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## POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

PIB,JULY17,2023

Department of Consumer Affairs conducts Chintan Shivir to review work and to evolve an action plan to implement Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's "Vision 2047"

Shri Piyush Goyal launches 'Bharat Dal Sale Campaign' and the 'Channa Promotion Campaign' under the umbrella of AatmaNirbhar Bharat

Shri Goyal appreciates Department's intervention for Price Stabilization of Tomato

The Department of Consumer Affairs (DoCA) organized Chintan Shivir here today with an objective to review work and to evolve an action plan to implement Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's "Vision 2047". On this occasion, Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Textiles and Commerce and Industry, Shri Piyush Goyal launched 'Bharat Dal Sale Campaign' along with the 'Channa Promotion Campaign' which promotes not only the health benefits of Channa consumption but also supports the initiative of Aatmanirbhar Bharat. Shri Goyal appreciated apt intervention of the department towards Price Stabilization of Tomato in which procurement of tomatoes was done from producing states and thereafter, supplied in the high-price markets at a discounted rate.

The Union Minister mentioned that consumer complaints are being resolved through National Consumer Helpline which is working 24\*7 and in 17 languages across India. He also encouraged for the use of data analytics and artificial intelligence for the consumer grievance redressal. He appreciated the working of the BIS for the outstanding work done for hallmarking of Gold and Standard promotion for the Consumer Welfare.

He appreciated the hard-working officials of the department who have served in the department over a decade also welcomed the new official who will bring the new ideas on the table. The Hon'ble Minister also pointed out that DoCA is the only department that have direct interaction with the 140 crore of Indian citizens. He also suggested to promote innovative ways and out of box thinking to do the task. Shri Goyal suggested that we should work as a team and bring forward looking progressive thinking, in the department by organising such Chintan Shivirs at a regular intervals.

Shri Rohit Kumar Singh, Secretary, DoCA delivered welcome address where he inspired the attendees to focus on the innovation and learning new things. This was followed by the session on "Yoga at Workplace" led by Ms. Arunima Sinha, Sr. Faculty, Art of Living. She delivered the importance of yoga in maintaining the healthy environment at the workplace. She taught the officials of the department some simple desk yoga exercises which will help in keeping calm and composure while office working.

The discussions were held in four interactive sessions where presentations were delivered on Consumer protection and Speedy Disposal of Consumer Complaints, Quality Assurance for the Consumer, Testing in Emerging Fields and New Technologies, and, Quality Assurance for Consumers. An interactive session ensued, enabling the staff members to express their opinions, offer suggestions and pose questions.

The guest speaker, Mr. Sonu Sharma, captivated the audience and inspired them to move out of their comfort zones and break down barriers.

PIB, JULY 17, 2023

Shri Dharmendra Pradhan addresses Chintan Shivir organized by Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship

Chintan Shivir organised to bring a Synergistic Ecosystem for Nurturing Entrepreneurs in India

Union Minister for Education & Skill development & Entrepreneurship Shri Dharmendra Pradhan addressed Chintan Shivir organized by Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship in New Delhi today. Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar, Minister of State, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, and Ministry of Electronics and IT; Secretary, MSDE Shri Atul Kumar Tiwari and senior officials of the Ministry attended the Shivir.

To foster the growth of entrepreneurship in India, the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE) organised "Chintan Shivir", aimed at bringing together various stakeholders, including central ministries, State governments, organizations, institutions, financial institutions, and entrepreneurs, to collaborate and create a unified approach towards promoting entrepreneurship.

Speaking on the occasion, Shri Pradhan shared his thoughts on capitalising on skill development to spur entrepreneurship and how to reap the benefits of the new digital and creator economy. Shri Pradhan further said that India is home to world's third largest startup ecosystem. Young India's innovation and creativity coupled with supportive government policies like the Digital India, Startup India are enabling our youth to become job creators. The Minister also shared his thoughts on how skill development, technology, digitisation, institutional lending, capacity development and branding can further give boost to entrepreneurship at the grassroots and create millions of nano entrepreneurs from the bottom-of-the-pyramid population.

Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar, said that today, young Indians are heeding Prime Minister's call to become job creators, not job seekers. They aim to propel their traditional family businesses or venture into entrepreneurship as part of their natural evolution. Entrepreneurship is now an opportunity for young Indians across new India, no longer an exception. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that entrepreneurship opportunities differ from state to state. Every individual possesses unique abilities and talents, necessitating

the design of tailored entrepreneurship programs that harness their diverse potential, he added. The event was divided into specific break-out sessions to address various aspects of entrepreneurship development, delve deeper into key focus areas, and propose actionable strategies. The sessions delved deeper into three thematic areas: strengthening the country's entrepreneurial ecosystem, fostering financial, marketing, digital linkages and compliances for enterprises, and capacity building, mentoring and handholding.

The first break-out session, strengthening the entrepreneurial ecosystem in the country, focused on fostering a convergent entrepreneurial ecosystem for supporting the aspiring and existing entrepreneurs from rural and urban areas, including LWE districts, aspirational districts, vibrant villages, north-east region, border areas, etc., bring regulatory reforms and Policy Interventions, promoting and strengthening women entrepreneurship, and creating an enabling policy environment for entrepreneurship.

The second break-out session, Fostering Financial, Marketing, Digital Linkages and Compliances for Enterprises, focused on improving access to finance for small businesses, providing alternative funding models for startups and small businesses, bringing innovative financing mechanisms for entrepreneurs from marginalized communities, exploring market access opportunities, including domestic and international markets, government procurement, and e-commerce platforms, leveraging digital technologies and tools to enhance business operations, productivity, and customer engagement through digital marketing, e-commerce, social media, and online presence for enterprises, and streamlining compliance processes and reducing administrative burdens for small and medium enterprises. The third break-out session, Capacity Building, Mentoring and Handholding, focused on bringing effective training programs for developing entrepreneurial skills and making entrepreneurship education application-oriented with different training techniques, bringing standardization and embedding of entrepreneurship in education, fostering institutional Network, mentoring and handholding Process, and leveraging emerging technologies (AI, blockchain, IoT) for entrepreneurial growth.

Post the breakout sessions, the groups presented their findings and insights, effectively summarizing the workshop. Each group highlighted key takeaways and proposed actionable strategies to foster entrepreneurship in India. Some of the key takeaways from the workshop included that there is a need to provide continued counselling & mentoring support to entrepreneurs with a convergent approach. They also need to have more access to credit, branding and marketing. Moreover, digital literacy and adoption should be promoted at a better level.

PIB,JULY22,2023

Union Minister For Jal Shakti, Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat Released Manual For Disaster Management Plan

Plan Aims To Enhance Resilience To Reduce Disaster Vulnerability Of Water, Sanitation & Hygiene Assets & Services

Plan Developed By Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation Based On NDMA Advisory To All Departments To Make Their Own Plans To Counter & Be Prepared For Any Emergency Arising In Future

The Union Minister for Jal Shakti, Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat released the Manual for Disaster Management Plan (DMP) during the two-day national conference of Rural WASH Partners Forum at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi which culminated today. The Manual is developed by Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation to ensure safety, uninterrupted supply and minimum loss of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) assets and services involving stakeholders at national, state, district, and village level. The Plan aligns with the two-flagship programmes on WASH implemented by the Department namely the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) and Swachh Bharat Mission-Grameen (SBM-G).

The Disaster Plan is developed based on the Advisory issued by National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) which, under Section 37 of Disaster Management Act, 2005 desires every Ministry/ Department to develop its own disaster plan to counter and be prepared for any emergency arising in future. The objective of the Plan is to ensure immediate WASH response to disasters as per the agreed standards; enhance WASH resilience to reduce disaster vulnerability; establish a robust environment, fund and coordination mechanism to achieve the desired goals; and develop a plan which caters to disaster preparedness, response, recovery, reconstruction, and mitigation.

The document developed by the Department looks into the vulnerability of WASH assets and services under different types of disasters, impact of disaster on WASH infrastructure and services, disaster management cycle and activities for disaster-resilient WASH infrastructure construction at all stages, institutional mechanism for disaster preparedness, response, recovery, reconstruction, mitigation at various levels, minimum standards for WASH service delivery during and post-disaster and financial mechanism to fund the integration of disaster-resilience in WASH assets and services. This disaster management plan includes, Gender-based vulnerabilities, issues concerning Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (SC/ST), elderly, children and people with disabilities.





According highest priority to the issue of disaster recovery the Manual offers a holistic approach addressing community preparedness, technology use, and international cooperation. The document focuses on four stages

of planning – preparedness, response, recovery & reconstruction and mitigation apart from addressing the issues as per the 10-point agenda for risk reduction. In case of disaster, three kinds of assessment need to be conducted

1. Before the disaster: A Hazard-Vulnerability-Capacity mapping to guide the preparedness activities most needed,
2. During Response: A Rapid Needs Assessment (RNA) which can be completed in a day and point out the immediate needs of the affected population,
3. During Recovery & Reconstruction: A detailed Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) which highlights the long-term needs of the community and helps the administration “build back better” the damaged infrastructure and update the service delivery mechanisms to mitigate against future disasters.

It is envisaged that the Manual shall provide clear guidance to States and Districts for planning of disaster risk reduction, disaster preparedness and for undertaking prompt and efficient efforts for disaster recovery.

PIONEER,JULY23,2023

Reform diplomacy to make it more effective

We need to rejig our diplomatic practices to meet the challenges of an ever-changing world which is undergoing a paradigm shift

The central government has, from time, stated that seventy-five years have passed since independence. A reform of India’s diplomatic network is much needed. As far as is publicly known, foreign policy has been handled in the last nine years better than ever before. The diplomatic network, however, is indeed of up-gradation.

The nations our foreign policy and establishment engages with need to be divided into three categories. Those requiring continual contact, political as well as economic, would be about ten or twelve, which the US, Russia, China, the UK, France, Germany, Japan, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Australia, etc., and possibly Brazil too, would figure. These may be designated as category 'X' countries.

Then there would be many countries that commercially have a lot of potential. For the moment though, these might require only occasional political or diplomatic attention like say, Taiwan, Vietnam, Mongolia, Spain, Argentina and some countries in Africa like Egypt. The interaction with such countries would have significant commercial potential, which would also include tourist inflow from these countries. They may, therefore, be categorized as belonging to 'Group A'. The rest of the countries, small or medium sized could be categorized under 'Group B'.

There could be a category 'C' that would include those countries with who India presently does not have any significant diplomatic contact, but which in the foreseeable or medium-term future could turn important. While no immediate name comes to mind, countries like Moldova in Eastern Europe or a few in Africa could be cases in point. In the coming years, India should avoid being out of contact with any country. The Indian Diaspora in this context should be useful, if necessary, to represent New Delhi on an honorary basis. Indian representatives in category 'C' countries must be in telephonic contact with their counterparts in the neighbouring countries under the category 'C'.

