

NEWSPAPER HIGHLIGHT

Consumer goods companies and makers of electronics goods have to ensure at least 60% of their electronic waste is collected and recycled by 2023 with targets to increase them to 70% and 80% in 2024 and 2025, respectively, according to a draft notification by the Environment Ministry made public this week. The rules bring into effect a system of trading in certificates, akin to carbon credits, that will allow companies to temporarily bridge shortfalls. A wide range of electronic goods, including laptops, landline and mobile phones, cameras, recorders, music systems, microwaves, refrigerators and medical equipment, have been specified in the notification.

853 foreign direct investment (FDI) proposals disposed of through the Foreign Investment Facilitation Portal (FIFP) in the last five years, according to the commerce and industry Ministry. FIFP was developed after the abolition of the Foreign Investment Promotion Board in May 2017. After the abolition, granting of government approval for overseas investment under the FDI policy and Foreign Exchange Management Act regulations was entrusted to the concerned Ministries/departments.

The World Health Organisation's (WHO) member states agreed to give half of their contributions as straightforward membership fees, instead of channelling most of their cash into health projects of their own choosing. Meanwhile, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus was reelected for a second term as the WHO chief.

The Quadrilateral alliance (Quad) is a "force for good", Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in his opening remarks at its summit in Tokyo on Tuesday. The event witnessed the launch of several initiatives, including a maritime project that will allow the tracking of "dark shipping" across the Indo-Pacific region. "Our confidence and determination are strengthening the democratic forces. Our cooperation at the level of Quad is aimed at an inclusive Indo-Pacific region. We increased cooperation during the COVID19 regarding vaccine delivery, climate action, supply chain resilience, disaster response.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and U.S. President Joe Biden met along

OPEN RAN

1. Radio-access networks (RAN) serve to connect the base stations that transmit and receive traffic to/from endpoints like cell phones and laptops and provide the link toward the carrier core network. Without standards, wireless equipment vendors designing their RAN gear don't have to consider whether it interoperates with gear made by other vendors. As a result, in order to have a network that operates smoothly, telecom companies are stuck dealing with one company only when they want to deploy a licensed wireless network.

2. This vendor lock-in tends to keep prices high because it limits competition among the equipment vendors for the individual RAN elements. It also limits flexibility in network design. Open RAN is a collaboration of equipment makers and telecoms in various working groups to solve this interoperability problem by creating standards. As long as equipment meets open RAN standards, it should be compatible with gear made by any other vendor whose gear also meets the standards. Without having to rely on one vendor for all the equipment, carriers and enterprises have more opportunity to shop around for the best deal on each piece.

3. Open RAN standards would also be available to software developers that could readily write innovative features and services to respond quickly to users' needs. Open RAN architecture virtualizes parts of the cellular network that are traditionally handled by specialized hardware and software.

4. Time-sensitive functions like QoS management, handover control, and load balancing are handled by the RAN Intelligent Controller near-real time layer (RIC near-RT), while policy management and analytics take place in the RIC non-real time layer.

5. These features are designed to provide the core functionality required for all cellular networks, while offering the opportunity to mix-and-match the actual hardware being used – as long as the equipment is O-RAN compliant, it can interoperate with other O-RAN compliant devices.

SAHARIYA TRIBE

1. The rising food inflation is hurting the weakest the most in India, including the Sahariya Adivasis of Madhya Pradesh. The Sahariya Adivasis are classified as a 'Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group' by the government.

2. They live in around eight districts of Madhya Pradesh (MP). They may also be located in the hills of the Ganjam district of southern Orissa, as well as in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, and the Plains division of Assam.

3. They speak a Munda language of the Austro-Asiatic language family. The Saharia farmers use the "slash and burn" method of cultivation along the hill slopes. Saharia villages generally contain several quarters called longlongs.

4. Each longlong is inhabited by one patrilineage (the line of descent as traced through the male's side of a family) called a birinda. Beliefs - The Saharia practice their traditional ethnic religions. But, they are aware of Hindu values and use them in defining their own identity.

KANHERI CAVES

1. On the occasion of Buddha Purnima, the a group of tourist amenities at Kanheri Caves was inaugurated by Union Minister for Tourism, Culture and Development of the North Eastern Region. Kanheri, which has over 100 caves, comes under the purview Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).

2. Kanheri Caves were created by Buddhist monks between 1st and 9th/10th centuries AD. Located within forests of Sanjay Gandhi National Park at Borivali in Mumbai, Maharashtra, they are collection of rock cut monuments.

3. These caves have artistic evidence of all the three vehicles of Buddhism: Hinayana, Mahayana, Vajrayana. Earliest reference of Kanheri is ascribed to Fa-Hein. It flourished

the sidelines of the Tokyo Quad leaders' meeting for a bilateral meeting, their second one in little over a month. The two countries announced a technology cooperation initiative and investment initiative with the U.S. development agency.

The Qutub Minar complex is not a place of worship and its character cannot be changed now, the Archaeological Survey of India submitted in a Delhi court, while opposing a plea challenging the dismissal of a civil suit seeking "restoration" of Hindu and Jain temples on the premises.

Sri Lanka has decided to seek fresh assistance of \$500 million from India to augment its fuel imports, as the island reels under a crippling economic crisis manifesting in persisting shortages of essentials.

