

KSG: NEWSPAPER CRUX

20TH SEPTEMBER 2022

NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHT

The Election Commission has proposed reducing anonymous political donations to ₹2,000 from ₹20,000 and cap cash donations at 20% or at a maximum of ₹20 crore to cleanse election funding of black money, sources said on Monday. Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Rajiv Kumar has written a letter to Union Law Minister Kiren Rijju, recommending a slew of amendments in the Representation of the People (RP) Act, sources said. The proposals are aimed at ushering in reforms and transparency in donations received by political parties, and also the expenditure incurred by candidates trying their luck at the hustings, they said.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has urged the World Bank's private sector investment arm, the International Finance Corporation (IFC), to increase lending to India to more than \$2 billion in the next two years and to \$33.5 billion over the next three four years. Makhtar Diop, Managing Director of IFC, who met Ms. Sitharaman on Monday, said the corporation would adopt 'a proactive approach' to scale up its India investments and would extend financing to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in order to bolster the country's 'effort to become a manufacturing hub'.

3.5 trillion tonnes, the amount of greenhouse gas to be emitted if the world's remaining fossil fuel reserves are burnt, according to the first public inventory of hydrocarbons. The UN estimates that the Earth's remaining carbon budget (the pollution we can add to the atmosphere before the 1.5°C goal) to be around 360 billion tonnes of CO2 equivalent.

1719 number of corruption complaints received by ombudsman Lokpal so far this year, of which 136 were registered for conducting inquiry, according to official data. A total of 1,635 graft complaints were pending. The government in 2020 notified the Lokpal (Complaint) Rules, which prescribed the format to file a complaint.

31,953 number of "illegal foreigners" who have so far been deported from Assam based on the Assam Accord, the State Assembly was informed on Monday. Assam Accord Implementation Minister Atul Bora said 1,48,022 "illegal foreigners"

PRIME MINISTER LAUNCHES NATIONAL LOGISTICS POLICY (NLP)

1. Policy aims to: Ensure seamless movement of goods and services across the country. Cut elevated logistics costs, often considered the biggest structural bottleneck for both external and internal trade, from 13-14% to a single digit by 2030.

2. Break into top 25 in World Bank's Global Logistics Performance Index (Ranked 44th in last edition) by 2030. Four major features of NLP are: Integration of Digital Systems: To integrate different systems of various departments including road transport, railways, customs, aviation etc. Unified Logistics interface Platform (ULIP): To bring all digital services related with transportation sector on a single portal.

3. Improving Ease of Logistics (E-LogS): A digital dashboard for registering, coordinating, and monitoring time-bound resolution of issues. System Improvement Group (SIG): To advise on changes in existing laws and processes to improve cargo movement. Policy will be implemented through a Comprehensive Logistics Action Plan (CLAP), which will include several key action areas.

4. Monitoring and the coordination will be done at the Centre and state levels. Benefits of NLP: Will enable fast paced logistics infrastructure development, better coordination among multiple stakeholders, improve competitiveness of Indian goods, boost last mile connectivity etc

US TRADE REPRESENTATIVE CONVENES MEET TO DISCUSS WTO'S DISPUTE SETTLEMENT REFORMS

1. WTO's dispute settlement process (DSP) functioning is impacted since December, 2019 in the backdrop of USA blocking appointments to Appellate Body (AB). Concerns are raised over issues like judicial overreach of AB, process being litigious, prolonged, expensive and contentious.

2. There are two main ways to settle a dispute once a complaint has been filed in WTO: Parties find a mutually agreed solution, particularly during the phase of bilateral consultations. Through adjudication which includes ruling by a panel and if not satisfied, challenging that ruling at AB. AB is the WTO's apex body for settlement of disputes.

3. It is composed of seven Members who are appointed by Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) to serve for four-year terms. DSB is composed of representatives of all WTO Members.

There are three main stages to the WTO's DSP: consultations between the parties; adjudication by panels and if applicable, by AB; and implementation of the ruling.

HOW CLIMATE CHANGE IS ALTERING INDIAN MONSOON

1. According to Indian Meteorological Department (IMD), extreme events of floods and droughts in 2022 have strongly depicted how global warming has been impacting Indian monsoon. Key changes in monsoon trends Increase in fluctuations in monsoon, resulting in both long dry periods and short spells of heavy rains.

2. A shift in track of monsoon systems, like low pressure and depression travelling south of their position. As a result of this shift, States such as Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan and parts of Maharashtra have been recording excess rainfall this season. West Bengal, Jharkhand and Bihar did not receive normal rain.

3. Monsoon rainfall became less frequent but more intense in India during latter half of 20th century. Consequences of altering monsoon Uneven distribution of rains along with increasing temperatures and humidity giving rise to pest attacks and diseases.

4. Changes in track of monsoon systems impact quantity as well as quality of Kharif crops, particularly rice. Melting of glaciers in Himalayan region. Increase in extreme weather events over entire South Asia (recent flash floods/floods in India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and drought in China).

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have been detected in the State till August 31 this year.

