



Contact: 097418 69722

22 November 2018
Daily News Pedia

Virtual climate summit

World leaders to participate in an innovative climate change summit that will take place entirely online so it is carbon neutral. The Virtual Climate Summit is the brainchild of Marshall Islands President Hilda Heine, whose low-lying Pacific island nation will drown beneath rising seas if global warming continues unabated.

It will be the first global political meeting to be held online. The virtual summit's main aim is to encourage the international community to keep global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

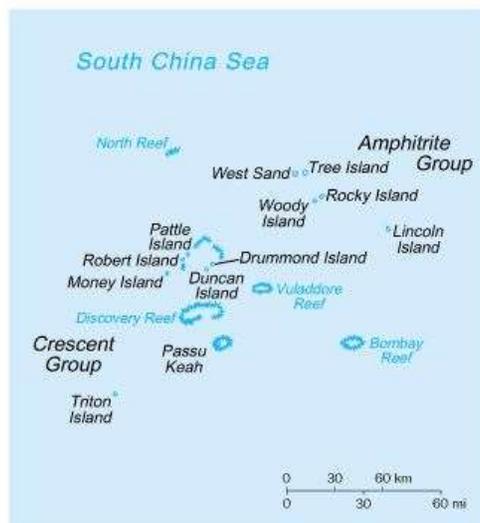
The latest round of UN climate talks, COP24, will open in the southern Polish city of Katowice on December 2 with the aim of reinvigorating the Paris agreement.

Source: The Hindu.

China Begins building on Bombay Reef in SCS

According to recent satellite images reviewed by a U.S. think tank, China has installed a new platform on Bombay Reef of the Paracel Islands in the disputed South China Sea

Bombay Reef: Bombay reef is an atoll of the Paracel Islands, South China Sea.



Paracel Islands: The Paracel Islands are an archipelago in the South China Sea. It is controlled by the People's Republic of China, and also claimed by Taiwan (Republic of China) and Vietnam. *Strategic significance of Bombay Reef:* The reef is directly adjacent to the major shipping lanes that run between the Paracels and the Spratly Islands to the south. This makes it an attractive location for a sensor array to extend Chinese radar or signals intelligence collection over that important sea lane.

Source: The Hindu.

Institution's Innovation Council (IIC)

Union HRD Ministry has launched the 'Institution's Innovation Council (IIC) program under Innovation cell of MHRD in New Delhi.

Aim: To foster the culture of Innovation in all Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) across the country.

It is a significant step in institutionalizing innovation and developing a scientific temperament in the country. More than 1000 Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have already formed IICs in their campuses and enrolled for the IIC network managed by MHRD's Innovation cell. Indian universities are setting up research centers through 'Institution's Innovation Council (IIC) program to improve global innovation ranking in next 2-3 years through this initiative.

Source: PIB.

Sentinelese Tribals

The Sentinelese, a negrito tribe who live on the North Sentinel Island of the Andamans, have not faced incursions and remain hostile to outsiders. The inhabitants are connected to the Jarawa on the basis of physical, as well as linguistic similarities.

Based on carbon dating of kitchen middens by the Anthropological Survey of India, Sentinelese presence was confirmed in the islands to 2,000 years ago. Genome studies indicate that the Andaman tribes could have been on the islands even 30,000 years ago.

The Govt. of India issued the Andaman and Nicobar Islands (Protection of Aboriginal Tribes) Regulation, 1956 to declare the traditional areas occupied by the tribes as reserves. It prohibited entry of all persons except those with authorisation. Photographing or filming the tribe members is also an offence. The rules were amended later to enhance penalties. But restricted area permits were relaxed for some islands recently.

The Sentinelese has been fiercely hostile to outside contact. But in 1991 they accepted some coconuts from a team of Indian anthropologists and administrators. Some researchers argue that the Sentinelese have been mostly left alone even from colonial times, unlike other tribes such as the Onges, Jarawas and Great Andamanese, because the land they occupy has little commercial attraction.

Source: The Hindu.

Compulsory registration for non-ECR category

Passport holders with non-Emigration Check Required (non-ECR) status will soon have to get themselves registered with the Ministry of External Affairs before taking up jobs abroad. The rule, which takes effect on January 1, is said to be aimed at the welfare of Indians going abroad. It applies to jobs in 18 countries, including the six Gulf Cooperation Council nations, which have the largest number of expats.

Category of passengers: The non-ECR category of passengers includes Indians paying income tax and those with educational qualification above matriculation.

As of now only ECR category passport holders were required to get emigration clearance from the office of the Protector of Emigrants to seek employment abroad.

All those seeking employment will have to register online via the website emigrate.gov.in. Those failing to register at least 24 hours prior to actual departure will be off-loaded at the airports. For all other visa categories, there is no change in existing procedures.

The objective of the directive is to protect workers with higher educational qualification from not getting into blue collar jobs. Previously only ECR stamped passport holders had to go through the mandatory e-migrate registration since 2015.

However, not all blue collar workers are in the ECR category as it was evident in the number of people taking up employment in United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Sultanate of Oman and Qatar.

Source: [The Hindu](#).

Editorial

To Read

Getting justice for Asia Bibi

How Pakistan must win the battle of narratives to counter Islamist sectarians

Last month, the Pakistan Supreme Court acquitted Asia Bibi, a Christian woman accused of blasphemy, citing lack of evidence. The verdict must rank as the boldest in the chequered history of Pakistan. The judges showed remarkable courage in going against the far-right ideology responsible for the extralegal lynching of an estimated 60 persons accused of blasphemy since 1990.

