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Sr.No	Subject	Page No.
1	Polity and Governance	3-13
2	Economic and Social Development	14-16
3	Science and Technology	17-19
4	Environment and Climate	20-37
5	Current Events	38-48

## POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

PIB,MAR27,2023

Big boost to rural employment as more than 31,000 jobs on the way under DDU-GKY

Rural Development Ministry to sign MoU with 19 Captive employers under the RTD (Recruit, Train & Deploy) model

Shri Giriraj Singh to distribute appointment letters to few candidates who had got similar training under the Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY)

In a big boost to rural employment, the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) is signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with 19 Captive Employers and provide them the target to train and provide gainful employment to 31,067 rural poor youths under the Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY) with minimum salary of 10000/per month for the minimum period of 6 months. Union Minister of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Shri Giriraj Singh will be the Chief Guest at the MoU signing ceremony in New Delhi tomorrow. On the occasion, he will also distribute appointment letters to few candidates who had got similar training under the DDU-GKY and placed with captive employers.

Based on the direction of Shri Giriraj Singh, MoRD launched the Captive employment Guidelines under DDUGKY to ensure that the candidates are trained as per the industry requirement and employed. The Captive Employment model allows the employer to select the rural youths, skill & deploy them in one of its own establishment/sister-concern/subsidiaries. The RTD (Recruit, Train & Deploy) model has been developed to address the needs of the Industry on one hand and ensuring sustainable placement for rural youth on the another hand. The model will be a win-win situation for Industry, Government & Rural Poor Youth. Industry will be able to provide more hands-on training at the job site itself as per its requirement while Government

will ensure longer placements (Minimum six months) for rural poor youth candidates. The Captive Employment Guidelines will increase the direct involvement of the industry due to the benefits provided to the industries for encouraging them to participate in the DDU-GKY program thereby ensuring the large quantity employment for rural youths. Few of the Benefits provided to the Captive Employers are: Top Most Priority in target allocation, Waiver of Performance Bank Guarantee, Waiver of Quality Appraisal Process and Fees, Due Diligence of Training Centre and few other mandates of DDU-GKY to ease the operations for industries, MoU with MoRD for the period of 3 Years, Industry to also get Trained Manpower on Work which may reduce wear and tear, better performance, training cost from Govt.

However, in turn Captive Employers are required to offer Captive (In-house) placement to all the trained candidates and provide captive employment to minimum 70% of trained candidates for the period of 6 months with Minimum Salary of Rs. 10,000 for training courses less than 6 months & Rs. 12,000 for training courses more than 6 months. The basic objective of DDU-GKY is to provide the gainful placement in sustainable manner to rural youth after skilling hence the concept of captive employment was envisaged and launched on the occasion of Antyodaya Divas in the year 2020.

PIB, MAR 27, 2023

Union Minister Jitendra Singh refers to integrated strategy to achieve 'TB Mukta Bharat':

Says, Department of Biotechnology is going to play an important part in the integrated holistic healthcare approach against elimination of Tuberculosis, in keeping with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's commitment of 'TB Mukta Bharat' by 2025. 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 announced integrated strategy to achieve 'TB Mukta Bharat' and said, the Department of Biotechnology, which gave the world first DNA vaccine against Covid, is going to

play an important part in this integrated holistic healthcare approach against elimination of Tuberculosis, in keeping with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's commitment of 'TB Mukht Bharat' by 2025. Inspired by PM Narendra Modi's clarion call at the One World TB summit at Varanasi on 24th March, the Minister declared commencement of the pilot phase of Indian Tuberculosis Genomic Surveillance Consortium (InTGS) with successful completion of WGS of 182 strains of Mtb isolated from TB patients and development of a novel blood bag technology at DBT-InStem, Bengaluru. Dr. Jitendra Singh was interacting with the Press on Bio-Next-Tech Innovations. Presentations on new initiatives on improving Tuberculosis outcomes – a) AYUSH interventions to improve TB patient quality-of-life (QOL) b) Mapping drug resistance through genomics & artificial intelligence (AI) and novel blood bag technology to enhance quality and shelf life of stored blood were made.

Dr. Jitendra Singh said that considering the deep societal and economic impact caused by Tuberculosis, the Govt. of India has placed a high priority for 'TB Mukht Bharat' by 2025. Biotechnology is going to play a huge part in the integrated holistic healthcare approach against elimination of Tuberculosis. Data-Driven Research to Eradicate TB- "Dare2eraD TB" an umbrella program of the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) was launched on World TB Day in 2022. Indian Tuberculosis Genomic Surveillance Consortium (InTGS), one of the key components of the program, is a joint initiative between the Ministry of Science & Technology and the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, led by the Department of Biotechnology. DBT, ICMR, CSIR and



other R&D institutes are part of the consortium & aim to perform Whole Genome Sequencing (WGS) of 32500 strains of TB. Dr. Rajesh S. Gokhale, Secretary, Department of Biotechnology stated that InTGS is modelled on the lines of the highly successful Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium (INSACOG).

Dr. Jitendra Singh said, this will be the first pan- India initiative at such scale to fully understand the biological characteristics of Mycobacterium tuberculosis (Mtb) and the effect of the mutations on transmission, treatment, and disease severity. He stated that this could lay the groundwork for use of modern technology such as WGS for TB diagnosis and surveillance in future. He mentioned that the Hon'ble Prime Minister had recently addressed the One World TB Summit at Varanasi on the occasion of World TB Day on 24th March 2023 where several initiatives were launched and the efforts of the Department align with the vision of 'TB Mukta Bharat' by 2025.

Dr. Jitendra Singh mentioned that the Government's focus has been on following an integrative approach for the different systems of medicine for the provision of holistic healthcare. He added that under a MoU signed between the Ministry of AYUSH and Department of Biotechnology, conducting high impact research studies on Ayurveda intervention as adjuvant to Anti TB therapy (ATT) for improving quality of life, managing cachexia, bio-enhancing of ATT and hepato-protection is being planned.

Dr. Jitendra Singh remarked that the Government has also been strongly supporting indigenous R&D and innovation in the Healthcare sector. He announced development of a novel Indian blood bag technology by scientists at the Institute for Stem Cell Science and Regenerative Medicine (DBT-inStem), an autonomous institute of the Department of Biotechnology. This is based on nanofibrous sheets that can capture damage-causing components from blood to increase the quality and shelf-life of stored blood and efforts are being made to commercialise this technology through a spin-off startup company, CaptureBio Private Limited.

