

Daily News Decode

01.06.21

17 June - World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought



- Since 1995, this day is observed to spread awareness about international cooperation to combat desertification and the effects of drought.
- The United Nation General Assembly in 1994 declared 17 June as the "World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought".
- It is a unique occasion to remind people that desertification can be effectively tackled, solutions are possible and important is participation and cooperation at all levels.
- "Restoration. Land. Recovery. We build back better with healthy land" is the theme for 2021 Desertification and Drought Day.

Smart Enforcement App for Trucks to reduce compliance Logistics costs



- As a strategy to reduce logistics costs on road transportation, the Government of India, Department of Commerce, Logistics Division has developed a risk-based approach on the implementation of smart enforcement of rules and regulations related to road-based violations by trucks.
- It has also developed an IT based solution to make enforcement mechanism technology driven.

The benefits:

- Lead to decrease in number of physical checks of commercial vehicles by the enforcement officers
- Overall reduction in the number of cash challan by issuing e-challan using the system
- Reduction in deployment of work-force on Roads leading to better manpower utilization
- Higher revenue collection due to reduced human intervention
- Improved targeting of offenders
- Reduction in Logistics Cost (currently at 13% of GDP).

Facebook launches ‘Report it, Don’t share it!’ initiative



- Social media giant Facebook has launched a new initiative ‘Report it, Don’t share it!’ that encourages people to report child abuse content on its platforms and not to share it.
- The initiative ‘Report it, don’t share it’ is in collaboration with civil society organisations like Aarambh India Initiative, Cyber Peace Foundation and Arpan.
- The initiative was rolled out with an animated video that visually communicates the negative impact that the circulation of child abuse content could have on the child who’s the subject of such content, even if it’s about condemning the act.
- To report content where a child is at risk, call 1098 and report it to the Childline India Foundation. If the content exists on Facebook’s family of apps, it can be reported on fb.me/online child protection.
- The company also added the option to choose “involves a child” under the “Nudity and Sexual Activity” category of reporting in more places on Facebook and Instagram to make it easier to report content for violating its child exploitation policies.
- Facebook also partnered with Bollywood actress Neha Dhupia who runs a community ‘Freedom to Feed’ on Instagram, which is a safe space for women to speak about breast-feeding and have an open dialogue about the challenges surrounding it. But the community has evolved to become a space for discussing diverse aspects of parenting too.

UAE, Brazil, Albania, Gabon, Ghana elected to UNSC



- UN Security Council elected Albania, Brazil, Gabon, Ghana, and UAE as non-permanent members for the 2022-23 term.
- All five countries, elected unopposed, will begin their term from 1 January 2022.
- The election for the non-permanent members of the Security Council is held through secret ballot and candidates require a two-thirds majority in the General Assembly to get elected.
- India, Ireland, Mexico and Norway had begun the term as non-permanent members of the UN Security Council from 1 January 2021.
- In the election, Ghana obtained 185 votes while Gabon received 183 votes.
- The United Arab Emirates received 179 votes and Albania got 175 votes. Gabon, Ghana, and the United Arab Emirate were elected from the African and Asian States seats.
- Brazil is elected from Latin American and Caribbean Group seat and the Eastern European Group seat went to Albania.

NATO leaders declare China a global security challenge



- NATO leaders declared that China poses a constant security challenge and is working to undermine global order.
- This is a message in sync with US President Joe Biden's efforts to get allies to speak out with a more unified voice against China's trade, military and human rights practices.
- The NATO leaders said that China's goals and 'assertive behaviour present systemic challenges to the rules-based international order and to areas relevant to alliance security.
- The warning to China comes as Biden has stepped up his effort to rally allies to put up a unified voice about China's human rights record.
- Biden has also criticised China's trade practices and its military's increasingly assertive behaviour that has unnerved US allies in the Pacific

Raja Parba- Odisha's Famous Festival celebrated



- Raja Parba festival celebrated in Odisha. It is a 3-days unique festival in which the onset of monsoon and the earth's womanhood is celebrated by the state.
- It is believed that during this time the Mother Earth or Bhudevi undergoes menstruation.
- The fourth day is the day of the 'purification bath'. During 3 days, women don't work.
- This festival is synonymous with varieties of cakes (pithas).
- Thus, Odisha Tourism Development Corporation (OTDC) has also launched a special programme named 'Pitha on Wheels'.
- Different kinds of pithas such as 'Poda Pitha', 'Manda', 'Kakara', 'Arisha', 'Chakuli' and 'Chandrakala' have been made available on 'Pitha on Wheels' (kiosks on wheels).
- These vehicles selling traditional cakes have been stationed in Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Sambalpur.

