

A “Create in India” campaign with an exclusive focus on content creation; an international platform for animation, visual effects, gaming and comics (AVGC) aimed at attracting foreign direct investment, coproduction treaties and innovation in collaboration with international counterparts; national and regional centres of excellence for skill development; and leveraging the National Education Policy to develop creative thinking at school level.

These are among the recommendations in the report of a task force on AVGC promotion, submitted to the Union government. The task force has proposed a national AVGC Extended Reality Mission with a budget outlay to be created for the integrated promotion and growth of the sector.

The parliamentary panel on Social Justice and Empowerment has pulled up the Union government over the “very slow” process to categorise over 260 denotified, nomadic and seminomadic tribes under the SC/ST/OBC lists. Government officials have pointed out that this has delayed the approval of benefits under the SEED (Scheme for Economic Empowerment of DNTs) launched in February this year.

The manufacturers of the beverage ‘Rooh Afza’ moved an appeal in the Delhi High Court seeking an interim injunction against Sadar Laboratories Pvt. Ltd. for their product ‘Dil Afza’. A Division Bench cited common words in the labels and similar words that can be used in conjunction as it ruled in favour of Hamdard National Foundation (India), the makers of ‘Rooh Afza’. The court also said that as the product is a low-priced consumable item, “the average customer would not deliberate on the details of the product as one would do while taking a high value investment decision”.

Buyant by the positive feedback received from the monthlong Kashi Tamil Sangamam, the Uttar Pradesh government plans to create food streets in various cities to introduce residents and tourists to cuisine from different States of India in a bid to showcase the State’s ‘soft’ power.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said a nation like India with such a glorious history must be full of self-confidence and self-respect, but lamented that concocted narratives taught till now had created a sense of inferiority in the country. Mr. Modi said there was a need to get free from the narrow interpretation of the past to move forward. “That is why the country has taken the pledge of removing all traces of slave mentality in the Azadi ka Amrit Kaal,” he said at the celebration of first Veer Bal Divas, which commemorates the martyrdom of the sons of Guru Gobind Singh, Sahibzadas Baba Zorawar Singh and Baba Fateh Singh.

71 number of warplanes along with seven ships that China’s military sent towards Taiwan in a 24-hour display of force

MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION UNVEILS ‘RIGHT TO REPAIR’ PORTAL ON OCCASION OF NATIONAL CONSUMER DAY

1. On the portal, manufacturers would share manual of product details with customers so that they could either repair by self, by third parties, rather than depend on original manufacturers. Initially, mobile phones, electronics, consumer durables, automobile and farming equipment would be covered.
2. Right to Repair movement calls for companies to make spare parts, tools, and information on how to repair devices available to customers and repair shops to increase lifespan of products and to keep them from ending up in landfills.
3. Right to Repair has been recognised in many countries including US, UK, and European Union.
4. **Significance of developing a framework on right to repair in India-** Empower consumers and product buyers in the local market. Address issue of ‘planned obsolescence’ i.e., devices are designed specifically to last a limited amount of time and to be replaced. Harmonize trade between original equipment manufacturers and the third-party buyers and sellers. Developing sustainable consumption of products and reduction in e-waste. Catalysing employment generation through Aatmnirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India) by allowing third-party repairs.

DEPARTMENT FOR PROMOTION OF INDUSTRY AND INTERNAL TRADE (DPIIT) SEEKS VIEWS ON DRAFT NATIONAL RETAIL TRADE POLICY

1. Draft policy by DPIIT (Ministry of Commerce and Industry) would focus on formulating strategies to provide a globally competitive and sustainable environment for overall development of retail trade. India is world’s fifth-largest global destination in the retail space.
2. **Objective of the policy-** Ensuring easy and quick access to affordable credit. Facilitating modernization and digitisation of retail trade by promoting modern technology and superior infrastructural support. Development of physical infrastructure across distribution chain. Promotion of skill development and improving labour productivity. Providing an effective consultative and grievance redressal mechanism.
3. **Economic importance of retail in India-** With more than 12% gross value contribution to GDP, retail is the third-largest sector in India’s economy. In addition to employing more than five crore workers, retail also provides significant indirect employment to adjacent sectors such as warehousing, logistics, construction, and packaging.
4. **Government initiatives for boosting retail-** Better access to finance through schemes like Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana etc. Focus on infrastructure by giving infrastructure status to Warehousing and logistics, developing multimodal logistics parks, Smart Cities Mission etc. Prioritising technology through initiatives like Digital India program.

CENTRAL BOARD OF INDIRECT TAXES AND CUSTOMS (CBIC) NOTIFIED RULES OF ORIGIN (ROO) FOR INDIA-AUSTRALIA TRADE PACT

1. Customs Tariff (Determination of Origin of Goods under India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement) Rules, 2022, lays out origin criteria for claiming preferential customs duty on products. India and Australia had earlier signed Economic cooperation and trade agreement (ECTA), which is expected to cover 90% of bilateral trade between the two. ROO are the criteria prescribed to determine national origin of an imported product in a country.
2. It helps to prevent misuse of FTAs by determining whether enough value addition took place in partner country for import to qualify as originating from there. General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) has no specific rules governing determination of country of origin of goods in international commerce.
3. **ROO are used:** To implement commercial policy measures such as anti-dumping duties and safeguard measures. To determine whether imported products shall receive most-favoured-nation (MFN) treatment or preferential treatment. For trade statistics, government procurement and application of labelling and marking requirements. Earlier India notified the ‘Customs (Administration of Rules of Origin under Trade Agreements) Rules, 2020’ (CAROTAR) to plug duty evasion through routing exports to India under FTAs.

