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POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

PIB,NOV14,2022

Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Government of India has launched a nation-wide campaign for promotion of Digital Life Certificate for Central Government pensioners

The Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Government of India has launched a nation-wide campaign for promotion of Digital Life Certificate for Central Government pensioners. In November 2021, Dr. Jitendra Singh, the Minister of State (PP) had launched the milestone Face Authentication Technique of submitting Life Certificate through any Android Mobile Phone. Now the department is launching a special nation-wide campaign for promoting the Life Certificate through Digital mode and to popularize the Face Authentication technique. All the registered Pensioners Associations, Pension Disbursing Banks, Ministries of Government of India and CGHS Wellness Centres have been directed to promote the Digital Life Certificate/Face Authentication Technique for submitting Life Certificate by organising special camps for 'Ease of Living' of pensioners.

During this ongoing campaign Digital Life Certificates submitted till 13.11.2022 are 47,66,735 and out of these, total DLCs generated through Face Authentication are 2,62,686. Further, the total DLCs submitted by Central Government pensioners are 18,18,289 and out of this total DLCs generated through Face Authentication are 1,61,158.

In this series, a Central Government team comprising of Dr. Pramod Kumar, Director and Shri Namo Narayan Meena, ASO, Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare has arrived in Ahmedabad for conducting an awareness programme at SBI, Administrative Office, C N Vidyalaya, Ambawadi, on 15th November, 2022. Prior to this, the team conducted an awareness campaign at Alka Puri Branch at Vadodara on 14th November, 2022.

This campaign is being actively assisted by Sh. Rajiv Rathi, Deputy Director General, NIC who is providing round the clock technical guidance ensuring smooth conduct of the campaign. Also, the support and promotion by the representatives of SBI and other banks, UIDAI, PIB, DD News and AIR is valuable. In Ahmedabad, momentum to this campaign is being provided by different Pensioners Associations including Posts and Telegraphs and Other Central Govt Pensioners' Association, spearheaded by its Secretary, Shri S.B. Patel and SBI Pensioners' Association, Ahmedabad Unit, led by its General Secretary, Sh. S.C.Gor.

The central team has informed that earlier, life certificates had to be submitted in physical form and for this old pensioners had to stand in queues outside the banks for hours. Now, it has become possible at the click of a button from the comfort of their homes. The central team has urged to bring certain document like Aadhaar Card, Registered Mobile Number for OTP, PPO Number and Account Number with Bank/Post Office especially if they are doing DLC through face authentication for the first time. This facility is also available to the pensioners of several other Pension Sanctioning Authorities including State Government.

The central team has requested all the pensioners to visit official youtube channel of the department – DOPPW_INDIAOFFICIAL where two videos have been uploaded explaining the process of submitting the Life Certificate through Face Authentication Technique in simple language.

This campaign will be run by the department throughout the month of November and all pensioners are requested to avail this facility for submission of their Life Certificate through Face Authentication.

TRIBUNE,NOV15,2022

Controversial role of Governors in state politics

In order to keep the high office of the Governor insulated from unnecessary public controversies, both Punchhi and Sarkaria Commissions had recommended that the Governors should not be burdened with the positions and powers which were beyond their constitutional domain.

KK Paul

Former Governor

Recent inconsistencies being highlighted by the media in respect of some of the Governors find their roots in the Constitution. We have a written Constitution, which is the longest-such document in the world in which the role of the Governor is also well-defined; nevertheless, situations continue to arise with a lot of scope for ambiguity in interpretation.

Also Read

4 Sikh fought till the end in Battle of Walong

Sailing in two boats

Let us have a close look at the oath of office of the Governor. Article 159 prescribes the oath, the core of which is preserving, protecting and defending the Constitution, and the law, which is similar to the oath prescribed for the President of India in Article 60. This peculiar phraseology is indicative of a proactive expectation. In contrast, the oaths of office prescribed for other constitutional functionaries, including the Prime Minister and the Chief Ministers, focus on “bearing true faith and owing allegiance to the Constitution, which can be comparatively seen to be representing somewhat of a passive situation amounting to going along or remaining in conformity with the provisions.”

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The difference is extremely subtle, but only one person in the state is bound by the oath of office to preserve, protect and defend the Constitution and that is the Governor. Such wording of the oath, to an extent, reveals the mind and intent of the framers of the Constitution, who might have envisaged a much wider role for the Constitutional head.

But, in effect, it is not so. In the case of *Shamsher Singh vs State of Punjab*, the Supreme Court has held that the Governor is bound to act only in accordance with the aid and advice of the Council of Ministers headed by the CM. Also, Article 154(1) makes it clear that the executive power of the state is vested in the Governor, but shall be exercised by him in accordance with the Constitution.

In the case of *Nabam Rebia of Arunachal Pradesh*, where the Governor went against the advice of the state Cabinet to prepone the session of the Legislative Assembly, the Supreme Court not only passed adverse comments against him, but also declared the President's Rule imposed in 2015 to be unconstitutional. In the process, the Governor had no option, but to resign.

The notable exceptions for the Governor, where he may not follow the advice of the Cabinet and as interpreted by the Supreme Court, are when the bias of the state government is inherent or apparent as with regards to dissolution of the House, or where the decision of the state Cabinet is wholly irrational, or where the Cabinet because of some incapacity becomes disentitled from giving such advice. A case in point is the advice of the Election Commission on disqualification under Article 192, where also the Governor does not have to follow the advice of the Cabinet, but the advice of the Chief Election Commissioner is binding in such cases.

In our Constitution, undoubtedly, a Governor has greater leeway than even the President. According to Article 74(1), the President shall in the exercise of his functions act in accordance with the advice of the Cabinet, while for the Governor, Article 163 (1) reads as, "There shall be a Council of Ministers with the CM as the head, to aid and advise the Governor in the exercise of his functions, except in so far as he is by or under this Constitution required to exercise his function or any of them in his discretion."

Further according to 163 (2), the decision of the Governor in his discretion will be final and the validity of anything done by the Governor shall not be called into question.

A plain reading of the provision would tend to convey that the Governor has unfettered and unlimited powers in certain aspects of governance. However, these discretionary powers are not unlimited and have been spelt out in the Constitution itself as well as interpreted by the Supreme Court. For instance, under Article 161, the Governor has the power to grant pardon, suspend, remit or commute sentences in certain cases, but this power, as brought out in the case of Satpal vs State of Haryana, can be exercised only on the advice of the state Cabinet.

Another important area of the Governor's functioning, which has often led to controversies, is his role as the Chancellor of universities located in the state. It has to be borne in mind that though the persona is one, but there are two distinct offices, one for the Governor under the Constitution and the other under the respective statutes of the university. The constitutional authority of the state government is quite distinct from that of the university. The Governor while acting as the Chancellor does not act under the advice of the Cabinet as provided for in the Constitution. In the circumstances, the immunity provided to the Governor under Article 361 is not available to him in his role as the Chancellor.

In order to keep the high office of the Governor insulated from unnecessary public controversies, both Punchhi and Sarkaria Commissions had recommended that the Governors should not be burdened with the positions and powers which were beyond their constitutional domain. Such an action would avoid a conflict with the state government.

There are several checks and balances in our Constitution, nevertheless, some grey areas still exist as in case of time limit for giving assent to the Bills. In case the trinity of the Preamble, Fundamental Rights and the Directive Principles are read together

in the spirit of democratic principles along with the interpretations of the Supreme Court, there would never be a cause for any ambiguity.

The importance of this fundamental for the Governors can hardly be overemphasised as they are only nominated, while the CMs and ministers are elected representatives of the people. Perhaps, for this reason alone, the oath of office of the Governor also prescribes that he would devote himself to the service and well-being of the people, while no such provision exists in respect of the oath of the CMs and ministers.

PIB,NOV16,2022

Accountability and transparency are twins that help blossom and sustain our democratic progress – Vice President

Absence of audit or inefficient audit is sure passage to system degeneration – Vice President

VP lauds Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) for establishing itself as an auditing organization of global repute

Vice President inaugurates 2nd Audit Diwas celebrations at CAG office today

The Vice President, Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar today described accountability and transparency as twins that help to sustain our democratic progress. He said that accountability in public service delivery is quintessential to good governance to ensure that benefits trickle to the last rows.

Addressing a gathering after inaugurating 2nd Audit Diwas celebrations at CAG office in New Delhi today, he highlighted that CAG has a pivotal role in ensuring these values; corruption and inefficiency would creep into the system, otherwise.

Describing audit as a powerful and inescapable tool of good governance, Shri Dhankhar cautioned that the absence of audit or inefficient audit would lead to system degeneration. He also called for increased focus by CAG on the instances of utility certificates involving massive public funds not being imparted for long by governmental entities.

Noting that CAG of India has been the External Auditor of various United Nations (UN) organizations over the years, Shri Dhankhar praised CAG for establishing a reputation for itself as a robust auditing organisation with global best practices. He expressed confidence that with the enhanced pro-active stance of the CAG, there is bound to be improved efficiency and monitoring and reach of government schemes. “Timely detection of fiscal misdemeanours and effective consequential correction mechanisms are peremptory CAG obligations,” he added.

Calling for continually enhancing credible systems to tackle the challenges before us, the Vice President highlighted that engaging in self-audit would be rewarding.

On this occasion, the Vice President also felicitated the winners of the National Online Essay Writing Competition - 2022 organized by CAG as part of its 2nd Audit Diwas celebrations. Appreciating the initiative, he hoped that the august institution would continue to find ways to involve the public at the grassroots in its impact assessment process and act as crusader against corruption and fiscal inefficiency.

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India, Shri Girish Chandra Murmu, Deputy Comptroller and Auditor General, Ms Parveen Mehta, officers of the Indian Audit and Accounts Department and other dignitaries were present.

Following is the full text of speech –

Delighted to be part of the Audit Diwas celebrations today.

Congratulations on CAG foundation day, and for organising the 30th Accountants General Conference to mark the occasion.

Critical importance of the institution of the CAG was significantly indicated by Dr. B R Ambedkar in the Constituent Assembly. He reflected:

“I am of the opinion that this dignitary or officer is probably the most important officer in the Constitution of India. He is the one man who is going to see that the expenses voted by Parliament are not exceeded, or varied, from what has been laid down by Parliament.”

It is indeed satisfying to note that CAG as institution has, over the years, exemplified spinal strength.

This elevated status is consequence of seminal leadership the institution has been benefiting from.

The credibility earned by the institution is due to the the painstaking efforts of the successive CAGs that brought this institution where it is today.

Impactful and wholesome CAG functioning has generated evolution of transparent and accountable eco system. Such a scenario has affirmatively contributed to our growth trajectory.

By virtue of constitutional prescription under Article 151 of the Constitution CAG reports are required to be laid before each House of Parliament as also before the Legislature of the States.

It is expected such reports receive due attention and consideration of the Parliamentarians and Legislators so that probity, efficiency and transparency in governance improves and accountability is enforced.

Painstaking efforts of CAG would bear fruit and results with timely Legislature and Executive actions in tandem and togetherness.

In a recent milestone accomplishment India secured the status of the fifth largest economy in the world and is on way to being the third largest global economy by turn of the decade.

The country has made rapid strides in structural and institutional reforms making the Country attractive opportunity and investment destination in the world.

The world is rightly looking at us today as a catalyst for positive change.

Transparent accountability in public service delivery is quintessential to good governance so as to ensure benefits trickle to the last rows. This can be impactfully brought about and enhanced by CAG acting as vigilant watchdog.

Appreciate significantly apt theme of today's Accountants General Conference- 'SAI India: Contributing to India Onward and Ahead'.

Am sure the deliberations would focus on opportunities and challenges with a view to fast track our continual upward growth trajectory.

Accountability and transparency are twins that help blossom and sustain our democratic progress. Lack of these breeds corruption and inefficiency. CAG has a massive role to root out this menace.

We must build and continually enhance credible systems to tackle the challenges before us.

Engaging in self audit and calibration would be rewarding. Timely detection of fiscal misdemeanours and effective consequential correction mechanism are peremptory CAG obligations.

