

NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHT

The Telecom Ministry is engaged in discussions with regulator TRAI to work out ways for optimum utilisation of “finite resource” spectrum, especially for airwave bands sought for both 5G services as well as satellite communication, a senior official said. “The demand for satellite based and terrestrial telecom services have put unprecedented demands on radio spectrum, in particular the C band and the Ka band frequencies are needed for both space based as well as terrestrial telecommunications services,” Telecom Secretary K. Rajaraman said.

The Nobel prize for economics was awarded to U.S.-based economist David Card for pioneering research that showed an increase in minimum wage does not lead to less hiring and that immigrants do not lower pay for native born workers, challenging commonly held ideas. The prize was shared with two others for creating a way to study these types of societal issues, while the prize other half was shared by Joshua Angrist from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Dutchborn Guido Imbens from Stanford University for their framework for studying issues that can't rely on traditional scientific methods.

The Supreme Court has declared the National Green Tribunal's (NGT) position as a “unique” forum endowed with suo motu powers to take up environmental issues across the country. The court said the NGT need not wait for the “metaphorical Godot” to knock on its portal to flex its considerable muscles to save the environment. “The exercise of power by the NGT is not circumscribed by the receipt of applications. When substantial questions relating to the environment arise and the issue is civil in nature and those relate to the Act, the NGT, in our opinion, even in the absence of an application, can self ignite action either towards amelioration or towards prevention of harm.

The 13th round of senior military commander talks between India and China ended in a stalemate, with each side blaming the other for it. In a statement, the Indian Army maintained that its side made “constructive suggestions” to resolve the “remaining areas”, while the Chinese military alleged that India made “unreasonable and unrealistic demands”. The acrimony

ECOLOGICAL THREAT REPORT

1.The ‘Ecological Threat Report (ETR) 2021: Understanding ecological threats, resilience and peace’ was released by the Institute of Economics and Peace. It assessed the data from sub-national administrative units in 178 countries for threats relating to food risk, water risk, rapid population growth, temperature anomalies & natural disasters. Findings - Of the 178 countries in the ETR.

2.30 were identified as hotspots for having low levels of resilience and a medium to extremely high catastrophic threat score. 13 faced extremely high ecological threats and 34 others faced high ecological threats. The 30 hotspot countries are least likely to be able to mitigate and adapt to new ecological threats, leading to mass displacement. The most vulnerable countries are clustered in the Middle East and North Africa, sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

3.Ecological degradation and conflict work in a vicious circle, whereby one degradation of resources leads to conflict and vice versa. Climate change will have an amplifying effect, causing further ecological degradation and pushing some countries through violent tipping points.

4.Of the 15 countries most threatened, 3 are in south Asia. As a region, south Asia is the worst-placed, with water and food risks driving the average ETR score in the region.

Global food insecurity has increased by 44% since 2014, affecting 30.4% of the world's population in 2020, and is likely to rise further. From 1990 to 2020, a total of 10,320 natural disasters occurred globally. Flooding has been the most common natural disasters, accounting for 42% of the total disaster count.

5.In 2020, 177 countries and territories recorded a warmer average temperature compared to their historical average temperatures. The report recommended a policy to combine health, food, water, refugee relief, finance, agricultural and business development into one integrated agency in high-risk areas and empowering local communities.

CLEAN, HEALTHY AND SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT-A UNIVERSAL RIGHT

1.The UN Human Rights Council unanimously voted for recognising a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as a universal human right. If formally recognised by all, this right would be the first of its kind in more than 70 years since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1948.

2.The resolution emphasises the rights to life, liberty and security of Environmental Human Rights Defenders (EHRDs). This resolution was adopted by a vote of 43 in favour, none against and 4 abstentions. China, India, Japan and Russian Federation, abstained from voting on the resolution. Right to a clean environment was rooted in the 1972 Stockholm Declaration.

3.Environmental Human Rights Defenders EHRDs are the human rights defenders working in environmental matters.

4.Environmental defenders across the globe are subject to constant physical attacks, detentions, arrests, legal action and smear campaigns. Some 200 environmental defenders have been murdered in 2020 alone.

GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION TAG

1.Recently, certain products from Tamil Nadu have received the Geographical Indication (GI) Tags.Kalamkari Paintings Karuppur.Wood Carvings Kallakurichi.Clove Kanniyakumari.

2.Documentary evidence shows that Karuppur Kalamkari paintings evolved under the patronage of Nayaka rulers in the early 17th century. Wood carving skill evolved as an indigenous art when Madurai was an important town in the ancient times. In the course of time, woodcarving craftsmen migrated to other towns, and each of them evolved their own style like Kallakurichi woodcarving.

comes amid continuing buildup of troops and infrastructure by China on its side along the Line of Actual Control and as both sides are preparing to be deployed in the high altitude areas of eastern Ladakh for the second straight winter this year.

Industrialists told Prime Minister Narendra Modi that for the space industry to grow, the government should help small and medium sector enterprises (SME) access more capital as well as move faster on finalising its space policy. The industry leaders were speaking at the inauguration of the Indian Space Association, an organisation meant to represent the interests of the space sector with government and private sector bodies across the board, including the Indian Space Research Organisation, Walchandnagar Industries, TATA Nelco, Pixxel, Mapmy India and Bharti Airtel.

