

**April 22<sup>nd</sup> news:**

**International:**

### **6 countries suspend membership in UNASUR regional bloc**

A South American bloc created a decade ago to counter US influence in the region has temporarily lost half its members after six countries suspended their memberships amid differences over who should lead the group.

Bolivian Foreign Minister Fernando Huanacuni said that Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Paraguay and Peru had decided to temporarily leave the Union of South American Nations, or UNASUR, given differences over choosing the secretary general of the group.

UNASUR was promoted by late Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez. Bolivia, Ecuador, Guyana, Surinam, Uruguay and Venezuela remain in the bloc.

### **CW agrees action on cybersecurity by 2020**

The Commonwealth countries have unanimously agreed to take action on cyber security by 2020. In a landmark declaration at the end of Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting (CHOGM) in London, the leaders of 53 countries agreed to work closely to evaluate and strengthen their cyber security frameworks and response mechanisms.

The declaration termed as the world's largest and most geographically diverse inter-governmental commitment on cybersecurity cooperation.

It followed an announcement by the UK government pledging up to 15 million pounds to help the Commonwealth nations strengthen their cybersecurity capabilities. It also aims to tackle criminal groups and hostile state actors who pose a global threat to security.

The leaders also expressed their strong support for the multilateral trading system and adopted a six-point connectivity agenda to boost trade and investment links across the Commonwealth.

They also agreed on a bold, coordinated push to protect oceans from the effects of climate change, pollution and over-fishing.

### **North Korea says it will stop nuclear tests, abolish test site**

North Korea will suspend nuclear and missile tests effective immediately and abolish a nuclear test site in a bid to pursue economic growth and peace on the Korean peninsula, the North's state media said on 21<sup>st</sup> April, ahead of planned summits with South Korea and the United States.

North Korea leader Kim Jong Un said his country no longer needed to conduct nuclear tests or intercontinental ballistic missile tests because it has completed its goal of developing nuclear weapons, state media Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said.

North Korea also said it would engage in talks with the international community, paving the way for the summit with South Korean President Moon Jae-in planned for next week and a meeting with U.S. President Donald Trump in late May or early June.

## **National:**

### **India Forms Committee To Reform Higher Defence Planning**

The Union Government formed a new integrated institutional mechanism, Defence Planning Committee (DPC) to reform the process of higher defense planning. The permanent body would be chaired by National Security Advisor Ajit Doval.

The committee is aimed at driving the country's military and national security strategy, draft capability development plans, and guide and accelerate defense equipment acquisitions.

The Chief of Integrated Defence Staff to the Chairman of the Chief of the Staff Committee (CISC) will be the member secretary of the committee.

### **Cabinet approves ordinance for death penalty for rape of children**

The Union Cabinet has approved an ordinance to allow courts to award death penalty to those convicted of raping children up to 12 years of age.

The criminal law amendment ordinance seeks to amend the Indian Penal Code (IPC), the Evidence Act, the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act to introduce a new provision to sentence convicts of such crimes punishment of death

### **Govt extends ceasefire agreement with 2 Naga insurgent groups**

The Centre has extended the ceasefire agreement with two insurgent groups in Nagaland for one more year, starting April 28.

According to the Home Ministry, the parties to the ceasefire agreement are -- the Centre, the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Neokpao-Khitovi) and the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Reformation). The pact was signed by Satyendra Garg, Joint Secretary in the Home Ministry, and Jack Jimomi of the NSCN-NK, and Viniho Kiho and Toshi Longkumer of the NSCN-R.

The NSCN (Isak-Muivah) and the NSCN (Khaplang) are among other groups that operate in Nagaland.

While the NSCN (I-M) had entered a ceasefire agreement in 1997 and has been maintaining it since then, the pact with the NSCN (K) ended after the group attacked a military convoy in Manipur in June 2015, killing 18 soldiers.

## **Economy:**

### **India's role to expand in Indo-Pacific region: IMF**

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has said India's role in the development of the Indo-Pacific region will continue to expand because of its robust growth.

Deputy Director of Asia and Pacific Department in the IMF, Ken Kang said that India's growth is rising from 7.4 percent in 2017-2018 to 7.8 percent in 2019 and there is room to increase its export orientation and to reduce further barriers.

He said the statutory tariff rate in India is relatively high at about 15 percent and higher than those in the rest of the region.

The IMF in the latest World Economic Outlook (WEO) has projected India to grow at 7.4 per cent in 2018 and 7.8 per cent in 2019. China is expected to grow respectively at 6.6 and 6.4 per cent in the two years.

### **Approval for ordinance on Economic Offenders**

The Cabinet has approved the Finance Ministry's proposal to promulgate the Fugitive Economic Offenders Ordinance 2018 that provides for confiscating properties of escapees.

The ordinance would lay down the measures to empower Indian authorities to attach and confiscate proceeds of crime associated with economic offenders and the properties of the economic offenders.

It will deter economic offenders from evading the process of Indian law by remaining outside the jurisdiction of Indian courts.

The Ordinance is expected to re-establish the rule of law with respect to the fugitive economic offenders as they would be forced to return to India to face trial for scheduled offences. This will also help banks and other financial institutions to achieve higher recovery from financial defaults committed by such fugitive economic offenders.

### **Sports:**

#### **Indian women excel at 8th South Asian Judo Championship in Lalitpur**

Indian women have made outstanding start at 8th South Asian Judo Championship in Lalitpur, Nepal. On the first day of championship Indian women made clean sweep and won all 4 gold medals on 21<sup>st</sup> April

India's L. Sushila Devi got first gold medal for the country in minus 48 kg category. She defeated Humaira Ashiq of Pakistan in the final. Within few minutes Kalpana Devi Thoudam also won gold in minus 52 kg. Kalpana beat Maryam of Pakistan.

In minus 57 kg. category A. Anita Chanu bagged third gold for the country by defeating Lila Adhikari of Nepal. In the last bout of the day H. Sunibala Devi defeated Phupu Lhamu Khatri of Nepal in minus 63 kg category and won fourth gold medal for India.

In men's section Pakistan won two gold and host Nepal got one gold. India bagged two bronze medals. Besides host Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka participating in a 3 day championship.

A total 102 players including 13 from India are competing for 7 gold, 7 silver and 14 bronze medals each in men's and women's individual categories. While they will also contest for one gold, one silver and two bronze each in the men's and women's team events. This is the fourth time Nepal is hosting South Asian Judo Championship.

### **Bengaluru FC wins Super Cup Football tournament**

Bengaluru FC have won the inaugural edition of Super Cup Football tournament. In the final at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar on 21<sup>st</sup> April, they defeated Kolkata football giants East Bengal by a convincing margin

### **Birmingham Organising Committee of CWG decides to exclude shooting from 2022 Games**

The Birmingham Organising Committee of CWG has decided to exclude shooting from the 2022 Games, citing logistical issues. The Commonwealth Games Federation has awarded the 2022 CWG to Birmingham. South Africa (Durban) was to originally host the 2022 CWG but it later expressed its inability to host the Games due to financial problems. The Commonwealth Games Federation later awarded the 2022 CWG to Birmingham.