Audit is a powerful and inescapable tool of good governance. Absence of audit or inefficient audit is the surest passage to system degeneration. This underlines imperatives of CAG focus. Instances of utility certificates involving massive public funds not being imparted for long by governmental entities needs exemplary corrective focus. By discerning errors and highlighting wastefulness and extravagance in public spending, the CAG not only ensures that the government delivers its promise with economic efficiency, but also it helps to stamp out inefficiency and corruption. Functional, vibrant and impactful CAG mechanism is safest assurance that the intended benefits actually reach the citizens- the ultimate beneficiaries. It is soothing to gather that the CAG has given priority to audit many citizen centric programmes such as Direct Benefit Transfer, National Pension System and so on. CAG focus will make the system robust delivery mechanism. The findings of these types of audits will give extremely important inputs which will help in better planning and management of citizen centric schemes. The digital revolution, combined with CAG's exemplary service in promoting transparency, is revitalising grassroots democracy in our country. This august institution should find ingenious and innovative ways to involve public at the grassroots level in its audit processes. In fact, the CAG has to play a proactive role in improving efficiency, monitoring and outcomes delivered by Government schemes. It is satisfying to note that to manage emerging challenges CAG is continuously engaged in upgrading its professional skills and practices to stay ahead of the learning curve. I commend CAG initiatives to become an IT-led institution and using data analytics for auditing. This has helped CAG in enhancing efficiency and enabling analysis and risk based audit. CAG of India has established a reputation as a robust auditing organisation with global best practices.

It is the External Auditor of various United Nations (UN) organizations over the years. Its international audit portfolio includes external audit of several important UN organizations including World Health Organization (WHO), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), Organization for Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). On this occasion, I would also like to congratulate all the seven university students who have won the National Online Essay Writing Competition, and who've joined us here today from different parts of the country. They wrote exceptional essays on themes in align with current governance vision.

I am confident that this august institution would continue to find ways to involve public at the grassroots level in its impact assessment process and act as crusader against corruption and fiscal inefficiency. With enhanced pro-active stance of the CAG, there is bound to be improved efficiency and monitoring and reach of government schemes. I take this opportunity to commend

the supreme audit authority and all the officers for their high ethical standards. I am sure, CAG will continue to emerge stronger and vibrant in days ahead.

STATESMAN, NOV 18, 2022

Empowered Women

India has set a stellar example of reserved quotas for women in local governance for a country that has a poor record of its overall commitment to women's rights. It is an example of how a country can successfully empower women, politically, economically, and socially.

MOIN QAZI

India is far from perfect in ensuring women's rights, but quotas at the local government level are making a real impact. Development experts are discovering that societies and cultures that invest in and empower women are on a virtuous cycle. They become more affluent, better governed, stable, and less prone to violence.

By contrast, countries that limit women's educational and employment opportunities and their political voices get stuck in a downward spiral. They are poorer, more fragile, and have higher levels of corruption. In the last two decades, the gender landscape in rural India has been slowly greening, and women are now on the cusp of a powerful social and political revolution. The harbinger of this change is a unique policy experiment in village-level governance that has brought transformative results for the weakest of the weak and the poorest of the poor: the village women. In 1993, India introduced the Panchayati Raj Act, mandating a three-tiered structure of local governance at the village, block, and district levels with reservation of one-third of all posts in Gram Panchayats (village councils) at the bottom tier of India's decentralised governance system, for women. The vision was that these women-headed councils would bring greater transparency and

better governance to their villages. It revitalised an age-old method of rural local government whose name “panchayat” is drawn from Sanskrit, meaning the council of five wise men. This new law was a step towards the fruition of Mahatma Gandhi’s dreams of village-level self-governance with gender justice as a critical pillar. Gandhi believed that if implemented correctly the Panchayati Raj system would alleviate the alienation of the common people from governance and preclude the external intervention of higher-level civic officials, who might not be familiar with the concerns of local people.

Earlier politics was considered a foul word, and women were expected to keep a hygienic distance from it. However, development scientists and social activists now acknowledge that the modern development paradigm has political salience and that politics underpins all facets of development. Politics is the firing engine for all the cylinders of development. It is true that political power needs to be sanitized and has to be reinforced with ethical underpinnings to make it more benevolent.

This can come about only when more educated and development-oriented individuals embrace politics as a critical arena for innovation and change. Politics is the fulcrum of governance, and unless the quality of political timber is improved, governance will continue to limp. Experience of this social and political experiment has shown that women are not just equal to the task but also orientate public-good provision more towards the preferences of their gender, namely more water, healthcare, and roads. Though less politically savvy and often only semi-illiterate, these women had an advantage in being actively mentored by trainers who are building the district bureaucracy.

Several NGOs also designed programmes to skill them in governance. Women face a host of difficulties in handling political power – cultural norms, social hierarchies, and patriarchal practices ~ which together tend to favour and attract men and discourage the participation of women. India has set a stellar example of reserved quotas for women in local governance for a country that has a poor record of its overall commitment to women’s rights. It is an example of how a country can successfully empower women, politically, economically, and socially. In 1993, an amendment to India’s constitution formally established Panchayati Raj (local democracy), a three-tiered local governance structure at the village, block, and district levels, to represent small rural communities. It has been called a silent revolution, the most significant social experiment of our time, and one of the greatest innovations in grassroots democracy. It is one of the crown jewels in India’s democracy.

And thanks to quotas reserving spots for female representatives, several women have been making their way up India's governance ladder. More than thirty lakh women have become politically active, with over ten lakh of them being elected to public office every five years. They are no longer puppets, rubber stamps, or proxies for their husbands. The rise of Indian women as heads of Gram Panchayats is a spectacular achievement, given that India has one of the worst records concerning how it treats females. Malnourished, suppressed, uneducated, violated, and discriminated against, Indian women have the odds stacked against them. Remarkably, they are now setting Indian demographics and social indices right.

These elected women are now role models to other women in their communities and are altering the development agenda to address issues critical to them. Their impact touches other areas, which may lead to enduring overall change. This role model effect can help close the gender gaps in other realms because higher aspirations translate into more significant investments in girls by their parents and themselves. Several women who started their political careers as self-described "rubber stamp" officials are now asking about budget allocations. They stride about in government offices with polished informality sharing their concerns with officials in tones of supportiveness and assertiveness. They successfully challenge the traditional village male elite by defying social codes of female bias and are now powerful aspirational symbols and role models. Women leaders today are more than just mouthpieces for their politically-savvy husbands. However, the path they have trodden after the initial euphoria of winning elections has not been easy. There have been growing pains and many early entrants retreated, never to emerge again.

The avalanche of social and cultural mores rained heavily on them. Although the resistance is whittling down, it is clear that achieving gender equality in leadership will require sustained policy actions that favour women over a long time. The vision is not as romantic as many would like us to believe. But as women have shown, they have all that is needed to ride out these storms. The men know this very well, but they don't want to concede that women possess the ability to be the better halves because they are afraid of losing their last refuge, that is, politics.

In the long term, the journey will be harder than policy wonks can imagine. The wait could potentially be eternal. But if bureaucrats can muster the will, they can succeed. They know from past lessons that they have the tools and need to vigorously

back reforms that can engender greater empowerment for women. For sustainable change to happen, women must actively compete in the present political game. Legislation and policy pronouncements seldom penetrate the surface of social and political barriers. They are ultimately impotent against the grid of the established power structures inherent in most rural households and villages. The great strength of democracy, according to Amartya Sen, lies in that “it gives people in need a voice and, by so doing, plays a protective role against so many different forms of political and economic abuse.” Panchayati Raj is just the beginning; it is only one step on the way, but it is the right step on the right ladder. These women are reconfiguring gender and social dynamics and have started exploring their wider responsibilities as stakeholders and citizens of a polity. However, decentralisation is not easy. The skill levels in impoverished communities are very low. And in a country where democracy has been established in a top-down manner, a feudal mindset may still prevail. The people may not be aware that the government should be accountable to the people, and not the other way around. A lot of positive changes are coming in better-governed villages. There are still large swathes where discriminatory traditions continue to dominate. Several factors constrain the effective participation of women leaders, including a lack of basic familiarity with political governance and the absence of legal literacy. Women need to be given adequate advocacy tools to strengthen democratic engagement and gain control over local resources.

Village assemblies are a critical participatory institution in providing equal access to all members of the community to the deliberations and negotiations in local governance. Still, elite control of these bodies has prevented functional democracy from taking root. This is the reason why, in several remote and tribal pockets, Panchayat Raj has failed to enhance the social outcomes for most citizens. The social pecking order of villages cannot be overturned easily, and several challenges remain to fuller empowerment. Legitimately-elected women representatives remain vulnerable to manipulation and harassment and are often reduced to mere proxies, while the actual decision-making authority remains with their husbands or power brokers from higher castes. At the policy level, we must understand the structural impediments in the full evolution of Gram Panchayats as functional governance units remain. The Panchayati Raj Act created these bodies but did not endow them with various governance functions like financial authority for the provision of education, health, sanitation, and water.

Instead, the law simply enumerated the functions that could be transferred and left it to the State Legislature to devolve them. There has been very little devolution of authority and functions till now. Gram Sabhas were expected to be the primary

legislation of rural governance with responsibilities to catalyse local planning by conducting ‘needs assessment’ exercises and devising plans for development projects aggregated at the panchayat level. These would become official inputs into the state government’s annual budgeting process when further aggregated and rationalized at the district level. Gram Sabhas did remain a pivotal institution in local planning but had a little real role in governance.

Despite the noble intention, they have struggled to stay relevant. They continue to be plagued by low participation and frequent hijacking by influential interests and have not been able to mature into viable democratic units. The dip in popular participation and weak political will has had significant implications for the future of democratic decentralisation in India. The heroic stories of tenacious women scripting tales of success are significant signs of a brighter tomorrow. Women’s empowerment is a journey that yields simple policies, not a fixed point.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INDIAN EXPRESS,NOV16,2022

Pratap Bhanu Mehta writes | Bloom vs gloom: When it comes to the economy, the evidence warrants agnosticism

There has always been a propensity to overestimate domestic demand. This has been compounded by the unequal distribution of income

Pratap Bhanu Mehta

Current positions over the prospects of the Indian economy seem to swing between alarmism and triumphalism. For example, you can juxtapose Morgan Stanley's exuberant recent report on India's impending economic boom, with analysis that comes out of the CMIE on India's dismal employment record and the enduring constraint it poses. A lot of economic debate is shaped by political mood affiliation. There are genuine difficulties figuring out what is going on.

In some cases, there just is not enough data, a situation not helped by the government's diffidence to data. Different shocks have taught us how much of our knowledge of the economy is post facto. Growth is also often a product of particular conjunctures. What may seem like a structural impediment to growth at a particular time can be compensated for by changing circumstances. But it is worth taking the optimists' case seriously. Why might we think India is more competitive and attractive now? Will any of these conditions obtain?

The central element in the optimist's story is India's vastly improved infrastructure. India's logistics, while not top class, are improving. Interestingly, Morgan Stanley argues that land is not a binding constraint (perhaps it never was). India's digital infrastructure is potentially outstanding. Optimism here seems well founded. But the Morgan Stanley report makes two further claims. The first, that the digital infrastructure will lead to offshoring of services to India, and second, it will lead to enhanced access to credit which will enable growth. Both of these are plausible claims, but by no means certain.

The second pitch is India's energy transition. India's economic performance traditionally has been tied to the price of oil. The optimists are betting on a major green energy transition that will not just bring more investment but make India energy self-sufficient and competitive. This is in the plausible but not easy category. There is a big "if" in this story. The fourth element is human capital. India has a long way to go. But often, quality assessments of human capital are also post facto; we infer

human capital qualities from successful economies. But it could be argued that India has enough human capital now for this to not be a binding constraint.

The fifth element is domestic demand. This has been the Achilles heel of the optimist's case. There has always been a propensity to overestimate domestic demand. This has been compounded by the unequal distribution of income. The poor have been cushioned from shocks a bit by the NREGA and PDS. But you cannot sustain consumption on the backs of only the top ten per cent; most post-Covid consumption trends suggest increased demand largely on account of the rich. The Morgan Stanley report assumes that the percentage of households in the income distribution Rs 10,000-30,000, will go up from 24 per cent to 46 per cent in the next eight years. The pessimists would argue the following. Growth in India is very capital intensive. So income distribution could be even more skewed. In the last consumption boom, agriculture growth helped. Can that happen again, especially in the face of climate uncertainties? It might be worth thinking whether it will be expansion in public employment that will help change this distribution. But for the moment, projections of India's consumption distribution seem speculative at best. The sixth element is MSMEs and the informal sector, which took big hits in the last few years. The assumption always was that small enterprises are hooked in enough to supply chains so that growth at the top can pull them up as well. This assumption may still hold. But can we be confident that these linkages will still hold?

