

NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHT

The Union Labour and Employment Ministry launched the “donate a pension” scheme allowing any citizen to pay the premium amount on behalf of an unorganised worker under the Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi MaanDhan Scheme. The pension scheme, which was launched in 2019, allows unorganised sector workers between the age of 18 and 40, who earn up to ₹15,000 a month, to enroll by paying a premium amount between ₹55 and ₹200, depending on the age, that would be matched by the government. On reaching the age of 60, the beneficiaries would get a ₹3,000 monthly pension. As of March 3, the scheme had 46.34 lakh enrollments, according to the Labour Ministry’s portal.

Exports of agricultural and processed food products rose more than 23% to \$19.7 billion during April-January 2021-22 compared with the year earlier period, the Commerce Ministry said.

Russia declined to attend a hearing at the UN’s top court on Monday at which Ukraine is asking for an immediate order to halt the conflict, the head judge said. “The court Zegrets the nonappearance of the Russian Federation in these oral proceedings,” International Court of Justice President Joan Donoghue said.

“Direct conversation” with Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky may help Moscow find a solution to the ongoing war, Prime Minister Narendra Modi told Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday. Mr. Modi spoke with the Russian leader after a similar conversation with Mr. Zelensky when he conveyed Indian concerns on the evacuation of the students stranded in the Ukrainian city of Sumy.

The rupee sank to a record low of almost 77 against the U.S. dollar as the Russia-Ukraine conflict sent crude oil prices soaring to 14-year highs prompting safe haven flows into the dollar. “The parabolic rise in crude oil prices towards multi-year highs and spiralling commodity prices are fuelling inflationary risks, which is a key headwind for the rupee dollar exchange rate.

Mining behemoth Coal India will not have the luxury to retain its loss-

SILICOSIS

1.Silicosis is ravaging mine and factory workers in several villages of Jharkhand. Silicosis is a type of pulmonary fibrosis, a lung disease caused by breathing in tiny bits of silica, a common mineral found in sand, quartz and many other types of rock. It usually happens in jobs where you breathe in dust that contains silica. [High-risk jobs are construction work, stone countertop fabrication, foundry work, ceramics manufacturing, mining and hydraulic fracturing (fracking).]

2.Over time, exposure to silica particles causes scarring in the lungs, which can harm your ability to breathe. Symptoms of silicosis usually appear after many years of exposure. In early stages, symptoms are mild and include cough, sputum and progressive shortness of breath. As the scarring continues to worsen, the first real signs of a problem may be an abnormal chest X-ray and a slowly developing cough.

3.Complications from silicosis can include tuberculosis, lung cancer, chronic bronchitis, autoimmune disorders and kidney disease. Treatment - There is no cure for silicosis, but treatment is available, and employers and workers can take steps to prevent it.

4.Medications (Inhaled steroids reduce lung mucus; Bronchodilators help relax your breathing passages; Oxygen therapy) Lung transplant surgery Cigarette smoking adds to the lung damage caused by silicosis. Quitting smoking is an important part of managing the disease.

BLACK-NECKED CRANES

1.Recently, a pair of black-necked cranes was seen in eastern Ladakh. Black-necked cranes (*Grus nigricollis*) are the only cranes to live in mountains. This alpine crane inhabits remote areas of the Tibetan plateau.

2.Black-necked Crane is the only crane species to migrate between winter and summer grounds. Courtship - Its breeding range includes the Himalayan Mountains, as well as parts of central China and northern India.

3.A pair claims ownership over a large tract of wetland, chasing away rival claimants. Then courtship begins when they dance together. When the time comes, both adults choose an islet on which they pile aquatic vegetation and mud into mounds. They nest in the same spot every year .

VAN GUJJARS

1.Van Gujjars are forest-dwelling, nomadic and transhumant community. Vangujjars are said to be migrated from Northwest India about 300 years ago and during the period of King Aurangzeb rule they have been converted to Muslims. They inhabit the foothills of Himalayan States such as Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir.

2.They are pastoralists who let their buffalo herds graze in the forest areas for their livelihoods. They adopted nomadism along with their buffalo herds in Tarai and Bhabhar region of Himalayas. Seasonal Movements - Buffalo grazing is adapted by seasonal movements in keeping with climatic variations prevailing between different altitudes of the mountain region of the Himalayas.

3.They spend autumn (October – April) in the lower ranges of Chillarveli in the Shiwaliks. Then, they move up in the summer and rainy season (May to Sept) to the bugyals (grasslands) in the higher alpine regions of the Himalayas viz., Uttarkashi, Badrinath, Kedarnath and Gangotri areas.

4.This highly ecologically sensitized movement is disturbed by the eviction of Van Gujjar families by the forest department which enclosed the forest area by declaring it as the Rajaji National Park in 1983. Forests Rights Act 2006 has ensured that even pastoralists possess rights to access grazing pastures in lieu of the Community Forest Resource right they are eligible for.

FUSOBACTERIUM

1.Several groups have corroborated the finding that oral tumours

making mines with its aim to remain competitive in the wake of privatisation of coal blocks, a senior government official said on Monday. It is also expected that India will have a surplus of coal for thermal power plants by next year even though electricity demand grows by 6%, he said. "Reforms will make the coal sector more vibrant for consumers of the dry fuel but there will be a churn in mining activities.

Russia announced humanitarian corridors would open in several Ukrainian cities on Monday, after terrified civilians came under fire in two previous attempts and with Moscow's forces pummeling cities across the country.