The 'X' category states could continue to be run as hitherto, with reinforcement with an officer familiar with making, exports, imports as well as tourism. It hardly needs to be emphasized that tourism is one sure way of earning foreign exchange. The government hardly needs to make any capital expenditure here. The sights to be seen by foreign visitors are aplenty; for example, the Taj Mahal at Agra or the Ajanta and Ellora Caves in

Maharashtra are already there. The expenditure on infrastructural improvement would be financed mostly by the private sector. What is needed to be done by the government is mostly promotion of the heritage and attractions, as well as the facilities, but the marketing function should ideally be handled by the respective marketing divisions of the embassies. Similarly, this division should remain in touch with the exports and imports of the country concerned as well as the local conventions and peculiarities of the country concerned. These would be a guide to aspiring traders from India. Information about the local traders keen to deal with India could be a useful guide for those in India who would be keen to exploit or import.

This implies that new entrants to the country's foreign service should pick up a sufficient working knowledge of international trade and local conditions before they plunge into responsible work. Such officials would be better suited to head Indian missions in category 'A' countries as distinct from categories 'B' or 'C'. They need not be super-experts in international affairs, which is highly essential for the 'X' category countries.

We then come to the level of category 'B' countries, which need diplomats only at the level of charge d'affaires. But they should be in contact with senior ambassadors in the region, to report as well as obtain guidance. In short, our aim should be to remain in touch with the goings-on in nearly all countries in the world, especially to not miss out on commercial opportunities, however apparently small. The small countries, let us say in Group 'C', could have local citizens friendly with the Indian embassy or establishment, and they could be appointed as honorary envoys who would bear all the local costs. Many earnest well-to-do individuals may be attracted to such appointments for the sake of local status, as well as the few privileges a diplomat would enjoy. Such envoys would likely be better informed about local developments than the conventional diplomatic representatives, who in any case, would cost the country's exchequer quite a bit. Also, such informal appointees would know the local language (s) spontaneously.

My own experience has been that it is difficult to understand a person's mentality fully unless one knows his or her language. How many languages can a professional career diplomat learn? Not many. It is, therefore, food for thought whether every embassy should have an honorary member diplomat who is a local. However, it bears iteration here that knowledge of the languages of non-English speaking countries in category 'X' countries is a must, to accurately understand the milieu of those countries and to be able to gauge the ongoing developments and potential changes likely to happen in those countries, which are bound to cast a profound impact on India. The lack of such linguistic proficiency in the country's diplomatic core has cost us in the past.

## ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

PIB, JULY 17, 2023

13.5 crore Indians escape Multidimensional Poverty in 5 years.

Steep decline in number of multidimensionally poor from 24.85% to 14.96% between 2015-16 and 2019-21.

Rural areas saw the fastest decline in poverty from 32.59% to 19.28%.

India on track to achieve SDG Target 1.2 much ahead of 2030 deadline.

Substantial improvements across all the 12 MPI indicators on ground.

Uttar Pradesh registered the highest decline in the number of poor with 3.43 crore, followed by Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. Improvements in nutrition, years of schooling, sanitation, and cooking fuel played a significant role in bringing down poverty.

A record 13.5 crore people moved out of multidimensional poverty between 2015-16 and 2019-21 as per NITI Aayog's Report 'National Multidimensional Poverty Index: A Progress Review 2023'. The Report was released today by Shri Suman Bery, Vice-Chairman, NITI Aayog, in the presence of Members of NITI Aayog Dr. V K. Paul and Dr. Arvind Virmani, and Shri B. V. R. Subrahmanyam, CEO NITI Aayog.

Based on the latest National Family Health Survey [NFHS-5 (2019-21)], this second edition of the National Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) represents India's progress in reducing multidimensional poverty between the two surveys, NFHS-4 (2015-16) and NFHS-5 (2019-21). It builds on the Baseline Report of India's National MPI launched in November 2021. The broad methodology followed is in consonance with the global methodology.

The National MPI measures simultaneous deprivations across the three equally weighted dimensions of health, education, and standard of living that are represented by 12 SDG-aligned indicators. These include nutrition, child and adolescent mortality, maternal health, years of schooling, school attendance, cooking fuel, sanitation, drinking water, electricity, housing, assets, and bank accounts. Marked improvement is witnessed across all the 12 indicators.

According to the Report, India has registered a significant decline of 9.89 percentage points in number of India's multidimensionally poor from 24.85% in 2015-16 to 14.96% in 2019-2021. The rural areas witnessed the fastest decline in poverty from 32.59% to 19.28%. During the same period, the urban areas saw a reduction in poverty from 8.65% to 5.27%. Uttar Pradesh registered the largest decline in number of poor with 3.43 crore people escaping multidimensional poverty. Providing multidimensional poverty estimates for the 36 States and Union Territories and 707 Administrative Districts, the Report states that the fastest reduction in the proportion of multidimensional poor was observed in the States of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and Rajasthan.

Between 2015-16 and 2019-21, the MPI value has nearly halved from 0.117 to 0.066 and the intensity of poverty has reduced from 47% to 44%, thereby setting India on the path of achieving the SDG Target 1.2 (of reducing multidimensional poverty by at least half) much ahead of the stipulated timeline of 2030. It demonstrates the Government's strategic focus on ensuring sustainable and equitable development and eradicating poverty by 2030, thereby adhering to its commitment towards the SDGs. The Government's dedicated focus on improving access to sanitation, nutrition, cooking fuel, financial inclusion, drinking water, and electricity has led to significant advancements in these areas. All 12 parameters of the MPI have shown marked improvements. Flagship programmes like the Poshan Abhiyan and Anaemia Mukta Bharat have

contributed to reduced deprivations in health. Initiatives such as Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) and Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) have improved sanitation across the country. The impact of these efforts is evident in the swift 21.8 percentage points improvement in sanitation deprivations. The provision of subsidized cooking fuel through the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) has positively transformed lives, with a 14.6 percentage points improvement in cooking fuel deprivations. Initiatives like Saubhagya, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), and Samagra Shiksha have also played a major role in significantly reducing multidimensional poverty in the country. The remarkable progress achieved through extremely low deprivation rates especially for electricity, access to bank accounts and drinking water, reflects the Government's unwavering commitment to improving citizens' lives and creating a brighter future for all. Consistent implementation across a diverse set of programmes and initiatives that have strong interlinkages has led to significant reduction in deprivations across multiple indicators.

PIB,JULY20,2023

### Implementation Of Har Ghar Jal Yojana

Government of India is implementing Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) – Har Ghar Jal in partnership with States, to make provision of tap water supply to every rural household in the country. Water is a state subject and therefore the primary responsibility for planning and implementing piped water supply schemes to provide tap water to their households, lies with the respective State/UT.

At the time of announcement of Jal Jeevan Mission in August 2019, 3.23 Crore (17%) rural households were reported to have tap water connections. Since then, tap water connections have been provided to additional 9.34 Crore rural households. Thus, as on 17.07.2023, out of 19.46 Crore rural households in the country, provision of tap water supply has been made to 12.57 Crore (64.61%) households.



As on 17.02.2023, the States of Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Telangana, and UTs of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, and Puducherry reported to have provided tap water connection to every rural household in their State/UT. The remaining States/UTs have been advised to cover all their rural households within the mission period. The State wise status of tap connections provided to rural households, is annexed.

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

PIB,JULY21,2023

Under Rozgar Mela, PM to distribute more than 70,000 appointment letters to newly inducted recruits in Government departments and organisations on 22nd July

Rozgar Mela is a step towards fulfilment of the commitment of PM to accord highest priority to employment generation

Newly inducted appointees to also train themselves through online module Karmayogi Prarambh

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi will distribute more than 70,000 appointment letters to newly inducted recruits on 22nd July, 2023 at 10:30 AM via video conferencing. Prime Minister will also address these appointees on the occasion. The Rozgar Mela will be held at 44 locations across the country. The recruitments are taking place across Central Government Departments as well as State Governments/UTs supporting this initiative. The new recruits, selected from across the country will be joining the Government in various Ministries/Departments including Department of Revenue, Department of Financial Services, Department of Posts, Department of School Education, Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Central Public Sector Undertakings, Department of Water resources, Department

of Personnel & Training and Ministry of Home Affairs, among others. The Rozgar Mela is a step towards fulfilment of the commitment of the Prime Minister to accord highest priority to employment generation. The Rozgar Mela is expected to act as a catalyst in further employment generation and provide meaningful opportunities to the youth for their empowerment and participation in national development. The newly inducted appointees are also getting an opportunity to train themselves through Karmayogi Prarambh, an online module on iGOT Karmayogi portal, where more than 580 e-learning courses have been made available for 'anywhere any device' learning format.

PIB, JULY 22, 2023

Government of India to make arrangements for establishing and managing offices for Child Welfare Committees who do not have their own offices: Union Minister for Women and Child Development

Ministry of Women and Child Development organises 'Vatsal Bharat' - 3rd one day Regional Symposium on Child Protection, Child Safety and Child Welfare in Mumbai

Programme part of a series of regional symposiums to be held across the country to raise awareness and outreach about child protection, child safety and child welfare issues

"Government of India will make arrangements for establishing and managing offices for Child Welfare Committees who do not have their own offices said Union Minister for Women and Child Development, Smriti Zubin Irani. She was speaking at the Regional Symposium on Child Protection, Child Safety and Child Welfare at Mumbai today. She also assured that the Government will provide all the support to establish Child Care Institutions (CCIs) in regions like aspirational districts or the districts where crimes against children are high which do not have CCIs or require additional CCIs. She urged stakeholders to draw attention of the government to this problem by writing to the Ministry so that the Government can make the necessary arrangement for the establishment of new or additional CCIs.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD), Government of India organised the Third One - Day Regional Symposium on Child Protection, Child Safety and Child Welfare at Mumbai today. Maharashtra, Goa, Gujrat, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu were the participating states/UTs in this symposium. The Symposium was attended by representatives from Child Welfare Committees (CWCs), Juvenile Justice Boards (JJBs), Members of Village Child Protection Committee (VCPC) and Anganwadi Workers. The programme is part of a series of regional symposiums to be held across the country to raise awareness and outreach about child protection, child safety and child welfare issues.

The Minister also further announced that the government will take all the responsibility of girls who are victims of sexual exploitation and are deserted by their families. The Ministry of Women and Child Welfare will extend financial support to such victims, she said. She invited suggestions from stakeholder agencies in this regard and also asked them to provide information about such victims to the government. The Central Government can thus address problems of such victims in co-ordination with the State Governments and give relief to innocent victims. She stressed on the issue of human trafficking and informed that the Government has formed anti human trafficking units in each district of the country to tackle the menace of human trafficking.