The seventh element is geo-political. This is the idea that the need to diversify away from China will give India an advantage. This seems the least tenable of the optimists' claim. For one thing, it is not clear that more than a small fraction of the offshoring from China will come to India rather than go to Vietnam or Indonesia. For another, the extent of offshoring is probably exaggerated. FDI in China is still rising, and unless a war breaks out, you may not see a radical shift. Banking on geo-politics is not a growth strategy. The eighth element is the state, which Morgan Stanley glosses over. In many respects, state capacity has been increasing steadily over the last two decades. India's macro regime is, like its foreign policy, a case of cautious prudence. There is optimism about state revenues. Arguably, the quality of state expenditure has also improved. But four clouds still hover.

The first is state finances. Much of India's recent growth has been sustained by public investment. But given the pressures of subsidies, expanding public employment, and now a reversal to the old pension scheme, there might be more serious limits on public investment. Second, the regulatory framework is still uncertain. In the e-commerce space, the implications of building swadeshi may not be all that bad, but our basic outlook on trade is not entirely clear. Third, there are still the usual

challenges of the inability to deal with complex governance problems, like pollution and urbanisation, which have reputational effects.

Finally, there are the uncertainties that arise from the political economy of letting a couple of national champions dominate the economy across so many sectors. What systemic risks does that pose for competitors, and the financial system as a whole? But you can still make the case that the Indian state has enough credibility for it to attract investment. But here is the issue. The analytics may not matter much, if you cannot convince investors. Private investment in India still does not have the momentum that you would expect based on the optimists' case. Is this because of structural reasons, purely transitional ones, or psychological? Arguably, the euphoria of Morgan Stanley's reports is still not being matched by investors, perhaps including its own. But the honest truth might be that when it comes to the economy, agnosticism is what the evidence warrants rather than hyped up bloom or catastrophic gloom.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

PIB,NOV14,2022

India and Finland agree to carry mutual cooperation between the two countries to a new level and enhance partnership in areas such as Digital Partnership in Future ICT, Future Mobile Technologies and Digital Education

The Finnish Minister of Education and Culture of Finland Mr
Petri Honkonen calls on Dr Jitendra Singh at his North Block office

Finland Minister was full of praise for Prime Minister Narendra Modi for management of Covid pandemic and also the efforts of the Union Government of India in ensuring development of vaccines and vaccination for all the countrymen.

Two countries emphasise on having institutionalised joint working group on areas of mutual interest

Finnish Minister assures Dr. Jitendra Singh on cooperation in areas like 5G, 6G, Environment and Clean Technologies, Climate Change

Finland Minister of Education and Culture, Petri Honkonen called on Union Minister of Science and Technology Dr Jitendra Singh at North Block today to seek enhanced bilateral cooperation between the two countries in the field of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI).

He was accompanied by a high level delegation which later held a separate meeting with the Indian delegation in the presence of the two Ministers.

While Dr Jitendra Singh reiterated India's focus on collaboration even in StartUps, the Finland Minister was full of praise for Prime Minister Narendra Modi for management of Covid pandemic and also the efforts of the Union Government of India in ensuring development of vaccines and vaccination for all the countrymen.

India and Finland agreed to carry mutual cooperation between the two countries to a new level in a number of areas of bilateral as well as global interests. Two nations decided to enhance cooperation in areas such as Digital Partnership in Future ICT, Future Mobile Technologies and Digital Education. The two countries also emphasised on having institutionalised joint working groups on areas of mutual interest.

This was reiterated by Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh and the visiting Finland Minister Petri Honkonen. The visit comes in the wake of the announcement made by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Finnish counterpart Ms. Sanna Marin during a Summit meeting on 16 March 2021.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, the bilateral STI collaboration between the two countries is an attempt to stimulate innovative R&D projects that address a specific need or challenge; demonstrate high industrial relevance and commercial potential; and aim to deliver benefit to all participants, and more broadly, to both nations.

Dr Jitendra Singh also recalled that following the signing of the Joint declaration during the visit of Mika Lintilä, Minister of Economic Affairs, Finland on 18th April 2022, both sides have initiated collaboration in Quantum Technologies. Indian side has already identified four premier institutes viz IISER, Pune, IIT Madras, TIFR Mumbai and C-DAC Pune to work with Finnish institutions on joint development of Quantum Computer. The Minister expressed satisfaction that experts from both sides are working out detailed plan for establishment of the Indo-Finnish Virtual Network Centre on Quantum Computing and targeting to develop 20 qubits superconducting based Quantum Computer in 1st phase and further scale it up to 54 qubits in second phase.

Dr Jitendra Singh conveyed to the Finland Minister that India is keen to develop research collaborations with Finnish R&D institutions and technology collaboration with Finnish Industry especially focusing on the application of Quantum Computing in areas such as: Sustainable Energy Technologies (generation, conversion, storage and conservation), Environment and Clean Technologies, Bio-based Economy, Bio Banks and Bio based materials for different applications of water and Marine Technologies, Food & Agri Technologies, Affordable Healthcare (including Pharmaceuticals and Biomedical Instrumentation) and Technologies for Advanced Manufacturing Integration of AI and Machine Learning in all domains.

Honkonen assured Dr Jitendra Singh that Finland is keen to cooperate with India in 5G, Environment and Clean Technologies, Bio-based Economy, BioBanks and Affordable Healthcare. He said, progress is also on subjects flagged by Indian and Finnish Prime Ministers.

India and Finland have strong bonding in Science, Technology and Innovation. Within the framework of S&T agreement, the Department of Science and Technology, Department of Biotechnology, Government of India and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland together with Business Finland and Academy of Finland have been successfully collaborating for over a decade.

PIB,NOV15,2022

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh says, India producing medical devices at 1/3rd world price

The Minister inaugurates Combined Devices Block at Chitra Triunal Institute of Medical Science and Technology in Thiruvananthapuram

India is among the top five countries in the world, manufacturing life-saving high risk medical devices: Dr Jitendra Singh

Combined Devices Block at Chitra Institute is a perfect example of convergence of pharmaceuticals and medical devices and this must be institutionalised

R&D for Ease of Living can become successful, only if the private industry become an equal stakeholder and invest in the project from the beginning.

Union Minister for Science and Technology Dr Jitendra Singh today said, India is among the top five countries in the world manufacturing life-saving high risk medical devices but the cost of our devices is about one-third of those manufactured by the other four countries.

Addressing the faculty and students after inaugurating Combined Devices Block at Chitra Triunal Institute of Medical Science and Technology here, Dr Jitendra Singh said, technologies developed by the Institute like the artificial heart valve, hydrocephalus shunt, oxygenator and drug eluting intra uterine device are being manufactured in three to four countries like USA, Japan, Brazil and China.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, the world class medical devices made indigenously are available to Indian patients at approximately one fourth to one third price of their imported counterparts. He underlined that this reflects the Atmanirbhar vision of PM Modi to become self-reliant in medical devices as well as medical management.

Dr Jitendra Singh pointed out that it was Prime Minister Modi, who notified Medical Devices Rules in 2017 in conformity with Global Harmonisation Task Force (GHTF) framework and conform to best international practices. The new Rules seek to remove regulatory bottlenecks to make in India, facilitate ease of doing business while ensuring availability of better medical devices for patient care and safety.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, the Combined Devices Block at Chitra Institute is a perfect example of convergence of pharmaceuticals and medical devices, and this must be institutionalised. He said, the Institute is also a model of Medicines and Bio-Medicines, which is now being emulated by IITs and other prominent medical institutes.

Dr Jitendra Singh noted with pride that Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences & Technology, Thiruvananthapuram, is a prominent institution under Department of Science and Technology, Government of India. This is the only Institute which brings biomedical research and development, high quality clinical care, public health studies and interventions as well as human resource development under a single institutional framework.

Dr Jitendra Singh said that this Institute has been focusing on the development of medical device technologies which are at par with any product available internationally, with respect to their quality and functional efficacy, at the same time ensuring that these products are made available to the Indian patients at an affordable cost. He said, various products like heart valve, oxygenators, blood bag, hydrocephalus shunt, orthopaedic and dental materials etc. have ensured that these are available to Indian patients at cost effective and affordable prices. The Minister also lauded the Institute for its pivotal role of bridging its research with the societal needs, especially looking at the needs of the under-privileged.

Dwelling on the synergy concept and Integrated Approach of Modi, Dr Jitendra Singh said, most of the technologies developed at Chitra Institute are transferred to private commercial enterprises and have been sustaining in the market for decades. Many projects for product development are fully funded by industrial establishments and both these are excellent examples of creating an environment for enhanced private participation in research and development, the Minister added.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, R&D for Ease of Living can become successful, only if the private industry becomes an equal stakeholder and invests in the project from the beginning. He said, this is also true for sustainable StartUps to have equal stake by both Public and Private sectors. He gave the example of Technology Development Board of DST and Bharat Biotech to form a ₹400 Crores Corpus Fund with equal contribution by both to support Startups in vaccine manufacturing and other

medical ventures. The Minister pointed out that DNA vaccine produced by Department of Biotechnology was later used effectively by private sector and this is the essence of Integrated Approach.

Dr Jitendra Singh informed the medical fraternity that only yesterday, the Finland Minister of Education and Culture, Petri Honkonen, who called on him was full of praise for Prime Minister Narendra Modi for management of Covid pandemic and also the efforts of the Union Government of India in ensuring development of vaccines and vaccination for all the countrymen. The Finnish Minister said, while his country with 5 Million people fought the pandemic, India with 130 Crore people showed the way to the World in its fight against COVID-19 and also helped many countries particularly the neighbours with vaccines.

Dr Jitendra Singh said the Pandemic has taught us the virtues of holistic healthcare and even after the pandemic has passed, it will be in the interest of mankind and ailing humanity to institutionalise integrated medicinal approach for adequate treatment and prevention of various diseases. He said, during the COVID even the West started looking up to India in search of immunity building techniques drawn from Ayurveda, Homoeopathy, Unani, Yoga, Naturopathy and other oriental alternatives.

Dr Jitendra Singh was happy to note that the Institute is in the process of setting up a medical device park, MedSpark, as a joint initiative with the Kerala State Industrial Development Corporation, Government of Kerala. He said, new initiatives in the combination devices will definitely help the Institute to take up a more significant role in supporting the Indian Medical Device Industry for strengthening its indigenous capability.

Director of the Chitra Triunal Institute of Medical Science and Technology, Dr Sanjay Bihari said that the Institute has ensured that all testing activities related to medical devices are accredited to an international agency, COFRAC, from France. This helps to build the confidence of the clinical community for using the products. This has also helped many Indian medical device manufacturers to get their products certified from national and international regulators like the Drugs Controller General in India, CE marking, the Food and Drugs administration in USA and Therapeutics Goods Administration in Australia.

Dr V. K Saraswat, Member, Health Niti Aayog, Dr Shashi Tharoor, Member of Parliament from Thiruvananthapuram and several noted Doctors and medical professionals joined the inaugural event.

PIB,NOV17,2022

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh says, India under Prime Minister Narendra Modi has become one of the world's most cost-effective healthcare destination, with the latest technology tools deployed, across care delivery

The Minister addresses the Healthcare Leaders Summit-2022 of the Economic Times on the topic- “Building a Cohesive Healthcare Ecosystem in India through Proactive Government Initiatives” More than 10 lakh medical visas were issued to foreigners between 2019 and 2022 and the country is fast emerging as the Medical Tourism Hub of the world: Dr Jitendra Singh There are over 4,000 healthtech startups working in India spanning from platforms helping to monitor health conditions, apps using AI to detect illnesses and diseases and connecting patients with doctors

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh said, India under Prime Minister Narendra Modi has become one of the world’s most cost-effective healthcare destination, with the latest technology tools deployed, across care delivery. Addressing the Healthcare Leaders Summit-2022 of the Economic Times, Dr Jitendra Singh said, more than 10 lakh medical visas were issued to foreigners between 2019 and 2022 and the country is fast emerging as the Medical Tourism Hub of the world. He said, this number is quite significant as there was almost complete ban on international travel during the pandemic. The Minister also pointed out that India has almost 600 globally and nationally accredited hospitals that provide world-class treatment in cost-effective manner. Dr Jitendra Singh said, healthcare sector in I



India is expected to grow to reach a size of \$50 billion by 2025, while the global medical tourism market is estimated to be worth about \$72 billion. He said, India's share in medical tourism is expected to be around 10 billion dollars by 2023. Moreover, the country is the world's largest supplier of generic drugs, the Minister added.

