

NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHT

India has achieved clean energy targets nine years ahead of schedule, Union Power Minister R.K. Singh said at the Sydney Energy Forum in Sydney on Wednesday. India has installed 162 GW (1 GW is 1,000 MW) of renewable energy capacity, which is 41% of the 402 GW of electricity installed. "We reached this target on November 2021. In 2015, India committed to ensuring that 40% of its energy would be from renewable sources by 2030 as part of its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC).

The World Health Organization's Science Council, in its first report, has called for accelerating access to genomics across the world. The report argues that it is not justifiable ethically or scientifically for countries with lesser resources to gain access to such technologies long after the rich countries do. The field of genomics tries to use human genetic material to study and research cures and treatments for medical conditions, and is used in a wide range of applications in animal sciences, and agriculture.

India ranks 135 among a total of 146 countries in the Global Gender Gap Index, 2022, released by the World Economic Forum on Wednesday. The country is the worst performer in the world in the "health and survival" subindex in which it is ranked 146. The Global Gender Report, 2022, which includes the index, says it will now take 132 years to reach gender parity, with the gap reducing only by four years since 2021 and the gender gap closed by 68.1%. But this does not compensate for the generational loss between 2020 and 2021 as the trends leading up to 2020 showed that the gender gap was set to close within 100 years.

Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, who fled the island nation and took refuge in the Maldives early on Wednesday, ahead of his promised resignation, appointed Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe as Acting President, the Parliamentary Speaker said. The announcement came even as protesters overran the Premier's office in Colombo, in the middle of agitations against the leader, now as unpopular as the President who appointed him two months ago amid political turbulence in the wake of a daunting economic crisis.

OPEN ACREAGE LICENSING PROGRAMME

1. The Government has launched the eighth round of Open Acreage Licensing Programme. The Hydrocarbon Exploration and Licensing Policy (HELP) was promulgated in 2016. It was launched with the vision of reducing hydrocarbon import dependency by 10% by 2022. The objective is to boost the production of oil & gas in the Indian sedimentary basin.

2. It adopts the Revenue Sharing Contract model and has replaced the earlier model of Production Sharing Contract (PSC) to improve the 'Ease of Doing Business' in the Indian Exploration and Production (E&P) sector. Under HELP Open Acreage Licensing (OAL) mechanism has been launched. It allows the investors to carve out blocks of their choice by assessing Exploration and production (E&P) data available at National Data Repository (NDR) & by submitting an Expression of Interest (EoI).

3. These blocks are subsequently offered biannually through formal bidding process. Special features of the programme are Single license that will cover exploration and production of all types of hydrocarbon viz. conventional oil and gas, coal-bed methane, shale oil, gas hydrates, etc. Reduced and graded royalty rates - To encourage exploration in deep water and ultra-deep water areas, the royalty was exempted for first seven years.

4. Subsequently royalty of 5% and 2% applicable in deep water and ultra-deep water areas. Exemption of cess on crude oil and custom duty applicable on equipment/ services for exploration and production activities. Full marketing and pricing freedom of gas produced. Extended period for exploration and production i.e. 8 years for onland/ shallow water and 10 years for deep water/ frontier areas.

5. The Government has now launched the OALP Bid Round-VIII, offering 10 blocks, for International Competitive Bidding. The Ten blocks under present bid are spread across 9 Sedimentary Basins and include two on land blocks, four shallow Water blocks, two Deep Water Block and two Ultra-Deep Water blocks.

MANGARH HILLOCK

1. National Monuments Authority (NMA) has submitted a report on declaring Mangarh hillock in Rajasthan as a monument of National Importance to Minister of State for Culture. The unsung heroes and Mangarh hillock haven't received the importance in history which they deserved. Mangarh Hillock - The hillock is situated at the Gujarat-Rajasthan border.

2. The place is also known as the Adivasi Jallianwala. 1500 Bhil tribal freedom fighters were brutally killed by the British army on 17th November 1913. To pay our tribute to them, on the occasion of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav the GoI is exploring the possibility of declaring Mangarh Hillock a monument of national importance.

3. **Bhil Tribes-Bhils are popularly known as the bow men of Rajasthan. Their name is derived from the word villu or billu. They are the most widely distributed and the largest tribe of the South Asia. Bhils comprise 39% of Rajasthan's total population.** Bhils are classified as Central or pure bills Eastern or Rajput Bhils. The central Bhils are found in the mountain regions in the Indian states of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujrat and Rajasthan.

4. Bhils are also found in the north eastern parts of Tripura. The name Bhil is also found mentioned in the great epic called Mahabharata and Ramayana in context of Eklavya. The endogamous tribe speak Bhili, an Indo Aryan language. Earlier they were the great hunters but they now practice agriculture as the source of livelihood. They are also demanding a separate state of Bhil Pradesh.

CHENKURINJI

1. The species Chenkurinji is very susceptible to climate change. Their present condition is quite bad and requires greater

12.6 lakh informal workers added to the staffing industry in India in 2021, driven by demand in industries like fast moving consumer goods, ecommerce and manufacturing, according to the Indian Staffing Federation (ISF) annual report. ISF is the apex body representing the manpower outsourcing industry in India. In 2021, the informal workforce demand grew at a modest 3.6%. The report added that digital adoption across sectors drove the demand for new employees.

5.9 lakh tonnes, the rise in India's palm oil imports in June 2022, according to industry body Solvent Extractors Association (SEA). India, the world's leading vegetable oil buyer, imported 5.87 lakh tonnes of palm oils in June 2021. The association demanded the government to increase the quota fixed for duty free import of crude soyabean and sunflower oil under the Tariff Rate Quota system to boost domestic availability. The share of palm oil is about 50% of the country's total vegetable oil imports.