The Centre on Monday told the Supreme Court that induction of women cadets in National Defence Academy (NDA) has been a major policy decision and it needs at least three months for deliberating implications in the long term for induction and deployment of exNDA women cadets in the Indian armed forces.

The Andhra Pradesh Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy on Monday gave its nod for making a legislative amendment to enable students to select Urdu as a second language alongside Telugu.

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Monday said that the Delhi government's Happiness Curriculum, Entrepreneurship Mindset Curriculum and Deshbhakti Curriculum will now be implemented in private schools.

Commodity prices went on the rampage on Monday as industrial buyers and traders scrambled to source raw materials hit by supply disruptions caused by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Nickel soared 30%, platinum hit a record and gold broke through \$2,000 an ounce on safehaven appeal, while oil and wheat jumped to 14-year highs

China's export growth slowed in the January-February period largely due to base effects, and though the data beat expectations, Russia's invasion of Ukraine has heightened uncertainty over the outlook for global trade this year.

"setbacks" in India-China ties do not serve the interests of both countries, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said on Monday, calling on ties "to move forward on the right track".

Union Minister of State Jitender Singh's recent statement in Parliament that the Centre had cleared a proposal to set up a

among Indian patients are not driven by HPV infection but by the Fusobacterium. Since the beginning of the 20th Century, Fusobacterium is known that infections could play a role in cancer, with 18-20% of cancers associated with infectious agents.

2.This could be relatively higher in developing countries like India, than in the developed countries where the incidence of human papillomavirus (HPV) genome is more. **Fusobacterium species is a genus of anaerobic, elongated, Gram-negative, non-sporeforming bacteria, similar to Bacteroides. They are common obligately anaerobic bacteria of the oral cavity that may act as a bridge between early and late colonizing bacteria in dental plaque and have a role in oral and extra-oral infections.**

3.There are multiple species of Fusobacterium, but the one most associated with human disease is F. Necrophorum. F. Necrophorum is a cause of periodontal disease, tonsillitis, peritonsillar abscess, and thrombophlebitis of the jugular vein (Lemierre syndrome). Fusobacterium nucleatum has a crucial role in oral biofilm structure and ecology, as revealed in experimental and clinical biofilm models.

GLOBAL TREATY ON PLASTIC POLLUTION

1.The United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) is going to start writing a global treaty on plastic pollution. The final resolution will take into account the "full life cycle of plastics" - Production, Design, Recycling and Management of plastic waste. The final resolution, which will be arrived by the members of the UNEA who held talks in Nairobi, is heavily influenced by the Rwanda-Peru joint draft resolution.

2.**It recognizes the significant contribution made by workers under informal and cooperative settings to collecting, sorting and recycling plastics in many countries.** This resolution urged the UN Environment Programme to convene an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) to complete its work by end of 2024.

3.Provisions of Resolution The treaty on plastic pollution, which includes both microplastics and marine litter, will have both binding and voluntary approaches. The proposed INC has to include provisions of promoting national and international co-operative measures and national action plans to work towards the prevention, reduction and elimination of plastic pollution.

4.The treaty will also specify arrangements for capacity building, technical assistance, technology transfer and financial assistance. It also indicated the possibility of a global dedicated fund and invited governments and other stakeholders to provide budgetary resources.

5.The blueprint for the plastic pollution resolution is being compared to the Montreal protocol to prevent ozone layer depletion and the Paris accord in terms of their open endedness.The extraction phase of the fossil fuels by the oil, gas and coal companies is the source of around 99% of plastics.

6.**Green Washing Greenwashing is the process of conveying a false impression or providing misleading information about how a company's products are more environmentally sound.**

It is considered an unsubstantiated claim to deceive consumers into believing that a company's products are environmentally friendly.

ADVANCED VERSION OF BRAHMOS

1.The Indian Navy successfully test-fired a naval variant long-range version of the BrahMos cruise missile recently. About BrahMos: Jointly developed by India and Russia. Extended range: 350 to 400-km. Speed: Flies almost three times the speed of sound at Mach 2.8. Types: Can be launched from submarine, ships, aircraft or land.

2.**Nomenclature: The name BrahMos is a blend formed from the names of two rivers, the Brahmaputra of India and the Moskva of Russia.** Engine: First stage: Solid rocket booster; Second stage: Liquid ramjet (airbreathing jet engine).

3.Significance: It is the world's fastest Anti-Ship Cruise Missile currently in operation. Future plans: In 2016, as India became a member of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), India and Russia are now planning to jointly develop a new generation of Brahmos missiles with 800 Km range.

NORTHERN RIVER TERRAPIN

1.It is a species of riverine turtle native to Southeast Asia. IUCN Status: Critically endangered. Habitat: Currently found in

nuclear power plant at Kovvada in Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh, abutting the proposed executive capital city of Visakhapatnam, has sparked another round of protests. At the same time, there are also protests at the other end of the State, in Tummalapalle, Kadapa district, over uranium mining and its associated risks to health and environment, as well as issues of rehabilitation and resettlement.

Bangladesh and India(in the Sunderbans), Cambodia, Indonesia and Malaysia.

2.It is regionally extinct in Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. Context: Experts and forest officials had installed GPS transmitters on Northern River Terrapin in Indian Sundarbans.

3.In just six weeks after the release, at least three of the ten individuals have travelled hundreds of kilometers and are now in Bangladesh.