

### NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHT

Over half of all people in the world have no social protections, the United Nations said, even after the pandemic spurred countries to offer more services to their populations. In a report on the state of social protection globally, the UN's International Labour Organization said that 4.1 billion people were living without any social safety net of any kind. Social protection includes access to health care and income security measures related especially to old age, unemployment, sickness, disability, work injury, maternity or the loss of the main breadwinner in a family, as well as extra support for families with children.

India has urged utilities to import coal despite having the world's fourth largest reserves, with several power plants on the verge of running out of fuel due to a surge in power demand. Coal-fired power accounts for more than 70% of India's electricity generation. Electricity generation makes up three-fourths of India's coal consumption. "Thermal power plants, which may import coal for blending, may explore (ways) to enhance imports of coal to tide over the current crisis.

Drawing up a sample calendar for gram sabhas, the Centre, in an advisory to all states and Union Territories, has suggested that monetisation of assets to increase own sources of revenue should form part of gram sabha deliberations. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj's advisory has attached a sample calendar with 71 topics, grouped in over a dozen Thematic areas to be covered by the gram sabhas in a year. Each month in the calendar has been assigned one or two thematic areas.

Indian Railways set a target in 2020 to become the world's first net-zero emissions rail network by 2030. When that happens, it could lead to an annual emissions reduction of at least 15 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>, which could help meet 5 per cent of India's Nationally Determined Contribution target, as well as save Rs 17,000 crore in fuel costs per year, according to an environment report released.

Gross Goods and Services Tax (GST) revenues in August fell to ₹1.12

### EVOLUTION OF THE COLLEGIUM SYSTEM IN JUDICIARY

1. **Collegium System:** It is the system of appointment and transfer of judges that has evolved through judgments of the Supreme Court, and not by an Act of Parliament or by a provision of the Constitution. There is no mention of the Collegium either in the original Constitution of India or in successive amendments. The Supreme Court collegium is headed by the CJI and comprises four other senior most judges of the court. A High Court collegium is led by its Chief Justice and four other senior most judges of that court.

2. **First Judges Case (1981):** It declared that the "primacy" of the Chief Justice of India (CJI)'s recommendation on judicial appointments and transfers can be refused for "cogent reasons." The ruling gave the Executive primacy over the Judiciary in judicial appointments for the next 12 years.

3. **Second Judges Case (1993):** Supreme Court introduced the Collegium system, holding that "consultation" really meant "concurrence". It added that it was not the CJI's individual opinion, but an institutional opinion formed in consultation with the two senior-most judges in the SC. 4. **Third Judges Case (1998):** Supreme Court on President's reference expanded the Collegium to a five-member body, comprising the CJI and four of his senior-most colleagues.

5. **Related Constitutional Provisions:** Article 124(2) of the Indian Constitution provides that the Judges of the Supreme Court are appointed by the President after consultation with such a number of the Judges of the Supreme Court and of the High Courts in the States as the President may deem necessary for the purpose. Article 217 of the Indian Constitution states that the Judge of a High Court shall be appointed by the President consultation with the Chief Justice of India, the Governor of the State, and, in the case of appointment of a Judge other than the Chief Justice, the Chief Justice of the High Court.

### TWO YEARS SINCE NRC DRAFT, LAKHS STILL IN LIMBO

1. Denial of benefits emanating from Aadhar to people who were eventually included in the draft NRC list after being initially excluded from the draft list published in 2018.

2. Lakhs of people were left out of the complete draft of Assam's National Register of Citizens (NRC) published in 2018. As per the Supreme Court mandated rules, those left out of the draft NRC list had to mandatorily submit their biometrics during the hearings of 'claims' (to include themselves in the NRC) and 'objections' (to object to someone else's inclusion) process. **27 lakh people who were left out from the list published in 2018 submitted their biometric details and amongst these only 8 lakh people made it into the draft list published in 2019.** However, these 8 lakh people are struggling to get Aadhaar, and concerned about benefits linked to it.

3. Lack of clarity and inability to enjoy the full benefits emanating from Aadhar has caused significant mental pressure on individuals. This situation has arisen primarily due to the lack of clarity over the NRC exercise since the government is withholding assigning Aadhar to these newly added individuals since the complete and final NRC list is yet to be published.

4. What needs to be done? Efforts must be taken by the stakeholders (NRS state coordinator, central government, state government of Assam and Supreme Court of India) involved to address the short-term concerns of these individuals and ensure no one is left behind in enjoying the benefits that the state owes (Ex: Food subsidies) to them; particularly during this pandemic times and a mechanism should be put in place to publish a final list of NRC in a time-bound and just manner.

5. About NRC- **The NRC is the list of Indian citizens and was prepared in 1951, following the census of 1951. The process of NRC update was taken up in Assam as per a Supreme Court order in 2013.** In order to wean out cases of illegal migration from Bangladesh and other adjoining areas, NRC updation was carried out under The Citizenship Act, 1955, and according to rules framed in the Assam Accord. UN experts had warned that the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam

lakh crore from ₹1.16 lakh crore collected the previous month. The Finance Ministry said the collections, which pertain largely to economic activity in July, indicated a “fast” economic recovery underway. But independent economists perceived it as a signal of an uneven and weak rebound.

Ladakh adopted two endangered species, snow leopard and black-necked crane, as State animal and State bird, two years after it was carved out as a separate Union Territory (UT) from the erstwhile State of J&K.

