

The city of Visakhapatnam is blessed with a number of sites that have geological importance. One among them is the coastal red sand dunes, popularly known as Erra Matti Dibbalu. The site is located along the coast and is about 20 km northeast of Visakhapatnam city and about 4 km southwest of Bheemunipatnam. It was declared as a Geo-heritage site by the Geological Survey of India (GSI) in 2014 and the Andhra Pradesh government has listed it under the category of 'protected sites' in 2016.

Geologists say that this site has much significance geologically, archaeologically and anthropologically and it needs to be protected for further study and evaluation. Primarily this site needs to be protected to study the impact of climate change, as Erra Matti Dibbalu have seen both the glacial and the warm periods, said adviser to the Geo-Heritage Cell of INTACH (Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage) and former professor of Geology, Andhra University, D. Rajasekhar Reddy.

Heeding to persistent complaints from Mates or site supervisors that their wages under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) are inordinately delayed, the Union Rural Development Ministry has devised a protocol to prioritise payment to mates. Under the MGNREGS, wages of unskilled workers must be paid within 15 days and if there is a delay, the Centre must compensate them. Mates — who are the frontline supervisors of the programme — are listed as semi-skilled workers because of the specialist nature of their job. Owing to the delay, in many States, the mates have started listing themselves as unskilled workers to get the wages on time.

The Ministry, to resolve this bind, has streamlined the process by which the attendance and wages of the mates are recorded. "The muster roll for mates must be issued soon after generating muster roll for unskilled workers. In the software, all other options will be disabled till this is done. It is also proposed that reports on day wise pendency in the payment to mates may also be generated," a senior official said.

Not a single coal based thermal power plant in West Bengal has installed flue gas desulphurisation (FDG), a technology to eliminate sulphur compounds from exhaust emissions, a study has found. According to an analysis by the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA), of the State's total coal-based power generation capacity of 13,686 megawatts (MW), plants contributing 5,695 MW — i.e., nearly 40% of the total capacity — have not yet been awarded contracts for FDG units and are yet to take any serious steps to regulate sulphur dioxide (SO₂) emissions despite the notification in December 2015.

Books on learning to speak, read and write Tamil are the hottest selling books at an exhibition being held at the Banaras Hindu University (BHU), the venue for the ongoing month-long Kashi Tamil Sangamam. The book stall, set up by the Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL) under the Ministry

DELIMITATION COMMISSION EMPOWERED TO REDRAW JAMMU AND KASHMIR CONSTITUENCIES: CENTRE TO COURT

1. The Supreme Court reserved its judgment on the plea challenging the delimitation exercise undertaken in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Plea challenged that delimitation exercise violates Article 170 which provides that the next delimitation in the country will be taken up after 2026.
2. In response, centre stated that Delimitation exercise for J&K could not wait till 2026 since idea was to give immediate democracy to newest Union Territory (UT).
3. The Election Commission of India further submitted that there is a bar on judicial interference, under Article 329(a) of the Constitution of India, regarding the validity of any law relating to the delimitation of constituencies. Supreme Court in Meghraj Kothari vs Delimitation Commission had held that once order is published in the Gazette of India, such an order cannot be reargued before a Court of Law.
4. **Delimitation exercise in J&K-** Before 2019, delimitation in J&K's parliamentary constituencies was governed by Constitution of India, and Assembly constituencies were governed by state government. After abrogation of J&K's special status in 2019, delimitation of both Assembly and parliamentary seats is governed by Constitution.
5. Delimitation is the act of redrawing boundaries of Lok Sabha and Assembly seats to represent changes in population. provides equal representation for equal population segments, and fair division of geographical areas, so that no political party has an advantage. It is done by DC and their orders cannot be questioned before any court. Earlier, DC were set up in 1952, 1963, 1973, and 2002. It is done on basis of preceding Census.

INDIA TO ASSUME CHAIRMANSHIP OF WASSENAAR ARRANGEMENT (WA) ON JANUARY 1, 2023

1. Wassenaar Arrangement is a multilateral export control regime (MECR) that works to promote transparency and responsibility in transfers of conventional arms and dual-use goods and technologies through regular exchanges of information among its members.
2. **WA was established in 1996.** It is a voluntary export control regime consisting of 42 members. India joined WA in 2017 as its 42nd participating state. MECR are voluntary and non-binding agreements. It prevents proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) which includes nuclear, radiological, chemical, biological or another weapon.
3. **Other regimes under MECR includes-** Nuclear Supplier Group (NSG), 1975: Prevents nuclear proliferation by implementing guidelines for nuclear and nuclear-related exports. India is not member of NSG. Australia Group, 1985: Ensures that exports do not contribute to development of chemical or biological weapons. 43 members including India and EU.
4. **Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), 1987:** Prevent proliferation of missile and unmanned aerial vehicle technology capable of delivering WMD. It is not legally-binding treaty. 35 members including India. China is not member of MTCR.

