

KSG:NEWSPAPER CRUX

20TH FEBRUARY, 2021

NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHTS

- **Indian-American scientist Swati Mohan, who leads the guidance, navigation, and control operations of NASA's Mars 2020 mission, played a pivotal role in landing the U.S. space agency's historic Perseverance rover on the Martian surface.**
- **The crime against women declined significantly in the national capital and the rate of solving the cases has gone up in 2020 as compared to 2019, Delhi Police said.**
- **Amid severe criticism of a frequent hike in fuel prices, questions on the issue by Opposition leaders at a meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Petroleum were shot down by Chairman Ramesh Bidhuri by shifting the blame on the States for imposing additional taxes.**
- **China said for the first time that it had lost four soldiers, including a battalion commander in the June 15 last clash in the Galwan Valley, breaking its silence over the number of casualties suffered by the People's Liberation Army (PLA).**
- **Banks cannot wash their hands of any liability if any harm is caused to their customers' lockers or safe deposits in an era when miscreants can manipulate technology to gain access to electronically-operated bank lockers, the Supreme Court observed in a judgment.**
- **The European Union (EU) envoys, who studied the ground situation for two days in J&K, have praised certain measures taken post August 5 in the Union Territory (UT) but called for "early organisation of the legislative Assembly elections.**
- **The Biden administration has said that it will participate in talks with Iran with a view to reinstate the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) or the 'Iran nuclear deal', which has been unravelling since the U.S.'s departure from the deal in 2018.**

BOOSTING COOPERATION IN SOUTH ASIA

- 1.Prime Minister suggested that neighbouring countries should consider creating a **special visa scheme for doctors and nurses, so that they could travel quickly** within the region during health emergencies, on the request of the receiving country.
- 2.This suggestion was made during a workshop on 'Covid19 Management: Experience, Good Practices and Way Forward' hosted by India with nine neighbouring nations, including Pakistan.
- 3.The eight members of the SAARC and Mauritius and Seychelles participated in the workshop.

NASA'S PERSEVERANCE ROVER MAKES HISTORIC MARS LANDING

- 1.Perseverance, part of NASA's Mars 2020 mission, is the most advanced astrobiology laboratory ever sent to another world.
- 2.Key highlights-Four science objectives-Studying Mars' Habitability, **Seeking Signs of Past Microbial Life**, Collecting and Caching Samples, and Preparing for Future Human Missions.
- 3.MOXIE or Mars Oxygen ISRU (In Situ Resource Utilization)Experiment-Which for the first time will **manufacture molecular oxygen on Mars using carbon dioxide** from the carbon-dioxide-rich. **Ingenuity**, the first ever helicopter to fly on Mars.

OTT SERVICE PROVIDERS VS TELECOM SERVICE PROVIDERS

- 1.The Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI) has urged the government to bring over-the-top (OTT) service providers such as WhatsApp under the licensing regime and defer net neutrality rules on telecom operators till the time 'same service, same rules' are applied on the applications.
- 2.COAI was constituted in 1995 as a registered, non-governmental society. COAI's core membership includes private Telecom Service Providers (TSPs).
- 3.Impact of OTT Services on TSPs: OTT applications actively use TSPs' infrastructure to provide their services. **Many telecom operators are worried by the threat OTT services provide to their own services.** Countless OTT applications are designed as alternative formats of existing **'classic' communications such as SMS.**

NURTURING NEIGHBOURHOODS CHALLENGE(NNC)

- 1.Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has announced names of 25 cities selected for the NNC under Smart Cities mission.
- 2.NNC is a three year initiative that **will support cities to develop, pilot, and scale solutions that enhance the quality of life of young children**, their caregivers and families in the public realm.
- 3.Cities will receive technical assistance and help in capacity-building to create accessible, safe, walkable streets for young children and families.

MAHABAHU BRAHMAPUTRA INITIATIVE LAUNCHED

- 1.The programme is aimed at providing **seamless connectivity to the eastern parts of India** and includes various developments activities for the people living around River Brahmaputra and River Barak.
- 2.On this occasion PM inaugurated **Ro-Pax vessel operations between Neemati-Majuli island, North Guwahati-South Guwahati and Dhubri-Hatsingimari.**
- 3.Programme also includes construction of tourist jetties to promote river cruise tourism, generate local employment and generate growth for local business.