

Headlines at a Glance - 9th October 2020

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World Trade Organization to be led by a woman for first time

The World Trade Organization announced Thursday that South Korea's trade minister and a Harvard-trained former Nigerian finance minister have qualified as the two finalists to become the next director-general, ensuring a woman in the top job for the first time. A selection committee said that Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala of Nigeria and Yoo Myung-hee of South Korea qualified for the final round in a race expected to end in the coming weeks. They were picked out of a pool of five candidates. Both of the women that are in the final round are remarkably well qualified. This is something on which everyone has agreed," WTO spokesman Keith Rockwell told reporters. We've been impressed with them from the very beginning. The Geneva-based WTO's General Council, made up of envoys from the 164-member body, eliminated Amina Mohamed, a former trade minister from Kenya; Mohammad Maziad Al-Tuwaijri, a Saudi former economy minister, and British former International Trade Secretary and Brexit proponent Liam Fox.

SOURCE: *Business Standard*

CSIR-CMERI transfers technology of community level Water Purification

The CSIR-CMERI today transferred its High Flow Rate Fluoride & Iron Removal technology to M/s Capricans Aqua Private Limited, Howrah, West Bengal, in Durgapur (WB). The Technology Transfer took place over a Virtual Platform in the presence of Prof. (Dr.) Harish Hirani, Director, CSIR-CMERI, Durgapur. Prof. Hirani, during the event stated, "This Community Level Water Purification System has a Flow-Rate capacity of 10,000 Ltr/hr and uses commonly available raw materials such as sand, gravel and adsorbent materials. It comprises a three-stage purification process which purifies water within permissible limits (1.5 ppm & 0.3 ppm for Fluoride and Iron respectively). The technology uses a combination of Oxidation, Gravitational Settling and Chemisorption process in an Affordable Package. The integrated backwashing profile of the technology will help in improving the shelf-life of the filtration media in a resource rationalised manner" Prof. Hirani said that, "As per available statistics the number of Fluoride affected individuals are continuously increasing in a contaminated habitat in the last 50 years. This has been happening in consonance with the disproportional depletion of Water Table, which has led to multiplication of the level of concentration of Fluoride in the particular region. Owing to inaccessibility to Affordable Fluoride Removal Solutions for the drastically affected sections of the Country, the Fluorosis affected statistics has also witnessed an upward trajectory. Besides, the technology is also a major thrust towards the AtmaNirbhar Bharat campaign. Proliferation of this technology will also help in catalysing Employment Generation opportunities for the Youth of the Nation. The strategic deployment of this Community Level system at affected places can help to turn the tide against the menace of Iron and Fluorosis across the Nation."

SOURCE: *PIB*

US stops funding relocation projects from Protected Areas

The United States government has halted funding to voluntary and involuntary relocation projects from protected areas (PA) across the world on account of human rights violations including beating, torturing, raping and murder of people living inside PAs by eco-guards. The move is likely to deal a blow to the relocations projects in India funded by the US, according to United Kingdom-based non-profit Survival International. In March 2019, an investigation by a media house accused global conservation charity World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) of funding and working with anti-poaching guards who allegedly tortured and killed people in the protected areas (PA) in countries like Nepal and Democratic Republic of Congo. In response to the alleged human rights violations, the United States government, in June 2019, launched an inquiry into international conservation grants by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) — an agency of the US federal government within the

Department of the Interior. It is dedicated to the management of fish, wildlife and natural habitats.

SOURCE: *BBC News*

AMHUB: India's first advanced manufacturing hub

Guidance, nodal investment promotion and facilitation agency of the state of Tamil Nadu has partnered with the World Economic Forum (WEF) to establish India's first advanced manufacturing hub (AMHUB) in Tamil Nadu. Neeraj Mittal, MD & CEO, Guidance, Francisco Betti, Head of Advanced Manufacturing and Production, World Economic Forum and Ion Cronin, Project Lead, Advanced Manufacturing & Production, World Economic Forum witnessed the partnership between Guidance and the World Economic Forum on Wednesday evening. The Advanced Manufacturing HUB or AMHUB is one of the 19 platforms designed by the WEF. This platform focuses on engaging entire regional production ecosystems to identify and address regional opportunities and challenges brought by the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) by amplifying regional success stories, sharing best practices & incubating new partnerships, said Mittal. AMHUB will help the production ecosystem in Tamil Nadu by identifying and addressing regional opportunities brought by the Fourth Industrial Revolution, highlighting and amplifying regional success stories globally and engaging directly with other AMHUBs through WEF's network of AMHUBs to share best practices globally, he added.

SOURCE: *Business Standard*

European Union Parliament voted for 60% Emissions cut by 2030

EU capitals have been put under pressure to agree to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 60% by 2030 compared with 1990, after the European parliament voted in favour of an "ambitious" climate law that would also oblige each member state to be carbon neutral by 2050. The vote, which sets the chamber's position as it goes into negotiations with the 27 member states and the European commission, won the backing of 392 MEPs, with 161 voting against and 142 abstaining. The parliament's vote was a rejection of a 55% emissions reduction target for 2030 proposed by the commission, the EU's executive body led by Ursula von der Leyen. "Having the parliament supporting 60% helps the progressive countries in the council to drive ambition upwards," Canfin said. Following the vote, Finland's environment minister, Krista Mikkonen, said she would propose that her government update its national position in line with that of the EU parliament. There are concerns that the opening demand will lead to a prolonged negotiation over a compromise

position during so-called “trilogue” discussions of parliament, council and commission ahead of a vote on the final deal by the chamber.

SOURCE: *The Guardian*