

### NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHT

Gujarat has topped the list for larger States in the NITI Aayog's State Energy and Climate Index-Round 1 that has ranked States and Union Territories (UTs) on six parameters including discoms' performance, energy efficiency and environmental sustainability. The States have been categorised based on size and geographical differences as larger and smaller States and UTs. The index is based on 2019-20 data. Gujarat, Kerala and Punjab have been ranked as the top three performers in the category of larger States, while Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh were the bottom three States. Goa emerged as the top performer in the smaller States category followed by Tripura and Manipur. Among UTs, Chandigarh, Delhi and Daman & Diu/Dadra & Nagar Haveli are the top performers.

Apple Inc. has started making the iPhone 13 in India, the company said on Monday, as the U.S tech giant tries to reduce reliance on its Chinese supply chain. The phone is being produced at a local plant of Apple's Taiwanese contract manufacturer Foxconn, situated in the town of Sriperumbudur in Tamil Nadu. Apple has been shifting some areas of iPhone production from China to other markets, including India, the world's second biggest smartphone market.

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) on Monday recommended slashing the base price for airwaves by up to 40% across all spectrum bands, including 5G airwaves. The telecom regulator has also suggested that all available spectrum in the existing bands — 700 MHz, 800 MHz, 900 MHz, 1800 MHz, 2100 MHz, 2300 MHz, 2500 MHz — should be put up for auction, along with airwaves in new bands such as 600 MHz.

Dubbed as Asia's largest teak and sal forest, the Barbara forest in Odisha is guarded by the jawans of Central Reserve Police Force (for protecting forest resources). It will soon be open for public from the next tourist season from September. The government is readying the infrastructure to bring the natural forest on ecotourism map.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi wished Pakistan's new PM Shehbaz Sharif on Monday, with a message of

### SCHEME ON FORTIFIED RICE

1. The Union Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved a scheme to distribute fortified rice under government programmes by 2024. During his 2021 Independence Day speech, Prime Minister had announced that by 2024 fortified rice will be made available under every government programme to fight malnutrition.

2. The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister has accorded its approval for supply of fortified rice throughout Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) under the National Food Security Act (NFSA), Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman - PM POSHAN [erstwhile Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDM)] and Other Welfare Schemes (OWS) of Government of India in all states and union territories (UTs) in a phased manner.

3. The entire cost of the scheme of ₹2,700 crore will be borne by the Centre until it is fully implemented by June, 2024. The initiative will be implemented in 3 phases. Food Corporation of India and the state agencies have already procured 88.65 LMT (lakh tonnes) of fortified rice for supply and distribution. A pilot for distribution of fortified rice through PDS was implemented for a period of three years from 2019-2020 across 11 States.

### FORTIFICATION

1. Food Safety & Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) defines fortification as deliberately increasing the content of essential micronutrients in a food so as to improve the nutritional quality of food and to provide public health benefit with minimal risk to health. Technologies - Various technologies are available to add micronutrients to regular rice, such as coating, dusting, and 'extrusion'.

2. The last mentioned involves the production of fortified rice kernels (FRKs) from a mixture using an 'extruder' machine. Considered to be the best technology for India, it involves blending fortified rice kernels with regular rice to produce fortified rice. Working of Extrusion Technology - Dry rice flour is mixed with a premix of micronutrients, and water is added to this mixture. The mixture is passed through a twin-screw extruder with heating zones, which produces kernels similar in shape and size to rice.

3. These kernels are dried, cooled, and packaged for use. FRK has a shelf life of at least 12 months. According to the Food Ministry, every second woman in the country is anaemic and every third child is stunted. Guidelines - As per guidelines of the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, the shape and size of the fortified rice kernel should "resemble the normal milled rice as closely as possible".

4. According to the guidelines, the length and breadth of the grain should be 5 mm and 2.2 mm respectively. 10 g of FRK must be blended with 1 kg of regular rice. FSSAI Norms - According to FSSAI norms, 1 kg of fortified rice will contain the following: iron (28 mg-42.5 mg), folic acid (75-125 microgram), and vitamin B-12 (0.75-1.25 microgram).

5. Rice may also be fortified with zinc (10 mg-15 mg), vitamin A (500-750 microgram RE), vitamin B-1 (1 -1.5 mg), vitamin B-2 (1.25 -1.75 mg), vitamin B-3 (12.5 -20 mg) and vitamin B-6 (1.5 -2.5 mg) per kg.

### STANDING DEPOSIT FACILITY

1. While retaining the Fixed Reverse Repo Rate at 3.35%, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) introduced the Standing Deposit Facility (SDF) at an interest rate of 3.75% to absorb excess liquidity to control inflation. The Standing Deposit Facility (SDF) is introduced nearly 8 years after the Patel Committee propagated an independent, transparent, non-collateralized concurrent offering. It will allow the banks to park their excess funds but without any collateral from RBI.