2021 NATO Summit Held in Brussels, Belgium



- The leaders of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) held a face-to-face summit on NATO headquarters in Brussels, Belgium.
- The 2021 Brussels summit of NATO was the 31st formal meeting of the heads of state and heads of government of the alliance.
- The summit of the 30-member NATO group was held as a part of U.S. President Joe Biden's first foreign trip since he took office.

- All the leaders agreed on the “NATO 2030” agenda, a comprehensive initiative to make sure that the alliance remains ready to face future challenges.
- The agenda also states that NATO will strengthen political consultation and the resilience of society, reinforce defence and deterrence, sharpen the technological edge, and develop its next Strategic Concept in time for the summit in 2022.
- The bloc agreed on a new cyber defence policy, to ensure that the bloc has strong technical capabilities, political consultations, and military planning in place to “keep its systems secure.”

RBI allows prepaid mobile recharges through Bharat Bill Payment System



- According to RBI, The scope of the Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS) will be expanded by August 31 this year by adding ‘mobile prepaid recharges as a biller category.
- BBPS is an interoperable platform for recurring bill payments operated by the National Payments Corporation of India.
- In May, 213.59 million bill payment transactions were carried out through the BBPS channel. BBPS was started in 2014 as a platform for repetitive bill payments.

VEDIC EDUCATION BOARD



- The Congress government in Rajasthan will set up a Vedic Education and Sanskar Board to revive the knowledge of ancient Sanskrit scriptures and connect the learnings of the Vedas with science and yoga.
- The board is likely to be set up in the coming four to five months.
- The ruling Congress had promised the establishment of the Vedic Education and Sanskar Board as well as steps to promote Sanskrit language and education in its manifesto for the 2018 State Assembly election.

EIGHTH SCHEDULE TO THE CONSTITUTION



- Various organisations initiated a Twitter campaign demanding official language status to Tulu in Karnataka and Kerala and include it in the eighth schedule to the Constitution.
- The Constitutional provisions relating to the Eighth Schedule occur in article 344(1) and 351 of the Constitution.
- Article 344(1) provides for the constitution of a Commission by the President on expiration of five years from the commencement of the Constitution and thereafter at the expiration of ten years from such commencement.
- Article 351 of the Constitution provides that it shall be the duty of the Union to promote the spread of the Hindi language to develop it so that it may serve as a medium of expression for all by assimilating without interfering with its genius, the forms, style and expressions used in Hindustani and in the other languages of India specified in the Eighth Schedule.

List of languages in the Eighth Schedule

- The Eighth Schedule to the Constitution consists of the following 22 languages:- (1) Assamese, (2) Bengali, (3) Gujarati, (4) Hindi, (5) Kannada, (6) Kashmiri, (7) Konkani, (8) Malayalam, (9) Manipuri, (10) Marathi, (11) Nepali, (12) Oriya, (13) Punjabi, (14) Sanskrit, (15) Sindhi, (16) Tamil, (17) Telugu, (18) Urdu (19) Bodo, (20) Santhali, (21) Maithili and (22) Dogri.
- Of these languages, 14 were initially included in the Constitution.
- Sindhi language was added in 1967.
- Thereafter three more languages viz., Konkani, Manipuri and Nepali were included in 1992.
- Subsequently Bodo, Dogri, Maithili and Santhali were added in 2004.

TULU

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ಊ	ಋ	ಌ	಍	ಋ	ೠ	ಌ	಍	
ಊ	ಋ	ಌ	಍	ಋ	ೠ	ಌ	಍	
[ɯ]	[ɯː]	[ɛ]	[ai]	[o]	[oɯ]	[oɳ]	[oh]	

- Various organisations initiated a Twitter campaign demanding official language status to Tulu in Karnataka and Kerala and include it in the eighth schedule to the Constitution.
- Tulu is a Dravidian language spoken mainly in two coastal districts Dakshina Kannada and Udupi of Karnataka and Kasaragod district of Kerala.
- The native speakers of Tulu are referred to as Tuluva or Tulu people and the geographical area is unofficially called Tulu Nadu.
- The Indian census report of 2011 reported a total of 1,846,427 native Tulu speakers in India.
- The 2001 census had reported a total of 1,722,768 native speakers.
- Separated early from Proto-South Dravidian, Tulu has several features not found in Tamil–Kannada.

- For example, it has the past perfect and the future perfect, like French or Spanish, but formed without an auxiliary verb.
- At present, Tulu is not an official language in the country. Efforts are being made to include Tulu in the eighth schedule of the Constitution.
- Tulu has a rich oral literature tradition with folk-song forms like paddana, and traditional folk theatre yakshagana.
- Tulu also has an active tradition of cinema with around 5 to 7 Tulu language movies produced a year.