PIB,MAR28,2023

Union Minister Shri Giriraj Singh initiates ‘Captive Employment’ initiative under Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY), paving the way for greater industry participation in skilling rural poor youth

19 Captive Employers signed MoU with Ministry of Rural Development, under DDU-GKY program for training and placing more than 31,000 rural youth in their own establishment or subsidiary companies

10 candidates being trained under the DDU-GKY program and going through on-Job Training handed out appointment letters during the program

Two candidates awarded with appreciation letter for their performance during their tenure of their current employment

Union Minister for Rural Development Sh. Giriraj Singh onboarded 19 Captive Employers, a unique initiative under the Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY) in New Delhi today. Captive employers will train Rural Poor Youth and provide employment to trained youth in their company or subsidiary. The event was also graced by the presence of Union Ministers of State Shri Kapil Moreshwar Patil (Panchayati Raj), Sadhvi Niranjan Jyoti (Rural Development and Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution) and Shri Faggan Singh Kulaste (Rural Development and Steel).



Speaking at the event, Shri Giriraj Singh said India has the potential to emerge as the skill capital of the world and the MoU signed between MoRD and the Captive Employers is the first step towards this aim. In the first phase 19 Captive Employers are being engaged to train and provide jobs to over 31,000 rural youth. “We are confident that in the future this number of jobs generated will jump from 30,000 to 1,30,000,” he said.

Shri Giriraj Singh emphasised that the Captive Employer scheme will bridge the gap between job seeker and job provider. The Minister invited suggestions from the participating employers to bring the changes in the said arrangement in order to make it more rewarding and effective. He also emphasised that Ministry as well as the States need to organise meetings with CII, FICCI, PHD Chamber of Commerce and MSME Associations.

MoS Shri Kapil Moreshwar Patil, in his speech, said that the Ministry of Rural Development, through its DDU-GKY programme and partner Project Implementing Agencies (PIAs), is helping the rural youth find their ground by providing them with employment opportunities and thereby empowering them financially. He also exhorted Captive Employers to inform other industry partners to participate in this scheme and reap rewards in the form of getting a ready supply of skilled Human Resource.

Addressing the gathering, MoS Shri Faggan Singh Kulaste said this is a ‘Rozgar Mela’ (Employment Fair), the more the number of youth and their trust in the scheme gains, the better. “This is the dream of our Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and this is the actual Make In India,” he said.

MoS Sadhvi Niranjana Jyoti observed that the captive employment programme is a significant initiative of the Ministry. She said, "Every individual is a source of immense possibilities. This initiative will remind our youth of their potential and make them AatmaNirbhar (self-reliant). Also, it will help bridge the human resource needs of the industry." During the event, Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) were signed with 19 Employers to engage as captive employers in the ambitious initiative by the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) for providing livelihoods to the rural youth under the DDU-GKY programme.

The selected CAPTIVE EMPLOYERS will be providing training to rural poor youth in their respective industries, namely, hospitality, apparel & textiles, manufacturing, IT/ITeS, telecom, retail, Power etc. More than 31,000 jobs are expected to be provided to rural poor youth through this unique initiative. The latest initiative is aimed at providing hands-on training with the concerned PIA, which is at par with the industry requirements. At the event, 10 select recently trained candidates, through the programme, were also handed out appointment letters by the dignitaries. These candidates have recently completed their On-the-Job Training (OJT) after completion of training.

#### About Captive Employment:

'Captive Employment', is a first of its kind initiative aimed at addressing the vision of a dynamic and demand-based skilling ecosystem catering to the requirements of industry partners assuring sustainable placements for rural poor youth. The initiative is a shot in the arm for the DDU-GKY programme, assuring post-training placement of candidates for a minimum of six months with a minimum CTC of Rs 10,000/-. This program will be a big boon for rural poor to augment their job needs and improve their standard of living. This program shall also contribute to sustainable development goals.

## About DDU-GKY:

Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY) is a placement linked skilling program of the Ministry of Rural Development under the aegis of National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM). This program caters to the rural poor youth. It was launched on 25 September 2014 and is funded by MoRG, Govt of India. The program is currently being implemented in 27 States and 4 UTs for rural poor youth with an emphasis on placements. More than 877 PIAs (Project Implementation Agencies) are training rural poor youth in about 616 job-roles through more than 2,369 training centres. A total of 14.08 lakh candidates have been trained and 8.39 lakh candidates placed since inception under the programme.

With changing times and changing aspiration of rural youth, the programme to is undergoing transformation in its Guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures. DDU-GKY 2.0 Guidelines are in the advance stage of finalisation in the ministry. This new version of the program aspires to improve by skilling ecosystem and make it more job oriented.

PIB,MAR31,2023

UIDAI seeds 10.97 million Aadhaars with mobile numbers in February, 93% more than January

Aadhaar authentication transactions jump over 13% to cross 226 crore in February

Over 10.97 million mobile numbers were seeded in Aadhaar following requests from residents in the month of February 2023, a jump of more than 93 per cent over the previous month.

According to the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), while 5.67 million mobile numbers were seeded following residents application, the number saw a significant climb in February. The UIDAI has been encouraging residents to link their Aadhaar with mobile number for better and effective communication while availing welfare services and accessing multitude of voluntary services. The jump is indicative of UIDAI's continuous encouragement, facilitation, and residents' willingness to keep their mobile number updated for availing various services. Nearly, 1700 Central and State social welfare direct benefit transfer (DBT) and good governance schemes have been notified for use of Aadhaar. There is a growing adoption and usage of Aadhaar across sectors in India. In the month of February alone, 226.29 crore number of Aadhaar authentication transactions were executed, more than 13 per cent growth over January when 199.62 crore such transactions were carried out. Cumulatively, 9,255.57 crore Aadhaar authentication transactions have been executed so far, by the end of February 2023. While a majority of the authentications transaction numbers were carried out by using fingerprint, it is followed by demographic and OTP.

Similarly, Aadhaar e-KYC service continues to play a stellar role for banking and non-banking financial services by providing transparent and improved customer experience, and helping in ease of doing business. More than 26.79 crore e-KYC transactions were carried out in the month of February. Adoption of e-KYC has reduced customer acquisition cost of entities like financial institutions, telecom service providers and others. Cumulatively, Aadhaar e-KYC transactions so far has gone past 1,439.04 crore by the end of February.

Whether it is AePS for last mile banking, Aadhaar enabled DBT for direct fund transfer, e-KYC for identity verification, or authentications, Aadhaar has been playing a key role in supporting the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi's vision of Digital India, and enabling ease of living for residents.

During the past decade, Aadhaar number has emerged as a proof of identity of residents in India and it is being used for availing several government schemes and services. Residents who had got their Aadhaar issued 10 years ago, and have never updated after that in these years, such Aadhaar number holders are encouraged to get their documents updated.

## ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

PIB,MAR27,2023

New NCERT textbooks to be made/ developed in 22 languages included in the VIII Schedule.

Dharmendra Pradhan steers meeting on faster roll out of textbooks

Union Education Minister Shri Dharmendra Pradhan today held a high level meeting on new National Curriculum Framework and new textbooks based on NEP 2020, in New Delhi. Secretary, School Education Shri Sanjay Kumar, Senior officials of NCERT and Members of National Steering Committee on National Curriculum Framework attended the meeting. During the meeting the Minister asked to develop textbooks in 22 languages included in the VIII schedule of the Constitution. This will be in consonance with the National Education Policy - 2020 perspective of imparting multilingual education.

