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POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

ECONOMIC TIMES,OCT25,2022

India doesn't need to draw lessons from any other country: Congress rebuffs remarks of Chidambaram, Tharoor on Sunak elevation

The Congress on Tuesday said India does not need to draw lessons from any other country as many minorities have become the president and chief minister in the past, a remark seen as a rebuff to party leaders P Chidambaram and Shashi Tharoor who hoped India will follow Rishi Sunak's example of electing a person from minorities to the top post. AICC general secretary communications Jairam Ramesh said respecting diversity has been India's hallmark for many years and cited the examples of Zakir Hussain, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed and A P J Abdul Kalam who held the top constitutional position in the country for many years. After Indian-origin Sunak was picked as the United Kingdom's next prime minister, Chidambaram and Tharoor had said that India should draw lessons from the UK and hoped one day this practice would be adopted in the country.

"In our country, Dr Zakir Hussain first became the President in 1967, then Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed became the President and Dr Abdul Kalam and if I keep giving you examples, Barkatullah Khan became chief minister and A R Antulay also became the chief minister," he told reporters.

Asked about the Congress leaders' remarks, Ramesh said, "You should ask them. I am only talking about Bharat Jodo Yatra and I would not speak about what other leaders have said. You should ask them on what they have said, I will not speak on any other leader's remarks." "The Congress is a democratic party," the Congress leader said, adding the Bharat Jodo Yatra is blowing the trumpet of democracy while the Bharatiya Janata Party is blowing guns of autocracy.

"Those who get a mandate will become prime minister. Democratically, if someone is elected, we don't have a problem. England's party has made him the prime minister, we welcome it," said Ramesh. He said India has set an example across the world on celebrating diversity and respecting them. "But, in the last eight years what we have seen, I don't think we need to draw lessons from somewhere else. Our society is unity in diversity and we have seen for many years that we respect diversity

and give them equal rights and we don't need to seek lessons from any other country. Our society will be strengthened through diversity," he noted.

The Congress general secretary said if we suppress diversity and try to bring uniformity, we will not be able to strengthen our society. "Our strength is unity in diversity. I will go a step further, as we will remain united through diversity. Bharat Jodo Yatra's purpose is this only, to unite diversity of different languages, castes and religions." Ramesh said in Karnataka they met some people a few days ago who speak a language which does not have a script. "We need to strengthen them as they are also Indian citizens." Asked specifically on his mention of the last years of Modi rule, he said, that is because there is a huge difference between the thoughts of Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Narendra Modi. Vajpayee was a product of the Nehru era and he was very impressed by Jawaharlal Nehru and that is the truth. "But, Narendra Modi is busy only in one thing - of how to erase the legacy of Jawaharlal Nehru and how to finish Teen Murti. Now there will be Teen Murti in 10, Downing Street also," Ramesh said. Congress leaders P Chidambaram and Shashi Tharoor welcomed the election of Sunak and hoped one day this practice is adopted in the country.

"First Kamala Harris, now Rishi Sunak. The people of the US and the UK have embraced the non-majority citizens of their countries and elected them to high office in government," Chidambaram said on Twitter. "I think there is a lesson to be learned by India and the parties that practise majoritarianism," he also said. "If this does happen, I think all of us will have to acknowledge that the Brits have done something very rare in the world, to place a member of a visible minority in the most powerful office. As we Indians celebrate the ascent of @RishiSunak, let's honestly ask: can it happen here," said Tharoor.

Sunak will make history as Britain's first Indian-origin Prime Minister after being elected unopposed as the new leader of the governing Conservative Party on Diwali as Penny Mordaunt withdrew from the race.

This means the 42-year-old former chancellor, a devout Hindu, is poised to walk through the door of 10 Downing Street in London after an audience with King Charles III in Buckingham Palace. Sunak will not officially become Prime Minister until Liz Truss, Britain's shortest serving Prime Minister, formally tenders her resignation to the King after which he will be invited by the monarch to form a new government. Besides being the first Hindu Prime Minister of Indian heritage, Sunak is also the youngest for around 200 years at 42 years.

TRIBUNE,OCT26,2022

Mallikarjun Kharge takes charge as Congress president; his clarion call is Rahul Gandhi's slogan 'Daro Mat'

'Will demolish BJP structures of lies, hatred and fraud', says Kharge, the first non-Gandhi to head the Congress in 24 years

Aditi Tandon

History was made on Wednesday as 80-year-old Karnataka leader Mallikarjun Kharge became the first non-Gandhi Congress president in 24 years, signalling a potential new era in the journey of the 137-year-old party which faces its worst odds ever in present times. Kharge, who assumed the Congress mantle from Sonia Gandhi, the longest-serving party president, at the AICC headquarters here today, however, chose former chief Rahul Gandhi's favourite slogan, "Daro mat (do not fear)", as his first war cry upon assumption of charge.

"We will take the Rahul Gandhi's slogan, 'Daro mat', forward," said Kharge, as he called upon all Congress persons to shed fear and assured them that "when the Congress workers cast away their fears, even the mightiest of empires have to keel down". The Congress president's equation of the ruling BJP dispensation with the British Empire drew applause, as did his call of "demolishing the web of lies, hatred and fraud spun by the BJP". The senior Congress leader described himself as a common party worker as he took charge from Sonia Gandhi. Sonia, who confessed that she was "happy and relieved to have relinquished the charge" that he held in the best of her capacity and capability for years, exuded confidence of the party's revival under Kharge.

"I am happy that our party president is a leader who is rooted to the ground and has reached this current position by the virtue of his hard work and perseverance. The Congress has faced crisis before and never accepted defeat. We will again fight collectively and succeed," said Sonia, in her speech that followed a reading of a statement of gratitude to her by AICC general secretary Ajay Maken. Kharge for his part described the moment of his formal anointment as "emotional" thanking the party delegates for electing an ordinary worker, a labourer's son the Congress president. "I know it is a difficult time when efforts are being made to change the democratic structures established by the Congress... Who had ever thought that people in power would engage themselves with undermining democracy," said Kharge, promising to "demolish the web of lies, hatred and fraud prevailing in the country." Kharge repeatedly referred to Rahul's Bharat Jodo Yatra as a transformational moment for the Congress and noted, "This yatra is a great mode whereby Rahul ji is connecting with the people. We assure that we won't let the momentum created by this yatra go wasted."

Pledging to implement a range of organisational reforms the party adopted by way of the Udaipur Chintan Shivir Declaration in mid-May, Kharge said 50 per cent party posts will be reserved for those below; organisational vacancies will be filled up, political advisory committees will be established in every state so also ST/ST advisory committees. Kharge also mocked the BJP promise of a 'new India' asking, "What kind of a new India is this where the youth are not getting jobs, the farmers are being mowed down by jeeps, crimes against women are rising, and people are reeling under inflation while the government is sitting with eyes shut and helping few crony capitalists?" Kharge also accused the BJP of idolising Mahatma Gandhi's assassin Nathuram Godse saying "In this new India, Godse is called a patriot and (Mahatma) Gandhi a traitor." Kharge said the BJP wanted to make India Congress-free but the Congress would not allow that to happen. "Together we will work to build an equal, empowered and enlightened India," promised the new Congress President who was handed the formal charge of his AICC office by Sonia Gandhi today. Moments after Kharge took over the entire Congress Working Committee, AICC general secretaries and state chiefs resigned, paving the way for the party president to put together a new team. Earlier today, Kharge paid homage at the Raj Ghat and the memorials of former prime ministers Jawahar Lal Nehru, Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi and Jagjivan Ram.

Kharge facts

1. Mallikarjun Kharge is the third Scheduled Caste president of the Congress after Damodaram Sanjivayya and Babu Jagjivan Ram
2. Kharge is the first non-Gandhi chief after Sitaram Kesri who exited office in 1998 after being elected just a year earlier
3. For 39 years since Independence, Nehru-Gandhi family members have remained party presidents.
4. Kharge is the 18th Congress chief post Independence

STATESMAN, OCT 28, 2022

Ups and Downs~I

The demise of Queen Elizabeth II in August not only denotes the end of an era in Britain's post War history but also the beginning of a new phase in Britain's relations with India, the Commonwealth, and the rest of the world.

ARUN KUMAR BANERJI

The demise of Queen Elizabeth II in August not only denotes the end of an era in Britain's post War history but also the beginning of a new phase in Britain's relations with India, the Commonwealth, and the rest of the world. India has been celebrating 75 years of independence. How have Indo-British relations evolved over the last seven-and-a-half decades? Was India's membership of the Commonwealth the result of Jawaharlal Nehru's own sentimental attachment to Britain, or was it a part of Britain's imperial design to keep its former colonies united by a common allegiance to the crown? These and other similar questions need a re-look to dispel some misperceptions. Partition and the independence of India were preceded by decades of the agitation launched by the Indian National Congress (INC) against the British, first for Swaraj and ultimately for outright independence.

The Congress accused the British government of following a policy of 'divide and rule' to perpetuate its rule in India, both officially ~ through the resolutions of the Congress Working Committee ~ and unofficially through the statements of individual leaders. Two decades after India's independence, Krishna Menon told Michael Brecher in 1968: "Pakistan really was the result of the Indian struggle led by the Congress... So far as the British are concerned, it is their classic imperial solution." But this is too simple an argument which does not recognize the socioeconomic causes that ultimately led to the partition of India.

There is no doubt that Britain's policy of 'divide and rule' was formulated with the idea of perpetuating its rule in India and that many, though not all, British functionaries ~ political leaders and bureaucrats whether working in London or in India as well as some of the Governors General and provincial Governors working in India ~ actively pursued that policy which becomes clear from a careful study of the Transfer of Power volumes edited by Nicholas Mansergh et al, and from the memories and biographies of many of the participants in the decision-making process.

During the tumultuous years preceding India's partition, relations between the Congress and the British Indian government were particularly bad especially in 1942 when the INC refused to support the government's war efforts ~ at a time when British forces had suffered military reverses in Southeast Asia and Japanese forces were close to the Indian border ~ and intensified its movement demanding the British should quit India, while the Muslim League continued its policy of passive support to the government.

INC's 'Quit India' movement led to a policy of reprisals by the British. The Hindus in general, and the Congress, in particular, ~ as it was led mostly by the Hindus ~ became suspect in the eyes of the British while many British officials such as Sir George Cunningham, then the Governor of the NWFP considered the Muslims to be solidly anti-Japanese. The anti-Congress bias of the British started developing when they realised that the Congress was trying to develop an all-India nationalism that would threaten the British Raj, and they turned to the Muslims to thwart that possibility.

The provision for a separate electorate for Muslims (1909) was motivated by the idea of driving a wedge between the two communities. Once the decision was taken by the British government to classify the electorate based on 'religion', the theory of the two nations became a logical corollary, to be followed by the demand for a separate homeland for the Muslims. The suggestion that the partition of India was the result of a policy of 'divide and rule' has generally been resented by the British 'official class'. During the debate on the Indian Independence Bill, Lord Listowel, the Secretary of State for India, said in the House of Lords that when it became clear the Cabinet Mission Plan for one Indian Union would never be accepted and that there was no alternative form of government to which Hindus and Muslims would give their consent, "we had either to agree to implement their separation or to remain indefinitely in control of India."

One should remember that India was the brightest jewel in the British crown, and it would have been a lasting achievement for the British if they could transfer power to a united India, as indeed they proposed to do through their successive efforts in 1942 and 1946. But it was already too late as differences between the Muslim League and the Congress had become deep-rooted making cooperation between them difficult, if not impossible.

