

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) on November 12 floated a consultation paper proposing measures to effectively tackle market rumours. The proposed measures are directed towards preventing any false market sentiment or impact on the securities of a company. Recognising the “growing influence” of print, television and digital news media, it argues that companies need to keep pace and ensure that any rumours are verified or refuted. The regulator observed that there was a need for quicker disclosure of material events since ‘information’ permeates very fast on social and digital media.

A new study projects that climate change will significantly impact El Niño La Niña weather patterns approximately by 2030 — a decade before what was earlier predicted. El Niño is the warming of sea waters in the central east Equatorial Pacific that occurs every few years. La Niña is the opposite, wherein we see cooler than average sea surface temperature in the equatorial Pacific region. The neutral state between the two opposite effects is called the El Niño Southern Oscillation. In India, El Niño causes weak rainfall and more heat, while La Niña intensifies rainfall across South Asia.

Regulation of wheat and atta exports has helped control their prices, the Union Food and Public Distribution Ministry said here on Wednesday. Food and Public Distribution Secretary Sanjeev Chopra said that the increase in the prices came down from 15% to 5% after the regulation.

India on Wednesday carried out the successful launch of the Agni-3 intermediate range ballistic missile from A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Island in Odisha. “The successful test was part of routine user training launches carried out under the aegis of the Strategic Forces Command,” a Defence Ministry statement said. “The launch was carried out for a predetermined range and validated all operational parameters.” The Agni series of missiles constitute the backbone of India’s nuclear weapons delivery. India has also completed its nuclear triad and operationalised its second-strike capability, with nuclear ballistic missile submarine INS Arihant.

The Supreme Court on Wednesday said the country needed Election Commissioners (ECs) who would not shirk from even taking on the Prime Minister if required, and not just “weak kneed” yes-men. “Suppose the Election Commissioner is asked to take on none less than the Prime Minister... we are just giving an example... And the Election Commissioner is so weak-kneed that he does not get around doing it. Will it not be a case of complete breakdown of the system?” Justice K.M. Joseph, heading a Constitution Bench, asked the government. The court said an Election

RULES FOR EXPORT OF SHISHAM (DALBERGIA SISSOO) BASED PRODUCTS BASED ON INDIA’S INITIATIVE

1. Decision was taken in ongoing 19th meeting of Conference of Parties (CoP19) to Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of wild fauna and flora (CITES). Presently, Shisham is included in Appendix II of CITES, thereby requiring to follow CITES regulations for trade.
2. Now it has been agreed upon that any number of Shisham timber-based items can be exported if they are adhering to certain weight requirement. This will help in exports of Shisham handicrafts, which were falling continuously since 2016. Shisham is a deciduous tree and is native to Indian subcontinent and southern Iran.
3. It occurs throughout sub-Himalayan tract from Ravi to Assam ascending up to 5000 ft. Other decisions taken at CoP19-Proposal (from Namibia, Botswana, South Africa, and Zimbabwe) to allow a regular form of controlled trade in ivory was defeated. India abstained from voting.
4. **International ivory trade was banned in 1989 when all African elephant populations were put in CITES Appendix I.** Later, populations of several countries including Namibia, Botswana etc. were transferred to Appendix II. Sea cucumbers (part of animal group called echinoderms (marine invertebrates) that live on seafloor) included in Appendix II.

SKILL TRAINING OF MGNREGS WORKERS LAGS UNDER PROJECT UNNATI

1. Project Unnati was launched, by Ministry of Rural Development, for upgrading skill base of MGNREGS workers to help them transition from partial employment to full employment and improving their livelihoods. Since its inception in 2020, just a little over 25,000 persons have been trained (against a target of 2 lakhs). Project was slated to end in March 2022 but has now been extended by two years.
2. **Key features of the project-** Aims to train one adult member (18-45 years) of a household that has completed 100 days of work under MGNREGA. Household continues to enjoy 100 days of work under MGNREGA.
3. Candidates undergoing training are paid a stipend for a maximum period of 100 days and for one program per household as per the wage rate prevailing. Candidates are skilled using three established programmes Deen Dayal Upadhyay Grameen Kaushal Yojana, Rural Self Training Institute and Krishi Vigyan Kendra. Full expenditures towards a stipend, against wage loss compensation, are entirely borne by Central Government.
4. **Other similar named initiatives Project-** UNNATI of Ministry of Shipping envisages number of initiatives across major ports. UNISpace Nanosatellite Assembly & Training by ISRO (UNNATI) offers training programme on nanosatellite assembly and building.

ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN HANDLING CLIMATE CHANGE

1. With rising number of natural disasters, local governments can play a frontline role in coordinating effective responses to climate risks, enabling adaptation, and building climate-change resilient communities.
2. Significance of local governments in combating climate change Proximity to community makes them most accessible authority when disaster strikes. Possesses most up-to-date knowledge on local environment and population. Coordinate effective responses and ensure people’s participation.
3. **Local governments interface with climate change via:** Local planning and regulation, largely in the form of by-laws and land use planning and zoning. Delivering goods and services that impact adaptation to climate change or need to be climate resilient. Local fiscal revenues (taxes, fees and charges) used as incentives and disincentives for climate change management.
4. Measures to further strengthen involvement Combining spontaneous (based on indigenous knowledge) and planned (based on scientific thought) adaption strategies. Access to international funds and support. Capacity building in terms of human resources, skills, knowledge, planning capabilities of individuals and communities.

Commissioner should be one who could take a stand even risking his life, and not a docile “yes-man” whom the government knew would do its bidding.

In a significant setback for Scottish nationalists, the U.K. Supreme Court ruled on Wednesday that the Scottish parliament does not have the power to conduct a referendum on Scotland’s independence from the United Kingdom without consent from the U.K.’s parliament in Westminster.

More than 270 members of the Kukicha community from Bangladesh who entered Mizoram on November 20 are being referred to as “officially displaced persons” in State government records, as India does not have a law on refugees. A senior Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) official told The Hindu that the issue was being discussed with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). According to the MHA, foreign nationals who enter the country without valid travel documents are treated as illegal immigrants.

4 lakh crores, the amount by which India’s tax collection will exceed the budget estimate in the current fiscal on the back of buoyant income tax, customs duty and GST mop-up, according to Revenue Secretary Tarun Bajaj. For this financial year ending March 2023, the tax collection target set in the Union Budget is around ₹27.50 lakh crore.

14 percentage by which the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) equity inflows into India contracted to \$26.9 billion during the April-September months in the current fiscal, according to the data of the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade. The inflows had stood at \$31.15 billion during the corresponding period of the previous year.

2.4 lakh, the number of Americans applying for unemployment benefits up by 17,000 from the week before, according to the Labour Department. Unemployment rose to the highest level since August, though it remains low by historic standards. The current low levels show that American workers enjoy extraordinary job security.

5. **Indian initiatives to highlight local government role in handling climate Change-** Meenangadi gram panchayat’s (Kerala) concept of carbon neutrality with key interventions like greenhouse gases emission inventory, energy-use mapping, tree banking etc. Palli gram panchayat (Jammu and Kashmir) prepared a climate-resilient plan to make villagers aware of climate change Mitigation factors.

INDIA-AUSTRALIA ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND TRADE AGREEMENT (ECTA) APPROVED BY AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENT

1. ECTA, signed in April 2022, is first bilateral trade agreement of India with a developed country in last decade. It is expected to: Raise bilateral trade to USD 45-50 billion in next five years. Create an additional employment of at least 10 lakhs jobs in India. Create opportunities for investment, promotion of start-ups.
2. **Key features of ECTA-Will provide duty-free** access to Australian market for over 6,000 broad sectors of India, including textiles, leather, furniture, jewellery, and machinery. Australia has offered wide ranging commitments in several services sub-sectors like IT, ITES, Health, Education. An institutional mechanism to encourage and improve trade. Covers areas like Rules of Origin, Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures, Dispute Settlement, Movement of Natural Persons etc.
3. **India-Australia areas of cooperation Geostrategic:** Both countries are part of QUAD, Trilateral Supply Chain Initiative, and Indo-Pacific Economic Forum (IPEF). Trade and investment: India's goods exports to Australia stood at USD 8.3 billion and imports aggregated to USD 16.75 billion in 2021-22.
4. **Defence and Security Cooperation:** Strategic Partnership, Joint declaration on security cooperation, Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement, regular military exercises (like AUSINDEX; AUSTRAHIND etc.).

CENTRE FOR SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENT (CSE) AND DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DST) JOIN HANDS TO DEVELOP EV BATTERIES SUITED TO INDIA

1. A white paper, followed by creation of an expert-industry platform, will be prepared on a roadmap to develop new electric vehicle (EV) battery technologies in India. EVs are powered by battery electric power. Different types of batteries are available such as Lithium-ion, Solid state, Nickel-Metal Hydride, Zinc-air battery etc.
2. In recent months, safety concerns have been raised due to multiple instances of fires in EVs. Collaborative initiative also discussed future pathways to develop EV batteries: Assessing needs of Indian vehicles and climatic stress for battery and thermal management systems.
3. **Application-** specific EV batteries such as lithium-titanate batteries in public transport, Sodium ion batteries for e-rickshaws etc. Data bases on performance and safety parameters to develop locally appropriate battery technology pathways. Recycling of end-of-life batteries and attention to ageing of batteries.
4. **Initiatives taken for EV Safety-** Ministry of Heavy Industries mandated New Safety tests for EVs receiving subsidies. Automotive Research Association of India to set up infrastructure for testing, certification. Issuance of performance norms for lithium-ion battery packs and traction systems (in line with broader ISO norms) by Bureau of Indian Standards.



*“Be happy with what you are.
Even if you are newton
there is an Einstein”*

DR. KHAN
(KSG)