

## NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHT

India, once again, abstained as the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) voted 1415 (35 abstentions) to condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine, calling upon Moscow to unconditionally withdraw its troops. Voting on the resolution occurred after representatives of more than 120 countries, territories and associations, made remarks over two days at a special emergency session of the UNGA. The session was convened after a similar resolution failed to pass the UN Security Council (UNSC) on Friday when Russia exercised its veto.

The Indian FMCG industry witnessed a consumption slowdown in urban markets and degrowth in rural areas in 2021 as the sector was hit hard by higher inflation levels forcing companies to go for successive price increases, according to data analytics firm Nielsen IQ. In 2021, the FMCG industry had to go for double digit price growth in three consecutive quarters to protect its margins, which converted into a price driven growth of 17.5% in comparison to a year ago in 2020.

Private equity investments in the Indian agritech space grew more than 50% annually to aggregate approximately ₹6,600 crore till 2020, according to a new report by Bain & Company and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). Titled 'Innovation in India's Rural Economy: Disruptive Business Models are Stimulating Inclusive Growth in Agriculture and Rural Finance', the report showed that India's rural economy contributed close to half of the nation's overall GDP in 2019-2020. "Two thirds of India's population participated in its rural economy in the past two years, and agriculture — the largest sub-sector within the rural economy, had the highest share of output, contributing approximately 37% of the total rural GDP," the authors said.

While Indians accept women as political leaders, they mostly favour traditional gender roles in family life, says a report released by the Pew Research Center, a Washington DC based nonprofit organisation.

Amid the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had a telephone conversation with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday evening. This

## MONTREUX CONVENTION

1. In response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Turkey is activating the Montreux Convention on naval passage through the Black Sea Straits. **Implementation of the Montreux convention would limit the movement of Russian warships between the Mediterranean Sea and the Black Sea.** Straits - Also known as the Turkish Straits, the Black Sea Straits are the Bosphorus and Dardanelles straits.

2. These straits connect the Aegean Sea and the Black Sea via the Sea of Marmara. It is the only passage through which the Black Sea ports can access the Mediterranean and beyond. Montreux Convention of 1936 Regarding the Regime of the Straits is an international agreement governing the Bosphorus and Dardanelles Straits in Turkey. This pact says that Turkey has control over both the Black Sea Straits. In the event of a war, the pact gives Ankara the right to regulate the transit of naval warships and to block the straits to warships belonging to the countries involved in the conflict.

3. Exception - Article 19 of the treaty contains an exception for the countries on the Black Sea that can effectively undermine Turkey's power in blocking the Russian warships entering or exiting the Black Sea. This Article says, "Vessels of war belonging to belligerent powers, whether they are Black Sea Powers or not, which have become separated from their bases, may return thereto." That means warships can return to their original bases through the passage and Turkey cannot prevent it.

4. The condition also applies to Russian fleets currently in the Black Sea that belong to a base in the Mediterranean or Baltic Sea. Russia is free to take them out of the Black Sea.

5. Official Assignment - **The official assignment of a ship to a port determines whether it has the right to pass through the Straits or not. This assignment, according to the International Maritime Organization (IMO) falls under the authority of the state** that owns the ships. Therefore, another possible way for Russia to exploit the Montreux Convention would be to reassign some of its vessels to the Black Sea.

## BILATERAL SWAP ARRANGEMENT

1. Japan and India renews Bilateral Swap Arrangement of up to \$75 billion. Bilateral Swap Arrangement is a two-way arrangement where both authorities can swap their local currencies in exchange for the US Dollar.

2. It aims to strengthen and complement other financial safety nets. It will further deepen financial cooperation between the two countries and contribute to regional and global financial stability.

## KONARK SUN TEMPLE

1. Konark is going to be the first model town in Odisha to shift from grid dependency to green energy by using solar energy in Sun Temple. The name Konark derives from the Sanskrit words 'kona' (angle) and 'ark' (the Sun).

2. Located on the coastline in the state of Odisha, the temple was built c. 1250 CE by King Narasimhadeva I of the Eastern Ganga dynasty (8th century CE - 15th century CE). The Konark Sun Temple is dedicated to the Hindu Sun God Surya. The temple follows the Kalinga or Orissa style of architecture, which is a subset of the nagara style of Hindu temple architecture.

3. **Each structure built in the Sun Temple represents the passage of time. Stone-carved wheels - The 12 stone-carved wheels of the Temple represent the 12 months of a year. These wheels that are found at the base of the temple also show time.** Each wheel here has 8 spokes. The spokes of the wheel form the shape of a sundial.

4. Each spokes represent a 'prahar' which is a 3-hour period, adding up to 24 hours which is a day. Sun chariot - The temple is shaped in the form of a huge sun chariot. This chariot is drawn by 7 horses, which represents seven days of a week. Like the temples of Khajuraho, the Konark Sun Temple also has an abundance of sculptures that depict kama, artha, dharma and moksha that are the four major pursuits of life.

was the second conversation between the two leaders in the past seven days. Mr. Modi spoke to Mr. Putin hours after the Indian Embassy in Ukraine issued an "urgent advisory" for all Indian nationals in the wartorn eastern city of Kharkiv and urged them to leave by early evening. Before that, the newly appointed Ambassador of Russia to India assured that Moscow was considering a humanitarian corridor for foreign nationals stuck in Kharkiv.

