

# KSG:NEWSPAPER CRUX

5<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2021

## NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHTS

- The Directorate of Education has issued a circular asking schools to follow the new 'School Bag Policy, 2020' released by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT).
- The Odisha Forest department has stressed the need for stricter monitoring of social media platforms to check pangolin poaching and trading.
- India was approaching its two year term on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) with "a strong commitment to reformed multilateralism", India's Permanent Representative to the UN, T.S. Tirumurti said.
- The Supreme Court asked the Centre to "delete" its three year old law which allowed seizure and subsequent confiscation of livestock from people who depended on these animals for a livelihood, even before they were found guilty of cruelty towards them.
- The seventh round of talks between Union Ministers and protesting farm unions failed to resolve the deadlock over three new agricultural reform laws. Both sides stuck to their own positions and accused the other of stubbornness, with the Centre seeking to discuss specific concerns on the laws and the farmers demanding total repeal.
- A British judge blocked the extradition of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange to the United States to face espionage charges, finding that he was at serious risk of suicide.
- The probe into app based instant loan companies' harassment of borrowers has widened, with the Hyderabad police roping in financial experts and analysts to pore over voluminous data pertaining to 1.4 crore loan transactions involving nearly ₹ 21,000 crore.
- Iran on Monday began enriching uranium up to 20% at an underground facility and seized a South Korean flagged oil tanker in the Strait of Hormuz.

## DZUKOU VALLEY

1. Massive forest fire broke out in Dzukou valley region.
2. Dzukou valley or the **valley of flowers** ranges between Nagaland and Manipur.
3. It is popular trekking destination **known for its lilies and biodiversity. It is also home to Blyth's tragopan-Nagaland's state bird.**

## INDIA-SRI LANKA JOINT WORKING GROUP ON FISHERIES

1. The Fourth Meeting of the India-Sri Lanka Joint Working Group (JWG) on Fisheries was held through virtual mode. Palk Strait and Gulf of Mannar are major fishing grounds for both the countries.
2. India reiterated the **need for releasing all fishing boats in Sri Lankan custody** in line with the commitment given by the Sri Lankan President during his state visit to India in November 2019.
3. India highlighted the initiatives being taken under the new **Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana** and other schemes of Government of India and governments of Tamil Nadu and Puducherry to diversify and reduce fishing pressure in the Palk Bay.
4. Sri Lanka also sought a **safe passage for Sri Lankan fishermen to enter the Arabian Sea.**

## DIGITAL INDIA AWARDS 2020

1. The President of India has conferred Digital India Awards 2020.
2. 22 digital governance initiatives/products by Government entities under seven categories received Digital India Awards 2020 for designing and implementing innovative citizen-centric digital solutions and improving the ease of living for all citizens. 'Innovation in Pandemic award' was introduced this year.
3. Digital India Awards **have been institutionalized under the ambit of National Portal of India to honor exemplary initiatives/practices** in Digital-Governance.

## YAMUNA'S HIGH AMMONIA LEVEL

1. High levels of ammonia in Yamuna is resulting in frequent disruption to Delhi's water supply.
2. Recently, ammonia levels shot up to 7.3 parts per million (ppm) at some places. When the concentration rises beyond the Delhi Jal Board's (DJB's) treatment capacity of 0.9 ppm, water production has to be stopped or reduced in water treatment plants.
3. **As per the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), the acceptable maximum limit of ammonia in drinking water is 0.5 ppm.**
4. Causes-The Yamuna flows into Delhi from Haryana and the state has **industrial units in Sonapat (on the banks of Yamuna).** Ammonia is used as an industrial chemical in the production of fertilisers, plastics and dyes.

## PROTESTS AGAINST ECO-SENSITIVE ZONES IN NARMADA DISTRICT

1. Tribal communities in Gujarat have been protesting against the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) order classifying 121 villages around the Shoolpaneshwar Wildlife Sanctuary in Narmada district as eco-sensitive zones.
2. They have appealed to the centre to withdraw the notification to mitigate the protests.
3. **Tribes like Tadvi and Vasava have been concerned ever since Kevadia village of Narmada district was developed into a tourism circuit around the Statue of Unity (SoU).**