Even Mahatma Gandhi, who was opposed to the idea of partition said in his statement of 4 June 1947: "The British government is not responsible for partition. The Viceroy had no hand in it. In fact, he is as opposed to partition as the Congress itself. But if both of us, Hindus, and Muslims, cannot agree on anything else, the Viceroy is left with no choice" (cited in V.P. Menon; *Transfer of Power in India*, 1957, p.382, italics added). Most Indians regard it as a placatory statement without much substance, but it has some truth; it is equally true that the nefarious role played by a section of the Conservative Party's leadership, from Winston Churchill downwards ~ and their henchmen in India ~ to boost the Muslim League's stand for a separate homeland, ultimately made partition inevitable. The leadership of the Congress party was, to some extent, responsible for the rapid growth in power and influence of the Muslim League; they underestimated the ability of the League to exploit Muslim fears about Hindu domination and refused to recognise it as an organization representing Muslim interests. It was this

implicit psychological rejection which led the League to make extreme demands to justify its existence as an organisation representing Muslim interests.

In the final analysis, the partition of India was the result of the attempts made by a section of the Muslim elite ~ represented by the Muslim League ~ to move out of the political-economic system to be dominated by the Hindu elite after the transfer of power and to create for themselves opportunities for autonomy and self-assertion. The INC committed a series of tactical mistakes during 1939- 46 – by resigning from the provincial ministries in 1939, refusing the Cripps offer in 1942 and launching the ‘Quit India’ movement that landed most prominent Congress leaders in jail, and gave the Muslim League the opportunity to increase its influence among the Muslims. Finally, it was Nehru’s denunciation of the grouping scheme of the Cabinet Mission Plan (1946) that provided Jinnah with an ‘incomparable wedge to press openly for Pakistan’, Michael Brecher wrote later. Jinnah withdrew the League’s acceptance of the Cabinet Mission Plan and threatened to use violence to achieve his goal of an independent Pakistan.

The ‘Direct Action Plan of the Muslim League and the communal violence resulting from it made partition inevitable. In retrospect, it seems that the rejection of the ‘grouping’ scheme of the Cabinet Mission Plan was the right decision because, if implemented, it would have weakened the Centre and led to the Balkanization of India.

PIB,OCT27,2022

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh says, National Education Policy (NEP-2020) aims at de-linking degree from education and livelihood opportunities

The Minister was addressing the students and youth at Krishna Mahavidyalaya at Moradabad in Uttar Pradesh

Dr Jitendra Singh says, the green and farm rich belt of Western UP can be a fertile ground for Agri-tech and Dairy start-ups

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 said, National Education Policy (NEP-2020) aims at de-linking degree from education and livelihood opportunities.



Addressing the students and the youth at Krishna Mahavidyalaya at Thakurdwar in Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh, Dr Jitendra Singh said, NEP-2020 also supplements Start-Up ecosystem with the promise to open new career and entrepreneurship opportunities for students and youth in India.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, NEP- 2020 introduced by Prime Minister Modi will reorient India's Education Policy as per global benchmarks. Describing it as the biggest path-breaking reform in India since independence, the Minister said, the new policy is not only progressive and visionary but is also in keeping with the emerging needs and requirements of 21st century India. He said, it gives due priorities to the inherent talent, knowledge, skill and aptitude of the students, rather than focusing only on degrees.

Dr.Jitendra Singh said that linking degrees with education has taken a heavy toll on our education system and society as well and one of the fall-outs has been an increasing number of educated unemployed. The Minister said, NEP-2020 is having the provision of multiple entry/exit option thus providing academic flexibility to the students. He said, this will have a positive impact on the students related to the availing of different career opportunities at different times, depending upon their intrinsic learning and inherent aptitude. Referring to Skill India Mission, Dr Jitendra Singh urged the students to imbibe multiple skills to be successful in life as there are ample number of examples to show that those equipped with the latest skills are doing wonders in the world today. Dr Jitendra Singh also urged the students and the youth to explore livelihood opportunities in the booming Start-up sector in the country. He informed the gathering that only in August this year, the Uttar Pradesh government injected Rs 4,000 crore into the state's start-up corpus for employment generation and economic activity. The fresh infusion of capital has been made to constitute the maiden 'UP Innovation Fund' that will be mandated to provide seed capital to start-ups.

Dr Jitendra Singh gave full credit to the futuristic vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who had given a call for Start-Up India, Stand-Up India in 2015 itself, that led to a mass interest, as a result of which the number of start-ups in India has increased from mere 350 in 2014 to over 80,000 in 2022 with more than 105 unicorns. Dr Jitendra Singh noted with satisfaction that Uttar Pradesh government plans to have at least one incubator in every district by 2023. As of now, there are 47 incubators in 20 districts. He told the youth of Moradabad that Uttar Pradesh is catching up fast in startups race and as of today there are more than 6,500 startups already registered in the state. The government has also decided to set up two centres of excellence in the state with one coming up in IIT-Kanpur for promotion of drone technology.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, Noida has turned to be the most preferred destination for startups followed by Ghaziabad, Agra, Lucknow and Gorakhpur in Purvanchal region and now is the time for the innovative minds of the Western UP to take a lead in Startups movement. He said, the green and farm rich belt of Western region can be a fertile ground for Agri-tech and Dairy startups. The Minister promised all support from Ministry of Science and Technology to support the StartUps ecosystem.

PIB,OCT28,2022

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh says, India has emerged as a leading country in the world in delivery of Digital Health services

The Minister addresses the first ever Global Digital Health Summit, Expo & Innovation Awards at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi

Dr Jitendra Singh says, the recent launch of 5G will bring a new revolution in Digital Health care system in India

Addressing the first ever Global Digital Health Summit, Expo & Innovation Awards at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, Dr Jitendra Singh said, India will become a digital health leader, as we have the world's best technical manpower required and our data is the cheapest in the world, approaching 100 percent coverage. The Minister said, the recent launch of 5G will bring a new revolution in the Digital Health care system in India. 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. Dr Jitendra Singh recalled that in July, 2021, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, while addressing the CoWin Global Conclave offered CoWIN platform as a digital public good to the world to combat COVID19. Dr Jitendra Singh informed that when COVID-19 hit us, India notified the telemedicine practice guidelines in March 2020, and we did the same for AYUSH in April 2020. He said, India could notify these guidelines as our groundwork was done and we were ready. The Minister said, we must work together to ensure 'Digital Health for All', which is a pre-condition to achieve 'Health for All'.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, India has a dedicated mission mode program for Digital Health -The Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission, which has delivered nearly 220 million electronic health records. Ayushman Bharat Yojna provides free treatment of upto five lakh rupees in the best of hospitals to eligible beneficiaries. He also informed that as on October 15, 2022, while e-Sanjeevani tele consultations are 6.72 million., eSanjeevani HWC (Provider-to-Provider) is at about 5.84 million and eSanjeevani OPD (Patient-to-Doctor) numbers stand at 0.9 million.

Referring to Prime Minister's revolutionary announcement of the "National Digital Health Mission" from the ramparts of the Red Fort on 15th August, 2020, Dr Jitendra Singh said, technology will be used prudently to reduce the challenges in treatment. He quoted Modi as saying, "Every Indian will be given a Health ID. This Health ID will work like a Health Account of every Indian. This account will contain your details of every test, every disease, the doctors you visited, the medicines you took and the diagnosis. We are devising a system which will help each and every citizen to make a better and informed decision". Dwelling on the pandemic challenges, Dr Jitendra Singh said, COVID-19 has pushed for the worldwide adoption of technology in health on a large scale. He said, during the pandemic, the world had come to a standstill, and since the doctors could not meet the patients, all were compelled to adopt technology to connect.

Dr Jitendra Singh informed that way back in 2016, MoHFW had proposed the digital health resolution at the WHO, and this was the first-ever resolution tabled at the WHO for digital health and, India, had set out eyes to become a world leader in Digital Health. He also pointed out that the National Health Policy in 2017 talked about the ecosystem approach to digital health and it had proposed Telemedicine services to be an integral part of the proposed Health and wellness centres, much before the onset of pandemic.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, it was the far-sightedness of Prime Minister Modi that soon after coming to power in 2014, he shared the powerful vision of 'Digital India' much before COVID-19 hit the world. Dr Jitendra Singh concluded that India has become the world's most advanced healthcare system, with the latest technology tools deployed, across care delivery. He said, everyone working in healthcare needs to adopt digitalization across healthcare. Clinicians and professionals working in pharmaceuticals, diagnostics, hospitals, and insurance will have to plan their forays for digitalization on a fast pace basis, the Minister opined. This summit is in partnership with global bodies working in Digital Health and co-hosted by the Internet Governance Forum, United Nations. Over 1500 delegates from 35 countries are participating in this summit.

HINDUSTAN TIMES, OCT28, 2022

PM Modi moots 'One Nation, One Police Uniform' idea; warns of 'borderless' crimes

Currently, the British-era Khaki is worn by police across the country, but its colour, fabric and patterns change with every state and union territory

Neeraj Chauhan

Close on the heels of the Centre's 'One Nation, One Ration Card' and 'One Nation, One Grid' initiatives, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday mooted the idea of 'One Nation, One Police Uniform' to states and union territories, and urged them to give it a thought, not as an "imposition" but one wrapped with a good intention to give the force a common identity.

Speaking on the second day of the 'Chintan Shivir of home ministers' at Surajkund in Haryana, the PM said that having a uniformed attire for police officers across India will not only ensure quality products due to the scale at which it'll be produced, but also give a common identity to law enforcement as citizens will recognise police personnel anywhere in the country. "On the lines of 'One nation, one ration card', 'one nation, one mobility card', 'one nation, one grid', we can also think of having 'one nation, one police uniform'. Yes, there can be different numbers and insignia for the states, but is this something which can be discussed among states and police establishments?" Modi said. Currently, the British-era Khaki is worn by police across the country, but its colour, fabric and patterns change with every state and UT.

The Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD), under the ministry of home affairs (MHA), had designed a new all-weather friendly 'smart uniform' for Indian police in 2017 in association with the National Institute of Design (NID) and sent a report to all the states and UTs.

The BPRD developed nine prototypes of the new uniform with features such as shirt, trousers, belt, beret (cap), insignia, shoes and jacket changed, apart from designing new rainwear and headgear for the law enforcers. Since law and order is a state subject, decisions on uniform and other aspects of policing come under local governments. It is not known if any state adopted the prototypes of BPRD's smart uniform for the police force. During the research, BPRD found that "there was no uniformity in police uniform in India." "While basic fit and shade changed from state to state, there were flaws like thick trouser fabric, which made it inconvenient in warm weather conditions, and not having enough space to carry personal/official objects. The

helmets worn by cops are too heavy during a law-and-order situation, the metal belts are too wide and big, which poke in the stomach while bending forward, and has no option to carry cellphones, baton or keys etc., like other police forces over the world,” according to the BPRD ‘Smart Uniform’ report seen by HT.

Another problem the BPRD found was in police officers’ shoes. Leather shoes, according to the report, were found to be very uncomfortable for long duty hours. Also, the Khaki is not identifiable by the public during night and several cops complained that similar Khaki color was used by municipality staffs, private agencies, postmen, fire department personnel, etc., which they argued took away the uniqueness of the police, BPRD said. The new uniform designed by the bureau and the NID has features like a softer khaki shade (beige) shirt to give the cops a smart and clean look and provide effective visibility of insignias, nameplate, badge, medals, ribbons, and epaulettes on shoulder and a standardised ‘Police’ print on the back. The PM also urged the police forces to assess their vehicles in light of the new scrappage policy. “Police vehicles should never be old as it is linked to their efficiency,” he said. Meanwhile, the prime minister on Friday urged states to work together given how ‘borderless’ crimes are these days, and criminals operate from across the borders through technology. Even though law and order are the responsibility of states as per the Constitution, the PM noted that they are equally linked to the unity and integrity of the country. “Every state should learn from each other, take inspiration from each other, work for the betterment of the country...this is the spirit of the constitution and it is also our responsibility towards citizens,” he said.