RESERVE BANK OF INDIA (RBI) LAUNCHED FIRST PILOT FOR RETAIL DIGITAL RUPEE

1. **RBI released the central bank digital currency (CBDC)-** digital rupee or e-rupee - for retail customers and merchants. Earlier, RBI launched digital rupee in the wholesale segment to settle secondary market transactions in government securities.
2. Initially, four banks will be involved in controlled launch of digital currency namely, SBI, ICICI Bank, Yes Bank, and IDFC First Bank in Mumbai, New Delhi, Bengaluru and Bhubaneswar cities. These banks will issue digital tokens in the same denominations as paper currency, which can be used to make and receive payments.
3. This is an Indirect model of CBDC. Retail e-rupee will be an electronic version of cash and primarily meant for retail transactions. It'll be potentially available for use by all i.e., private sector, non-financial consumers and businesses. It'll provide access to safe money for payment and settlement, as it will be a direct liability of the central bank. CBDC or Digital rupee is a legal tender issued by RBI in digital form. It is same as fiat currency and exchangeable one-to-one with fiat currency.
4. **Model for issuance and management of CBDC-** Direct model (Single Tier model) where the central bank is responsible for managing all aspects of the CBDC system viz. issuance, account-keeping, and transaction verification. Indirect model (Two-Tier model) where central bank and other intermediaries (banks and any other service providers), each play their respective role.

of Education, includes self-learning books in 11 languages under its “Bhasha Jyoti” initiative.

Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar has said that the world does not know of an instance where a constitution provision, reflecting the will of people, can be undone by the judiciary. Though the Vice-president did not explicitly name the Constitutional amendment, his reference was to the now repealed National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) through the 99th amendment.

One thousand tourist guides, including 146 who can speak foreign languages, would fan out across the 55 locations where G-20 meetings would be held over the next one year to facilitate the travel of foreign delegates and “ensure a unique Indian experience” for them. With India assuming the G-20 presidency on Thursday, the government has embarked on a massive exercise to showcase India and training tourist guides or tourist facilitators is part of this process, a senior official in the Tourism Ministry told.

Describing India as a “strong partner” of the U.S. President Joe Biden on Friday said he was looking forward to supporting his friend Prime Minister Narendra Modi during India’s G-20 presidency. The U.S. President also underlined that both countries “will advance sustainable and inclusive growth while tackling shared challenges like the climate, energy, and food crises.” The next G-20 Leaders’ Summit at the level of Heads of State/Government is scheduled to be held on September 9 and 10 in New Delhi.

The U.S. has added a key ant Pakistani militant group and its al-Qaida branch to its list of “global terrorists,” triggering sanctions against the groups amid a resurgence of militant violence in this nation. Both groups operate from Afghanistan, but they have hideouts in Pakistan’s former tribal regions in the northwest and elsewhere as well.

The Supreme Court on Friday said it had become a “fashion” for its former judges to comment on earlier decisions of the Collegium when they were part of it while adding that the top court was the “most transparent institution”. “We do not want to comment on anything said by former members [of the Supreme Court Collegium] ... We do not want to say or comment on them... Nowadays it has become a fashion to comment on earlier decisions when they were part of the Collegium,” Justice M.R. Shah, leading a Bench, said.

CENTRE TO CUT FUNDS IF THE LAND IS NOT ALLOTTED FOR HOUSING SCHEME (PMAY-G)

1. Centre may withdraw its share of funds allocated to states who are unable to provide land to landless beneficiaries under the centrally sponsored Pradhan Mantri Gramin Awas Yojana (PMAY-G). PMAY-G scheme was launched in April 2016 with a goal of building 2.95 crore houses for the rural poor by March 2022.
2. It was launched by the Ministry of Rural Development. Beneficiaries are selected using housing deprivation parameters in the Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC) 2011 data. Gram Sabha verifies the eligible beneficiaries.
3. It has provisions for convergence with other schemes like providing LPG connection under Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Scheme, etc. Due to the COVID pandemic, the deadline was extended by two-years till March 2022. Till November 2022, 2.06 crore houses had been constructed.
4. **Other Issues faced in Implementation**-Access to finance: The amount of 1.2/1.3 lakh in subsidies is insufficient for building a new house in rural areas.
5. **Convergence**: Various studies and CAG audit reports have pointed out the lack of convergence with other schemes like MGNREGA.
6. **Improper execution in a few states**: Some states delay their contributions which drastically affects progress. E.g. : Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, M.P etc.

HIV INFECTION RATE DECLINES BY 46 PERCENT BETWEEN 2010 AND 2021: NACO

1. On eve of World AIDS Day, the National AIDS Control Organization (NACO) has revealed that the country’s annual rate of HIV infection has declined by 46% between 2010 and 2021 against a global average of 32%. Also, AIDS-related mortalities have declined by 76%. NACO, under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoH&FW), acts as nodal agency for activities of National AIDS Control Program (NACP).
2. **MoH&FW also released several initiatives at the event**. It includes, National Digital Repository, a Digital hub where all resource materials related to HIV and AIDS will be available for the common public. National Data Hub of NACO, central digital repository for key reports, documents, and all approved data of NACO for internal use.
3. **#AbNahiChalega campaign** to eliminate HIV-related stigma and discrimination. World AIDS Day has been globally observed on 1st December since 1988. Theme of World AIDS Day, 2022 is “Equalize”. Equalize slogan call to take practical actions to address inequalities in HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Viruses) infected and affected populations and help in ending AIDS.
4. HIV is a virus that weakens a person’s immune system by destroying important cells that fight disease and infection. Currently, there is no effective cure for HIV. But with proper medical care, HIV can be controlled. If HIV is not treated, it can lead to AIDS.

DIGI YATRA

1. Ministry of Civil Aviation launched Digi Yatra for three Airports in country. Digi Yatra is conceived to achieve contactless, seamless processing of passengers at airports based on Facial Recognition Technology (FRT).
2. It facilitates paperless travel and avoid identity checks at multiple points in an airport. One-time registration on Digi Yatra app is required using Aadhar based validation and a self-image capture. Each passenger would get a unique Digi Yatra ID.
3. Digi Yatra Foundation (DYF) has been set up as a joint venture company with the objective of creating the Digi Yatra Central Ecosystem.



“The perfect right is right now.”

DR. KHAN
(KSG)