CENTRAL POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD (CPCB) REPORT SHOWS FEWER POLLUTED RIVER STRETCHES (PRS), BUT WORST ONES REMAIN UNCHANGED

directed at the island. This came after China expressed anger at Taiwan related provisions in a U.S. annual defence spending Bill. China's military has often used large military exercises as a demonstration of force in response to U.S.'s support of Taiwan.

1536 rupees crore, the investments attracted by production linked incentive scheme for India's textiles sector. The Centre launched the PLI Scheme with an approved outlay of ₹10,683 crore to promote the production of MMF apparel, MMF fabrics and Products of Technical Textiles to enable the textiles industry to become competitive.

11.97 percentage by which India's export of agriculture and allied commodities rose to \$30.21 billion during the April-October period, the Agriculture Ministry said. The exports stood at \$26.98 billion in the same period of 2021-22. Wheat, basmati, cotton, castor oil, and fresh fruits were major commodities exported from India.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Monday to discuss India's ongoing G-20 Presidency. During the conversation, the Ukrainian President sought support for his "10-point Peace Plan". The call marks the fourth telephone conversation between the two leaders this year, and comes days after Mr. Zelensky's visit to Washington, his first trip abroad since the war in Ukraine began in February.

The practice of civil society organisations using representative visuals for fundraising activities concerning development issues such as malnutrition now faces new scrutiny, with the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) issuing a directive to nongovernmental organisations (NGO) not to depict vulnerable children.

Digital capture of the attendance of workers employed under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) has been made universal by the Centre from January 1. The Union government, arguing for transparency and accountability in May 2021, had started a pilot project to capture attendance via a mobile application, the National Mobile Monitoring System (NMMS).

1. CPCB monitors water quality, under National Water Quality Monitoring Programme, at locations covering rivers, lakes, creeks, drains, canals etc. Water quality management is performed under provision of Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974. According to report, number of polluted stretches in India's rivers has fallen from 351 in 2018 to 311 in 2022.
2. Overall reduction may be attributed to development of infrastructure for sewage management, industrial effluent management, waste management and enforcement of regulations etc. Maharashtra has highest number of PRS followed by Madhya Pradesh. PRS are categorized under five Priority Classes (I to V) based on maximum Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) level observed.
3. BOD represents amount of oxygen consumed by bacteria and other microorganisms while they decompose organic matter under aerobic (oxygen is present) conditions at a specified temperature. BOD exceeding 3.0 mg/L (milligram per litre) are identified as polluted locations. Two or more polluted locations identified on a river in a continuous sequence are considered as a PRS. A BOD less than 3 mg/L means river stretch is fit for 'Outdoor Bathing.'

WINDOW FOR FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS (FTAs) SHRINKS AS INDIA BRACES FOR SET OF NON-TARIFF BARRIERS

1. Concerns are being raised that India's ongoing FTA negotiations with UK, European Union etc. might face hurdles from non-tariff issues such as climate action, carbon emission norms, labour, and gender balance standards. E.g., USA brought up the issue of carbon emissions from manufacturing melted steel process that can impact India.
2. Similarly, EU has proposed a Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) from 2026 to tax carbon-intensive products such as iron and Steel, Cement, Fertiliser, Aluminium etc. Negative Impact of these Non-Tariff Barriers for India Might delay the FTAs conclusion. Can hurt India's chances to reap the benefits of its comparative labour advantage.
3. Reduced scope of FTAs benefit for India. Exposes early harvest agreements of India to legal challenges from other WTO members if they do not graduate into full-scale FTAs. FTAs are arrangements between two or more countries or trading blocs that primarily agree to reduce or eliminate customs tariff and non-tariff barriers on substantial trade between them. India has inked FTAs with several countries, including Australia, UAE, Mauritius, Japan, Singapore etc.

CHANGE IN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) PROCESS CANNOT BE SUSTAINED, SAYS GREEN COURT

1. Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) with a notification in 2018 gave powers to the local bodies instead of State Environment Impact Assessment Authorities (SEIAAs) to do EIA of: Construction projects with built up area between 20,000 sqm and 50,000 sqm.
2. Industrial sheds, educational institutions, hospitals and hostels for educational institutions between 20,000 sqm and 1,50,000 sqm. Now NGT has stated that this will result in diluting the existing mechanism of EIA by SEIAAs and cannot thus be sustained. EIA is the study to predict effect of a proposed activity/project on environment.
3. It examines both beneficial and adverse consequences and ensures that these are considered during project design. EIA is backed by the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. EIA notification of 2006 made it mandatory for various projects such as mining, thermal power plants, river valley, infrastructure, and industries etc. to get environmental clearance.
4. **Benefits of EIA:** protection of environment, optimum utilisation of resources, saving of time and cost of the project etc.



"You are stronger than your excuses."

DR. KHAN
(KSG)