

### **Sheikh Saud International Prize for Materials Research awarded to C N R Rao...**

- The first Sheikh Saud International Prize for Materials Research has been awarded to C N R Rao. The award will be presented to Rao by Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi ruler of Ras Al Khaimah emirate during the International Workshop on Advanced Materials at Ras Al Khaimah on February 25.
- Chintamani Nagesa Ramachandra Rao popularly known as C N R Rao is an Indian scientist who has made significant contributions in material research.
- He has authored over 1,600 research papers and 50 books. His areas of research include transition metal oxides and other extended inorganic solids, metal-insulator transitions, nano-materials including nanotubes and graphene, artificial photosynthesis and hydrogen generation by photocatalysis and hydrogen generation by photocatalysis and thermal means.
- He has been honored several national and international awards which include honorary fellowship of the 'Royal Society of Chemistry', London in 1989 and 'Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur' from France in 2005. He has also been conferred with 'Padma Shri' (1974), 'Padma Vibhushan' (1985) and 'Karnataka Ratna' (2001), Bharat Ratna (2014) among others.

### **PM inaugurates manufacturing facility for K9 Vajra self-propelled Howitzer guns in Hazira...**

The Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Armoured Systems Complex (ASC), developed by Larsen & Toubro (L&T) at Hazira near Surat in Gujarat. This Armoured Systems Complex (ASC) is the country's first private facility where the K9 Vajra self-propelled Howitzer guns will be manufactured.

### **The features of the K9 Vajra self-propelled Howitzer guns**

- The gun weighs 50 tonnes and can fire 47kg bombs at a 43-kilometer distance target.
- It can turn around at zero radii.
- K9 Vajra is a variant of K9 specially designed for operation in the desert areas bordering Pakistan.

### **Exclusive Satellite to help in securing Pakistan and Bangladesh borders**

- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will launch a satellite exclusively for the Union Home Ministry to help it in strengthening its frontiers with Pakistan and Bangladesh among others.

The exclusive satellite will be utilized for the purpose of using space resources for security, operational planning and border infrastructure development.

## **Methanol blending to cut Carbon-di-oxide Emissions...**

Biofuels are being considered an alternative to reduce the country's crude oil imports worth Rs7 lakh crore. They can also be a potential weapon to fight increasing pollution. The findings of the research by the Pune-based Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI) have substantiated the potential reduction in the emissions of the carbon-di-oxide by the adoption of methanol blending.

## **TRAI releases Tele-density data of India: Key Facts...**

The TRAI has released the Tele-density data of India. Important observations from the TRAI data are listed below:-

- The total number of mobile phone subscribers in India by the end of November was 117.18 crore with a net addition of 17.39 lakh customers during the month.
- The private access service providers held 89.99 percent market share of the wireless subscribers whereas BSNL and MTNL, the two PSU access service providers, had a market share of only 10.01 percent as on November 2018.
- Reliance Jio led the subscription race in November 2018 adding around 88.01 lakh subscribers across the country.
- State-run Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd (BSNL) added around 3.78 lakh subscribers in November, taking its total tally to 11.38 crore.
- Airtel added around 1.02 lakh new customers in November, taking its total tally to 34.18 crores. On the other hand, Vodafone Idea lost around 65.26 lakh subscribers.
- Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) is a statutory body set up by the Government of India under section 3 of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997. TRAI is the watchdog of the telecommunications sector in India.

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