THE TREATY ON THE PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS (TPNW)



- The entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in early 2021 highlights the growing divide between the nuclear-armed states and other countries that are impatient to see progress on nuclear disarmament promised by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.
- it is the first legally binding international agreement to comprehensively prohibit nuclear weapons, with the goal of leading towards their total elimination.
- It was adopted in July 2017 and came into force in January 2021.
- As of March 2021, 54 states have ratified or acceded to the treaty, most recently Comoros in February 2021.
- For those nations that are party to it, the treaty prohibits the development, testing, production, stockpiling, stationing, transfer, use and threat of use of nuclear weapons, as well as assistance and encouragement to the prohibited activities.
- For nuclear armed states joining the treaty, it provides for a time-bound framework for negotiations leading to the verified and irreversible elimination of its nuclear weapons programme.

SIPRI YEAR BOOK 2021



- The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) launched the findings of SIPRI Yearbook 2021, which assesses the current state of armaments, disarmament and international security.
- The nine nuclear armed states — the U.S., Russia, the U.K., France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea — together possessed an estimated 13,080 nuclear weapons at the start of 2021.
- Russia and the U.S. together possessed over 90% of global nuclear weapons.

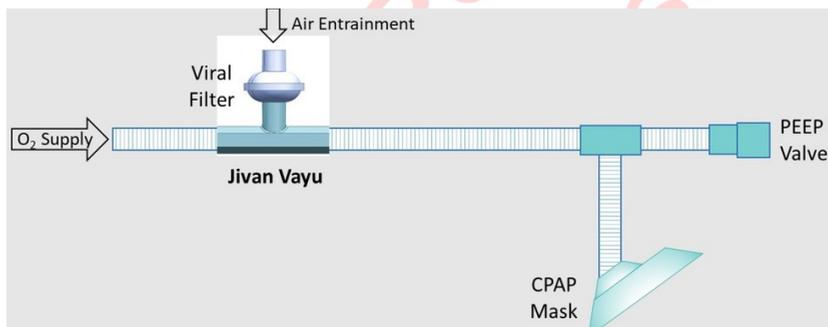
- India possessed an estimated 156 nuclear warheads at the start of 2021, compared with 150 at the start of last year, while Pakistan had 165 warheads, up from 160 in 2020.
- China's nuclear arsenal consisted of 350 warheads, up from 320 at the start of 2020.

DAGMARA HE PROJECT



- NHPC signs MoU with Bihar State Hydroelectric Power Corporation (BSHPC) for Implementation of 130.1 MW Dagmara HE Project.
- It would come up on Kosi River in Suapul district, Bihar.
- The project will be located near village Bhaptiahi on the left bank, about 31 km downstream of Bhimnagar barrage on Kosi River.
- The 130.1 MW Dagmara HE Project, the largest hydropower project of Bihar is to be implemented by NHPC on ownership basis.

IIT Ropar has developed nation's first power-free CPAP device 'Jivan Vayu'



- It is adapted to both kinds of oxygen generation units like O₂ cylinders and oxygen pipelines in hospitals.
- These provisions are not available in otherwise existing CPAP machines.
- Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) is a treatment method for patients having breathing problems during sleep called sleep apnea.
- The machine uses mild air pressure to keep the airways open for easy breathing.
- It is also used to treat infants whose lungs have not fully developed. The machine blows air into the baby's nose to help inflate his or her lungs.
- The treatment is all the more necessary during early stages of the Covid-19 infection.
- It reduces lung damage and allow patients to recover from the inflammatory effects.

Southern ocean as 5th official ocean



NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

- The National Geographic Society named 'Southern Ocean' as world's 5th ocean
- With this decision, the Southern Ocean around Antarctica will be added to the list of oceans along with the Atlantic, Pacific, Indian and Arctic oceans.
- On June 8th World Oceans Day, the society announced that it would henceforth be labeling the Southern Ocean as the fifth ocean on its maps of our planet.
- The Southern Ocean has long been recognized by scientists, but because there was no agreement internationally and was not officially recognized.
- National Geographic began making maps in 1915, but the society had only formally recognized just four oceans, which they defined by the continents that bordered them.
- In contrast, the Southern Ocean is defined not by the continents that surround it, but by the Antarctic Circumpolar Current (ACC) that flows from west to east.
- The newest body of water makes it the second-smallest, after the Arctic.
- The ACC flows through all waters that surround Antarctica until about 60 degrees south, except for the Drake Passage and the Scotia Sea, which are both roughly between South America's Cape Horn and the Antarctic Peninsula.
- The waters of the ACC and therefore most of the Southern Ocean — are colder and slightly less salty than the ocean waters to the north.
- The ACC pulls in water from the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian oceans to help drive a global "conveyor belt" that carries heat around the planet, while the cold dense water of the ACC sinks and helps to store carbon in the deep ocean.

