

### NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHT

Arjan De Wagt, head of nutrition, UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund) India said that Overall, India has made impressive gains in economic and human development in recent decades. However, high levels of maternal and child undernutrition continue to plague the country. Large scale surveys, like the Comprehensive National Nutrition Survey (CNNS) and National Family Health Survey4 (NFHS), show that about one third of children under five years of age in India are stunted, a third of them are underweight, and almost two out of 10 children are nutritionally wasted; many of these children suffer from multiple anthropometric deficits. The CNNS also highlights the emerging problems of overweight, obesity and micronutrient deficiencies. The launch of the Poshan Abhiyan in March 2018 refocused the national development agenda on nutrition. However, with the spectre of COVID19, there is a heightened risk of increasing malnutrition, and parts of progress made in the past may get undone.

The Centre has rebranded the 26 - year old national midday meal scheme to give a hot cooked meal to 11.8 crore government school students from Classes I to VIII, with the Cabinet approving a proposal to rename it as the PM POSHAN (Poshan Shakti Nirman) scheme. From the next financial year, it will also cover the 24 lakh children studying in balvatikas, the pre primary section of government schools, Education Ministry officials said. The extension of midday meals to pre primary students, who are to be incorporated into the formal education system, was a key recommendation of the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020 and the population of balvatikas — which offer one year of preschool classes — is expected to rise from the existing 24 lakh as the policy is implemented.

The Joint Parliamentary Committee on Data Protection has found a middle ground on the contentious clause which in the name of "sovereignty", "friendly relations with foreign states" and "security of the state", allows any agency under the Union government exemption from all or any provisions of the law. More than 10 MPs in the panel had earlier objected to the clause, saying that it made the entire Act

### ANTI-DEFECTION LAW FOR INDEPENDENT LEGISLATORS

1.Independent MLA from Gujarat's Vadgam constituency, Jignesh Mevani, has pledged support to the Congress party, saying though he has not formally joined the Congress, he has joined the party's ideology. Hence, provisions of the Tenth Schedule do not apply in this case.

2.Relevance: the Tenth Schedule of the Indian Constitution: Popularly known as the anti-defection law. It specifies the circumstances under which changing of political parties by legislators invites action under the law. It was added to the Constitution by the 52nd Amendment Act. It includes situations in which an independent MLA, too, joins a party after the election.

3.The law covers three scenarios with respect to shifting of political parties by an MP or an MLA. These include: When a member elected on the ticket of a political party "voluntarily gives up" membership of such a party or votes in the House against the wishes of the party. **When a legislator who has won his or her seat as an independent candidate joins a political party after the election. In the above two cases, the legislator loses the seat in the legislature on changing (or joining) a party.** Relates to nominated MPs. In their case, the law gives them six months to join a political party, after being nominated. If they join a party after such time, they stand to lose their seat in the House.

4.Matters related to disqualification: **Under the anti-defection law, the power to decide the disqualification of an MP or MLA rests with the presiding officer of the legislature.** The law does not specify a time frame in which such a decision has to be made. Last year, the Supreme Court observed that anti-defection cases should be decided by Speakers in three months' time.

5.However, Legislators may change their party without the risk of disqualification in certain circumstances. **Exceptions: The law allows a party to merge with or into another party provided that at least two-thirds of its legislators are in favour of the merger.** On being elected as the presiding officer of the House, if a member, voluntarily gives up the membership of his party or rejoins it after he ceases to hold that office, he won't be disqualified.

### THE BURDEN OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON CHILDREN BORN TODAY

1.A study was recently published by Researchers on the impact of climate change on children born today. The study is based on data from the Inter-sectoral Impact Model Intercomparison Project (ISIMIP).

2.How was the study carried out? The ISIMIP data were used alongside country-scale, life-expectancy data, population data and temperature trajectories from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

3.Key findings: Children born today will be hit much harder by extreme climate events than today's adults. During his or her lifetime, a child born in 2021 is likely to experience on average twice as many wildfires, two to three times more droughts, almost three times more river floods and crop failures and about seven times more heat waves compared to a person who is, say, 60 years old today.