“Whether it is cybercrime or the use of drones for the smuggling of weapons or drugs, the government needs to keep working towards new technologies to tackle the menace. The law-and-order system can be improved with the help of smart technology,” Modi said, adding that the 5G technology can be of immense help in this area. “We should have a pan-India outlook, all our best practices should be interoperable and should have a common link,” he said. Asserting that the Centre repealed close to 1,500 pre-Independence era laws, Modi urged state governments to also repeal local laws that are obsolete. Further, the PM said “a single instance of fake news has the capability to snowball into a matter of national concern”, as he cited the example of protests across the country when the central government announced reservations in armed forces under the ‘Agniveer scheme’ in June. “We need to educate people on how to analyse and verify any information before forwarding it. We have to come up with technological advancement to prevent the spread of fake news”, he added. Stressing the need to end all forms of Naxalism, Modi said “be it the one with guns or the one with pens, Naxals have to be uprooted to prevent them from misleading the youth of the country.”

The MHA is holding the two-day conference of home ministers, home secretaries and director generals of police (DGPs) of states and UTs, Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) and Central Police Organizations (CPOs) to provide a national perspective to policy formulation on internal security-related matters.

TELEGRAPH,OCT29,2022

Imprisoned minds

The failure of Indian schools to promote liberalism

The predominant aesthetic of a large Indian school still resembles a peculiar fusion between the regimentation of a military garrison and the ritualisation of an authoritarian cult.

Asim Ali

The “rule of law”, Justice D.Y. Chandrachud told law students recently, depends not merely on the Constitution or legislations “but largely... upon the political culture and habits of citizens...”. The words of the incoming Chief Justice of India represented an indirect admission of the long-drawn conflict between the two components of liberal-democracy under the Narendra Modi regime: liberalism and (a thinly conceived) democracy. The opposing poles of ‘liberal institutionalism’ and ‘democratic majority’ have framed the most contentious of political disputes — Article 370, CAA and the Ram temple.

The majoritarian backlash against liberal principles and institutions is not unique to India. We see traces of similar clashes in the US, the UK, Turkey and Hungary. Yet, nowhere is liberalism as besieged as in India, bereft of support even among the educated middle classes. Indeed, the enlightenment thesis of an increase in education levels breeding a more liberal citizenry turns on its head in India. As a 2017 CSDS-Lokniti report noted: “as levels of education increases the likelihood of holding conservative views also increases.” The use of ‘conservative’ here is a euphemism for right-wing authoritarianism. The survey probed the public on the most contentious political questions of the day: should the government (or caste/ community) punish those who eat beef; do not say ‘Bharat Mata ki jai’; do not stand up for the national anthem; or engage in religious conversions? On each of the four questions, a clear majority of Hindus supported the punishment of the individual not just by the State but also presumably by the mob. In fact, the educated classes displayed the greatest penchant for coercive violence, not to mention

a higher level of sympathy for dictatorship and suppression of speech than found among the cohort of illiterates. What explains the staggering failure of Indian education to promote liberal ideas?

One must resist the temptation of culturally essentialist explanations, be it recourse to a rigid, caste-deterministic framework or chalking it all down to the transcendental lure of 'Asian values'. The faulty transmission link between liberal democracy and public education merits an institutional approach. An influential strand of sociological literature views the relationship between liberalism and education to be mediated by the variable of 'core values' embedded in the educational system. In other words, educated people are more likely to accept the prevailing values emphasised in schools, whatever those values might be.

The question then becomes a simple one: what are the values transmitted by the typical Indian school? At the outset, let's accept that schools are hardly known as redoubts of freewheeling enquiry. Michel Foucault compared the systematic control exercised by the Western model of the public school with the disciplinary ordering enforced in prisons. As an aside, the Karnataka High Court perhaps mistook this Foucauldian critique for a juristic prescription, ruling against the right to wear the hijab partly on the grounds that schools, like prisons, were "qualified public spaces" which "repel the assertion of individual rights". It is the contention of this essay that the Indian schooling system produces an exceptional, soul crushing conformity, which needs to be studied through a structural frame. This is because the socialisation of students and the transmission of values happen not so much via the curriculum as it does through the system of rewards and punishment embedded in the structure of schooling. This is the domain of cultural aesthetics, where minds are conditioned through images, symbols and rhetoric.

The predominant aesthetic of a large Indian school still resembles a peculiar fusion between the regimentation of a military garrison and the ritualisation of an authoritarian cult. Let's begin with a simple deconstruction of the spectacle of the daily morning assembly: geometric rows of students neatly arrayed to military commands of 'Attention' and 'Stand at ease'; the fervent chanting of patriotic and religious songs; the 'pin-drop' attention focused on the echoing voice of the Authority figure handing down moral and administrative instructions; and the swift action meted out against any deviation in appearance or behaviour. The ritual of the assembly reminds the student every morning that the individual student is an insignificant blob, whose only redemptive value lies as part of a collective body, while the Authority is all-knowing and all-powerful and,

therefore, deserves to be obeyed. The daily meeting of the RSS's shakha reproduces a similar message, except that it provides some allowance for democratic deliberation in the form of group discussions.

Such grotesque public offerings to the gods of conformity have long become extinct in the colonial metropolis. Yet they hum along mindlessly, as if guided by an invisible colonial clock, in the exclusive schools of Nairobi and Accra, Lahore and Agra. The highly disciplined school cultivates its authority not so much by the exemplary punishment of a rare dissent as much as the grinding down, under the overloaded wheels of rituals and ceremonies, of the capacity for independent thought. For instance, the point of 'march pasts' is not simply training for obedience but also the training of a mind which hardly ever stops to question the point of marching in schools.

The elite colonial school, built by British educationists and missionaries, left a lasting legacy by serving as the pre-eminent model imitated by generations of aspirational, middle-class schools. However, the choices of the legitimating symbols underlying school authority seem to reflect a definite shift. A 2018 survey of a cross-section of Delhi schools undertaken by the educationist, Manish Jain, reported that two-thirds of the schools (both private and government) draped themselves with a "significant presence of Hindu religious and nationalist symbols combined together". It must be remembered that the conformist structure of the Indian school is rooted in its original purpose as an assembly line for the middle-rung bureaucracy of the raj. Martial discipline and unfailing obedience desired in potential recruits (both white and brown sahibs) mirrored the 'garrison state' mentality of the raj. The interesting question is why did a free, democratic India embrace and reproduce this model of the elite private school? One can think of three different approaches in answering this question, corresponding to the lenses of public administration, political economy and political sociology.

First, the elite private schools had little incentive to change as the nature of the State institutions they serviced did not undergo any substantive transformation. It was still the old colonial bureaucracy of powerful local overlords, albeit with certain 'Indian characteristics'. They were now the loyal agents of the Congress regime, owing their democratic legitimacy to little else but a 'proper' implementation of the orders handed from state capitals. The word, 'proper', it must be born in mind, exemplifies the time-honoured governing credo of both the bureaucracy and the elite schools. It is also the perfect adjective for this school-bureaucratic complex: clinical, conventional, and morally neutral.

Second, the State-led development path taken by India did not require a rupture of this school-bureaucratic complex. In the Western world, the shift towards a less-textual and more-individualistic paradigm of public schooling had been driven, above

all, by the needs of the market economy. In contrast, the State-led economic system merely required a different cadre of rule-following bureaucrats to helm the centralised, public sector behemoths. There were hardly political imperatives for nurturing a transition towards a permissive market society (and, by extension, to a more liberalised educational system) when the economic regime neglected the market for consumer goods and anchored itself dourly to a supply-side-focus on capital goods.

Third, the State massively under-funded school education, because the rationally planned, centralised economy was designed to be run only on a thin top soil of managerial and technician class. The concept of a well-funded public schooling system, the bedrock of the process of production of liberal citizenship in postwar Europe, has been consistently regarded by Indian policymakers as an unaffordable luxury on the labouring poor. It is here that the privileged caste interests of India's ruling class come into startling focus. This merits a fuller discussion; the states where lower caste interests were integrated fairly early in the power structure, such as Kerala and Tamil Nadu, represent today the best models not just of public schooling but also of liberal citizenship.

The argument of the essay is not that the properly groomed product of the above-described Indian school is consciously socialised into the kind of majoritarianism or supremacy that threatens liberal values. The seeding of authoritarianism is primarily done through inculcating in students an eternal suspicion of their own autonomy as well as fomenting a lasting dependence on a Master Authority. Outside the school, the role of the Master is seamlessly taken over by the family or caste/religious community, thus reproducing the traditional structures of dominance that can then blur into majoritarian threats to liberal values.

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PIB,OCT29,2022

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh says, Modi's governance model has sustained over the last 20 years, with the promise to sustain in future as well and at the same time, it prepares India for a quantum jump to overtake other countries of the world in the next few years

The Minister delivers keynote address on the topic of "Modi @ 20 - Dreams Meet Delivery" at Vaishnav College of Women in Chennai

Modi at 20 lays the foundation for India at 2047

Modi is focused on ramping up best infrastructure in Tamil Nadu and committed to further popularise Tamil

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 said that Narendra Modi's governance model has sustained over the last 20 years, with the promise to sustain in future as well and at the same time, it prepares India for a quantum jump to overtake other countries of the world in the next few years, which in a nutshell would mean that Modi at 20 lays the foundation for India at 2047. Delivering keynote address on the book "Modi @ 20 - Dreams Meet Delivery" at Vaishnav College for Women in Chennai, Dr Jitendra Singh said, to understand the essence and the spirit of "Modi@20", it is essential to read the book in its entirety and in its real context and perspective.

Referring to Prime Minister Modi's visit to the State in May this year, Dr Jitendra Singh said, Modi promised that the Centre is focused on ramping up the best infrastructure and outlined a commitment to further popularise Tamil. The Minister said, PM Modi described Tamil Nadu as a special place and lauded the Tamil language as eternal and its culture as global. Modi also quoted a popular verse of nationalist poet Subramania Bharathi in praise of Tamil and said that in every field someone from Tamil Nadu is excelling. "Modi@20: Dreams Meet Delivery" is a compilation of chapters written by Amit Shah, S Jaishankar, Amish Tripathi, PV Sindhu, Anupam Kher, and Sudha Murthy, among others.

Of the several chapters included in the book "Modi @20..." Dr Jitendra Singh referred to the chapter by Amit Shah titled "Democracy, Delivery and Politics of Hope", which traces nation's pessimism getting replaced with optimism and Sudha Murthy's chapter which illustrates the awakening of aspirational India under Modi. Lata Mangeshkar's chapter highlights Modi's ability to strike a personal chord, he added.



Dr Jitendra Singh pointed out that Narendra Modi is the only Indian leader to have completed 20 years as the Head of Government, first as Chief Minister and then as Prime Minister and across the world also this could be a rare feat to have been achieved. Secondly, Modi was the rare case of a Chief Minister directly assuming the position of Prime Minister without having been a Member of Parliament in the past. And most of all, the greatest distinguishing feature is that before Modi became Chief Minister in 2002, he had never held any post in the government or administration or not even contested any election in the past, either at local level or State level or national level, and was mostly occupied in the organisational activities. The question, therefore, said Dr Jitendra Singh, we need to study and analyse what are the essential factors which have sustained Modi's governance model for 20 years and continue to sustain beyond 20 years also. Significantly, instead of being affected by the principle of diminishing returns, each passing year of Modi's governance of 20 years has yielded increasing returns and each new challenge has enabled this governance model to emerge stronger, more effective and enduring.



