

● POLITY

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INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

SUMMIT CONCLUDES; MODI CALLS FOR VIRTUAL REVIEW MEET IN NOV.

CONTEXT: Mr. Modi handed over the ceremonial gavel to Brazil's President Luiz Inacio Lula Da Silva, initiating the process of transition of the President's Chair for the next round of the G-20 in Brazil.

The Delhi summit witnessed a high point with the admission of the African Union as a new G-20 member. Prime Minister Modi announced the adoption of the "Joint Declaration" of the summit which was adopted through consensus overcoming sharp differences among members regarding the Ukraine crisis. The G-20, under the Indian Presidency, should convene virtually towards November-end to take stock of the progress made on the proposals received during the September 9-10 summit.

Regarding the discussion at the summit in the last session, Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte said the agenda included digitisation and artificial intelligence. "It's crucial that we join together at international level to adopt rules on this, so that this technology can be used safely and inclusively in our societies. A working session that I took part in was devoted to ensuring that this process runs smoothly," Mr. Rutte said.

Mr. Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron held a bilateral meeting after which a Joint Statement was issued to inform that India and France will collaborate in the Indo-Pacific and in Africa in areas such as "infrastructure, connectivity, energy, biodiversity, sustainability and industrial projects". Mr. Macron and Mr. Erdogan appreciated the launch of the India-Middle East-EU transport corridor that will include a network of roads, ports and maritime routes.

Mr. Macron reiterated the call for a "just and lasting peace in Ukraine in line with the UN Charter". He also called for "deep reform of the global governance structures including the United Nations, World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Mr. Modi held a series of meetings with visiting leaders that included German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, President Lula Da Silva, President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol soon after he declared the end of the summit.

GEOGRAPHY

MOROCCO QUAKE TOLL RISES ABOVE 2,100

CONTEXT: A 6.8-magnitude quake struck 72 kilometres southwest of the tourist hub of Marrakech in Morocco, wiping out entire villages in the hills of the Atlas mountain range.

The strongest-ever quake recorded in the North African country has killed at least 2,122 people and injured over 2,400. Al-Haouz province, site of the epicentre, suffered the most deaths with 1,351. The quake was the deadliest in Morocco since a 1960 earthquake destroyed Agadir and killed more than 12,000 people.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

G-7 NATIONS, TURKEY DEFEND 'CLIMBDOWN' ON UKRAINE TO CLINCH DELHI DECLARATION

CONTEXT: The Western media called significantly "watered-down" language on Russia adopted the Delhi Declaration as a "sellout" by the G-7 and "eye opening departure" from Bali and as Ukraine slammed the outcome, G-7 countries mounted a defence that the language against Russia was not weakened but was something needed to obtain consensus for G-20.

The Delhi Declaration referring to the "war in Ukraine" called for a "just and durable peace in Ukraine", and noted "there were different views and assessments of the situation. The Delhi Declaration highlighted the human suffering and negative added impacts of the war in Ukraine with regard to global food and energy security, supply chains, macro-financial stability, inflation and growth.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau noted the statement would have been much stronger particularly on Ukraine while if it had been just up to other countries around the table it would have been much weaker particularly on Ukraine. The G-20 is an extremely disparate group and we worked very hard to get as strong language as we possibly could.

The Bali Declaration last year had mentioned "aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine" which was staunchly opposed leading to speculation that there may be no deceleration at this summit. However, a compromise language by host country India and its acceptance by the West saw consensus emerge among the grouping.

ECONOMICS & DEVELOPMENT

EXTERNAL DEBT WITHIN COMFORT ZONE: NIRMALA

CONTEXT: In her foreword to 'India's External Debt: A Status Report 2022-23' released earlier, Ms. Sitharaman cited India's external debt of \$ 624.7 billion at March-end with a debt-service ratio of 5.3 % is within the comfort zone.

The ratio of external debt to GDP declined from 20 % a year ago to 18.9% at March-end 2022-23. It said the debt-service ratio during 2022-23 increased marginally from 5.2 % to 5.3 % mainly due to a rise in debt service payments in 2022-23.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

ANY GRAIN INITIATIVE THAT ISOLATES RUSSIA IS BOUND TO FAIL: ERDOGAN

CONTEXT: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan noted that any initiative that isolates Russia in the Black Sea Grain Initiative is bound to fail.

