is adapting, so many new challenges keep arising. To address these challenges, we need not just more, but bigger banks," she told bankers at the 74th Annual General Meeting of the Indian Banks' Association (IBA) in Mumbai.**

**2.Roque de los Muchachos (Highest Mountain in the island) houses the GRANTECAN (Gran Telescopio Canarias) astronomical observatory.** Its well-watered slopes are densely wooded and deeply dissected by ravines. Economy of La Palma revolves around irrigation-based farming.

**3.**Bananas, tomatoes, and tobacco, along with embroidery, are exported from the port of Santa Cruz de la Palma - the island's capital. Tourism has increased in importance.