Dwelling on the topic of the summit, "Building a Cohesive Healthcare Ecosystem in India through Proactive Government Initiatives" Dr Jitendra Singh pointed out that only last month, while inaugurating health facilities in Gujarat, Prime Minister Modi said, "If the heart and intention of the government are not filled with concern for the people's problems, then the creation of suitable health infrastructure is not possible". The Minister emphasised that the intention and policies of the government are in perfect alignment for creating affordable healthcare for all.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, ever since 2014, Modi Government is hand-holding in harnessing the enthusiasm of scientific brilliance and addressing the most pressing healthcare challenges of the current generation and being future-ready. He said, massive efforts are also on in building a robust life sciences ecosystem through science and research, which will in turn reduce health inequalities and build a clear road map on the continuing successes of vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics. He said, the action plan laid out by the government to support healthcare stakeholders to create a vibrant healthcare ecosystem in the country is happening through funding, incentives, government and industry-academia partnership and incubation.

Dr Jitendra Singh pointed out that the whole world recognised India's leadership role during COVID-19, as it achieved the rare feat of delivering over 220 crore vaccinations through a fully digital platform – COWIN and the process continues. Underlining the importance of vaccines as one of the most cost-effective health interventions for combating infectious, the Minister pointed out that during the pandemic, India played a crucial role in the rapid development and distribution of vaccines globally. Going forward, what are the evolving mechanisms for supporting end-to-end development and testing pipeline for vaccines by strengthening engagement between industry, academia and government, he added. Dr Jitendra Singh said, the Proactive Government Initiatives as the topic of the Summit suggests can be best illustrated, as it was Modi again, who launched the StartUp India from the ramparts of Red Fort in 2015, and today we have more than 80,000 start-ups from 400 odd start-ups in 2014. He said, Prime Minister's special focus on Science, Technology and Innovation has fired the imagination of the youth in the country to innovate and solve problems with new ideas and we have startups fast emerging in the fields like IT, agriculture, aviation, education, energy, health and space sectors.



Dr Jitendra Singh pointed out that at present there are over 4,000 healthtech startups in India spanning from platforms helping to monitor health conditions, apps using AI to detect illnesses and diseases, platforms connecting patients with doctors, and much more and hoped that this ecosystem will grow further and become the leading sector in the world. Dr. Jitendra Singh concluded by saying that one can't visualize India @2047 through the prism of 2022. He said, Narendra Modi's 8 years as Prime Minister gave India vision for 2047 and laid the roadmap for the next 25 years of Amrit Kal which would witness the ascent of India as a front-rank nation in the world in terms of best healthcare system.

HINDUSTAN TIMES, NOV 18, 2022

PM Modi hails launch of India's first private rocket Vikram S, calls it 'historic moment'
technology

The launch of Vikram-S rocket marked the entry of private players in India's space sector. The 500-kg rocket travelled in an arc as seen in the live footage from the ISRO.

Vikram-S lifts off from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota. (AFP)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday hailed the launch of Vikram-S, India's first private rocket which lifted off from Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launchpad at Sriharikota. "A historic moment for India as the rocket Vikram-S, developed by Skyroot Aerospace, took off from Sriharikota today! It is an important milestone in the journey of India's private space industry. Congrats to @isro & @INSPACeIND for enabling this feat", the prime minister tweeted.

"This accomplishment bears testimony to the immense talent of our youth, who took full advantage of the landmark space sector reforms of June 2020. @SkyrootA", Modi added. The launch of Vikram-S rocket marked the entry of private players in India's space sector. The 500-kg rocket travelled in an arc as seen in the live footage from the ISRO. The private rocket developed by Hyderabad-based startup Skyroot Aerospace reached the peak altitude of 90 kilometres which is below the internationally recognised 100-km Kamran line that separates the earth from the outer space. The startup was founded by Pawan Chandana and Bharath Deka in 2018. The company is eyeing to cut development costs by up to 90 per cent to launch small satellites, Reuters reported.

The company is hoping to achieve cost savings through rocket architecture which can be assembled in less than 72 hours using composite materials. Skyroot is planning launches which can deliver satellites. The rockets are named after Dr. Vikram Sarabhai, revered as the father of India's space programme. The company is backed by Singaporean wealth fund GIC. It is the first space startup to sign an agreement for using ISRO's launch and test facilities following the Narendra Modi government's decision to allow private companies in space sector in 2020.

PIB,NOV19,2022

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh chairs a high level review meeting for the preparations of Science-20 meetings of the G-20 Summit to be held in India next year

Minister says, all the six Science Ministries and Departments, including Science & Technology, Biotechnology, CSIR, Earth Sciences, Space and Atomic Energy are fully geared up for the upcoming G-20 Summit meetings

Some of the expected deliverables of S-20 Summit will be Creation of better and encouraging frameworks for environmentally responsible technologies and assertion of IP sharing and technology transfers, Creation of a global ecosystem for start-up mentorship and funding: Dr Jitendra Singh

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh today chaired a high level review meeting for the preparations of Science-20 meetings of the G-20 Summit to be held in Delhi next year.

The meeting was attended by Principal Scientific Advisor to Government of India Ajay Kumar Sood and Secretaries of all the six Science Ministries and Departments, including Science & Technology, Biotechnology, CSIR, Earth Sciences, Space and Atomic Energy.

Dr Jitendra Singh said after the meeting that all the six Science Ministries and Departments under him are fully geared up for the upcoming G-20 Summit meetings. The Minister also welcomed the topics and subjects assigned to Science Ministries. He said, all the stakeholders will meet again with Sherpa of G-20, Shri Amitabh Kant this week to firm up Human Resources and Experts for assigned topics.

Dr Jitendra Singh informed that apart from S-20 Summit and Side meetings, another important event assigned to DST is Research Innovation Initiated Gathering (RIIG) with side events.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, the expected deliverables of the S-20 and RIIG will be Creation of better and encouraging frameworks for environmentally responsible technologies and assertion of IP sharing and technology transfers, Creation of a global ecosystem for start-up mentorship and funding, Encouragement of more mega science projects, Creation of framework for global holistic health program and mental health program, Creating common cultural dialogue for science through more engagement programs and interdisciplinary partnerships, Creation of a common digital global heritage that is accessible for all citizens.

The Science-20 Summit meeting will be held in Coimbatore from 21st to 22nd July, 2023 with the theme of “Disruptive Science for Innovative and Sustainable Growth”. The Sub-themes (side event topics) are- Non-conventional energy for a greener future, Connecting Science to Society and Culture and Holistic Health: Cure and Prevention of Disease.

Meeting schedule and venues for S-20 are as follows- Inception meeting: Pondicherry (30-31 January 2023), Side-event1: Bangaram Island, Lakshwadeep (27-28 February 2023), Side-event2: Agartala (3-4 April 2023), Side-event3: Indore (16-17 June 2023).

The S-20 Secretariat will be chaired by Dr Vijay P Bhatkar of Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru. Prof Ajay K Sood and Prof Gautam Desiraju are also eminent members of the Secretariat.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, DST will also take care of the Research Innovation Initiated Gathering (RIIG) on the subject of “Research and Innovation for Equitable Society”. The Sub-theme/ topics for RIIG gathering will be Materials for Sustainable Energy (CSIR), Scientific Challenges and Opportunities towards Achieving a Sustainable Blue Economy (MoES), Bio-resource/ Biodiversity and Bio-economy (DBT) and Eco-Innovations for Energy Transition (SERB).

Meetings schedule and venues for RIIG are the following: Inception meeting: Kolkata (9-10 February 2023), Side-event1: Ranchi (21-22 March 2023), Side-event 2: Dibrugarh & Itanagar (24-25 March 2023), Side-event 3: Shimla (19-20 April 2023), Side-event 4: Diu (18-19 May 2023) and the RIIG Summit and Research Minister meeting, Mumbai (4-6 July 2023).

TELEGRAPH,NOV19,2022

IMAT marks significant milestone of the project

ISRO carries out parachute airdrop test of Gaganyaan programme

The Gaganyaan deceleration system consists of three main parachutes, besides the smaller ACS, pilot, and drogue parachutes, to reduce the speed of the crew module to safe levels during its landing

ISRO's Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre has conducted the Integrated Main Parachute Airdrop Test (IMAT) of its crew module deceleration system for the much-awaited maiden Gaganyaan human spaceflight programme at the Babina Field Fire Range (BFFR) in Jhansi district of Uttar Pradesh. The IMAT conducted on Friday marks a significant milestone toward realising the nation's ambitious Gaganyaan project, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) said in a statement.

The Gaganyaan deceleration system consists of three main parachutes, besides the smaller ACS, pilot, and drogue parachutes, to reduce the speed of the crew module to safe levels during its landing, the space agency said. Two of the three main chutes are sufficient to land the astronauts on earth, and the third is redundant, ISRO said adding that the IMAT test simulated the case when one main chute failed to open. The IMAT test is the first in a series of integrated parachute airdrop tests planned to simulate different failure conditions of the parachute system before it is deemed qualified to be used in the first human spaceflight mission.

In this test, a five-tonne dummy mass, equivalent to the crew module mass, was taken to an altitude of 2.5 kilometres and dropped using the Indian Air Force's IL-76 aircraft. Two small pyro-based mortar-deployed pilot parachutes then pulled the main parachutes.

The main parachute sizes were initially restricted to a smaller area to reduce the opening shock. After seven seconds, the pyro-based reefing line cutters cut the area restricting line, allowing the parachutes to inflate fully.

"The fully inflated main parachutes reduced the payload speed to a safe landing speed. The entire sequence lasted about 2-3 minutes as the scientists watched the different phases of the deployment sequence unfold with bated breath. There was loud cheer and applause as the payload mass landed softly on the ground and the gigantic parachutes collapsed," the statement read.

The design and development of the parachute-based deceleration system is a joint venture of ISRO and the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

"The overall system design, analytical simulations of parachute deployment and crew module descent under various conditions, the design and development of ordnance devices for parachute extraction and ejection, assembly, mechanical and electrical integration of deceleration system, its instrumentation and avionics for conducting this drop tests are done at ISRO's leading Research and Development centre, Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC), Thiruvananthapuram," the space agency explained.

Senior ISRO and DRDO scientists and airforce officers were present when the crucial test was done.

"Besides proving the calibre of the scientists of ISRO and DRDO, the test also demonstrated the active coordination between the country's premier agencies, namely ISRO, DRDO, the Indian Air Force, and the Indian Army," ISRO said quoting a senior official.

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE

PIB,NOV14,2022

Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change Intervenes at High-Level Ministerial Dialogue on Climate Finance at COP 27

Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Bhupender Yadav intervened at a High-Level Ministerial Dialogue on Climate Finance at COP 27 today. In his intervention, he said-

" Access to Finance and Technology in developing countries is a must-have if we expect to protect our earth and ourselves from apocalyptic changes. The commitment made by the developed countries to mobilize \$100 b from diverse sources by 2020 was a meager amount and remains unachieved till now. The current needs of developing countries are estimated to be in the order of trillions.

There are several estimates of climate finance. The OECD estimates the flows to be USD83.3 billion in 2020 and USD79.9 billion in 2018, while Oxfam estimates the mobilized amount to be USD19-22.5 billion per year in 2017-18. Other estimates from UNFCCC, are USD45.4 billion in 2017 and USD51.8 billion in 2018. Evidently, there is no understanding of what really comprises climate finance. Transparency and Trust are the backbones of all multilateral discussions. Having a clear definition of climate finance will promote transparency and trust, vital for furthering constructive deliberations. While we

take note of the work carried out by the Standing Committee on Finance, there is a need to further work in arriving at a meaningful definition of climate finance.

High transaction costs for accessing project preparation grants and considerable cofinancing requirements from the developing country need to be addressed. Slow disbursements, lack of flexibility to adapt to changing requirements, and long complex approval procedures with stringent eligibility criteria make difficult access to climate finance difficult. It is not the absence of a bankable project pipeline, but the procedures, inflexibility in approach, and lack of trust with respect to direct access entities that is a problem.

The new collective quantified goal for the period post-2025 needs to be an ambitious mobilization target at grant/concessional term. We require an ambitious flow of financial resources from various sources- public and private with the developed countries playing a pivotal role in incentivizing flows to the developing countries so that finance-the key means of implementation- is at grant/concessional rates. The Nationally Determined Contributions and the Needs determination reports could be a good basis to estimate the requirement. We are also of the view that action to improve the functioning of the financial mechanism to enable access is also critical.

