

NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHT

Tamil Nadu topped the State Food Safety Index (SFSI) this year, followed by Gujarat and Maharashtra. Among the smaller States, Goa stood first, followed by Manipur and Sikkim. Among the Union Territories, Jammu and Kashmir, Delhi and Chandigarh secured the first, second and third ranks. The SFSI measures the performance of States on the basis of five parameters set by the Health Ministry. The rating is done by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).

2 million tonnes, the cap amount of grains Ukraine will be able to export if Russia refuses to lift its blockade of the country's Black Sea ports, according to Taras Vysotskyi, Ukraine's first deputy Minister of Agrarian Policy and Food. Ukraine is trying to export its grain to help avert a global food crisis, but the routes face severe constraints. Before Russia invaded Ukraine, the country was able to export up to six million tonnes of grain a month. Since shipments from Ukraine's Black Sea ports stopped, more than 20 million tonnes of grain are stuck.

600 \$ billion, the value of India's home mortgage market after five years, according to Deepak Parekh, chairman of HDFC Ltd. Mr. Parekh in his annual letter to shareholders expressed his optimism about the home buying market, "...never been as optimistic about the demand for home loans as I am currently. Despite the recent headwinds in the global macro landscape, I continue to maintain this stance," he said. He claimed that in the past 46 years, HDFC has financed over 9.3 million housing units.

27 people killed in Sudan's west and south due to ethnic clashes. In separate incidents, clashes broke out in the restive Darfur region in a bitter land dispute, leaving 16 dead, as well as in the South Kordofan state, where 11 people died after an argument escalated into wider gun battles. It is the latest in the several rounds of clashes pitting largely settled farmers against seminomadic Arab pastoralist groups. This violence comes as Sudan is still grappling with the fallout from a coup in October last year.

2.3 billion dollars, the amount Chinese banks have agreed to refinance Pakistan with, in order to help it bolster its depleting

SINGLE USE PLASTICS

- 1.The Centre writes to the States to phase out the Single Use Plastic (SUP). SUPs, or disposable plastics, are those plastic products that have a one-time use before they are thrown away or recycled. These items are things like plastic bags, straws, coffee stirrers, soda and water bottles and most food packaging.
- 2.Often these kinds of plastic are not disposed of properly, therefore not recycled. World-wide only 10-13% of plastic items are recycled. Nature of petroleum based disposable plastic makes it difficult to recycle and they have to add new virgin materials and chemicals to it to do so. Additionally, there are a limited number of items that recycled plastic can be used.
- 3.Problem - Petroleum based plastic is not biodegradable and usually goes into a landfill where it is buried or it gets into the water and finds its way into the ocean. Although plastic will not biodegrade, it will degrade into tiny particles after many years. In the process of breaking down, it releases toxic chemicals (additives that were used to shape and harden the plastic) which make their way into our food and water supply.
- 4.These toxic chemicals are now being found in our bloodstream and they disrupt the Endocrine system which can cause cancer, infertility, birth defects, impaired immunity and many other ailments.
- 5.Three-stage Ban A government committee has proposed a 3-stage ban of the SUP items to be banned based on an index of their utility and environmental impact.

PUBLIC INTEREST STANDARD

- 1.Indian government endorsed a "public interest" standard with South Africa in order to reduce the impact of monopolies on the availability, supply, and access of medicines, vaccines, and other essential medical products. This "public interest" standard was endorsed by submitting to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) a waiver of monopolies based on a combo of patents, preventive tools in the pandemic across the world, etc.
- 2.This is a 'Waiver' proposal that calls for specific provisions of the agreement on Trade-related aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) to be waived temporarily by WTO member. Intellectual property (IP) systems should balance the protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights (IPR) with public interest considerations. Article 7 of the TRIPS Agreement recognises this balance, providing that the protection and enforcement of IP rights should contribute.
- 3.To the promotion of technological innovation and To the transfer and dissemination of technology, To the mutual advantage of producers and users of technological knowledge and In a manner conducive to social and economic welfare, and To a balance of rights and obligations.
- 4.Article 8 allows members to adopt measures necessary to promote the public interest, including protecting public health - as long as those measures are consistent with the TRIPS Agreement.

AGNI-4 MISSILE

- 1.India has successfully tested the Agni-4 Missile from APJ Abdul Kalam Island, Odisha. This successful test reaffirms India's policy of having a 'Credible Minimum Deterrence' Capability. Agni-4, earlier known as Agni II prime, is an Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile (IRBM).
- 2.It is one of many in the Agni series (I to V) of strategic missiles. It is a 2-stage, surface-to-surface missile that is 20 metres long and weighs 17 tonnes. It has a range of over 3,500 km. It was developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- 3.Tri-Service Strategic Forces Command (SFC) has the Prithvi-II (350-km), Agni-I (700-km), Agni-II (2,000-km), Agni-III (3,000-km) and Agni-IV missile units. But the induction of the country's first intercontinental ballistic missile Agni-V (over 5,000-km) is currently in an advanced stage.

YANKTI KUTI VALLEY

foreign exchange reserves. This comes as a huge relief for the cash-starved country. Pakistan is facing an uncertain economic situation due to a delay in the revival of a stalled multi billion dollar International Monetary Fund programme. Pakistan is facing growing economic challenges, with high inflation, sliding forex reserves, a widening current account deficit and a depreciating currency.

On the last day of his nine day international tour that concluded in Qatar, Vice President Venkaiah Naidu said "inclusion" is the firm foundation underlying the Indian Constitutional architecture and it finds an echo in the philosophy of the Modi government, which believes in "sabka sath, sabka vikas, sabka vishwas."

