

### NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHT

**37 India's rank in the World Competitiveness Index, an annual index compiled by the Institute for Management Development based on gains in economic performance. India has witnessed the sharpest rise among the Asian economies, with a jump of six positions from 43rd rank in 2021. Denmark has moved to the top of the 63 nation list from the third position last year, while Switzerland slipped from the top ranking to the second position and Singapore reached the third spot from fifth, a global study showed.**

**Eminent Urdu scholar and former president of Sahitya Akademi Prof.. Gopi Chand Narang passed away in the United States on Wednesday. Through his perceptive analysis, academic rigour, and theoretical grounding, Prof. Narang was instrumental in making literary criticism a fullfledged branch of knowledge in Urdu literature.**

**India is a global security power and the U.S. is keen for India to project this power, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia, Donald Lu, said. Mr. Lu said India was "not only a security provider in the narrow Indian subcontinent" but "a global security power now". "And that's what's in the interest of the United States — that you are militarily ready, but that you are also able to project that power far beyond your borders, because we are partners that share a common view of the security of Asia and of the world and we want India to be able to project that power."**

**The World Trade Organization on Wednesday extended its negotiations by a day amid growing doubts they would find consensus on any change to global trade rules and India adamant it would not yield on food, fisheries and vaccines. During the WTO's ministerial conference this week, its first major meeting in over four years originally set to end on June 15, the 164 member body is seeking to agree on a response to the COVID19 pandemic, a reduction of fishing subsidies, pledges on food security and the launch of an internal reform.**

**Schneider Electric has unveiled solutions to equip the IT infrastructure and data centre industry with the ability to ensure net zero operations and sustainability. "There is an insatiable demand for data centres,"**

### THE AGNIPATH SCHEME

**1.It is a scheme for recruiting soldiers across the three services for 4 years for personnel below officer ranks. Around 50,000 soldiers will be recruited annually. Recruitment will be done twice a year. Soldiers recruited under the scheme will be called Agniveers. Post service Opportunities - After 4 years they can apply for regular employment in the armed forces.**

**2.They may be given priority over others for various jobs in other government departments. After 4 years 25% of Agniveers will be allowed to continue for another 15 years under permanent commission. For those who are re-selected, the initial 4 year period will not be considered for retirement benefits. The move is expected to decrease the average age profile of armed forces personnel from the current 32 to 24-26 years over a period of time Eligibility criteria – Age limit - 17.5 years to 21 years.**

**3.Salary - The 'Agniveers' will receive an annual package of Rs. 4.76 lakh in the first year to Rs. 6.92 lakh in the fourth year. Seva Nidhi programme - 30% of their salary will be set aside for Seva Nidhi programme. Government will also contribute an equal amount every month, and it will also accrue interest. At the end of the four-year period, each soldier will get Rs 11.71 lakh as a lump sum amount, which will be tax-free.**

**4.Insurance cover - 'Agniveers' will be provided a non-contributory life insurance cover of Rs. 48 lakh during their service. In case of death, the payout will be over Rs 1 crore, including pay for the unserved tenure. In case of disability attributable to service up to Rs. 44 lakh based on the percentage of disability, apart from full pay for the unserved period, including 'Seva Nidhi' with interest as applicable, has been made.**

### APEDA-MANGO FESTIVAL

**1.Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) has launched an 8 day Mango Festival in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The festival has been organised in association with the Indian Embassy and Al Jazira Group supermarket.**

**2.This is expected to give a major boost to the export of mangoes. Earlier mostly mango varieties from Southern and western regions like Alphonso, Kesar, Banganpalli were showcased in most of the global shows.**

**3.This year 34 varieties of Indian mangoes from eastern states of West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh and Odisha have been displayed at eight different stores of Al Jazira.**

**4.Some of the varieties include – Bihar's Jardalu - a GI-tagged variety. Jharkhand's Kamli and Biju Odisha's Benganpalli Langra, Himsagar and Dusseri varieties of Uttar Pradesh Bhavani, Lakshman Bhog, Rasagolla, Amrapali, Golapkhas etc.. from West Bengal.**

### BIMSTEC TECHNOLOGY

**1.Transfer Centre The Union Cabinet has approved a Memorandum of Association (MoA) by India for establishment of BIMSTEC Technology Transfer Facility (TTF) at Colombo, Sri Lanka. It was signed by the BIMSTEC member countries at the 5th BIMSTEC Summit held at Colombo, Sri Lanka on 30th March, 2022.**

**2.TTF shall have a Governing Board and the overall control of activities of the TTF shall be vested in the Governing Board. The Governing Board consists of one nominee from each Member State. Objective - Promoting of transfer of technologies, sharing of experiences and capacity building among the Member States.**

**3.The TTF shall facilitate transfer of technologies in the priority areas like Biotechnology, Nanotechnology, Information and Communication Technology, Space technology applications, Agriculture, Food processing, Pharmacy, New and renewable energy, Oceanography, Nuclear Technology Applications, E-waste and solid waste management, Health, Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation.**

said Pankaj Sharma, executive vice-president, Secure Power Division, Schneider Electric. Though decarbonisation at data centres had accelerated in the recent past, data centres of the future needed to be more sustainable, efficient, adaptive, and resilient, he stressed. Based on a Schneider Electric projection, total energy consumption by the IT sector would be 2,700 terrawatt-hours (TWh) by 2040, with 60% coming from distributed sites and 40% from data centres.