A contingent of 200 Army personnel will participate in the multinational Exercise ZAPAD 2021 being held at Nizhniy, Russia from September 3 to 16, the Army said. Of the 17 countries invited for the exercise, there are nine Participating countries and eight Observers including China and Pakistan, a defence source said.

The Taliban called on fighters in the holdout bastion of the Panjshir Valley to lay down their arms, as the resistance movement said it had repulsed heavy attacks. The rugged mountain valley with towering snow capped peaks — which begins around 80 kilometres north of the capital Kabul — is the centre of Afghanistan’s most important pocket of armed anti Taliban forces.

Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa has declared an economic emergency to contain soaring inflation after a steep fall in the value of the country’s currency caused a spike in food prices.

China’s new data security law takes effect from Wednesday — the latest effort to tighten oversight of the country’s mammoth tech sector. The broadly worded law seeks to tighten the leash on China’s tech giants and what they do with information from their hundreds of millions of users. It also comes as fears grow over data security with government departments becoming increasingly dependent on cloud storage services.

Stocks of di-ammonium phosphate(DAP), muriate of potash(MOP) and other major non-urea fertilisers have dipped sharply. This comes ahead of the ensuing rabi planting season from October-November and also Assembly polls in Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Uttrakhand, scheduled for February-March.

could render millions of citizens stateless and create instability in India.

## CHINA OPENS FIRST ROAD-RAIL TRANSPORT LINK TO INDIAN OCEAN

1. The first shipments on a newly-launched railway line from the Myanmar border to the key commercial hub of Chengdu in western China was made recently. This project provides China a new road-rail transportation channel to the Indian Ocean. The transport corridor involves a sea-road-rail link. This passage connects the logistics lines of Singapore, Myanmar and China, and is currently the most convenient land and sea channel linking the Indian Ocean with southwest China.

2. China also has plans to develop another port in Kyaukphyu in the Rakhine state, including a proposed railway line from Yunnan directly to the port. Chinese planners have also looked at the Gwadar port in Pakistan as another key outlet to the Indian Ocean that will bypass the Malacca Straits.

3. Gwadar is being developed as part of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) to the far western Xinjiang region, but has been slow to take off amid concerns over security. The costs and logistics through CPEC are also less favourable than the Myanmar route with the opening of the rail transport channel from the Myanmar border right to western China’s biggest commercial hub, Chengdu.

4. What is BRI? The Belt and Road Initiative, reminiscent of the Silk Road, is a massive infrastructure project that would stretch from East Asia to Europe. It was launched in 2013. The plan is two-pronged: the overland Silk Road Economic Belt and the Maritime Silk Road. The two were collectively referred to first as the One Belt, One Road initiative but eventually became the Belt and Road Initiative.

5. India’s views: India has tried to convince countries that the BRI is a plan to dominate Asia, warning of what some analysts have called a “String of Pearls” geo-economic strategy whereby China creates unsustainable debt burdens for its Indian Ocean neighbors in order to seize control of regional choke points. In particular, New Delhi has long been unsettled by China’s decades-long embrace of its traditional rival, Pakistan.

## TAMIL NADU ANNOUNCES PARKS FOR FUTURE MOBILITY, APPARELS

1. An integrated apparel park and a future mobility park was announced to be setup in Tamil Nadu recently.

2. Both the initiatives would boost economic development in the state. The future mobility park, first of its kind in the country followed the emergence and growing demand for e-vehicles. Initiatives were also announced to attract investment for defence manufacturing in the state. Ex: A common testing facility for aiding research in the aerospace and defence sectors. The government also announced a State integrated logistics plan which would be formulated to regulate freight movement to customers, and an exports cell would be set up to boost exports and a research and development policy would be released.

3. What is a future mobility park? The park would make use of the advances in data science, artificial intelligence and sensing technology to provide cleaner transport, automation, new business models and new modes of sustainable travel. Such mobility parks are established in UK, Detroit etc.

1. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is planning to enable international settlement of transactions in government securities (G-secs) through International Central Securities Depositories (ICSDs).

2. This proposal would expand the investor base for the G-secs market. Once operationalised, this will enhance access of non-residents to the G-secs market, as will the inclusion of Indian G-secs in global bond indices.

3. An international CSD settles trades in international securities such as eurobonds although many also settle trades in various domestic securities, either directly or through local agents. International CSDs include Clearstream, Euroclear and SIX SIS.

4. What is a G-sec? Government security applies to a range of investment products offered by a governmental body. Government securities come with a promise of the full repayment of invested principal at maturity of the security.

5. G- Sec prices fluctuate sharply in the secondary markets. Factors affecting their prices: Demand and supply of the

**Lingering uncertainty has led companies to yet again freeze hiring, according to IHS Markit. With monsoon rains in deficit, agricultural output and wider rural consumption also face a likely downturn. Policy makers must remain laser focused on expediting vaccination coverage and taking fiscal measures to ensure overall consumption demand does not weaken any further.**

**securities. Changes in interest rates in the economy and other macro-economic factors**, such as, liquidity and inflation. Developments in other markets like money, foreign exchange, credit and capital markets. Developments in international bond markets, specifically the US Treasuries. Policy actions by RBI like change in repo rates, cash-reserve ratio and open-market operations.