Shri Pradhan also said that the learning-teaching material “Jaadui Pitara” developed by the NCERT will be taken forward to reach out to every school in the form of open education resources. There is a need to make it a mass movement so that innovative and creative youth will join hands to develop a variety of innovative learning-teaching materials, he added.

PIB,APRIL1,2023

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh urged the PRI representatives to carry Prime Minister Modi’s welfare schemes to the last mile.

Presiding over a meeting of Panchayati Raj Institution representatives from Amroha District in Uttar Pradesh, Dr Jitendra Singh said that PRIs can be the messengers of Prime Minister Modi’s people centric initiatives

and programmes as they are directly in touch with the grassroot people. Modi symbolises grass root level democracy which is liberated from any dynasty politics as he himself has risen from the grassroots: Dr Jitendra Singh With Sabka Prayas, the Centre has been able to bring many schemes closer to 100% saturation during the last 8 years

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 urged the PRI representatives to carry the Prime Minister Modi's welfare schemes to the last mile.

Presiding over a meeting of Panchayati Raj Institution representatives from Amroha District in Uttar Pradesh, Dr Jitendra Singh said that they can be the most important messengers of Prime Minister Modi's people centric initiatives and programmes as they are directly in touch with the grassroot people. He said panchayats are continuously being empowered under Modi. The Minister further pointed out that the PRIs being elected representatives, know who are the most needy among the lowest strata of the society and can ensure that the benefits reach them without any vote bank consideration. Dr Jitendra Singh quoted Modi as saying, "The country has made this resolve to cover 100 per cent of the beneficiaries. When there is 100 percent coverage of schemes, the appeasement politics come to an end. There remains no space for it".

Dr Jitendra Singh emphasised that Modi symbolises grassroot level democracy which is liberated from any dynasty politics as he himself has risen from the grassroots. He has always insisted on the strengthening of Panchayati Raj Institutions and decentralising powers with the efficient utilisation of the central funds by discretion of the PRI representatives.

The Minister further added that the Prime Minister's faith in Panchayati Raj Institutions and grassroot level democracy is evident from the fact that after 70 years, it was due to his intervention that for the first time,

Jammu and Kashmir district development council (DDC) elections were held. Dr Jitendra Singh emphasised the need for time-bound completion of development programmes and underlined the need for adoption of newer technologies and innovations for faster completion of projects without compromising with any quality.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, when Modi took over in May, 2014, almost half of the country's population was deprived of facilities like toilets, housing, vaccination, electricity connection and bank accounts. He said, with 'Sabka Prayas', the Centre has been able to bring many schemes closer to 100% saturation during the last 8 years. There is a new resolve to make India a frontline state in the world in the next 25 years of Amrit Kaal.

Dr Jitendra Singh appreciated the efforts of the PRI representatives for strengthening grass root level democracy and making people aware about the benefits of the Government's welfare schemes. He said to PRIs that they should always keep in mind Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call for maximising the reach and utilisation of government schemes in rural India so that no one is left out. He said, the Modi Government has reiterated on many occasions that there would be no shortage of funds for any of the central schemes.



## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

PIB,MAR27,2023

Providing multilingual internet crucial to bridge digital divide in India: MeitY Addl Secy at 2-day NIXI event on Universal Acceptance

### Key points

- India has been chosen as the flag-bearer this year to promote and promulgate Universal Acceptance for digital inclusion.
- Being celebrated globally, this inaugural UA Day is aimed at driving efforts for inclusive and multilingual internet.
- The 2-day event is being organised by National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI), a non-for-profit company under the aegis of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) on 27th-28th March.

Calling India the right place for Universal Acceptance Day celebrations, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY), Shri Bhuvnesh Kumar said that providing a multilingual internet user interface was crucial to bridge digital divide in the country. He was speaking at the curtain raiser of the 2-day event on Universal Acceptance Day today, organised by National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI), a non-for-profit company, under the aegis of the MeitY.

Being organised on 27th and 28th March, the event is aimed at driving collaborative efforts for inclusive and multilingual internet. The unique initiative was lauded by Union Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology Rajeev Chandrasekhar as well.

Elaborating on the importance of Universal Acceptance, Shri Bhuvnesh Kumar said, “India, which is home to many languages, has been successful in providing domain names in 22 official languages and this is a huge achievement. The country has the most internet users but it must be noted that language barriers also make it a base of the largest numbers of non-users who do not speak English. It is very important that we not just provide internet services but also create emails and websites in native languages. Providing a multilingual internet user interface is crucial for bridging the current digital divide. Through Universal Acceptance, we can connect with non-internet users and promote digital inclusion across the country and the world.”

Notably, India which is fast-turning into a digital economy, has been chosen as the flag bearer this year to promote and promulgate Universal Acceptance for digital inclusion. The event is a first-of-its-kind effort to initiate thought-provoking, meaningful and result-oriented dialogues to raise awareness, break the language barriers and make the internet accessible to a larger population and bring every citizen in the ambit of economic progress.

The first day of the event witnessed the presence of dignitaries and thought-leaders including Edmon Chung- Board Director, ICANN, Ajay Data - Chair UASG, Jia-Rong Low- Vice President & MD, APAC, ICANN, Anil Kumar Jain- CEO, NIXI, Asha Nangia- Scientist G (MeitY), T Santhosh- Scientist ‘E’, Internet Governance Division, Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology, Nitin Wali - Senior Director of Stakeholder Engagement, ICANN, and others who shared their views with students, developers, researchers, content creators, participants and other guests.

Speaking during a session, Jia-Rong Low, Vice President & MD, APAC, ICANN said, “UA will break down language barriers to help bring the next billion people online. We need to work together to raise awareness for industry particularly the Indian tech companies to accept domain names in diff scripts. I am confident that India's vision for a multilingual Internet will come to fruition and be a success case for the world.”

The first day of the event hosted engaging sessions and workshops on relevant and important topics such as ‘Introduction to Universal Acceptance (UA),’ ‘Making your website Universal Acceptance ready: Way Forward’, ‘Universal Acceptance work in India’, ‘Importance of UA for multi-cultural society in India,’ and others.

Universal Acceptance means building a technical environment to allow computing devices, operating systems, browsers, social media or e-commerce to accept instructions in local language other than English and ensure valid domain names and email addresses, regardless of script, language or character length. India has set a target of becoming a USD 1 trillion digital economy soon and it is important for the country to widen the cover of digital inclusion with UA. Achieving it can ensure every Indian has the ability to experience the full social and economic power of the internet by choosing domain name and email address in any language that best aligns with their interests, business, culture, language, and script. Being celebrated globally on 28th March, this inaugural UA Day is being organised by UASG and ICANN and it aims to engage and mobilize top technical and language communities, companies, governments and DNS industry stakeholders to better understand the benefits of UA and how they can make their systems UA-ready. It is reported that more than 50 countries are participating in celebrating 1st Global UA day.

## ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE

PIB,MAR27,2023

### G20 DELEGATES DISCUSS INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ON DAY 1 OF 2ND ECSWG MEET AT GANDHINAGAR

### INDIA'S TRADITIONAL & MODERN WATER MANAGEMENT PROWESS SHOWCASED TO DELEGATES

The 2nd Meeting of Environment and Climate Sustainability Working group started with focus on water resource management. More than 130 delegates from 19 G20 member countries, 09 Invitee countries and 13 International Organisations are taking part in the meeting being held at The Mahatma Mandir, Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

Ms Debashree Mukherjee, Special Secretary, Ministry of Jal Shakti in her opening Address welcomed the delegates from G20 members, invitee countries, and international organizations and highlighted the fact that management of water resources in a holistic manner is pre-requisite for the development of a nation and consequently water secured world. She emphasized the need for collaboration and knowledge sharing in the field of water resources. She also pointed out that G20 India Presidency appreciates the valuable work, successful programmes, and innovations in the field of water resources by G20 members and India is committed to strengthen this cooperation in water resources development and management through sharing of the technical experiences, best practices, usage of state-of-the-art tools and technology and case studies of successful interventions in water sector for mutual benefits.

Thereafter, G20 members & other participants shared their best practices with presentations from Indonesia, Brazil, Argentina, Canada, China, European Union, France, Germany, Italy, Korea, Mexico, Japan, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, UK, USA, Denmark, Singapore, Spain, Oman and Netherlands as well as by International Organisations like Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Solar Alliance (ISA), United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and Asian Development Bank (ADB) showcasing their Best Practices on Water Resources Management. The following were the major themes of their presentations:

Integrated & Sustainable Use of Water Resources /Ecosystem Management

Waterbody Restoration / River Rejuvenation

Rainwater Management

Groundwater Management

Water Efficiency Approach with Adaptation to Climate Change

Drought/ Flood Management

Watershed Management with Focus on Civil Society Participation

Efficient Water Governance

Safe drinking Water and Wastewater Management

Water supply augmentation

Participatory Groundwater management practices

During her closing remarks, Ms Mukherjee thanked the delegates for their active participation and for sharing best practices on Water Resources Management. She appreciated that the presentations from all across the

globe encompassing plethora of water issues and challenges and innovative ways to address them amicably by G20 members will be definitely of immense value for all G20 members. She emphasized that India always plays an active role in such collaborative scientific endeavors as we truly believe in the concept of ‘Universal brotherhood & Collective wisdom’, and always contributed for betterment of humankind and collectively, it will lead to ‘One Earth, One Family and One Future’. The session was followed by visit by the delegates to the exhibition stalls put-up by the organizations under the Ministry of Jal Shakti showcasing various themes & sharing the quality work in Atal Jal, Swachh Bharat Mission, Jal Jeevan Mission, Namami Gange, Jal Shakti Abhiyan, Nation Water Mission, etc.

Thereafter, the excursion visits were undertaken by G20 Delegates to the following sites showcasing India's Water Management Practices

Adalaj Vav - Demonstration of the ancient water management practices of India

Sabarmati Siphon - Sabarmati Siphon demonstrates India’s engineering prowess as Narmada river’s waters flow through a huge tunnel built under the bed of the river

Sabarmati Escape - Sabarmati Escape facilitates a safe evacuation of canal in case of emergency.

Sabarmati River Front- The project approach is to bring about an overall environmental improvement, social upliftment and sustainable development along the Riverfront.

PIB,MAR27,2023

PARIVESH Portal provides a “single window” solution for an expeditious, transparent and effective decision making without compromising on environmental safeguards

PARIVESH is a web based, role-based workflow application which has been developed for online submission and monitoring of the proposals submitted by the proponents seeking for Environmental (EC), Forest (FC),

Wildlife (WL) and Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) clearances. Main aim and objective of the PARIVESH portal is to provide a “single window” solution by process automation of aforementioned four major clearances through process & data synchronization, leveraging emerging technologies such as GIS, Advance Data Analytics etc for an expeditious, transparent and effective decision making without compromising on the environmental safeguards.

In pursuance of the spirit of ‘Digital India’ and capturing the essence of Minimum Government and Maximum Governance, the government had launched a single window portal “PARIVESH (Pro Active and Responsive Facilitation by Interactive and Virtuous Environmental Single-window Hub)” on 10.08.2018 at Central level and on 16.08.2019 at State level for handling four major clearances as mentioned in reply to para (a) above. As per the details available on PARIVESH Portal, the total number of clearances (EC, FC, WL and CRZ) granted since inception, is as under:

Year

Number of Clearance granted

2018

577

2019

3498

2020

8169

2021

8793

2022

12496

Ministry of Environment, forest and Climate Change has taken several measures through policy and technological interventions in order to remove redundancy and to streamline the clearance process with the environmental safeguards. Due to the above measures, the average time taken for grant of EC and CRZ clearance at the central level has reduced significantly from more than 150 days in 2019 and 102 days in 2020 to less than 70 days in 2022, respectively. Similarly, average time taken for grant of 'in-principle' FC approval has been calculated to be ~180 days for the financial year (FY) 2021-22 against 188 days in the previous FY.

The existing PARIVESH portal launched at the Central level in August 2018 has met its objectives and facilitated uninterrupted services to the industries even during difficult period of CoVID. However, in order to enhance the Users experience, scope of existing PARIVESH has been expanded to ensure due diligence and adherence to environmental safeguards while examining project proposals by including new functionalities based on emerging technologies, such as GIS, advance Data Analytics etc. Some of the transformational modules included in the expanded scope are: Know Your Approval (KYA) module to provide the tentative list of clearances required and to support the project proponent in assessing the environmental sensitivity and planning of the project before its execution; Decision Support System (DSS) a spatial-based visualization and analytical module to provide tools for exploration of the project proximity and to help the expert committees and regulatory authority in taking a considered decision in expeditious manner; Common Application Form (CAF) and Application Form Management module to minimize the repetitive efforts of the Users and at the same time to ensure the single version of the truth across all applicable clearances and Compliance Management module to ensure reduction in compliance burden and improving ease of doing



business. However, all processing of proposals for grant of EC is on the basis of EIA/EMP, examined by the duly constituted Expert Appraisal Committees (EACs) and final approval is given only after incorporating general and specific conditions so as to ensure compliances of environmental standards and safeguards. Grant of clearances/approvals under different Acts and Rules is a continuous process. Proposals received for various activities are examined / appraised as per the procedure defined in different Acts and Rules. Prompt decision is taken by the Central Government on the proposals which are complete in all respect as per the timeline prescribed in different Acts and Rules/Guidelines. This information was given by Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Ashwini Kumar Choubey in a written reply to the Lok Sabha.