Mr. Erdogan said that 33 million tonnes of grain had been exported by Russia through the Black Sea corridor so far. Mr. Erdogan said Russian President Vladimir Putin insisted that the West had not kept the promises it made to Moscow. The war in Ukraine disrupted grain supplies from Ukraine and as the repercussions were felt across the globe, a deal was stuck between Russia and Ukraine, mediated by Turkey and the UN, under which ships carrying grain were given safe passage through the Black Sea. However, the deal collapsed in July as Russia pulled out of it.

SWIFT access

Mr. Lavrov said that meant restoring Russian banks' access to the SWIFT system and allowing exporters to avail insurance for the grain and other commodity exports.

Criticising the UN Secretary-General for working "unilaterally" for only one side, Mr. Lavrov said the assurances given thus far meant Russia would have to revive the grain deal immediately, but only receive relief for its own exports over a few months.

Sergey Lavrov, Russian Foreign Minister called for a "full, timely and effective implementation to ensure the immediate and unimpeded deliveries of grain, foodstuffs, and fertilizers/inputs from the Russian Federation and Ukraine. This is necessary to meet the demand in developing and least developed countries, particularly those in Africa. Russia and Ukraine together account for 21% of global grain trade.

Sergey Lavrov, Russian Foreign Minister reiterated that Moscow would reciprocate to the "collective implementation" of the grain deal "the same day" its conditions for the export of its grain and fertilizers to the global markets are met.

POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

APPLE COUNTRY GETS GROUND READY FOR CANNABIS CULTIVATION

CONTEXT: In 2017, Uttarakhand became the first State in the country to legalise cannabis cultivation. At present, Himachal Pradesh is taking steps to legalise cannabis (hemp) cultivation in the State, growers are upbeat and optimistic about getting an economic boost.

Hemp is a botanical class of Cannabis sativa cultivars grown specifically for industrial or medicinal use. It is produced in parts of Himachal Pradesh, though it is illegal under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985. A committee comprising lawmakers that explored the possibility of legal cultivation of cannabis recently recommended cultivation of cannabis for "non-narcotic use of cannabis for medicinal, industrial, and scientific use". The approval of the State Cabinet is awaited.

State Revenue Minister Jagat Singh Negi, who headed the

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

JAPAN KEEN TO DEEPEN DEFENCE TIES WITH INDIA, SAYS KISHIDA

CONTEXT: Prime Minister Fumio Kishida noted India as an "indispensable" partner in the Indo-Pacific and is keen to develop deeper defence cooperation to ensure maritime security in the region.

The Japan Self-Defence Force and the Indian Armed Forces have already conducted joint exercises this year between all services of land, sea and air. The Japan maritime Self-Defence Forces and the Indian Navy engaged in joint exercises this July and the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. Quad joint drill Malabar was also held on a continuous basis.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida described "an increasingly harsh security environment in the region", and Japan was "opposed to unilateral changes to the status quo in East and South China Seas", and also "firmly condemned North Korea's missile activities". The Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) that Japan is promoting is a concept to uphold and reinforce a free and open international order based on rule of law in the Indo-Pacific region that Aim to ensure peace and stability and prosperity in the entire region and ultimately across the world.

Mr. Kishida had announced his new FOIP plan during a visit to India in March this year. "As a concrete measure we announced the reinforcement of our support to maritime law enforcement capabilities and for maritime security," he said. "In particular, India is an indispensable partner to realise a FOIP."

"Doing nothing is very hard to do. You never know when you're finished."—Leslie Nielsen

five-member committee noted that cultivation of cannabis would be limited only for industrial, medicinal and scientific use. The policy on hemp cultivation for medicinal, industrial, and scientific uses would pave the way for utilising the medicinal properties of cannabis to treat patients, besides raising revenue for the State from the products made of hemp.

The NDPS Act of 1985, imposes a ban on extracting the resin and flowers from the plant, but the law determines the method and extent of its cultivation for medicinal and scientific purposes.

Section 10 (a) (iii) of the Act empowers the States to make rules regarding the cultivation of any cannabis plant, production, possession, transport, consumption, use and purchase and sale, and consumption of cannabis (except charas). The States are empowered to permit, by general or special order, the cultivation of hemp only for obtaining fibre or seeds or for horticultural purposes.

