

NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHT

Black percher or black ground skimmer (Diplacodes lefebvrii), a species of dragon fly, was sighted for the first time in the Seshachalam Hill ranges recently. It belongs to the phylum arthropoda, class insecta and order odonata.

Welfare societies in Rajasthan are set to get a boost with the State government approving a proposal for allotment of land at concessional prices for their activities. The projects for promoting girls' education and social upliftment will get an impetus with the governments support after a decision of the State Cabinet.

The 100 metre radius around Centrally protected monuments where construction is prohibited could be replaced with site specific limits to be decided by an expert committee, as the Union Culture Ministry was working on amendments to the relevant Act, officials say. The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act, 1958, was amended in 2010 to declare the 100 metre radius of protected monuments as prohibited areas and the next 300metre radius as regulated areas.

The African Union has condemned a recent "wave" of military coups that has seen an unprecedented number of member states suspended from the bloc, a senior official said Sunday, the last day of its annual summit. The putsches were among the main issues expected to be discussed at the summit, along with the AU's ties to Israel and its response to a grinding war in the north of host country Ethiopia.

North Korea pressed ahead with the development of its nuclear and missile programmes last year despite international sanctions, according to a confidential United Nations report. Pyongyang is under major sanctions over its weapons programmes, including a ban on exports of coal, iron, lead, textiles, seafood and other products.

Russia has in place about 70% of the combat power it believes it would need for a full scale invasion of Ukraine and is sending more battalion tactical groups to the border with its neighbour, two U.S. officials said. In the last two weeks, the number of battalion tactical groups (BTG) in the border region has risen to 83 from 60 as of Friday

UNEP@50

1.The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2022. About UNEP: Founded in 1972 following the landmark UN Conference on the Human Environment. UNEP was conceived to monitor the state of the environment, inform policy making with science and coordinate responses to the world's environmental challenges. Major Reports: Emission Gap Report, Global Environment Outlook, Frontiers, Invest into Healthy Planet. Major Campaigns: Beat Pollution, UN75, World Environment Day, Wild for Life.

2.Achievements: Since its creation, UNEP has worked closely with its 193 Member States and other stakeholders to galvanize worldwide commitments and coordinated action to address many of the world's most pressing environmental challenges. It also played a leading role as the docking station for 15 multilateral environmental agreements.

3.Key milestones and timeline: 1972: Maurice Strong is elected as first head of UNEP. 1973: UNEP opens first headquarters. On 2 October at the Kenyatta International Convention Centre. 1973: Leaders sign Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships Known as 1973: States adopt the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). CITES became a UNEP-administered multilateral environmental agreement in 1984. 1974: World Environment Day makes its debut. The world celebrates the first World Environment Day organized by UNEP on 5 June under the theme "Only One Earth." 1974: Regional Seas Programme established. 1976: The Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution (Barcelona Convention) was adopted on 16 February 1976 in Barcelona and entered into force in 1978. 1979: States adopt Convention on Migratory Species. Also known as the Bonn Convention.

4.UNEP hosts the secretariats of many critical multilateral environmental agreements and research bodies. These include the following: **The Convention on Biological Diversity. The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. The Minamata Convention on Mercury, The Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions. The Vienna Convention for the Protection of Ozone Layer and the Montreal Protocol. The Convention on Migratory Species. The Carpathian Convention. The Bamako Convention. The Tehran Convention.**

KEN-BETWA LINK PROJECT

1.Even as the union Cabinet cleared the Rs 44,605-crore Ken-Betwa link project (KBLP) in December 2021 with a eight-year deadline for completion, the project does not have the clearances to start work as yet.

2.Challenges-2018-2021: Ministry of Jal Shakti repeatedly told the Environment Ministry that Madhya Pradesh could not find only 42.06 sq km revenue land for Panna tiger reserve instead of 60.17 sq km — a key precondition for KBLP's final forest clearance.

3.Why was the Project being opposed-The Ken-Betwa river interlinking project will lead to the submergence of a major portion of the core area of the Panna Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh, triggering a major loss of the tiger and its major prey species such as chital and sambar, according to a new study. The project may incur an estimated loss of 58.03 square kilometres (10.07 per cent) of critical tiger habitat (CTH) in the reserve. There will be an indirect loss of 105.23 sq km of CTH because of habitat fragmentation and loss of connectivity due to submergence, the study. The total area submerged would be 86.50 sq km, of which 57.21 sq km lies within Panna Tiger Reserve. This will account for 65.50 per cent of total submergence.

4.Significance of the Project: **The project is slated to irrigate 10.62 lakh hectares annually, provide drinking water supply to 62 lakh people and generate 103 MW of hydropower and 27 MW of solar power.** The project will be of immense benefit to the water-starved Bundelkhand region, spread across

and 14 more are in transit, the officials said.

China and Pakistan on Sunday said they opposed “unilateral actions that complicate” the Kashmir issue, as they pledged closer ties following a meeting between Chinese President Xi Jinping and Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan. A joint statement released following their meeting in Beijing said “both sides reiterated their support on issues concerning each other’s core interests” and “underscored that stronger defence and security cooperation between Pakistan and China was an important factor of peace and stability in the region.”