The Union Cabinet has approved the auction of airwaves capable of offering fifth generation, or 5G, telecom services, including ultra highspeed Internet, and gave its nod for setting up of captive 5G networks by big tech firms. The auction of over 72 GHz of the spectrum will be held by July end, said an official statement detailing the decision taken by the Union Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at its meeting held on Tuesday. The spectrum auction will start on July 26, 2022. Sources said that the Cabinet has approved 5G auctions at reserve prices recommended by the sector regulator, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI).

India's merchandise exports in May rose by 20.6% to \$38.94 billion, while the trade deficit ballooned to a record \$24.29 billion, government data released on Wednesday show. Imports surged 62.8% to \$63.22 billion. The trade deficit stood at \$6.53 billion in the same month last year.

The European Commission launched new legal action against Britain on Wednesday, accusing London of putting peace in Northern Ireland at risk by trying to overhaul the post-Brexit trade deal. "The U.K. government tabled legislation confirming its intention to unilaterally break international law," EU commission vice president Maros Sefcovic said.

Egypt, Israel and the European Union on Wednesday signed a deal to increase liquified natural gas sales to EU countries, who aim to reduce their dependence on supplies from Russia as the war in Ukraine drags on.

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said on Wednesday he will attend this month's NATO summit in Madrid, becoming the country's first leader to join a top meeting of the transatlantic alliance.

Seventy five projects of transformed urban spaces, including waterfronts, transit hubs and markets or plazas,

4. The expected outcomes of the BIMSTEC TTF are: Databank of technologies available in BIMSTEC Countries, Repository of information on good practices in the areas of technology transfer management, standards, accreditation, metrology, testing and calibration facilities, Capacity building, sharing of experiences and good practices in development, and Transfer and use of technologies among BIMSTEC countries.

#### TWIN CYCLONES

1. The symmetric tropical cyclones on either side of the equator are known as Twin Cyclones. For example Cyclone Asani in the northern hemisphere and Cyclone Karim in southern hemisphere. Cyclone Fani over the Bay of Bengal and Cyclone Lorna over the southern Indian Ocean. Both the cyclones were formed at almost uniform longitude.

2. Causes - Twin cyclones are not really rare. The interplay of the wind and the monsoon system combined with the Earth system produces these synchronous cyclones. Rossby waves are huge waves in the ocean with wavelengths of around 4,000–5,000 kms.

3. The vortex in the northern latitudes moves anticlockwise and has a positive turn, whereas the one in the southern hemisphere turns clockwise and it has a negative spin.

4. This structure has a whirlpool in the northern latitudes and the other in the southern region which is mirror images of one another. Both have a positive vortex value (measure of spin). Twin cyclones are formed from these Rossby waves.

#### HETEROLOGOUS BOOSTER VACCINE

1. With the number of cases, raising by the thousands on a daily basis the debate about getting a booster or precaution dose has gotten shriller. The debate has also increasingly called to question of whether the booster dose should be homologous or heterologous. A homologous booster shot involves the administration of the same vaccine as previously administered, while a heterologous booster shot involves the administration of a different vaccine.

2. There are growing scientific evidences that a booster dose with a COVID-19 vaccine different from the one used for the first immunisation raised antibody levels more than a booster with the same vaccine. 3. Also use of heterologous booster vaccines could simplify the logistics as booster formulation could be administered regardless of the primary series.

4. So it would be prudent for governments, including in India, to switch to a heterologous booster regimen to allow more persons eligible for the vaccine and able to pay for it access it in the market.

#### DEADLINE FOR FREEZING ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARIES EXTENDED, NO CENSUS THIS YEAR

1. The census exercise, which was originally scheduled to take place in 2021, has been further pushed to 2023-24. Why has census been postponed? Normally, before every Census, states are required to provide information on changes in the number of notified districts, villages, towns and other administrative units such as tehsils, talukas and police stations to the Registrar General of India (RGI). After this RGI freezes the administrative boundaries so that census tasks can begin. However, this time, RGI has extended the deadline for freezing administrative boundaries to December 31, 2022. Since the Census can only begin a few months after the administrative boundaries are frozen, the possibility of a Census in 2022 is ruled out.

2. Census in India: Definition: Population Census is the total process of collecting, compiling, analysing and disseminating demographic, economic and social data pertaining, at a specific time, of all persons in a country or a well-defined part of a country. First Non-synchronous Census: It was conducted in India in 1872 during the reign of Governor-General Lord Mayo. First Synchronous Census: The first synchronous census was taken under British rule on February 17, 1881, by C. Plowden (Census Commissioner of India). The decennial Census is conducted by the Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, Ministry of Home Affairs.

3. Sixteenth Census (2021): (Postponed) It will be the first digital Census, also with a provision for self-enumeration. It is for the first time that information about households headed by a person from the Transgender Community and members living in the family will be collected. Earlier there was a column for males and female only.

selected by the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) in a recently released compendium, would serve as examples where harmonised guidelines on accessibility are fully implemented.

Youth recruited in the armed forces under the short term 'Agnipath' scheme can be called back if the situation demands, particularly in case of a fullfledged war, Lt. General K.K. Repswal, Chief of Staff, Eastern Command, said.

The Foreign Minister of Myanmar is unlikely to be part of the 24th ASEAN India Ministerial here on Thursday, an official source indicated. Myanmar's representation at the meeting was in focus as India had been under pressure to avoid inclusion of Myanmar in the high level meeting.

4.How is National Population Registry different from Census? The objective of the NPR is to create a comprehensive identity database of every usual resident in the country and it is "mandatory for every usual resident of India to register in the NPR." While similar data is collected through Census, according to Section 15 of the Census Act, 1948, all individual level information collected in Census is confidential and "only aggregated data are released at various administrative levels."