The Delhi government started spraying biodecomposer solution in farmlands to decompose the stubble left after the harvest. A biodecomposer capsule, developed by Pusa Institute, is made into a solution through a weeklong process, and according to the government, this solution can decompose straw and stubble into manure. Environment Minister Gopal Rai said the number of farmers, who are getting the solution sprayed in their fields, has doubled as compared to last year.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla has invited the Chairman of Pakistan's Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani, to attend the centennial celebration of the creation of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of Parliament. The invite has not been confirmed by the Ministry of External Affairs yet but other informed sources told that the August 24 letter sent to the Pakistan Senate Chairman was a routine gesture as Pakistan is part of the Commonwealth and other members of the grouping are also likely to be part of the celebration.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, urging India to announce a "more ambitious" Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) ahead of a United Nations climate change summit in the U.K. in a few weeks. The two leaders also spoke about the issue of vaccine certifications and the Afghanistan situation.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will attend an extraordinary virtual meeting of G20 leaders on Afghanistan to be held on October 12. Mr. Modi had urged the

3. Kanniyakumari Clove This clove is being grown in the densely wooded areas of hilly regions of the district and it is known for its rich aromatic oil content. The district represents about 73% of the area under clove in Tamil Nadu. Clove is native to the Moluccas, a chain of small islands that are now part of Indonesia and were formerly known as the Spice Islands. Of the total production of 1,100 tonnes of cloves in India, Tamil Nadu accounts for 1,000 tonnes, of which over 65% is grown in Kanniyakumari district.

4. Geographical suitability - The hilly regions of Kanniyakumari district is ideal for clove cultivation, as it benefits from both the monsoons. 'Sea mist' comes in and works up the moisture needed for the crop. Black soil here, rich in organic nutrients, is suitable for clove cultivation. This makes the cloves grown in the region unique. Oil - With the highest percentage of volatile oil content present in the clove buds, the crop being grown in the district is much sought-after. Furthermore, drying happens naturally at the plantations located at an altitude of 800 metres and having moderate temperature. This means a limited loss of essential oils and an increase in their concentration.

5. Eugenol One of the major components of clove oil is phenylpropanoids, and eugenol is the reduced version of it. Eugenol, also called clove oil, is the major constituent [70% to 90%] in the aromatic oil extract from cloves. It is also found in lower concentrations in cinnamon and other aromatic spices. Eugenol is a weak acid that is used as Aromatic oil that is used widely as a flavoring for foods & teas and Herbal oil used topically to treat toothache and more rarely to be taken orally to treat gastrointestinal and respiratory complaints. But, ingestions of Eugenol in high doses can cause severe liver injury.

QUESTIONS ARISING FROM QES DATA

1. The Labour Bureau's All-India Quarterly Establishment-based Employment Survey (QES) for the first quarter of 2021 (April to June) throws up some perplexing numbers raising suspicions on reliability.

2. What is the survey about? The objective of the QES is to enable the government to frame a "sound national policy on employment". It covers establishments employing 10 or more workers in the organised segment in 9 sectors - manufacturing, construction, trade, transport, education, health, accommodation and restaurants, IT/BPO, and financial services. These sectors account for 85% of the total employment in establishments employing 10 or more workers as per Sixth Economic Census which serves as the basis of QES survey. The QES has reported a simple growth rate of 29% in employment in FQ2021 over 2013-14.

3. What are the other surveys regarding employment? While the QES provides a demand side picture, Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) gives the supply side picture of the labour market. The release of the PLFS results in 2019 showed the highest-ever unemployment rate of 6.1%. CMIE data has been projecting a distressed labour market scenario especially during the pandemic.

4. What cautions were raised from QES data? Limited coverage - establishments with ten or more workers account for a mere 1.66% as per the Sixth Economic Census. Also, a disproportionately 81.3% of workers are in unorganised sector as per the PLFS data. Employment growth despite economic slowdown - The QES provides very broad employment figures — 3.8 crores approximately in FQ-2021. But CMIE data revealed a discouraging picture in April where salaried class shed around 3.4 million jobs compared to March 2021 and the urban unemployment rate was as high as 9.78%. The real national income growth rates also declined from 2017-18 onwards. Credibility of statistics - QES reports that 87.5% of the estimated workers were regular workers and just about 2.1% were casual workers.

5. What can be inferred from the survey? **It would have been more prudent to await the release of a newly updated frame in the EC-2020 and then canvass for the QES. F12021 QES must be considered as a starting point of the new data set rather than as a continuum of the Sixth EC.** The Labour Bureau could have put a high-frequency labour market information base like most advanced economies.

ECONOMY CENSUS

international community to carefully act on the recognition of the Taliban as the legitimate rulers of Afghanistan and the G20 meeting is likely to deliberate on both political and humanitarian issues regarding the country.

The Gujarat based Adani Group, which operates ports across the country, announced on Monday that it will not handle Exim containerised cargo originating from Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan from November 15. The move assumes significance as it comes in the backdrop of the seizure of nearly 3,000 kg of heroin by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) at the company - operated Mundra port on the Gujarat coast on September 16 in containerised cargo imported as talc from Afghanistan via Iran's Bandar Abbas port.

1. Economic Census is the complete count of all establishment located within the geographical boundary of India. It is conducted by the Union Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation (MoSPI).

2. The first Economic Census was undertaken in 1977.

3. The last one was Seventh Economic Census, conducted in 2019 by MoSPI partnering with CSC e-Governance Services India Limited, a Special Purpose Vehicle under Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.