The Union Minister emphasized on the achievements made in furtherance of child protection, safety and welfare and said that due to the relentless efforts of the Child Welfare Committees and District Child Protection Societies more than 1,40,000 children could reach their homes in last 4 years. She also stated that more than 1,30,000 councillors, workers, officers associated with Child Care Institutions could receive counselling through 'NIMHANS'. She added that the fact remains untold to the nation through our media that due to the co-operation extended by the various concerned agencies and through coordination with District Magistrates more than 2500 children have been adopted thus far.

While underlining the importance of bringing back dropout school girls to mainstream school education, she informed that more than one lakh girls could be brought back to schools with the co-ordination of all the departments across regions and including every district, village and house. She said that the Ministry has decided to bring back school dropout adolescent girls especially from minority communities as there are more than one crore children from the minority communities in the country who are out of school according to studies undertaken by various NGOs like Pratham. She also stated that the government will collaborate with the Women and Child Development Ministry, Education Ministry and Ministry of Minority Affairs to identify children upto the age of 14 years who have the right to education under RTE and try to provide education to them. She further added that support of stakeholders agencies such as the members of Child Welfare Committees, State Commissions for Protection of Child Rights District Child Protection Units and others would be required to achieve this and expressed confidence regarding receiving it.

Shri Sanjeev Kumar Chadha, Additional Secretary, Women and Child Development, Smt. Indra Mallo, Joint Secretary, WCD, Smt. Rupali Banerji, Member Secretary, National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) were present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, Sanjeev Kumar Chaddha, Additional Secretary, WCD said that after the implementation of Mission Vatsal in mission mode, an improvement was seen in the implementation of Juvenile Justice Act and functioning of CCIs as a result of which common people and children have benefited.

Indra Mallo, Joint Secretary, WCD briefed the gathering about Vatsal Bharat and sought support from all the State Governments for the successful implementation of Mission Vatsal. She stated that the Ministry has launched a Mission Portal and details regarding the Mission are available on the portal. She concluded by saying that children are the carriers of our dreams of a bright future and Mission Vatsal can contribute in the fulfilment of this dream.

TELEGRAPH,JULY23,2023

That mushroom cloud

Today, one does not hear voices from civil society talking of the nuclear threat or, for that matter, of biological and chemical threats to the world. Disarmament is a piety in conference agendas

Gopalkrishna Gandhi

Twenty-five years ago, in the month of May in 1998, India conducted five nuclear bomb test explosions at the Indian army's Pokhran Test Range. They are known as Pokhran II. The first of these, on 11 May, coincided with Buddha Jayanti. Could the Great Indian Establishment, then headed by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, not have avoided that date?

Bombs and the Buddha do not go together.

But why should it have avoided that date? After all, the very first such test, known now as Pokhran I, was also conducted on Buddha Jayanti — May 18, 1974. More, it was codenamed by the Great Indian Establishment of the day headed by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi as Smiling Buddha. If the daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru, an ardent admirer of the Buddha, did not have the sensitivity to see the incongruity of conducting a nuclear test on Buddha Jayanti, then there is no reason why Atalji should have worried about the coincidence of his Pokhran tests and Buddha Jayanti. Atalji was, if anything, more honest. He spoke the truth about the test. He did not say that it was a peaceful device that had been exploded. He knew it to be and had it described as what it was: a nuclear bomb tested successfully. And the country as a whole celebrated the achievement. Our embassies abroad and the Indian diaspora generally were elated. ‘We can now hold our heads high’ was the sentiment underlying the euphoria.

I was working then for the president of India, the wise and brave K.R. Narayanan, as his secretary. I knew he was in favour of India going nuclear. That was his considered belief and I could only respect it in the position of a seasoned diplomat and scholar of international affairs. He was reading some official papers seated in the Mughal Gardens when I went to him with the news of the test as conveyed over the phone to me by Mr Brajesh Mishra, the national security adviser. That incredibly able diplomat and strategist had apprised President Narayanan earlier, in complete confidence, about the intended tests. So, this news was not unexpected.

Nonetheless, the president was visibly pleased and straightaway wrote out a statement: “This event is a major breakthrough in the realm of national security. I extend my felicitations to all the scientists and technologists who have made this possible and say to them — India is proud of you.” The Opposition Congress hailed the event as “... a national achievement of which the nation is proud.” The former prime ministers, I.K. Gujral and Deve Gowda, too, lauded the tests.

After the news had become official, I rang a cherished friend of mine and said, “We have burst the crackers...” Shocked, he said, “No! No!” I went later that evening with him and my wife to the sublime Buddha shrine adjacent to the Lakshminarayan Temple, better known as Birla Mandir, on New Delhi’s Reading Road for a few moments of quiet reflection. I could, of course, see the Buddha smiling but it was a curious smile that seemed to say, ‘Mankind is bent on suicide; yet some will strive with diligence to draw it away from that path.’

Way back in 1957, a British Quaker called Harold Steele had come to India to get a ship that he could sail in to get to the Pacific Islands to be blown into smithereens. Blown up? Precisely that, under hydrogen bombs that Britain was testing there. Steele with others minded like him were appalled that this should be done, unmindful of the radiation to which the tests would subject humans to in that zone. I sat in during a meeting Steele had with my father, a newspaper editor at the time. What was discussed, I cannot remember but Steele’s clean-cut face and his determined jaw made an impression on my eleven-year-old mind that has not gone away. Steele’s mission came to naught due to lack of funds and official obstruction but I was not surprised to read much later that Steele had, apart from meeting my father, been received by Nehru in New Delhi. Steele was to record: “Mr. Nehru wished me well and his whole bearing and attitude of speech showed he was not opposed to my mission.” Nic Maclellan in a study of Steele has this to say: “Harold Steele’s dream of sailing a boat into the middle of the Pacific nuclear test zone went unfulfilled, but his vision inspired many others. In 1958, US pacifist Albert Bigelow planned to sail the Golden Rule from California to Enewetak Atoll in the Marshall Islands, to disrupt the US military’s test series codenamed Operation Hardtack. When Bigelow’s yacht was seized by the US Coast Guard off Hawai’i, a former US naval officer Earle Reynolds took up his voyage, and sailed the yacht Phoenix to waters off Bikini Atoll. Reynolds, his wife Barbara and children later sailed to the USSR to protest against Soviet nuclear testing.

‘More than a decade later, the rusting fishing trawler Phyllis Cormack was renamed the Greenpeace, and sailed from Vancouver in 1971 attempting to halt US nuclear tests in the northern Pacific. Greenpeace activists and other mariners aboard the Vega, Fri, Rainbow Warrior and other vessels bedevilled the French state in the waters off Moruroa Atoll until France’s nuclear testing program ended in 1996... Harold Steele’s tradition of moral witness and ‘bodies on the line’ had taken root in the Pacific — a lesson learnt by a new generation of climate activists.”

Today, one does not hear voices from civil society talking of the nuclear threat or, for that matter, of biological and chemical threats to the world. Disarmament is a piety in conference agendas. And, of course, there is no voice from the world of scientists and physicists anywhere near that of J.R. Oppenheimer, Kenneth Bainbridge, Bertrand Russell and Albert Einstein or Joseph Rotblat, the leading light of the Pugwash Movement, who warned the world of the peril of a nuclear pile-up, in the great Russell-Einstein Manifesto of July 5, 1955. (The Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs sought to work to reduce the danger of armed conflict.) The risks of nuclear devastation caused by war or terror or error as outlined by Martin Rees, the great astrophysicist, are one great exception. Speaking about his book, *The Final Century*, Rees says: “...[W]e have to go back to what happened in the post-War era, post-World War II, when the nuclear scientists who’d been involved in making the atomic bomb in many cases were concerned that they should do all they could to alert the world to the dangers. And they were inspired not by the young Einstein, who did the great work in relativity, but by the old Einstein, the icon of poster and t-shirt, who failed in his scientific efforts to unify the physical laws. He was premature. But he was a moral compass — inspiration to scientists who were concerned with arms control.”



On this twenty-fifth anniversary of Pokhran II, some contrarians amongst us might think why today, when the risks of mass extinction are far, far greater, the moral compasses amidst us to warn of those are so much fewer. Why should we have Pokhran after Pokhran in India but not one Pugwash? The scientists that were identified as having made India proud are known. But are there any among that community who can claim to be of the Einstein, Russell, Rotblat league? For the record, it must be said that Professor M.S. Swaminathan lent distinction to the Pugwash body by serving on it. The Buddha in our history now embodies dukkha in the shape of the ground quaking from nuclear explosion after nuclear explosion. Agni is not the ancient fire god who sanctifies, but a missile. Prithvi not Mother Earth, but also a missile. In a park that I regularly walk in are some of the finest botanical specimens one can find anywhere. Also, replicas of these missiles. And tanks. No one notices the trees. Everyone flocks around the missiles and the tanks. Especially children, whose parents then take pictures of them saluting the war machines. Will any of them ever get to hear of Indian opposition to war? Of Indian protests for peace? It is not as if there are no brave-hearts who wage that war on war and fight that peaceful fight for peace. But they are few and are not taken seriously. Nuclear, biological, chemical and cyber weapons further fortified by the as yet only dimly perceived risks of Artificial Intelligence can unleash misery upon us.

Grim as this prognosis is, the Buddha at Birla Mandir saying through a curious smile ‘... some will strive...’ makes me believe that individuals, including scientists in Japan and Germany (countries which were placed under war constraints after World War II), South Africa (which reversed its nuclear weaponisation programme) and India, will pioneer an initiative towards comprehensive disarmament.

STATESMAN, JULY 23, 2023

Path to Riches~II

ARVIND SAXENA

All right, now that we know what is required and how the system will molly coddle you with favourable tax regimens etc. let us look at how to move ahead. Let us start with manufacturing, infrastructure and international trade. First, draw up a super ambitious business plan. Whether it is practical or not is immaterial, it should involve large numbers and massive capital investments in land, plant and machinery. It should also promise job opportunities for a large number of unemployed. The key word is promise, whether we realise, or even intend to realise, the promise or not is not important. The word here is 'big ticket' investment. Now get your political friends to arm twist some banks or financial institutions to extend huge loans to you, ostensibly for economic progress of the nation. Also, see if you can get some state government to lease you a big piece or pieces of land, acquired by the state, not for you, but for its economic development. Get them to build roads and in general develop the area at public cost so that you can contribute in industrializing the state. Now go ahead and buy plant and machinery from third countries at bargain prices, do look at reconditioned or scrapped equipment also.

Ask your cousin in a tax haven type of country to become the supplier for this and other raw material, which should be sold to your brand new company in India at hugely inflated prices. See how beautifully it works. Huge amounts of money have been paid out to shell companies which make massive profits, which can be legally kept out of India. While you are at it give yourself and your wife and children positions of directors with low salaries and more perks. You don't want to pay taxes on salaries and consultancies do you? Also, don't forget that low declared personal incomes can be used to project your social sensitivity and responsibility towards the nation.