4.What needs to be done? **Under a scenario of current "insufficient" climate policies, dangerous extreme heatwave events, which affect about 15% of the global land area today, could treble to 46% by the end of this century.** However, if: Countries are able to follow through with their climate policies as decided under the Paris Climate Agreement, this effect could be limited to 22%, which is just seven percentage points more than the global land area that is affected today. We increase climate protection from current emission reduction pledges and get in line with a 1.5-degree target, we will reduce young people's potential exposure to extreme events on average by 24% globally.

5.What is the Inter-sectoral Impact Model Intercomparison Project (ISIMIP)? **This is a community-driven climate-impacts**

infructuous. Sources said the committee had largely agreed that the clause needed to be appropriately amended. The members demanded that the conditions for making the exemptions be clearly laid down without leaving scope for interpretation.

The Supreme Court said a preliminary enquiry by the CBI into the firecracker industry, including in Tamil Nadu, revealed rampant violation of its ban on use of toxic ingredients like barium and its salts. In March 2020, the court ordered the CBI Joint Director in Chennai to conduct a "detailed" probe into allegations of violation of the court ban in 2018.

Nipah virus antibodies (IgG antibodies) were detected in bat samples collected by the National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune, from Kodiyathoor and Thamarassery in Kozhikode district near the panchayat where a Nipah infection was confirmed last month.

On International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste, the Delhi government organised a workshop to connect food business operators (FBO) such as restaurants and hotels with NGOs distributing food to the needy. The government is also helping NGOs to get registered with it to carry out food donation and ensure quality food is distributed to the needy, said government authorities.

With several large scale employers bouncing back to the usual pace of international recruitments, fraudsters who flourished in illegal recruitment through fake job offers are back. Forging appointment letters from professional recruiters offering attractive pay packages and liberal terms, they target young graduates and skilled workers keen on working in the United Kingdom.

The Taliban government in Afghanistan has written to India's DGCA (Directorate General of Civil Aviation), requesting the resumption of commercial flights between the two countries, according to a senior government official. The letter from the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan was addressed to the DGCA Director-General on September 7, 2021.

The Indian Navy and the Australian Navy signed the 'Terms of Reference' (ToR) for the conduct of the navy to navy talks under the framework of the 'Joint Guidance for the India-Australia Navy to Navy Relationship' document, signed by the two Navy

**modelling initiative that assesses the differential impacts of climate change.** Initiated by the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK) and the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) and has since grown to involve over 100 modelling groups from around the world.

#### **PUNJAB'S DESERTIFICATION IN 25 YEARS**

- 1.The Punjab Vidhan Sabha committee, constituted to study water table depletion, has recently said that the state will turn into a desert in the next 25 years if the present trend of drawing water from underground aquifers continues. This is a prediction that has been made before – over two decades ago, a study on water table depletion in Punjab (The State of the World Report, 1998) had projected almost the same time frame of 25 years, saying aquifers in Punjab could be depleted by 2025.
- 2.How alarming is the water situation in Punjab really? **Out of 138 blocks in Punjab, 109 have already gone into the 'dark' or over-exploited zone, which means groundwater extraction is more than 100 per cent here.** Two fall under the 'dark/critical' zone (groundwater extraction is 90 to 100 per cent), while five are under semi-critical (groundwater extraction 70 to 90 per cent) zone. This means that around 80 per cent blocks of the state have already dried up and four per cent are on the verge of it. Water availability at 3 to 10 meters, which needs a centrifugal pump to extract water, is the most desirable, but currently, water is available at 20 to 30 meters, or more than 30 meters down, in around 84 per cent of Punjab.
- 3.Reasons for this scarcity: More water is being drawn than it is being replenished. The rate of water extraction in Punjab is 1.66 times against the rate of replenishment. Because of the adoption of a faulty cropping pattern. Paddy crop hampers water recharging because of the puddling method used to prepare fields for transplanting.
- 4.What needs to be done? **Farmers must be incentivised to choose cropping patterns that require less water, and go for drip irrigation or other water management mechanisms to save our only available deeper aquifers.**