9.1 In percentage, the surge in U.S. inflation in June which is a 40 year high, according to the Labour Department. Government data showed a sharp, faster than expected increase in the consumer price index (CPI) from the previous month driven by the significant rise in gasoline prices. The CPI spike over the past 12 months to June was the fastest increase since November 1981. This situation has strained American families, heaping pressure on President Joe Biden, whose ratings have taken a battering from the relentless rise in prices.

As light travels with a velocity of about 3,00,000 km per second, light from a distant object will take time to reach us on Earth. Hence, when we see a distant stellar object, we see it as if it were far back in time. To collect more light we need giant infrared telescopes. JWST is the biggest infrared telescope ever built. The first five images released are — the deep field image of the SMACS 0723 cluster of galaxies which date back to times when the first stars were born, the Carina Nebula vividly showing the birth of new stars, the Southern Ring Nebula which details a dying star, the Stephan's quintet where we can see the cataclysmic cosmic collision of galaxies and finally the WASP96 b, an exoplanet (a planet orbiting a distant star).

India and China are scheduled to hold the 16th round of Corps

conservation measures. Chenkurinji (*Gluta travancorica*) belongs to the Anacardiaceae family. The heartwood is quite sturdy with deep red colour. It is endemic to the Agasthyamala Biosphere Reserve. **The Shendurney Wildlife Sanctuary derives its name from the species. The tree is also seen inside the shola forests near Ponmudi, Pandimala, Vilakkumaram and Rosemala.**

2.The tree was once abundant in the hills on the southern parts of Aryankavu Pass but its presence has been fast receding from the area over the years. It is very susceptible to climate change and the present condition of the species is quite bad with low regeneration performance. The species is facing inbreeding depression. Though there are seemingly enough number of the trees, most are not productive, generating a negative trend in its population.

3.Majority of the trees are old with poor flowering and fruiting rates. At present, we have a few young generation trees, and if we plant some now, we will have flowering trees within the next 25 years. Flowering usually happens in January. However the species has reported a tendency to extend the process due to climate change. It's an adaptation strategy to increase the chances of germination and maintain a minimum viable population.

4.The plant lowers blood pressure and treat arthritis. The conservation measures in the past weren't totally successful. As a new measure the department is launching 'Save Chenkurinji', a campaign to be implemented in various areas coming under the Achencoil Forest Division.

5.The department looks to plant thousands of saplings in the ghat sectors of Kollam and Pathanamthitta districts. The officials have also identified around 75 schools in the area where Chenkurinji will be grown with the support of students. Apart from schools, saplings will be planted in public places.

LANCE SYSTEM

1.Lockheed Martin has delivered a LANCE system to the Air Force Research Laboratory of the US Air Force for operational testing. LANCE refers to Laser Advancements of Next-Generation Compact Environments (LANCEN). The system is one-sixth the size of the other laser energy systems being developed by the company. Now the device will be tested after being mounted on an aircraft.

2.The development holds importance as it can be mounted on a fighter aircraft, or any aircraft for that matter. It will give the US Air Force the capability of shooting down incoming anti-aircraft missiles, thus giving it a crucial edge over its adversaries. At present, LANCE has been manufactured for a defensive role. It could also be furthered as an offensive weapon, one that could not only shoot down aircraft and drones, but also be mounted atop ground- and sea-based mobile platforms for offensive roles.

3.Apart from the US, several other countries have robust laser energy weapon development programmes. This includes China, Russia, Israel, Germany, France and India. Israel recently tested its laser weapon to shoot down a drone from the ground. India, too, is developing a directed energy weapon named DURGA II, which stands for Directed Unrestricted Ray-Gun Array. It is said to be a light energy weapon of 100 kilowatt capacity.

AGUMBE GHAT

1.Landslip-affected Agumbe Ghat was thrown open for light motor vehicle traffic. Heavy rain caused a landslide in Agumbe ghat connecting Shivamogga and Udupi districts. Agumbe Ghat - Agumbe, popularly known as the 'Cherrapunji of South'. It is a tiny village nestled in the thick rainforests of Western Ghats in Karnataka.

2.**It is situated in the Thirthahalli taluka of Shimoga district of North Karnataka. It is one of the last surviving rainforests in India which receives an average of around 7,000mm of rainfall annually. Agumbe is registered as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is famous for its rich biodiversity, waterfalls and red-hazy sun-set over the Arabian Sea.**

3.The village is also known as the 'Cobra Capital' of India because of the number of Cobras that are found here and could be encountered while driving along the Ghats. It is also a home to more than 70 other species of snakes. The debris of the landslide were cleared and the ghat is now open for light motor vehicle traffic.

4.Agumbe is associated with rainforest conservation efforts, documentation of medicinal plants, tourism (trekking and

Commander talks on July 17 on the Chinese side at Moldo as part of efforts to take forward the stalled process of disengagement and de-escalation in eastern Ladakh.

The Tamil Nadu government has established District Climate Change Missions in all 38 districts. The missions will be headed by the Collectors as Mission Directors. The District Forest Officers will function as Climate Officers. The missions will help strengthen the government's climate response at the grassroots.

The "delicate task" of deciding whether juveniles aged between 16 and 18, accused of heinous offences such as murder, can be tried like adults should be based on "meticulous psychological investigation" rather than be left to the discretion and perfunctory "wisdom" of juvenile justice boards and children's courts across the country, the Supreme Court held in a judgment.

photography), and the promotion of cottage industry. The Agumbe Rainforest Research Station was established as a sanctuary for the King Cobra, Agumbe's flagship species.