A study titled "Dynamics of drug addiction and abuse in northwest India: social, economic and political implications" pointed out that approximately 95% drug addicts in Himachal Pradesh are using cannabis and its byproducts. Legalising the cultivation of cannabis is likely to encourage adolescents and youth towards the use and abuse of cannabis. It may, however, help addicts to shift from the use of more harmful drugs to less harmful drugs but there is a very high probability that it may end up in life-long addiction.

Cannabis has been growing in Himachal Pradesh for decades, and those in favour of its cultivation point out that hemp has multiple uses ranging from phytoremediation, fibre-cloth manufacturing, medicinal use, and use in the pulp and paper industry.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

ADITYA L1 COMPLETES ANOTHER STEP IN ITS JOURNEY TOWARDS SUN

CONTEXT: The Telemetry, Tracking and Command Network (ISTRAC) in Bengaluru successfully performed The third earth-bound manoeuvre of the Aditya L-1 spacecraft, India's first space-based mission to study the sun in the early hours of Sunday.

Aditya-L1 will stay approximately 1.5 million km away from earth, which is about 1% of the earth-sun distance. The new orbit attained is 296 km x 71767 km, the space agency said. Two more manoeuvres are scheduled to take place. The next manoeuvre (EBN#4) is scheduled for September 15, 2023, around 02:00 Hrs. IST.

After the final manoeuvre on September 18, Aditya-L1 will undergo a Trans-Lagrangian1 insertion manoeuvre, marking the beginning of its 110-day trajectory to the destination around the L1 Lagrange point. Upon arrival at the L1 point, another manoeuvre will bind Aditya-L1 to an orbit around L1, a balanced gravitational location between the earth and the sun.

Aditya-L1 will stay approximately 1.5 million km away from earth, directed towards the sun, which is about 1% of the earth-sun distance.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

DGCI ISSUES ALERT OVER SALE OF FALSIFIED VERSIONS OF DRUGS

CONTEXT: The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) has directed the drugs controllers of the States and Union Territories to keep a strict vigil on the sale and distribution of falsified versions following alerts issued by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Defitelio (Defibrotide) 80 mg/ml concentrate for solution for infusion is manufactured by Gentium Srl for liver treatment and Adcetris (Brentuximab Vedotin) is a CD30-directed antibody-drug conjugate indicated for the treatment of patients with Hodgkin's lymphoma after the failure of an autologous stem cell transplant and systemic anaplastic large cell lymphoma

The spurious medicines are most often available at the patient level and distributed in the unregulated supply chains (mainly online). The products have been identified in both regulated and illicit supply chains, sometimes at patient levels as well.

POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

DARK PATTERNS IN E-COMMERCE PLATFORMS

CONTEXT: The Centre has sought comments from sector stakeholders and consumer advocacy groups by October 5 on matters related to regulating insidious e-commerce trade practices, known as dark patterns.

Harry Brignull, When the British 'user experience researcher' coined the term dark patterns in 2010. Examples of dark patterns

ECONOMICS AND DEVELOPMENT

REVAMP MODE: RAILWAYS TO MAXIMISE UTILITY OF ITS PRIME LAND NEAR MAJOR STATIONS

CONTEXT: The Indian Railways has decided to maximise the utility of its prime lands abutting railway stations by replacing decades-old sparsely distributed buildings with multi-storey structures. The initiative is part of the mission to develop major railway stations and surrounding areas as city centres.

Master plans are being prepared for station development across the railway network, saying that cities had generally grown around railway stations whereas the constructions in and around such stations were filled with several decades-old low-height buildings and sparsely distributed.

Railway stations located in the prime location of the station with respect to the city provides an opportunity to go for dense utilisation and redevelop the entire area in such a manner that the whole place becomes much more useful for the citizens and in turn brings value to railways.

The entire master plan should be well-designed for utilities and inter-connectivity between different components so that the station becomes the 'City Centre'. Outside the station building, the plots marked for property development should be developed to their maximum potential in phases as per market demand. These identified plots in master plan should be well secured against encroachments in the initial phase itself.

The circulating area and parking would be designed in such a manner that the valuation of commercial space in the station building does not get adversely affected on account of access and parking of vehicles.

The development plan would include an adequate number of elevators/escalators, electric vehicle charging points and other infrastructure keeping in view future growth and expansion.

include the auto check mark for travel insurance while booking flight tickets; the mandatory requirement of entering emails or phone numbers to access e-commerce sites etc. to name a few.

