

“One resolution I have made, and try always to keep is this: ‘To rise above little things’.”

John Burroughs

INTERNATIONAL AND BILATERAL

RIMPAC

The United States has decided to disinvite China from participating in the Rim of the Pacific naval exercise, held near Hawaii. The decision to withdraw the invitation extended to China was made in response to Chinese activity in the South China Sea.

China first participated in the RIMPAC exercises in 2014, as noted by The Diplomat. Back then China’s participation was lauded and viewed as a step toward cooperation. In Asia’s current climate, these exercises are especially important. Tension in both the South China Sea and East China Sea tends to increase during summer months, when activity is on the rise due to the presence of fishing and trade vessels.

RIMPAC:

RIMPAC is the world’s largest set of international maritime war games. The exercises occur every two years and are led by the U.S. Navy’s Pacific Fleet, headquartered in Honolulu, Hawaii. They are seen as a unique opportunity for Pacific Rim nations to cooperate as they train and work together to solve problems.

Also, the games are seen as a way of ensuring open access to important shipping lanes in Asia’s increasingly contested waters. The exercises are also a display of power — in the sense that participants are able to understand the technological capabilities of other participants — and thus perhaps act as a deterrent to further aggressive action.

NATIONAL

MHA CREATED A NEW DIVISION TO ADDRESS ISSUES OF WOMEN SAFETY

MHA has created a new Division to address issues of women safety comprehensively.

The division, headed by a joint secretary level officer, would deal with all aspects of women’s safety in coordination with the

relevant ministries, departments and state governments.

Besides dealing with crimes against women, the new division will deal with crimes against SCs and STs, crimes against children and elderly persons, the anti-trafficking cell, matters relating to prison legislation and prison reforms, all schemes under the Nirbhaya fund, Crime and Criminal Tracking and Network System and the National Crime Records Bureau.

In order to address offences against women, particularly rape, in a time-bound manner, the division would focus to enhance capacity of the existing administrative, investigative, prosecution and judicial machinery, along with appropriate measures for rehabilitation of victims and bringing attitudinal changes in society.

INDIA BIODIVERSITY AWARD

Singchung Bugun Village Community Reserve in Arunachal Pradesh has been awarded the India Biodiversity Award for its effort to conserve the critically endangered bird – Bugun liocichla.

Bugun Liocichla (Liocichla bugunorum) was discovered in 2006 in West Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh. The bird has been named in honour of the efforts of the Bugun community of Singchung village in West Kameng district in conserving the wildlife and forest of the area.

The known population of this species is between 14 and 20 individual birds and occupies an extremely small (3 to 4 square kilometre) area in the temperate forest around 2,200m which is entirely within the traditional lands of Singchung village.

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature has classified this species as critically endangered.

The Singchung Bugun village community reserve was formally created on February 6 last year following intensive conservation efforts by the Arunachal forest department.

The SBVCR, 17 square kilometre in size, is the core area of a larger conservation area on traditional Bugun lands.

Community reserves:

Conservation reserves and community reserves in India are terms denoting protected areas of India which typically act as buffer zones to or connectors and migration corridors between established national parks, wildlife sanctuaries and reserved and protected forests of India.

Such areas are designated as conservation areas if they are uninhabited and completely owned by the Government of India but used for subsistence by communities and community areas if part of the lands is privately owned. Administration of such reserves would be through local people and local agencies like the gram panchayat, as in the case of communal forests.

The 2002 Amendment to the Indian Wildlife Protection Act (1972) calls for a new category of protected areas, a 'Community Reserve'.

RUSTOM-II

Rustom-II Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) will be delivered to the armed forces by 2020.

It is being developed by the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO).

Rustom II has completed one test at Chitradurga recently.

At present, the basic UAV system is being perfected. Attempts are also being made to increase the altitude. By the end of this year, DRDO will be ready with the bird, after which the focus will be on the machine systems on it.

The drone is being developed for use by all three services of the Indian Armed Forces, primarily for intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) operations.

The medium-altitude prototype can fly at over 22,000 feet and is a long-endurance UAV that has an 20 hours approximate flight time.

Rustom-2 project:

Rustom 2 or TAPAS-BH-201 is a medium-altitude long-endurance unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV), designed to carry out surveillance and reconnaissance roles for the Indian Armed Forces.

It is capable of carrying different combination of payloads including synthetic aperture radar, electronic intelligence systems and situational awareness systems.

The UAV has an endurance of 24 hours and is similar to the American predator series of drones.

DRDO carried out a successful test flight of Rustom 2 on 25 February 2018, at the Aeronautical Test Range(ATR) located in Chalakere, Chitradurga district. This was the first flight of the UAV in user configuration with higher power engine.

FOOD PROCESSING MINISTRY TO COLLABORATE WITH INTERNATIONAL LABS FOR ACCEPTABILITY PRODUCTS

Food Processing Ministry to collaborate with international labs for wider acceptability of NIFTEM approved products.

NIFTEM:

NIFTEM is the brainchild of the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) Government of India.

It was created to cater to the needs of various stakeholders such as entrepreneurs, food processing industry, exporters, policy makers, government and existing institution.

It works actively for assisting in setting up food standards, businesses incubation and can also include knowledge sharing.

It would also be an apex institution in the field of food technology and management, networking and co-ordinating with other institutions in the same field in India and Abroad.