There is only a small window of opportunity to rectify a problem that has accumulated over the centuries. It is really time for concerted action if we want to curtail temperature rise to sustain life.”

PIB,NOV14,2022

Union Minister of Environment Forest and Climate Change participates in a session on “Transformative Green Education: Experiences from India” at India Pavilion at COP 27 Sharm El-Sheikh

At the 27th Session of Conference of Parties of the UNFCCC (COP 27) in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, the India Pavilion hosted a side event on "Transformative Green Education: Experiences from India", today. This side event involved deliberations by officials and experts from the National Museum of Natural History (NMNH), Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH highlighting the need to encourage a sustainable lifestyle for the environment among children through innovative techniques, tools and methods.

Shri Bhupender Yadav, Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India gave the keynote address and released a book (both print and digital versions), calendar, postcards, bookmarks, and posters based on paintings by Indian schoolchildren on sustainable lifestyles, collected by the NMNH. On this occasion the Minister also released a short video on green transformative education. Experiences from India were also shared in the panel discussion. Addressing the gathering at India Pavilion, Egypt and children who joined virtually from India, the minister congratulated all the children who actively contributed to this campaign and said:

“We have not inherited this earth from our ancestors but we have borrowed it from our children. It is a loan we have got from them and it is our responsibility to lead a sustainable life so that our children have a safe place to live”.

About the Campaign:

To inculcate the environment friendly lifestyle among the school children, National Museum of Natural History organized a National Level Painting Competition for the school students of class 6th to 8th on the theme – “LiFESTYLE FOR ENVIRONMENT” through colours.

Over 16000 entries were received from the children from 24 states of the country. The entries presented a broad perspective of the children on the environment and their thoughts on how they would love to see their environment in the years to come. The wealth of paintings thus collected will be utilised in calendars, posts card, bookmarks, books and videos in collaboration with GIZ India. The selected paintings of this competition were displayed at the COP27 Side Event at the India Pavilion.

For thematic focus and relevance NMNH and GIZ India have planned activities to facilitate experiential learning for school children on themes covering Lifestyle for Environment and Climate Change, which contributes towards India’s NDC Goal 1. The activities include innovative permanent exhibits, climate change learning labs, outreach events and awareness programs. These are intended to enable school students to relate to the impacts of climate change on their lives, help them understand the science behind climate change, and find pragmatic solutions, especially nudging them to adopt climate-friendly lifestyles. For more information on this [click here](#).

Speaking on this occasion, Shri Bhupender Yadav said:

“Mission LiFE is a collective, conscious global movement that is human-centric and is aligned with the local culture and tradition will have a huge positive impact on the ongoing efforts on fighting climate change. Within such a community led environmental movement, children play a crucial role in our efforts towards combating climate change. Nurturing a sensitivity

towards environment in young minds is the need of the hour to ensure their persistent involvement in environmental protection, as well as meaningful actions.

As a country with one of the youngest populations in the world, school children in India will act as proponents of sustainable habits within their families and communities. I also would like to highlight that the National Education Policy of India, released in 2020 emphasises on

education to be experiential, holistic, integrated, inquiry-driven, discovery-oriented, learner-centred, and discussion-based. Developing a robust and healthy environmental consciousness is part of the core theme of the education policy today.

We look forward to more collaborations from children across the country and globe on leading a sustainable lifestyle – a lifestyle that is conscious about generation of unwanted waste, consuming resources in the right quantity, conserving the precious resources of nature; and living in harmony with nature.”

TELEGRAPH,NOV15,2022

Act together

Cooperation can resolve global woes

Renu Kohli

Two events highlight global cooperation this month. The need for this exceeds the conspicuous lack of it in today's world. Multiple shocks have impacted the world economy, the unprecedented ones being the Covid-19 pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine war catapulting geopolitics above geoeconomics, and weather extremities. Frayed relations between the United States of America and China have aggravated the problems. The combined fallout on global supplies and prices, especially food and energy, has slowed recoveries, with some big economies expected to slide into recession. Policy challenges to tackle inflation, facilitate urgent climate actions, and recover global growth provide the backdrop to the 27th annual Conference of Parties on climate change issues that commenced last week as well as the G20 leaders' summit — a group of twenty advanced and emerging economies formed to coordinate policies for global economic stability and sustainable growth, amongst other objectives. The problems are universal and testing, but require mutual collaboration. Can this happen?

Standalone actions cannot address climate change, which recognises no geography or jurisdiction — global warming caused by greenhouse gas emissions affects all, albeit unequally. Realising the shared objective of limiting global temperature to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels is a joint responsibility. Climate negotiations are fractious, ranging from rules and regulations to financing, investments, technology and so on. They've been tortuously slow, riven by a rift amongst the rich countries — responsible for global warming through their greenhouse gas emissions for over a century — and the developing ones, which bear the brunt of climate-related vulnerabilities and bear grudges against injustices in the decarbonisation efforts that could slow their growth rates. The demand is that the richer countries pay to cover the costs of climate damages and for low-carbon transition — a moral obligation. The pledge of climate financing of \$100 billion annually to ensure a just transition to a clean energy future remains unfulfilled so far; the figure is peanuts compared to an estimated \$1 trillion required for climate actions each year.

However, there are some positive markers of climate cooperation. The inclusion of climate 'Loss and Damage' compensation in COP27's official agenda for the first time; funds for some highly vulnerable countries by a few rich nations towards adaptation financing; a carbon offset plan — the 'Energy Transition Accelerator', a US government initiative with the Bezos

Earth Fund and the Rockefeller Foundation to enable developing countries to meet their energy-transition goals through private capital, are some examples. The prospect of these extending to satisfactory aid for developing countries or any meaningful green initiatives is still uncertain. Stretched public finances and astronomical debt levels in the advanced world are key restraints. Financial positions of the poorer countries are far more precarious. Many are reeling under weather severities, which have added to the pandemic distress, including hunger and increased poverty; most face depressed growth and narrowed funding opportunities or access.

There are positive ironies too. The cumulative impetus of different shocks has been unintendedly motivational for climate cooperation. The once-in-a-century pandemic underscored the reality of climate change, shook past apathies, and elicited net-zero emission pledges by many countries, most notably by the two largest emitters, the US and China. Second, Russia's weaponisation of gas supplies created forceful incentives for structural change in energy markets and policies; according to the International Energy Agency, despite an increased use of fossil fuels to bridge shortfalls, it has accelerated transitions to renewable energies and cleaner technologies (The Economist, November 5, 2022). Third, geopolitical and extreme weather shocks further underlined climate change threats to food security as deficits arose due to heatwaves and weather-and war-induced disruptions to foodgrain trade and transportation; earlier, the pandemic had reinforced securing essential foods and nearshoring production of medical and other necessities.

A meeting of the American and Chinese presidents on the sidelines of the G20 meeting this week is a positive development in this light. Both countries are critical to advancing climate cooperation. This applies as much to other global challenges at the G20, which is more impeded by geopolitics than any other group. A platform for multilateral cooperation, conceived such that leaders of member countries could meet unconstrained by the formal structures that exist at other multilateral forums, the body played an important role back in 2009 — the joint, coordinated policy responses helped avert a recession and restored the functioning of financial markets. But the world and its environment in 2022 do not empower the G20 to make a difference of comparable scale or magnitude. Heightened US-China tensions have additionally weighed down its functioning. The G20 has economic heft, constituting almost 80% of the world's GDP and three-quarters of its trade, besides significant financial and investment flows. Therefore, how its members, especially the big ones like the US and China, respond and perform would

make a substantial difference to the world economy. This is why the leaders' meeting of these two countries at the first G20 summit since the outbreak of the war represents some ice-melting, if not a breakthrough.

Coordinated, collective efforts for mitigating inflation, ensuring food security for vulnerable populations, and combating the global economic slowdown are sorely needed in these difficult times. Individual and differential responses to problems such as inflation when the causes are common (for example, energy prices, war-related sanctions and blockages to trade) end up aggravating the problems rather than resolving them. Similarly, an optimal restoration of world trade would facilitate lower costs, stimulate growth and investments but it seems doubtful. Economic and trade fragmentation with concepts such as 'friend-shoring' production and reshaping supply chains, governed by security, friendship, and shared values instead of efficiency considerations, serve to undermine the G20's capacity or capability for agreements on vital issues.

Still, the platform provides a valuable, informal space and an opportunity to lessen tensions and heighten political reconciliations. Even a semblance of this would help inch closer to addressing critical and common global challenges. Climate mitigation, overlapping with COP27, is one of these, while the other imminent issues require multilateral economic cooperation for which the G20 is an important forum. However, meaningful breakthrough or progress in the current settings remains an open question.

PIB,NOV17,2022

Union Minister for Environment Forest and Climate Change participates in a session on "Accelerating Resilient Infrastructure in Small Island Developing States (SIDS)" at COP 27

Highlights:

Vision of 'Infrastructure for Resilient Island States' (IRIS) presented.

First ‘Call of Proposals’ for the roll out of projects under IRIS announced.

IRIS enshrines the philosophy of India’s LiFE initiative.

A session on Accelerating Resilient Infrastructure in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) was held at the UNFCCC Pavilion on the side lines of COP 27 today. Union Minister for Environment Forest and Climate Change, Government of India, Shri Bhupender Yadav, Mr. Kavydass Ramano, Minister for Environment, Solid Waste and Climate Change, Government of Mauritius, Senator Matthew Samuda, Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, Government of Jamaica and representatives from AOSIS and Fiji participated in the session.

The agenda of this session was to present the IRIS vision and announce the first ‘Call for Proposals’. The session focused on the IRIS vision 2022-2030 and reflected on the key enabling factors that will facilitate the implementation of the IRIS projects under the first ‘Call for Proposals’. IRIS will be the first initiative that will be rolled out through the Infrastructure Resilience Accelerator Fund (IRAF), launched by the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) last week at COP 27.

In his key note address, Shri Bhupender Yadav said:

“It is my pleasure to join you all today to present the vision of ‘Infrastructure for Resilient Island States’ (IRIS) to a global audience and announce the first ‘Call of Proposals’ for the roll out of projects under IRIS. As you all know, IRIS is a flagship strategic initiative that has been designed as an instrument to achieve and deliver resilience and climate adaptation solutions to the SIDS, which are among the most vulnerable and exposed countries. Anchored on the key guiding principles of co-creation and complementarity, IRIS was launched at the World Leaders Summit at COP26 by India, UK, Australia, Jamaica, Mauritius and Fiji. It is a joint platform to facilitate cross learning, sharing and engagement on solutions to infrastructure resilience in SIDS.

Ladies and gentlemen, Government of India under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi stands firmly committed to safeguarding the interests of SIDS in a changing climatic regime. Today we know that climate change is the most crucial of all other environmental challenges. Without cumulative emissions in check, success with other environmental challenges, even if they are achieved, will not carry lasting value. India is committed to both domestic action and multilateral cooperation on climate change. We will continue to fight all global environmental concerns in the call to protect humanity's planetary home. But global warming also warns us that equity and international cooperation, leaving no one behind, hold the key to success, where those most fortunate must lead the way. No nation can undertake this journey alone. Right understanding, right thought and co-operative action – these need to set our path for the next decisive half a century.

Friends,

IPCC's AR6 Reports tell us clearly that the responsibility for warming is directly proportional to the contribution to cumulative emissions of CO₂. All CO₂ emissions, whenever they take place, contribute equally to warming.

IPCC Reports and all other best available science also show that India is among those countries with high vulnerability to climate change. So, we are very sympathetic to the situation of the island states and others. India, with over 7500 km of coastline and more than 1000 islands in the surrounding seas, and a large coastal population dependent on the sea for lives and livelihoods, is also a highly vulnerable nation on the global scale. Just to give an example, between 1995 – 2020, India recorded 1058 climatic disaster events. Considering per capita emissions, for an objective scale for comparison, India's emissions are, even today, about one-third of the global average. If the entire world were to emit at the same per capita level as India, the best available science tells that there would be no climate crisis.

