



Current Affairs of the Day

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'Most women miss pay raise due to gender'

About 85% or four in five working women in India believe they have missed out on a raise, promotion, or work offer because of their gender, according to a new report by LinkedIn.

Highlights:

1. As per the 'The Opportunity Index 2021' report, this average stands at 60% for the Asia Pacific (APAC) region. A deeper analysis shows that more women in India have experienced the impact of gender on career development when compared to the APAC region, as per the LinkedIn report.
2. While 66% of the people in India feel that gender equality has improved compared to their parents' age, India's working women still contend the strongest gender bias across Asia Pacific countries.

IIT-Delhi researchers develop technology to recycle e-waste

To deal with one of the fastest-growing waste streams, researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi have developed a zero-emission technology to manage and recycle e-waste to wealth, the institute said.

Highlights:

1. The research group has adopted a methodology that uses e-waste as an "Urban Mine" for metal recovery and energy production.
2. Researchers said using their method, e-waste is shredded and pyrolyzed to yield liquid and gaseous fuels, leaving behind a metal-rich solid fraction.
3. On further separation using a novel technique, the leftover solid residue yields a 90-95% pure metal mixture and some carbonaceous materials.
4. The carbonaceous material is further converted to aerogel for oil spillage cleaning, dye removal, carbon dioxide capture, and use in supercapacitors.
5. The technology is an outcome of a Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, funded project and developed technology that will cater to the need of "Smart Cities," "Swachh Bharat Abhiyan," and "Atmanirbhar Bharat" initiatives of the government, IIT-Delhi said.



Allow us to resume mining in Aravali Hills, Haryana tells SC

The Haryana government has appealed to the Supreme Court to permit it to resume mining in the Aravali Hills on the grounds that the pandemic had ground the State's economy to a halt. The Supreme Court is slated to hear the petition on Thursday.

Highlights:

1. Mining in the region has been banned since 2002 under the Supreme Court orders unless expressly permitted by the Union Environment Ministry. However, mining continued illegally.
2. Illegal mining: A 2018 report by a Supreme Court-appointed Central Empowered Committee (CEC) said 25% of the Aravalli range has been lost due to illegal mining in Rajasthan since 1967-68.
3. The Aravali Hills spanning Gujarat, Rajasthan, Haryana and Delhi are an ecologically sensitive zone but have for years borne the brunt of quarrying and environmental degradation. The consequences of this mining have been the destruction of aquifers and deforestation.

Chinese cyberattack foiled: Power Ministry

"State-sponsored" Chinese hacker groups targeted various Indian power centres, the Union Power Ministry said on Monday, but added that these groups have been thwarted after government cyber agencies warned it about their activities.

Highlights:

1. While the government refused to confirm or deny The New York Times report, based on a U.S. cybersecurity firm's claim that the Mumbai power outage in October 2020 was part of a coordinated cyberattack by China, it said it has suffered "no data breach".
2. There is no impact on any of the functionalities carried out by the Power Sector Operations Corporation (POSOCO) due to the referred threat. No data breach/data loss has been detected due to these incidents," the Ministry said in a statement.
3. "Prompt actions are being taken by the Chief Information Security Officers at all these control centres under operation by POSOCO for any incident/advisory received from various agencies," it added.



Red Echo and Malware “ShadowPad”

Specifically naming the Chinese group “Red Echo”, which has been identified in the U.S. company Recorded Future’s report as responsible for the Mumbai outage, officials said they had been warned by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology’s (MeitY’s) Cyber Emergency Response Team (India) (CERT-in) about the threat from a malware called “ShadowPad” in November 2020, and by the NTRO’s National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre (NCIIPC) in February 2021, of the threats, weeks before the Recorded Future report was released.

Vigilant National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre (NCIIPC)

NCIIPC informed [Power Ministry] through a mail dated 12th February 2021 about the threat by Red Echo through malware called Shadow Pad. It stated that the Chinese state-sponsored threat Actor group known as Red Echo is targeting the Indian Power sector’s Regional Load Dispatch Centres (RLDCs) along with State Load Dispatch Centres (SLDCs).

Background:

National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre (NCIIPC) is an organisation of the Government of India created under Sec 70A of the Information Technology Act, 2000 (amended 2008), through a gazette notification on 16 January 2014. Based in New Delhi, India, it is designated as the National Nodal Agency in respect of Critical Information Infrastructure Protection. It is a unit of the National Technical Research Organisation (NTRO).

‘Food processing revolution needed’

The time has come to increase the private sector participation in all areas of agricultural research and development as well as in the food processing space, according to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Addressing a webinar on Monday on budget announcements for the farm sector, he said a food processing revolution was now overdue for several decades.

Highlights:

1. In the 21st century, in a time of increasing agricultural production, India needs a post-harvest food processing revolution, with a focus on value addition. It



would have been good for the country had this been done two to three decades back.

2. In order to ensure that such a revolution takes place speedily, apart from the participation of farmers, public-private partnerships were also needed.
3. It was critical that storage facilities and processing units were available near the fields, he said.
4. Seaweed, beeswax, millets, coarse cereals and organic vegetables were the other sectors with significant potential, the Prime Minister said.