India's manufacturing sector saw an expansion in output and new orders in February as per the IHS Markit Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI), which rose to 54.9 from 54 in January. A PMI reading above 50 indicates expansion in activity levels.

Oil prices surged as supply disruption fears mounted following hefty sanctions on Russian banks amid the intensifying Ukraine conflict, while traders scrambled to seek alternative oil sources in an already tight market.

The United States is imposing additional sanctions on Russia and also targeting Belarus in response to Russian President Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine, the White House said.

Ukrainians said on Wednesday they were battling on in the port of Kherson, the first sizeable city Russia claimed to have seized, while air strikes and bombardment caused further devastation in other cities, especially Kharkiv in the east.

India is clearly the natural leader in the region in terms of the vision the Quad signs up to in the Indo-Pacific region, and the multination defence exercise, MILAN, in Vishakapatnam demonstrates the cooperation in the IndoPacific, Australian High Commissioner to India, Barry O'Farrell said.

India is positioned to become the leading hub of global app innovation, Purnima Kochikar, vice-president Play Partnerships at Google, said. Speaking at the Appscale Academy launch, she said, "India is increasingly transforming into an app first country. Today, India is uniquely positioned to become a leading hub for global app innovation with tremendous opportunity for Indian start ups across the country, regardless of size and location, to thrive in the global app ecosystem," she said.

India's merchandise exports rose 22.3% to \$33.81 billion in February, while imports shot up 35% to

5.The temple was also known as Black Pagoda or Kaala Pagoda by the European sailors, as the temple was dark in colour and a major landmark for the sailors. The Konark Sun Temple is one of the UNESCO World Heritage Site in India for its unique model of antique architecture.

## POCSO ACT 2012

1.The Bombay High Court grants protection to a director in the POCSO case. The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act is meant to protect children from offences of sexual assault, sexual harassment and pornography. The Act provides for the establishment of Special Courts for trial of offences and related matters, keeping the best interest of the child as of paramount importance at every stage of the judicial process.

**2.The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child was ratified by India in 1992. This Convention requires sexual exploitation and sexual abuse to be addressed as heinous crimes.** Salient features - The Act is gender neutral, and it defines a child as any person below 18 years of age. The Act regards the best interests and welfare of the child as a matter of paramount importance at every stage so as to ensure the healthy physical, emotional, intellectual and social development of the child.

3.It defines different forms of sexual abuse, including penetrative and non-penetrative assault, as well as sexual harassment and pornography. It deems a sexual assault to be "aggravated" under certain circumstances, such as, When the abused child is mentally ill or When the abuse is committed by a person in a position of trust or authority vis-à-vis the child, like a family member, police officer, teacher, or doctor. People who traffic children for sexual purposes are also punishable under the provisions relating to abetment in the Act.

4.The Act prescribes stringent punishment graded as per the gravity of the offence, with a maximum term of rigorous imprisonment for life, and fine. It defines "child pornography" as any visual depiction of sexually explicit conduct involving a child which include photograph, video, digital or computer generated image indistinguishable from an actual child, and image created, adapted, or modified, but appear to depict a child.'

5.The Act recognizes that the Intent to commit an offence, even when unsuccessful for whatever reason, needs to be penalized. The Act also provides for punishment for abetment of the offence, which is the same as for the commission of the offence. Related Link - POCSO (Amendment) Act, 2019 POCSO

**6.e-Box for Children This e-Box is an online complaint box for reporting child sexual abuse. It is a National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) initiative to help children report such crimes directly to the Commission.** The online complaint management system enables easy reporting and timely action against the offenders under the POCSO Act, 2012.

## INDIA SPECIFIC IPCC REPORT

1.The report identifies India as one of the vulnerable hotspots, with several regions and important cities facing very high risk of climate disasters such as flooding, sea-level rise and heat-waves.

2.Mumbai is at high risk of sea-level rise and flooding. Ahmedabad faces serious danger of heat-waves. Several cities, including Chennai, Bhubaneswar, Patna and Lucknow, are approaching dangerous levels of heat and humidity. Infrastructure, including transportation, water, and sanitation and energy systems has been compromised by extreme and slow-onset events, with resulting economic losses, disruptions of services and impacts to well-being. **3.Urban India is at greater risk than other areas with a projected population of 877 million by 2050, nearly double of 480 million in 2020. At present, wet-bulb temperatures in India rarely exceed 31 degrees C, with most of the country experiencing maximum wet-bulb temperatures of 25-30 degrees C, according to Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).**

**4.Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC): It is an intergovernmental body of the United Nations responsible for advancing knowledge on human-induced climate change. It was established in 1988 by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Headquarter: Geneva, Switzerland.** Function: To provide policymakers with regular assessments of the scientific basis of climate change, its impacts and future

**surpass \$55 billion, widening the trade deficit to \$21.2 billion, as per preliminary foreign trade estimates. The trade deficit, which shrank to about \$17 billion in January, had earlier hit a record \$22.9 billion in November 2021, and had averaged \$21.7 billion between September and December. February's deficit was more than twice as wide as the pre-pandemic level of February 2020. Fertiliser imports surged more than sevenfold last month to touch \$1.6 billion, while coal imports more than doubled to \$2.8 billion.**

risks, and options for adaptation and mitigation.