

NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHT

A recent study by scientists has suggested a significant decline in the habitat of the golden langur (*Trachypithecus geei*), an endangered primate species distributed in the transboundary region of Bhutan and India. A recent paper titled "Future simulated landscape predicts habitat loss for the golden langur: a range level analysis for an endangered primate" throws light on whether the habitat of the endangered primate is protected or not.

Antarctic sea ice this year shrank to its lowest minimum extent since satellite records began in 1979. The minimum extent of 1.92 million square kilometres, recorded on February 25, was 1,90,000 square kilometres less than the previous record in 2017. Researchers say that the low was partly caused by strong winds pushing the ice to warmer waters, where it melted.

Many key species in Africa have not had their genomes sequenced, and whatever has been sequenced are by researchers outside the continent. But now researchers leading the African BioGenome Project want to correct this. They want to sequence multiple genomes including those of 1,05,000 endemic plants, animals, fungi, and other eukaryotes.

India and Japan set an investment target of "five trillion yen" (\$42 billion) in the next five years, the leaders announced after a meeting in New Delhi for the 14th annual summit, where several agreements were signed. The two sides discussed various regional issues during the meeting. Prime Minister Narendra Modi briefed his Japanese counterpart, Fumio Kishida, about the situation at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China, and attempts by the People's Liberation Army (PLA) at "multiple transgressions" along the LAC.

India's oil imports from the United States will rise by 11% this year, officials said on Saturday, as the severely energy deficient Asian nation looks to secure supplies from producers around the world, including heavily sanctioned Russia. The surge in oil prices following Russia's invasion of Ukraine last month threatens to fan Indian inflation, stretch public finances and hurt growth just when it was emerging from a pandemic induced

MINA SWAMINATHAN

1.The passing of Mina Swaminathan comes as a loss to generations of researchers, practitioners and activists who drew inspiration from her work. Born in 1933, Mina was the daughter of civil servant and economist S Bhoothalingam and Tamil writer "Krihika" Mathuram Bhoothalingam. In Cambridge, Mina met her husband, agricultural scientist MS Swaminathan. [After the devastation caused by the Bengal famine, Swaminathan chose to study agriculture.

2.He became the leader of the Green Revolution in India, and first awardee of the World Food Prize.] Mina was a pioneering educator, researcher and activist for women's equality. She was an educationist in the field of pre-school education. "Social justice demands attention to the preschool child because the first 5 years are crucial for all forms of development."

3.She was a friend of India's children, especially those without privilege. In 1979, she wrote about the children of the urban poor, as there was an exclusive focus on rural India. Mina was deeply involved in trailblazing initiatives such as the Centre for Women's Development Studies (CSDS) and Mobile Creches.

4.**Report on ICDS - As chair of the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) Committee on 'The Preschool Child' in 1970, she steered the development of the Report on the Preschool Child (1972).** This report became the basis of the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) in India, the largest programme of its kind in the world. Fifty years ago, she proposed setting up anganwadis across the country.

RISKS TO INDIAN ECONOMY

1.The officials of the Reserve Bank of India have said that India's macroeconomic fundamentals remain strong but the unfolding global developments pose downside risks in terms of spillover. Ongoing geopolitical crisis has heightened the uncertainty clouding the global macroeconomic and financial landscape even as the world economy struggles to recover from the pandemic. 2.This uncertain economic outlook had increased risks to the emerging economies. Although India was making steady progress on the domestic front, the spiralling oil and gas prices and unsettled financial market conditions posed fresh headwinds to the incomplete global recovery. 3.Rapid and large withdrawal of fiscal support has risked pushing the economy over the cliff into a sharp downturn.The RBI has continued with an accommodative stance even as inflation has inched up and left the key lending rate unchanged, keeping it at record lows in the last policy announcement made in February 2022.

STEEL SCRAP RECYCLING POLICY

1.Ministry of Steel notified the Steel Scrap Recycling Policy in 2019. The Policy provides a framework to facilitate and promote establishment of metal scrapping centers in India for scientific processing & recycling of ferrous scrap generated from various sources. It provides standard guidelines for collection, dismantling and shredding activities in an organized, safe and environmentally sound manner in order to curb pollution and prevent health hazards. 2.Under this Policy, the Government will act as the facilitator to create conducive eco-system for the entrepreneurs and investors to establish scrapping centres in the country. The scrapping centres are approved by the State Governments/Union Territories.

3.**Features - To promote circular economy in the steel sector. To promote a formal and scientific collection, dismantling and processing activities for end of life products that are sources of recyclable (ferrous, non-ferrous and other non-metallic) scraps** Setting up of an environmentally sound management system for handling ferrous scrap. Processing and recycling of products in an organized, safe and environment friendly manner.

4.To produce high quality ferrous scrap for quality steel production thus minimizing the dependency on imports. To decongest the Indian cities from ELVs and reuse of ferrous scrap. To create a mechanism for treating waste streams and residues

slowdown.

As foreign companies seek to exit Russia over the war in Ukraine, they face the prospect that Russian bankruptcy law could be used to seize assets and even lead to criminal penalties.