Dr Jitendra Singh noted that soon after Modi took over as Chief Minister of Gujarat, his first challenge was a devastating earthquake in Bhuj and as he completed 20 years as head of government, the latest challenge confronted by him was the COVID pandemic sweeping across the nation of 140 crore people. A research study of how these challenges were successfully overcome and adversity was turned into virtue, will also bring to surface Modi's unique and exclusive work style highlighted by diligent 24x7 focus, his unquenchable quest to go deep into every subject so as to be able to provide new ideas even to the officers who go to brief him, his long hours of introspection about how to innovate new ideas and his intimate connect with the ground which enables him to assure that "Dreams meet Delivery", as the title of the book suggests.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, while on the one hand, Modi brought in optimum use of technology for last mile delivery through measures like Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT), his governance became more and more technology driven which not only helped in ensuring ease of living for common citizen through measure like single portal, single form etc., but also enabled objective delivery of service by civil servants through innovative concepts like "Mission Karmyogi".

Modi has given a futuristic vision to India and spoke about "Startup India -Standup India" in his Independence Day address from the ramparts of Red Fort on 15 August 2015, when the StartUp concept was almost dismal in this country. Today, India ranks third in the world in the StartUp ecosystem. Dr Jitendra Singh pointed out that there is also a meaning in what Prime Minister Modi keeps reiterating about Amrit Mahotsav because he can foresee India's emerging role in next 25 years and his governance model seeks to build nation's capacity to make a mark in the global arena.

The book "Modi @2.0- Dreams meet Delivery" is about the rise of Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi as a watershed moment in Indian politics. This book discusses the magnitude of his influence on the country that India's governance paradigm and political history can be easily divided into two distinct eras- Pre-Modi and Post- Modi.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

STATESMAN,OCT25,2022

Old Age Insecurity

Actuarial experts and pro-government scholars were perfectly right in showing the exchequer's high financial burden of the government employees' Old Pension Scheme (OPS),

P S M RAO

Actuarial experts and pro-government scholars were perfectly right in showing the exchequer's high financial burden of the government employees' Old Pension Scheme (OPS), which provides a defined benefit and no employee contribution. But they were utterly wrong in recommending in its place the New Pension Scheme (NPS), which entails the defined contribution from the employees and some uncertain, paltry post-retirement benefit to them. These pundits' excessive concern about financial costs made them relegate the government's inalienable social security responsibility to the back seat.

The new pension scheme is not a freshly baked one; it was announced way back in December 2003 and launched on April 1, 2004. Its purported goal was to reduce the ever-increasing pension burden ~ Rs.65,000 crore a year ~ on the Union and state governments at that time with a 20 per cent expected to rise every year. The central government first introduced the NPS and gradually all the state governments, except that of West Bengal, applied it to their respective employees. Naturally, the employees reject the scheme; but their refusal and protests are more vocal now than at the time of its introduction two decades ago.

Unfortunately, the protests against any unsavoury policy changes become vehement only when the people feel their actual impact, not when the changes are made. For instance, the opposition to rising oil prices is more tangible now, when people are acutely feeling their burden, than at the time when the administered price mechanism to facilitate this rise was dismantled about two decades ago. So, are the employees now agitating since the new pension scheme did not immediately affect those in active service at that time since those recruited after January 1, 2004, were brought under the scheme's purview.

Now, the employees in state after state are launching agitations seeking revival of the Old Pension Scheme. Already, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand have reverted to the old scheme; Delhi and Punjab have decided to follow suit while A.P employees are demanding that the poll promise of Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy to restore the old scheme be fulfilled. Also, employees in Tamil Nadu and several other states are in agitation. So, a continuation of the new scheme is not sustainable after a few states have budged under employees' pressure, no matter the experts' warning of the financial unsustainability of state finances. Under the new scheme, the employees contribute to the pension fund every month, throughout their career life, a sum equal to 10 per cent of their Salary and Dearness Allowance and the government contributes another 14 per cent (hiked from the original 10 per cent).

At the time of retirement, the corpus (the total of contributions plus the investment returns) is used to purchase a fixed annuity, with an option to withdraw a portion, as a lump sum. So, under the new scheme employees also have to contribute and the market determines the return and pension sum, whereas the old scheme did not require any contribution from employees but assured a pension sum equal to 50 per cent of the last drawn salary, a fair amount of pension, and an accepted norm. The ILO in its Social Security Convention 102 (held in 1952), confirmed that the pension sum should be fixed at 50 per cent of the insurable salary.

Although the word 'insurable' is a hitch, the spirit of the norm was 50 per cent assurance. Also, pertinent here is the ILO's other recommendation that the social security schemes be administered on a tripartite basis, which guarantees and strengthens the social dialogue between Governments, employers, and workers. The ILO's recommendation is for the working community as a whole, not just for government employees, whose share in total employment in India is not very significant. True, the organized sector employment in the country is less than 7 per cent of the workforce and that of the public sector is about 4 per cent.

Thus, the pension scheme in question pertains to only the government employees – at best about 35 lac central government and a little more than one crore state government employees. The new scheme in effect pertains to much fewer numbers because it mandatorily covers only those recruited after January 2004. Notwithstanding its insignificant share in total employment, the government in a welfare state is expected to function as an ideal employer and to set an example to the private sector by providing decent salaries and post-retirement benefits to its employees thereby eventually ensuring the 'equal pay for equal work' norm in the society.

Usually, the workers with relatively high wages are criticised for asking more; the derision mostly comes from the employers and entrepreneurs who themselves are responsible for creating the anomaly by not willing to part with their excess share in the national cake and for disallowing the workers their due. Overall, old age security is not getting adequate attention while the number of senior citizens, aged 60+ is rapidly increasing. Their share in the total population had increased from 5.5 per cent in 1951 to 8.6 per cent in 2011.

India, with a 138 million 60 plus population, in 2021(104 million as per the 2011 census), accounts for 12.5 per cent of that category in the world; the UNPF forecasts the number to rise to 173 million by 2026 and an NSO report anticipates it to swell to 194 million in 2031. The old-age dependency ratio in the country climbed from 10.9 per cent in 1961 to 14.2 per cent in 2011 and is projected to increase to 20.1 per cent in 2031. The situation calls for adequate financial support for the elderly. But the pension system in the country, even to the organized sector workers, is defective and unscientific.

The pension benefits available to different segments of society depict the anomaly. For instance, an MLA gets a full pension for a lifetime for serving five years; the Madhya Pradesh MLA gets the pension even for one day's service. Similarly, a seven-time MLA from Haryana Assembly is getting Rs. 2.38 lac monthly pension. A Telangana one-time elected MLA gets Rs.50,000 monthly pension and Rs.75,000 if elected more than three times. An MLA in A.P gets a monthly pension of Rs.30,000 and in Tamil Nadu of Rs.40,000. Different states have fixed different sums for their legislators. Compare this with the millions of employees covered under the Employees Provident Fund (EPF) pension. Most of the executives who had drawn Rs 1 lac and more are getting pension amounts around Rs.1,500; the recently retired may at best be getting a thousand rupees more. This is because their pension is calculated based not on their total salary but on the insurable salary on which contributions were collected.

The scheme which came into being in 1995 till recently had Rs.6,500 insurable salary limit (now raised to Rs.15,000). As per the pension formula, one gets a maximum pension of Rs.3,250 after 35 years of service. The minimum EPF pension was raised to Rs.1,000 after the government found that 83 per cent of EPF pensioners were getting a monthly pension of less than that amount and 27 per cent were getting even lesser, less than Rs.500. So, during post-retirement life, workers who had contributed for not only the pension fund but to national wealth through decades of hard work fall below the poverty line levels of income; even the destitute pension given as part of the government's welfare programmes is at times higher than the

EPF pension. For instance, the Telangana government gives an old pension of Rs. 2,000, A.P at present gives still more, Rs.2500, and has proposed to raise it to Rs.2,750 from January 2023. Delhi and Haryana governments, too, give a monthly Rs.2,500 as an old age pension. All this suggests that there is an urgent need to raise the pensions to all those workers who are not getting equal to half their last drawn salaries but without reducing the pensions of those few who are already getting it. Governments are expected to improve the existing levels of benefits; if they cannot, they should not at least reduce them. They should not bring in inferior schemes which amount to a reduction. Viewed from any angle, it is unjust not to revert to the old pension scheme.

ECONOMIC TIMES, OCT25, 2022

India to export green energy to Singapore from 2025, Greenko-Keppel sign Hydrogen MoU

India will for the first-time export green energy from 2025, with the first shipments going to a Singapore power plant under an MoU signed by an India-based dispatchable renewables company and Singapore's energy business on Tuesday. The MoU to explore opportunities in green hydrogen potential in India will see Greenko group and Singapore's Keppel Infrastructure working towards a 250,000 tonne per annum contract to be supplied to Keppel's new 600Mw power plant in Singapore.

Further, the contract for the export of green ammonia would also expand to cover bunker fuel through the Keppel network in Singapore's network of bunker fuel supplies to ships, said Mahesh Kolli, President and Joint Managing Director of Greenko Group. Likewise, Greenko's wide range of investments includes USD 5 billion in the storage of carbon-free green hydrogen energy across India, said Kolli. "India will be exporting energy for the first time from 2025," said Kolli, after Greenko and Keppel Infrastructure signed the MoU on the sidelines of the Singapore International Energy Week which began on Tuesday.

Elaborating, Kolli said Greenko would participate in green hydrogen exports from 2025-26 onwards, estimating global demand of 50 million tonnes a year globally, including 15 million tonnes replacing bunkers fuels in ships. The green ammonia will fuel newly built ships, including a fleet ordered by the international shipping group Maersk. "This is the first time we are making lowest cost carbon-free energy which means this energy is of high quality," he stressed.

Last month, Greenko signed a deal to supply one million tonnes a year of green ammonia supply to South Korean steel and power producer, Posco. The delivery is also expected from 2025-26 onwards. In total, Greenko is planning to produce close to three million tonnes of green ammonia, which will also cover domestic demand, he said. Greenko's green ammonia will help reduce India's imports of about six million tonnes of ammonia and urea, he added.

The Greenko-Keppel MoU was virtually witnessed by Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri and Singapore's Trade and Industry Minister Gan Kim Yong. Welcoming the MoU, Puri said, "Over the last few years, India has developed unparalleled strength in renewable paths, which acts as a catalyst in producing green hydrogen at competitive prices." "I think the manner in which we have brought down the cost of solar power and I think is something that as appreciation and being applauded, applied throughout the world equally."

TELEGRAPH, OCT 26, 2022

Early taming: Editorial on Modi government's plan for child development

The youngest minds are obviously the most suitable for moulding

The thought of pre-primary infants becoming part of a formal, centralised education system is alarming. The Narendra Modi government, with a sudden admiration for scientific findings, has decided that since children's brains develop most rapidly until they are eight, it must concentrate on them from three years onwards for their 'cognitive development' and 'socio-emotional stimulation'. The focus on nutrition and play of the anganwadis is now to be abandoned. That a child's brain grows best with the free play of curiosity is irrelevant. The Centre has a mission. Play, too, will be under direction: the curriculum proposed for the infants includes physical development through traditional games and yoga. All this is because pre-primary children under the Central government will be subjected to a syllabus based on the Upanishadic Pancha Kosha, of which one aspect is physical development. The koshas move through emotional development to intellectual and finally to spiritual development or experience of the Transcendent.

