

### NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHT

The Supreme Court on Thursday, in a judgment championing the importance of “cooperative federalism” for the wellbeing of democracy, held that Union and State legislatures have “equal, simultaneous and unique powers” to make laws on Goods and Services Tax (GST) and the recommendations of the GST Council are not binding on them. The apex court’s decision came while confirming a Gujarat High Court ruling that the Centre cannot levy Integrated Goods and Services Tax (IGST) on ocean freight from Indian importers. “The recommendations of the GST Council are the product of a collaborative dialogue involving the Union and the States. They are recommendatory in nature. The recommendations only have a persuasive value.

59.1 million people registered as internally displaced worldwide in 2021, according to a joint report by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre and the Norwegian Refugee Council. The all-time record for internally displaced people is expected to be broken again this year amid mass displacement inside war torn Ukraine. Around 38 million new internal displacements were reported in 2021, with some people forced to flee multiple times during the year.

An umbrella body of child rights organisations, set up by Nobel Laureate Kailash Satyarthi, which appeared before the parliamentary panel studying the Bill on raising the age of marriage for women to 21 from 18 years, has opposed the move and emphasised the need to improve access to education to delay marriages. The India Child Protection Forum (ICPF) comprising nearly 70 civil society organisations, represented by its convener Amod K. Kanth and Ravi Kant from the Kailash Satyarthi Children’s Foundation, made its submissions before the Parliamentary Standing Committee.

266 number of confirmed cases of Salmonella infection reported by European health officials. The officials said that with 58 more suspected cases, the outbreak was linked to Easter eggs and has now been reported throughout Europe and North America. The European Centre for Disease Prevention and

### THE FALLOUT OF DELIMITATION

1.A delimitation of the constituencies that will elect Members of the Lok Sabha, following the population figures is to take place in 2026. What is delimitation-Delimitation literally means the act of fixing the boundaries of constituencies. Under Article 82 of the Constitution, Parliament enacts a Delimitation Act after every Census which establishes a delimitation commission. The main task of the commission is redrawing the boundaries of the various assembly and Lok Sabha constituencies to ensure an equitable population distribution. Delimitation commissions have been set up four times in the past under ‘Delimitation Commission Acts’ of 1952, 1962, 1972 and 2002.

2.**Status now-The government had suspended delimitation in 1976 until after the 2001 census. This is done for the reason that the states’ family planning programs would not affect their political representation in the Lok Sabha.** Later, delimitation based on the 2001 census was done in 2008. However, the total number of seats in the Assemblies and Parliament decided as per the 1971 Census was not changed.

3.The constitution has also capped the number of Lok Sabha & Rajya Sabha seats to a maximum of 550 & 250 respectively. The 84th Amendment Act, 2001 has postponed the lifting up of the cap on the maximum seats in the parliament to the year 2026. This was justified on the ground that a uniform population growth rate would be achieved throughout the country by 2026.**Article 81 of the Constitution defines the composition of the Lok Sabha and it mandates that the composition should represent changes in population.**

4.Issue with the scheduled delimitation exercise-Considering the Census data for 2011, almost half (48.6%) of our population is contributed by the States of Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Bihar, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh. According to the projections made by the Technical Group formed by National Commission on Population, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare for 2011-36, the share of these states in India’s population would see an increase.

5.The share of states such as Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and West Bengal is said to decline. The scheduled delimitation exercise will inevitably lead to a reduced representation for States that have managed to stabilise their populations a higher representation for States that have not stabilised their populations This will add to the tension on the north-south front in addition to those we already have.

### SELA TUNNEL-IMPORTANCE AND THE STRATEGIC USE

1.The strategically-significant Sela Tunnel project in Arunachal Pradesh is nearing completion. Arunachal's Sela tunnel project-The Sela tunnel was announced by the government in 2018. It is a part of the Balipara-Charduar-Tawang road, one of the key strategic projects near the Chinese border. It is located in the West Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh. The project is being executed by the Border Roads Organisation, This will be the longest twin-lane tunnel above 13,000 feet in the world. The project includes two tunnels and a link road.

2.Tunnel 1 is 980m long Tunnel 2 which is 1555m long is a twin tube tunnel. Tunnel 2 has one bi-lane tube for traffic and one escape tube for emergencies. The link road between the two tunnels will be 1,200 metres. Tunnels longer than 1500 m needs to have to have an escape passage alongside. The total length of the project, including the tunnels, the approach and the link roads, will be around 12 km. The tunnels are coming up through two ridges west of Sela.

3.**Significance-It will cut down travel time to from Tezpur to Tawang by at least one hour as well as provide all-weather connectivity.** At the moment, Sela pass stays closed for a few winter months due to winter and heavy snowfall.

4.This poses serious logistics challenge for both military and civil vehicles. Now faster deployment of weapons and soldiers to the Line of Actual Control and forward areas in the Tawang sector can be made. Once the tunnel is ready, the road will remain open for 12 months of the year. The local population of Tawang will no longer get cut off from the mainland.

Control said that 86.3% of the cases were among children aged 10 or younger. No deaths have been reported. Cases have been reported in 14 European countries, Canada and the U.S.