I am confident that today's meeting will focus on the long-term vision of implementing IRIS projects. The vision decided here will help in providing an opportunity for SIDS to address their most pressing infrastructure challenges by converging resources and capacities. Ladies and Gentlemen, through IRIS, India is putting to action its belief in Vasudeva Kutumbakam – the world is one family- and showing its commitment to address climate change with partners to make a better and safer planet for all. Towards the end, I would like to conclude by quoting Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi who have effectively conveyed the essence of IRIS. He said and I quote –

“CDRI or IRIS is not just a matter of infrastructure, but it is part of the most sensitive responsibility of human welfare. It is the collective responsibility of all of us towards mankind. It is, in a way, a common atonement for our sins”

About CDRI and IRIS

The Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) was launched by the Hon’ble Prime Minister in September 2019 at New York. It aims to promote the resilience of new and existing infrastructure systems to climate and disaster risks in support of sustainable development. CDRI promotes rapid development of resilient infrastructure to respond to the Sustainable Development Goals’ imperatives of expanding universal access to basic services, enabling prosperity and decent work. Government of India has supported the Coalition in the creation and operationalization of IRIS since its design phase. Through IRIS, Government of India aims to support SIDS across the globe in making their new and existing infrastructure resilient to disaster and climate risks.

HINDUSTAN TIMES, NOV 18, 2022

Reducing air pollution needs systemic changes

The solutions to reducing air pollution are well known: Shift the poor from biomass for cooking to clean fuels, push cleaner construction, reduce landfill fires, and increase reliable public transportation — for the most part. But each of these must be systemic, not piecemeal.

Bharati Chaturvedi

Delhi does not have a polluted air season anymore, sub-optimal air is a year-round phenomenon. According to data presented by the environment ministry in Parliament this year, Delhi could not enjoy a day of air that would be classified as good — Air Quality Index (AQI) under 50 — in the first six months of this year. What is more telling is that the city managed only seven satisfactory and 47 moderate AQI days during this time. In contrast, the Capital was hit by 105 poor and 21 very poor AQI days (200-400). The first day of clean air was as late as September 16. And while stubble burning adds to Delhi’s woes, the city’s pollution base load is high for most months. Yet, air pollution hits the headlines only when the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) is invoked as an emergency measure. GRAP was notified in 2017 and comprises four stages, each with

increasingly strict protocols to reduce emissions. It is implemented after AQI crosses the 200 threshold or just before. But the category of 100-200 (moderately polluted) is also considered unhealthy for sensitive groups such as people with lung diseases and discomfoting to people with heart disease, children and older adults. Children are particularly vulnerable as their organs are developing, and they inhale more dust playing closer to the ground. This could result in life-long compromised health. Workers who cope endlessly with dust, such as construction workers, municipal safai karamcharis, waste pickers and landfill managers, are also sensitive groups. While it is rarely headline news, 100-200 AQI is a hidden health crisis. It demonstrates the limitations of only leaning on GRAP in bad times but ignoring the air the rest of the year. Systemic changes based on cumulative data and experience are our solution.

But such evidence-based actions are missing. Closing schools is a case in point. By closing them, the State expects students will stay home, minimising their exposure to polluted air. Yet, without reasonable supervision, they tend to step out, especially if their homes are small or are in jhuggis. Chintan observed slum children playing outdoors in hazardous air during previous school closures. Their parents, informal economy workers, had to work. Why not roll out an institutional shift that cuts down summer or other breaks and creates annual air pollution breaks when the data suggests it will worsen? Why not train parents and children about protocols? Why not change the sports timings to the cleanest times, between noon to 4 pm, since AQI is likely in the 100-200 category most days? Institutionalising shifts that fight exposure while reducing AQI are likely to keep children safer than ad-hoc close-downs.

The solutions to reducing air pollution are well known: Shift the poor from biomass for cooking to clean fuels, push cleaner construction, reduce landfill fires, and increase reliable public transportation — for the most part. But each of these must be systemic, not piecemeal. They need ecosystems, not just procurement and campaigns. For example, while electric buses are a boon, advertising their routes and pushing the middle classes into them is also essential. Helping neighbourhoods understand construction norms is key to monitoring outside GRAP periods. But as a society, we can only set this in motion if we acknowledge our air is mostly unhealthy and continues to harm us relentlessly.

Bharati Chaturvedi is founder and director, Chintan Environmental Research and Action Group

PIB,NOV19,2022

India Pavilion takes Mission LiFE to the global audience

Highlights:

Pavilion showcased India's achievements in Climate Change.

Key documents like LT-LEDS, LiFE Prayas se Prabhav tak released.

Pavilion witnessed a footfall of 25000 COP participants.

India hosted a pavilion with the theme of LiFE- Lifestyle for Environment at COP 27 at Sharm El Sheikh from 6th to 17th November 2022. The Pavilion had been designed to send out the message of LiFE through various audio-visuals, Logo, 3D models, set up, décor and side events.

Various side events were held during entire duration of COP 27 in the pavilion. The organizers of the side events included the Central Government Ministries, State Governments, PSUs, autonomous bodies /subordinate organizations, think tanks and UN Organizations. 49 side events that were organized at the pavilion out of which, 16 events were organized by the Central Government and 10 events were organized by the State Governments. The pavilion also witnessed 23 Private Sector events. The pavilion was inaugurated on 6th November by Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. This was followed by an event organised by UNDP & UNICEF to distribute COP 27 Young Scholars Award. This award was presented to four Young Scholars who were chosen after a rigorous process. November 14th was dedicated to LiFE related events at the India Pavilion. Events were also organised that day to showcase and promote the involvement of Youth and Children in propagation of environment friendly and sustainable lifestyles.

Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Bhupender Yadav released India's Long term Low emission development Strategy (LT-LEDS) at the pavilion on 14th November. The Minister also launched LeadIT Summit Statement from the India Pavilion and released a compendium of LiFE "Prayas se Prabhav tak". Secretary, Ministry of Environment,

Forest and Climate Change, Ms Leena Nandan also participated at side events at India Pavilion including a DST event on Technology Needs Assessment and TERI's on Long Term Strategy on Adaptation & Adaptation Readiness event. The side events saw a participation of approximately 2000 participants over a period of 12 days.

The pavilion had a footfall of around 25,000 COP participants. India Pavilion enthused the visitors with the display of India's achievements in Climate Change using technology along with a display on Indian culture, textile, and food. The Block Printing activity planned at the pavilion saw huge participation specially from the young participants at COP. The pavilion spread the message of Life through the displays, activities and distribution of LiFE badges and booklets to the visitors.

PIONEER,NOV19,2022

We can curb pollution, not damage to lungs

Policy reforms should be initiated to ensure that environmental concerns are prioritised over commercial gains

Every year the third Wednesday of November is observed as COPD Day. The day strives to raise awareness on the condition, risk factors and also on the importance of a pollution free environment for healthy living. The COPD theme this year rightly proclaims "Healthy Lungs - Never More Important" as the Covid-19 infection has not only created havoc on environment and human life but also compromised our lung health. Hence, the time to fix them is most certainly now before it is too late.

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) is a broad term for a range of progressive lung diseases. Any form of lung damage can result in a multitude of problems, including chronic bronchitis and emphysema. The bad news is that lung deterioration is a condition that is non-reversible and also there is no treatment available. Lifestyle changes and medical intervention can simply help the patient to avoid flare ups and improve their quality of life. Children, especially premature kids, and those with weak immune systems and asthma are more prone to develop COPD at a later stage in life. According to WHO, every day almost 93 per cent of the world's children under the age of 15 years (1.8 billion children) breathe air that is so polluted it puts their health and development at serious risk. The WHO estimates that in 2016, 600,000 children died from acute lower respiratory infections caused by polluted air. The Delhi government's recent order on the closure of primary schools in Delhi owing to the dangerous level that the AQI has dipped to has brought the debate back to the environmental

concern of cleaner and safer air and finding sustainable solutions to the pollution problem. Instead of opting for short-term knee jerk solutions it is imperative that we ensure long term sustainable solutions to the ever growing problem of pollution.

The adverse health impact of air pollution is an immediate public health concern in the country and the government should look to address the concern in the most effective manner. In India, industrial emission is majorly responsible for air pollution, followed by combustion by vehicles and then household emissions and burning of crop waste in rural areas. With Indian metros topping the list of most polluted cities in the world, the problem can no longer be overlooked. The government has already taken noteworthy steps when it comes to environmental degradation - from promoting cleanliness drives of rivers to banning the usage of plastic, the government has time and again shown its commitment towards environmental causes. However, the issue of air pollution has not been redressed impactfully and the resultant damage is a threat to our lungs – an organ that processes life with every breath that we inhale. Hence, healthy lungs are a non-negotiable aspect of a healthy body and a non-toxic and safe air plays a key role in ensuring strong and healthy lungs.

Policy reforms should be initiated to ensure that environmental concerns are prioritised over financial and commercial gains. If the government is able to look for sustainable options in a well-planned and coordinated manner, the future would be able to take care of economic progress along with mitigating harmful pollution caused by industrialisation. Also, civil society should play a proactive role in creating awareness on the negative impact of pollution on human health and also on other causes of COPD.

Apart from air pollution, smoking tobacco is the major cause of COPD and also results in serious harm to the human body, especially to lungs. Long-term exposure to air pollution has countless adverse effects on human health, patients with chronic respiratory diseases such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and asthma are especially vulnerable to the negative impact of air pollutants. Air pollution can also aggravate and trigger asthma, thereby increasing respiratory disorders because of decreased lung health. Many researches indicate that women in developing countries are more prone to COPD because of household cooking smoke hence it is important that they keep their lung health good by switching to healthier fuel and prioritizing their health over family needs. It is also important that we break marketing myths related to the use of electronic cigarettes and vaping. People usually fall for such gimmicks and jeopardize their health just to follow the trend and appear stylish and fashionable.

It is quite evident that COPD, air pollution and lung health are inevitably linked to each other and hence a comprehensive approach that involves all relevant stakeholders should be initiated. The government needs to make sure that in policy matters on health and environment they seek the participation of health professionals, and engage in inter-sectoral policy making for better outcomes. The government also needs to popularise the use of cleaner and greener sources of energy instead of using fossil fuels. Also, better waste management techniques in metros as well as for crop waste in rural areas need to be initiated.

In order to minimise the risk of air pollution on kids, schools and playgrounds should be located away from busy roads, factories and power plants. Policy interventions in this regard can pave the way for better tackling the problem of air pollution and a holistic approach can provide better results. But the onus of this change should not be the responsibility of the government alone; a preventive lifestyle is a must to keep away from lung disorders. The role of lifestyle modifications at the individual level can successfully combat air pollution and the resulting disorders, including COPD. From limiting the use of fossil fuels by opting for greener vehicles to quitting smoking, small lifestyle modifications can go a long way in ensuring healthier and happier lungs.

Indulging in breathing exercises as well as including some sort of physical activity in your daily routine can add vitality and strength not only to your lungs but to your mental-wellbeing also. It has been scientifically proven that people who have anxiety disorders or stress are more prone to trigger asthma and COPD. So, emotional wellbeing is equally important when it comes to managing COPD, along with a healthy diet and non-sedentary lifestyle. Small steps in the right direction can play a major role in encouraging lung health and managing air pollution; car-pooling, using mosquito nets instead of dangerous repellents, keeping indoor plants and most importantly quitting any form of smoking, which is harmful for your family as well as the environment. In keeping with the WHO's vision of "a world in which all people breathe freely", let's strive to leave a safer and healthier planet for our future generations.

STATESMAN,NOV19,2022

The other side of climate finance

Countries from across the world met at the 27th Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), popularly COP 27, to negotiate an international agreement for addressing climate change. A key part of those

negotiations is focusing on the commitment of developed countries to provide developing nations with financial support for climate action.

BISHAL THAPA

Money can't buy you love. It hasn't bought reforms either. But it can buy you other things, like a trip to Sharm-El-Sheikh, the beautiful seaside resort in Egypt where the UN conference on climate change was on. Countries from across the world met at the 27th Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), popularly COP 27, to negotiate an international agreement for addressing climate change. A key part of those negotiations is focusing on the commitment of developed countries to provide developing nations with financial support for climate action. At COP 15 in 2009, developed countries had committed to collectively mobilizing \$100 billion annually by 2020 for climate action in developing countries. The goal was reiterated and extended to 2025 at COP 21 in Paris in 2015. Developed countries will not meet that goal. In September 2022, an analysis by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), an intergovernmental organisation of 38 developed countries, estimated that \$83.3 billion had been mobilized in 2020. Counting climate finance flows has always been a murky business. Take the case of the Electricity Grid Modernisation Project in Nepal, where the Asian Development Bank (ADB) provided Nepal with a loan of \$216 million in 2021. The project aims to support the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) to expand and modernise the electricity transmission and distribution system in selected areas, as well as enhance its financial and customer information systems. The ADB estimates that \$188 million of the \$216 million counts as climate finance, in part because "the project will allow increased penetration of renewable energy generation into the grid, allowing greater displacement of fossil generated electricity".