PIB, MAR 28, 2023

G20 Delegates in Second Environment Climate Sustainability Working Group (ECSWG) meeting at Gandhinagar discuss key issues pertaining to identified priorities with emphasis on developing inclusive, action-oriented outcomes

Integrated approach essential for recognizing key role of water resource conservation and sustainable development to ensure adequate water allocation both in terms of quality and quantity

The second day of the 2nd Environment and Climate Sustainability Working Group (ECSWG) meeting commenced at Gandhinagar, Gujarat with the opening remarks by G20 Co-chair for India, Ms. Richa Sharma, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. Speaking on the occasion, she emphasised on the need to collaborate with the G20 countries and engage in an inclusive, consensus driven approach and actions to address climate change. She expressed her gratitude to the delegates for their active involvement in the first ECSWG meeting and the Focus Group Discussions between the two working Group meetings on the three thematic priorities. She reaffirmed India's commitment to facilitate tangible outcomes to build a strong foundation before passing on the baton to the Brazil Presidency.

Acknowledging the work of past Presidencies and the deliberations on the three priorities during the 1st ECSWG, Ms. Sharma highlighted the importance of receiving inputs during the technical sessions which would help shape the outcomes for each priority. She further expressed that consistent and enthusiastic participation from all delegates will greatly facilitate the process of finalizing the draft Communique. The representatives from the Troika (Indonesia and Brazil) echoed the Co-Chair's remarks on the expected outcomes from the G20 India Presidency.

The inaugural session was followed by the first technical session of the day on Water Resource Management, led by Ms. Debashree Mukherjee, Special Secretary, Water Resources, Ministry of Jal Shakti. The presentations made during the session highlighted the need for efficient management of water resources to achieve the overarching UN Sustainable Development Goals and also addressed global water challenges such as climate change, population growth, and increasing water demand. Thematic presentations were also made on Namami Gange -an integrated Conservation Mission to accomplish effective abatement of pollution, conservation and rejuvenation of Ganga, climate resilient infrastructure – water storage/ Dam Rehabilitation & Improvement Project (DRIP), participatory ground water management, Jal Jeevan mission – a project to provide safe and adequate drinking water by 2024 to all households in rural India, and Swachh Bharat - the project on Universalization of Water Sanitation & Hygiene and its effects. These presentations further corroborated the ever-demanding need of such initiatives to address the depleting level of ground water at an alarming rate. The G20 countries expressed their concerns on the subject , following are some of the key suggestions from the participants:

Jal Jeevan Mission & other Indian interventions were highly appreciated.

The role of cooperation at all possible levels is key in effective Water Resource Management (WRM).

Common understanding of water and groundwater and integrating principles of sustainable development in implementation of WRM is critical. Indonesia will be hosting World Water Forum in 2024 and importance of the same for water cooperation was highlighted. An integrated approach is essential for recognizing the key role of water resource conservation and sustainable development, to ensure adequate water allocation both in terms of quality and quantity. Interventions in Monitoring and evaluation of water ecosystem are important.

Strong legal and policy instruments are necessary towards regulation and implementation of strategies in WRM.

Technology, cooperation and joint research are crucial for successful WRM.

Safeguard measures for vital ecosystem may be promoted.

The role of communities in implementing WRM measures like Human right to water, sound sanitation, and access to clean water, Green recovery plans covering water as a resource etc is crucial.

Sustainable national water strategy needs to be developed.

The focus of the second technical session was on land restoration and sharing of best practices on this topic. In his opening remarks for the session, Shri Bivash Ranjan, Additional Director General of Forest, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change highlighted the key inputs collated from the deliberations of the 1st ECSWG, focused group discussions and the written inputs shared by the member countries. The deliberations on the subject were in favour of a collaborative and consensus driven approach, directed at how the key inputs are being incorporated in the development of the proposed outcomes under the India Presidency. Further, Shri Bivash Ranjan appreciated the constructive inputs shared and the active participation of the countries in developing the outcomes proposed by the Presidency. The session saw engaging discussions by the delegates on the two priority landscapes identified under India's Presidency, which are forest fire impacted

areas and mining affected areas. Experts representing organisations like United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE) delivered presentations on the proposed Gandhinagar Implementation Roadmap (GIR) on land restoration in correlation with climate change mitigation and adaptation actions; and draft publications were proposed as a compendium of best practices and development of a knowledge sharing platform respectively.

The second half of the day began with a technical session on Encouraging Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy, with presentations and release of draft G20 documents on the four sub-themes identified under the Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy priority, namely: G20 Knowledge Exchanges in Circular Economy in Steel Sector, Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Circular Economy and Circular Bioeconomy, and the proposed G20 Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy Industry Coalition. The co-chair for the session, Shri Naresh Pal Gangwar reiterated India G20 Presidency's commitment to move to efficient and sustainable use of natural resources, a key element of discussion at G20 ECSWG meetings as well as at the G20 Resource Efficiency Dialogue. He pointed out that valuable inputs were received from the member countries during the Resource Efficiency Dialogue Workshop, and has been incorporated in the Presidency documents. The representatives from G20 Countries and other participants deliberated on each of the sub themes, and appreciated India's active involvement and engagement with the member countries for adopting an inclusive approach towards building consensus. The Delegates also participated in Yoga session in morning.

The day concluded with Media Interaction on an upbeat note to use the G20 as a forum to further the cause of tangible outcomes that can be carried forward by future Presidencies for the sustainable use of resources and the overall benefit of the Environment.

PIB,MAR29,2023

## Study on Climate Vulnerability

The National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR), an attached office of Ministry of Earth Sciences, has carried out a National shoreline change assessment mapping for Indian coast (including Odisha) using 28 years of satellite data from 1990 to 2018 to provide information for coastal management strategy. In addition, Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), MoES has prepared the Coastal Vulnerability Index (CVI) maps for the entire coastline of India by using 7 parameters such as shoreline change rate, sea-level change rate, coastal elevation, coastal slope, coastal geomorphology, significant wave height and tidal range. Further studies have been done on Multi-Hazard Vulnerability Mapping to identify potential areas of coastal inundation for the mainland of India using data on extreme water levels, coastal erosion, sea-level change and high-resolution topography.

The district-wise statistics of coastal erosion in Odisha is as follows:

Coastal District

Coastal length (km)

Erosion

Stable

Accretion

Erosion

Stable

Accretion

(In km)

(In %)

Ganjam

62.9

15.48

18.32

29.1

24.6

29.1

46.3

Puri

140.04

15.78

14.12

110.14

11.3

10.1

78.6

Jagatsinghpur

58.72

32.58

6.32

19.82

55.5

10.8

33.8

Kendrapara

135.78

50

52.12

33.66

36.8

38.4

24.8

Bhadrak

59.88

11.1

10.4

38.38

18.5

17.4

64.1

Baleshwar

92.18

15.79

27.49

48.9



17.1

29.8

53.0

Total

549.5

140.73

128.77

280

25.6

23.4

51.0

A report on "National Assessment of Shoreline Changes along Indian Coast" was shared with various Central and State Government agencies and stakeholders for implementing shoreline protection measures. The details of habitat loss, coastal degradation and coastal erosion in Odisha are:

Loss of habitat and shifting of sites of turtle nesting from Bhitarkanika to Gahirmatha in Kendrapara district.

Loss of vegetation and sand dunes in Pentha and Satabhaya coast.

Loss of Casuarina vegetation in Siali and adjoining areas of Jagatsinghpur district

Degradation of fishing hamlets in Ramachandi, and tourist beach in Puri town of Puri district.

Damage to fishing hamlets in Podampeta, Ramiyapatnam and Gopalpur of Ganjam district.

Ministry of Earth Sciences through National Centre for Coastal Research and National Institute of Ocean Technology provides technical solutions to Government of Odisha in mitigation of coastal erosion and they are being implemented by Government of Odisha with their own funds.

This information was given by the Minister for State (Independent Charge) for Ministry of Science and Technology and Earth Sciences, Dr. Jitendra Singh in a written reply in Lok Sabha today.

PIB,MAR29,2023

Second Environment and Climate Sustainability Working Group (ECSWG) meeting concludes in Gandhinagar with G20 member countries reaffirming their commitment towards combatting environment and climate crisis with a renewed sense of urgency

The Second G20 Environment and Climate Sustainability Working Group (ECSWG) meeting concluded in Gandhinagar today with shared views and accordance on outcomes of the priority areas. Building on the discussions from the first ESCWG, constructive deliberations among the G20 countries took place on Arresting Land Degradation, Accelerating Ecosystem Restoration and Enriching Biodiversity; Promoting a Sustainable and Climate Resilient Blue Economy and Encouraging Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy. The G20 member countries reaffirmed their commitment towards combatting the environment and climate crisis, but with a renewed sense of urgency. All the G20 countries agreed on the pressing need for concerted global efforts and the immediate action required, given the current scenario. After technical sessions delving deep on the outcomes of the three priority areas identified by ECSWG under the India Presidency, the countries highlighted several action points on how to bring about a meaningful change.

On Day 1, Ministry of Jal Shakti led the side event with thematic site visits to the Adalaj Vav, Sabarmati siphon, Sabarmati river front and Narmada main canal, showcasing India's ancient water management practices and the nation's long-standing tradition of conserving water resources. During other sessions of the day the G20 countries presented their best practices in Water Resource Management.

The second day included opening remarks by G20 Co-chair for India, Ms. Richa Sharma, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, who highlighted the inclusive, action-oriented and consensus driven approach of the Indian Presidency to facilitate tangible outcomes with a strong foundation.

The key inputs collated from deliberations over the 1st ECSWG, focused group discussions and the written inputs shared by the member countries was the highlight of the session on Biodiversity, Land degradation and ecosystem restoration during the pre-lunch session of the second day. The session witnessed engaging deliberations amongst the delegates on the two priority landscapes identified under India's Presidency and presentations on the proposed Gandhinagar Implementation Roadmap (GIR) and draft publications on compendium of best practices by experts from United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE). The deliberations of draft G20 documents on the four sub-themes – namely G20 Knowledge Exchanges in Circular Economy in Steel Sector, Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Circular Economy and Circular Bioeconomy and the proposed G20 Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy Industry Coalition – identified under the Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy formed the key discussion points during the technical session on Circular Economy.

India's commitment to make the efficient and sustainable use of natural resources was an important aspect of the G20 talks, and the highlight of the Resource Efficiency Dialogue, which was further deliberated by the delegates. The final day of the 2nd ECSWG meeting had a special address by Ms. Darshana Vikram Jardosh, Union Minister of State for Railways and Textiles, Government of India. She acknowledged efforts of the G20 countries, with a comprehensive approach to address climate change.

Following this was the technical session which witnessed engaging discussions to outline ways of effectively accelerating the transition to a sustainable and climate resilient Blue Economy. Experts from organisations like National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management (NCSCM), Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO), United Nations Development program (UNDP) and Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) made presentations emphasising the need for protecting and conserving coastal and marine ecosystems for a healthy ocean, ecosystem conservation from Blue Carbon initiative, mainstreaming Marine Spatial planning for a sustainable Blue Economy and MSP Global Initiative. The delegates deliberated on the G20 High Level Principles for a Sustainable and Climate Resilient Blue Economy that was presented during the technical session. The technical study on Accelerating the Transition to a Sustainable and Climate Resilient Blue Economy was also discussed among the participating delegates during the session.

The concluding technical session of the day was on alignment of Global Biodiversity Framework 2022 and its implementation modalities under the priority of biodiversity, land degradation and ecosystem restoration. The focus of the session on Biodiversity was to accelerate the action on implementing the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework across G20 countries and concluded by posing three key questions for deliberation on the topic.

Ms. Leena Nandan, the G20 Chair for India and Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change addressed the delegates before the start of the final session of the day which was on the Communique. She also urged the G20 members to continue with their approach that is collaborative in nature and in concurrence with each other, under the India Presidency to ensure an inclusive, action-oriented, and decisive outcome. The session on the Communique had presentation and extensive open discussions on the zero draft. The Secretary also briefed the media regarding the deliberations during three days of Second G20 Environment and Climate Sustainability Working Group (ECSWG). The day concluded with the delegates visiting the Dandi Kutir, which is the world's largest and only Museum built on one man's story - Mahatma Gandhi, Father of the Nation. The delegates were delighted with a tour of the experiential museum.

The conference ended on a note of collaboration with a goal to refine the proposed outcomes under the G20 India Presidency by incorporating the feedback of the delegates and best practices shared during the sessions and gather inputs on the outline of the Communique presented. The discussions during this meeting will be taken forward at the 3rd ECSWG meeting, which is scheduled to take place in Mumbai from 21st – 23rd May, 2023.

## CURRENT EVENTS

PIB,MAR28,2023

### PRESIDENT OF INDIA GRACES CONVOCATION OF VISVA-BHARATI

The President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu graced and addressed the convocation ceremony of Visva-Bharati at Santiniketan today (March 28, 2023).

Speaking on the occasion, the President said that Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore left the comfort of the most important city of the Eastern hemisphere in the early 20th century and came to Santiniketan which was a remote area those days. There is a message for everyone, especially the young students, in this. Pioneers like Gurudev choose difficulties over comfort to achieve larger objectives. The young students of Visva-Bharati have to focus on this learning from Gurudev's life that one has to come out of one's comfort zone to be able to make a difference.

The President said that Gurudev's belief that nature is the best teacher is reflected in the way this institution has been designed. He wanted to liberate the process of education from the confines of conventional systems borrowed from the West. He was against the rigid structures and methods in which students were passive receivers and not active partners in learning. Through Visva-Bharati, he has given us the gift of a learning system which is close to nature, which blends spirituality and modern science, ethics and excellence, tradition and modernity. For Gurudev, learning was boundaryless and boundless. The President said that Gurudev wanted education to promote creativity and individuality and not produce stereotypes and careerists. She was happy to note that Visva-Bharati has adhered to Gurudev's philosophy of education and produced many celebrated artists and creative individuals.

The President said that Gurudev took pride in the Indian knowledge tradition. In our tradition, it is said – ‘Only that learning is meaningful which liberates’. She said that liberation from ignorance, narrow-mindedness, prejudice, negativity, greed and other such limitations is the real objective of education. She expressed confidence that students of Visva-Bharati would help build better communities wherever they choose to live and work.

PIB,MAR30,2023

Dr. Jitendra Singh attends youth convention on India’s G20 presidency organised by Nehru Yuva Kendra Kathua

Under PM Narendra Modi, 1st December 2022, a watershed moment for the youth of this country when it assumes the presidency of the G20 forum: Dr. Jitendra Singh

Youth of today will define India @2047 when India will be celebrating its freedom centenary: Dr. Jitendra Singh Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, the best youth icon ever produced in India: Dr. Jitendra Singh The youth of India today have the privilege and opportunity to contribute to the making of ‘New India’ as envisaged by Prime Minister Narendra Modi: Dr. Jitendra Singh

Hundreds of opportunities created for the youth for their skill development; Youth should take advantage of these opportunities and become active partners of India’s journey towards becoming a ‘Vishwa Guru’: Dr. Jitendra Singh Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh today said, the youth of India today will define India @2047 when India will celebrate its freedom centenary as they have the privilege and opportunity to contribute to the making of ‘New India’ as envisaged by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Dr. Jitendra Singh was addressing a Youth convention here organized by Nehru Yuva Kendra, Kathua on the theme 'Role of Youth vis-à-vis India's G20 Presidency'. Dr. Jitendra Singh said, the youth of this country must feel lucky that they are living in an era when India has assumed G20 Presidency under PM Narendra Modi the youth can thus play a key role to showcase India's rich cultural diversity and heritage and solution to the global problems while being the President of G20 forum. Dr. Jitendra Singh said, the world is knocking at the doors of India as India has talent and capability under PM Narendra Modi to lead the world under all circumstances as India is now regarded as the 'Leader of the world'.

Saying that this government is dedicated to the youth of this country, Dr. Jitendra Singh said, the revolutionary decisions were taken by PM Narendra Modi for the welfare of the youth be that doing away with the attestation by a gazetted officer, the interviews for the non-gazetted posts etc. as this government strongly believes in the youth of India. Dr. Jitendra Singh said, the 'Start-up India, Stand-up India' is actually dedicated to the youth by PM Narendra Modi and it is because of their efforts that from mere 350 start-ups in 2014, it has now crossed 90,000 with more than 100 unicorns. Many start-ups under Aarogya Mission born in





Doda district of J&K have shaped the future of many youth who left the jobs and are now earning in lakhs having lucrative lavender startThe Minister said, this is the proudest moment for the youth of this country that India has assumed G20 Presidency under PM Narendra Modi, at the same time the youth of this country have responsibility to carry forward this legacy to make India ‘Vishwa Guru’.

Dr. Jitendra Singh said, hundreds of opportunities have been created for the youth of this country for their skill development what is important is that youth should take advantage of these opportunities and become active partners of India’s journey towards becoming a ‘Vishwa Guru’.

Praising Syana Prasad Mukherjee as tallest but uncelebrated youth icon of 20th century India, Dr. Jitendra Singh recalled that Milkerjje became Vice Chancellor of Calcutta University as a 34 year youth and said, Kathua was selected today for the youth convention for the reason that Syama Prasad Mukherjee was the best youth icon who sacrificed his life for national integration. The onus is on the youth of this country to carry forward his legacy, Dr. Jitendra Singh added.The others present during the youth convention today were Deputy Commissioner, Kathua, Rahul Pandey, DDC Vice-chairperson Kathua, Raghunandan Singh Bablu, Deputy Director, NYK Kathua, Somdat Zard besides students across different institutions of Kathua and youth from various areas of district Kathua.

PIB,MAR31,2023

The International Women’s Day celebrated throughout the country

Government has taken several steps to end all forms of discrimination against women and girls in the country through legislative framework, schematic interventions and policies/ programmes/ schemes.The International Women’s Day this year has been celebrated throughout the country with great zeal and fervor. On this occasion, several programmes, events, functions, quizzes were organized by various Central and State Government as well as other organizations. The theme of International Women’s Day 2023 is

#EmbraceEquity. The Ministry of Women and Child Development does not maintain the data of expenditure incurred by various authorities on celebration International Women's Day. The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Constitution of India. The Constitution of India not only provides for equality but also empowers the State to make positive discrimination in favour of women and children. The Directive Principles of the State Policy and the Fundamental Duties cast obligation on State as well as citizens to remove discrimination renounce derogatory practices and uphold the dignity of women. In line with the principles enshrined in the Constitution, the Government has taken several steps to end all forms of discrimination against women and girls in the country through legislative framework, schematic interventions and policies/ programmes/ schemes. The vibrant Indian Judiciary also plays an important role in protecting the rights and entitlements of women and girls.

Several legislations for example 'the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955', 'the Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 (subsumed under Code on Wages, 2019)' and 'the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013', 'the Indian Penal Code', 'the Criminal Law Amendments of 2013 and 2018', 'the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961', 'the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005', 'the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006', 'the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act, 2019', three Labour Codes of 2020 etc. already exist to further strengthen this framework.

Moreover, in order to ensure that the marital status of a woman does not subject her to any form of discrimination or hardship, or have a bearing on access to services, the Passport rules have been amended in favour of single mothers. Now either the mother or the father's name can be provided in the passport application form and there is no requirement to provide the certificate of marriage/divorce during application anymore. Earlier, providing the father's name in the PAN application forms was mandatory. The said rule has been suitably amended to the effect that in PAN application forms, mentioning the father's name is no longer mandatory for person whose mother was a single parent and PAN has been applied by furnishing the name of

the mother only. As a measure for improving the girl child sex ratio, the Government of India launched the 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme'. The scheme is a convergent effort to prevent gender-biased sex selective elimination, ensure the survival and protection of the girl child, and to ensure her education, with an overall aim of increasing the child sex ratio. To assist the women in distress, the Government has is setting up of "One Stop Centers" (OSCs) across the country with the objective of facilitating access to an integrated range of services including medical aid, police assistance, legal aid/case management, psychosocial counselling, and temporary support services to women affected by violence. Access to sanitation is a matter of dignity. To curb the problem of open defecation in India which affects the health and safety of women the most, the Government launched the Swachh Bharat Mission. Under this initiative over 11.6 crore individual household toilets have been constructed. Similarly, the schemes like Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana, Stand-up India, Start-up India, Skill India, Digital India are promoting the financial and digital inclusion and economic empowerment of women. There are several other schemes implemented by various Central Ministries/ Departments for promoting social, educational, economic and political empowerment of women.

As per Census of India 2011, there are over 26.8 million persons with disabilities in India, constituting 2.21% of the population. Among these, around 11.8 million are women. The National Policy for Persons with Disabilities, 2006, endorses the need to focus special attention on the needs of differently-abled women. Recognizing the need of differently-abled mothers of additional support, the Policy envisages giving financial support to such women so that they may hire services to look after their children. The Government of India introduced the Rights of Persons with Disability Act, 2016, which implores government and local authorities to take measures to ensure that women and children with disabilities enjoy their rights equally with others.

As per Census 2011, the number of widowed women is 4,32,61,478, number of separated women is 23,72,754 & number of divorced women is 9,09,573. This information was given by the Union Minister of Women & Child Development, Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani, in a written reply in Lok Sabha today.

PIB, APRIL 2, 2023

Inaugural session of the 2nd G-20 Tourism Working Group Meeting held at Siliguri in West Bengal

Vision is to make India a one trillion dollar tourism economy by 2047: Shri G.Kishan Reddy

Aim of the National Adventure Tourism strategy is to place India among the top Adventure Tourism Destinations of the World: Shri G.Kishan Reddy

The niche product of Adventure Tourism will benefit India's Tribal Communities, disadvantaged communities, women and youth by providing jobs & entrepreneurial opportunities : Shri G.K Reddy

The overall aim is to see that the tourism sector contributes towards improving the quality of life of people in general: Shri John Barla

The Inaugural session of the 2nd Tourism Working Group Meeting under G20 hosted by the Ministry of Tourism was held at Siliguri, West Bengal today morning. The inaugural session was addressed by Union Minister for Tourism, Culture and DoNER Shri G.Kishan Reddy and Minister of State for Minority Affairs, Shri John Barla. Shri Raju Bista, Member of Parliament, Darjeeling was also present in the session. In his opening remarks, Union Minister for Culture, Tourism and DoNER Shri G.K Reddy welcomed all the participants to the beautiful town of Siliguri. He opined that Siliguri possesses a rare combination of Diversity, Culture, Tradition, and beauty. Known as The Gateway to the Northeast, the minister said that the place provides amazing travel experiences such as Spirituality in the various Monasteries and Temples, Wildlife and natural beauty in the National Parks, adventure in the form of camping and rafting . He said that Siliguri

is an embodiment of India, a country where diversity delights, culture echoes, tradition speaks and beauty enthral. Addressing the session, Shri G.Kishan Reddy further said that the ideas discussed will aid in developing tourism in mission mode. It will also aid India in maximising its potential in the tourism sector. He announced that in order to give a boost to the uniqueness of Indian tourism, the country is observing 'Visit India Year 2023' which is a unique, collective movement that invites the world to explore India in the historical year of India's G20 presidency as well as, grand celebrations of 75 years of Indian Independence - India@75 Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav. The minister announced that the vision is to make India a one trillion dollar tourism economy by 2047 - our 100th year of Independence.

He also informed that the Ministry of Tourism has also formulated a Draft National Tourism Policy. The new Policy is a holistic framework for sustainable and responsible growth of the tourism sector in the country and aims at improving framework conditions for tourism development in the country, supporting tourism industries, and strengthening tourism to highlight India's commitment to achieving Sustainable Development Goals 2030. The Union Minister said that the aim is to make India a seamless , modern, and smart tourism destination.

Shri G.Kishan Reddy underscored the need for digitalisation of the Tourism Industry which also is a priority of the Tourism Working Group. He informed that the Government of India is working on various niche products like coastal tourism, wildlife tourism, adventure tourism, cultural tourism, rural,tourism, archaeological tourism, spiritual tourism, destination weddings and others. The minister expressed his confidence that a meaningful framework for realising the potential of adventure tourism will be devised.

The minister of State, Shri John Barla said that Government of India has implemented various schemes for the welfare and upliftment of all strata, including minorities, especially the economically weaker and lesser privileged sections of the society, through various schemes of the Government of India.

He also said that the State of West Bengal aims to become a preferred tourism and tourism-related investment destination by leveraging its unique geographical setting along with its various tourism-related assets. It is developing the necessary infrastructure and promoting tourism in an integrated manner which will not only bring in more investment and further the socio-economic goals of the Government of India, but also ensure that all these are in conformity with the relevant acts, rules and regulations relating to environmental protection. The overall aim is to see that the tourism sector contributes towards improving the quality of life of people in general. Welcoming all the participants, Shri Arvind Singh shared that under India's G20 Presidency, there are over 200 meetings in more than 59 cities across 32 different work streams. It allows India to showcase the rich cultural and natural heritage to G20 delegates and guests. All the G20 member States (including Troika – Indonesia & Brazil) shared their comments and suggestions on the 1st Draft Outcome and the five priorities introduced by India.

The second session of the tourism working group meeting was planned in Presentation & Open Discussion format. The session discussed all five priorities one by one. A presentation on each priority was made by Turkiye, Saudi Arabia, Australia, Indonesia and Italy on Green Tourism, Digitalization, Skills, Tourism MSMEs, and Destination Management respectively. Each presentation was followed by detailed discussion among member countries, invitee countries and international organizations. Concluding the meeting, Chair (India) expressed towards all the G20 Members, Invitee countries, International Organizations for endorsing the five priorities and successfully conducting the meeting

In a side event today, on "Tourism in Mission Mode: Advantage Adventure Tourism" presentations by the participants highlighted the benefits, issues and challenges in the promotion of adventure tourism. Ideas were discussed with respect to making India a globally competitive Adventure Tourism hub. The model law on Adventure safety and way of developing vibrant villages as adventure destinations were discussed.

In the side event, the Union Minister for Tourism, Culture and DoNER, Shri G.Kishan Reddy said that the presentations were informative, engaging and thought-provoking. He informed that the ideas mentioned in here have further enriched understanding of Adventure Tourism. Shri G.Kishan Reddy opined that by the very nature of Adventure Tourism locations, this niche product will benefit India's Tribal Communities, disadvantaged communities women and youth by providing jobs & entrepreneurial opportunities. He announced that India holds great potential to become a global marketplace for adventure activities and sports. The minister said that the National Adventure Tourism strategy has been framed and the aim is to place India among the top Adventure Tourism Destinations of the World by developing infrastructure and setting up high safety standards. Earlier in the day on the sidelines, Shri G.Kishan Reddy and Shri John Barla flagged off the Himalayan drive Car 9 car rally. The second day of the meeting concluded with colorful cultural performances by folk artists. On the occasion Adivasi dance performance, Chau dance performance were performed.

Earlier last evening, Union Minister for Culture, Tourism and DoNER Shri G.K Redd; Secretary Information and Broadcasting; Secretary Tourism, Shri Arvind Singh along with the delegates participated in the moonlight tea plucking activity.