Let the stupid salaried class pay the taxes, after all you as the promoter have the wherewithal to decide on your own salary and perks. Do it. Buy some swanky office space and a few luxury cars too, so that the loan is well consumed. Meanwhile, get the enterprise going. Your products and services should be targeted at the government as the lead consumer or buyer. Set up things in a manner that your products and services should

reach the masses but the expenditure should be from the public exchequer. Things like free utilities, infrastructure, military hardware, insurance, health and education come to mind, but then your imagination can take you in many other directions too. Is the product deleterious to human health, or is the service you sell destroying human society is none of your concern.

Go ahead sell them fast food, untested drugs, overpriced imports or social media services which will destabilize societies and promote hatred. Not your concern. Invest in some good PR and image make-over companies to build a super shiny image for yourself. Of course it need not be the truth. They will give you a brand new personal history bringing out your brilliance from early childhood to how you have worked hard for social causes, poverty alleviation, environment, wild life conservation, protecting our heritage etc. They will build a persona showing you as a caring employer, philanthropist and whatever else are the top selling traits of the times. It is a good investment. Sometime in the future you might also consider buying up a few media houses, or at least get them to do your bidding for advertising revenue, or outright pay outs.

Self-projection and building a Santa Claus like image will serve you well. So now that you have a going company manned by a few qualified men and women and lots of contractual workers, look at listing your company on the stock exchange. Come up with an IPO, where you can manipulate the offer price and escalate the value by pumping in money from your off shore shell investors and few market players who will help you for a price. Some jealous people call it 'round-tripping of money' just ignore them, the fact is it is money coming from off-shore investors. Now use the artificially inflated share value to raise new loans from banks and keep playing the game to raise the book value of your assets ~ and your personal worth.

Try to buy up land and natural resources, infrastructure and Public Sector concerns. Create monopolies by buying out, or destroying competitors, Use your personal wealth stashed abroad to buy up high end properties and stake in safe conglomerates. Notice we have not talked about blatantly illegal practices like money

laundering, trafficking in drugs and other contraband, fictitious trade or trade in spurious goods and of course the age old smuggling of anything from gold, grains to petroleum. At some point in time consider acquiring a foreign citizenship also. There are several countries which sell their citizenship. So as the real India's socioeconomic situation worsens keep an escape route open.

Bear in mind that 2.25 lakh High Net worth Indians gave up their Indian nationality in 2022 alone. Obviously they were not idiots, they knew pretty well how the nation was being hollowed out and why it was worth their while to find a safe haven, from where they could continue with their predatory behaviour in India, while enjoying the privileges of an honoured citizen abroad. In fact, if you work with foresight the same tycoons whose hands you shake at elite global forums can also help you get some high sounding national awards, which can establish your credentials in your new country of residence. The ecosystem is now the same in most countries. The leadership is beholden to their top businessmen, who can easily bend rules to help their friends ~ transactional of course ~ the same 'give some, take some' type. Do you feel this scale is too big for you to dream of? No problem, there are many other routes. Look at real estate development, premier league sports, film financing, education, tertiary health care, minerals and many more areas. You can scale down even further and start with some services aggregation, or retail sales Apps.

These Apps will damage the real physical economy, kill jobs, suppress wages and force the working class into inhumane working conditions, the so-called gig economy. This need not bother you ~ go ahead, there is quick money here. Once again, make a super promising business plan and use your political connections to get some big loans. Tie up with PR firms, advertising executives and data thieves to build your real revenue model. There are kick-backs in all transactions, whether you are selling space for advertisers or selling your own advertisements. All transactions can get you money and handled smartly can make your business look lucrative. Keep salting away money as you go ahead.

Two things can happen ~ your business might eventually fail, or you might have actually built something that works. In the first case, just walk away after shutting shop. With the right connections you might not be chased by the lenders. After all, banks know how to get their bad loans written off! You have made money and are now set to start another venture. Don't worry, the same tricks will work again.

On the other hand if your business is profitable, chose the right time and sell it to the highest bidder. Remember the cardinal rule, there is money to be made in every transaction. Keep doing this till you start knocking at the doors of the elite club we have talked of at length. Greed is the prime mover of modern economies. It is no longer a dirty word and will take you to where you want to be. There is so much calling you out to get rich that if you still don't take the plunge, you have only yourself to blame. Buckle up, the system beckons.

(The writer is a former Chairman of the Union Public Services Commission)

ECONOMIC TIMES, JULY 23, 2023

Government extends Atal Beemit Vyakti Kalyan Yojana for two years

The government has extended the unemployment scheme, the Atal Beemit Vyakti Kalyan Yojana, under the Employees' State Insurance Corporation for a period of two years up to June 30, 2024.

“It has been decided to extend the Atal Beemit Vyakti Kalyan Yojana for the period 01.07.2022 to 30.06.2024 with the relaxed eligibility conditions and enhanced rate of relief,” the ministry of labour and employment said in a gazette notification.

This is the third extension to the scheme with two extensions given each in 2020 and 2021 to financially support ESIC beneficiaries who had lost jobs during the pandemic.

Launched in 2018 on a pilot basis for a period of two years, the Atal Beemit Vyakti Kalyan Yojana provides relief in the form of cash compensation up to 90 days to the insured persons (IPs) under ESIC who have become unemployed. However, with the outbreak of Covid and subsequent lockdown, the government extended the unemployment scheme while also relaxing the eligibility criteria and enhancing the compensation amount. The existing benefits under the scheme include enhanced rate of unemployment relief of 50% of wages as against 25% earlier along with relaxation in eligibility conditions which includes availing benefit after 30 days from date of unemployment. Benefits under ABVKY can be availed by insured person who have been in insurable employment for a minimum period of two years immediately before her/his unemployment and have contributed for not less than 78 days in the contribution periods in two years prior to unemployment. Earlier, a minimum contribution of 78 days in each of four contribution periods was required. Further, the claim under the scheme earlier could be made after 90 days of being unemployed which has now been reduced to 30 days. As per the government data, 66,013 employees availed unemployment benefits under the scheme Atal Beemit Vyakti Kalyan Yojana (ABVKY) and an amount of Rs 87.83 crores were disbursed between July 1, 2018 and December 12, 2022.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

PIB, JULY 18, 2023

India and the United States today jointly launched a call for proposals on Critical and Emerging Technology: Quantum Technologies and Artificial Intelligence for Transforming Lives

India's Science Minister Dr Jitendra Singh said, the move comes in the wake of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to US, where he stressed upon a new chapter to bilateral comprehensive and global strategic partnership

Investments in AI and quantum technology would lead to transformative advances in our everyday lives and greatly benefit our social well-being by impacting healthcare, agriculture, climate change and more. He welcomed the transformative potential of the Endowment fund: Dr Jitendra Singh

US Secretary, Department of Energy, Ms Jennifer M. Granholm called on Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space Dr Jitendra Singh at North Block here today and discussed bilateral collaboration between the two countries. The meeting assumes special significance as it comes close on the heels of PM Narendra Modi's US visit. Ms Jennifer was accompanied by a high-level American delegation.

India and the United States also jointly launched a call for proposals on Critical and Emerging Technology: Quantum Technologies and Artificial Intelligence for Transforming Lives. The Indo-U.S. Science and Technology Forum (IUSSTF) and the Secretariat for USISTEF have designed the program.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, through this competitive grant program, the USISTEF selects and supports promising joint U.S.-India technology innovation and entrepreneurial initiatives that are commercially viable and socially relevant. He said, these joint initiatives can originate from U.S. and Indian entities including StartUps, government, academic, or commercial endeavours, and any combination thereof provided they focus on applied R&D, incorporate a business plan and proof of commercial concept, and have significant sustainable commercial potential.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, the move comes in the wake of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to US, where he stressed upon a new chapter to bilateral comprehensive and global strategic partnership. The Minister said, he felt happy that both the Indian and US sides have positioned themselves quickly to take-up the decision of the leaders to the implementation level. Dr Jitendra Singh pointed out that the engagement has charted a Technology Partnership for the future with a new direction and a new energy in the AI (America – India) relation in the AI (Artificial Intelligence) era.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, among other technology-oriented matters of high relevance, it is heartening to note that President Biden and Prime Minister Modi had welcomed the launch of a \$2million grant program under the U.S.-India Science and Technology Endowment Fund (USISTEF) for the joint development and commercialization of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and quantum technologies, and encouraged public-private collaborations to develop high performance computing (HPC) facilities in India.

Dr Jitendra Singh informed that India has recently approved the National Quantum Mission (NQM) with an aim to seed, nurture and scale up scientific and industrial R&D and create a vibrant & innovative ecosystem in Quantum Technology (QT). Needless to say, that AI has the potential to address the world's most pressing challenges and presents tremendous opportunities for economic development, he added.



Dr Jitendra Singh said, investments in AI and quantum technology would lead to transformative advances in our everyday lives and greatly benefit our social well-being by impacting healthcare, agriculture, climate change and more. He welcomed the transformative potential of the Endowment fund.



The call will remain open till August 31, 2023 and will invite promising joint Indo-U.S. technology innovation and entrepreneurial proposals that are commercially viable and socially relevant. It will provide a significant boost to the domestic as well as the US priorities looking at various facets of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

PIB,JULY19,2023

New tech transfer arrangement for scaling up indigenous knowledge system can help integrate sustainable practices in livestock production system

A technology transfer arrangement can help to scale two environment-friendly technologies—an indigenous herbal formulation with the potential to control Mastitis, an ailment common among dairy animals, and an indigenous herbal supplement with positive influence on growth performance of broiler chicks, for end users.

The National Innovation Foundation (NIF) - India, an autonomous body of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India has recently entered into a Technology Transfer arrangement for these indigenous technologies with Indian Genomix, a Hyderabad-based company which has W.H.O.G.M.P. certification ensuring quality assurance for medicinal products. This initiative is a step towards scaling up of outstanding traditional knowledge which has been sustained by society over generations. These technologies were scientifically studied and found effective in control of mastitis in dairy animals and as poultry feed supplements. NIF had embarked on integrating outstanding indigenous knowledge systems with farmers with the support of regular service providers or formal systems. Farmers rely on these knowledge systems for cost-effective, sustainable practices in livestock production systems.

Mastitis is an ailment causing huge losses to dairy farmers. The ailment is primarily caused by bacteria which need to be diagnosed and treated at the earliest. Indian farming system faces challenges in early diagnosis, availability of onsite treatment, and drug resistance. Further, lack of effective technology in field situation calls for alternative technologies. This indigenous herbal formulation was found to control major causative bacterial organisms like *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*. This herbal formulation has multiple phyto-constituents which produce effective results against field bacterial strains. The unique formulation of the Knowledge holders was evaluated for its efficacy in clinical bacterial mastitis among dairy animals.