The European Data Protection Board issued guidelines to recognise and avoid dark patterns on social media platforms, and the United States' Federal Trade Commission warned of a "rise in sophisticated dark patterns designed to trick and trap consumers".

India issued detailed guidelines to identify and prevent false urgency, basket sneaking, confirm shaming, forced action, and a subscription trap by online platforms. An Advertising Standards Council of India report in 2021 estimated that over 50% of e-commerce sites used dark patterns to sell their products. India's efforts so far to regulate the sector have been confined to preventing tax leakages and protecting the interests of brick and mortar merchants.

e-commerce platforms have systematically collected the behavioural footprint of digital users to sell their or third party products. The broadening of scope from mere protection of commercial interest of consumers to the need to safeguard privacy in relation to personal data on e-commerce sites and social media platforms, should boost user confidence and ensure a safe, secure, free, and fair digital environment.

DISASTER MANAGEMENT

REDOUBLE EFFORTS TO REDUCE DISASTER RISKS

CONTEXT: The aftershocks of the COVID-19 pandemic, combined with a polycrisis of war, debt, and food insecurity, a relentless wave of bad news across the world, from severe flooding in China to destructive wildfires in Europe and Hawaii to the hottest month ever on record in July have dominated the media headlines.

India, already among the world's most disaster-prone countries was battered by disasters or extreme weather nearly every day, while this year's severe monsoon has caused widespread loss of livelihood and lives. Over a third of the world's population, mostly in least developed countries and Small Island Developing States, do not have access to global multi-disaster warning systems. Just a 24-hour warning of a coming storm can reduce the damage caused by 30 %.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) serve as the blueprint for peace and prosperity, together with commitments made in Paris to limit global warming to 1.50C, and the global framework for reducing disaster risks — the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. In May this year, UN member states committed to accelerate resilience building with renewed urgency under the framework provided by the Sendai Framework.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of systems-wide disaster risk reduction, resilience, and adaptation. India's CoWIN digital vaccine system highlighted a Whole of Government approach to deal with the Covid 19 pandemic.

All the 28 States have prepared their own disaster management plans in recent years. The Government of India has allocated \$28.6 billion at the national and State levels for a period of five years for disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and capacity development.

India is promoting disaster resilience and sustainability,

including through the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure, a global partnership for building resilience in infrastructure. India's National Disaster Response Force responds to domestic disasters and is also regularly deployed to disaster zones around the world.

India's ongoing G20 presidency established the first-ever work stream on disaster risk reduction. The Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group is aligned with the SDGs and reflects many of our shared priorities.

Way forward:

1. Establish a cost-effective well-integrated global multi-risk warning system for all kinds of hazards, whether biological, tectonic, or technological.
2. Improve global data capabilities will help predict and respond to the risks.
3. Enhance international cooperation in disaster prevention, response, and recovery in an inclusive manner, especially for the countries of the Global S

India's early warning system for cyclones covers the entire coastline and has helped reduce cyclone-related mortality by 90% over the last 15 years, while heat wave action plans at the local level have reduced heat wave deaths by over 90%. The recent zero death toll of Cyclone Biparjoy in Gujarat demonstrates what can be achieved through effective preparedness, response, and early warning and action systems. In fact, there were rays of joy amidst the disaster, as hundreds of babies were reported to have been born to women who had been transported to hospitals and shelters for safe delivery by the government before the cyclone.

POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

ON THE CRIME OF 'FALSE PROMISE TO MARRY'

CONTEXT: Section 69 of the proposed Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023 identifies 'sexual intercourse of 'consensual' nature based on false promise of marriage' as an offence

What does Section 69 say?

Chapter 5 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023 Bill, titled "Offences against woman and children" describes 'sexual intercourse by employing deceitful means etc. attracting a penalty of up to ten years of imprisonment'. Section 69 cites 2 grounds -

1. Deceitful means - false promise of employment or promotion, inducement or marrying after suppressing identity.
2. False promise to marry a woman for the purpose of getting her consent and sexually exploiting her, with the intention of breaking it.

How has the IPC dealt with cases of 'false promise to marry'?

In 2016, a quarter of the total rape cases registered in Delhi pertained to sex under 'false promise of marriage', as per Delhi Police data. The National Crime Records Bureau in the same year recorded 10,068 similar cases of rape by "known persons on a promise to marry the victim" (the number was 7,655 in 2015).

