

KSG:NEWSPAPER CRUX

25TH OCTOBER, 2020

NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHTS

- Ahead of the Indo-US2+2 ministerial meeting starting Monday, the Trump administration has told the Indian government that its development of the Chabahar port in Iran will not be impacted by US sanctions on 18 major Iranian banks.
- Seven mainstream parties of Jammu and Kashmir (Gupkar alliance) gave formal shape to their recently cobbled alliance for the restoration of Article 370, electing National Conference's Farooq Abdullah as its chairman.
- A recent study on the Himalayan brown bear (*Ursus arctos isabellinus*) has predicted a significant reduction in suitable habitat and biological corridors of the species due to climate change.
- New clashes broke out between Azerbaijan and ethnic Armenian forces over Nagorno-Karabakh a day after talks in Washington to try to end the deadliest fighting in the mountain enclave.
- Nepal Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli was at the centre of a new controversy following the Use of the country's old map in his Vijaya Dashami greeting card which had the national emblem and his portrait printed on it.
- Iran's foreign ministry described a US-brokered Sudan-Israel deal to normalise ties as "phoney" and accused Khartoum of paying a Ransom in return for Washington removing it from a list of state sponsors of terrorism.
- Lakhs of borrowers, irrespective of whether they availed of moratorium or not during lockdown, stand to get some cash back from the government soon, as it has decided to come out with a proposal to provide relief in the form of ex-gratia payment.
- US is closely monitoring the border row between India and China and does not want the situation to escalate: top US official.

SNOW LEOPARD HABITAT CONSERVATION

1. India has identified **three large landscapes for snow leopards.**
2. **Hemis-Spiti** across Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh, **Nanda Devi-Gangotri** in Uttarakhand, **Khangchendzonga- Tawang** across Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh.
3. Initiatives taken for snow leopard protection- Project Snow Leopard(2009), Party to Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Programme, Snow Leopard Population Assessment in India(2019).
4. IUCN status is **Vulnerable.**

INDIA OPPOSES BINDING PACT ON OPEN SERVICES TRADE AT WORLD TRADE ORGANISATION(WTO)

1. In an effort to address climate change global impact of COVID-19, **countries like Australia, Canada, Mexico etc are asking for making environmental-related services trade more affordable through increased market opening by WTO members.**
2. However, **India opposed the move** starting the importance of built-in flexibilities for developing countries provided by the General Agreement for Trade in Service(GATS).
3. Developing countries are given flexibility for opening fewer sectors, liberalizing fewer types of transactions, and progressively expanding market access in line with their development situation.

CLIMATE FINANCE SHADOW REPORT 2020 BY OXFAM HIGHLIGHTS CONCERNS OF CLIMATE FINANCE

1. Key points highlighted in report- Around \$47 billion of the total climate financing of \$59.5 billion pledged in 2017-18 was forwarded as loans and only \$12.5 billion was given in the form of grants.
2. It risked contributing to the unsustainable debt burdens of many low-income countries. **Only a quarter of funding was spent helping countries adapt to the impacts of the climate crisis.**
3. Significant scale-up in adaptation financing was needed if the 2015 Paris Agreement commitment was to be realised.

INDIA METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT(IMD) COMMISSIONS FLASH FLOOD GUIDANCE SERVICES(FFGS) FOR SOUTH ASIA

1. A dedicated FFGS centre will be established in New Delhi, where weather modelling and analysis of rainfall data observations from member countries will be done.
2. Guidance for flash floods in form of **Threats(6 hours in advance) and Risks(24 hours in advance)** will be provided for taking necessary mitigation measures **to reduce the loss of life and property in India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and Sri Lanka.**
3. Flash Floods are highly localized events of short duration with a very high peak and usually have less than six hours.

PRADHAN MANTRI GRAM SADAK YOJANA(PMGSY)

1. **Mandi(Himachal Pradesh)** has bagged top position in the country in successful implementation of PMGSY.
2. PMGSY was launched in 2000 to provide all-weather access to unconnected habitations as part of a poverty reduction strategy.

WAR MEMORIAL AT BUM LA INAUGURATED

1. **Bum La Pass is a border pass between Tibet's Cona Country and India's Tawang district** in Arunachal Pradesh.
2. The pass currently serves as a trading point between Tawang and Tibet.