NoBroker, a proptech firm, has partnered with charging platform, ElectricPe, to set up 1,00,000 electric charging points at residential communities across the country this year. The alliance would see charging stations set up across residential welfare societies, apartments, gated communities and standalone buildings, to offer residents easy access to electric-vehicle (EV) charging points. "Lack of charging infrastructure has been a major hurdle for EV acceptance in the country".

In what they call surprise findings, Johns Hopkins Medicine scientists report that unlike fruit flies, mosquitoes' odour sensing nerve cells shut down when those cells are forced to produce odour related proteins. This "expression" process apparently makes the bugs able to ignore common insect repellents. In contrast, when odour sensors in fruit flies are forced to express odour receptors, it prompts flight from some smelly situations. So the researchers designed their research project suspecting they'd find that mosquitoes have the same reaction as fruit flies when their new odour sensors are forced to be expressed.

Sri Lanka cancelled exams for millions of school students as the country ran out of printing paper with Colombo short on dollars to finance imports, officials said.

Russian forces pushed deeper into Ukraine's besieged and battered port city of Mariupol on Saturday, where heavy fighting shut down a major steel plant and local authorities pleaded for more Western help.

Russia said on Saturday that it had unleashed hypersonic missiles against an arms depot in Ukraine, the first use of the next generation weapons in combat, after Kyiv's embattled leader pressed for "meaningful" talks to halt an invasion now in its fourth week.

The government is accused of saffronising education but "what is wrong with saffron", Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu asked on Saturday as he called for a total rejection of the Macaulay system of education from the country. Indians must give up their "colonial mindset" and learn to take pride in

produced from dismantling and shredding facilities in compliance to Hazardous & Other Wastes (Management & Transboundary Movement) Rules, 2016.

5.To promote 6Rs principles of Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Recover, Redesign and Remanufacture through scientific handling, processing and disposal of all types of recyclable scraps including non-ferrous scraps, through authorized centers / facility.

NATIONAL RAIL PLAN VISION-2030

1.Indian Railways have prepared a National Rail Plan (NRP) for India - 2030. The National Rail Plan (NRP) is to create a 'future ready' Railway system by 2030. NRP is aimed to formulate strategies based on both operational capacities and commercial policy initiatives to increase modal share of the Railways in freight to 45%.

2.The objective is to create capacity ahead of demand, which in turn would cater to future demand right up to 2050 and increase the modal share of Railways to 45% in freight traffic and to continue to sustain it. Key objectives of the NRP - Reduce transit time of freight substantially by increasing average speed of freight trains to 50Kmph.

3.As part of the National Rail Plan, Vision 2024 has been launched for accelerated implementation of certain critical projects by 2024 such as 100% electrification, Multi-tracking of congested routes, Upgradation of speed to 160 kmph on Delhi-Howrah and Delhi-Mumbai routes, Upgradation of speed to 130kmph on all other Golden Quadrilateral-Golden Diagonal (GQ/GD) routes and Elimination of all Level Crossings on all GQ/GD route.

4.58 Super critical Projects of total length of 3750 kms and 68 Critical Projects of total length of 6913 kms have been identified for completion by 2024. Identify new Dedicated Freight Corridors and, new High Speed Rail Corridors. Assess rolling stock requirement for passenger traffic as well as wagon requirement for freight.

5.Assess Locomotive requirement to meet twin objectives of 100% electrification (Green Energy) and increasing freight modal share. Assess the total investment in capital that would be required along with a periodical break up. Sustained involvement of the Private Sector in areas like operations and ownership of rolling stock, development of freight and passenger terminals, development/operations of track infrastructure etc.

INDIA'S ARCTIC POLICY

1.Ministry of Earth Sciences released India's Arctic policy titled 'India and the Arctic: building a partnership for sustainable development'. India's Arctic policy would play an essential role in preparing the country for a future where humankind's biggest challenges, like climate change, can be addressed through collective will and effort.

2.India's Arctic policy lays down six pillars: **Strengthening India's scientific research and cooperation, Climate and environmental protection, Economic and human development, Transportation and connectivity, Governance and international cooperation, and National capacity building in the Arctic region.**

3.Implementing India's Arctic policy will involve multiple stakeholders, including academia, the research community, business, and industry. India's Arctic policy aims to promote the following, Strengthening national capabilities and competencies in science and exploration, climate and environmental protection, maritime and economic cooperation with the Arctic region. Institutional and human resource capacities will be strengthened within Government and academic, research and business institutions. Inter-ministerial coordination in pursuit of India's interests in the Arctic.

4.Enhancing understanding of the impact of climate change in the Arctic on India's climate, economic, and energy security. Contributing better analysis, prediction, and coordinated policymaking on the implications of ice melting in the Arctic on India's economic, military and strategic interests related to global shipping routes, energy security, and exploitation of mineral wealth.

5.Studying linkages between Polar Regions and the Himalayas. Deepen cooperation between India and countries of the Arctic region under various Arctic forums, drawing expertise from scientific and traditional knowledge. Increase India's participation in the Arctic Council and improve understanding of

their Indian identity, the Vice-President said in his address after inaugurating the South Asian Institute of Peace and Reconciliation at the Dev Sanskriti Vishwa Vidyalaya, Haridwar.

the complex governance structures in the Arctic, relevant international laws, and geopolitics of the region.