Similarly, in Broiler industry, birds are fed with nutrients for meeting enhanced metabolic rates thereby optimum growth performance in less period of time. This causes huge stress on metabolism of broilers and they need supplements to minimize health risks and enhance feed conversion ratio. A study conducted by NIF found that an outstanding indigenous herbal supplement had a positive influence on growth performance of broiler chicks. The supplementation indicated better nutrient absorption properties (had resulted in higher villi: crypt ratio). This had enabled broiler with improved feed efficiency and resulted in higher body weight gain.

NIF had value added to these herbal knowledge practices with scientific evidence and helped them to be patent protected. Indian Genomix, a leading industry player in the field of manufacturing products for animal healthcare and veterinary diseases will assist in realization of market potential of these knowledge systems. This NIF-Indian Genomix, engagement can integrate such technologies with regular livestock service providers thereby scaling environment-friendly technologies for end users.

NIF and Indian Genomix Pvt Ltd. has entered into a Technology Transfer arrangement for commercialization of indigenous technologies

## ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE

PIB, JULY 19, 2023

Union Minister for Science and Technology Dr Jitendra Singh calls for affordable Clean Energy solutions and says, in order to achieve this goal, strong Public Private Partnership is the need of the hour

The Minister addresses the Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM -14) 8th Mission Innovation (MI-8) in Goa in a virtual mode

Clean Energy International Incubation Centre set up in PPP mode in 2018 CEIIC has incubated 45 startups and they have already filed 35 patents: Dr Jitendra Singh

Successful PPP model can serve for tackling global challenges in the other fields to create environment friendly, affordable, scalable solutions for a sustainable future: Dr Jitendra Singh

Addressing the Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM -14) 8th Mission Innovation (MI-8) meeting, being attended by representatives of over 40 countries in Goa today, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space Dr Jitendra Singh called for affordable Clean Energy solutions and said, in order to achieve this goal, strong Public Private Partnership is the need of the hour. He also reiterated Prime Minister Narendra Modi's commitment to this cause. The Minister representing India, the host country, said, Clean Energy International Incubation Centre known as CEIIC set up in 2018 CEIIC has incubated 45 StartUps and they have already filed 35 patents. He informed that 10 StartUps have commercialized their products and a few StartUps have raised more than Rs. 20 crore funds, while 20 of these startups are now commercially available in the market.

Dr Jitendra Singh recalled that the Clean Energy International Incubation Centre known as CEIIC is a first of its kind International Incubation Centre jointly established by DBT/BIRAC, Tata Trust & Tata Power in 2018 under Mission Innovation multilateral program. He said, this reflects strong Public Private Partnership commitment from Govt of India for promoting clean energy solutions.



The Minister said, the incubator supports a wide spectrum of clean energy innovations, focusing aligned with MI objectives. The Incubator provides access to advanced labs and equipment, pool of experts & mentors, and live Test beds with opportunity to conduct Pilots. It also offers opportunities to network with key ecosystem

actors, access Seed fund support and Scale-up Investments, he added. Dr Jitendra Singh also announced that CEIIC incubated StartUp 'Takachar' was named the GBP 1 million Earth shot prize winner for its technology innovation. Dr Jitendra Singh said, the Clean Energy Incubator has launched 3 Tectonic calls for applications to identify and create a pipeline of entrepreneurs & Start-Ups. He said, it is evidence of the Government of India's commitment and contribution to work together with Industry and International partners to encourage innovations in the area of clean energy. The Minister concluded that this successful PPP model can serve for tackling global challenges in the other fields to create environment friendly, affordable, scalable solutions for a sustainable future. He said, India is looking forward to connecting with other partners for scaling up innovations by Start-Ups.

PIB, JULY 20, 2023

Forest coverage in the country

Forest Survey of India (FSI), Dehradun, an organization under the Ministry carries out the assessment of forest cover biennially, since 1987 and the findings are published in India State of Forest Report (ISFR). As per latest ISFR 2021, the total forest cover of the country is 7,13,789 square kilometer which is 21.71% of the geographical area of the country. The forest cover has increased by 1,540 square kilometer between ISFR 2019 and ISFR 2021 assessment. The State/UTs wise details of forest cover as per ISFR 2021 are given in Annexure.

To protect and improve the forest cover in the country, afforestation and tree plantation activities are undertaken by States/UTs. The Ministry provides financial assistance to States/UTs under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes namely Green India Mission (GIM) to support and supplement the efforts of States and Union Territories. GIM activities were started in the Financial Year 2015-16. During the last five years, the amount of Rs. 755.68 Crores has been released to seventeen States and one union territory for taking up the



afforestation activities. The Ministry has also implemented Centrally Sponsored Scheme, National Afforestation programme for regeneration of degraded forest and adjoining areas in the country. Under the scheme, an amount of Rs. 108.57 crore has been released during the years 2019-20 to 2021-22. National Afforestation Programme is now stands merged with Green India Mission.

The Ministry is implementing Nagar Van Yojana (NVY) since the year 2020 which envisages creation of 600 Nagar Vans and 400 Nagar Vatika in the country during the period 2020-21 to 2024-25 under the funds available under Compensatory Afforestation Fund (CAMPA). The Nagar Van Yojana aims to enhance the green cover in the urban and peri-urban areas including biological diversity, provide ecological benefits and improve the quality of life of city dwellers. So far, the Ministry has approved 270 projects under Nagar Van Yojana with the total cost of Rs.238.64 Crore. The Compensatory Afforestation Fund (CAMPA fund) is being utilized by States/UTs for taking up compensatory afforestation as per approved Annual Plan of Operations for compensating the loss of forest & tree cover due to diversion of forest land for developmental projects as per provisions of Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act, 2016 (CAF Act) and CAF Rules, 2018. During the last five years, an amount of Rs. 55,394.16 Crore has been released to State/UT Forest Department under CAMPA funds. Afforestation activities are also taken up under various programmes and schemes of line Ministry such as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, National Bamboo Mission, Sub-Mission on Agroforestry etc. and under schemes of State Government/UT Administration through different departments, Non-Government Organizations, Civil Society, Corporate bodies etc. The multi departmental efforts have yielded good results in conserving and enhancing forest cover in the country. The Ministry takes various steps to combat forest fires. The Ministry supports the efforts of the States/UTs in prevention and control of forest fire by providing financial assistance for various forest fire prevention and management measures such as modern tools for fire extinguishing, use of communication and information technology, etc. creation and maintenance of fire lines in forest areas, engagement of fire watchers, creation

of water storage structures in forest areas, strengthening of forest infrastructure, procurement of firefighting equipment, soil and moisture conservation works in high risk areas, awareness creation, incentivizing villages/communities for protection against forest fire etc. under the Centrally Sponsored Forest Fire Prevention and Management Scheme.

PIB,JULY20,2023

### e-Waste Management

Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) estimates the e-waste generation at national level based on the countrywide sales data provided by producers, and average life of notified electrical and electronic equipment (EEE), as mandated under the E-waste Management Rules, 2016. As per the information available with CPCB, e-waste generated in the country from twenty-one (21) types of EEE notified under the E-Waste (Management) Rules, 2016 in the financial year (FY) 2020-21 and 2021-22 was estimated as 13,46,496.31 Tonnes and 16,01,155.36 tonnes respectively, which is not substantial as compared to other major economies of the world.

Ministry has comprehensively revised the previous set of Rules and notified the E-Waste (Management) Rules, 2022 in November, 2022 and the same is enforce since 1st April, 2023. These new rules intend to manage e-waste in an environmentally sound manner and put in place an improved Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) regime for e-waste recycling wherein all the manufacturer, producer, refurbisher and recycler are required to register on portal developed by CPCB. The new provisions would facilitate and channelize the informal sector to formal sector for doing business and ensure recycling of E-waste in environmentally sound manner. Provisions for environment compensation and verification & audit has also been introduced. These rules also promote Circular Economy through EPR regime and scientific recycling/disposal of the e-waste.

PIB,JULY20,2023

### Climate change impact assessment

Climate change is a cross-cutting issue spanning various Ministries/ Departments and institutions under them. Studies on adverse impacts of climate change is mainly sponsored by the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, and Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). Sectoral aspects of climate change are also studied by different Ministries/Departments concerning sectors like agriculture, water resources, human health, power, renewable energy, transport, urban, etc. Further, a large number of universities and government research institutions such as the Indian Institute of Technologies (IITs), Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Central and State Universities and their departments also carry out climate change related research.

The Government of India through its various organizations such as Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology, National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR), Geological Survey of India, Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO), G. B. Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment, Central Water Commission, and National Institute of Hydrology has been carrying out regular scientific studies to monitor the changes in Himalayan glaciers. One such study conducted by MoEFCC and ISRO, monitored 2,018 glaciers between years 2000 to 2011, which showed that 87% of the glaciers showed no change, 12% retreated and 1% glaciers have advanced.

Climate change and its impact on glaciers remains a global challenge which requires global efforts and actions. Government of India is committed to protect the glaciers and has made efforts to reduce the impact through several adaptation and mitigation measures. This includes a number of programmes under National Action Plan on Climate Change. Various R&D projects are being supported for studying Himalayan Glaciers under the National Mission for Sustaining Himalayan Ecosystem and National Mission on Strategic Knowledge for Climate Change. Several areas in the Himalayan States have also been declared as National Parks or Protected Areas, such as, Gangotri National Park, Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve, and Great Himalayan National Park.

There is no established study for India providing a quantified attribution of climate change leading to increased outbreak of floods. While many studies monitor disasters such as floods, drought and heat, the science of attribution of these changes particularly to climate change is far more complex and currently an evolving subject. Most studies so far have relied on mathematical modelling of climate change impacts but these are not empirically verified. The occurrence of floods can be attributed to various factors, including wide variations in rainfall both in time and space with frequent departures from the normal pattern, inadequate carrying capacities of rivers, river bank erosion and silting of river beds, landslides, poor natural drainage in flood prone areas, snowmelt and glacial lake out-bursts. This information was given by Union Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Shri Ashwini Kumar Choubey in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha.

PIB, JULY 20, 2023

NITI Aayog releases Analytical Tools for managing Climate Change and exploring Net Zero Pathways

India Energy Security Scenarios (IESS) 2047 facilitates assessment of Country's Green Energy Transition Journey

IESS is a user-friendly and Interactive Energy Modelling tool that takes into account the Green Policy Initiatives and explores Possible Decarbonisation Pathways towards Net-Zero

A Revamped India Energy Security Scenarios (IESS) 2047 (IESS 2047 V3.0) to assess the integrated impact of various green energy policies of Government of India was released by NITI Aayog today. An open-source tool, IESS incorporates several policies related to alternative energy resources like Green Hydrogen, Energy Storage, Renewable Purchase Obligations, PM-KUSUM, offshore wind strategy, Electric Vehicle policy, Energy efficiency, etc. Assessing the demand and supply of energy in the country, the tool helps in analysing emissions, cost, land, and water requirements till 2047. The release was attended by Shri Suman Bery, VC, NITI Aayog, Dr. V.K. Saraswat, Member, NITI Aayog, Shri B.V.R. Subrahmanyam, CEO, NITI Aayog, Shri Amitabh Kant, G-20 Sherpa, and other experts from Academia, Industry and the Government.