Indeed, in 1997, a judge of the Lahore High Court, Arif Iqbal Bhatti, who had dismissed a blasphemy case against two Christians, was killed. So were Salman Taseer, the outspoken Governor of Punjab, and Shahbaz Bhatti, Pakistan's Federal Minister for Minority Affairs, in January and March of 2011, respectively. Both of them were critical of the blasphemy laws and had defended Ms. Bibi.

Surrender of the Pakistani state

True to form, the Pakistani clerics' reaction to Ms. Bibi's acquittal was brutal. Thousands of their weapon-wielding henchmen blocked roads and burnt vehicles shouting "Hang Asia" slogans. Pir Muhammad Afzal Qadri, senior leader of the radical outfit Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP), not only incited an insurrection against Pakistan Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa, but also openly called for the assassination of the Supreme Court judges who discharged Ms. Bibi. If that was not horrific enough, he hurled an antisemitic slur at Prime Minister Imran Khan and sought the dismissal of his government. All this in the name of the Prophet whom the Quran calls Rahmat al lil aalameen (Mercy unto humanity)!

Such was the savageness of the clerical backlash that the government capitulated within two days of the verdict. This resulted in Pakistan's Religious Affairs Minister and the Law Minister of Punjab signing an agreement with the TLP. One of the two TLP signatories was Mr. Qadri.

Under the deal, the government agreed to take immediate steps to prevent Ms. Bibi from leaving the country and promised not to contest the review petition filed against the verdict. Also, the arrested protesters would be released without delay and violence against them investigated. The only concession that could be extracted from the TLP was a deceitful ma'azarat (apology) to those who feel its activities had hurt them. The surrender of the Pakistani state could not have been more abject.

One fails to understand why Pakistan is constrained to pander to every whim of the extremists, especially when they do not enjoy popular support. The TLP, which has been

consistently holding the state to ransom, did not win a single seat this year in the National Assembly despite fielding more than 170 candidates. The only inference that could be drawn from this is that an overwhelming majority of the Pakistani electorate does not subscribe to the medievalism of religious parties. Yet, the radicals can be seen dictating terms to even the powerful Pakistani military.

Some commentators attribute this to the belief that Pakistani citizens are not moderate. The argument is, if the extremists are not winning seats, it is because the mainstream parties have appropriated the discourse of the religious right on issues like blasphemy and women's rights. This reasoning is too simplistic. If, as alleged, the people of Pakistan had really been comfortable with radicalism, they would have backed authentic religious groups which hope to desecularise Pakistan. They would not have voted to power a mainstream party which only opportunistically resorts to the language of political Islam.

A conundrum explained

What explains this conundrum? The answer could lie in the Constitution which declared Pakistan to be an "Islamic Republic" perhaps without fully ascertaining if that was really "the will of the people of Pakistan" as the Preamble claims. The fact is, even Mohammad Ali Jinnah did not envision the state he was creating as a theodemocracy although he wanted Pakistan's Constitution to embody the "essential principles of Islam" such as equality, justice and fair play, which is totally different from making Islam the state religion.

In *Creating a New Medina*, Venkat Dhulipala points out that Jinnah considered Muslims in the "majority provinces" a nation only because they constituted a numerical majority in a contiguous piece of territory. On the other hand, he refused to accord the status of a "national group" to Muslims in the United Provinces because they were "scattered". In other words, there is no evidence to claim that Jinnah's definition of a nation was based on religion.

Yet, soon after his death, the Objectives Resolution (adopted in March 1949 and now part of the Pakistan Constitution) proclaimed inter alia that "sovereignty over the entire universe belongs to Allah Almighty alone and the authority which He has delegated to the State of Pakistan, through its people for being exercised within the limits prescribed by Him is a sacred trust." Several provisions of the Constitution echo these views. Article 31, for instance, expects the state to take steps to enable Pakistani Muslims to live in accordance with the basic concepts of Islam and help them understand "the meaning of life according to the Holy Quran and Sunnah." From a Muslim point of view these assertions are justified. But the question is, on whose interpretation of the Quran and the Sunnah would "the limits" prescribed by Allah be determined and enforced? Who has authorised Pakistani theologians to hang a person for a crime she has not committed, especially when that crime does not carry the death penalty in Islam?

With fatwas of kufr (apostasy) and threats of assassination hanging over them like a sword of Damocles, the people and secular politicians of Pakistan cannot be expected to boldly speak out against the views of the rampaging clerics. Even the Supreme Court judges who acquitted Ms. Bibi thoughtfully began their ruling with the Kalima-e-shahaadat (the testimony of faith). But it was of no avail. The fatwa of apostasy was nevertheless issued against them.

The only way to reclaim Islam from the radicals is to dismantle their blinkered narrative by questioning the juristic devices of abrogation, sectarian consensus, exegetic rationales, and eisegesis. Through these instruments, Quranic verses and Prophetic hadeeses are either arrogantly repealed, semantically stifled, or gratuitously expanded to rationalise narrow sectarianism in the name of preserving the Shariah.

Simultaneously, a massive intellectual effort must be mounted to mainstream a concept of Quranic hermeneutics that is consistent with the core values of Islam: justice, fairness, equality, freedom of religion, moderation, kindness and mercy. The subjugation of the medievalists is almost entirely dependent on winning this battle of narratives.

Mains Question

Q: Analyze the impacts of US-China trade war on global rule and consensus based trade approach.

YesUPSC