India is closely monitoring the construction of a bridge by China on the Pangong Tso (lake) in eastern Ladakh, which is in "occupied territory", the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Thursday. Sources in the security establishment stated that a broad bridge was currently under construction, connecting both sides of the lake, which would significantly cut down time for the People's Liberation Army (PLA) to move troops and armoured vehicles, while a smaller bridge built early this year was intended to support construction of the main one.

Bosch Ltd. said it was working towards pilot deployments of hydrogen based vehicles by 2025-26 in India. "We as a country are not going to lag behind any advanced countries in hydrogen based vehicles," said Guruprasad Mudlapur, JMD and CTO.

Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe has appointed Maldivian Parliamentary Speaker and former President Mohamed Nasheed as the "coordinator" for securing foreign aid to Sri Lanka that is facing an unprecedented economic crisis.

U.S. Congress approved a \$40 billion aid package for Ukraine on Thursday, the latest tranche of U.S. assistance under President Joe Biden's promise of unwavering support for Kyiv in its fight against Russia's invasion.

The Nagaland Government ordered on Thursday that all "police check gates", except those at the inter-State boundaries, shall be shut to "curb illegal collection of money from the vehicles on roads". Several armed groups, including the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Isak-Muivah) [NSCNIM], one of the main groups with which the Government of India is engaged in peace talks, collect taxes from traders and vehicles.

India will introduce a newly approved "made in India" TB infection skin test called 'cTB', said Health Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya on Thursday, adding that this cost effective tool will be of immense benefit to other high burden countries as well. He added that a new initiative, "Adopt people with TB" will be launched this year.

## SON META-PREFERENCE

1. The newly released National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) reconfirms that a large number of Indians have a preference for sons with the only exception of Meghalaya. NFHS-The NFHS is a large-scale, multi-round survey conducted in a representative sample of households throughout India. The NFHS provides estimates on key indicators related to population, family planning, child and maternal health, nutrition, adult health, and domestic violence, among others.

2. **The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, has designated International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS) as the nodal agency for the NFHS. NFHS was funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) with supplementary support from UNICEF.** The First National Family Health Survey (NFHS-1) was conducted in 1992-93. NFHS-5 covers the period 2019-21.

3. **Takeaways of the report-Son meta-preference-** The number of married people (age 15-49) who want more sons than daughters is several times the number who want more daughters than sons. However, most Indians still believe an ideal family should include at least one daughter. Most of the respondents want at least one son and at least one daughter. Average children- Men and women would both want to have an average of 2.1 children which is almost the same as the current total fertility rate.

4. **A married person who has at least one son is less likely to want more children than another married person whose existing children do not include a son.** Trends by states- Among the states and Union Territories, men in Mizoram (37%), Lakshadweep (34%) and Manipur (33%), and women in Bihar (31%) show the strongest preference for more sons.

5. **Across all states and both genders, Meghalaya women are the only section in which a higher proportion prefers more daughters than sons than the proportion that want more sons than daughter.**

6. **Reasons for son preference-In India's patriarchal society, a boy is widely viewed as an asset, a future breadwinner and caregiver while a girl, on the other hand, is seen as a liability. The son preference is rooted in the traditional belief that a male child would carry forward the family name.**

It is also believed that sons will look after the parents in their old age, while daughters would leave them for their matrimonial homes. Also, raising a daughter would cost them dowries.

## OLIVE BARBS, FILAMENT BARBS, HIGHFIN BARB AND CARNATIC CARP

1. They are freshwater fish species used to be found widely in the Idamalayar Dam, Bhoothathankettu, and the Kol fields of Thrissur district, Kerala. However, indiscriminate fishing and changes in habitat conditions have brought these species, especially Kuruva Paral, to the brink of extinction.

2. Conservation measures are taken up under the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)-India High Range Landscape project. The project was launched in January 2020. It aims to help trained aquaculturists among Adivasis to take up farming of these freshwater species.

3. **Why in the News?** A team of scientists from Kerala has standardised the techniques for artificial breeding of these fish species.

## SRESTHA-G PROJECT

1. The World Bank has granted USD 350 million for Gujarat's "Systems Reform Endeavors for Transformed Health Achievement," or the SRESTHA-G initiative.

2. This project aims on transforming key health delivery systems in Gujarat.

3. It will also focus on the disease surveillance systems' capacity.

## INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM DAY 2022

1. Observed on 18th May every year. Theme for 2022: The Power of Museums. Background: The Day was instituted in 1977 by the International Council of Museums (ICOM). ICOM is a membership association and a non-governmental organisation which establishes professional and ethical standards for museum activities.

2. It is the only global organisation in the museum field. It was created in 1946 and is headquartered in Paris, France. It serves as a network of museum professionals (more than 40,000

**Addressing a United Nations 'Global Food Security Call to Action' ministerial meeting, Minister of State for External Affairs V. Muraleedharan said India's restrictions on the export of wheat made allowance for exports to countries that had food security needs. He also reiterated India's call for a diplomatic solution to the Russia-Ukraine conflict. The U.N. meeting was held in person in New York and chaired by U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken.**

members in over 138 countries).

**3.**The ICOM Red Lists of Cultural Objects at Risk are practical tools to curb the illegal traffic of cultural objects.

**4. Article 49: Protect monuments, places and objects of artistic or historic interest which are declared to be of national importance.**