With an aim of making this technology available to the people, this version of IESS is easily downloadable and facilitates users to generate their own pathways. It will help researchers and think tanks to develop user-specific scenarios and the option of customised applications on the basis of share of industry/services/agriculture, population, the pace of urbanisation, end-use energy demand etc. IESS 2047 is a user-friendly interactive tool that can help ministries/ departments to develop a variety of energy transition scenarios to achieve net-zero. The tool is flexible enough to provide many permutations and combinations of net-zero pathways. It provides capabilities to compute the energy needs and estimates of the country and hence reduce India's dependency on external agencies for the estimates. Designed with the help of IIT Bombay, the revamped IESS 2047 will be updated on yearly basis. The baseline has been standardised at 2020 and calibrated up to 2022.

Shri Suman Bery, Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog appreciated the indigenization of IESS 2047 and termed the tool a big facilitator in achieving net-zero target by 2070.

Shri BVR Subrahmanyam, CEO, NITI Aayog termed IESS as a national asset and an outstanding example of the research and development being undertaken at NITI Aayog. Emphasising upon the fine balance between justified growth aspirations and sustainability, he said that it is important to have such tools and data platforms for holistic planning and policy making at national and state level.

PIB, JULY 20, 2023

India Climate Energy Dashboard (ICED) is live now

ICED provides Near Real Time Data with in-built Analytics to track the Climate Action Progress

A User- Friendly platform with integrated database across 500 Parameters

NITI Aayog released the India Climate Energy Dashboard (ICED) 3.0 today. The ICED is the country's one-stop platform for near real-time data on the energy sector, climate, and related economic datasets based on government published sources.

Developed as a user-friendly platform, ICED 3.0 enables users to freely access and analyse datasets using an analytical engine. It will facilitate insights and enhance understanding about the energy and climate sectors while identifying the key challenges. The Portal will draw insights from the available data parameters and hence immensely useful in monitoring the progress of India's clean energy transition journey. This dashboard offers more than 500 parameters, over 2000 infographics, and a number of interactive visualizations, allowing users to gain a holistic understanding of India's energy sector.

TRIBUNE, JULY 23, 2023

## Polluted rivers

### Review of clean-up measures needed

A report of the Central Pollution Control Board, tabled in the Lok Sabha on Thursday, says that around 46 per cent (279 out of 603) of the rivers monitored across the country are polluted. This figure is alarming and puts a question mark on various Central and state projects worth crores of rupees undertaken to tackle riverine pollution in the past few years. The work is primarily focused on setting up sewage treatment plants as the dumping of untreated domestic and industrial effluents into the water bodies is considered the main villain. However, a multi-pronged approach is needed to tackle the problem as the presence of other contaminants such as plastic and pharmaceutical waste in rivers is also found to be on the rise.

The silver lining visible in the comparative analysis, showing that the number of polluted river stretches (PRS) decreased from 351 in 2018 to 311 in 2022, is laudable, even though the worst PRS have remained unchanged. In fact, the water quality of the Sabarmati, which was found to be the second most polluted river, has deteriorated in the past five years. This, despite the Gujarat High Court taking suo motu notice of the authorities' inability to tame the rising pollution and ordering interventionist measures. Similarly, the execution of the Namami Gange project to clean and rejuvenate the Ganga and its tributaries leaves much to be desired as the pollution levels are worryingly high, despite Rs 20,000 crore being earmarked for it in 2014. With the government approving Mission-II of the campaign with a Rs 22,500-crore outlay, there is hope for better results.

Clearly, the river-cleaning act needs to be taken up on a war footing after a review of the methods adopted so far. Clean and free-flowing rivers are the key to sustaining the ecological system, including the aquatic flora and fauna and farmlands along the riverbanks.

STATESMAN,JULY23,2023

## Himalayan water woes

Himalayas are young mountains and have the third largest deposit of snow and ice in the world. Due to this, they are often referred to as the third pole of the planet. Having formed relatively recently in the Earth's geological history, the Himalayas are fragile since they are undergoing the mountain building process. Himalayas are also the point of origin of many Asian rivers, which collectively feed more than 1.3 billion people living in the watershed of the Himalayas.

These rivers are fed by seasonal melting of glaciers, snowfall, rainfall and springwater. In recent decades, global warming has impacted the weather regime which has altered seasonality and flow intensity in these rivers. This is threatening the life and livelihoods of people in the Himalayas and stands to impact more than a billion people across Asia who depend on these rivers. The Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has consistently warned that climate change is intensifying the hydrological cycle. This means more intense rainfall which is associated with flooding, and more intense heat resulting in heat waves and drought. Recent studies have predicted that climate change will result in excess flow of water in the Himalayan Rivers during the ongoing first half of the twenty first century. Post-2050, Himalayan Rivers are projected to have below normal river runoff. There is thus a dire need for preparing the Himalayan Rivers to carry additional water. Flood mitigation measures are needed to be deployed and flood related disaster risk reduction should be the focus of all climate change action planning in the vicinity of the Himalayas.

The recent flood disasters in North India, especially in the states of Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Delhi have brought to limelight another critical challenge impacting the Himalayan Rivers. Rampant construction of buildings and other infrastructure in the catchment, and destruction of river floodplains in the downstream region are causing irreparable damage to the river ecosystem. Himalayan states like Himachal Pradesh and



Uttarakhand are witnessing large-scale migration from villages to hill towns and cities. This has increased the population pressure due to large-scale growth in urban infrastructure in the Himalayas. As a result, forests are sometimes cleared, and catchments of rivers are destroyed thereby severely impacting the hydrology of the Himalayan region. Tourism is an important sector in the Himalayas and is a key driving force behind this rural-urban migration. Construction of tourism boosting infrastructure like hotels, resorts, parking facilities and wider roads has played its part in damaging the hydrology of the Himalayas. Ecologically sensitive areas are often overlooked and built upon to meet the infrastructure demands of the tourism sector. There is usually no public hearing or consensus during such construction activities and local water sources are often destroyed. Incorporating community knowledge of channels and waterways can help ensure long-term water security of emerging hill towns and cities. Tourism further threatens Himalayan Rivers by inflating the water demand.

This creates a water crisis like situation which in turn affects tourism itself. In June 2018, the queen of hill stations, Shimla, faced a severe water scarcity problem and locals pleaded with tourists on social media to not visit Shimla. The fragile geology of the Himalayas, climate change and unplanned growth of hill towns and cities are thus key factors behind Himalayan water woes. It is important to address these factors for safeguarding life, livelihoods and the ecology of the Himalayan ecosystem. All infrastructure development projects in the Himalayas must undergo detailed scrutiny for feasibility and safety. The municipalities in the Himalayan states need to play a more proactive role while granting approval to buildings; building bye laws need to be updated to overcome the emerging challenges of climate change. Disaster management departments need to reorient their approach and focus on flood prevention & preparedness. According to the United Nations Disaster Risk Recovery office, every dollar spent in disaster risk reduction saves up to \$15 in post-disaster recovery. Himalayas are not just the source of water but also provide non fossil fuels-based energy security.

Hydroelectric projects in the Himalayas need to introduce additional measures in the wake of recent floods. Upgrading existing dams to improve their structural stability and regular monitoring after flooding events should be prioritized. Schemes for promoting series of micro-hydro projects on Himalayan Rivers, including in the downstream of big dams, can help check flooding and prevent flash floods. Creating localized early warning systems and setting up community-based flood management organisations are the need of the hour in the Himalayas.

Climate change impacts are increasing every year which is a cause for worry. It is time to deploy holistic and multidisciplinary strategies that can prevent unsustainable growth and allow only sustainable development of the Himalayas.

This requires collaborative efforts between governments, local communities and NGOs towards building resilience of this ecologically sensitive region. Safeguarding the Himalayan waterways is the only way to ensure prosperity and well-being of current and future generations.

(The writer is associate professor at Jindal School of Environment & Sustainability, O.P. Jindal Global University, Haryana, India.)

MINT,JULY23,2023

The Earth's climate is getting too close to a hot tipping point

Faye Flam

Between this summer's biblical floods, apocalyptic fires and life-threatening heat domes, people are wondering whether we've lurched over a climate tipping point. Climate scientists and ecologists who study

tipping points say that these are merely extreme events amplified by global warming. They've been warning about climate tipping points for years. Now people are listening. Research published last year in *Science* suggests the risk of a global tipping point that triggers accelerated climate warming starts to become significant when average worldwide temperatures rise 1.5° Celsius above pre-industrial levels, which is likely to happen in the 2030s. In science, a tipping point refers to a straw-that-broke-the-camel's-back phenomenon, where a small change in input makes a big difference in outcome. When climate scientists talk about tipping points, they're looking at a shift in feedback loops—the disruption of stabilizing feedback loops and the start of new ones that amplify change. Physicists call this a positive feedback loop, but from our standpoint it won't be beneficial. Scientists have documented dozens of regional and local climate tipping points. Long ago, the Earth experienced planet-wide tipping points when the climate whiplashed from an ice-free hot-house to a snowball and back again.

Looking at its history for an Earth Day column a few years ago, I talked to scientists who marvelled at the habitability of Earth for nearly 4 billion years, thanks to stabilizing feedback loops. For most of that history, there was only bacteria. Sudden shifts in climactic feedback loops roiled the planet and after the advent of complex life, these led to mass death and extinction. One more reason to be concerned today: The rate of change we're imposing on the planet is “geologically unusual,” as planetary scientist Andy Knoll told me then.

Now, scientists are worried about regional changes that tip into global catastrophes. Timothy Lenton, chair in climate change and earth system science at the University of Exeter, refers to “tipping elements”—systems of glaciers, forests and coral reefs whose collapse could trigger a form of global warming that feeds on itself. He and colleagues first identified a number of these in a 2008 study, but he said they're generating much more interest now. He led a recent review of studies highlighting the tipping elements that pose an immediate threat: destruction of the West Antarctic and Greenland ice sheets, the thawing of permafrost and destruction of the

world's coral reefs. He said the extreme events making the news this summer might represent what he calls flickering—a brief visit to the other side of a tipping point. “A complex system can sometimes start to sample a different regime or state before it takes a more permanent shift into that state,” he said. “I hope it’s not the case.”

The tipping point phenomenon has led to the collapse of local ecologies before, said Simon Willcock, an interdisciplinary researcher at Rothamsted Research in the UK. The Sahara Desert is an example, which went from lush to dry in cycles, the most recent one perhaps aided by humans. In a paper published in *Nature Sustainability*, he and colleagues created complex models of ecosystem collapse, using two examples of tipping points in relatively recent history—the Chilika Lagoon in India, where fish populations collapsed, and Easter Island, where deforestation and environmental stress led to extinction of the local human population.