The ADB's estimates were derived using standardised frameworks it developed in 2013 and 2017 for all projects, not just for Nepal. By that count, though, about half of every foreign dollar that Nepal has ever received for its power sector in the last 100 years, long before climate change even became a topic, can be considered as climate finance. And, oh, just so you don't miss the point, Nepal will need to repay almost all of that \$188 million of climate finance with interest. You can see why developing countries think they have themselves a highly unfair deal. Poorer countries must bear the brunt of climate change when they do not have responsibility for historic emissions that are leading to climate change. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) estimates that 46 least-developed countries (LDC), Nepal included, accounted for only 1.1 per cent of global CO2 emissions in 2019. Yet, 69 per cent of worldwide deaths caused by climate change-related

disasters over the last 50 years occurred in LDCs, leading observers to label this injustice as “climate apartheid”. Whether COP 27 will deliver poorer countries from climate apartheid is unclear. But if the need to support poorer countries with climate finance is one side of the coin, the need to examine how governments in poorer countries spend it is other. The other side of climate finance—its effectiveness—must draw from past experiences of development funding. In Nepal, there are plenty of examples to learn from. Donor assistance in Nepal, both bilateral and multilateral organisations, isn’t translating fast enough into meaningful reforms. The country’s energy sector illustrates this clearly. Since 2013, Nepal has received approximately \$2.2 billion across 16 major projects in a mix of grants and loans from development partners, the ADB estimates. There has been notable progress over that duration. Load-shedding (rolling blackouts) has ended.

Over 90 per cent of the country is electrified. Generating capacity has almost doubled. Private participation is higher. Transmission capacity has been enhanced, and interconnection with India is enabling exports. These physical gains notwithstanding, the underlying sector reforms have remained paralysed. In September, an amendment to the Electricity Act was withdrawn from Parliament even though it had already passed the National Assembly. The act was last revised in 1992. In the intervening 30 years, the world has undergone radical transformations in the technology, markets, and systems in the power sector. Even the monarchy has fallen since then. But the underlying relic of Nepal’s power sector continues to remain unchanged.

In 2015, the World Bank sanctioned the Power Sector Reform and Sustainable Hydropower Development project for Nepal with a loan commitment of \$20 million. The implementation status and result report submitted by the World Bank in June this year showed that Nepal had already met the programme’s goal of achieving five “key policy and sector reform actions”. Exactly what the five reforms were and why they mattered to the sector, the World Bank chose not to disclose.

Anyway, Nepal has drawn down only half of that loan, and the facility ends this year, so it is unlikely any other meaningful reforms will be emerging from this effort. In April 2017, Nepal established the Electricity Regulatory Commission under an act of Parliament, and, just to be clear, only because it was prerequisite for the \$500 million from the US Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC).

Today, far from launching “a new era in Nepal Hydropower and Electricity Sector Development,” as one expert theorised, the commission is stuck in an institutional squabble that has paralyzed the sector. Despite \$2.2 billion in development

assistance, over half of its potential climate finance, we have not been able to make a single dent in reforming the institutional framework that will be critical to shaping the climate response.

Climate change is exposing decades, and often centuries, of systemic neglect by those in power and authority. Climate finance is essential, but it will be meaningful only if it enables us to confront that accumulated history of neglect and make important structural, institutional, economic, and social reforms across sectors. Nepal's donors must explore alternative gateways to reach the beneficiaries. They must return to empowering non-governmental agencies and civil society, engage directly with the private sector, and allow climate finance to flow broadly across rather than percolate down from the top. Climate finance must empower those in need to hold their own governments accountable. It must unshackle the systemic neglect that keeps the poor poor and marginalises the marginalised. Money can't buy love. We must demand it buy reforms

CURRENT EVENTS

PIB,NOV14,2022

PM's departure statement ahead of his visit to Bali for G20 Leaders' Summit

I will be visiting Bali, Indonesia on 14-16 November 2022, to participate in the 17th G20 Leaders' Summit, to be chaired by Indonesia.

During the Bali Summit, I will have extensive discussions with other G20 Leaders on key issues of global concern, such as reviving global growth, food & energy security, environment, health, and digital transformation. On the sidelines of the G20 Summit, I will meet with Leaders of several other participating countries, and review the progress in India's bilateral relations with them. I look forward to addressing the Indian community in Bali at a Reception on 15 November 2022.

In a significant moment for our country and citizens, President of Indonesia Joko Widodo will hand over the G20 Presidency to India at the closing ceremony of the Bali Summit. India will officially assume the G20 Presidency from 1st December 2022. I will also extend my personal invitation to G20 Members and other invitees to our G20 Summit next year.

During my interactions at the G20 Summit, I will highlight India's achievements, and our unwavering commitment to collectively address global challenges. India's G20 Presidency will be grounded in the theme "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" or "One Earth One Family One Future", which underlines the message of equitable growth and shared future for all.

PIB,NOV15,2022

“Expressing pride in the tribal heritage of the country through Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas and resolution for the development of the Adivasi community is part of the energy of ‘Panch Praan’”

“Bhagwan Birsa Munda was not just the hero of our freedom struggle but was a carrier of our spiritual and cultural energy”

“India has to give shape to its future by learning from the grand Adivasi legacy. I am sure that Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas will become an opportunity and medium for this”

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has said that the nation is moving with the energy of ‘Panch Praan’ to realize the dreams of Bhagwan Birsa Munda and crores of Janjatiya bravehearts. “Expressing pride in the tribal heritage of the country through Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas and resolution for the development of the Adivasi community is part of that energy”, he said. The Prime Minister was greeting the nation on the occasion of Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas via a video message today.

The Prime Minister paid tributes to Bhagwan Birsa Munda and said 15th November is a day to celebrate Adivasi tradition as Bhagwan Birsa Munda was not just the hero of our freedom struggle but was a carrier of our spiritual and cultural energy.

The Prime Minister recalled the contribution of the tribal community in the freedom struggle and remembered key tribal movements and wars for Independence. He remembered Damin Sangram led by Tilak Manjhi, Larka movement under Budhu Bhagat, Sidhu-Kanhu Kranti, Tana Bhagat Movement, Vegda Bhil Movement, Naikda Movement, Sant Joriya Parmeshwar and Roop Singh Nayak, Limdi Dahod battle, Govind Guru ji of Mangarh and Rampa movement under Alluri Sitaram Raju.

The Prime Minister listed measures to acknowledge and celebrate the tribal contribution. he talked about the tribal museums in various parts of the country and schemes like Jan Dhan, Gobardhan, Van Dhan, Self-help Groups, Swachh Bharat, PM

Awaz Yojna, Matrutva Vandana Yojana, Gramin Sadak Yojan, Mobile connectivity, Eklavya Schools, MSP for up to 90 percent forest products, Sickle-cell Anemia, tribal research institutes, free corona vaccine, and Mission Indradhanush that have benefitted the tribal community a great deal.

The Prime Minister highlighted the valour, community life and inclusion of the Adivasi Samaj. “India has to give shape to its future by learning from this grand legacy. I am sure that Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas will become an opportunity and medium for this”, the Prime Minister concluded.

PIB,NOV16,2022

DSIR, CSIR, APCTT of the UN-ESCAP jointly organised two days International Knowledge Sharing Workshop on “Cross-border Innovation, Acceleration and Challenges in International Transfer of Technologies” at CSIR Science Centre, New Delhi

An International Knowledge Sharing Workshop on “Cross-border Innovation, Acceleration and Challenges in International Transfer of Technologies”, was jointly organized by Department of Scientific & Industrial Research (DSIR), Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of India, Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR), in association with Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology (APCTT) of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP) from 14th – 15th November 2022 and coordinated by CSIR-Human Resource Development Centre (CSIR-HRDC) at CSIR Science Centre, New Delhi in Hybrid Mode. Out of around 350 participants registered for the programme 36 were international participants from 17 countries viz Bangladesh, Cambodia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Indonesia, Jordan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Trinidad & Tobago, Uzbekistan who joined both online & offline. Around 70 participants joined physically.

Panelists were from International Organizations including FAO, ILRI, ISA, DWIH, UKRI, RIS; Indian National Organizations like CSIR-NBRI, IITD, SPMVV, CSIR-NCL, Venture Centre, Government departments including Office of PSA, MoE Innovation Cell, Public sectors like NRDC, excellent Industries such as International Tractors, IOCL, TATA Power Company Limited, Ankur seeds and Mahyco Pvt. Ltd.; Innovation eco-system partner like Research Parks, Incubation Centres, Start-ups, Member Country dignitaries and participants from National Organizations like NIT, Arunachal Pradesh, PRISM-TOCICS like GSBTM, CSIR-NEIST, CSIR-CSIO, CTAE, Udaipur, CSIR-NAL, IGNOU, Shiv Nadar University,

University of Delhi, IITD, IIT Mandi, IIT Roorkee, IIT Indore, several Incubation Hubs, DSIR, CSIR HQ, CSIR-IIP, CSIR-NIScPR, NRDC and APCTT.

The Workshop was inaugurated online by Dr. N. Kalaiselvi, Secretary, Department of Scientific & Industrial Research (DSIR) and Director General, Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR). While delivering the inaugural address, she emphasized about the importance of technology transfer, cross border innovation and the concerted efforts of CSIR in developing the technologies and transferring them to industry. She advised the participants to develop technologies that can ultimately reach the society. In this direction she commended the Workshop where innovators, industry, R&D labs, academia, MSME, Startups, Big Industries, Incubation centres, Policy makers and other stakeholders have been brought on a common platform to discuss about the roadmap for achieving the goals under SDG 2 SDG 7 and SDG 9.

Dr. Parvinder Maini, Scientific Secretary, Office of Principal Scientific Advisor, Govt. of India; Shri Surinder Pal Singh, Joint Secretary, DSIR, Dr. Ajay Mathur, Director General, International Solar Alliances, Dr. Katja Lasch, Director, DAAD Regional Office and DWIH, New Delhi; Ms. Rebecca Fairbairn, Head of Science and Innovation, UK Research & Innovation (UKRI), UK Government; Dr. Habibar Rahman, International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) Regional Representative, South Asia; Prof. Jamuna Duvvuru, Vice Chancellor, Sri Padmavati Mahila University, Tirupati, Dr. Bhaskar Balakrishnan, Former Ambassador of India & Science Diplomacy Fellow, Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), New Delhi, Dr Preeti Soni, Head of APCTT-ESCAP, Dr Rama Swami Bansal, Head of CSIR-International S&T Affairs Directorate (ISTAD) and Dr R. K. Sinha, Head of CSIR-HRDC also graced the occasion in person.

Inaugural session of the Workshop

Dr. Parvinder Maini underscored, “Innovation is essential for boosting survival, competitiveness and market power despite being risky and prone to failure”. She gave an overview of India’s policy and a few focus areas i.e. R&D expenditure from industry should increase; Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in R&D; Increase in R&D exports; R&D by Central Public Sector Enterprises; Corporate Social Responsibility guidelines for spending in R&D, for boosting Technology transfer and start-up ecosystem. Shri Surinder Pal Singh, Joint Secretary, DSIR told, “this workshop will provide a strong platform for APCTT Member States including India to share their needs and identify opportunities on Cross-border Innovation, possibilities on acceleration of International Collaboration and Challenges in International Transfer of Technologies

Dr. Katja Lasch, Ms. Rebecca Fairbairn and Dr. Habibar Rahman wished more fruitful collaborations to accelerate Cross-border Innovation acceleration. Prof. Jamuna Duvvuru maintained that New Education Policy of Govt. of India is an impactful step to promote more innovation and entrepreneurship in India. This international workshop was envisaged to strengthen capacity of innovators and promote regional cooperation between innovators from India and member States of APCTT through cross-learning from experience and good practices, identifying potential collaboration opportunities and strategies for cross-border technology transfer. It Increased knowledge and awareness on the challenges, mechanisms and good practices of innovation, transfer and diffusion of technologies in the Asia-Pacific Region. It explored innovative strategies and modalities to strengthen regional cooperation for cross-border transfer and diffusion of technologies; The workshop panellists made recommendations on addressing the critical challenges for strengthening regional cooperation for innovation and technology transfer. The workshop aimed to identify the challenges for achieving the goals in SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), SDG 9 (Industry-Innovation and Infrastructure). Under the Session, “Emerging technologies for climate-resilient agriculture and animal husbandry to support SDG 2”, moderated by Dr Anand Mohit, Principal Scientist, CSIR-ISTAD, productive agriculture and animal husbandry through integrating emerging technologies like Internet of Things (IOT), robotics, drones, energy resilient preservation and biotechnology for better selection, yield improvement, disease resistance, precision farming, precision nutrient deliveries, Innovation and Policy perspectives were discussed. A constructive discussion was held particularly on smart and climate resilient agriculture, crop breeding technology for productive agriculture, precision farming, precision nutrient deliveries, animal husbandry and innovation – including Global and India’s perspectives.