Fortified Rice Bran Oil



- Government of India's NAFED launched Fortified Rice Bran Oil to Boost Healthy Living
- This Rice bran oil will be marketed by NAFED (National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd).
- In the same way a MoU has been signed between NAFED and FCI for the production and marketing of fortified rice kernel
- Rice Bran oil from Nafed will be fortified and it will be ensured that it will contain additional nutrients and vitamins.
- Health benefits of Fortified Rice Bran Oil

- It has multiple health benefits, including lowering cholesterol level due to its low trans-fat content and high mono-unsaturated and poly-unsaturated fat contents.
- It also acts as a booster and reduces the risk of cancer due to the high amount of Vitamin E it contains.
- This oil is recommended by The American Heart Association and the World Health Organization (WHO) as one of the best substitutes for other edible oils.
- According to the FSSAI, fortified oil can help a person fulfil 25-30% of the recommended dietary intake for vitamins A and D.

Pine Island Glacier



- According to a study by Washington University and British Antarctic Survey, the ice shelves of Pine Island Glacier are breaking apart rapidly and may collapse faster than previously projected
- It is one of the largest ice streams in Antarctica.
- This glacier contains approximately 180 trillion tonnes of ice, melting of which could result in 0.5 meters or 1.6 feet of global sea level rise.
- It flows, together with Thwaites Ice Stream, into the Amundsen Sea embayment in West Antarctica, and the two ice streams together drain ~5% of the Antarctic Ice Sheet
- It is Antarctica's largest contributor to sea-level rise, causing about one-sixth of a millimeter increase to the sea-level each year or about two-thirds of an inch per century.
- Pine Island Glacier has a large ice shelf, which supports the glacier.
- Recent speedups due to edge weakening may shorten the timeline for the Pine Island Glacier to finally collapse into the ocean.
- In this study, researchers analysed satellite images from January 2015 to March 2020. The researchers found that recent changes in the ice shelf were not caused by processes directly related to ocean melting.
- The study revealed that from 2017 to 2020, a large iceberg on the edge of the ice shelf collapsed and glaciers accelerated
- The ice shelf lost about one-fifth of its area in this period, as captured by the Copernicus Sentinel-1 satellites, operated by the European Space Agency on behalf of the European Union.
- The glacier's surface also sped up by 12 per cent in this time.
- The researchers used an ice flow model to confirm that the loss of the ice shelf caused the observed speedup
- High-resolution videos of glaciers stitched together from satellite data showed the sides of the ice shelf were gridded with respect to the coastline.
- But a large crack in the centre of the ice shelf caused a sudden snap.

Kerala's silverline project



- It is a semi high-speed railway project aimed at reducing travel time between the state's northern(Kasaragod) and southern ends(Thiruvananthapuram).
- Project Cost: Rs 63,940 crore
- The line is proposed to be 529.45 kms long, covering 11 districts through 11 stations.
- Once completed, one can travel from Kasaragod to Thiruvananthapuram in less than four hours on trains travelling at 200 km/hr.
- The current travel time on the existing Indian Railways network is 12 hours.
- The project will have trains of electric multiple unit (EMU) type with preferably nine cars and extendable to 12 cars each.
- A nine-car rake can seat a maximum of 675 passengers in business and standard class settings.
- The trains can run at a maximum speed of 220 kmph on standard gauge track, completing journeys in either direction in under four hours.
- Every 500 metres of the corridor, there will be under passages with provision of service roads.
- Cities covered under this rail line are Thiruvananthapuram(elevated station), Kollam, Chengannur, Kottayam, Ernakulam (Kakkanad)(elevated), Cochin Airport, Thrissur (elevated), Tirur, Kozhikode(underground station), Kannur and Kasaragod
- The proposed railway line will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, help in expansion of Ro-Ro services, produce employment opportunities, integrate airports and IT corridors and faster development of cities it passes through.

What are the latest guidelines as gold hallmarking becomes mandatory f?



- As mandatory gold hallmarking comes into effect from today in 256 districts, government said jewellers can continue to buy back old gold jewellery without hallmark from consumers.
- Gold of additional carats 20, 23 and 24 will also be allowed for hallmarking.
- Watches and special types of jewellery are exempted from hallmarking.
- No penalty will be imposed till August-end, it stated

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