

The Hindu

Front Page

- **No language is less than Hindi, English (Page no. 1)**
(GS Paper 1), Regionalism

No language is any less than Hindi or English, said Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan at a conference of Education Ministers from across the country.

For the past many days, there have been many doubts over the issue of languages. All languages are national languages, whether it is Gujarati or Tamil, Punjabi or Assamese, Bengali or Marathi. No language is less than Hindi or English.

Dr. K. Kasturirangan, head of the drafting committee of the National Education Policy, consciously coined the term “local languages” or mother tongues such as tribal languages, and had discussed reviving them with the help of technology.

There are a total of 15 lakh schools in the country, out of which 11 lakh are government schools. Of these, 1% will be PM Shri schools under a new scheme that will be framed after consultations.

PM Shri schools will be a laboratory for the National Education Policy. It will set benchmarks for readying the youth of the 21st century,” he said in his address.

- **India sent senior diplomat to Kabul for talk with Taliban (Page no. 1)**
(GS Paper 2), India and its Neighbourhood

India has sent a multi-member team of senior diplomats to Afghanistan for the first time since the Indian Embassy in Kabul was evacuated in August 2021 following the arrival of the Taliban at the Afghan capital.

Post 15th of August, 2021, in the light of the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan, it was decided to bring back all India-based personnel. However, local staff continued to function and ensure proper maintenance and upkeep of our premises there.

The Taliban has asked the Indian delegation to reopen its diplomatic mission in Afghanistan. The Afghanistan government is committed to providing a secure environment for its normal functioning.

The visit acquires significance as India has refused to recognise the Taliban administration in Afghanistan and has urged the international community to go slow in recognising the Taliban.

As part of its cautious approach to the Taliban, India has been supportive of the humanitarian requirements of the Afghan people, and has been sending medicines and food to Kabul since earlier this year.

The Indian delegation’s visit is the culmination of quiet engagement with the Taliban, which started soon after it provided indirect help in the evacuation of Indian officials from Kabul in August 2021.

Editorial Page

- **India-Pakistan ties and the mirror of 2019 (Page no. 8)**
(GS Paper 2), India and its Neighbourhood, Editorial

An official delegation from Pakistan was in New Delhi on Monday to hold talks with its Indian counterparts under the aegis of the Indus Water Treaty.

In March, the Indians had gone to Islamabad to attend the previous meeting. Starting from February, India has been sending through Pakistan consignments of wheat, via the World Food Programme, to the Talibanrun Afghanistan.

Evidently, channels of communication between the two governments are working and open hostility has subsided, if not vanished completely.

In his speeches, Prime Minister Narendra Modi no longer targets Pakistan as an enemy country or invokes it to target politicians of Opposition parties, a regular feature till a few years ago.

This is not because of a sudden change of heart or out of great love for Pakistan.

The change has been driven by realist considerations that surfaced during the Ladakh border crisis on the Line of Actual Control with China in the summer of 2020.

Explainer Page

- **China growing footprint in the Pacific Island (page no. 11)**
(GS Paper 2), Regional and Global grouping

Wang Yi, the Foreign Minister of China, is currently on an eight day visit to ten Pacific Island Countries (PICs), and has cohosted with Fiji the Second China Pacific Island Countries.

During the meeting, China's effort to push through a comprehensive framework deal, the draft of which was leaked earlier, failed to gain consensus among the PICs.

Though this has raised regional concerns about China's growing footprint in the Pacific islands, it has also been seen as a demonstration of China's limitations in the region.

News Page

- **Liquid mirror telescope in Devasthal sees first light (Page no. 15)**
(GS Paper 3), Achievements of Indians in Science & Technology

The fourmetre International Liquid Mirror Telescope (ILMT) saw the first light recently, gazing out from its vantage on Devasthal, a hill in Uttarakhand, into the deep sky.

The telescope, staring at the sky overhead, will make sky surveys possible and obtain images that can help observe transient phenomena such as supernovae and record the presence of space debris or meteorites — basically, watch the skies.

The telescope has been built by a collaboration of scientists from Canada, Belgium and India.

It is located at an altitude of 2,450 metres on the Devasthal Observatory campus of the Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES) in Nainital district, an autonomous institute under the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India.

- **India, Israel seek links on Futuristic defence ties (Page 14).**
(GS Paper 2), Bilateral Relation

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his visiting Israeli counterpart Benny Gantz discussed partnerships within the government to government framework, military training, and technological cooperation with a focus on Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) and defensive capabilities.

A Letter of Intent on enhancing cooperation in the field of futuristic defence technologies was also exchanged between the two Ministers..

The Ministers also discussed a cooperation agreement signed between the Indian Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Israel's Directorate for Defence R&D.

The Ministers declared their intention to further develop defence cooperation in a manner that harnesses Israel's

“technological advance and operational experience”, together with India's “extraordinary development and production capabilities”.

“Cooperation between the countries would be in line with Prime Minister Modi's ‘Make in India’ vision.”

Business Page

- **Trade deficit widened to a record 23.33 billion dollar last month (Page no. 17)**
(GS Paper 3), Indian Economy

India's merchandise trade deficit widened to a record \$23.33 billion in May, as exports grew 15.5% to \$37.3 billion while imports jumped 56.1% to \$60.62 billion, preliminary data from the Commerce and Industry ministry.

The previous highest monthly trade deficit was November's \$22.91 billion. Goods exports shrank 7.2% from April's \$40.19 billion, resulting in the trade deficit for the first two months of 2022-23 widening to \$41.73 billion.

The figure for April-May 2021 was \$21.82 billion. While petroleum exports, which surged 52.7% from May 2021, electronics (41.5%) and readymade textile garments (22.9%), led the export growth, the overall growth rate almost halved to an 8.1% pace once petroleum exports were excluded.