Under the session, “Green and low-carbon emerging technologies in energy to support SDG 7”, Material research & innovation, production technology, power electronics, energy storage and management for alternate energy (solar, offshore, wind etc), green hydrogen, carbon-negative technologies, ocean biomass, biofuel, 5G-based smart grids, climate protection, sustainability etc. was discussed. The various challenges, research & development Innovation and policy issues concerning green & low-carbon technologies in energy sector; Green hydrogen production & storage and utilization of hydrogen as a transport fuel, blending of hydrogen in fossil fuels, smart grids, emerging Technologies like IoT, ML, CPS in power sector for energy efficiency, green energy and sustainability; power electronics such as development of various controllers (AC-DC and DC-DC) for penetrating the renewable energy and issues concerning making the existing grids resilient, etc. were also covered in the discussions.

Under the Session, “The process and key constraints in innovation, technology promotion and commercialization to support SDG 9”, deliberations on the opportunities, challenges, and guidance on how countries can accelerate the technology formulation and adoption cycles were held. Various topics on innovation ecosystem, opportunities, challenges in India, Germany and UK and Member countries of APCTT were discussed.

Finally, panel discussions on “Pathways and constraints in techno-commercial value assessment, techno-economics, marketability, and affordability of innovative technologies” was held. Various innovators from countries like Cambodia, Nepal, Uzbekistan, Thailand, India discussed about their startups as case studies. Sri Vivek Pandey, Co-founder and Chief Technology Officer, Ecozen Solutions Private Limited, Pune and Dr. Sandip Patil, Director, E-Spin Nanotech Pvt. Ltd. and Indeema Fibres Pvt. Ltd., Kanpur, the successful start-ups graduated from DSIR scheme, TePP and PRISM represented India during Panel discussion. Dr. N. Kalaiselvi, Secretary, DSIR and Director General, CSIR, Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India addressed the audience at the valedictory session. She discussed the outcome of the Workshop specially on critical challenges on cross border technology transfer and possible recommendation and envisioned couple of successful technology transfers/start-ups as an outcome of the Workshop in near future.

Deliberations during Day 1 and Day 2 of the workshop

The programme ended with closing remarks and brief summary of deliberations by Dr Preeti Soni, Head, APCTT-UNESCAP and Dr. Ramanuj Banerjee, Scientist F, DSIR and National Focal Point (India) for APCTT of UNESCAP, followed by Vote of Thanks to all dignitaries, panellists, speakers and participants from India and APCTT Member states, presented by Dr Vinay Kumar, Principal Scientist, CSIR-HRDC.

PIB,NOV19,2022

Text of PM's speech at inauguration of greenfield airport 'Donyi Polo' & other development projects in Arunachal Pradesh.

Jai Hind.

Jai Hind.

Long live Mother India.

The Governor of Arunachal Pradesh Shri BD Mishra ji, the popular young Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh Shri Pema Khandu ji, my cabinet colleague Kiren Rijiju ji, Deputy Chief Minister Mr. Chauna Mein ji, respected MPs, MLAs, mayors, all other dignitaries and my dear brothers of Arunachal Pradesh And sisters!

I have visited Arunachal several times. Whenever I come, I leave with new energy, new enthusiasm, new enthusiasm. But I must say that I have come to Arunachal so many times, maybe even if I count, there will be some mistake, I have come so many times. But saw such a big program for the first time and that too at 9.30 in the morning. The arrival of people from the mountains in Arunachal means that it shows the importance of development work in your life and that is why you have come in such large numbers to bless.

brothers Sisters

The people of Arunachal, the intimacy of the people of Arunachal, whenever you look at the people of Arunachal, they always laugh, their faces keep smiling. Never apathy, despair is reflected on the faces of the people of Arunachal. And discipline, I think what is discipline on the border, it is visible in every house, in every family, in every person's life in my Arunachal.

This double engine government's hard work, commitment for development under the leadership of our Chief Minister Pema ji is taking Arunachal to this new height today. I congratulate Pema ji and his entire team.

You will remember, and Pema ji has also mentioned that the foundation stone of this airport was laid in February 2019 and I had this good fortune. And you know, we have brought such a work culture, whose foundation stone is laid by us, we also

inaugurate it. To hang, to hang, to wander, that time is gone. But I want to talk more, I had laid its foundation stone in February 2019. Now in May 2019 elections were about to come. All these political commentators, who have old-fashioned spectacles hanging on their eyes, these people have started shouting, started writing, started speaking, airport-airport is not going to become anything, it is an election, isn't it? That's why Modi has come here to lay the stone. And it is not happening here, they see election in everything, in everything. In everything, it has become fashionable to paint any good work with the color of election.

The inauguration of this airport today is a befitting reply to all these people, a slap on their face. And I request these political commentators, I request them to remove their old spectacles, this country is moving forward with new zeal and enthusiasm, stop weighing it with the scales of politics. The commentators who used to call it election announcement, today within three years they are seeing our airport taking shape in this modern grand form. And it is my good fortune that in your presence, in the testimony of lakhs of people, the whole of Arunachal is connected online today, the whole of Arunachal is connected. This is also a matter of great pride.

There is neither an election here today nor any election is going to come. It is happening despite that, because the government that is in the country today, its priority is the development of the country, the development of the people of the country. 365 days a year, 24 hours a day, we work only for the development of the country. And you see, right now I am in Arunachal where the sun rises and in the evening where the sun sets, I will go and land in Daman and go to Kashi in the middle. This hard work is going on with only one dream, we are working wholeheartedly – my country should move forward. We neither work keeping in front the advantages and disadvantages of elections nor are people who work with small intentions to get the benefits of elections. Our dream is only and only Maa Bharti, India, 130 crore citizens.

Today, along with this airport, the 600 MW Kameng Hydro Project has also been inaugurated. This is also a great achievement in itself. This combination of flight of development and energy for development will take Arunachal to new heights at a new

pace. For this achievement, I congratulate my dear brothers and sisters of Arunachal Pradesh, brothers and sisters of all the North East states, I extend my best wishes.

After independence, the North East has witnessed a completely different era. For decades, this area has been a victim of neglect and apathy. At that time, the people who made policies while sitting in Delhi only meant that somehow they could win the elections here. You know this situation continued for several decades. When Atal ji's government was formed, for the first time an attempt was made to change it. It was the first government to create a separate ministry for the development of the North East.

But the government that came after him did not take that momentum forward. After this, a new phase of change started after 2014, when you gave me the opportunity to serve. Earlier governments used to think that Arunachal Pradesh is so far away, North is so far away. The people living on the far-flung border were earlier considered to be the last village. But our government has done the work of considering them as not the last village, not the last end, but the first village of the country. As a result, the development of Northeast became the priority of the country.

Now be it culture or agriculture, commerce or connectivity – Northeast gets top priority, not the last. Be it trade or tourism, telecom or textiles – the Northeast gets not the last but top priority. From drone technology to agricultural flights, from airports to ports to connectivity – the Northeast is now the priority of the country.

Be it India's longest bridge or the longest railroad bridge, laying a rail line or building a highway at a record speed – the Northeast is first for the country. As a result of this, today a new era of hope and opportunities has begun in the North-East, a new era has begun.

Today's event is a great example of this approach of New India. Doni-Polo Airport is the fourth operational airport in Arunachal Pradesh. In the seven decades since independence, there were only 9 airports in the entire North East. While our government has built seven new airports in just eight years. There are many such areas here, which are now connected with air connectivity after 75 years of independence. Because of this, now the number of flights to and from the North East has more than doubled.

comrades,

This Doni-Polo airport of Itanagar is also witnessing the past and culture of Arunachal Pradesh. And I was told, Pema ji was telling that Doni means Sun and Polo means Moon. And I also see a lesson for development in the doni-polo culture of Arunachal. Light is the same, but the light of the sun and the coolness of the moon, both have their own importance, their own power. Similarly, when we talk about development, whether it is big projects or public welfare schemes that reach the poor, both are important aspects of development.

Today, as much importance is given to the big infrastructure like the airport, the same importance is given to the service of the poor and their dreams. If an airport is built today, work is also done on the flight plan to see how the common man gets its benefit. After the start of flight service, we work for how the number of tourists increases, how small traders, shopkeepers, taxi drivers get benefited from it.

comrades,

Today in Arunachal Pradesh, roads and highways are being built in the border areas at the most inaccessible heights. The central government is going to spend about 50 thousand crore rupees more for the construction of roads. When this much

infrastructure is there, a large number of tourists will also come. Nature has given so much beauty in every corner of Arunachal. There are immense possibilities of tourism in every village. The income of every family can increase through home stay and local products. For that it is necessary that there should be arrangements to reach every village. That is why, today more than 85 percent villages of Arunachal Pradesh have been built with Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak.

comrades,

After the airport and better infrastructure are built, there is a huge potential for cargo facilities in Arunachal. With this, the farmers here will be able to easily sell their produce in big markets outside Arunachal, they will get many times more money than today. The farmers of Arunachal are also getting huge benefits of PM Kisan Samman Nidhi.

comrades,

Bamboo cultivation is also an example of how our government is working for the North East. Bamboo is an important part of the lifestyle here. Today bamboo products are becoming popular all over the country and the world. But since the time of British rule, there were such legal restrictions on cutting bamboo that it had become a hindrance in the life of our tribal brothers and sisters, people of our North-East region. So we changed that law, and now you can grow bamboo, cut bamboo, sell bamboo, add value to bamboo, and do business by going to the open market. As we grow crops, we can also grow bamboo.

Brothers & Sisters,

As soon as the poor is freed from the basic concerns of life, he starts creating new dimensions of development for himself as well as for the country. That's why, today the poorest of the poor people come out of neglect and misery, they get a dignified life, this is the priority of the country. Earlier it was said that education and treatment is always a problem in the mountains. But now, along with good health facilities, arrangements have also been made for free treatment worth Rs 5 lakh through the Ayushman Bharat scheme. Every poor is being given a pucca house under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana. Especially in tribal areas, the central government is opening Eklavya Model School by spending Rs 500 crore, so that no tribal child is left behind in studies.

Efforts are being made to bring the youth who have gone on the path of violence due to some reason into the mainstream through a separate policy. A separate fund has been created for them. To join the power of Startup India, Arunachal Pradesh is also matching step by step through Arunachal Startup Policy. That is, our immortal stream of development, which starts from the top, is reaching the villages-poor, youth-women and becoming their strength today.

comrades,

After 2014, the country started a campaign to provide electricity to every village. The villages of Arunachal Pradesh have also benefited a lot from this campaign. There were many such villages here, where electricity had reached for the first time after independence. After this, the central government started a campaign to connect every household with electricity connection by making a Saubhagya scheme. Here in Arunachal too thousands of households were connected with free electricity connections. And when electricity reached the houses here, not only light spread in the houses, but there was also light in the lives of the people here.

Brothers & Sisters,

We are working on the mission of taking the journey of development in Arunachal Pradesh to every village and every house. It is our endeavor to empower the border villages by giving them the status of Vibrant Border Village. When new doors of possibilities will open in every village adjacent to the border, prosperity will begin from there itself.

Under the Vibrant Border Village Program, rapid work is being done on a plan to stop migration from border villages and promote tourism there. A special campaign is going on by the government to connect the youth of border areas with NCC. The effort is that there should be maximum participation of the youth of the villages situated along the border in the NCC. The children of these villages joining NCC will get training from army officers. This will not only pave the way for a bright future for the youth, but will also inculcate in them a spirit of service towards the country and will increase further.

comrades,

Following the mantra of Sabka Saath-Sabka Vikas, the double engine government is committed to the development of Arunachal Pradesh and ease of living for the people. I wish that this Arun of development continues to spread its light here like this.

I once again congratulate Pema ji and his entire government for their active cooperation in taking forward all these Government of India schemes. And I congratulate our colleagues from the entire North-East as well as our mothers and sisters.

I wish you the best, thank you very much!