The impact on three- to eight-year-olds is likely to be unprecedented. The ostensible aim is to undo the damage done by the British by basing education in the Indian ethos, as announced by the National Education Policy. The youngest minds are obviously the most suitable for moulding with this purpose in mind. Lessons will aim at invoking the values of patriotism, sacrifice, non-violence, nishkam karma, tolerance, peace, love, honesty, equality, respect for women and so on. If it is possible

to ignore the fatuousness of teaching three- and four-year-olds patriotism and nishkam karma, the sinister nature of the design becomes clear. For it is a design — in the form of a curriculum that will pull little ones into formalised education that would destroy freedom of perception and understanding from the earliest period. The classes will teach reasoning: they will not learn to reason independently. All lessons will be directed towards the goal of making the little subjects of education ‘Indian’. Would a model that encourages passivity help meet India’s avowed goal of matching international standards in learning and curriculum? Moreover, the values to be inculcated are not those of the curriculum planners — rulers are neither nishkam nor tolerant, let alone non-violent or respectful towards women. The aim, then, is to create a nation of obedient subjects proud of being ‘Indian’ without a critical or thinking bone in their yoga-practised bodies. The eagerness to seize on yet unformed three-year-old minds is, therefore, perfectly understandable.

ECONOMIC TIMES,OCT29,2022

Foreign trade will help India become \$30 trillion economy: Piyush Goyal

Commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal on Friday said foreign trade will help India become a \$30-trillion economy with a per capita GDP of \$15,000. India is a bright spot in the world today when several other countries are in recession and facing severe inflation, which is five times higher than normal in some countries, Goyal said.

"We have reached that inflection point...we are at the cusp where we are going to take off... We have the ambition to be at least ten times in the next 25 years where we are looking to cross the \$30 trillion economy with a per capita GDP of \$15,000," he said.

The minister pushed for seamless foreign trade and free movement of goods and services across borders while inaugurating the Kakinada campus of Indian Institute of Foreign Trade. The Indian economy grew nearly 12 times in dollar terms in the last 30 years to \$3.5 trillion today, from less than \$300 billion, he said. The world is seeking to engage with India because it is a growing economy, he said, adding that political stability, decisive leadership and deft handling of the economy have made the world look up to India. The world is seeking to engage with India because it is a growing economy, he said, adding that political stability, decisive leadership and deft handling of the economy have made the world look up to India.

"The world wants to do more and more business...free trade agreements with us," Goyal said. "World wants to expand trading relationships and friendship with India, looking at the potential in terms of a large market and the potential we have to help their economies survive and grow."

HINDUSTAN TIMES,OCT30,2022

India among leading nations: PM Modi on solar power, 1st solar village

Addressing the 94th episode of his Mann ki Baat radio programme, PM Modi said, "Today, solar energy is one such topic, in which the entire world sees its future. And for Indians, Sun has not only been worshipped for centuries but has also been at the centre of our lifestyle."

Harshit Sabarwal

India is among the leading nations in generating electricity from solar energy, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Sunday.

Addressing the 94th episode of his Mann ki Baat radio programme, PM Modi said, "Today, solar energy is one such topic, in which the entire world sees its future. And for Indians, Sun has not only been worshipped for centuries but has also been at the centre of our lifestyle." He made the comments as devotees in many parts of India celebrate Chhath when Surya Devta - or Sun God - is worshipped.

"Linking its traditional experience with modern science, India is amongst the leading nations in generating electricity from solar energy," PM Modi added. The Prime Minister added that solar energy has transformed the lives of the poor and middle class in India. PM Modi also mentioned the examples of a few farmers of the union government's Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan (PM Kusum) scheme, who are using solar energy for agricultural purposes. A few weeks back, Modi declared Gujarat's Modhera village the country's first fully solar-powered village. According to the Gujarat government, more than 1,000 solar panels have been installed on houses in Modhera, generating electricity round the clock for the villagers. An important takeaway is that the villagers will be provided with solar electricity at zero cost.

During Sunday's Mann ki Baat, Prime Minister Modi spoke about the Modhera village and said, "Most of the houses in this solar village are now generating electricity from solar energy. Now many houses in the village do not have to pay electricity bills at the end of the month. Instead, they are receiving cheques as income from solar power."

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

PIB,OCT26,2022

New technology for retrofitting non-earthquake-resistant buildings can prevent major damage in old settlements

Researchers have found a solution for retrofitting old non-earthquake-resistant buildings with a technology that can prevent major damage to such buildings from earthquakes without compromising on their strength. The technology called semi-confined unreinforced brick masonry (SC-URBM) can resolve the problem of spread of settlements in earthquake-prone areas with constructions that have been built without following earthquake-preventive building codes.

Historically, most buildings, technically called unreinforced masonry (URM), were not built using modern building codes. Thus they are much more likely to experience damage or collapse during an earthquake. URM buildings have traditionally been widely adopted worldwide due to inexpensive and locally available construction materials. Just like in most developing countries located in earthquake-prone regions unreinforced brick masonry (URBM) has been a common practice in urban, semi-urban, and rural areas of India. Considering that major parts of India are under seismic zone III or above and most of the URBM buildings are old and structurally deficient, strengthening of URBM buildings located in earthquake-prone areas is extremely important.

Researchers from Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur, have explored the extent to which retrofitting old buildings with SC-URBM technology can solve the problem. They found that SC-URBM can significantly enhance the energy dissipation capacity and ductility of the retrofitted building without compromising its strength. Hence such buildings would have resulting superior performance in comparison to URBM buildings during earthquakes. The idea of the technology emerged from confined masonry, an earthquake-resistant construction system where the masonry walls are built first, and the concrete columns and beams are poured in afterward to enclose (confine) the wall. SC-URBM technology has a similar concept but does not need to be implemented at the construction stage. It involves embedding of reinforced concrete (RC) bands through the partial thickness of the wall and can be implemented or retrofitted in old buildings.

The researchers, Lakshmi Latha, Samit Ray-Chaudhuri, Suparno Mukhopadhyay, and Kunwar Bajpai, conducted experiments on two identical full-scale single-story brick masonry buildings -- a completely unreinforced (URBM), and the other retrofitted with semiconfining horizontal and vertical reinforced concrete (RC) elements (SC-URBM).

The two buildings were subjected to a test called reverse slow-cyclic quasi-static loading protocol to quantify the improved seismic performance of the SC-URBM building compared to the URBM building. A Pseudo Dynamic Testing Facility (PDTF) for affordable experimental evaluation of earthquake resistance of full prototype structural systems developed with the guidance of Professor Durgesh C Rai under the Fund for Improvement of S&T Infrastructure (FIST) programme of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India was used for the tests. They proved that the technology provides better integral action of the confining elements and load-bearing walls to achieve enhanced seismic performance. The results were published in the ASCE Journal of Structural Engineering. This technology for strengthening existing URBM buildings is not only architecturally aesthetic but can also be implemented easily by manpower available locally (masons).

PIB, OCT 26, 2022

DST's green measures in new buildings of Technology Bhawan Campus take forward Special Swachhata Campaign 2.0

The new buildings constructed in the Department of Science and Technology campus have substantially reduced water and energy consumption from day one of occupancy. This is because the buildings have been constructed adhering to the Indian Green Building Council's Green New Building Ratings and US Green Building Council's LEED BD+C rating in respect of the new buildings.

In Green New buildings, energy savings range from 20 - 30 %, and water savings around 30 - 50%. Besides, they also have enhanced air quality, excellent daylighting and ensure the health and well-being of the occupants, safety benefits, and conservation of scarce national resources.

Green building rating tools – also known as certification – are used to assess and recognise buildings which meet certain green requirements or standards. Rating tools, often voluntary, recognise and reward companies and organisations who build and operate greener buildings, thereby encouraging and incentivising them to push the boundaries on sustainability.

The major initiatives incorporated to achieve green building ratings include integrated design and approach, preservation of existing trees, passive architecture, soil erosion control, allowance for natural topography or vegetation, five roof as well as non-roof rainwater harvesting systems, water-efficient fixtures, landscape design, 1.1 lakh kilo litre Sewage Treatment Plant, reuse for landscaping, systems for reduction of air conditioning requirements, eco-friendly refrigerants, installation of 540 kWp solar panels for onsite renewable energy, segregation of waste and use of sustainable building material, and reduction of waste. The initiatives have played a major role in taking forward the Special Swachhata Campaign 2.0.

PIB,OCT27,2022

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh says, Indo-Swedish companies must support start-ups from both sides, and undertake collaborative research and human resource exchange

The Minister addresses the 9th edition of the India-Sweden Innovation Day through virtual mode

Collaborative research & Start-ups ecosystem will lead to a shared future by harnessing the power of science, technology and innovation for social good: Dr Jitendra Singh

Union Minister for Science & Technology, Dr Jitendra Singh said, Indo-Swedish companies must support start-ups from both sides, and undertake collaborative research and human resource exchange.

Addressing the 9th edition of the India- Sweden Innovation Day through virtual mode, Dr Jitendra Singh said, collaborative research and joint StartUps ecosystem will help build a shared future by harnessing the power of science, technology and

innovation for social good. Referring to the joint projects having significant potential to improve public health, nursing or care in India and Sweden, Dr Jitendra Singh informed that in 2020, the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Government of India, and Vinnova, Government of Sweden announced grant funding to implement projects aimed at producing new solutions which, aided by artificial intelligence (AI), have significant potential to improve public health.

Dr Jitendra Singh recalled that in April 2019, India and Sweden announced the India-Sweden Collaborative Industrial Research & Development Programme. The Joint programme co-funded by the Indian Department of Science & Technology (DST) and Sweden's Innovation Agency – Vinnova brings together the world class excellence of Sweden and India to address challenges in the area of Smart Cities and Clean Technologies and Digitalization / Internet of Things (IoT). The Minister was also happy to note that Swedish Energy Agency earmarked an additional 25 million over 4 years for research and innovation collaboration with India.

Dr Jitendra Singh fondly remembered that in April 2018, during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Sweden, India agreed to deepen the collaboration through the Joint Declaration on Innovation Partnership for a Sustainable Future. He said, the partnership aims to increase the impact of bilateral cooperation in innovation, science and technology and it sets the framework for future cooperation to jointly tackle societal challenges including innovation-driven challenges on cross-sectoral issues with multi-stakeholder/agency participation from both countries.

Dr Jitendra Singh underlined that the partnership covers several areas, including smart cities, transportation and eMobility, energy, clean technologies, new materials, space, circular and bio-based economy, and health and life sciences. The India-Sweden Innovation Partnership bridges institutions, R&D intensive industries and creative entrepreneurs to address global challenges in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Dr Jitendra Singh shared his thoughts with the distinguished delegates and said, India has been progressing well in recent years in terms of its overall performance and outcome in science and technology and it has attained the 3rd position globally in terms of the number of publications. India's growth rate of publications in SCI journals is nearly 14% against the global average of 4% and India has attained the 10th spot in the number of patents filed, the Minister added.

In conclusion, Dr Jitendra Singh said, the bilateral diplomatic relations have flourished on the back of our like-mindedness and commitment to fair trade and globalization and added that Innovation cooperation is the fastest growing element in the bilateral relationship between India and Sweden. Dr. Jitendra Singh thanked Ms Ebba Busch, Swedish Deputy Prime Minister of Sweden and Minister for Business and Energy for her participation and also extended his sincere thanks to Indian Embassy in Sweden, the Swedish Government Agency for Innovation Systems (Vinnova), the Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education, guest speakers, industry partners and participants to make this even successful. Dr. Fredrik Hörstedt, Head of Division for International Collaboration, Vinnova, Mr. Ulf Borbos, International Project Manager, SISP Swedish Incubators and Science Parks, Dr. Andreas Göthenberg, Executive Director of STINT, Dr. Jyoti Sharma, Scientist F, International Cooperation Division, Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, and Dr. Sapna Poti, Director, Strategic Alliances Division, Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India participated in the India Sweden Innovation Day event.

HINDUSTAN TIMES, OCT 29, 2022

On new IT rules, minister says mission to make internet 'open, safe and trusted'

Rajeev Chandrasekhar said the new IT rules address the gaps that existed earlier, underlining that intermediary platforms cannot be "misused" to "upload criminal, illegal, inciteful content and misinformation".