He found that ecological tipping points happened much faster than previous models, when multiple stresses were taken into account, such as overgrazing, deforestation, agricultural runoff and overfishing. Natural fluctuations make tipping points more likely. Think of standing on the edge of a cliff, he said, with random gusts buffeting you toward and away from the brink. And consider someone nearby in still air on a similar cliff. “Who’s going to fall off the cliff first?” he asked. “It’s obvious, right?”

He also worries that the clearing of the Amazon might dry things out and start a massive fire, making the region drier, killing more trees, fuelling more fire and lofting more carbon into the atmosphere. It would make the climate warmer and drier, and accelerate forest loss in a vicious cycle. Our civilization is delicate, with population centres dependent on agriculture and clean water. Although humanity survived shifts from ice ages to warm interglacial periods, humans have enjoyed a quiescent period for the last 12,000 years, as we settled down and started farming. A climate tipping point could make life a lot harder for our species. We’re not yet

over the cliff, but we're dancing dangerously near the edge. Faye Flam is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist covering science

## CURRENT EVENTS

PIB,JULY18,2023

English rendering of PM's speech at inauguration of New Integrated Terminal Building of Veer Savarkar International Airport, Port Blair via video conferencing

Namaskar!

Lieutenant Governor of Andaman and Nicobar Islands Shri DK Joshi ji , my cabinet colleagues Jyotiraditya Scindia ji, VK Singh ji, my Parliamentary colleagues, all other dignitaries, and my brothers and sisters from Andaman and Nicobar Islands !

Even though today's event is taking place in Port Blair, the eyes of the whole nation are pinned on this event. For a long time, there was a demand from the people of Andaman & Nicobar to increase the capacity of Veer Savarkar Airport. And our previous MP used to come to my chamber every week to work on this matter. So today he seems to be extremely delighted and I can see all my old friends on the screen. It would have been better if I could have joined you physically today and participated in this celebration. But I could not come due to lack of time, but I can see the joy on all your faces. I can feel the joyous atmosphere.

Friends,

And the people from all over the country who wanted to visit this place also had the same wish. So far the capacity of the existing terminal could handle 4000 tourists every day. After the construction of the new terminal, this airport has the capacity to handle about 11,000 tourists every day. Under the new system, now 10 aircrafts will be able to be parked simultaneously at the airport. That means the path has been opened for new flights here. More flights and more tourists coming here directly means more and more employment opportunities. In this new terminal building of Port Blair, Ease of Travel will be enhanced, Ease of Doing

Business will increase and connectivity will also get better. I congratulate the people of the country and all the friends from Port Blair for this facility.

Friends,

For a long time, the scope of development in India was limited to a few major cities or a few regions. Due to the selfish politics of some parties, the benefits of development did not reach the far-flung areas of the country. These parties used to give priority only to those projects that benefitted them personally and their families. As a result, our tribal areas and the islands remained deprived of development and were yearning for development.

In the last 9 years, we have rectified those mistakes of the previous governments with full sensitivity. Moreover, we have also developed new systems. Now a new model of development has developed in India. This model is of inclusion, taking everyone along. This model is called 'Sabka Sath Sabka Vikas'. And when I say 'Sabka Vikas' or development of all – its meaning is very broad. 'Sabka Vikas' means development of every person, every class, every area. Sabka Vikas means- development of every aspect of life, education, health, connectivity, so development of all in every way.

Friends,

With this thinking, a new saga of development has been written in Andaman & Nicobar in the last 9 years. In the 9 years of the previous government, that is, the government that was before us, a budget of about Rs 23 thousand crore was allotted to Andaman-Nicobar. Whereas during our government's regime, a budget of about Rs 48 thousand crore has been allocated for the development of Andaman-Nicobar in 9 years. That is, our government has spent twice as much money as before for the development of Andaman-Nicobar.

In the 9 years of the previous government, 28 thousand houses in Andaman-Nicobar were connected with water supply. In the 9 years of our government's regime, water connections have been provided to about 50 thousand houses here. That is, to provide water connections to every household, our government has worked twice as fast as before. Today almost every person here has their own bank accounts. Today, every poor here has got the facility of 'One Nation, One Ration Card'. There was not even a single medical college in Andaman-Nicobar during the previous government's regime. It is our government which has established a medical college in Port Blair. During the previous government's regime, the internet in Andaman-Nicobar was dependent on satellites only. Our government has solved this problem by laying many kilometres of submarine optical fibre cable under the sea.

Friends,

This development of facilities in Andaman & Nicobar is giving an impetus to the tourism sector here. When mobile connectivity is enhanced, the number of tourists also increases. When the health infrastructure improves, the tourist inflow increases further. When the facilities at the airport are improved, tourists like to visit this place. When the roads are of good quality, the tourists spend more time in the area. That is why the number of tourists coming to Andaman and Nicobar has now doubled as compared to 2014.

The number of tourists coming here for adventures like snorkelling, scuba diving, and sea-cruise is also increasing. And my brothers and sisters of Andaman and Nicobar, this is just the beginning. This number is going to increase manifold in the coming years. Due to this, new possibilities of employment and self-employment are going to be created in Andaman & Nicobar.

Friends,

Today Andaman & Nicobar is turning into a living example of this great mantra - Virasat Bhi Aur vikas Bhi' i.e. heritage as well as development. You are also aware that the tricolour was hoisted in Andaman and Nicobar



much before it was hoisted at the Red Fort. But despite that traces of slavery were still visible here. In the year 2018, I was fortunate to have hoisted the tricolour at the same place in Andaman where Netaji Subhas had hoisted the flag. It is our government which named Ross Island after Netaji Subhas. It is our government which has named Havelock and Neil Islands as Swaraj and Shaheed Islands. We have named 21 islands after the brave sons who demonstrated valour for the country, i.e. the Paramveer Chakra winners. Today, these islands of Andaman & Nicobar are giving new inspiration to the youth of the whole country for the development of the country.

Friends,

In the 75 years after independence, our country India could have reached great heights and I am saying this with immense responsibility. It could have reached great heights. There has never been any dearth of potential in us Indians. But the corrupt and family-oriented parties have always done injustice to this capability of the Indians, the common man. Today, the people of the country have once again made up their minds to bring back our government in the 2024 elections. They have taken that decision already. In such a scenario, some people responsible for the plight of India have started their dirty business. Looking at them, I am reminded of a few lines from a poem. A poet had written in Awadhi. This is a poem written in Awadhi language-

"गायित कुछ है, हाल कुछ है, लेबिल कुछ है, माल कुछ है"

It is very apt for the 26 political parties who have come together for the 2024 elections.

"गायित कुछ है, हाल कुछ है, लेबिल कुछ है, और माल कुछ है"

That is, someone is singing the song, but the truth is something else. The label is someone else's, while the product is something else. This is the reality of their business. Two things are guaranteed in their shops. Firstly, they sell the poison of casteism in their shop. And second, these people indulge in unlimited corruption. These days these people have gathered in Bengaluru.

Once upon a time there was a very famous song, I don't remember it completely, but in bits and pieces - People wear different masks on a single face. These people have different faces. When these people come together in a single frame in front of the camera, the first thought that comes to the mind of the people of the country is - corruption worth lakhs of crores of rupees. That's why the people of the country are saying that this is a 'perfect corruption conference'. These people have been singing something else but the situation is something different. They have placed the labels on something else while their products are something different. Their product is a guarantee of Rs 20 lakh crore scam.

Friends,

There is one more speciality of this meeting. If someone is out on bail in a multi-crore scam, he is looked upon with great respect. If the entire family is out on bail, then they are respected even more. If an incumbent minister of a party goes to jail due to a corruption case, he is given extra marks and is invited as a 'special invitee'. If someone insults a community, and is punished by the court, then he receives a lot of hospitality. If someone has been found guilty in a multi-crore scam by the court, then he becomes even more qualified to attend this meeting. Rather, these people seek guidance from him. There is great affinity and great love among them for corruption. That's why these people, who guarantee corruption of Rs 20 lakh crore, are meeting each other with great love and affection.

Friends,

All of them involved in corruption are staunch supporters of the dynastic system - Whatever the family says is right. For democracy it is believed - Of the People, By the People, For the People. But the mantra of these people supporting dynastic politics - 'Of the family, By the family, For the family'. 'Family First, Nation Nothing' is the motto of these people. This is their inspiration. These people want to make the country's democracy and the constitution their hostage. I would like to tell them... 'there is hatred, there are scams. There is appeasement and crookedness. The country has been in the grips of a dynastic system for decades.

Friends,

It is not the development of the children of the country's poor that matters to them, but the development of their own children, their brothers and nephews always was their priority. Nowadays you see that the number of start-ups is rising in the country. Our youngsters are getting patents; trademarks are being registered in large numbers; the youth of my country are dominating the sports world and daughters are creating wonders!

This youth power was there in our country even before, but these dynastic parties never did justice to the power of the youth of the country. They have only one ideology, only one agenda - save the family, and keep corruption alive for the family! Their common minimum program is to stop the development of the country, to cover up their misgovernance and to stop action against the corrupt. Now see, this group that has gathered becomes speechless when it comes to the biggest scams and crimes committed by them. When their misrule in any one state is exposed, these people from their group from other states immediately start providing arguments in their defence. But if there is a flood scam somewhere or someone is kidnapped, then all the people of this clan become silent. You have seen that Panchayat elections were held in West Bengal just a few days ago. There was open violence and reckless bloodshed. All of them have stopped speaking even on this matter. The workers of Congress and Left parties are trying to save themselves. But the leaders of Congress and Left, in their selfishness, have left their workers alone to fend for themselves.

Whether it is about the daughters being tortured in Rajasthan or examination papers being leaked, they turn a blind eye to everything. When those who betray the public by talking about change are involved in liquor scams worth crores, this family again starts giving cover to them. They turn a blind eye to that blatant corruption. When any agency of the country acts on them, they have the same thing to say each time – "nothing has happened...everything is a conspiracy, we are being framed". If you look at Tamil Nadu, several cases of corruption and scams are coming to the fore. But all the parties of this clan have already given a clean chit to everyone. That is why friends keep identifying these people and get to know them. Be careful of these people, brothers and sisters!

Friends,

Amidst the conspiracies of these people, we have to dedicate ourselves to the development of the country. There are many examples in the world today, where islands and small landlocked countries have made unprecedented progress. When these nations had chosen the path of progress, they too had faced various challenges. Not everything was simple, but those countries have shown that when development takes place, it brings along all kinds of solutions. I am sure, the development work being done in the Andaman-Nicobar Islands will further strengthen this entire region. I hope this new facility related to connectivity, i.e. the new terminal of Veer Savarkar International Airport will be beneficial for all. With this wish, I thank you for coming in such large numbers to this video conference event. I can feel your joy and enthusiasm even from here.