2. It will be set at 25 basis points below the policy rate (Repo rate). The SDF will replace the Fixed Rate Reverse Repo (FRRR) as the floor of the Liquidity Adjustment Facility corridor. No collateral - In 2018, the amended Section 17 of the RBI Act

peace in a region “free of terror”. In a speech to the National Assembly a few hours earlier, Mr. Sharif said that Pakistan desires good ties with India, which is “not possible without the resolution of the Kashmir dispute”. The comments from both leaders, while different from the period of no bilateral engagement between Indian and Pakistani leaders during the last few years of ousted PM Imran Khan’s tenure, indicated that both sides will maintain their positions on terrorism and Jammu and Kashmir respectively.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and U.S. President Joe Biden met virtually on Monday morning, as External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh were in Washington for the fourth ‘2+2’ foreign and defence ministry dialogues with their U.S. counterparts. The government’s readout of the meeting said the two leaders had discussed Ukraine, as well as regional and global issues, including the COVID-19 pandemic, the global economy, climate and “recent developments in South Asia and the Indo-Pacific region”.

Growth in pre provision earnings and decline in bad loans will improve profitability of banks in the current fiscal, Moody’s Investors Service said in a report on Monday. Better profitability will offset increases in capital consumption due to an acceleration in loan growth, helping banks across the system maintain capital at current levels. Capital ratios at public sector banks have improved in the past year, aided by capital infusions by the Centre, it said.

China said it “noted the political change” in Pakistan, adding that it “will not affect” bilateral relations between the close allies. With Pakistan’s Parliament electing Shehbaz Sharif as the new Prime Minister in the wake of the exit of Imran Khan, Beijing has been closely following the developments in the country it likes to call its “iron brother” and “all weather” ally.

Ukraine said on Monday it expected Russia to launch a huge new offensive soon, as Moscow shifts its focus to seizing territory in the east after its invasion force was driven from the gates of Kyiv this month.

The Supreme Court on Monday decided to examine a plea to simplify the legal process for adoption of children in the country. A Bench led by Justice D.Y. Chandrachud issued notice on the petition filed by an NGO, ‘The

empowered the RBI to introduce the SDF - an additional tool for absorbing liquidity without any collateral. By removing the binding collateral constraint on the RBI, the SDF strengthens the operating framework of monetary policy.

3. Since the SDF comes with the conditionality of no collateral of G-secs to be given by the RBI to banks, it will free up securities from Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR) holdings of banks. This will thus result in lowering of excess SLR holdings and will lead to an increase in demand for bond. Role of SDF - The main purpose of SDF is to reduce the excess liquidity of Rs 8.5 lakh crore in the system, and control inflation.

4. It will be applicable to overnight deposits at this stage. It would, however, retain the flexibility to absorb liquidity of longer tenors as and when the need arises, with appropriate pricing. The SDF is also a financial stability tool in addition to its role in liquidity management.

5. With the Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) at the upper end of the policy corridor at 4.25%, the SDF will make up the duo of standing facilities - one to absorb and the other to inject liquidity.

#### **WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION BILL 2022**

1. The Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Amendment Bill, 2022 has been unanimously passed in Lok Sabha. The Bill seeks to amend the Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Act, 2005.

2. The 2005 Act prohibited the manufacturing, transport, and transfer of weapons of mass destruction, and their means of delivery. It will be amended to provide against the financing of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems in line with India’s international obligations.

3. Definition - India’s 2005 WMD Act defines the Biological weapons and Chemical weapons. “Biological weapons” are Microbial or other biological agents, or toxins of types and in quantities that have no justification for prophylactic, protective or other peaceful purposes; and Weapons, equipment or delivery systems specially designed to use such agents or toxins for hostile purposes or in armed conflict.

4. “Chemical weapons” are Toxic chemicals and their precursors except where used for peaceful, protective, and certain specified military and law enforcement purposes; Munitions and devices specifically designed to cause death or other harm through the toxic properties of those toxic chemicals; and Any equipment specifically designed for use in connection with the employment of these munitions and devices.

#### **QS WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS 2022**

1. Recently, the QS World University Rankings 2022 was released by the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS). Started in 2004, the QS World University Rankings is an annual publication of university rankings. Featuring 1,300 Universities from around the world, the university rankings of the year 2022 is the largest of the rankings.

2. **Methodology - Each institution has been assessed according to the following six metrics: Academic Reputation (40%) Employer Reputation (10%) Faculty/Student Ratio (20%) Citations per faculty (20%) International Faculty Ratio (5%) International Student Ratio (5%)** This ranking can be used to easily compare universities by looking at their score which is from 0 to 100. Findings - In the 2022 ranking, the top rank holders are Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Cambridge, USA, University of Oxford, United Kingdom and Stanford University, United States. IIT-Kharagpur has been ranked 37th in 2022 in mineral and mining engineering and 80th in 2022 in electrical and electronic engineering globally.

3. Jadavpur University is the only state university in India which was ranked in the QS World University Rankings in the sphere of arts and humanities, 2022. Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT) bagged 9th rank in engineering and technology in the country. QS World University Rankings by Subject 2022 The QS World University Rankings by Subject are compiled annually to help prospective students identify leading universities in a particular subject.

4. It covers a total 51 disciplines under 5 broad subject areas. 16 higher education institutes (with 35 programmes) from India were ranked among the top 100 in their subject categories. Two programmes with best performance among Indian Institutes were Saveetha Institute of Medical and Technical Sciences with its

**Temple of Healing.**

Dentistry programme placed at 18; and Indian School of Mines (ISM) University, Dhanbad with its Mineral and Mining Engineering programme placed at 26.