Shubhangi Gupta

Union minister Rajeev Chandrasekhar on Saturday said the government's mission is to make the internet "open, safe and trusted" with the amended information technology (IT) rules that came into effect on Friday. Chandrasekhar, a minister of state for electronics and information technology, said intermediaries or social media platforms will have to ensure that "no unlawful content" is posted online, adding that the internet can't be a party to "deliberate misinformation". His statement also assumes significance in the wake of the recent acquisition of Twitter by Elon Musk – a self-proclaimed free-speech absolutist

– who has spoken of his plans to have fewer limitations on the content posted online. This has triggered concerns that dialogue on the platform which he acquired in a \$44 billion deal may deteriorate amid no deterrence on bullying and harassment faced online. Rajeev Chandrasekhar said the new rules address the gaps that existed earlier, underlining that intermediary platforms cannot be “misused” to “upload criminal, illegal, inciteful content and misinformation”. “Constitutional rights of India’s citizens should be respected by intermediaries, especially articles relating to free speech, liberty and non-discrimination. In order to strengthen accountability between user and intermediary we’ve brought a grievance appellate platform,” the Union minister was quoted as saying by news agency ANI.

As part of the amended IT rules, 2021, which came into effect on Friday, the Centre has made a provision for new government “grievance redressal” panels to hear complaints against content moderation decisions taken by social media companies. The panel members will be appointed by the government which, activists have said, will amount to giving the government the final say over what content stays up or is taken down, with the power to overrule companies like Meta and Twitter if they remove or refuse to act on posts. Rajeev Chandrasekhar also spoke of the government's wish to work on a "partnership model" with all foreign and Indian companies on the internet with the "objective of a safe and trusted internet for all its citizens."

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE

PIB,OCT26,2022

Two more Indian Beaches enter the coveted list of Blue Beaches

India now has 12 Blue Flag beaches, an eco-label given to the cleanest beaches in the world

Blue Beaches give a sense of pride to the community and attract tourism

New entrants a testimony to PM Modi's vision for sustainable environment

In yet another recognition of India's commitment to protect and conserve the pristine coastal and marine ecosystems through holistic management of the resources, the globally recognized and the coveted International eco-label "Blue Flag", has been accorded to two new beaches – Minicoy Thundi Beach and Kadmat Beach- both in Lakshadweep. This takes the number of beaches certified under the Blue Flag certification to twelve (12).

Announcing this proud moment in a twitter message, Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Bhupender Yadav expressed happiness and congratulated everyone stating that it is a part of India's relentless journey towards building a sustainable environment led by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.

The Thundi Beach is one of the most pristine and picturesque beaches in the Lakshadweep archipelago where white sand is lined by turquoise blue water of the lagoon. It is a paradise for swimmers and tourists alike. The Kadmat Beach is especially popular with cruise tourists who visit the island for water sports. It is a paradise for nature lovers with its pearl white sand, blue lagoon waters, its moderate climate and friendly locals. Both the beaches have designated staff for beach cleanliness and maintenance; and for safety and security of swimmers. Both the beaches comply with all the 33 criteria as mandated by the Foundation for Environment Education (FEE). The other Indian beaches in the blue list are Shivrajpur-Gujarat, Ghoghla-Diu, Kasarkod and Padubidri-Karnataka, Kappad-Kerala, Rushikonda- Andhra Pradesh, Golden-Odisha, Radhanagar- Andaman and Nicobar, Kovalam in Tamil Nadu and Eden in Puducherry beaches.

Background:

Foundation for Environment Education in Denmark (FEE) accords the globally recognized eco-label - Blue Flag certification. In order to qualify for this prestigious award, a series of stringent environmental, educational, safety-related and access-related criteria must be met and maintained. The mission of Blue Flag is to promote sustainability in the tourism sector, through environmental education, environmental protection and other sustainable development practices.

TRIBUNE,OCT26,2022

Poor air quality

Bracing for a season of discomfort

THE after-effects of a cracker-filled Diwali are known all too well. As also the fact that announcements such as giving a two-hour window to burst crackers and allowing only green ones are meaningless concessions. Once you lift the cracker ban, there is simply no way to check flouting of the time rule, or the quality of crackers. Not that any such regulatory mechanism was put in place in the region. So, several parts of Punjab and Haryana woke up to air quality in the ‘poor’, ‘very poor’ and ‘hazardous’ categories. Citing environmental concerns and health hazards, Delhi had banned the sale and bursting of firecrackers. The unpopular decision had the backing of the Supreme Court. That did not prevent the national capital’s air quality from turning ‘very poor’ overnight — like in the neighbouring Gurugram, Noida and Faridabad, where there was no ban — as firecrackers were set off in several parts. The data that pollution levels were relatively better than in the previous years would be of little consolation to Delhi. Its season of breathing discomfort is round the corner. The outcome of a complex mix of contributing factors, a fair share of the blame is pinned on the contentious practice of stubble burning in the neighbouring states. Since AAP now holds the reins of power in Punjab along with Delhi, it can no longer play the victim card on the issue of farm fires. So far, AAP’s efforts to prevent stubble burning have failed to get the traction it was hoping for. The project needs sustained support and innovative inputs.

In Delhi, a month-long campaign is under way to check dust pollution at construction sites. Over 580 teams, the government claims, are monitoring compliance with the norms. It's a commendable exercise, provided it is carried out with all the sincerity and seriousness the effort deserves. The switch to electric vehicles, too, is touted as a pragmatic solution to control vehicular emissions. The push for it is facing a new challenge. The renewed reliance on coal for power generation can prove to be counter-productive.

PIB,OCT27,2022

Meeting between Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate change and the Committee on Environment of German Federal Parliament

India and Germany to work together to find sustainable solutions to global climate challenges

German delegation appreciates concrete climate actions taken by India

Global Climate initiatives like ISA, CDRI, and LeadIT highlight India's commitment: Shri Bhupender Yadav

India achieved the 1st NDC targets on renewable energy and energy intensity before time. PM Modi's Mission LiFE, the only way ahead for a greener planet: Union Environment Minister

Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Bhupender Yadav held fruitful meeting with the Committee on Environment of German Federal Parliament headed by Honourable Member of Parliament (MdB) Mr. Harald Ebner, today, at Indira Paryavaran Bhawan, New Delhi. In the meeting, they discussed global environmental, climate change and other related challenges, and how Germany and India can work together to find sustainable solutions to these challenges. Union Minister Shri Bhupender Yadav with the Committee on Environment of German Federal Parliament

In the meeting, issues related to sustainable lifestyle, circular economy, e-wastes, conservation of water bodies, drinking water, problem of fertilisers, urban migration, sectoral climate action plans and achievements were discussed. The German delegation appreciated the concrete environment and climate actions taken by India despite the huge size and population. The

German delegation mentioned that Germany fully supports India's G-20 Presidency. The Union Environment Minister acknowledged the support given by Germany to India for addressing challenges relating to environment and climate change. He appreciated Germany's support in Ganga Rejuvenation and stated that India and Germany must work together to address global environment challenges. The Union Environment Minister highlighted that India has been undertaking numerous concrete climate actions under the leadership of Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, both domestically and globally. These include NCAP, Biofuel, Kalyan Yojana, Amrit Sarovar, 500 GW target of RE, BS-VI, etc. India always endeavours to be part of the solution, and not part of the problem, Shri Yadav said.

Shri Yadav elaborated on India's global commitment for addressing climate change, by spearheading global initiatives like ISA, CDRI, and LeadIT, and he specially thanked Germany for joining ISA. He emphasised the need for mindful consumption and circular economy, and that India is promoting circular economy from three aspects-Legal, Capacity and Market economy.

While responding to the questions raised by the German delegation, the Union Minister stressed that India's climate actions are based on the principle of CBDR-RC. He stated that India achieved the targets mentioned in the 1st NDC on renewable energy and energy intensity before time. Further, India has enhanced these targets along with the launch of Mission LiFE.

Concluding the meeting, both sides acknowledged the contribution of the Indo-German Bilateral Cooperation on environment and climate, and agreed to further strengthen the same and also explore how both countries can work together in areas like conservation of water bodies, circular economy, and e-waste.

TELEGRAPH,OCT30,2022

Tipping point: Editorial on climate crisis flagged by UN and The Lancet

The upcoming CoP-27 is a chance to address these concerns

Countries around the world are failing to live up to their commitments to fight climate change, pushing the planet towards a future marked by intense flooding, wildfires, drought, heat waves and species extinction, according to a report issued by the

United Nations this week. Another study by The Lancet raised concerns not only about the direct health consequences of dependence on fossil fuels and rising temperatures, including heat-related mortality, pregnancy complications and cardiovascular disease, but also the indirect costs, such as the effects that drier soil could have on malnutrition and how a changing climate can expand habitats suitable for mosquitoes that, in turn, would lead to a spike in dengue fever and malaria, both of which ravage Bengal and Calcutta. Each study on the changing climate throws up alarming results, even as governments globally have their heads buried in the sand.

Spiralling energy costs, soaring inflation and the geopolitical fallout of the war in Ukraine are on the minds of the global fraternity, relegating the climate emergency to the back-burner of policymaking. There is enough in the latest reports to set the alarm bells ringing and the CoP-27 summit, which begins in November, would be a litmus test for nations. Of course, the history of climate summits is one of failure to pass this test. CoP-26 in Glasgow had set its targets too far into the future to be of use. India's pledge to achieve net zero emissions by 2070 is a case in point. This collective inertia is proving to be fatal. The Lancet report, for instance, identified newer constituencies being affected by the rising temperature. Adults older than 65 years and children younger than one year of age are two such groups, who were exposed to 3.7 billion more heatwave days in 2021 than annually in 1986-2005; heat-related fatalities have increased by 68% between 2000-04 and 2017-21. Established vulnerable groups remain in peril. According to the World Bank's Groundswell report, up to 216 million people could be compelled to leave their nations by 2050 as a result of the emergence of climatic catastrophes such as water scarcity, decreased food yields and rising sea levels.

One major point of failure of climate summits concerns the onus of taking historical responsibility for climate change and make reparations. The developed world refuses to adequately compensate poor and developing countries, which would bear a disproportionate share of the disaster, so that the latter can take mitigatory action. Could nimble imagination resolve the discord? Alaska set up the Alaska Permanent Fund, which mandates that the country's mineral wealth belongs not to the government or to the private players but to all its citizens, including the unborn, entitling them to annual dividends from activities like oil drilling. If implemented on a global scale, the idea of the environment as a universal asset-based resource that can be used to fund change may save the planet.

CURRENT EVENTS

PIB,OCT24,2022

PM celebrates Diwali with Armed Forces in Kargil

Interacts with brave jawans on occasion

“For years, you have been a part of my family”

“Diwali is the festival of the end of terror”

“The India that we revere is not just a geographical territory but a living spirit, a constant consciousness, an immortal existence”

“You are standing as a shield on the border while strict action is being taken against the enemies within the country too”

“I admire our armed forces, who have decided that more than 400 pieces of defence equipment will no longer be bought from abroad, and will now be made in India itself”

“We are preparing the military strength of the country according to the new challenges, new methods and changing requirements of national defence”. Keeping in with his tradition of spending Diwali with armed forces, the Prime Minister spent this Diwali with the forces in Kargil.