On such an occasion, the country should move forward with a new belief and a new resolve. And I hope that Andaman-Nicobar moves forward with it. With this wish, my best wishes to all of you, heartiest thanks!

PIB,JULY19,2023

President of India Smt. Droupadi Murmu to inaugurate unique "Festival of Libraries 2023" to be organised by M/o Culture to Promote Development and Digitization of Libraries

Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal unveils the schedule of, "Festival of Libraries" 2023

Libraries preserve manuscripts and bridge the gap between history and the limitless future. Our digital library initiative breaks barriers, empowering all citizens with access to knowledge: Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal

President of India Smt. Droupadi Murmu will inaugurate the unique 'Festival of Libraries 2023', a two-day event to be held on 5th - 6th August 2023 at Hall No. 5 Pragati Maidan, New Delhi. The Festival is being organised by the Union Ministry of Culture. The Minister for Law and Justice(Independent Charge) and Minister of State for Culture, and Parliamentary Affairs Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, unveiled the schedule of, "Festival of Libraries" in New Delhi today. The Secretary Ministry of Culture, Shri Govind Mohan and Joint Secretary, Ministry of Culture Smt. Mugdha Sinha were also present on the occasion. Vice President of India, Sh. Jagdeep Dhankhar will grace the Valedictory Ceremony of the event. The festival will also highlight iconic libraries from across the world in order to initiate a conversation on the modernization and digitization of libraries in India.

Addressing mediapersons, Sh. Arjun Ram Meghwal said, "The Festival of Libraries 2023 celebrates knowledge and imagination. Libraries preserve manuscripts and bridge the gap between history and the limitless future. Our digital library initiative breaks barriers, empowering all citizens with access to knowledge. Let's celebrate with fervour, embracing the transformative power of libraries and the boundless opportunities that the One Nation, One Digital Library will give." The Minister further added that development of libraries will be our priority since libraries are an essential part of human-centric approach to development. Libraries in physical mode have occupied a place of pride in our country and we want to revive

the reading culture among the people, he explained. Shri Arjun ram Meghwal emphasised that we have to maintain a balance mix of physical and digital libraries and also create special corners for senior citizens and divyangjan to enjoy reading within libraries.

On the occasion, Secretary Ministry of Culture, Shri Govind Mohan said that there is a deep connect between Libraries and Museums and there is also a need to have an appropriate mix of physical and digital libraries, and both these issues will be discussed at length during the Festival. Libraries are essential to emotional and mental development and therefore, it is important to revive reading habits among the people. The Festival of Libraries Delhi will kick off with a series of exciting launch events, exhibitions, and panel discussions. It will also introduce a special ranking system for libraries across India, encouraging healthy competition and progress in the library ecosystem, Sh Govind Mohan added. Speaking on the occasion, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Mugdha Sinha said, "Libraries are the drawing rooms of the community, and while physical libraries continue to proliferate, as does publishing of books, visit to libraries and readership is on a decline. While the world of digital, social media and new-age technologies has made it easy to read from the comfort of homes and devices, libraries- with their rare books, manuscripts, and archives- will need to keep pace with their demanders to reinvent and re-envision themselves with better infrastructure and other digital device facilities to enable them to mimic gardens in the way they are multi-functional egalitarian places easily accessible to all. It is with this in mind that the Festival of Libraries aims to explore the entire ecosystem of the libraries and how they can graduate from bare reading rooms to cultural hotspots."

This festival is a part of the second phase of the 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav' and is in line with the Prime Minister's vision to foster the development and digitization of libraries and cultivate a culture of reading in India. The Festival of Libraries will serve as a platform to showcase iconic libraries from around the world, initiating a dialogue on the modernization and digitization of libraries. It aims to facilitate the formulation of action-oriented policies for the development of Model Libraries in India, right down to the village and

community levels. The festival will also mark the launch of a special ranking system for libraries across India, further promoting excellence and innovation in the library sector. The event will culminate with a valedictory function which will be graced by the Vice President of India, Sh. Jagdeep Dhankhar.

Noteworthy highlights include the launch of a crowd-sourced Directory of Libraries and the signing of a Tripartite MoU between three prominent libraries: Khuda Baksh Oriental Public Library, Patna; Rampur Raza Library, Rampur; and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Arabic Persian Research Institute, Tonk, for long term collaborative events, commencement of celebration of 250 years of the Rampur Raza library, Launch of the Sassy Library Series with the plot based on Rampur Raza Library, and the release of a set of Cursive Writing Books in the 22 vernacular languages.

NITI Ayog has tasked the National Mission on Libraries under the Ministry of Culture to make a union catalogue of central government libraries in Phase-I, as part of the Hon'ble Prime Minister's One Nation, One Digital Library Mission. The Festival of Libraries is a unique event that aims to engage and inspire participants from the entire ecosystem of libraries. The festival will also see the launch of new initiatives and publications.

The event will include roundtable discussions and panels where participants can explore library best practices from Indian states and libraries worldwide. There will be engaging conversations with organizers of literary festivals, young authors, publishing houses, and more. Special sessions will focus on schemes for libraries and their collections, including National Missions on Libraries Manuscripts and Archives.

Visitors will have the opportunity to experience 10 captivating exhibitions showcasing cartography, calligraphy, cursive writing, and tribal fonts and scripts. The digitization of archives, particularly private collections, will be discussed, and attendees can explore a remarkable exhibition featuring rare archival collections and illuminated manuscripts.

The festival will feature interactive drawing rooms with book-author sessions, digital displays, podcasts, and the Human Library Project. A dedicated Children's Zone will provide hands-on activities to foster a love for reading among children. The event aims to bring together stakeholders across the board, from librarians & academics to district collectors of 100 aspirational districts & directors of model libraries to develop a roadmap for encouraging Libraries to become the Drawing Rooms of the Community and for the Readers to emerge as future Leaders, in consonance with the spirit of a country that reads, is a country that leads.

The government's National Mission on Libraries (NML) launched in 2014 further underscores its dedication to enhancing libraries across the country. This mission has a total budget of Rs100 crore to develop model libraries, connect district libraries with digital networks, and prioritize libraries in economically backward districts.

PIB, JULY 21, 2023

Union Minister for Science and Technology Dr Jitendra Singh urges the Indian diaspora Scientists abroad to engage with India; says, the Vaishvik Bhartiya Vaigyanik (VAIBHAV) Fellowship programme introduced recently by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is a step in this direction. The Minister addresses the International Ministerial meet of Joint 8th Mission Innovation Ministerial (MI-8) & 14th Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM-14) at Goa with delegates from about 30 countries

The Minister says, this decade must see major innovation efforts for new technologies to be in the market to meet various climate goals. In an interconnected world, there should be more collaborations among countries to develop universal solution that can be adapted to large set of countries to make them affordable: Dr Jitendra Singh



Advancing Research and Innovation value chain and fostering the culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in young minds has witnessed a phenomenal growth in India as evident from the Start-Up ecosystem gathering speed, scale and momentum: Dr Jitendra Singh



Addressing the International Ministerial meet of Joint 8th Mission Innovation Ministerial (MI-8) and 14th Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM-14) here today, attended by delegates from about 30 countries from across the world, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh urged the Indian diaspora abroad to engage with India.

The Minister said, the Vaishvik Bhartiya Vaigyanik (VAIBHAV) Fellowship programme, introduced recently by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is a step in this direction. The Fellowship would be awarded to outstanding scientists/technologists of Indian origin (NRI/OCI/PIO) who are engaged in research activities in their respective countries. The 75 selected fellows would be invited to work in 18 identified knowledge verticals including quantum technology, energy and material sciences amongst others. Touching upon the global concerns, Dr Jitendra Singh said, this decade must see major innovation efforts for new technologies to be in the market to meet various climate goals. The Minister underlined that the world today is more interconnected and interdependent than ever before and to create resilience, there should be more collaborations among countries to develop universal solutions that can be adapted to large sets of countries to make them affordable.

Addressing the Joint 8th Mission Innovation Ministerial (MI-8) and 14th Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM-14) meeting in Goa with delegates from about 30 countries in attendance, Dr Jitendra Singh said, the Mission Innovation (MI) and International Solar Alliance, spearhead by our Prime Minister Narendra Modi was announced at COP21 in 2015, as world leaders came together in Paris to commit the ambitious efforts to combat climate change. Dr Jitendra Singh informed the delegates that Mission Innovation is a term coined by India's Prime Minister and the United Nation has recognized him for his Policy Leadership and pioneering work in championing and promoting new levels of cooperation on environmental action and clean energy initiatives and conferred on him Champions of Earth Award 2018.

Dr Jitendra Singh told the delegates that Prime Minister Modi's attention to Clean energy is continuously reflected in his vision, outlined in form of Panchamrit during COP26 and India's targets toward climate action like- Reaching a non-fossil fuel energy capacity of 500 GW by 2030; Fulfilling 50 percent energy requirements via renewable energy by 2030; Reducing CO2 emissions by 1 billion tons by 2030; Reducing carbon intensity below 45 percent by 2030; To pave the way for achieving a net-zero emissions target by 2070.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, our current initiatives and efforts are the nation's testimony to drive Clean Energy at accelerated pace and enhance global and private sector participation. At Global level, let us all resolve to work together to foster innovations and drive necessary changes in the energy sector to ensure a sustainable, liveable future in a cleaner and greener planet, the Minister added. Dr Jitendra Singh said, India is celebrating 75 Years of Independence and in this special moment (Amritkal), hosting of Annual Ministerial meeting of MI, CEM and G20 Energy Ministerial at same location will be pivotal and a step forward to reach our ambitious clean energy commitments into action while ensuring energy security and accessibility.

Dr Jitendra Singh said after the Goa Meeting, we have G20 energy transition ministerial meeting scheduled tomorrow and the objective of scheduling this is to get maximum participation of the global clean energy community and engagement at the highest level. He reiterated that delegates from more than 40 countries around the world assembled in Goa to join various clean energy events planned from 19 July to 22 July 2023.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, Indian Cabinet has recently approved the introduction of the National Research Foundation (NRF) Bill, 2023 in the Parliament to promote the culture of research and innovation throughout India's universities, colleges, research institutions, and R&D laboratories at a total estimated cost of Rs. 50,000 crores during five years and this will give further impetus to Clean energy research in India and Mission innovation.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, advancing the Research and Innovation value chain and fostering the culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in young minds has witnessed a phenomenal growth in India as evident from the Start-Up ecosystem gathering speed, scale and momentum. From 350 odd start-ups in 2014, the number swelled to over 88,000 Start-Ups. India is also home to 107 Unicorns and 23 of them emerged only last year is a sign of India's rapid upward ride on STI (Science, Technology & Innovation) ladder, he added. The Minister concluded by saying that achieving a cleaner and healthier future requires the unwavering focus of all governments, business, investors, and citizens. He said, we all must not lose sight of the need to continue the R&D cycle and focus on the next set of solutions.