BNS penalises those coercing women into sexual relationships. Coercing a woman into sexual relations were dealt under Sections 375 and 90 of the IPC. Section 375 defines consent as "an unequivocal voluntary agreement when the woman by words, gestures or any form of verbal or non-verbal communication, communicates a willingness to participate in the specific sexual act." Section 90 says consent, given under "fear of injury" or "misconception of fact," cannot be considered as consent.

Difference between 'false promise' and 'breach of promise'

The Courts have distinguished between a 'false promise' and a 'breach of promise' on the basis of proving if the man intended to marry at the time of engaging in sex. The SC observed that a false promise is "given on the understanding by its maker that it will be broken," but a breach of promise is "made in good faith but subsequently not fulfilled."

A Supreme Court Bench ruled against rape in Uday versus State of Karnataka (2003), citing lack of intention, since the victim had to be 'clearly conscious' of the 'stiff opposition' the relationship would face since the parties belonged to 'different castes'.

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INTERNAL SECURITY

CHINA-BASED HACKING GROUP COMPROMISED MICROSOFT'S CLOUD SECURITY

CONTEXT: In July, Microsoft accused a China-based hacking group identified as Storm-0558, gained access to email accounts of 25 organisations, including Western European government agencies, email accounts from top American officials such as Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo, U.S. Ambassador to China Nicholas Burns, and Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia Daniel Kritenbrink.

Microsoft Threat Intelligence “with moderate confidence” assessed that Storm-0558 is a China-based threat actor with activities and methods consistent with espionage objectives. The group is thought to operate as its own distinct group and its core working hours are consistent with working hours in China.

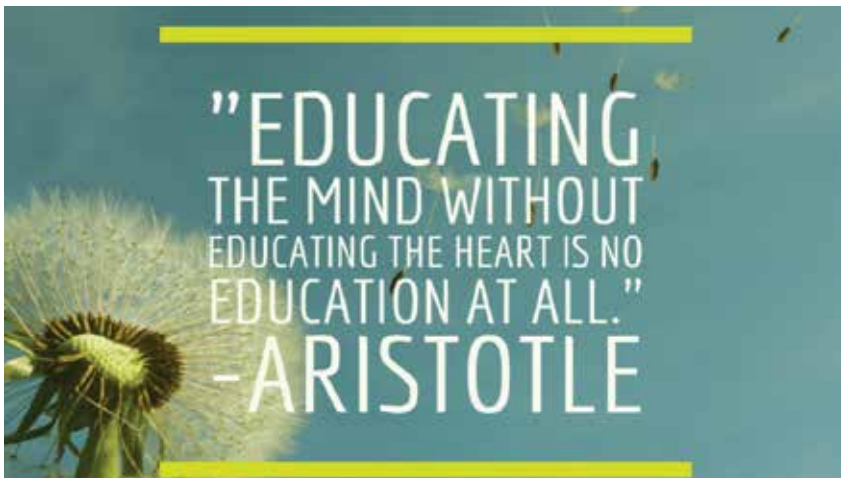
The group has been targeting Microsoft accounts since August 2021 and had reportedly obtained credentials for initial access through phishing campaigns and exploited vulnerabilities in public-facing applications to gain access to victims’ networks.

The China-based threat actor was able to compromise Microsoft’s cloud security systems by using an acquired MSA key to forge tokens to access Outlook Web Access (OWA), Microsoft’s web-based mail client that is part of the company’s Exchange Server, Outlook.com. MSA keys are token signing keys used by a service to validate authentication tokens for the service.

Hackers then used the acquired key to forge a token that was used for validation issues to impersonate Azure AD users and gain access to enterprise email.

Cryptographic key: A string of characters used within an encryption algorithm to alter data making it illegible to someone without the correct key. A cryptographic key encrypts data and is used to decrypt the encased data by the holder of the key. Two types of encryptions are used for SSL encryption (HTTPS)

- 1. Symmetric encryption:** Both sides of a conversation use the same key for turning plain text into cyphers (encrypted) text.
- 2. Asymmetric encryptions:** In asymmetric or public key encryption, the two sides of the conversation use a different key. A public key and a private key, the private key is never shared by the party with anyone. When plaintext is encrypted with the public key, only the private key can decrypt it, not the public key.



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