Addressing the brave jawans, the Prime Minister said that the reverence for the soil of Kargil always draws him towards the brave sons and daughters of the armed forces. “For years, you have been a part of my family”, the Prime Minister said. The Prime Minister underlined that the sweetness of Diwali increases in the presence of the jawans and the light of Diwali that is present among them emboldens his spirit. “On one side there are the sovereign borders of the nation, and on the other committed soldiers, On one we have the love of the soil of the motherland, and on the other, there are braveheart jawans. I could not have expected a Diwali of such magnitude anywhere else”. The Prime Minister remarked that India gleefully

celebrates these sagas of valour and bravery that are part of our traditions and cultures. “Today, from the victorious lands of Kargil,” the Prime Minister said, “I wish a very happy Diwali to everyone in India and the world.”

The Prime Minister underlined that there have been no such wars against Pakistan when Kargil did not hoist the Tricolour after emerging victorious. Remarking on India’s longing in the world of today, the Prime Minister wished that the festival of lights illuminates the path of peace and prosperity in the current geopolitical landscape of today. Explaining the significance of Diwali, the Prime Minister said, “It is the festival of the end of terror.” Drawing an analogy to Diwali the Prime Minister remarked that Kargil had done exactly the same and the celebrations of the victory are remembered even today.”

The Prime Minister recalled that he was a witness to the Kargil war and had watched it closely. He expressed gratitude toward the authorities for preserving and showing 23-year-old photographs of the Prime Minister when he had come to spend time with the jawans when they were giving a befitting reply to the enemies during the war. “As an ordinary citizen, my Kartavya Path had led me to the battlefield”, the Prime Minister remarked. The Prime Minister remembered that he had come to drop off the supplies put together by the countrymen and said that it was a moment of worship for him. Remarking on the atmosphere during the time, the Prime Minister said that it was the call of every individual to commit mind, body and soul to the cause, and the cheers of victory filled the air around us.

“The India that we revere is not just a geographical territory but a living spirit, a constant consciousness, an immortal existence”, the Prime Minister exalted. “When we speak of India,” Shri Modi continued, “the eternal picture of India’s culture comes to the fore, the circle of legacy manufactures itself and the model of India’s might starts to grow.” He further added that India is a stream of such weaponry that begins on one end begins with the sky-high Himalayas and encompasses the Indian Ocean. The Prime Minister remembered that the many flourishing civilisations of the past were decimated to grains of sand but the existence of India’s cultural stream remained uninterrupted. He explained that a nation becomes immortal when the brave sons and daughters of the land show complete faith in their strength and resources.

The battlefield of Kargil is shining proof of the courage of the Indian Army. “Dras, Batalik and Tiger Hill are proof that enemies sitting on a mountaintop were dwarfed before the courage and valour of the Indian Armed Forces”, Shri Modi

remarked. He said that those manning India's borders are the resilient pillars of India's security. He further added that a country is secure only when its borders are secure, its economy is robust and the society is filled with self-confidence. The Prime Minister remarked that the morale of the entire nation goes up when we hear news about the strength of the country. Highlighting the feeling of solidarity among the countrymen, the Prime Minister gave the example of Swacch Bharat Mission and the timely delivery of pucca houses with electricity and water and remarked that every jawan feels proud of it. He remarked that far away when these services reach the jawans' houses, it gives them satisfaction. He further added that when the jawan notices the boost in connectivity, it gets easier for him to call home and even easier to get home during vacations. He also highlighted India's recent achievement of becoming the 5th largest economy in the world from the 10th largest 7-8 years ago. The Prime Minister also spoke about the 80,000-plus startups that keep the innovation mill running. He also recalled that two days ago, ISRO created a new record by simultaneously launching 36 satellites to expand broadband internet. The Prime Minister also threw light on the Ukraine War where the Tricolour acted as a protective shield for Indians.

The Prime Minister explained that it is the result of India successfully taking the fight against both external and internal enemies. "You are standing as a shield on the border while strict action is being taken against the enemies within the country." Shri Modi pointed out that the country has made a successful attempt to uproot terrorism, Naxalism and extremism. Speaking on Naxalism that had once engulfed a large part of the country, the Prime Minister said that its scope is continuously shrinking. Speaking on corruption, the Prime Minister remarked that India is fighting a decisive war. "No matter how powerful the corrupt may be, he cannot escape the law." He further added that misgovernance had limited the country's potential by creating obstacles in the way of our development. "With the mantra of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas and Sabka Prayas, we are fast removing all those old shortcomings", he added.

Throwing light on the advancement in technologies in modern warfare, the Prime Minister remarked that the nature of future wars is going to change and in this new era, we are preparing the military strength of the country according to the new challenges, new methods and changing requirements of national defence. Speaking on the need for major reforms in the army whose requirements were felt for decades, the Prime Minister assured that all possible steps are being taken so that there is better coordination of our forces to take swift action against every challenge. "For this, an institute like CDS has been created.

A network of modern infrastructure is being created on the border so that our jawans are more comfortable in performing their duty”, he said. He further added that many Sainik Schools are being opened in the country.

Highlighting Atmanirbhar Bharat, the Prime Minister pointed out that the most important aspect of the country's security is the possession of modern indigenous weapons in Indian armies. The Prime Minister informed that all three sections of defence have decided to minimize our dependence on foreign weapons and systems and pledged to be self-reliant. “I admire our three armies, who have decided that more than 400 pieces of defence equipment will no longer be bought from abroad, and will now be made in India itself”, he said. Pointing out the benefits of using indigenous weapons, the Prime Minister said that when the jawans of India fight with the weapons made in the country, their faith will be at its peak and their attacks will come with a surprise element for the enemy while crushing the enemy's morale. The Prime Minister gave the examples of Prachand - Light Combat Helicopters, Tejas Fighter Jets, and the colossal aircraft carrier Vikrant, and also highlighted India's missile strength in Arihant, Prithvi, Akash, Trishul, Pinak and Arjun. He further added that today, India has become an exporter of defence equipment while strengthening its missile defence system, and also working rapidly on modern and effective technology like drones.

“We follow the traditions where war is considered as the last option”, Shri Modi remarked. He said that India is always in favour of world peace. Shri Modi exclaimed, “We are against war, but peace is not possible without strength.” He further added that our armies have the capability and the strategy, and if someone looks at us, then our armies also know how to give a befitting reply to the enemy in their own language. Speaking on efforts taken to abolish the slavery mentality, the Prime Minister gave the example of the newly inaugurated Kartavya Path and said that it is promoting the new faith of New India. “Be it the National War Memorial or the National Police Memorial, these make for a new identity for new India”, he said. The Prime Minister also recalled the new Indian Navy Ensign and said, “now the inspiration of Shivaji's bravery has been added to the naval flag.”

The Prime Minister underlined that the eyes of the whole world today are on India and its growth potential. Shri Modi said that the Azadi Ka Amrit Kaal is going to be a real witness to this power of India. “Your role in this is huge because you are the Pride of India”, the Prime Minister remarked. He concluded his address by reciting a poem dedicated to the jawans of the Indian Armed Forces.

HINDUSTAN TIMES,OCT25,2022

Rishi Sunak vows to earn each Briton's trust as UK PM, talks of hopes, challenges

Rishi Sunak said that some mistakes were made” by his predecessor, while promising to place “economic stability and confidence” at the heart of his agenda. Rishi Sunak was on Tuesday anointed Britain's first Prime Minister with Indian origins. He paid a visit to Buckingham Palace after King Charles III invited him to form the new government following the exit of Liz Truss from the country's top post. In his first speech as the UK PM outside 10, Downing Street, the third boss the country had in three months, Sunak said fixing mistakes begins now. Promising to unite his crisis-hit country, he said he will earn his the citizens' trust and will put the needs of the public first. “Trust is earned and I will earn yours...,” Sunak said, adding there will be difficult decisions. Stating that some mistakes were made” by his predecessor, Sunak promised to place “economic stability and confidence” at the heart of his agenda. “I have been appointed to fix the mistakes.”

He said he would confront the “profound economic crisis” with compassion and lead a government of “integrity, professionalism and accountability.” “I want to pay tribute to my predecessor Liz Truss. She was not wrong to want to improve growth in this country. It is a noble aim. And I admired her restlessness to create change. But some mistakes were made — not born of ill will, or bad intentions. Quite the opposite, in fact. But mistakes, nonetheless. And I have been elected as leader of my party and your prime minister, in part to fix them,” Sunak added.

"Our country is facing a profound economic crisis. The aftermath of COVID still lingers. Putin's war in Ukraine has destabilised energy markets and supply chains the world over," the ex-Chancellor of Exchequer said. The 42-year-old former hedge fund boss is also the youngest British prime minister in 210 years. In his first address as Tory leader soon after the result was declared on Monday, Sunak said his priority would be to bring the country together and said he was "humbled and honoured" to get the "greatest privilege" of his life to give back to the country "I owe so much".

HINDUSTAN TIMES, OCT 25, 2022

'Mistakes were made, will fix them': Top quotes from Rishi Sunak's first address as UK PM

"I will unite our country not with words, but with action. I will work day in and day out to deliver for you", Sunak said.

Kanishka Singharia

In his first statement as Britain's Prime Minister on Tuesday, Rishi Sunak acknowledged the mistakes made by Liz Truss, and vowed to fix the economy, govern with honesty, and keep the promises stated in the Conservative Party's 2019 manifesto. Here are the top quotes from Rishi Sunak's first address as Prime Minister:

> "I want to pay tribute to my predecessor Liz Truss. She was not wrong to want to improve growth in this country. It is a noble aim. And I admired her restlessness to create change. But some mistakes were made — not born of ill will, or bad intentions. And I have been elected as leader of my party and your prime minister, in part to fix them."

> "Our country is facing a profound economic crisis. The aftermath of Covid still lingers. Putin's war in Ukraine has destabilised energy markets and supply chains the world over. I will place economic stability and confidence at the heart of this government's agenda. This will mean difficult decisions to come."

>"I will always be grateful to Boris Johnson for his incredible achievements as prime minister and I treasure his warmth and generosity of spirit."

> "I will unite our country not with words, but with action. I will work day in and day out to deliver for you. This government will have integrity, professionalism, and accountability at every level. Trust is earned and I will earn yours."

> "I will deliver on (our manifesto's) promise. A stronger NHS, better schools, safer streets, control of our borders, protecting our environment, supporting our armed forces, levelling up, and building an economy that embraces the opportunities of Brexit where businesses invest, innovate and create jobs."

PIB,OCT26,2022

7th ASEAN-India Ministerial Meeting held on Agro-Forestry under the co-chairmanship of Union Agriculture Minister Shri Narendra Singh Tomar

India will promote nutritious cereal products for public health and nutrition- Shri Tomar

India's emphasis on closer regional cooperation with ASEAN countries for agricultural development

The 7th ASEAN-India Ministerial Meeting (AIMMAF) on Agriculture and Forestry was held virtually today. The meeting was co-chaired by the Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Shri Narendra Singh Tomar. Agriculture Ministers of Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam also participated in the meeting. Union Minister Shri Narendra Singh Tomar, in his opening remarks during the meeting, reiterated Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of keeping ASEAN at the center of India's Act East Policy> He also emphasised on mutually close regional cooperation with ASEAN to ensure sustainable and inclusive growth for agricultural development in the region. Referring to the importance of millet (nutritional-cereals) as a nutritious food and the international nutritional-cereal year 2023, Shri Tomar urged the ASEAN member countries to support the efforts of India in

increasing the production, processing, value addition and consumption of millets. Shri Tomar said that India will promote nutritious cereal products for the health and nutrition of the people. Nutritious cereals help in the creation of nutritious, with low resource requirement and more efficient agri-food systems. In the meeting, the progress in implementation of various programs and activities under the Medium Term Action Plan of ASEAN-India Cooperation (Year 2021-2025) was reviewed. The meeting also welcomed the 30th anniversary of ASEAN-India relations. In the meeting, the commitment to ASEAN-India cooperation in agriculture and forestry was reaffirmed. It was said in the meeting that in order to mitigate the unprecedented impact of the COVID-19 pandemic by ensuring a seamless flow of safe and nutritious agricultural products to ASEAN and India, It is necessary to take continuous measures under ASEAN-India cooperation for the implementation of post-pandemic recovery. Union Minister Shri Tomar committed to enhance India's cooperation with ASEAN in food security, nutrition, climate change adaptation, digital farming, nature-friendly agriculture, food processing, value chain, agricultural marketing and capacity building.