In its responses to the diplomatic storm over the comments made by leaders Nupur Sharma and Naveen Kumar, the government took a stern view of the statement by the 57member Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), but it subsequently made a special effort at ensuring that Indian Ambassadors based in every OIC country were briefed and sent "talking points" to deal with the situation on June 5.

The World Bank cut India's economic growth forecast for the current fiscal to 7.5%, as rising inflation, supplychain disruptions and geopolitical tensions dampen recovery. This is the second time the World Bank has revised its GDP growth forecast for India in the current fiscal FY23. In April, it had trimmed the forecast from 8.7% to 8%. The latest estimate compares with the 8.7% expansion in FY22.

Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Tuesday that India's growing flock of retail investors in the stock market has emerged as a 'shock absorber' amid an exodus of funds from foreign portfolio investors or FPIs. The last eight months have seen a persistent decline in FPI exposures to Indian equities, with May 2022 recording an outflow of \$5.7 billion, the highest since March 2020.

Apple will have to change the connector on iPhones sold in Europe by 2024 after EU countries and lawmakers agreed on Tuesday to a single mobile charging port for mobile phones, tablets and cameras in a world first. The political intervention came after companies failed to reach a common solution. Brussels has been pushing for a single mobile charging port for more than a decade, prompted by complaints from iPhone and Android

1. Multiple events of glacial advances have been witnessed from the Yankti Kuti valley situated in Uttarakhand, since 52 thousand years (MIS 3) that synchronises with climate variability, according to a new study. Yankti Kuti valley is a Himalayan valley situated in the extreme eastern part of Pithoragarh district, Uttarakhand.

2. **Located in the Kumaon region, the Kuti Valley is the last valley before the border with Tibet. This valley runs along a North-West to South-East axis, formed by the river Kuti Yankti. [Kuthi Yankti is one of the two headwaters of the Kali River, the other being the Kalapani River that flows down from the Lipulekh Pass.]**

3. It is mainly dominated by Byansis, one of the 4 Bhotiya communities of Kumaon, with the others being Johar, Darmiya and Chaudansi. Claims - In 2020, Nepal laid claim to the northeastern half of the valley, claiming that Kuthi Yankti represented the Kali River and it was meant to be Nepal's border by the 1816 Sugauli Treaty. India said that the claim was not based on historical facts and evidence.

SANT KABIR

1. Indian President inaugurated the Sant Kabir Academy and Research Centre Swadesh Darshan Yojana and paid tribute to the Bhakti saint Kabir at Maghar (Uttar Pradesh). Sant Kabir was born in Varanasi and lived between the years 1398 and 1448, or till the year 1518. He was from a community of 'lower caste' weavers of the Julaha caste, a group that had recently converted to Islam.

2. **He was a member of the Nirguni tradition, a school within the Bhakti movement. In this tradition, God was understood to be a universal and formless being. Kabir is also believed to be a disciple of the famous guru Ramananda, a 14th century Vaishnava poet-saint. Beliefs - Kabir is in modern times portrayed as a figure that synthesized Islam and Hinduism.**

3. Kabir's beliefs were deeply radical, and he was known for his intense and outspoken voice which he used to attack the dominant religions and entrenched caste systems of the time. Instead of God being an external entity that resided in temples or mosques, Kabir argued that God existed inside everyone. In many of his verses, Kabir proclaimed that people of all castes have the right to salvation through the bhakti tradition.

4. In the Sikh tradition he is seen to have influenced Guru Nanak, for Hindus he is a Vaishnavite, and is revered by Muslims as a Sufi saint. Compositions - Kabir's compositions can be classified into 3 literary forms Dohas (short 2 liners), Ramanas (rhymed 4 liners), Sung compositions of varying length, known as padas (verses) and sabdas (words).

5. He composed his verses orally and is generally assumed to be illiterate. Kabir's own humble origins and his radical message of egalitarianism fostered a community of his followers called the Kabir Panth. According to legends, Kabir is said to have departed the mortal world in Maghar.

BHAKTI MOVEMENT

1. The Bhakti movement, which began in the 7th century in South India, had begun to spread across north India in the 14th and 15th centuries. The movement was characterized by popular poet-saints who sang devotional songs to God in vernacular languages.

2. Many preached for abolishing the Varna system and some kind of Hindu-Muslim unity. They emphasized an intense emotional attachment with God. Many of the saints of the Bhakti movement came from the ranks of the lower to middle artisanal classes.

3. Kabir was a 'low caste' weaver; Raidas was a leather worker and Dadu a cotton carder. Their radical dissent against orthodoxy and rejection of caste made these poet-saints extremely popular among the masses and their ideology of egalitarianism spread across India.

SAMBANDAR

1. Context: Ten antiquities (sculptures) retrieved from Australia and the United States were handed over to the Government of Tamil Nadu in Delhi last week. This included the sculpture of Dancing child-saint Sambandar. Sambandar of the 12th century belongs to the Chola dynasty.

2. He was a contemporary of Appar, another Saiva poet-saint. He is one of the Muvar, the three principal saints of South India. He composed an oeuvre of 16,000 hymns in complex meters.

3. Sambandar was one of the nayanmars, a group of sixty-three

users about having to switch to different chargers for their devices.

Cambodia denied again on Tuesday that it will allow any Chinese military presence at a port where it and China are beginning an expansion this week that has prompted concern in the United States and elsewhere that it will be used by Beijing as a naval outpost on the Gulf of Thailand.

saints active in South India from the sixth to the ninth century who were instrumental in popularizing the worship of Shiva through devotional poetry and song.