#### **LANDSAT 9**

- 1.Earth Monitoring Satellite Landsat 9 - a joint mission of NASA and the US Geological Survey (USGS) - was launched recently. Landsat satellites have collected images of our planet and helped understand how land usage has changed over the decades. The first Landsat was launched in 1972. Landsat 9 joins Landsat 8 that was launched in 2013 and the satellites together will collect images of Earth's surface. It takes 8 days to capture the whole Earth. It will make contact with a ground station every few hours and offload its data.
- 2.**As the satellite orbits, these instruments will take pictures across 185 kms and each pixel will represent an area of about 30 meter X 30 meter.** These instruments will measure different wavelengths of light reflected off the Earth's surface. It can see more colour shades with greater depths.
- 3.Uses - **Previously, Landsat images have been used to study the health of forests, coral reefs, monitor water quality and melting glaciers.** Landsat 9 will provide data that can help make science-based decisions on key issues of climate change such as impacts of wildfire, coral reef degradation, the retreat of glaciers, and deforestation. It can help identify water bodies affected by potentially harmful algal blooms.

#### **NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR DOG MEDIATED RABIES ELIMINATION BY 2030**

- 1.National Action Plan for dog Mediated Rabies Elimination by 2030 (NAPRE) was launched recently. It wants to eliminate Dog mediated Rabies (Hadakwa disease) from India by 2030 through One Health Approach including community education, awareness programmes and vaccination campaigns. 33% of global rabies deaths are recorded in India.
- 2.**Rabies Rabies is a zoonotic, viral disease spread to people from the saliva of infected animals. It is a Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD) that mostly affects poor and vulnerable populations. 80% of cases occur in rural areas. Rabies is a 100% fatal but 100% vaccine preventable.** Spread - Dogs are the main source of human rabies deaths, contributing up to 99% of all rabies transmissions to humans. It is also transmitted through bats, coyotes, foxes, raccoons and skunks. In rare cases, rabies can be spread when infected saliva gets into an open wound or the mucous membranes, such as the mouth or eyes.

**Chiefs in August. This is the first such document signed by the Indian Navy with any country. The document set the navy to navy talks as the principal medium for guiding the bilateral cooperation, the Indian Navy said in a statement.**

**Chief Economic Adviser K.V. Subramanian said India would clock more than 7% annual growth during this decade on the back of strong economic fundamentals. During the current fiscal, he said, growth would be in double digits and it could moderate to 6.57% in the next financial year. The Economic Survey 202021, released in January, had projected GDP growth of 11% for the current year ending March 2022.**

**3.Symptoms** - Incubation period for rabies is 2 to 3 months. But this may vary from 1 week to 1 year, depending upon factors like the location of virus entry and viral load. Initial symptoms - Fever with pain and unusual or unexplained tingling, pricking, or burning sensation (paraesthesia) at the wound site. As the virus spreads to the central nervous system, progressive and fatal inflammation of the brain and spinal cord develops. Prevention - Interrupting transmission is feasible through vaccination of dogs and humans, and prevention of dog bites.

**4.Diagnosis** - **Current diagnostic tools are not suitable for detecting rabies infection before the onset of clinical disease. It is diagnosed after rabies-specific signs of hydrophobia or aerophobia are seen.** Treatment of a bite victim after rabies exposure is the Post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP), which prevents virus entry into the central nervous system. PEP consists of: Extensive washing and local treatment of the bite wound or scratch as soon as possible after a suspected exposure; A course of potent and effective rabies vaccine; and Administration of rabies immunoglobulin (RIG), if indicated. WHO leads the 'United Against Rabies' to drive progress towards "Zero human deaths from dog-mediated rabies by 2030".