

electricity is drawing sharp criticism from opponents, who say it undermines the nation's efforts to cut air pollution and shift to cleaner energy sources. The proposal, part of a draft of a sweeping 3-year action plan that was released in April by an influential government think tank, is aimed at managing 170,000 tons of waste generated each day in some 8000 municipalities. The plan suggests establishing a Waste to Energy Corporation of India and developing public-private partnerships to build the plants, intended to generate 330 megawatts of electricity by 2018 and 511 megawatts by 2019. But Indian environmentalists and scientists say the idea is flawed: India's urban waste streams often contain materials such as damp food scraps that are unsuitable for efficient incineration, and existing plants have struggled to meet air quality rules. State and local governments are currently commenting on the overall draft plan. <http://scim.ag/Indiaincinerators>

U.K. throws lifeline to fusion site

LONDON | The United Kingdom's plans to leave the European Union have worried scientists who use the Joint European Torus (JET), Europe's largest fusion experiment sited near Oxford, U.K. Last week, the U.K. government tried to dispel those concerns, saying it could support running the device for 2 years when its current contract ends in 2018. The JET is a doughnut-shaped tokamak; it is the world's largest until construction is finished at ITER, a huge global effort in France. Researchers have upgraded the JET and were planning to run it with a full power-producing, deuterium-tritium fuel to prepare for ITER. But that plan would have been canceled if JET closed after next year. The United Kingdom operates JET on behalf of the EU body Euratom, which provides £60 million per year, 88% of the facility's running costs.

Polio vaccine on way to Syria

DEIR EZ-ZOR, SYRIA | A supply of monovalent oral polio vaccine type 2 (mOPV2) is wending its way from a tightly held stockpile to war-torn Syria, where it will be used as early as this week to quash a polio outbreak that has so far paralyzed 22 children. More cases are expected, health officials say. The vaccine is no longer in widespread use because, in rare instances, the live virus it contains can revert and spark outbreaks like this one. Since April 2016, mOPV2 has been stored in an emergency stockpile that can be



Young scientist-astronauts have the right stuff

NASA's newest class of 12 astronauts, chosen last month, includes three young scientists who may be uniquely equipped to help NASA return to space on an array of new vehicles and, eventually, send humans to Mars. Planetary geologist Jessica Watkins (bottom right), 29, a postdoc at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena, studies long-runout landslides that have helped shape the surface of Mars, and also helps operate the Curiosity rover managed by NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory. Zena Cardman (left), a 29-year-old graduate student in geomicrobiology at Pennsylvania State University in State College, works on "analog science" projects that simulate conducting science on the Red Planet while also exploring terrestrial phenomena. And Warren "Woody" Hoburg (top right), 31, an assistant professor of aeronautics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, is an amateur rocketry buff who created a software tool that allows aerospace engineers to more efficiently evaluate myriad airplane design options. He's also the first tenure-track faculty member to join NASA's astronaut corps. Next month the three head to Houston, Texas, for 2 years of training to prepare for missions to the International Space Station, the moon, and beyond. <http://scim.ag/NASAsciastronauts>

released only by the director-general of the World Health Organization (WHO). But it remains the most powerful weapon to stop polio. Last month, WHO authorized its release, and Syria's health ministry and international partners are planning to immunize about 330,000 children in the Islamic State group strongholds of Deir ez-Zor and Raqqq.

NEWSMAKERS

Surgeon general nominee tapped

U.S. President Donald Trump on 29 June nominated anesthesiologist and Indiana state health commissioner **Jerome M. Adams** to be surgeon general. If confirmed to a 4-year term by the Senate, Adams will become the government's leading public health spokesperson, replacing Vivek Murthy, whom Trump ousted in April.

Adams was hired in 2014 by then-Indiana governor and current Vice President Mike Pence. Early in 2015, Adams confronted an HIV epidemic in southeastern Indiana caused by needle-sharing among prescription opioid users. Last month, in a state Health Department press release, Adams plugged a needle exchange program that Pence had authorized in response to the outbreak. "Syringe exchanges aren't pretty," Adams wrote, "but the opioid epidemic is far uglier." As an undergraduate in 1996, Adams was a Howard Hughes research scholar in the lab of biochemist Thomas Cech at the University of Colorado in Boulder. He earned a master's degree in public health from the University of California, Berkeley, and completed an M.D. and residency in anesthesiology at Indiana University in Indianapolis. "I'm thrilled that Jerome's research experience ... in my lab helped propel his career," Cech says.

PHOTOS: (CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT) RUAN HUANG; VERONICA PADRON; CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY