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NEW DELHI

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## **POLITY AND GOVERNANCE**

**PIB, APRIL 4, 2023**

**Ministry of Civil Aviation disbursed about Rs 30 crores during FY 2022-23 under PLI Scheme for Drones and Drone Components. The Ministry of Civil Aviation has disbursed an amount of Rs. 30 crores (approximately) to the beneficiaries during FY 2022-23 under the PLI Scheme for Drones and Drone Components.**

**To promote the indigenous drone industry, the government notified the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for drones and drone components on 30th September 2021. The step was widely welcomed by academia and industry experts. This scheme has multiple features to help the industry such as:**

**The total incentive is Rs. 120 crore spread over three financial years. It is nearly double the combined turnover of all domestic drone manufacturers in FY 2020-21. For this scheme, the PLI rate is 20% of the value addition which is one of the highest among PLI schemes. Under this scheme, the value addition is calculated as the annual sales revenue from drones and drone components (net of GST) minus the purchase cost (net of GST) of drone and drone components.**

**The PLI rate is kept constant at 20% for all three years, which is an exceptional treatment for the drone industry in the country. The Minimum value addition norm has been at 40% of net sales for drones and drone components instead of 50% which is another exceptional treatment for the industry. The eligibility norm for MSMEs and startups is at nominal levels. The coverage of the scheme includes developers of drone-related software also.**

**PLI for a manufacturer is capped at 25% of the total annual outlay. This allows for the widening of the number of beneficiaries. In case a manufacturer fails to meet the threshold for the eligible value addition for a particular financial year, she will be allowed to claim the lost incentive in the subsequent year if she makes up the shortfall in the subsequent year. A provisional list of 23 PLI beneficiaries was released on 6th July 2022. The beneficiaries include 12 drone manufacturers and 11 drone component manufacturers.**

**PIB, APRIL 5, 2023**

**Central Government develops Integrated Check Posts (ICPs) at international land borders of the country with the aim to facilitate cross-border movement of passengers and goods**

**Central Government develops Integrated Check Posts (ICPs) at international land borders of the country with the aim to facilitate cross-border movement of passengers and goods. Presently, 09 Integrated Check Posts are operational at international borders of the country, the details of which is at Annexure-A.**

**After the establishment of four (04) operational ICPs at Moreh, Sutarkandi, Agartala and Srimantapur in North Eastern States, requisite facilities for seamless movement of passenger and trade across the land borders in secured environment have been put in place. Setting up of ICP has also improved co-ordination among all stakeholders concerned with facilitation of international trade and passenger movement across the border. This has resulted in ease of movement and saving of time and cost for the movement of passengers and goods. As a result there is increase in volume of trade and movement of passengers in North East.**

**Annexure-A.**

**Details of operational Integrated Check Posts**

**Sl. No.**

**Location**

**State**

**International Border**

**Operationalized on**

**1.**

**Attari**

**Punjab**

**Pakistan**

**13.04.2012**

**2.**

**Agartala**

**Tripura**

**Bangladesh**

**17.11.2013**

**3.**

**Petrapole**

**West Bengal**

**Bangladesh**

**12.02.2016**

**4.**

**Raxaul**

**Bihar**

**Nepal**

**03.06.2016**

**5.**

**Jogbani**

**Bihar**

**Nepal**

**15.11.2016**

**6.**

**Moreh**

**Manipur**

**Myanmar**

**15.03.2018**

**7.**

**Sutarkandi**

**Assam**

**Bangladesh**

**07.09.2019**

**8.**

**PTB Dera Baba Nanak\***

**Punjab**

**Pakistan**

**09.11.2019**

**9.**

**Srimantapur**

**Tripura**

**Bangladesh**

**05.09.2020**

**\*Passenger Terminal Building (PTB), Dera Baba Nanak is operational only to facilitate pilgrims to visit the Gurudwara Sri Kartarpur Sahib Ji.**

**This was stated by the Minister of State for Home Affairs, Shri Nishith Pramanik in a written reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha.**

**TELEGRAPH, APRIL 5, 2023**

**Ambitious claim**

**The Mother of Democracy discourse**

**Vivek Katju**

**Some of the hoardings welcoming the G20 foreign ministers and delegates to their meeting in Delhi on March 1-2 had the visage of Prime Minister Narendra Modi with the words, “Mother of Democracy welcomes you.” The words describing India as the “Mother of Democracy” had been used by Modi in his address to the United Nations General Assembly in September 2021. He had said, “I am representing a country which has the distinction of being named as the ‘Mother of Democracy’. We have had a great tradition of democracy for thousands of years.”**

**India’s traditional formulation was that it was the world’s ‘largest democracy’. Indeed, Modi himself used this term in his September 2020 speech to the UNGA. Asking the General Assembly how long could India “be kept out of the decision-making structures of the United Nations,” Modi spelt out India’s credentials with the words, “This is a country, which is the largest democracy of the world...” However, after laying the foundation stone of the new**

**Parliament building in December 2020, Modi had dwelt in his speech on the democratic practices prevalent essentially in pre-medieval India. He had said, “When we glorify our democratic history with confidence, the day is not far away when the world will also say that India is the Mother of Democracy.” That seems to be the beginning of this new formulation.**

**Following Modi’s description of India as the “Mother of Democracy”, the Indian Council of Historical Research undertook the task of giving it academic backing. Scholars cutting across disciplines advanced views that Indic governance structures were inherently democratic. Some asserted that despotism was unknown to Hindu governance and that a king’s power was constrained by dharma and ‘sabhas and samitis’. Rulers were attached to their people by bonds of trust and were inclusive in their approach. In addition, there were political entities which were ‘republics’ that were not based on hereditary lineage.**

**The motivation for focusing on the ‘democratic’ nature of Indic governance is to establish that democracy is intrinsically Indian and not a Western import. There is an obvious desire to contest the Western view that the ideas of democratic governance originated in ancient Greece and Rome as well as to establish that Indic political structures were founded on inclusiveness and the welfare of the people and that its ideas are worthy of universal study and acceptance of the claim of India being the Mother of Democracy. There is also the suggestion that Western scholarship and the Indians who followed its paths after the country’s Independence ignored these aspects of Indic traditions; that they also overlooked the fact that the Republic’s Constitution, too, derives from these continuities and is part of the Indic governance heritage.**

**Aware that these assertions about ancient Indic governance structures may be dismissed ab initio if stretched beyond a point, some scholars acknowledge that ancient Indian polities were no ‘Utopias of equality’. They, however, seem reluctant to delve into the impact of caste on Indic governance. Whatever may have been the origin of the caste system, its baleful influence on Indic governance can hardly be denied; intellectual rigour demands that the caste system be taken into account for a full and true evaluation of Indic governance structures.**



**Clearly, a great attempt is now underway to provide a conceptual underpinning to Modi's assertion that India is the Mother of Democracy. This is part of the projection that centuries of attacks and foreign rule sullied India and that the glories of Indic civilisation are now being restored, including in their political aspects. Thus, a vital conceptual difference — India being the Mother of Democracy as opposed to India being the largest democracy — is being underlined. As part of this process, it is being argued that universal adult franchise cannot be considered a precondition of a true democracy.**

**There is little doubt that the term, 'Mother of Democracy', will now fully enter the Indian diplomatic lexicon and will gradually replace or will be used in conjunction with the old formulation of India being the world's largest democracy. The international community readily accepted that yoga is associated with India and non-violence with Gandhiji. Consequently, the UNGA passed resolutions designating June 21 as International Yoga Day and October 2 — Gandhiji's birthday — as the International Day of Non-violence. However, it is unlikely that the global community will easily accept the idea that India is the Mother of Democracy. Hence, Indian scholars and institutions will have to do a lot of work if they wish to give this view wider currency in the global academic community. In this process, they may have to overcome entrenched prejudice and ignorance about ancient Indian governance structures. The other approach can be of not being bothered about foreign scholars on this issue.**

**The international political community has accepted the idea of India being the world's largest democracy. The fact that India has formed governments on the basis of free and fair elections consistently since the adoption of the Constitution in 1950 and that fundamental rights and freedoms are largely respected under the law have attracted admiration in the developing world as also in advanced democracies. However, earlier, if it was the Soviet Union that posed a challenge to democracies because of ideological considerations, now it is China. President Xi Jinping recently asserted, "There is no universal model of governance and there is no world order where the decisive word belongs to a single country." Will the idea of India as the Mother of Democracy be an accretion to the country's soft power in the present global climate?**

**In the context of the forthcoming G20 summit, will this assertion impress the political leaders and the international media that will come to India to cover the event? China is hostile to the notion that democracy is a superior model of governance; Saudi Arabia is an absolute monarchy; Russia and Turkey are autocracies with democratic pretensions.**

**The other established democracies may note the idea and may even make polite noises about it but the danger is that they may find it pretentious till Indian scholarship establishes the idea conclusively in the global consciousness. That will not be an easy undertaking.**

**Vivek Katju is a retired Indian Foreign Service officer**

**TRIBUNE, APRIL 5, 2023**

**The age of toxic politics**

**Death of critical thinking is what all authoritarian masters cherish**

**Avijit Pathak**

**The politics of critical pedagogy probes the discourse of power, interrogates all sorts of authoritarianism, promotes the ethos of dialogue and art of listening, sees education beyond the acquisition of mere market-friendly technical skills, and strives for enlightened/democratic citizenship. However, these days amid the all-pervading toxic politics, and cultural/psychic pollution all around, a sense of despair or pessimism seems to be preventing many of us from celebrating or practising the art of critical pedagogy. To begin with, let us acknowledge a simple fact: no meaningful teaching/learning is possible if the psychology of fear robs us of our voice. In fact, the toxic politics we see around has created an environment in which one can be censored, disciplined and punished for any critical voice that seeks to interrogate the logic of the Establishment, say, the reduction of the supreme leader of the ruling party into a non-questionable messiah; the legitimisation of his every act, speech or policy through the logic of popularity and electoral statistics; and the simple equation that divides us into two categories or binaries — deshbhakts or nationalists and anti-national conspirators. As this psychology of fear invades our campuses and classrooms through politically appointed academic bureaucrats, it destroys the soul of critical pedagogy. It becomes difficult to learn and unlearn through questions, conversations and dialogue. Imagine the intensity of the danger. A student or a teacher can be suspended or expelled if he/she dares to watch the much talked about BBC documentary on the 2002 Gujarat riots. Or, for that matter, a series of FIRs can haunt you if you print a poster revealing your unhappiness with the present regime. And you can be jailed if your critical reflections ‘hurt’ the sentiments of hyper-nationalists playing with the fire of religious fundamentalism. How is it then possible to create a culture of learning that promotes dialogue and art**

**of listening, and encourages us to ask uncomfortable questions? The fact is that the cult of authoritarianism, and even electoral authoritarianism, needs either non-reflexive conformists or indulgent consumers as market fundamentalism and religious fundamentalism often go together. This is like annihilating the spirit of critical pedagogy.**

**Likewise, critical pedagogy requires the cultivation of some mental/intellectual faculties, say, the quality of endurance and patience needed to examine an issue relating to politics, culture, religion or economy with alertness, facts and conceptual clarity; and the courage to amend and even alter one's position through nuanced debates and conversations. However, the characteristic feature of toxic politics is that it is loud, noisy and abusive. And it has further been accelerated by the propaganda machinery and the instantaneity of social media. If your educator is primarily the noisy television news anchor who turns everything into its opposite, or if you continually see political spokespersons of different colours or even ministers spreading lies and false information without the slightest shame and guilt, or if anything beyond irresponsible and destructive messages disseminated through social media look 'boring', how is it possible to verify facts, think clearly and critically, and evolve an informed opinion? To take an illustration, let us ask a question: In his Cambridge speech, did Rahul Gandhi really plead for foreign intervention in India to save Indian democracy, as the spokespersons for the ruling party want us to believe? Or, is it that while emphasising this 'internal' problem — the growing danger to our democracy — he only urged his audience to be aware of it as Indian democracy is a 'public good'? You can verify facts and respond with moral responsibility only if you bother to see beyond 'viral' videos, aggressive press conferences, catchy Twitter messages, and listen to Rahul's long speech carefully. Likewise, it is only through deep listening and alert thinking can you understand that if you are critical of Lalit Modi or Nirav Modi, you are not conveying a message that all those who bear the surname 'Modi' or belong to a particular caste are like these two corrupt persons. It is as simple as understanding that every Gandhi is not necessarily like Mahatma Gandhi, or, for that matter, every Savarkar is not necessarily a proponent of militant Hindutva. Imagine the damage that this intoxication with toxic politics and associated fake news has done to our collective psyche. Indeed, the death of critical thinking is what authoritarian/narcissistic masters all over the world cherish.**

**And finally, critically pedagogy is related to the pedagogy of hope. However, this hope seems to be eroding fast as the toxic political culture is transforming even children, adolescents and youth into cynics, or dreamless ‘pragmatists’. Imagine what it means to live in a world where our political bosses, ministers and demagogues do not have the slightest hesitation in vomiting filthy words and nasty slogans to castigate their opponents. Are we normalising hate speech, like ‘Yeh Congress ki kaunsi vidhwa thi, jiske khaate mein rupaya jaata tha?’, ‘Goli maaro saalon ko’, or ‘Apne kabhi dekha hai 50 crore ka girlfriend?’ Such vulgar language has entered every locality; and ironically, decency in public life is seen as ‘effeminate’ as we normalise authoritarianism, religious fundamentalism and hyper-masculine aggression as the order of the day. Can we recover the lost language — the language of sanity, or the language of ethically responsible and intellectually nuanced conversations?**

**Yes, these are terribly difficult times. But then, those who believe in the efficacy of a truly transformative education ought to unite, raise their voice, interact with students and teachers, and spread the ethos of critical pedagogy — the pedagogy of love, resistance and social transformation.**

PIB, APRIL 6, 2023

Ministry of Education invites suggestions on Draft National Curriculum Framework for School Education

National Education Policy 2020 aims at transforming the whole education system in India comprising of school education and higher education. School Education works as the foundation stone of a child’s life. In the context of school education, NEP 2020 recommends shift from 10+2 structure to 5+3+3+4 and emphasises on developmental perspectives suggesting curricular and pedagogical shifts at different stages- foundational, preparatory, middle and secondary. NEP 2020 focusses on competency-based education integrating cultural rootedness, equity and inclusion, multilingualism, experiential learning, reduction in content load, integration of arts and sports in the curriculum, etc.

As a follow-up of the NEP 2020, development of four National Curriculum Frameworks, viz., NCF for School Education, NCF for Early Childhood Care and Education, NCF for Teacher Education and NCF for Adult Education has been initiated. National Steering Committee under the Chairpersonship of Dr. K. Kasturirangan was set up by the Ministry of Education to undertake and guide the development of NCFs.

Going through a participatory process of deliberations, inputs were sought for the National Curriculum Frameworks (in the area of ECCE, School Education, Teacher Education and Adult Education) from diverse stakeholders including teachers, parents, students, educational institutions, neo- and non- literates, subject experts, scholars, childcare personnel etc. Extensive public consultations in face-to-face as well as digital mode were carried out. In this process of deliberations and discussions, more than 500 District Level Consultations and more than 50 consultations with different Ministries, religious groups, civil society organisations, NGOs and Universities were held in face-to-face mode with the participation of more than 8000 diverse stakeholders. In digital mode, Mobile App survey has received feedback from around 1,50,000 stakeholders. The Citizen Centric Survey, launched by the Ministry of Education in August 2022, has received inputs from more than 12,00,000 stakeholders. Inputs are being received in all areas of ECCE, School Education, Teacher Education and Adult Education. The highlights of the inputs revealed endorsement of the recommendations of NEP 2020 from all the regions.

Taking into cognizance these inputs, the National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage had been brought out and launched by the Ministry of Education on 20th October 2022. In continuation of this NCF-FS, National Curriculum Framework for School Education – Pre-Draft is also ready. Given the diverse needs of students, multiple pedagogic approaches, learning-teaching material at the different stages of school education, it is felt important to take feedback from students, parents, teachers, teacher educators, experts, scholars and professionals on the various sections and recommendations of this NCF-School Education (SE). While giving your feedback, it needs to be kept in view that this is a pre-draft of the NCF-SE which still requires several rounds of discussion within the National Steering Committee. Feedback from diverse stakeholders will further help NSC to look critically into different modalities and approaches that this framework is proposing.

Feedback is solicited specifying the stage of school education, curricular area, school governance, assessment, etc.

You may send your feedback on the following email addresses- [ncf.ncert@ciet.nic.in](mailto:ncf.ncert@ciet.nic.in)

Link to the document- <https://ncf.ncert.gov.in/webadmin/assets/b27f04eb-65af-467f-af12-105275251546>

PIB, APRIL 6, 2023

POLICY FOR RAINWATER HARVESTING

Central Government has formulated National Water Policy 2012 which inter alia contains provisions for rainwater harvesting like incentivizing revival of traditional water harvesting structures by States, encouraging rainwater harvesting to increase availability of utilizable water in urban and industrial areas, preference to urban and rural domestic water supply from surface water in conjunction with groundwater and rainwater, etc. The National Water Policy has been sent to all States/UTs for appropriate action. Water being a State subject, steps for augmentation, conservation and efficient management of water resources are primarily undertaken by the respective State Governments. In order to supplement the efforts of the State Governments, Central Government provides technical and financial assistance to them through various schemes and programmes. In order to effectively implement the rainwater harvesting across the country, the Government undertakes various activities in the form of special drives, schemes and programmes. Some of the major steps taken by Government of India in this regard are as follows:

Jal Shakti Abhiyan-I (JSA-I) was conducted in 2019 in 1,592 blocks out of 2,836 blocks in 256 water stressed districts of the country and was expanded as “Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain” (JSA:CTR) in 2021 with the theme “Catch the Rain Where it Falls When it Falls” to cover all the blocks of all districts (rural as well as urban areas) across the country. “Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain” (JSA:CTR) -2022 campaign, the third in the series of JSAs, was launched on 29.03.2022 to cover all the blocks of all districts (rural as well as urban areas) across the country. In the current year, Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain 2023, 4th in the series of JSA, has been launched on 04.03.2023. Rainwater harvesting is one of the major components of the campaign. States/UTs have been advised to actively participate in JSA:CTR 2023 and have also been suggested to undertake rain harvesting activities under JSA:CTR. As per the information available, the following water related works/afforestation works have been completed/ ongoing during the period 29.03.2022 to 03.03.2023:

Water related works across the country in JSA: CTR 2022

Water Conservation and Rainwater Harvesting Structures

12,28,553

Renovation of Traditional Water Bodies

2,67,472

Reuse and Recharge Structures

8,74,680

Watershed Development

16,28,726

Intensive Afforestation

78,38,36,035

Government of India is implementing Atal Bhujal Yojana, a Central Sector Scheme with an outlay of Rs. 6,000 crore in identified water stressed areas of 8,220 Gram Panchayats (GPs) under 229 blocks in 80 districts of 7 States viz. Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh with an aim to arrest decline in ground water level through community led sustainable groundwater management. The scheme is being implemented from 01.04.2020 for a period of 5 years. Allocation and utilization of funds for Atal Bhujal Yojana since its inception is as given below:

Financial Year

Funds allocated

Funds utilized

2020-21

Rs. 125 crore

Rs. 123.03 crore

2021-22

Rs. 330 crore

Rs. 327.48 crore

2022-23

Rs. 1,170 crore

Rs. 1,155.37 crore

Watershed Development Component of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (WDC-PMKSY) has got rainwater harvesting as one of the activities under its Natural Resource Management (NRM) component. The scheme of Surface Minor Irrigation (SMI) and Repair, Renovation & Restoration (RRR) of Water Bodies have multiple objectives like expanding cultivable area under assured irrigation by improvement and restoration of water bodies inter alia increasing ground water recharge and revival of lost irrigation potential. Master Plan for Artificial Recharge to Groundwater- 2020 has been prepared by Central Ground Water Board in consultation with States/UTs which is a macro level plan indicating various structures for the different terrain conditions of the country. Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) while granting No Objection Certificates (NOCs) for ground water abstraction envisages that the proponents shall install roof top rain water harvesting & recharge systems in the project area.

Government of India has launched Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) in 2015 which focuses on development of basic urban infrastructure especially water supply & access to tap connection to every household in 500 cities. In water supply sector, ULBs/State may take up projects related to new/augmentation/rehabilitation of water supply system; rejuvenation of water bodies for water supply, rainwater harvesting and recharge of ground water etc. Further, AMRUT 2.0 has been launched in 2021 which covers all the statutory towns of the country to ensure universal coverage of water supply. It envisages rejuvenation of water bodies, urban aquifer management, promote recycle & reuse and rainwater harvesting to augment freshwater resources. The Aquifer Management Plan will also be prepared to focus on maintaining positive groundwater balance in urban aquifer systems. So far, 2,296 water supply projects costing about ₹87,896 crore and 2,102 projects of water body rejuvenation worth ₹3,664 crore have been approved by Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) includes water conservation and water harvesting structures as one of the activities under its natural resource management (NRM) component.



Model Building Bye Laws (MBBL) 2016 circulated by Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs include provisions for Rainwater Harvesting and it has been shared with all the States/ UTs. So far, barring Sikkim, Lakshadweep and Mizoram all the States/UTs have adopted the provisions of rainwater harvesting of MBBL-2016. The Mission Amrit Sarovar was launched on National Panchayati Raj Day on 24th April, 2022 as a part of celebration of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav with an objective to conserve water for future. The Mission is aimed at developing and rejuvenating 75 water bodies in each district of the country.

The important steps taken by the Central Government for sustainable ground water management in the country can be seen at the URL: [http://jalshakti-dowr.gov.in/sites/default/files/Steps%20taken%20by%20the%20Central%20Govt%20for%20water\\_depletion\\_july2022.pdf](http://jalshakti-dowr.gov.in/sites/default/files/Steps%20taken%20by%20the%20Central%20Govt%20for%20water_depletion_july2022.pdf)

This information was given by the Minister of State for Jal Shakti, Shri Bishweswar Tudu in a written reply in Lok Sabha today.

## **ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

PIB, APRIL 5, 2023

More than Rs. 40,700 crore sanctioned to over 1,80,630 accounts under Stand-Up India Scheme in 7 years

Stand-Up India Scheme is an important milestone in promoting entrepreneurship among SC, ST and women: Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman

Stand-Up India Scheme instrumental in improving standards of living for entrepreneurs, their employees and their families: MoS Finance Dr Bhagwat Kisanrao Karad

Stand up India Scheme was launched on 5th April 2016 to promote entrepreneurship at grassroot level focusing on economic empowerment and job creation. This scheme has been extended up to the year 2025.

Recognising the challenges that energetic, enthusiastic, and aspiring SC, ST and women entrepreneurs may face many challenges in converting their dream to reality, Stand-Up India was launched to promote entrepreneurship amongst women, Scheduled Castes (SC) & Scheduled Tribes (ST) categories, to help them in starting a greenfield enterprise in manufacturing, services or the trading sector and activities allied to agriculture. On the occasion, Union Finance & Corporate Affairs Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman said, “It is a matter of pride and satisfaction for me to note that more than 1.8 lakh women and SC/ST entrepreneurs have been sanctioned loans for more than Rs. 40,600 crore.”

“The scheme has created an eco-system which facilitates and continues to provide a supportive environment for setting up green field enterprises through access to loans from bank branches of all Scheduled Commercial Banks. Stand-Up India Scheme has proved to be an important milestone in promoting entrepreneurship among SC, ST and women,” the Finance Minister said on the 7th anniversary of SUPI Scheme.

Smt. Sitharaman said that Stand-up India Scheme has touched numerous lives by ensuring access to hassle-free affordable credit to the unserved/underserved segment of entrepreneurs. The Finance Minister said that the scheme has provided wings to aspiring entrepreneurs to showcase their entrepreneurial acumen and the potential entrepreneurs hold in driving economic growth and building a strong ecosystem by being job creators is immense. On the 7th anniversary of the Stand-Up India Scheme, Union Minister of State for Finance Dr Bhagwat Kisanrao Karad said, "Stand-up India scheme is based on the third pillar of National Mission for Financial Inclusion namely "Funding the unfunded". Scheme has ensured availability of seamless credit flow from branches of Schedule Commercial Banks to SC/ST and women entrepreneurs. Scheme has been instrumental in improving the standards of living for entrepreneurs, their employees and their families."

Dr Karad said, "More than 1.8 lakh entrepreneurs have benefitted from this scheme during past seven years." "It is also a matter of immense pleasure for me that more than 80% of loans given under this scheme have been provided to women," Dr Karad added. As we celebrate the seventh anniversary of Stand Up India Scheme (SUPI), let us glance at the features and achievement of this Scheme.

The purpose of Stand-Up India is to:

promote entrepreneurship amongst women, SC & ST category;

Provide loans for greenfield enterprises in manufacturing, services or the trading sector and activities allied to agriculture;

facilitate bank loans between Rs.10 lakh and Rs.100 lakh to at least one Scheduled Caste/ Scheduled Tribe borrower and at least one woman borrower per bank branch of Scheduled Commercial Banks.

Why Stand-Up India?

The Stand-Up India scheme is designed to address the challenges faced by SC, ST and women entrepreneurs in setting up enterprises, obtaining loans and other support needed from time to time for succeeding in business. The scheme therefore endeavors to create an ecosystem which facilitates and continues to provide a supportive environment to the target segments in doing business. The scheme aims to encourage all bank branches in extending loans to borrowers from SC, ST and women in setting up their own greenfield enterprise. The desiring applicants can apply under the scheme:

Directly at the branch or,

Through Stand-Up India Portal ([www.standupmitra.in](http://www.standupmitra.in)) or,

Through the Lead District Manager (LDM).

Who all are eligible for a loan?

SC/ST and/or women entrepreneurs, above 18 years of age;

Loans under the scheme are available for only green field projects. Green field signifies, in this context, the first time venture of the beneficiary in manufacturing, services or the trading sector and activities allied to agriculture;

In case of non-individual enterprises, 51% of the shareholding and controlling stake should be held by either SC/ST and/or Women Entrepreneur;

Borrowers should not be in default to any bank/financial institution;

The Scheme envisages ‘up to 15%’ margin money which can be provided in convergence with eligible Central/State schemes. In any case, the borrower shall be required to bring in minimum of 10 % of the project cost as own contribution.

#### Handholding Support:

Apart from linking prospective borrowers to banks for loans, the online portal [www.standupmitra.in](http://www.standupmitra.in) developed by Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) for Stand Up India Scheme is also providing guidance to prospective entrepreneurs in their endeavour to set up business enterprises, starting from training to filling up loan applications, as per bank requirements. Through a network of more than 8,000 Hand Holding Agencies, this portal facilitates step by step guidance for connecting prospective borrowers to various agencies with specific expertise viz. Skilling Centres, Mentorship support, Entrepreneurship Development Program Centres, District Industries Centre, together with addresses and contact number.

#### Achievements of this Scheme as on 21.03.2023

Rs.40,710 crore has been sanctioned under Stand Up India Scheme to 180,636 accounts up to 21.03.2023 since inception of the Scheme. Details of SC/ST and Woman beneficiaries of Stand Up India scheme, as on 21.03.2023, are below:

SC

ST

Women

Total

No Of A/Cs

Sanc. Amt. (Rs. Crore)

No Of A/Cs

Sanc. Amt. (Rs. Crore)

No Of A/Cs

Sanc. Amt. (Rs. Crore)

No Of A/Cs

Sanc. Amt. (Rs. Crore)

26,889

5,625.50

8,960

1,932.50

1,44,787

33,152.43

1,80,636

40,710.43

TELEGRAPH, APRIL 8, 2023

Radical perspective

POLITICS AND PLAY | A fresh appraisal of 'Annihilation of Caste'

Ramachandra Guha

In my personal list of books every Indian must read, four stand paramount. These, in order of their year of first publication, are M.K. Gandhi's *Hind Swaraj* (1909), Rabindranath Tagore's *Nationalism* (1917), B. R. Ambedkar's *Annihilation of Caste* (1936), and Jawaharlal Nehru's *The Discovery of India* (1946). These works are both timely and timeless, speaking to the India in which they were published but continuing to speak to an India that would exist long after the writers themselves had gone.

Gandhi's book is perhaps most notable for its passionate advocacy of Hindu-Muslim harmony and its principled opposition to the use of violence as a means of settling political disputes. Tagore was addressing the dangers of xenophobic nationalism to warmongers in Japan and the United States, yet, a hundred and more years later, his words bear re-reading by young Indians today seduced by the claim that their country is destined to lead the world. Ambedkar's work focuses on that most characteristic — and most discriminatory — of Indian institutions, the caste system, and explains why it needs to be annihilated if our society is to renew itself on a more humane footing. Nehru's reflections on the deeply layered and inescapably plural evolution of Indian culture are a direct challenge to the unifying, homogenising ideology of *Hindutva* that identifies national identity with one religion (and often one language) alone.

Of these four works, Ambedkar's is the most coherent in its organisation and presentation. Gandhi's defence of non-violence and religious harmony is marred by an intemperate attack on doctors, lawyers, and modern civilisation in general. Nehru's book meanders and digresses, perhaps because it was written in prison, in part because the author's own mind tended to meander and digress. Tagore's book is powerful in intent but occasionally (or perhaps more than occasionally) clumsy in expression, perhaps because he was not writing

in his native language, Bengali. *Annihilation of Caste* is a much shorter work than *Hind Swaraj*, *Nationalism*, or *The Discovery of India*. However, that may not be the principal reason why the book is more focussed in its presentation. Pertinent here is the author's personal experience as a Dalit who had experienced caste discrimination himself. Even more pertinent is his scholarly temperament. Ambedkar had a naturally curious mind and was a voracious reader from a very young age. These tendencies were given further shape by his education in Columbia and London, and the two doctoral degrees he obtained there. In and outside the classroom, Ambedkar had read widely in sociology, economics, philosophy, and history. Because of this scholarly training, he had — unlike Tagore, Gandhi, or Nehru — the analytical skills to synthesise his readings and his experiences into a cohesive and persuasive narrative. At the same time, unlike the jargon-prone academics of today, Ambedkar had the ability as well as the desire to communicate his arguments in everyday language. He was not writing for his fellow scholars, but for his fellow citizens.

I myself first read *Annihilation of Caste* in the early 1990s, in an edition brought out by a Delhi publisher. I had then begun studying Gandhi, and was struck by the force and directedness of Ambedkar's approach. For, though in the main text of *Annihilation of Caste* Gandhi is mentioned only glancingly, it was the Gandhian view of caste that the tract principally targeted. Whereas the Mahatma thought Hinduism could reform itself by making individuals of different castes eat and live together, Ambedkar had no time for temporising. He argued — to my mind, persuasively — that caste was so central to the moral and theological world of Hinduism that it could only be abolished by a frontal attack that questioned the legitimacy of the scriptures that sanctified it. I have read *Annihilation of Caste* many times over the years, sometimes with students in university courses that I have taught. I have followed the critical commentary on the work, as provided by sociologists, historians, biographers, and anti-caste activists interested in Ambedkar and his legacy. I thought I knew the tract, its arguments, and its reception pretty well until I happened upon a draft of a book-length commentary on the text by a philosopher based in Hyderabad, Syed Sayeed. This provided an altogether fresh and deeply illuminating perspective on what Ambedkar wished to say.



Previous commentators on Annihilation of Caste have broadly asked, and sought to answer, four kinds of questions. First, why Ambedkar wrote the text and, after he could not deliver it as a speech, chose to publish it at his own expense. Second, whom did Ambedkar think his likely audience was. Third, whether apart from Hindus in general, Ambedkar had the most famous Hindu of the time, Gandhi, particularly in mind, when he wrote and published his tract. Fourth, what precise place does the text and its aftermath occupy in Ambedkar's own biography. In a daring, radical move, Professor Sayeed chooses not to address any of these questions. He is interested not in the broader context of Annihilation of Caste but in a closer, more fine-grained, analysis of the text itself. In his own words, his book has been written to focus attention "on what this essay is saying, and only on what it is saying." He defines his technique of presentation as follows: "This is what Ambedkar seems to be saying and, if that is so, these are the implications of his positions and his arguments." He thus brackets the relation of Annihilation of Caste to other texts by Ambedkar, to his broader political and social reform work, to the even broader question of his place and position in modern Indian history. As Professor Sayeed says, his attempt is to study the text "without the shadow of the towering author falling over it."

In this task he very largely succeeds. We cannot altogether escape Ambedkar's presence, but through Professor Sayeed's lens we can more fully understand the structure of the text and what it says. He allows us to perceive the originality of Ambedkar's social theory, and how it views the social, the political, the economic, and the religious as autonomous domains with their own structures of power, authority, and discrimination. Though in real life these domains do overlap, they cannot be simply collapsed into one another, nor is it helpful to see one domain (such as the economy) as "determinant in the last instance." Professor Sayeed demonstrates how, on the one hand, Ambedkar's analysis of social inequality in India is far more incisive (and wide-ranging) than that offered by the Marxists, and, on the other, how Ambedkar's programme for transforming Hindu society is far more thoroughgoing than that advocated by the Gandhians.

In his text, Professor Sayeed provided a penetrating critique of the identity politics of today. Thus, as he writes, “what [Ambedkar] wanted was the erasure of all marks of caste, whereas what we find today is the conspicuous foregrounding of those marks.” He adds that Ambedkar “would have foreseen that identity politics inevitably results in the emergence of majoritarian politics (in the twenty-first century this has become apparent in India as well as globally), and that majoritarianism undermines both democratic politics as well as the moral, or loosely civilisational, character of the country it infects.” On the current invocation of a glorious Hindu past, and how Ambedkar might have viewed it, Professor Sayeed writes: “Of what use is a great civilisational heritage of art and culture when its bedrock is oppression, bondage, and the treatment of a large section of their own kind as inferior to the point of subhuman by upper-caste Hindus?”

A significant contribution of Professor Sayeed’s work is that it successfully deprovincialises Ambedkar. “For many of his professed followers,” he writes, “Ambedkar’s views must be embraced not because he was a profound thinker but because he belonged to a particular caste.” He himself insists that Ambedkar was “a spirit capable of the broadest human sympathy and deepest sense of what constitutes justice.”

In his book, to be published later this month, Syed Sayeed provides us a close reading of *Annihilation of Caste* that itself warrants a very close reading. This is a deeply original work of scholarship on one of the most remarkable and enduringly relevant texts ever written by an Indian. If you have — like this writer — read *Annihilation of Caste* before, or even several times already, you will find its ideas and arguments richly illuminated by Professor Sayeed’s arguments. If, on the other hand, you have not yet read Ambedkar’s text, this brilliant commentary provides you with the best way to approach it with fresh eyes and an open mind.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

PIB, APRIL 5, 2023

The Government today informed that it has given bulk approval for the installation of ten nuclear reactors.

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 informed the Rajya Sabha that National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) have jointly manufactured an earth science satellite named, NISAR (NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar). The Government today informed that it has given bulk approval for the installation of ten nuclear reactors. In a statement laid on the floor of the floor of the Lok Sabha, 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 Government has roped in PSUs for the installation of the nuclear reactors or the exercise would be done exclusively by the specialized Government agencies

The Government has accorded administrative approval and financial sanction for 10 indigenous Pressurized Heavy Water Reactors of 700 MW each in fleet mode. The details are as follows:

State

Location

Project

Capacity

(MW)

Karnataka

Kaiga

Kaiga-5&6

2 X 700

Haryana

Gorakhpur

GHAVP– 3&4

2 X 700

Madhya Pradesh

Chutka

Chutka-1&2

2 X 700

Rajasthan

Mahi Banswara

Mahi Banswara-1&2

2 X 700

Mahi Banswara-3&4

2 X 700

The Government has amended the Atomic Energy Act in 2015 to enable the Joint Ventures of NPCIL with Public Sector Enterprises to set up nuclear power projects. These reactors are planned to be set up in 'fleet mode' progressively by the year 2031 at a cost of Rs. 1,05,000 crores.

PIB, APRIL 5, 2023

### Digitization of Co-operative Societies

A Centrally sponsored project for Computerization of 63,000 functional PACS/ LAMPS across the country with a total financial outlay of Rs. 2,516 Crore is under implementation. The project entails bringing all the functional PACS onto an ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) based common software, linking them with NABARD through State Cooperative Banks (StCBs) and District Central Cooperative Banks (DCCBs).

At present, proposals for computerization of 58,383 PACS have been received from 24 States and 4 Union Territories. Release of central share amounting to the States/ UTs for the procurement of hardware, digitization of legacy data and establishing support system is under process. An amount of 11.28 crore has been released to the State of Uttar Pradesh under this Project for Computerization of 1,539 PACS. The Project Monitoring Units (PMUs) have been set up at Central and State Levels by NABARD. Development of software has been started by the National Level Project Software Vendor (NLPSV) selected by NABARD.

The expected benefit of the computerization of PACS Project, inter alia are - increasing efficiency of their operations, ensuring speedy disbursement of loans, lowering of transaction costs, reducing imbalances in payments, seamless accounting with DCCBs and StCBs and increasing transparency. Implementation of Common Accounting System (CAS) and Management Information System (MIS) would enable PACS to

carry out their operations online and obtain refinance/ loans for their various activities from NABARD through DCCBs and StCBs. This was stated by the Minister of Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah in a written reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha.

PIB, APRIL 5, 2023

RISC-V is becoming a global movement, in which India will play a leading role: MoS Rajeev Chandrasekhar  
One year after launch of Semicon India Conference by PM, legendary chips designer Jim Keller's Tenstorrent sets up office in IndiaTime and place for RISC-V is India and Bengaluru is capital of RISC-V innovation: MoS Rajeev Chandrasekhar

Young Indians are going to shape future of Semicon design: MoS Rajeev Chandrasekhar

Union Minister of State for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship and Electronics & IT Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar today said Indian startups using RISC-V have tremendous opportunities for developing products, devices and AI solutions with global companies like Tenstorrent evincing interest for collaborations.

<https://static.pib.gov.in/WriteReadData/userfiles/image/image0014VKH.jpg>

The RISC-V, an open-source instruction set architecture (ISA) is being increasingly used for innovations, particularly when it comes to emerging and rapidly developing AI solutions. "RISC-V is becoming a global movement with India as a leading player," the Minister said, while addressing the RISC-V Technology Conference on 'Nerds Talking To Nerds', organised by Tenstorrent at Bengaluru in Karnataka.

“We are living in extremely interesting times for technology space and in the next five years, centres of gravity will be rebuilt around newer geopolitics and newer talent pools. Young Indians are going to shape the future of Semicon design and build and create new products, new devices and new solutions,” he said.

<https://static.pib.gov.in/WriteReadData/userfiles/image/image002G425.jpg>

Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar, himself a former chip designer, welcomed the move by legendary chips designer Jim Keller’s decision to set up his startup Tenstorrent’s office in India, saying, “I am happy that within a year of the launch of the 1st Semicon India Conference by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, global semicon leaders like Jim Keller are moving to India and catalysing future design startups in the country. The time and place for RISC-V is India and Bengaluru is the capital of RISC-V innovation,” he said.

STATESMAN, APRIL 5, 2023

## The Power of AI: Transforming Industries and Enabling Innovation

From healthcare to transportation, from finance to education, AI is transforming industries and enabling us to solve problems in new and innovative ways.

Vineet Gupta

Artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly changing the world we live in. From healthcare to transportation, from finance to education, AI is transforming industries and enabling us to solve problems in new and innovative ways. As we move further into the digital age, the role of AI is only going to become more important. In this article, we’ll explore the impact of AI on the new world and discuss some of the ways it is transforming various industries.

Healthcare is one area where AI is already making a big impact. Medical professionals are using AI-powered tools to help diagnose diseases, monitor patients, and develop new treatments. For example, machine learning algorithms can analyze vast amounts of medical data to identify patterns and help doctors make better decisions. AI can also help identify patients who are at risk of developing certain conditions, allowing doctors to intervene early and prevent illness. Another area where AI is transforming the new world is transportation. Autonomous vehicles are becoming more common, and many experts predict that self-driving cars will soon be the norm. These vehicles use AI to navigate roads, detect obstacles, and make decisions in real-time. Self-driving cars have the potential to greatly reduce accidents, save lives, and make transportation more efficient.

In finance, AI is helping banks and other financial institutions detect fraud, analyze risk, and make investment decisions. AI-powered chatbots are also becoming more common, allowing customers to get quick answers to their questions without needing to speak to a human operator.

Education is another area where AI is transforming the new world. Online learning platforms are using AI to personalize learning experiences for students, identifying their strengths and weaknesses and tailoring course content to their needs. AI-powered tutoring systems are also becoming more common, allowing students to get immediate feedback and support.

As AI becomes more widespread, it is also raising new questions and challenges. For example, many people are concerned about the impact of AI on employment. Some predict that AI will lead to widespread job displacement, while others argue that it will create new jobs and opportunities. There are also concerns about AI ethics, such as how to ensure that AI systems are transparent, fair, and accountable. In conclusion, the role of AI in the new world is becoming increasingly important. From healthcare to transportation, from finance to education, AI is transforming industries and enabling us to solve problems in new and innovative ways. As we move further into the digital age, it is important to consider the challenges and opportunities presented by AI and work to ensure that it is used responsibly and for the benefit of all.



PIB, APRIL 6, 2023

Government Notifies Amendments to the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics code) rules, 2021 for an Open, Safe & Trusted and Accountable Internet

These amendments layout a comprehensive framework for Online Gaming Eco-system and also deals with Fact checking related to online content pertaining to Government

These rules address the twin challenges of catalyzing and expanding online gaming innovation and at the same time protecting citizens from illegal betting and wagering online. Rules will be catalyst for expanding innovation, while banning/prohibiting wagering on outcome of games and betting

Online gaming is a multi-billion opportunity for Indian Startups & an important part of PM Narendra Modi ji's vision of IndiaTechade and USD 1 Trillion Digital Economy

Online gaming startups and innovation are being powered by young Indians across the country and these rules will provide clarity and certainty in terms of policy framework for them

Rules will ensure that Online games or sites that involve wagering will be banned completely including advertising or any time of presence. Industry participating SROs will be core of the enabling framework which will certify permissible Online games. Stakeholder participative SROs to determine permissible online games; Safety of Gamers including Children to be addressed. Under the Rules, MEITY to also notify agency to factcheck false & misleading information related to Govt business

Reaffirming its commitment to protect the safety and trust of the Digital Nagriks, the Ministry of Electronics and IT, Government of India today notified amendments to the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, related to online gaming and spread of false and misleading information regarding government business.

The aim of these amendments is to enforce greater due diligence by online gaming and social media intermediaries in respect of online games & fake or false misleading information related to Government business. Elaborating on the new rules at a press conference, Union Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar, said, “It is Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision and goal that young Indians get every opportunity possible to create startups and innovate for the world. Online gaming is certainly a huge opportunity for India and Young Indians. We see the Indian online gaming ecosystem to expand and grow into a multi-billion dollar industry and be an important catalyst to India’s One trillion-dollar Digital economy goal by 2025-26, with very clear restrictions on online wagering and betting.”

These amendments have been drafted after holding widespread consultations with multiple stakeholders including parents, school teachers, academics, students, gamers and gaming industry associations, child rights bodies, etc. The Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY) was allocated the matter related to online gaming rules on December 23 last year under the Government of India (Allocation of Business Rules), 1961. The Ministry, within a fortnight, prepared the draft amendments to the IT rules and uploaded them for consultations on January 2, 2023. Meetings were held with stakeholders on 11th, 17th January and 16th February 2023.

As per the amended rules, it has been made obligatory on the part of intermediaries to make reasonable effort to not host, publish or share any online game that can cause the user harm, or that has not been verified as a permissible online game by an online gaming self-regulatory body/bodies designated by the Central Government. The intermediary will also have to ensure that no advertisement or surrogate advertisement or promotion of an online game that is not a permissible online game, is hosted on its platform.

2. The self-regulatory body will have the authority to inquire and satisfy itself that the online game does not involve wagering on any outcome, that the online gaming intermediary and the game complies with the rules, the requirements under law for being competent to enter into a contract (currently at 18 years), and a framework made by the self-regulatory body regarding safeguards against user harm, including psychological harm, measures to safeguard through parental controls, age-rating mechanism, and measures to safeguard users against the risk of gaming addiction.

3. The amended rules also cast additional obligations on online gaming intermediaries in relation to online games involving real money. These include the displaying of a mark of verification by the self-regulatory body on such games; informing their users of the policy for withdrawal or refund of deposit, manner of determination and distribution of winnings, fees and other charges payable; obtaining the KYC details of the users; and not giving credit or enabling financing by third parties to the users.

If in case the Central Government issues a notification in the interest of users or other specified grounds, the same rules and obligations will be made applicable to even those games where the user is not required to make any deposit for winnings.

4. The Government may notify multiple self-regulatory bodies, which shall be representative of online gaming industry but it will function at arm's length from their members, and a Board consisting of Directors who are free from conflict of interest and represent all relevant stakeholders and experts, including online games users, educationists, psychology or mental health experts, ICT experts, persons with child rights protection experience and individuals having experience in relevant fields of public policy and administration.

The rules provide for the obligations to become applicable once sufficient number of self-regulatory bodies have been designated, so that the online gaming industry has adequate time to comply with its obligations.

5. The amended rules now also make it obligatory on the intermediaries to not to publish, share or host fake, false or misleading information in respect of any business of the Central Government. These fake, false or misleading information will identified by the notified Fact Check Unit of the Central Government. it is to be noted that the existing IT rules already required the intermediaries to make reasonable efforts to not host, publish or share any information which is patently false and untrue or misleading in nature.

6. The rules already cast an obligation on intermediaries to make reasonable efforts to not host, publish or share any information which is patently false and untrue or misleading in nature.

## ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE

PIB, APRIL 3, 2023

PARIVESH portal automates the process of Environmental Clearance bringing down the overall time taken in grant of clearance

The proposals received for grant of Environmental Clearance (EC) are examined expeditiously as per the provisions of the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2006 as amended. As per procedure, the proposals are first appraised by the Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) at Central level or by the State Expert Appraisal Committee (SEAC) at State/Union Territory level as the case may be. If recommended, the proposals are further considered by the Ministry or State Level Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA), respectively, for grant of EC.

In case of Maharashtra, three SEACs have been constituted on request of the State Government so as to avoid pendency of EC. One of these three SEACs is dedicated exclusively for the building and construction related projects in the state.

In order to expedite the EC process, the Ministry has launched a single window online PARIVESH portal which automates the entire process of EC starting from submission of application, preparation of agenda, and preparation of minutes to grant of clearances. Further various initiatives have been taken to amend the policies and regulations to ensure transparent and simplified process of EC without compromising on rigor of the environmental concerns. Due to various efforts taken by Government towards streamlining the EC procedure,

overall time taken in grant of EC has been coming down steadily. This information was given by Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Ashwini Kumar Choubey in a written reply in the Lok Sabha.

PIB, APRIL 3, 2023

India to achieve about 50 percent cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel-based energy resources by 2030

The Apex Committee for Implementation of Paris Agreement (AIPA), an inter-ministerial group, was set up on 27th November 2020. Its functions include, inter-alia, coordination, communication and reporting of Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC); to monitor, review and revisit climate goals to fulfil the requirements under the Paris Agreement; provide guidance for Action Plans under different climate related Missions, etc. To address and combat climate change, as well as to provide a roadmap to achieve net zero by 2070, India submitted its updated NDC on 26th August 2022 with enhanced commitments. As per updated NDC, India has an enhanced target to reduce emission intensity of its GDP by 45 percent by 2030 from 2005 level, achieve about 50 percent cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel-based energy resources by 2030. India has also submitted its Long-Term Low Carbon Development Strategy on 14th November 2022 under the Paris Agreement, to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). In its first meeting held on 24th March 2021, AIPA had deliberated on carbon trading scheme for energy sector, by enhancing the scope of existing energy savings trading mechanism. In this regard, the Government has notified the Energy Conservation (Amendment) Act, 2022 on 19th December 2022. It includes provisions for putting in place a domestic carbon



market. Further, the Government has also notified the National Designated Authority for the Implementation of Article 6 of the Paris Agreement (NDAIAPA) on 30th May, 2022 to develop processes and frameworks under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement for international carbon trading in India. The NDAIAPA has identified certain activities for trading of carbon credits under cooperative approaches under the Paris Agreement. However, no administrative infrastructure for monitoring of carbon emissions has been created in partnership with the World Bank.

This information was given by Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Ashwini Kumar Choubey in a written reply in the Lok Sabha.

PIB, APRIL 6, 2023

MISHTI scheme promotes development of 540 Sq. Kms Mangroves across 11 States and 2 Union Territories. Resources for implementation of the Amrit Dharohar and MISHTI are through convergence of other ongoing schemes/programmes of Central and State Governments. The features of Amrit Dharohar scheme encompass promoting the unique conservation values of wetlands including their optimal use for enhancing biodiversity, carbon stock, ecotourism opportunities and income generation for local communities. The objectives inter-alia are integrated management of such wetlands for green growth, developing nature and culture-based tourism at the sites, community stewardship for wetland based livelihood, heritage, and culture, building convergence with different Ministries and departments, State Governments, Research and academic institutions and Industrial Sector, over the next three years across the country.

Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats & Tangible Incomes (MISHTI)) envisage to comprehensively explore the possible area for development of Mangroves covering approximately 540 Sq. Kms. spreading across 11 States and 2 Union Territories during five years commencing FY 2023-24 onwards. The sharing of best practices on plantation techniques, conservation measures, management practices and resources mobilization through Public Private Partnership are objectives of the MISHTI scheme.

This information was given by Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Ashwini Kumar Choubey in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha.



## **CURRENT EVENTS**

**PIB, APRIL 4, 2023**

**PM addresses 5th International Conference on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure**

**“Our response to disaster has to be integrated not isolated”**

**“Infrastructure is not only about returns but also about reach and resilience”**

**“Infrastructure must leave none behind”**

**“Resilience is built in the times between one disaster and another”**

**“Modern technology with local insights can be great for resilience”**

**“The commitment of financial resources is key to the success of disaster resilience initiatives”**

**The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi today addressed the 5th International Conference on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (ICDRI) 2023 via a video message.**

**The Prime Minister said that CDRI arose from a global vision that in a closely connected world, the impact of disasters will not just be local. Therefore, “our response has to be integrated not isolated”, he said. He noted that in just a few years, over 40 countries from advanced and developing countries, large or small or from global South or Global North have become part of the CDRI. He found it encouraging that apart from governments, global institutions, private sectors and domain experts are also involved.**

**The Prime Minister outlined some priorities for discussion for disaster resilience infrastructure in the context of this year's theme of 'Delivering Resilient and Inclusive Infrastructure'. The Prime Minister said "Infrastructure is not only about returns but also about reach and resilience. Infrastructure must leave none behind and serve the people even during times of crisis." The Prime Minister stressed the need for a holistic view of infrastructure as social and digital infrastructure are as important as transport infrastructure.**

**Along with quick relief, the Prime Minister emphasized the need to focus on early restoration of normalcy too. "Resilience is built in the times between one disaster and another. Studying past disasters and learning lessons from them is the way", he added. Shri Modi underlined the intelligent use of local knowledge of building infrastructures that can with-stand disasters. Modern technology with local insights can be great for resilience. Further, if documented well, local knowledge may become a global best practice, the Prime Minister said.**

**The Prime Minister noted the inclusive intent of some of the CDRI initiatives. He mentioned the Infrastructure for Resilient Island States initiative or IRIS benefitting many island nations. He remarked on the Infrastructure Resilience Accelerator Fund that was announced last year. This 50 million dollar fund has generated immense interest among developing nations. "The commitment of financial resources is key to the success of initiatives", the Prime Minister emphasized.**

**Mentioning India's G20 presidency, the Prime Minister informed about inclusion of the CDRI in many working groups. 'The solutions you explore here will receive attention at the highest levels of global policy-making', he said**

**Referring to the scale and intensity of the recent disasters like the earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria, the Prime Minister concluded by underlining the importance of CDRI's work and its importance.**

**PIB, APRIL 4, 2023**

**Young minds to deliberate on shaping future policies at Y20 Consultation at IIT Kanpur from 5th-6th April, 2023**

**More than 1200 youth delegates will take part in the event**

**Kanpur, April 3, 2023: The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur will be hosting the Youth20 Consultation under the G20 Presidency of India, from 5th-6th April, 2023. More than 1200 youth delegates from across India and abroad will attend the Y20 Consultation at IIT Kanpur. The Y20 Consultation is a platform that brings young people together to connect, share ideas and experiences, and deliberate on finding innovative solutions to pressing global concerns. The Y20 Consultation, under the aegis of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India, is a pan-India activity in the run up to the final Youth-20 Summit to be held in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh. The deliberations from these consultations will help in shaping future policies.**

**Five core themes are identified for the Y20 Summit 2023, out of which, IIT Kanpur will cater to two – “Future of Work: Industry 4.0, Innovation, & 21st Century Skills”; and “Health, Well-being & Sports: Agenda for Youth”, during the Y20 Consultation. Prof. Abhay Karandikar, Director IIT Kanpur, said, “It is a matter of pride for every Indian that India has assumed the G20 Presidency. Under its aegis, the Youth20 Consultation is an important event that would bring youth from the G20 countries together to discuss, ideate and suggest solutions to build a better tomorrow. We are glad to be hosting one of the Y20 Consultations on two core themes. As an institute, IIT Kanpur has been spearheading research and development across these crucial domains to empower youth and society, for long. I hope the fruitful debates and discussions from the Consultation would contribute significantly to the larger Y20 Summit.”**

**The Y20 Consultation at IIT Kanpur will also hold panel discussions with invited dignitaries and entrepreneurs on the topics of “Future of Health”, “Technologies for Sustainable Future”, and “Innovation in Future of Work”. The attendees will have opportunities to interact with the panelists.**

**Apart from the panel discussions, a grand exhibition with more than 50 stalls will be organized as part of the Y20 Consultation. The exhibition is likely to be inaugurated by Kanpur Commissioner Dr. Raj Shekhar, and will showcase science and innovation, and education, along with tech stalls by startups from the Startup Incubation and Innovation Centre (SIIC), IIT Kanpur. A cultural evening with Hindustani and Carnatic Classical Music followed by dinner will bring the curtains down to the Y20 Consultation at IIT Kanpur.**

### **About IIT Kanpur:**

**Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur was established on 2nd November 1959 by an Act of Parliament. The institute has a sprawling campus spread over 1055 acres with large pool of academic and research resources spanning across 19 departments, 22 centres, and 3 Interdisciplinary programs in engineering, science, design, humanities, and management disciplines with 540 full-time faculty members and approximately 9000 students. In addition to formal undergraduate and postgraduate courses, the institute has been active in research and development in areas of value to both industry and government. For more information, visit [www.iitk.ac.in](http://www.iitk.ac.in).**

**PIB, APRIL 8, 2023**

**Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah will launch ‘Vibrant Villages Programme’ in Kibithoo, a border village in Arunachal Pradesh on 10th April**

**Under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, government has approved ‘Vibrant Villages Programme’ with central components of Rs.4800 crore including Rs.2500 crore exclusively for road connectivity for the Financial Years 2022-23 to 2025-26**

**The programme will help in improving the quality of life of people living in identified border villages and encourage people to stay in their native locations thereby reversing the outmigration from these villages and adding to security of the border**



**2967 villages in 46 blocks of 19 districts abutting northern border in Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand & Himachal Pradesh and UT of Ladakh have been identified for comprehensive development under ‘Vibrant Villages Programme’**

**Shri Amit Shah will inaugurate nine Micro Hydel Projects of Arunachal Pradesh government constructed under the “Golden Jubilee Border Illumination Programme” he will also unveils Indo-Tibetan Border Police projects to augment infrastructure and interact with ITBP personnel**

**Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation will visit Namti field and pay homage at the Walong War Memorial**

**Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah will visit Arunachal Pradesh on April 10-11, 2023. On first day of his visit, he will launch the ‘Vibrant Villages Programme’ in Kibithoo, a border village in Anjaw district of Arunachal Pradesh on April 10, 2023.**

**Under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, the Government of India has approved the ‘Vibrant Villages Programme’ (VVP) with central components of Rs.4800 crore including Rs.2500 crore exclusively for road connectivity for the Financial Years 2022-23 to 2025-26. VVP is a centrally sponsored scheme under which 2967 villages in 46 blocks of 19 districts abutting northern border in the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand & Himachal Pradesh and UT of Ladakh have been identified for comprehensive development. In the first phase, 662 villages have been identified for priority on coverage, which includes 455 villages in Arunachal Pradesh.**

**The Vibrant Villages Programme will help in improving the quality of life of people living in identified border villages and encourage people to stay in their native locations thereby reversing the outmigration from these villages and adding to security of the border. District Administration with the help of appropriate mechanisms at block and panchayat level will prepare Action Plans for identified village to ensure 100% saturation of central and state schemes. The focus areas of interventions identified for development of villages include road connectivity, drinking water, electricity including solar and wind energy, mobile and internet connectivity, tourist centers, multi-purpose centers and healthcare infrastructure and wellness centers.**

**Shri Amit Shah will inaugurate nine Micro Hydel Projects of Arunachal Pradesh government constructed under the “Golden Jubilee Border Illumination Programme” in Kibithoo, on April 10, 2023. These electricity projects will empower people living in border villages. He will also inaugurate Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) projects to augment infrastructure at Likabali (Arunachal Pradesh), Chapra (Bihar), Nooranad (Kerala) and Vishakapatnam (Andhra Pradesh). Union Home Minister will also interact with ITBP personnel at Kibithoo. An exhibition of the products made by women members of Self-Help Groups of border districts will also be organized. Shri Amit Shah will visit exhibition stalls to acquaint with and appreciate the efforts of women of border villages. On April 11, 2023, Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation will visit Namti field and pay homage at the Walong War Memorial.**

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## POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

PIB, APRIL 13, 2023

Atal Innovation Mission and Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare collaborate to Support Agri-related Innovations in India by linking ATLS with KVKs and ATMA

Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog, and the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (MoA&FW) have come together to promote innovation in the agricultural sector among school students across India. The two government bodies have agreed to connect Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs) with Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVKs) and Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMAs) under the initiative.

The collaboration is a result of the vision of the Honourable Prime Minister Narendra Modi who seeded this idea during a conversation and proposed to connect the ATLs with the KVKs across the country. The Prime Minister also suggested both the government bodies to look into the idea of linking soil testing labs to ATL schools. KVKs function as a "Single Window Agricultural Knowledge Resource and Capacity Development Centre," and this collaboration will provide numerous stakeholders with necessary information, training, and inputs. KVKs, in partnership with ATMA, will collaborate with nearby ATLs to support agricultural-related innovation. During the first phase of the implementation, one KVK under each of the 11 Agricultural Technology Application Research Institutes (ATARIs) will be involved, providing technology backstopping and facilitating knowledge-sharing and skill-building exercises. KVK experts will also undertake need-based visits to nearby ATLs, while KVKs will provide literature, seeds, planting materials, and other inputs as required. The pilot project will be extended after assessing the positive outcomes after two years.

peaking during the event, Mission Director Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog, Dr. Chintan Vaishnav said, "In my mind this step is going to be a giant leap towards boosting agriculture innovations in India. There are two aspects of this collaboration that are worth replicating across many sectors. First, the idea of linking the

existing government platforms with a purpose. For example, public health centers and ATLs could be linked similarly for better healthcare and so on. Secondly, linking children, the most important change-makers of society to the real, most important challenges, and opportunities.” He said. He further said that both AIM and MoA&FW are also mulling to create a quarterly showcase at MoA&FW where a stream of Agri-student innovators would be felicitated by Atal Innovation Mission. He informed that AIM has mapped and shared a list of 55 ATLs (mapping each of the 11 KVKs, ATMAs with up-to 5 ATLs) based on the list of KVKs and ATMAs shared by MoA&FW. Addressing the gathering, Secretary, DA&FW, MoA&FW Manoj Ahuja spoke about the potential of this collaboration to address the various challenges of Agriculture. He further added that under this framework, MoA&FW and ATL can develop a problem finding platform and organise hackathons. He stressed the need for adopting an “integrated learning approach” to find solutions to the problems of farm sector.

To familiarize MoA&FW officials with the Atal Tinkering Labs initiative, a school visit was conducted on April 12th, 2023. A delegation from MoA&FW visited the ATL lab at Amity International School, Saket, Delhi, where they had an opportunity to witness innovations made by young school students from various sectors which included agriculture related innovations. A similar visit is planned for ICAR in the last week of April, 2023. This collaboration between AIM and MoA&FW is a significant milestone towards the growth and development of the agricultural sector in India and Atal Innovation Mission is committed to continue its efforts towards fostering innovation and creativity among the youth of the country. Meanwhile, young student innovators from the ATL schools KV Janakpuri, DAV Vasant Kunj and Amity International School also shared their ATL experiences and spoke about their innovations in agriculture sector.

PIB, APRIL 16, 2023

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh says, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had accomplished Sardar Patel's unfinished task in Jammu & Kashmir

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 Prime Minister Narendra Modi had accomplished Sardar Patel's unfinished task in Jammu & Kashmir.



Speaking as chief guest at “Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat” celebration here, Dr Jitendra Singh said that Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel played a pivotal role in the integration of more than 560 princely states to constitute the post-independence Indian Union. Unfortunately, Patel was not allowed to handle Jammu & Kashmir because the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru thought that he knew J&K better. Later, Nehru also declared a unilateral ceasefire and thus prevented Indian forces from retrieving back the present ‘Pakistan occupied

Jammu Kashmir' (PoJK) from the Pak intruders, he said. The Minister further said, had Sardar Patel been given a free hand, the history of Indian subcontinent would have been different. PoJK would not have been there, whole of Jammu & Kashmir would have been a part of India and this issue would not have lingered on for so many decades, he said. The anomaly of Article 370 and 35A, said Dr Jitendra Singh, persisted for more than 70 years and the nation had to wait for Prime Minister Modi to come and do the course correction. Therein lies the significance of 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' and it is a providential coincidence that the vision of 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' was declared by Prime Minister Modi on 31st October, 2015 which happened to be the 140th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. Dr Jitendra Singh said that in J&K, in the garb of Article 370, those who were votaries of the Article were actually misusing it to sustain themselves in power. Otherwise, what was the political logic of holding back social reforms like the Dowry Prohibition Act 1961, Prohibition of Child Marriage Act 2006 etc. if not to appease certain sections of society for vote bank, he asked. Talking about the North East of India, Dr Jitendra Singh said that before 2014, North East used to show up in the news for all the wrong reasons mainly encounters, Dharnas, road blockades, poor rail and road connectivity and violence. But all that has dramatically changed. In the last 9 years, Prime Minister Modi has visited the North East more than 60 times which may be more than the total number of visits made by all the previous PMs put together. He added that earlier governments took North East for granted but today the region is a model of 'Vikas' for the rest of the country. The Minister further added that Prime Minister Modi has won the trust of the people of North East by ensuring all round development in the region. Now the youth of North East are in high demand throughout the country for their skill and are excelling in different fields. Business houses are looking upto North East as an attractive destination for investment. For example, a small Northeastern state like Mizoram with a population of hardly 10 lakh has set up Indian's subcontinent's first-of-its-kind specialised "Citrus Food Park" with Israel's collaboration which has been hailed as a "Centre of Excellence".

Dr Jitendra Singh concluded by saying that the new political culture brought in by Prime Minister Narendra Modi coupled with the tremendous pace in development has broken the mental and physical barriers, and united the country as 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat'.

## ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

PIB, APRIL 14, 2023

PM lays foundation stone, inaugurates and dedicates to the nation projects worth more than Rs. 3,400 crores in Guwahati, Assam

Dedicates AIIMS Guwahati and three other medical colleges to the nation

Launches 'Aapke Dwar Ayushman' campaign

Lays foundation stone of Assam Advanced Health Care Innovation Institute

“Social infrastructure has significantly improved in the Northeast in last nine years”

“We work with 'Seva Bhaav' for the people”

“We are moving forward with the mantra of India's development through Northeast's development”

“Government's policy, intentions and commitment are not driven by self-interest but by the spirit of 'nation first - people first'”

“Development becomes impossible when the politics of dynasty, regionalism, corruption and instability start to dominate”“The schemes started by our government have greatly benefited the health of women”“Our government is modernizing India's health sector according to the needs of the 21st century”“The biggest basis for change in India's healthcare system is Sabka Prayas”

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone and dedicated to the nation various projects worth more than Rs. 3,400 crores in Guwahati, Assam today. The Prime Minister dedicated AIIMS Guwahati



and three other medical colleges to the nation. He also laid the foundation stone of Assam Advanced Health Care Innovation Institute (AAHII) and launched 'Aapke Dwar Ayushman' campaign by distributing Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) cards to eligible beneficiaries. Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister greeted the people on the auspicious occasion of Rongali Bihu. The Prime Minister remarked that the health infrastructure of Assam and the North East has found new strength as the Northeast gets its first AIIMS and the state of Assam gets three new medical colleges. He underlined that the foundation stone for a 500-bed super speciality hospital has also been laid for advanced research in collaboration with IIT Guwahati. He also noted that work is underway in mission mode to distribute Ayushman Cards to millions of citizens of Assam. The citizens, the Prime Minister continued, from the neighbouring states of Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Manipur and Mizoram will also reap the benefits of today's development projects. The Prime Minister congratulated everyone for today's projects.

The Prime Minister mentioned the efforts to enhance connectivity in the Northeast and visible improvement in the road, rail and airport infrastructure in the last 8-9 years. The Prime Minister said along with physical infrastructure, social infrastructure also received a massive boost in the region as education and health facilities have been expanded in an unprecedented manner. The Prime Minister had presented a number of medical colleges during his last visit and today he presented AIIMS and three medical colleges. The Prime Minister also underlined the support to medical facilities and in turn to patients from ever-improving rail-road connectivity in the region. The Prime Minister recalled how the hunger for taking credit and a sense of lording over the masses in the previous regimes made the nation helpless, the Prime Minister interjected as he pointed out that the general public is a form of God. He said that the previous governments had created a feeling of alienation towards the Northeast and deemed it too far from the mainland. But the present government, the Prime Minister explained, comes with a service-oriented belief which makes the Northeast very approachable and the feeling of proximity never ceases.

The Prime Minister expressed happiness that the people of the Northeast have taken charge of their destiny and development. “We are moving forward with the mantra of India’s development through the development of the Northeast. In this movement of development, the central government is accompanying as a friend and servant”, the Prime Minister added. Referring to the long-festering challenges of the region, the Prime Minister said that development becomes impossible when the politics of dynasty, regionalism, corruption and instability start to dominate. This, the Prime Minister remarked, happened with our healthcare system. He illustrated this by giving an example of AIIMS which was established in the 50s and no effort was made to open AIIMS in other parts of the country. Despite the initiation of the process during the time of Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the Prime Minister said that efforts did not move in subsequent years, and only after 2014, these issues were addressed by the present government. He informed that in recent years the government started work on 15 AIIMS and treatments and courses have already begun in most of them. “AIIMS Guwahati too is an example of the fact that our government fulfills all the resolutions”, the Prime Minister said.

The Prime Minister reiterated that the policies of the previous governments created a scarcity of doctors and medical professionals in the nation and erected a wall before quality health service. In the last 9 years, the Prime Minister informed that the government has worked on a huge scale to boost medical infrastructure and medical professionals in the country. Highlighting the developments in the field of medical infrastructure, the Prime Minister informed that approximately 300 medical colleges became functional in the last 9 years when compared to only 150 medical colleges a decade before 2014. He also added that the number of MBBS seats in the country doubled to around 1 lakh in the last 9 years, while the PG seats have seen a rise of 110 percent. With the establishment of the National Medical Commission for the expansion of medical education in the country, the Prime Minister underlined that reservations have also been ensured so that youth from backward families can fulfill their dreams of becoming doctors. The Prime Minister informed that more than 150 nursing colleges have also been declared as part of this year’s Budget. In the Northeast, the Prime Minister said, the number of medical colleges in the region along with the number of seats have doubled in the last 9 years while

work is underway for several new ones. The Prime Minister credited the solid work in the medical and healthcare field to a strong and stable government at the center. He said in BJP governments policy, intentions and commitment are not driven by self-interest but by the spirit of ‘nation first - countrymen first’. That is why, he said, the focus of the government was not on vote bank but on reducing the problems of the citizens. The Prime Minister conveyed his understanding of the plight of lack of financial resources for medical treatment for a poor family and talked about the Ayushman Yojana that provides free treatment up to 5 lakh rupees. Similarly, 9000 Jan Aushadhi Kendras are providing affordable medicines. He also mentioned ceilings on the cost of stents and knee implants and free dialysis centers in every district. More than 1.5 lakh Wellness centers are providing important tests for early diagnosis and better treatment. Pradhanmantri TB Mukta Bharat Abhiyan is also addressing a key medical challenge of the country and the poor. Preventive health care focus via cleanliness, Yoga and Ayurveda will improve wellness and prevent disease. Reflecting on the successes of the Government schemes, the Prime Minister said that he feels blessed on getting the opportunity to serve the people. He gave the example of Ayushman Bharat PM Jan Arogya Yojna Yojna and said that it has become a support system for the poor helping them save Rs 80,000 crores. He credited the Jan Aushadhi Kendras with helping the middle class save Rs 20,000 crores. He further added that the poor and middle class are saving Rs 13,000 crore every year due to the reduction in the cost of stents and knee implants, while the facility of free dialysis has helped poor kidney patients save Rs 500 crores. The Prime Minister also noted that the campaign to hand over about 1 crore Ayushman Bharat Cards has also begun in Assam which will further help them save more money.

The Prime Minister dwelled at length on the impact of the measures taken in the field of healthcare on the welfare of women. He noted the traditional reluctance of women to spend on their health. He said that the propagation of toilets saved them from many ailments and Ujjwala connections saved them from smoke-related problems. Jal Jeevan Mission helped with waterborne diseases and Mission Indradhanush saved them by free vaccination for serious diseases. Ayushman Bharat, Pradhanmantri Matru Vandana Scheme and

National Nutrition Mission improved health indicators among women. “When the government is sensitive and there is a feeling of service towards the poor, then such work is done”, the Prime Minister added. Shri Modi said, “Our government is also modernizing India's health sector according to the needs of the 21st century.” He listed Ayushman Bharat Digital Health Mission and Digital Health ID which will make health records of the citizens with one click and will improve hospital services. He expressed happiness that so far, 38 crore health IDs have been issued and more than 2 lakh health facilities and 1.5 lakh health professionals have been verified. Noting the growing popularity of e-Sanjeevini, the Prime Minister mentioned the feat of completing 10 crore e-consultation through the scheme.

“The biggest basis for change in India's healthcare system is Sabka Prayas (everyone's effort)”, the Prime Minister said. He recalled the spirit of Sabka Prayas during the crisis of Coronavirus and noted that the entire world is praising the world's biggest, fastest, and most effective Covid vaccination campaign. He noted the contributions of Asha workers, Anganwadi workers, primary healthcare workers and the pharmaceutical sector in delivering Made in India vaccines to even the remotest of places within a very short time. “Such a big Mahayagya becomes successful only when there is Sabka Prayas (everyone's effort) and Sabka Vishwas (everyone's faith)”, the Prime Minister said. He concluded the address by urging everyone to move forward with the spirit of Sabka Prayas and take the mission of Healthy India, Prosperous India to new heights. Governor of Assam, Shri Gulab Chand Kataria, Chief Minister of Assam, Shri Himanta Biswa Sarma, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Dr Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare, Dr Bharati Pawar and Minister from Government of Assam were present on the occasion among others.

The operationalization of AIIMS, Guwahati will mark a momentous occasion for the state of Assam and the entire North-East region. This is also a testimony of the Prime Minister’s commitment to strengthening health infrastructure across the country. The foundation stone of this hospital was also laid by the Prime Minister in

May 2017. Built at a cost of more than Rs. 1120 crores, AIIMS Guwahati is a state-of-the-art hospital with a capacity of 750 beds including 30 AYUSH beds. This hospital will have an annual intake capacity of 100 MBBS students every year along with providing world-class health facilities to the people of the Northeast. The Prime Minister also dedicated to the nation three medical colleges viz Nalbari Medical College, Nalbari; Nagaon Medical College, Nagaon; and Kokrajhar Medical College, Kokrajhar, built at a cost of about Rs. 615 crores, Rs. 600 crores and Rs. 535 crores respectively. Each medical college has an attached 500-bed teaching hospital with OPD/IPD services including emergency services, ICU facilities, OT and diagnostic facilities etc. Each medical college will have an annual intake capacity of 100 MBBS students. The ceremonial launch of 'Aapke Dwar Ayushman' campaign by the Prime Minister is a step towards realising his vision of reaching out to every beneficiary to ensure 100 percent saturation of welfare schemes. Prime Minister also distributed Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) cards to three representative beneficiaries, which was followed by the distribution of about 1.1 crore AB-PMJAY Cards in all districts of the state.

The foundation stone of Assam Advanced Health Care Innovation Institute (AAHII) is a step towards realising the Prime Minister's vision of 'Atmnirbhar Bharat' and 'Make in India' in the areas related to health. The majority of technologies used in healthcare in the country are imported and developed in a different context, which is highly expensive and complex to operate in the Indian environment. AAHII is envisioned in such a context and will work such that 'we find our own solutions for our own problems'. AAHII, to be built at a cost of about Rs. 546 crores and will facilitate cutting-edge inventions and R&D in medicine and healthcare, identify the nation's unique problems related to health and promote the development of new technologies for solving those problems.

TELEGRAPH, APRIL 14, 2023

## Learning from Babasaheb

In his final speech, B.R Ambedkar discussed how the caste system strikes at the roots of fraternity — and called it ‘anti-national’

As we honour Babasaheb’s legacy today, we must remember his prescient warning that the success of the Constitution depends on the conduct of the people entrusted with the duty to govern.

## Sonia Gandhi

One of modern India’s architects — Babasaheb B.R. Ambedkar — was born 132 years ago today. His remarkable life remains an enduring inspiration for all Indians. Babasaheb Ambedkar developed his talents as an economist, jurist, scholar and politician, rising up from a modest background and struggling against poverty and caste-based discrimination. As a social reformer, he struggled throughout his life for justice on behalf of Dalits and all other backward communities. As a political philosopher, he rejected the caste system, imagining instead a society with justice for all, based on the cherished values of liberty, equality and fraternity. Babasaheb Ambedkar’s leadership in drafting newly-independent India’s Constitution gave him the opportunity to cement these values into the foundations of our nation and its government.

As we honour Babasaheb’s legacy today, we must remember his prescient warning that the success of the Constitution depends on the conduct of the people entrusted with the duty to govern. Today, the regime in power is misusing and subverting the institutions of the Constitution and weakening its foundations of liberty, equality, fraternity and justice. Liberty is threatened by misusing the law to harass people rather than to protect their rights. Equality is assaulted by favoured treatment to chosen friends in every sphere, even as the vast majority of Indians suffer economically. Fraternity is eroded by deliberately manufacturing an atmosphere of



hatred and polarising Indians against each other. The resultant injustice is amplified by pressuring the judiciary through a sustained campaign. This is plain for most Indians to see. At this junction in our nation's history, we must act to defend the Constitution from this systematic assault. All Indians, wherever they stand — political parties, unions and associations, citizens in groups and as individuals — must play their part at this critical time. Dr Ambedkar's life and struggle teach critical lessons, which can serve as a guide.

The first lesson is to vigorously debate and disagree, but ultimately work together for the nation's interest. The history of India's freedom struggle is full of sharp disagreements among Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Dr Ambedkar, Sardar Patel, and many others. These debates naturally attract interest, as they offer many perspectives on serious questions about our future. But we must not forget that ultimately, all the eminent men and women who fought for our freedom worked together for our independence and to shape our nation. Their ups and downs at different times only show that they were fellow travellers on a common journey, and they were well aware of the fact.

Dr Ambedkar's conduct as the chairman of the Constituent Assembly's Drafting Committee exemplifies this principle. Even a glimpse at the debates shows that he was a true democrat. He discussed his ideas, heard vigorous, sometimes vicious, disagreements, defended his principles, and changed his mind when needed. In his final speech, he particularly acknowledged his gratitude to his ideological opponents. He also shared credit with the other members of the Committee, his team, and the Congress Party, which he said was "entitled to all the credit for the smooth sailing of the Draft Constitution" through its discipline. Today, all of us fighting to defend Babasaheb's Constitution must remember this sense of unity of purpose despite differences in views.

The second lesson is to encourage a spirit of fraternity, the bedrock of the nation. Babasaheb believed deeply in the importance of nurturing a brotherhood of Indians as one people, saying "without fraternity, equality and liberty will be no deeper than coats of paint." In his final speech, he discussed how the caste system strikes at the roots of fraternity — and called it "anti-national". This phrase is abused by those in power today, but Dr

Ambedkar explained its true meaning — the caste system is “anti-national” because it brings about separation, generates jealousy, antipathy — in short, because it divides Indians against one another.

Today, the real ‘anti-nationals’ are those who are misusing their power to divide Indians against one another — on the grounds of religion, language, caste and gender. Thankfully, despite the regime’s efforts, the sense of fraternity runs deep in Indians. The example of crores of Indians from all walks of life who protested against religious divisiveness, raised their voices for livelihoods of farmers, and helped to their best abilities during the Covid-19 pandemic proves this beyond doubt. We must always nurture this sense of brotherhood and defend it from attacks — in our households, communities, and organisations. The third lesson from Dr Ambedkar is to always fight for social and economic justice. Dr Ambedkar fought for the rights of Dalits as well as the rights of all individuals and communities who were marginalised. The system in the Constitution for backward classes and minorities is flexible and expansive, and has enabled progressive action for their welfare. For example, Article 340 provided for a Commission to investigate the conditions of backward classes which was the basis of the Mandal Commission. In his private life too, Dr Ambedkar was a campaigner for social and economic justice, with his writings relentlessly attacking untouchability and the caste system, rationally exploring India’s great religions, and his attempts to organise Dalit communities to claim their rights.

Today, the challenges of ensuring social justice have taken new forms. The economic reforms of 1991 introduced by the Congress government have increased prosperity, but we now see growing economic inequality. Reckless privatisation of public sector units is narrowing the system of reservation, which offered security and social mobility to Dalits, Adivasis and OBCs. The advent of new technologies is threatening livelihoods but also creating opportunities to organise better and ensure greater equality. The challenge is to learn from Babasaheb Ambedkar and ensure social justice in these changing times and act on our convictions in our public and private lives.



It is fitting to end with Babasaheb Ambedkar's last words in the Constituent Assembly: "If we wish to preserve the Constitution... let us resolve not to be tardy in the recognition of the evils that lie across our path... nor to be weak in our initiative to remove them. That is the only way to serve the country. I know of no better." These words must be our resolve in the years to come.

Sonia Gandhi is the Chairperson of the Congress Parliamentary Party

STATESMAN, APRIL 16, 2023

Address core issues to tackle female foeticide

While several government agencies including the Ministry of Women & Child Development have time and again drawn attention to this concern, it continues to exist. One of the visible indicators of this sex selective elimination is the sex ratio at birth (SRB) for children born in the last five years or the females per-one-thousand-males.

Aparna Kohli

Issues relating to girls and women should be integral to a country's development agenda. In fact, the status of women in society is an indicator of a country's level of civilization. In India, the practice of female foeticide is an issue that has existed since time immemorial. While several government agencies including the Ministry of Women & Child Development have time and again drawn attention to this concern, it continues to exist. One of the visible indicators of this sex selective elimination is the sex ratio at birth (SRB) for children born in the last five years or the females per-one-thousand-males. Latest data from the National Family Health Survey's fifth round (NFHS-5) reveal a worsening trend in this statistic in several states. For example, comparing SRB numbers from NFHS-4 (2015- 2016) to NFHS-5 (2019-2020) evidences a decline in several

states including Odisha: 932 to 894, Bihar: 934 to 908, Kerala: 1047 to 951, Chhattisgarh: 977 to 960, and Jharkhand: 919 to 899. In fact, such gender discrimination is not limited to the womb, it extends to the outside world where the just-born girl is often met with half-hearted happiness – across socio-economic levels. This unjust attitude towards one half of the human species is an indicator of a negative perception attached to the girl child. Responsible sections of society as well as multiple governments have run programmes to address this problem (like financial incentives under Ladli Scheme for poor families starting 2005). However, these efforts have not reaped adequate results. This calls for a reanalysis of the problem by policymakers, a deeper look at the associated factors. Is female foeticide the correct diagnosis or is it just a symptom of more deeply rooted problems?

Consider the following. Female foeticide implies (“illegal”) killing of the female human child at the foetal stage by its parent or with the consent of the parent. Throughout the animal kingdom the basic instinct of a ‘parent’ is to protect offspring; it is the natural instinct of a ‘parent’ to sustain its life against all odds, against all threats, often at their own cost. Then why is man – the most evolved animal – going against this natural instinct? What are the forces strong enough to cause this aberration? That indeed would be the root cause of female foeticide, and a key to its solution. Step into lanes of villages for explicit signs and into city lanes for more implicit ones, and two serious problems will glare at you – security of girls/women and the dowry system. Women security includes instances of eve-teasing and harassment at public places, stalking, and other crimes. Dowry system on the other hand is unique to Indian society and its marriage tradition wherein demands for durable goods, property or cash may be made from the bride’s family by the bridegroom’s family. These problems, both related to the female members of a family, can gain considerable dimensions. They have the potential to drain an individual, financially and emotionally. It often is a lever for repeated harassment and insecurity. What safeguards has the government put for these very real, very ubiquitous problems?

At least ‘nothing’ sufficiently effective for the ‘common man’ who does not wield any form of power in our society. There is absolutely no support at these points of personal adversity. The man is left to his fate. It is this agony, insecurity and injustice which people have suffered over generations. It would have certainly caused a mutation in our genes – as a community we have developed an apprehension towards the newborn female, an anti-girl child sensitisation. With greater empathy, with greater understanding, a relook at the act of female foeticide makes it appear not an act of heartlessness, but an act of helplessness. Based on this premise, the government is called on to take a different perspective on female foeticide – see it as the result of a chain reaction set off by other societal problems. Once these problems are addressed suitably, it is highly probable that the issue of female foeticide would be dealt with in a more effective manner. A Modi government initiative that targets female foeticide is the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) Scheme. Its key elements include stricter monitoring of gender determination tools, nationwide awareness campaigns on foeticide; and financial assistance to encourage girl child education. While it is a well-meaning programme, its effectiveness on the success indicators – like SRB in districts, girls’ enrolment (and re-enrolment of dropouts) in schools – is a question mark. Similarly, another government initiative (under the BBBP scheme): ‘Udaan – Sapneye Di Duniya De Rubaru (Udaan – live your dream for one day) scheme’ provides opportunities to selected girls to spend a day with the professional they aspire to be. For a girl in a village or a small town whose security is at risk, any amount of motivation generation or sermons to families on the importance of female education is not likely to work.

In order for these initiatives to be truly successful in their mission, the government efforts and funds should be channelized to treat the real issues lurking underneath. Address issues of girl/women safety and automatically female education will get a boost, and more women will be mobilized into the workforce.

Address issues of the dowry system and automatically the burden attached to a girl child will disappear. It is proposed that the BBBP Scheme be re-explained, beti bachao: assure girl safety after birth, stop dowry system at marriage; beti padhao: girl education/enrolment will skyrocket; and female foeticide shall see a major drop.

To conclude, women's security and dowry system are serious issues of our people, and strong predictors of female foeticide and also low levels of female education in India. These social factors must be duly recognised by the political machinery. Tackling such factors of women empowerment along the life-cycle continuum shall also enhance India's economic growth. We Indians – men and women – must vow to support any government initiative that targets these issues. It will optimise the social health of our country, will greatly enhance the productivity of its human resource, and ultimately the peace and economic progress of its people.

(The writer, a PhD in Public Health and Nutrition, is a former Research Fellow from ICMR, and former Assistant Professor, University of Delhi.)

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

PIB, APRIL 10, 2023

### UIDAI - IIT Bombay join hands to develop touchless biometric capture system

Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has joined hands with Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay (IIT-Bombay) to develop a robust touchless biometric capture system for easier usage by people anytime, anywhere. As part of the memorandum of understanding, UIDAI and IIT Bombay will carry out joint research to build a mobile capture system for fingerprints along with liveness model integrated with the capture system. The touchless biometric capture system, once developed and operational, will allow fingerprint authentication from home alike face authentication. The new system is expected to capture multiple fingerprints at one go and aid authentication success rate further. The new system once in place will be an addition to the existing facilities available in the Aadhaar ecosystem. Such a system will use an intelligent combination of signal/image processing and machine learning/deep learning with a common mobile phone available to most citizens with a good user experience. This will be a step forward in making Universal authenticator a reality.

The collaboration between UIDAI and IIT Bombay through its National Centre of Excellence in Technology for Internal Security (NCETIS) will lead to joint engagement in research and development (R&D) for development of a system for UIDAI. The NCETIS is a joint initiative by IIT Bombay and the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), under its flagship Digital India Programme. The NCETIS is aimed at developing indigenous technology solutions for Internal Security forces in broad areas of Electronic System Design and Manufacturing.

PIB, APRIL 14, 2023

AI will be kinetic enabler of India's Digital Economy, make Governance smarter and more Data-led: MoS Rajeev Chandrasekhar

India's focus is on creating framework for catalysing growth & innovation of emerging technologies while laying guardrails for ethical & safe use

IndiaAI will propel country into the leading pack of nations in AI space

Union Minister of State for Electronics & Information Technology and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar has said the Government is determined to develop artificial intelligence and AI powered solutions that will benefit India as well as transform lives of its people. "AI will be kinetic enabler of India's digital economy and also make Governance smarter and more data-led," the Minister said while addressing the Technology Round Table, organised by Business Standard in Bengaluru today. The theme of the event was "AI and Business: Navigating the Opportunities and Challenges."

Stating that the broad vision of the country's AI programme is to secure India's position as one of the leading Nations in the AI space, Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar said in this regard, the Government is working in partnership with academia, startups and industry players to develop cutting-edge applications and scalable problem solutions in various fields such as agriculture, health, and sustainable cities, thereby catalysing an effective AI ecosystem. He said IndiaAI will significantly expand the AI Compute, GPU infrastructure in partnership with Technology companies for catalyzing growth & innovation of emerging technologies while laying guardrails for ethical and safe use. "One of the objectives of IndiaAI programme is create a model of responsible and ethical AI – for India and world," he added.

“Apart from developing technology, the Prime Minister has also emphasised on making India a Global Talent Hub for AI under the IndiaAI. Skilling efforts to re-skill and up-skill professionals to be adept with the emerging technologies are being implemented and also to equip the Young Indians with industry-ready and future-ready skills too,” Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar said. The Round Table brought together several luminaries from IT and AI sectors, who later took part in a panel discussion.

PIB, APRIL 15, 2023

"Student – Scientist connect at CSIR-IIP"

The students from KV-IIP Dehradun, DAV Public School Dehradun, St. Kabeer Academy Dehradun, SGRR Public School, Nehrugram, Dehradun and NSS Doiwala Dehradun actively participated in various competitions

On the third day of its "One Week One lab" campaign, CSIR-IIP organized a half-day Jigyasa program for school students at its laboratory premises in Dehradun. The event's objective was to teach the scientific temperament among school children. The program included interactive scientific presentations by the research scholars at CSIR-IIP. Over 75 students from different schools in and around Dehradun participated in the event. The students from KV-IIP Dehradun, DAV Public School Dehradun, St. Kabeer Academy Dehradun, SGRR Public School, Nehrugram, Dehradun and NSS Doiwala Dehradun actively participated in various competitions arranged for the students. The program began with the introduction of the Jigyasa program by Dr Aarti, Pr. Scientist CSIR-IIP. Director CSIR-IIP Dr Anjan Ray, in his welcome address, motivated the students and emphasized the importance and significance of Science in our day-to-day life. He also addressed the issues of global warming and the measures to be taken to mitigate it by minimizing the overconsumption of energy. Citing various examples, Dr Ray stressed on reasonable consumption of energy and water resources.



The conservation of water and energy is a necessity to save our future. The presentations were made by Ms Sakshi Bhatt, Mr Ramesh N. Goswami, and Mr Ankit Mishra. Ms Sakshi discussed the impacts of Carbon Dioxide on the environment; Mr Ramesh discussed carbon's origin and its allotropes, such as graphenes and their application. In contrast, Mr Ankit discussed different natural sources for the synthesis of biofuels.

The quiz and skit competitions were planned for the students. KV IIP Dehradun secured first prize, DAV Public School - Second Prize and Doiwala School secured third prize in the skit competition. The school students and audience actively participated in the quiz competition also. The DAV school secured first position, Doiwala school Second position and SGRR Nehrugram School and KV-IIP jointly secured third position in quiz completion. Director CSIR-IIP motivated the students by distributing the prize to the winners. Dr Deependra Tripathi delivered the vote of thanks for the program. Dr Jyoti Porwal and Miss Bhawna Sharma actively compered the program while the Jigyasa team of CSIR-IIP played an active role in conducting the event.

**PIB, APRIL 15, 2023**

**Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh says, India is all set to lead diabetes research in the world**

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 In times to come, India is all set to lead the Diabetes research in the world.

Delivering inaugural address at the 3-day World Diabetes Meet organised by the coveted professional organisation "Diabetes India" here today, Dr Jitendra Singh, who is also a renowned Diabetologist, said that India has a huge resource pool of patients with different manifestations of diseases at different stages and at the same time there is no dearth of calibre, capacity and acumen on the part of our researchers. It is therefore the right time to generate as much Indian data as possible because the goal should be to develop Indian



treatment regimens for Indian patients, Indian solutions for Indian problems. He said this is also important because the Indian phenotype is different from the westerners and the genetic preponderance is also quite different. As a result, the pathogenesis and progress of Type 2 diabetes mellitus and other related metabolic disorders is not the same as in the western populations, he added. Citing research evidence, Dr Jitendra Singh said it has now been proven beyond doubt that Indian origin diaspora living in European countries for several generations still continue to have higher preponderance to develop Type 2 diabetes mellitus even though they were no longer living in India and the environmental conditions they are living in is different. Referring to some of the important risk factors prevalent in Indians, Dr Jitendra Singh said that our central obesity profile is also different from others. For example, in India, prevalence of central obesity is high and almost equal in both males and females whereas in the western population, the individual may be apparently looking obese but has general visceral fat, he said. Lauding Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the high priority given to healthcare, the Minister said that it was because of the personal interest and intervention of Prime Minister Modi that within two years, India not only managed the Covid pandemic successfully better than much smaller countries, but also succeeded in coming out with a DNA vaccine and providing it to the other countries as well. Referring to Prime Minister Modi's support to indigenous medical research, Dr Jitendra Singh said that time has come to integrate the traditional Indian knowledge with the modern scientific inferences and also to seek a synergy of different systems of medicine including Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy for optimum and maximum benefits in the control and prevention of diabetes.

Dr Jitendra Singh concluded by saying that prevention of diabetes is not only our duty towards healthcare but also our duty towards nation building because this is a country with 70% population below the age of 40 and the youth of today are going to be the prime citizens of India@2047. We cannot afford to let their energy go waste in incapacitating complications occurring as a result of Type 2 diabetes and other related disorders.



## ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE

PIB, APRIL 10, 2023

Shri Bhupender Yadav says India is not only leading on the domestic front but also setting up examples internationally by launching various International Alliances for combating climate change

Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change and Labour and Employment Shri Bhupender Yadav has said India is not only leading on the domestic front but also setting up examples internationally by launching various International Alliances such as International Solar Alliance (ISA), Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) and Leadership Group for Industry Transition (LeadIT) for combating climate change. Addressing the inaugural session of the National Climate Conclave 2023 in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh Shri Yadav outlined various initiatives that India has undertaken in climate arena with the focus on green growth in the Union Budget 2023-24. He acknowledged Green Climate Fund (GCF) Team for their presence in this Conclave and requested all participants to gain a deeper understanding of the GCF modalities and to develop concrete climate projects. He also emphasized the importance of engaging youth positively and proactively on climate change issues to encourage sustainable lifestyles.

Chief Minister Shri Yogi Adityanath stated that for ages, conservation and management practices have been a part of the cultural ethos of India, which encourages compassion and co-existence and highlighted that climate change is the biggest challenge today and its effect is also being seen in the UP state. In the midst of these challenges, we also have to find a way out, he added further. He also highlighted many successful projects being implemented by the State of Uttar Pradesh.

Ms. Leena Nandan, Environment Secretary highlighted that the scope, scale and speed of climate finance have to increase considerably. As an emerging developing economy with ambitious climate plans in place, there are opportunities at various levels including at community level She said we expect that GCF also respond in a commensurate way to our readiness for climate actions. Dr. Arun Kumar Saxena, Minister of State, Department of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Govt. of Uttar Pradesh and Ms. Carolina Fuentes, Director, Green Climate Fund were also present on the occasion. This Conclave is part of an ongoing effort to accelerate climate action along the lines of enhanced climate action announced by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi at COP-26. This conclave is also designed to create greater awareness on “LiFE – Lifestyle for Environment”. The objective was to bring officials from States/UTs of India under one roof to focus on the challenges/issues in climate arena and explore innovative solutions at the local level along with creating a vibrant network of stakeholders who will continue to engage with each other on cross-cutting themes such as risk governance, technologies and innovation as well as domestic and international climate finance.

PIB, APRIL 15, 2023

PM addresses World Bank Event - ‘Making it Personal: How Behavioral Change Can Tackle Climate Change’

“Individuals making the right decisions for our planet are key in the battle for our planet. This is the core of Mission LiFE”

“Climate change cannot be fought from conference tables alone. It has to be fought from the dinner tables in every home”

“Mission LiFE is about democratising the battle against climate change”

“People of India have done a lot in the last few year in the matter of mass movements and behaviour transformation”

“Adequate financing methods need to be worked out for behavioural initiatives too. A show of support by the World Bank towards behavioural initiatives such as Mission LiFE will have a multiplier effect”The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi today addressed the World Bank Event titled ‘Making it Personal: How Behavioral Change Can Tackle Climate Change’ via video message. The Prime Minister acknowledged his personal connection with the theme and expressed happiness that it is becoming a global movement.

Quoting Chanakya, the Prime Minister underlined the importance of the small deeds and said “by itself, each good deed for the planet may seem insignificant. But when billions across the world do it together, the impact is huge. We believe that individuals making the right decisions for our planet are key in the battle for our planet. This is the core of Mission LiFE.”

Talking about the genesis of the LiFE movement the Prime Minister remembered that in 2015 at the United Nations General Assembly he spoke about the need for behavioural change and in October 2022, the UN Secretary General and he launched Mission LiFE. He mentioned that the preamble to the outcome document of CoP-27 also speaks about sustainable lifestyle and consumption. If people understand that it is not just the government but they too can contribute, the Prime Minister pointed out that “their anxiety will turn into action.” He elaborated “climate change cannot be fought from conference tables alone. It has to be fought from the dinner tables in every home. When an idea moves from discussion tables to dinner tables, it becomes a mass movement. Making every family and every individual aware that their choices can help the planet can provide scale and speed. Mission LiFE is about democratising the battle against climate change. When people become conscious that simple acts in their daily lives are powerful, there will be a very positive impact on the environment.”

Shri Modi illustrated his thinking with examples from India and said “in this matter of mass movements and behaviour transformation, the people of India have done a lot in the last few years.” . He gave examples of improved sex ratio, massive cleanliness drive, adoption of LED bulbs which helps in avoiding nearly 39 million tonnes of Carbon Dioxide emissions every year. Saving water by coverage of nearly seven hundred thousand hectares of farmland by micro-irrigation. Shri Modi informed that under Mission LIFE, the government’s efforts are spread across many domains such as making local bodies environment-friendly, saving water, saving energy, reducing waste and e-waste, adopting healthy lifestyles, adoption of natural farming, promotion of millets.

These efforts, he said, will save over twenty two billion units of energy, save nine trillion litres of water, reduce waste by three hundred and seventy five million tons, recycle almost one million tons of e-waste and generate around one hundred and seventy million dollars of additional cost savings by 2030. “Further, it will help us reduce the wastage of fifteen billion tons of food. Let me give you a comparison to know how big this is. The global primary crop production in 2020 according to FAO was about nine billion tons”, he elaborated. Prime Minister Modi emphasized that global institutions have an important role to play in encouraging countries across the world. Referring to the World Bank Group’s proposed increase in climate finance from 26% to 35%, as a share of total financing, he said that the focus of this climate finance is usually on conventional aspects. “Adequate financing methods need to be worked out for behavioural initiatives too. A show of support by the World Bank towards behavioural initiatives such as Mission LiFE will have a multiplier effect”, he concluded.

PIB, APRIL 15, 2023

Shri Bhupender Yadav says the IPCC AR 6 Report reemphasises that development is our first defence against climate change

The global goal of reaching net zero by 2050 requires enhanced decoupling of emissions by the Developed Countries: Shri Yadav

Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change and Labour and Employment Shri Bhupender Yadav said the IPCC AR 6 Report reemphasises that development is our first defence against climate change. The Report reinforces the scientific view that CO<sub>2</sub> is the primary GHG that needs to be drastically reduced to achieve the global temperature goal as agreed in the Paris Agreement. Addressing the Plenary Session at G7 Ministers' Meeting on Climate, Energy and Environment in Sapporo, Japan he said the global goal of reaching net zero by 2050 requires enhanced decoupling of emissions by the Developed Countries. He said this will provide space for countries like India to achieve the development required for its people, which will provide necessary defence against the impacts of climate change, environmental degradation and pollution.

Shri Yadav said since the advent of Industrial Revolution, there has been enormous disproportionate emission of GHGs to achieve economic growth and development. He said over-exploitation of natural resources has also led to widespread environmental degradation. This has come at the cost of altering the balance of nature, putting at serious risk the existence of Planet Earth, he added. Shri Yadav said to save our planet from the challenges of climate change, pollution, loss of biodiversity, we need collective action guided by the founding principles of the Rio Conventions. He said we have made some progress collectively through the process of UNFCCC, CBD, UNCCD. However, there is an urgent need for greater action to deal with the three challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, he added.

The Union Minister said developing Countries also need the means of implementation, finance and technology. He said we do hope that the Developed Countries will make good their commitments on finance for combatting climate change and provide for the same for dealing with the environmental degradation and biodiversity loss. Shri Yadav said reaching targets on carbon neutrality and increased ambition will not fly unless they are made keeping Equity and CBDR-RC consideration in view as well as unless the Developed Countries meet their commitments to provide means of implementation. Shri Yadav said our actions have so far focused on creating a policy framework to combat climate change. It is time that governments across the world focus on making this a participative process at the level of individuals. The Union Minister said individual actions have the potential of a revolution. At COP 27 in Sharm el Sheikh, the importance of sustainable lifestyles and sustainable patterns of consumption and production to combat climate change was underscored.

Shri Yadav requested all countries around the table to take lead in setting an example for the world in the collective fight against climate change, environmental degradation and pollution, by focusing on nudging of individual behaviour in the spirit of Mission LiFE, by making the shift to Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE).

PIB, APRIL 16, 2023

Shri Bhupender Yadav says protecting and restoring ecosystems can help reduce extent of climate change and cope with its impacts



India in its Presidency of G-20 has embedded mitigation and adaptation deeply across priority areas of arresting land degradation, accelerating ecosystem restoration, and enriching biodiversity: Shri Yadav

Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change and Labour and Employment Shri Bhupender Yadav said protecting and restoring ecosystems can help us reduce the extent of climate change and cope with its impacts. Speaking at the Plenary Session at the G7 Ministers' Meeting on Climate, Energy and Environment in Sapporo, Japan he said it is therefore important that we address issues related to climate change in tandem with environmental action, holistically. We do hope that this is at the core of deliberations of this meeting of the Climate, Energy and Environment Ministers of the G7 Countries, he added. Shri Yadav said climate change, desertification and biodiversity loss are deeply interlinked and pose existential challenges to humanity. In response to these challenges, Rio Conventions have made remarkable progress, through a consensus driven approach, based on principles, he said.

Shri Yadav said very recently at the CBD conference in Montreal we adopted the Global Biodiversity Framework and at CoP27 at Sharm el Sheikh, landmark decisions on issues like the Loss and Damage fund were taken. However, there still is a long way to go. The Union Minister said India in its Presidency of G-20, for example, has taken this approach and embedded mitigation and adaptation deeply across priority areas of arresting land degradation, accelerating ecosystem restoration, and enriching biodiversity. He said the approach promotes a sustainable and climate resilient blue economy; encouraging resource efficiency and circular economy; with Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE) as a cross-cutting theme, thus mainstreaming climate change, and addressing the impacts in an ambitious, decisive and action-oriented manner.

Shri Yadav said India has been part of providing solutions, while it historically has not been part of any of the problems. He said India has rather taken strong domestic actions, set challenging ambitious targets for itself

and is also steering international actions through various initiatives. Shri Yadav said India's approach has been focused on the convergence of the issues related to Climate Change, Biodiversity loss and pollution. This has reflected in taking up initiatives based on specific interventions through International Solar Alliance (ISA), Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), Lead IT. The Union Minister said India has also focused on action by all, including individual and community actions through Mission LiFE. Changing individual and community behaviour alone can make a significant dent in the environmental and climate crises.

Shri Yadav said the recently launched International Big Cat alliance, on the occasion of 50 years of Project Tiger, is rooted in the fact that conserving big cats and their habitats can secure some of the most important natural ecosystems on Earth leading to natural climate change adaptation, water, and food security for millions of people, and provide livelihood and sustenance to forest communities. Shri Yadav said it will be important to ensure country-driven approach along with the principles of equity and CBDR-RC to undertake decisive action. At the same time the voice of the global South needs to be recognised for a truly global leadership of G7 and to receive valuable inputs towards implementation of G7 initiatives. He said this approach will ensure that while we take decisions impacting the whole world, we leave no one behind.

Shri Yadav said we look forward to the leadership of G7 Nations to ensure an effective fight against the triple challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, for unity of purpose and unity of action conscious of the fact that we have One Earth, we are One Family and have One Future. The Union Minister said he looked forward to welcoming all at G20 Environment and Climate Sustainability Ministerial Meeting at Chennai in July.

## CURRENT EVENTS

PIB, APRIL 10, 2023

Text of the Vice President's speech – Scientific Convention on World Homoeopathy Day 2023 (Excerpts)

When I went to the USA along with my wife, we went to the statue of liberty. There was a quote of Mahatma Gandhi 'I respect your liberty because I care for mine'. That was the substance of the quote.

विश्व होम्योपैथी दिवस पर सभी को शुभकामनाएँ। हर साल 10 अप्रैल को डॉ क्रिश्चियन फ्रेडरिक सैमुअल हैनिमैन के जन्मदिन के उपलक्ष्य में मनाया जाता है। विश्व होम्योपैथी दिवस 2023 की थीम बहुत सार्थक है - "होम्योपरिवार: एक स्वास्थ्य, एक परिवार" जब मैं इस पर ध्यान दे रहा था तब मुझे एक और विषय की याद आयी। दुनिया में भारत का डंका तो बज ही रहा है। We are on the rise as never before and the rise is unstoppable.

India is the President of G20- its motto is also significant reflecting our age old ethos and civilisational essence - One Earth, One Family, One Future' और बिना स्वास्थ्य के फ्यूचर हो नहीं सकता है। हमारी आस्था है - वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्, ये महा उपनिषद् का एक मंत्र है, और जब हम इस विचारधारा से जुड़े हुए हैं तो निश्चित रूप से 'पहला सुख निरोगी काया' ये कहा गया है। बिना निरोगी काया के कुछ भी सार्थक नहीं होता। विश्व और जन कल्याण के लिये स्वस्थ रहना अनिवार्य है। हमारे ऋषि-मुनि कह गए हैं, 'पहला सुख निरोगी काया!'

अमृत काल में हमको संकल्प लेना चाहिए। आज 2047 की नींव रखी जा रही है और जहाँ भी कहीं हमारे स्वस्थ्य पर कुप्रभाव हो और भारत की अस्मिता पर प्रहार हो, कुंठित करना अनिवार्य है। देश हो या विदेश भारत की प्रतिष्ठा को बढ़ाएंगे और इस पर कोई आंच नहीं आने देंगे, ये हम सबका संकल्प होना चाहिये। इस प्रकार के सभी कुप्रयासों को असफल करना हमारा राष्ट्रीय कर्तव्य है। We must ever take pride in our historic achievements and be proud Indians. India became the 5th largest global economy on the Planet and by all objective assessment, by the turn of the decade it will be the 3rd largest economy. This is because of the commitment of our people and their good health. If we are assured of good health, nothing can stop us.

Have you ever noticed a foreign dignitary or foreign national on a visit to this great democracy, ever decrying or criticizing his nation? Answer is obvious no. Why cannot we take pride in our scientists, health warriors and compliment our innovation? जब भी देश के बाहर जाएं, राजनीतिक चश्मे को यहीं छोड़ जाएं। इसमें देश का भला है, व्यक्ति का भी भला है।

Dr B R Ambedkar's last speech in the Constituent Assembly was historic. He said "What perturbs me greatly is the fact that not only India has once before lost her independence, but she lost it by the infidelity and treachery of some of her own people... But this much is certain that if the parties place creed above country, our independence will be put in jeopardy a second time and probably be lost forever. This eventuality we must all resolutely guard against. We must be determined to defend our independence with the last drop of our blood." You have two jobs, one to keep us healthy in body and mind, and also to ensure that our spirit of functioning is committed to our nationalism.

ॐ सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः ॐ, सभी खुश रहें तभी फलीभूत होगा जब हम पूर्ण रूप से स्वस्थ होंगे। इसमें मैंने राष्ट्रवाद का एक एंगल जोड़ा है क्योंकि दुनिया के हालात देखने से ये स्पष्ट है that we must be committed to our Nationalism. I urge businessmen and industrialists that they must also think, reflect and stand committed to economic nationalism. No amount of economic gain can justify deviation from economic nationalism.

Healthcare is not just about medical treatment; it includes an individual's physical, mental and emotional well-being, and a community's social and economic environment. चारो तरफ देखते है एक नई समस्या उभर रही है, an environment of stress and tension. We have an ecosystem where due to affirmative policies of government one is able to exploit his or her potential. We must develop a culture to eradicate stress and tension and this blind reckless pursuit of competitive mechanisms must get rationalized. मैं आपसे आग्रह करूँगा कि हर नागरिक को चौबीस घंटे में से एक घंटा शरीर को स्वस्थ रखने के लिए देना चाहिए। आप स्वस्थ रहेंगे तो भारत स्वस्थ रहेगा। प्रगति की रफ़्तार में गति आयेगी।

Homoeopathy as a form of treatment has a rich history spanning over two centuries. In our country in the last few years, it is being nurtured and has become a significant factor to our health apparatus and mechanism. World Health Organization acknowledges homoeopathy as the second largest and fastest-growing system of medicine in the world and has marked its presence in more than 80 countries

यह अत्यधिक तनुकृत पदार्थों के उपयोग पर आधारित एक उपचार है, जिसके बारे में चिकित्सकों का दावा है कि यह शरीर को स्वस्थ रख सकता है।

होम्योपैथी केंद्रीय परिषद अधिनियम, 1973, होम्योपैथिक चिकित्सा प्रणाली को भारत में एक मान्यता प्राप्त चिकित्सा प्रणाली बनाता है। 19 नवंबर 2014 is a very significant day. It was on that day that the government for the first time reflected on spinally strong thought process- और एक नए मंत्रालय का जन्म हुआ, आयुष मंत्रालय। इसका उद्देश्य था हमारे प्राचीन चिकित्सा पद्धति के गहन ज्ञान को पुनर्जीवित करना और स्वास्थ्य की आयुष प्रणालियों के इष्टतम विकास और प्रसार को सुनिश्चित करने की दृष्टि प्रदान करना। I am happy and satisfied that its achievements have been milestones. It has been a complete turnaround and people have been encouragingly involved in this kind of medicine and therapy that has come to us. कोविड महामारी को नियंत्रित करने में this facet of medicine has played a significant role. बंगाल में राज्यपाल रहते हुए मैंने देखा, homoeopathic kits were given to Covid Warriors which were extremely effective and impactful. It had both preventive and curative aspects.

आज के दिन जब पीछे जब कोविड को देखते हैं तो हमारे देश का कोई नहीं है | By one masterstroke stroke Hon'ble Prime Minister could inspire 1.3 Billion people to put people's curfew, which was very successful... पर कुछ लोगों ने नुक्ताचीनी की.. कुछ लोगो में नुक्ताचीनी का डीएनए है.. कि वो इसका कोई मौका छोड़ते नहीं है। आपकी प्रतिस्पर्धा समाज में हो, राजनीति में हो, कहीं और भी हो, तो नुक्ताचीनी करो, लेकिन जहां देश का मुद्दा हो वहां किसी बात की नुक्ताचीनी नहीं होनी चाहिए?

मैंने खुद राज्यपाल की हैसियत से इस कफर्यू में भाग लिया, थाली बजाई, मोमबत्ती जलाई ...कोविड वारियर्स का हौसला बढ़ाने के लिए...कुछ लोग उसकी साइंस में चले गए, कहा गया कि समझ में नहीं आता है कि इससे उत्साह कैसे बढ़ता है? ..Motivation, expression, recognition, acknowledgement is necessary उन लोगों को जो खुद की जान हथेली पर रख कर समाज को सुरक्षा दे रहे थे, हमारे देश को बचा रहे थे |फिर आया इनोवेशन कैसे करेंगे, हमें तो दशकों लग जाएंगे। हजारों साल की संस्कृति में है, कि जो हम में है वह औरों में नहीं है, हम से लोग सीखते हैं।हमें दूसरों से सीखने में परहेज़ नहीं है, but this cannot be with a psyche that we immediately go against our own people.हमने अपने ही नहीं बल्कि 100 से ज़ादा देशों की भी मदद की, जब विदेशो से लोग आकार मुझसे मिलते हैं.. they express gratitude that even in those times while engaging in taking care of our own population, India was hand-holding other nations.आज देश भर में 220 करोड़ टीके लगाए जा चुके हैं and every vaccination certificate is digitally mapped and is available on your mobile...दुनिया के किसी देश को ये दर्जा हासिल नहीं है।मेरा मानना है कि देश और नागरिक स्वस्थ रहें, हमारा डेमोग्रेफिक डिविडेंट तभी प्रोडक्टिव होगा, जब हेल्थ के ऊपर ध्यान दिया जाए।In recent years, critical interventions have been made in the country's health sector, with remarkable outcomes:

22 AIIMS have been approved in the country, and almost one medical college has come up every month in the last eight-nine years.

दुनिया हमें 'pharmacy of the world' क्यों कहती है? इसका श्रेय जाता है ह्यूमन रिसोर्स को, we are contributing to 20% of the global demands for generic medicines, after meeting demand of one-sixth of humanity that lives here.आपका मंत्रालय और आपका सचिवालय, they have to be complimented for their focus on research and development...पूरे देश के अंदर तानाबाना वेलनेस सेंटर का जो हो रहा है उसमें आपके मंत्रालय की छाप है।

I am thankful to the Hon'ble Minister for affording me this opportunity, it is very satisfying in nature. I would like to congratulate him for not only leading the Department to greater heights with large and impactful presence all over the country but also for bringing together all stakeholders of traditional medicines on one platform to generate wider acceptability.I wish great success to this endeavour. Wishing you all निरोगी काया एंड गुड हेल्थ.

Jai Hind.

PIB,APRIL13,2023

Swachhata Pakhwada 2023 being observed in Legislative Department , Ministry of Law & Justice

Swachhata Pakhwada 2023 is being observed in the Legislative Department, Ministry of Law and Justice from 1st-15th April, 2023 with various cleaning activities and awareness programmes. Legislative Department has been celebrating Swachhata Pakwada every year as per the calendar under the Swachh Bharat Mission launched by the Prime Minister in 2014.



A Pledge taking ceremony was held on 5th April, 2023 wherein Secretary, Legislative Department administered the pledge on Swachhata. The pledge was taken by all employees. Banner were displayed at prominent place in the office premises of Shastri Bhawan for making people aware of their responsibilities. Housekeeping workers were engaged in cleaning and sanitization of rooms of the Department.

Action Plan was prepared in the Department to celebrate the Pakhwada listing out various activities to be undertaken during the Pakhwada. As a part of the Pakhawda, today ,a tree plantation event was organised by the Legislative Department in the premises of Shastri Bhawan, Gate No.6. Secretary Legislative Department and all officers/officials of Legislative Department and its administrative control viz Official Languages Wing and Vidhi Sahitya Prakashan gathered for the event .

PIB,APRIL13,2023

Ministry of Tourism to organise the SCO Millets Food Festival from 13th -19th April 2023 in Mumbai

Ministry of Tourism, Government of India will organise the 4th and last event SCO Millets Food Festival from 13th -19th April 2023 in Mumbai at Taj Mahal Palace where Chefs from SCO member countries ( Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan Uzbekistan and Russia) and will attend the 9 day event and showcase their various cuisines and offer to the guest at the hotel. Taj Mahal Palace will be hosting the SCO Millet Food Festival to commemorate the International Year of Millets (IYM 2023). This festival will feature a selection of organic meals made with millets that have been hand-selected by our SCO Member Chefs. From 14th to 19th of April the festival will be open to public for lunch and dinner at Shamiana Restaurant, Taj Mahal palace Hotel, Mumbai.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is an Intergovernmental Organization comprising eight Member States China, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, four Observer States and fourteen “Dialogue Partners”

India is hosting presidency of SCO for the year 2023, the Ministry of Tourism Government of India has successfully completed SCO Tourism Mart from 9th - 11th February 2023, SCO Expert Level Tourism Working Group Meeting and SCO Tourism Minister's Meeting in Kashi (Varanasi) from 13th - 18th March 2023 during the meeting discussed the Joint Action Plan for implementing the Agreement between the Governments of the SCO Member States on the Development of Cooperation in Tourism. The Experts from the member countries of SCO prioritised various activities under areas of cooperation such as Promotion of the SCO tourism brand, Promotion of the cultural heritage of the SCO Member States in tourism, Sharing and Exchange of information and digital technology in tourism, Promotion of mutual cooperation in medical and health tourism, Improving the quality of services.

The SCO countries have a diverse mix of cultures and traditions, which is aptly reflected in their cuisines. The cuisine of SCO countries will offer unique delights to food lovers. With the aim to create awareness and increase the production & consumption of millets, United Nations had declared 2023 the International Year of Millets. The idea behind the international year is to promote millets as they are climate resilient and consuming them can help the world meet at least six United Nations-mandated sustainable development goals.

Spearheaded by the Prime Minister, the Government of India sponsored the proposal for International Year of Millets (IYM) 2023 which was accepted by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). The declaration has been instrumental for the Government of India to be at the forefront in celebrating the IYM. The PM of India, Shri Narendra Modi has also shared his vision to make IYM 2023 a ‘People’s Movement’ alongside positioning India as the ‘Global Hub for Millets’.

PIB, APRIL 14, 2023

## Nation pays homage to Baba Saheb Dr. B. R. Ambedkar on his 133th Birth Anniversary

The President Smt. Droupadi Murmu led the nation in paying homage to Bharat Ratna Baba Saheb Dr. B.R. Ambedkar on his 133th birth anniversary here today. The President offered floral tributes at the statue of Baba Saheb at Sansad Bhavan Lawns in the Parliament House complex at this morning. The Vice President, Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar, the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Shri Om Birla also offered floral tributes to the Father of the Indian Constitution Dr. Ambedkar. Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Dr. Virender Kumar and other Union Ministers, leaders dignitaries also offered tributes.



The function was organised by the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment.

PIB, APRIL 16, 2023

Ministry of Panchayati Raj gears up to celebrate National Panchayat Awards Week from 17th April to 21st April 2023 to commemorate Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav 2.0

President of India Smt. Droupadi Murmu to inaugurate the National Panchayat Awards Week and confer the National Panchayat Awards at ‘National Conference on Incentivization of Panchayats-cum-Award Ceremony’ on 17th April 2023

Theme of the National Panchayat Awards Week Celebrations is Panchayaton ke Sankalpon ki Siddhi ka Utsav (पंचायतों के संकल्पों की सिद्धि का उत्सव)

A series of five National Conferences covering nine themes under Localization of Sustainable Development Goals through Panchayati Raj Institutions and Way Forward for 2047 to be organized during the National Panchayat Awards Week Celebrations

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj will be celebrating National Panchayat Awards Week during 17th – 21st April, 2023 as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM) 2.0 in the run-up to the National Panchayati Raj Day (24th April, 2023). To celebrate this monumental occasion in the right spirit and in line with the AKAM 2.0 directives of adopting “whole-of-society” and “whole-of-government” approach as well as enhancing the outreach of AKAM 2.0 to touch the lives of every Indian, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj has conceptualized a series of Thematic Conferences for the National Panchayat Awards Week on the theme “Panchayaton ke Sankalpon ki Siddhi ka Utsav” (पंचायतों के संकल्पों की सिद्धि का उत्सव) where the representatives of high performing Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) will not only receive their coveted Awards but will also deliberate and discuss their achievements in the presence of other stakeholders that can set examples for others to follow. The five-day National Panchayat Awards Week will commence with organizing ‘National Conference on Incentivization of Panchayats-cum-Award Ceremony’ in New Delhi tomorrow. The President of India has very kindly accorded her consent to inaugurate ‘National Conference on Incentivization of Panchayats-cum-Award Ceremony’ on 17th April, 2023 to flag off the National Panchayat Awards Week, confer the National Panchayat Awards and address the august gathering on this occasion. The National

Conference on Incentivization of Panchayats-cum-Award Ceremony is expected to witness participation of more than 1,500 delegates from across the country. Union Minister of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Shri Giriraj Singh, Union Minister of State for Panchayati Raj Shri Kapil Moreshwar Patil and Union Minister of State for Rural Development Shri Faggan Singh Kulaste will grace the occasion with their august presence. Shri Sunil Kumar, Secretary, Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Shri (Dr.) Chandra Shekhar Kumar, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Panchayati Raj and other Senior Officers of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj will also be present on the occasion. State Panchayati Raj Ministers, Senior Officers of line Ministries / Departments and Panchayati Raj Department of States/UTs, NIRD&PR, SIRD&PRs and elected representatives and functionaries of Panchayats have also been invited to participate in the National Conference on Incentivization of Panchayats-cum-Award Ceremony. Following this, four days of deliberations on achievements made so far and way forward on the Localization of Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs) to take place through National Conferences at C. Subramaniam Auditorium, NASC Complex, Pusa, New Delhi. Details of National Conferences planned during National Panchayat Awards Week to commemorate Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav 2.0 are given as under:

Sl. No.

Date / Day

National Conferences

Venue

1.

17th April, 2023 (Monday)

National Conference on Incentivization of Panchayats-cum-Award Ceremony

Plenary Hall,  
Vigyan Bhawan,  
New Delhi

2.

18th April, 2023 (Tuesday)

National Conference on Poverty free and enhanced livelihoods Panchayat, Self-sufficient Infrastructure Panchayat and Panchayat with Good Governance

C. Subramaniam Auditorium,  
NASC, Pusa, New Delhi

3.

19th April, 2023 (Wednesday)

National Conference on Child-friendly Panchayat, Women-friendly Panchayat and Socially-secured Panchayat

C. Subramaniam Auditorium,  
NASC, Pusa, New Delhi

4.

20th April, 2023 (Thursday)

National Conference on Water Sufficient Panchayat, Clean and Green Panchayat and Healthy Panchayat

C. Subramaniam Auditorium,

NASC, Pusa, New Delhi

5.

21st April, 2023

(Friday)

National Conference on Sarvottam Panchayat Satat Vikas Efforts – Way Forward for 2047

C. Subramaniam Auditorium,

NASC, Pusa, New Delhi

The Awardee Panchayats under various categories of National Panchayat Awards–2023 namely, (i) Deen Dayal Upadhyay Panchayat Satat Vikas Puraskar (DDUPSVP) for the performance under individual LSDG themes, (ii) Nanaji Deshmukh Sarvottam Panchayat Satat Vikas Puraskar (NDSPSVP) for the aggregate performance under all 9 LSDG themes and green initiative related Special Categories of (iii) Gram Urja Swaraj Vishesh Panchayat Puraskar and (iv) Carbon Neutral Vishesh Panchayat Puraskar will be felicitated and the award money will be transferred digitally to the Awardee Panchayats on this occasion. A booklet on ‘Best Practices on Works of Awardee Panchayats’ would be released by Shri Giriraj Singh, Hon’ble Union Minister of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj and the first copy of the booklet will be presented to the Hon’ble President of India.



To further strengthen Gram Sabha for ensuring participatory democracy and making empowered people and accountable Panchayats, a new mobile application GS NIRNAY, National Initiative for Rural India to Navigate, InnovAte and Resolve PanchaYat decisions has been developed to record and upload Gram Sabha proceedings open for public view. The app Gram Sabha NIRNAY would be launched on this occasion by Shri Giriraj Singh, Hon'ble Union Minister of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj. The recordings made through the GS NIRNAY app will provide a means of verification of facts where necessary or in case of queries that may arise regarding the resolutions undertaken during the Gram Sabha. This would bring in more transparency and increase efficiency in the functioning of Panchayats, which play a vital role in decentralized participatory democracy as enshrined in the 73rd Constitutional Amendment. The app will also serve as a valuable repository of information for future reference. During the Inaugural Function of National Panchayat Awards Week, State Panchayati Raj Ministers will be sharing views, ideas, strategies and preparedness of the States towards the noble goal of attainment of Sustainable Development Goals and achievements made so far. The series of Conferences during National Panchayat Awards Week will serve as an august platform to share various initiatives undertaken by the Central and State Governments towards this end.

Live webcast of Inaugural Function of National Panchayat Awards Week will be available from Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi at 11:00 AM onwards on 17th April, 2023 at webcast link: <https://webcast.gov.in/mopr>. Live webcast of Thematic National Conferences from 18th to 21st April, 2023 will also be available at 10 AM onwards on the same link [<https://webcast.gov.in/mopr>]. During the remaining days of the National Panchayat Awards Week, a series of Thematic Conferences will showcase the convergence of the views, ideas, opinions, preparedness, technological interventions, success stories, best practices and cutting-edge insights of all stakeholders towards Localization of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through Panchayati Raj Institutions. An active, consistent and enthusiastic participation from all delegates in the five-day celebration of National

Panchayat Awards Week will greatly facilitate and accelerate the process of localizing and achieving the SDGs in rural India, and will also help nudge other Panchayats towards achieving larger goals. Numerous well performing Panchayats recognized at District, State and National levels through the process of Revamped National Panchayat Awards, which have done remarkable works in making the Panchayats poverty free, healthy, child and women friendly, water sufficient, clean and green, self-sufficient infrastructure, socially just and secured and good governed Panchayats, will share their experiences, key achievements, roadmap for sustainability with the representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions from across the country.

Since commencement of the official journey of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav on 12th March, 2021 which started a 75-week countdown to 75th Anniversary of India's Independence, Ministry of Panchayati Raj has been making sincere efforts to create awareness among rural masses about Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM) through taking onboard Panchayati Raj Departments of States/UTs to ensure active involvement of Panchayati Raj Institutions. In the second year of AKAM celebrations (AKAM 2.0), it has been envisaged to enhance the outreach of this programme even further to touch the lives of every Indian. The emphasis is on high Jan Bhagidari and public participation, and the new approach is to organise long term campaigns on themes that articulate the vision of new India and resonate with every Indian.

With active participation of the Panchayati Raj Institutions in undertaking different activities as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, it has been possible to reach out to rural masses and sensitize them about the importance and objectives of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj has also made concerted efforts to create a suitable, conducive and positive environment for Localization of Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs) through Panchayati Raj Institutions in rural India, and has been successful in disseminating the concept of Sustainable Development Goals among the rural masses – giving wings to the dreams and aspirations of rural India.

Ministry of Panchayati Raj has been at the forefront in Localisation of Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs) through Panchayati Raj Institutions in rural areas, and the Ministry of Panchayati Raj is continuously playing an important role in bringing together multiple stakeholders, setting clear strategic targets and in catalyzing the technical assistance of United Nations organizations to localize the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in rural areas. In response to clarion call given by the Prime Minister, the Panchayati Raj Institutions have started working towards setting Panchayat-specific targets, aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the right way and achieving the SDGs through localised strategy and a holistic Panchayat Development Plan and its proper implementation.

Incentivization of Panchayats scheme is one of the central components of Centrally Sponsored scheme of revamped Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA). Under this scheme, 'National Panchayat Awards' are given to the best performing Panchayats, including financial incentives for award winning Panchayats, in recognition of their performances under various priority sectors/themes. Last year, the format, procedures and categories of the National Panchayat Awards were revised comprehensively to establish a multi-level competition aligning with the nine themes of LSDGs. It was envisioned that this will help in accelerating the pace of attainment of LSDGs. The initiatives which have been steered so far have yielded positive outcomes. Accordingly, this year's National Panchayat Awards will be conferred for outstanding works in various thematic areas in making the Panchayats poverty free, healthy, child and women friendly, water sufficient, clean and green, self-sufficient infrastructure, socially just and secured and good governed Panchayats. Taking forward the vision of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of making India a self-reliant nation, the concerted efforts of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj to incentivize Panchayats based on their exemplary performance in nine thematic areas of LSDGs will supplement and accelerate progress towards achieving LSDGs targets for creation of self-reliant Panchayats to meet the United Nations 2030 Agenda.