The Supreme Court referred to a Constitution Bench the question of how to provide accused in death penalty cases a “meaningful, real and effective” hearing of their mitigating circumstances before a trial judge. A three judge Bench led by Chief Justice of India U.U. Lalit said the presentation of mitigating factors by an accused to avoid the “extreme penalty of death” was a “valuable right”. In many cases, an accused is condemned to the gallows by the trial judge after a rather “formal” if not cosmetic sentence hearing. In some cases, the sentence hearing happens on the same day of the order of conviction.

China on Monday said it “lodged stern representations” with the United States after President Joe Biden committed in the clearest terms yet to “defend” Taiwan in the face of an attack. In an interview on Sunday, Mr. Biden appeared to mark a shift in the U.S. policy of “strategic ambiguity” on the question of defending Taiwan, which previous administrations had followed with the goal of both deterring China and discouraging Taiwan from pursuing outright independence.

Kashmir’s first ever tryst with multiplex cinema will begin on October 1 this year with the screening of two epic movies, Vikram Vedha and Ponniyin Selvan (PS)-I, at the new INOX theatre in Srinagar’s Shiv Pora area. The experience of watching a film in a theatre returns to the Valley after a gap of 23 years. Jammu & Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha will inaugurate the multiplex.

India and Egypt agreed to further develop military cooperation and focus on joint training, defence coproduction and maintenance of equipment. This was agreed as Defence Minister Rajnath Singh called on Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi in Cairo on Monday. They emphasised the need for coproduction and to discuss specific proposals in that regard, the Defence Ministry said. Mr. Singh is on a two-day visit to Egypt.

No negotiation is possible at the cost of food security, Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Narendra Singh Tomar said at the ninth session of the governing body of the International Treaty on Plant

CONFERENCE ON INTERACTION AND CONFIDENCE BUILDING MEASURES IN ASIA(CICA)

1.Kazakhstan has invited PM Modi for CICA summit (convened every four years). CICA is a multi-national forum (founded in 1999) for enhancing cooperation towards promoting peace, security and stability in Asia.

2.To be a member of CICA, a state must have at least a part of its territory in Asia. Presently CICA has 27 Member States (including India). Confidence building measures are categorized under five broad domains: economic, environmental, human, new challenges and threats, and military-political dimension.

INDIA-SINGAPORE MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLE(ISMR)

1.ISMR is a new initiative by India and Singapore to enhance economic cooperation and to identify new areas for collaboration in new and emerging areas.

2.ISMR is a leaders-led forum to explore opportunities in rapidly evolving geopolitical developments in a post-COVID-19 recovery phase and ongoing supply chain disruptions.

3.It will be headed by their ministers of foreign affairs, finance and trade. India-Singapore Ministerial.

INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT(IFAD)

1.**IFAD is an international financial institution and a specialized agency of United Nations (based in Rome, Italy) dedicated to eradicating poverty and hunger in rural areas of developing countries.**

2.**IFAD empowers rural people to increase their food security, improve nutrition and increase their incomes.**

3.**IFAD works in the area of agriculture, agricultural productivity. It is focused on small-holder farmers. Total IFAD lending in India is about \$1.2 billion.**

CHILD WELFARE COMMITTEE(CWC)

1.Government has notified Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection Amendment) Model Amendment Rules, 2022 that bar a person associated with an organization receiving foreign funds to be a part of CWC. CWCs were established under Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 for Children in need and care of protection.

2.They are constituted for every district or group of districts by state government for care and protection of children who are abused, exploited, abandoned or orphaned.

3.It consists of a chairperson and four other members of whom at least one shall be a woman and another, an expert on child matters.

FREEDOM FUEL

1.Vishakha Chandhere has spawned a quiet revolution of sorts from her city of Pune to beat the rising prices of cooking gas or liquefied petroleum gas (LPG).

2.**Chandhere cooks food on her three solar cookers — the first has a parabolic reflector that heats the base; the second one is an insulated box with light reflected mirrors on the base and the lid; and in the third cooker, food is placed inside a vacuum tube that concentrates light to generate heat.** Food can be boiled, steamed or roasted in any of the three cookers.

3.The only difference is that the parabolic solar cooker works well when there is excessive light; the tube model is best suited for cloudy days; and the box cooker, though it takes one to two hours to warm up, is suited for all conditions.

4.Chandhere in 2018 launched a startup called Orjabox to share the lessons she had learnt and to promote clean cooking devices.

DOCTORS GOT JUST 20% OF INSURANCE COMPANY

1.Dependents of doctors got just over 20% of the total money distributed under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package (PMGKP) insurance scheme for health workers who died fighting COVID-19 in the country.

2.The insurance scheme was launched in March 2020 to provide a comprehensive personal accident cover of Rs. 50 Lakh to over 22 lakh health care providers including community health

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Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) on Monday.

The Oil Ministry has sought a review of the two and a half month old windfall profit tax on domestically - produced crude oil saying it goes against the principle of fiscal stability provided in contracts for finding and producing oil. The Ministry in the August 12 letter, reviewed by PTI, sought exemption for fields or blocks — which were bid out to firms under the Production Sharing Contract (PSC) and the Revenue Sharing Contract (RSC) — from the new levy.

workers and private health workers.

3.The insurance provided under this scheme would be over and above any other insurance cover being availed of by the beneficiary. The scheme covers loss of life due to COVID-19 and accidental death on account of COVID-19-related duty.

4.All government health centres, wellness centres and hospitals of the Center as well as States are covered under this scheme.