The code name “GAY” for the airport at Gaya is “offensive, embarrassing and inappropriate” and the government must make all efforts to get it changed, a parliamentary panel has said in its report. The Committee on Public Undertakings in its first report tabled in Parliament in January 2021 recommended changing the code name for Gaya airport, assigned by global trade body International Air Transport Association (IATA). It suggested that a more “appropriate” code like “YAG” may be assigned. “The Committee have their apprehension that Gaya being a holy city, locals might be finding it offensive or embarrassing on their city being recognised in the international community with the code name ‘GAY’

Asserting that the issuance of sovereign green bonds is part of the government’s overall borrowing programme, Economic Affairs Secretary Ajay Seth has said these rupee denominated papers will have long tenure to suit the requirement of green infrastructure projects.

The J&K Delimitation Commission has changed the complexion of most of the 90 Assembly seats, while reconfiguring and renaming 28 new Assembly constituencies and deleting 19 Assembly segments in its interim report. Besides, it has proposed to redraw all the five Lok Sabha seats.

The government will take up the inclusion of Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) in the Goods and Services Tax (GST) system before the GST Council, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Sunday, noting that high global fuel prices are a cause for concern.

Sri Lankan Foreign Minister G.L. Peiris will meet External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, in his first visit to India since being appointed last August. Both sides are expected

Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. The project is expected to boost socio-economic prosperity in the backward Bundelkhand region on account of increased agricultural activities and employment generation. It would also help in arresting distress migration from this region.

GAIL STARTS INDIA’S MAIDEN PROJECT OF BLENDING HYDROGEN INTO NATURAL GAS SYSTEM IN INDORE

1. In line with National Hydrogen Mission, GAIL has commenced India’s first-of-its-kind project of mixing hydrogen into the natural gas system to establish the techno-commercial feasibility of blending hydrogen in City Gas Distribution (CGD) network. The project has been initiated in Indore, Madhya Pradesh. GAIL has started injecting grey hydrogen. This grey hydrogen would subsequently be replaced by green hydrogen. The hydrogen blended natural gas will be supplied to Avantika Gas Ltd, one of GAIL’s joint venture with HPCL, for retailing of CNG to automobiles and piped natural gas to households in Indore.
2. Government is planning to blend 15% green hydrogen with piped natural gas (PNG) for domestic, commercial and industrial consumption.
3. Importance of blending Hydrogen with natural gas: It is easier and safer to use than hydrogen as it contains very low energy content from hydrogen i.e., up to 30% by volume. Hydrogen-enriched compressed natural gas (HCNG) will ensure 70% more reduction in carbon monoxide emissions compared to CNG. Power output of HCNG is also better than CNG ones. Blending integrates concentrations of hydrogen into existing natural gas pipelines and reduces carbon intensity of methane.
4. **Significance of Hydrogen Based economy: Due to its ability to power fuel cells in zero-emission electric vehicles, its potential for domestic production, and the fuel cell’s potential for high efficiency hydrogen is considered an alternative.** Water is the only by-product that results from the usage of hydrogen fuel that makes the fuel 100 per cent clean. Hydrogen can also serve as fuel for internal combustion engines. The energy in 2.2 pounds (1 kilogram) of hydrogen gas contains about the same as the energy in 1 gallon (6.2 pounds, 2.8 kilograms) of gasoline.

SENTINEL ON THE QUI VIVE

1. Sentinel on the qui vive is usually translated as watchful guardian. Qui vive means watchful or alert.
2. Supreme Court recognised this phrase in State of Madras v. VG Row. Union of India & State (1952), where the Court has been given the role of “Sentinel on the Qui Vive” with regards to the “fundamental rights”.

MAJOR NON-NATO ALLY(MNNA)

1. US has designated Qatar a MNNA. What is a MNNA? It is a designation given by the United States government to close allies that have strategic working relationships with the US Armed Forces but are not members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).
2. Nations with MNNA designation are eligible to, among other things, host U.S. war reserve stockpiles of material inside their countries.
3. While MNNA status provides military and economic privileges, it does not entail any commitments to the designated country. India is not a MNNA of US.

SIRUVANI DAM

1. Tamil Nadu has urged Kerala to maintain the storage of the Siruvani dam up to its full reservoir level (FRL). About Siruvani dam: It is located in Palakkad District, Kerala. Built across the Siruvani river, a tributary of Bhavani River which forms part of the Cauvery basin.
2. **It was constructed in 1984 for supplying drinking water to the city of Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu.**
3. The catchment is in the reserve forests of both Kerala and Tamilnadu. Muthikulam hill is situated on the eastern side of the dam.

RECLINING LORD VISHNU

1. **A 1,000 years old sandstone sculpture of the reclining Lord Vishnu has been restored by Indian National Trust for Art and Culture Heritage.** The Statue is situated in Bandhavgarh National Park (Madhya Pradesh).
2. This is the first conservation and restoration project

to discuss India's economic support to Sri Lanka, plans for new infrastructure projects and pending issues over fishermen's rights.

With no headway in sight on the implementation of the purview of the Krishna and Godavari River Management Boards, the Ministry of Jal Shakti (MoJS) has decided to hold a third meeting of the apex council soon to convince Telangana and Andhra Pradesh to hand over the management of all projects to the two river boards.

undertaken by INTACH in Madhya Pradesh.

3. Popularly known as Shesh Shaiyya, the sculpture belongs to Kalchuri period (8th century, feudatories of the Rashtrakutas at central part of India).