PIB,OCT27,2022

Raksha Mantri graces 'Shaurya Diwas' celebrations in Srinagar to commemorate 75th year of air landed operations of Indian Army which ensured victory in 1947 war

Pays rich tributes to the bravehearts for protecting the unity & integrity of the country

“J&K has entered a new era of peace & prosperity following abrogation of Article 370”

Our aim is to implement 1994 Parliament resolution to reclaim PoK: Shri Rajnath Singh

Urges people to take the country to greater heights with unity & dedication

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh graced the 'Shaurya Diwas' celebrations in Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) on October 27, 2022 to commemorate the 75th year of air landed operations of Indian Army at Budgam Airport in 1947, which ensured the first civil-military victory of Independent India. On October 27, 1947, the Indian Army was inducted by the Indian Air

Force at Budgam Airport to evict Pakistani forces from J&K, a day after the ‘Instrument of Accession’ was signed between Maharaja Hari Singh and Republic of India. 27th October is, hence, celebrated as ‘Infantry Day’. The event was organised as part of ‘Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav’.

In his address, the Raksha Mantri paid rich tributes to the heroes of the Armed Forces & the people of J&K who laid down their lives to protect the unity & integrity of the country. He stated that it is because of their valour and sacrifice that J&K remained an integral part of India and will continue to be in the future. He asserted that despite a number of stumbling blocks, India has risen time & again because of the courage & sacrifice of our soldiers and today it is standing tall on the strong foundation laid by them. “The greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall. The incident of 1947 is one such instance,” he said. Shri Rajnath Singh recalled the valour of the first Param Vir Chakra recipient, Major Somnath Sharma, who despite being injured led a company & saved the Srinagar airfield from enemy clutches and in the process made the supreme sacrifice. He also paid glowing tributes to the bravery of other Gallantry award winners such as Brigadier Rajinder Singh and Lt Col Dewan Ranjit Rai, who gave away their lives to protect the motherland.

The Raksha Mantri said, Major Somnath Sharma and other heroes will always remain a source of inspiration for every Indian and the Nation will forever be indebted to their sacrifices. He also remembered former Chief Minister of Odisha Biju Patnaik, who as a pilot during the war, made a valuable contribution to the movement of the troops. He commended the crucial role played by the people of J&K who helped the Armed Forces in forcing the enemies to retreat and protect the sovereignty of the country. Shri Rajnath Singh termed the campaign of October 27, 1947 as the one for safeguarding the country’s territorial integrity as well as the safety of the people. It was a campaign to protect the dreams and aspirations of the people of J&K, he said. The Raksha Mantri added that post independence the people of J&K were deprived of development & tranquillity for decades, until the Government, led by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, came to the helm and abrogated Article 370, bringing a new era of peace & progress in the Union Territory (UT). He said, earlier some anti-India elements used to disturb peace and harmony in the name of religion, but now there is peace & tranquillity in J&K due to the persistent efforts by the Government and the Armed Forces.

“Terrorists have no religion. They are the enemies of humanity. Any violation of fundamental rights of a human being is not acceptable in an ideal society. This has been our commitment. The doors of development & peace have now been opened in J&K and Ladakh, with the people of the two UTs reaping the benefits of the welfare schemes of Government of India. There is unity among the people who are moving forward hand-in-hand,” asserted Shri Rajnath Singh.

The Raksha Mantri pointed out that some areas illegally occupied by Pakistan are still devoid of that progress. “Pakistan is fully responsible for inhuman incidents against innocent Indians in PoK. In the times to come, Pakistan will face the result of its atrocities. Today, the region of J&K and Ladakh is touching new heights of development. This is just the beginning. Our aim is to implement the resolution unanimously passed in Indian Parliament on February 22, 1994 to reclaim remaining parts, such as Gilgit and Baltistan,” he said. Shri Rajnath Singh stated that this ‘Shaurya Diwas’ gives the nation an opportunity to remember the valour of the bravehearts and inspires the people to take the country to greater heights with unity and dedication. “We are moving forward with the spirit of unity. We must resolve to fight together against any divisive forces which may come in the way of our development in the future,” he said.

During the event, the replication of the historic event was organised to pay obeisance to the brave soldiers and people of J&K. The Raksha Mantri, along with the citizens, witnessed the re-enactment of history, covering the violation of ‘Standstill Agreement’ by Pakistan. The event also depicted arrival of Indian Army on October 27, 1947 to evict the Pakistani Forces. A stunning airshow was organised by the Indian Air Force, which mesmerised the audience. The Next of Kin of war veterans, who travelled from across the country, were felicitated at the event.

Lieutenant Governor of J&K Shri Manoj Sinha, Chief of Army Staff General Manoj Pande; GOC-in-C, Northern Command Lieutenant General Upendra Dwivedi; Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Air Command Air Marshal S Prabhakaran; General Officer Commanding, 15 Corps Lieutenant General ADS Aujla, along with several other civil and military dignitaries attended the event.

PIB,OCT27,2022

Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya addresses Second G20 Health Ministers Meet

“Govt of India under PM Narendra Modi’s leadership attaches topmost importance to the Health sector”: Dr Mansukh Mandaviya

“India is committed to contributing immensely to creating a future-ready and resilient global healthcare ecosystem”

Government of India under Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s leadership attaches topmost importance to the health sector. We are committed to protecting global health and making sure we leave behind for the coming generations a better and healthier planet to live in”. This was stated by Dr Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare as he addressed the second G20 Health Ministers Meeting in Bali, Indonesia today. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the progress and way forward on priorities in the healthcare sector.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Mansukh Mandaviya stated that “India is committed to contributing immensely to creating a future-ready and resilient global healthcare ecosystem”. At the same time he also elaborated on building global health resilience wherein the proposal of a Financial Intermediary Fund was discussed. He also highlighted the need to acknowledge existing fault lines in the Global Health Architecture and the importance of building an inclusive, agile and responsive framework for health emergency management.

Dr Mandaviya also encouraged all G20 members to contribute their public keys to the proposed Global Federated Public Trust Directory for ensuring seamless worldwide mobility of people and goods.

PIB,OCT28,2022

Secretary I&B reviews working of PIB Research Wing; inaugurates Capacity Building Workshop

Underlines need to create content in Hindi & regional languages for better outreach to the masses

Shri Apurva Chandra, Secretary, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and Shri Satyendra Prakash, Principal Director General, Press Information Bureau (PIB) today reviewed the working of the Research Wing of PIB on the completion of its first year. The Research Wing was set up to address the long-felt need for government communication to be supported by research material of referral value in order to give a complete perspective of the decisions and policies of the government to the media.

The Research Wing, which began its journey in October 2021, produces fact-based, well researched content on Government initiatives to strengthen the information dissemination through PIB and other official channels to the media and the people. The Wing has created nearly 450 documents in the form of explainers, factsheets, FAQs, features etc. since its inception which have found very good traction across different media platforms.

Shri Chandra also inaugurated the one-day Capacity Building Workshop organized by the Research Wing for its members. Speaking on the occasion, the Secretary emphasized the need for creating content for communication in Hindi as well as regional languages for better outreach to the masses and generating greater awareness about government programmes and policies. He congratulated the team on its contributions across various projects with visible outcomes and gave valuable inputs to help further enrich its work in the near future. The Inaugural Session of the workshop was also attended by Shri Vikram Sahay- Joint Secretary, Ministry of I&B and other senior Officers of the Indian Information Service.

The Secretary noted that the formation of the Research Wing has been one of the most significant new initiatives of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in the past year and has successfully carved out a niche for itself in the domain of Government communication. Speaking on the occasion, Shri Satyendra Prakash highlighted the importance of research to back government communication so as to give a holistic perspective on issues of national importance to the media and public at large. Throwing light upon the roles and expectations from the Wing, he stressed on the need to make the PIB platform content-rich, precise, attractive and engaging for the readers. Government communicators should never lose sight of the final consumer of their product, he added.

Shri Ashish Goyal, Additional Director General, Research Wing, presented an overview of the Research Wing. He traced the progress of the Wing from its early days to the present date, highlighting the diverse nature of work done over the past year and the course envisioned for the days ahead.

The two afternoon sessions of the workshop were focused on building the capabilities of the Research Wing team by introducing them to new tools and concepts that can add greater value to their content. Dr. Anubhuti Yadav, Professor at the Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC), addressed a session on ‘Visual Communication: Tools and Skills’, where she introduced the participants to a diverse range of tools that can enhance the visual appeal of research documents and make them increasingly engaging for the target audience. Participants were also taken through a session on ‘Communication Research: Methodology and Tools’ where Dr. Shashwati Goswami, Professor, IIMC and Ms. Ananya Roy, Research Officer, IIMC, guided them through the nuances of communication research.

HINDUSTAN TIMES, OCT30, 2022

PM Modi to lay foundation stone of Vadodara plant for C-295 planes today: Top 10

The C-295 planes would be manufactured at the Gujarat facility with an aim to modernise the IAF fleet.

Swati Bhasin

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to visit his home state of Gujarat on Sunday to lay the foundation stone for a manufacturing facility of the Tata-Airbus consortium. This is the country's first aircraft manufacturing facility in the private sector, and has been pitched as a crucial step towards "Atmanirbharta" (or self-reliance). The C-295 aircraft - which would be manufactured at the facility - aims to modernise the Indian Air Force (IAF) fleet. The total cost of the project is said to be around ₹21,935 crore.

Here are ten points on Sunday's event and PM Modi's Gujarat visit:

1. "Tomorrow, 30th October will always be remembered as a special day in our quest to attain Atmanirbharta and emerging as a hub for next-gen infrastructure relating to aviation sector. Looking forward to the programme in Vadodara," PM Modi wrote in a tweet on Saturday.
2. The facility comes following a collaboration between Tata Advanced Systems Limited and Spain-based Airbus Defence and Space.
3. Last year, India had sealed a nearly ₹21,000 crore deal with Airbus Defence and Space for 56 C-295 planes. While first 16 planes would be delivered from Spain, 40 of these aircraft would be manufactured at the Vadodara facility.
4. This is the first time that the C-295 planes - that are set to replace Avro-748 planes of Air Force - would be manufactured outside Europe.
5. PM Modi will also visit an exhibition showcasing technological and manufacturing strides in the aerospace industry under Atmanirbhar Bharat.
6. The project, however, has triggered a row in Maharashtra with the opposition accusing the Eknath Shinde-Devendra Fadnavis government of losing the plant to Gujarat where elections are due in few months,

7. The ruling coalition had earlier attempted to house the joint venture at the Multi-modal International Cargo Hub and Airport (MIHAN) in Nagpur.
8. The project is expected to generate tens of thousands jobs at a time when the opposition has been attacking the BJP over the issue of unemployment ahead of the 2024 national elections.
9. Meanwhile, on Monday, PM Modi would be in Kevadia to mark the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel.
10. “The celebration will witness Rashtriya Ekta Diwas Parade, which will include contingents of BSF and of five State Police Forces, one each from Northern Zone (Haryana), Western Zone (Madhya Pradesh), Southern Zone (Telangana), Eastern Zone (Odisha) and North Eastern Zone (Tripura). Apart from the contingents, six Police Sports Medal winners of the Commonwealth Games 2022 will also participate in the Parade,” a government statement read. PM Modi would be in Rajasthan on Tuesday.