Chinese and Russian fighter jets carried out joint flights over the Sea of Japan and the East China Sea on May 24 as leaders of the Quad bloc met in Tokyo, Japan's Defence Minister said. Nobuo Kishi said Tokyo had expressed "grave concerns" to Russia and China over the flights, which took place while leaders from the United States, India, Australia and Japan held talks on regional security.

A leak of thousands of photos and official documents from China's Xinjiang has shed new light on the methods used to enforce mass internment in the region, researchers said on Tuesday. The files, obtained by academic Adrian Zenz, were published as UN human rights chief Michelle Bachelet begins a long awaited and controversial trip to Xinjiang. Activists say Chinese authorities have detained more than one million Uighurs in a network of detention centres and prisons in the region, which Beijing has defended as training centres.

Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu said that Russia was deliberately slowing its offensive in Ukraine to allow civilians to evacuate, while a top security official said Moscow was not "chasing deadlines" in the war.

In a bid to cool inflation in edible oils, the Centre on Tuesday allowed duty free import of 20 lakh tonnes each of crude soyabean oil and crude sunflower oil for this year as well as 2023-24.

Many people were arrested by Sri Lanka's navy for allegedly trying to travel by sea to Australia illegally. The navy said in a statement that 12 men were arrested near the port town of Trincomalee, 260 kilometres

under the patronage of Satavahana, Traikutakas, Vakatakas and Silaharas.

US' ONE CHINA POLICY

1. Soon after the US President said that the US would intervene militarily if China invaded Taiwan, the US White House sought to clarify that he didn't mean America's policy towards the dispute had changed. The contours of the 'One China' policy were explained in the US-PRC joint communique of December, 1978.

2. Under the 'One China' policy, the USA recognises the Government of the People's Republic of China (PRC) as the sole legal Government of China. Also, the US snapped formal diplomatic ties with the Republic of China (ROC) in Taiwan in 1979.

3. The Government of the USA acknowledges the Chinese position that there is but one China and Taiwan is part of China. Implications - In operational terms, the One China Policy is a balancing act wherein the US maintains an official relationship with China, and an unofficial one with Taiwan. This has resulted in Taiwan's diplomatic isolation from the international community.

4. US-Taiwan Ties In 1979, around the time PRC and the US posted Ambassadors in each other's capitals, the US Congress passed the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA). The Act made it clear that the US decision to establish diplomatic relations with the PRC rests upon the expectation that the future of Taiwan will be determined by peaceful means.

5. It committed to providing Taiwan with arms of a defensive character and to maintain the capacity of the US to resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion that would jeopardize the security, or the social system or economic system, of the people on Taiwan. The Act established the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT), as a private NGO to maintain the facade of unofficialness in the ties. The AIT is the de facto US Embassy in Taiwan.

SAGITTARIUS A*

1. Scientists from the Event Horizon Telescope (EHT) facility revealed the first image of the black hole Sagittarius A* at the centre of the Milky Way. In 2019, the EHT Telescope made history by releasing the first ever image of a black hole M87* - the black hole at the centre of a galaxy Messier 87, which is a supergiant elliptic galaxy.

2. The image of the black hole Sagittarius A* gave further support to the idea that the compact object at the centre of our galaxy is indeed a black hole.

3. This strengthens Einstein's General Theory of Relativity. Sagittarius A* is a Supermassive Black Hole. It is 27,000 light years from Earth. It is located in the Sagittarius Constellation at the Center of our Milky Way galaxy.

INDIA, US INK INVESTMENT INCENTIVE AGREEMENT

1. India and the US have signed the Investment Incentive Agreement (IIA). This agreement is expected to lead to enhanced investment support from America's development finance institution in a wide range of sectors.

2. The agreement supersedes another similar pact signed between the governments of India and the US in 1997. The agreement is a legal requirement for the US International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) to continue providing investment support in India. Services offered under this agreement include debt, equity investment, investment guaranty, investment insurance or reinsurance, feasibility studies for potential projects and grants.

3. Significance of IIA: DFC or its predecessor agencies have been active in India since 1974 and have provided investment support worth \$5.8 billion, of which \$2.9 billion is still outstanding. It is expected that signing of IIA would lead to enhanced investment support provided by DFC in India, which shall further help in India's development.

4. The agency has provided investment support in sectors related to development, such as manufacturing of Covid-19 vaccines, healthcare financing, renewable energy, financing of SMEs, financial inclusion and infrastructure.

NEW KARST SINKHOLE

1. It is located in south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. It was recently found by explorers. The sinkhole measures 306 metres in length, is 150 metres in width and 192 metres in depth, with its volume exceeding 5 million cubic

northeast of the capital Colombo, while 55 were intercepted as they tried to escape in a fishing vessel. Five of them are suspected to be part of a human smuggling ring. Police are still determining the motivation for the illegal voyage.

meters. Southern China is home to karst topography – a landscape prone to dramatic sinkholes and otherworldly caves.

2.Sinkholes emerge when the roof of an underground chamber enlarges and collapses. Rainwater flows through the cracks in the bedrock, turning them into tunnels and voids. Sinkholes can be formed due to natural processes or human activity.

3.Typically, sinkholes form in areas of “karst” terrains, where the rock below the surface of the Earth can be easily dissolved by groundwater.