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Manipur To Introduce Grading System In Class 10 Board Examination; No Rank To Be Awarded

IMPHAL

The Manipur government will introduce a grading system for the class 10 board examination from this year. No division or rank will be awarded in the grading system for the high school leaving certificate examination (class 10), said the statement issued by Joint Secretary, Education Department, Elangbam Sonia on Thursday.

"In the grading system being introduced, no total marks/aggregate will be displayed in the document, no division/rank will be awarded and only pass/fail will be printed", the statement said. Students will be graded with A1 for those getting 91 to 100. Students will be awarded A2 for those getting from 81 to 90. E1 would be award-



ed for those with 21 to 30 marks and would be termed as fail along with E2.

A1: 91 to 100 Marks

A2: 81 to 90 Marks

E1: 21 to 30 Marks

"The government felt that though competition amongst the students is good to improve one's

performance, there is a need to see that it does not lead to stress or completely dishearten a minor", it said, adding that "grading system reduces stress and burden on the students helping them to learn with less stress without being over competitive at their

age". At least 37,715 students including 18,628 female students are appearing for the matriculation examination which is being held from March 15 to April 8 in 154 examination centres, an official was quoted as saying to news agency.

Tribal student body approaches Delhi HC demanding UPSC examination centres in Churachandpur and Kangpokpi

NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Thursday sought the stand of the Centre, Manipur government and the UPSC on a plea seeking the setting up of additional examination centres for civil services and Indian Forest Service aspirants in the troubled northeastern state.

A bench headed by Acting Chief Justice Manmohan issued notice on the petition by Zomi Students Federation which sought directions to the authorities to make adequate arrangements for tribal candidates from the hill districts in Manipur so as to enable them to take the civil services and Indian Forest Service preliminary examination scheduled for May 26.

The petitioner prayed for setting up examination centres in Churachandpur and Kangpokpi in the state, which is in the grip of protracted eth-



nic strife, and reopening of the application window to enable the aspirants to opt for a centre of their choice.

Counsel for the UPSC told the court that the commission has already written three letters to the Manipur chief secretary with respect to the opening of examination centres in Churachandpur, Kangpokpi and Ukhrul but no response has been received yet. He said the commission has to work close-

ly with the state government to make adequate arrangements for holding the examinations and so the state's stand has been sought on the feasibility of the proposal. The bench, also comprising Justice Manmeet PS Arora, asked the Centre's counsel to take instructions on the issue, saying it has to provide security in the current scenario. Manipur plunged into a frenzy of violence in May 2023 over a high court order directing

the state government to consider including the non-tribal Meitei community in the list of Scheduled Tribes. This order led to rampant ethnic clashes. More than 160 people have been killed and several hundred injured since ethnic violence first broke out in the state on May 3 when a 'Tribal Solidarity March' was organised in the hill districts to protest against the majority Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe status.

Earthquake of 3.9 magnitude strikes near Ukhrul

UKHRUL

An earthquake of magnitude 3.9 on the Richter scale occurred near Ukhrul, Manipur, the National Center for Seismology said on Friday.

The time of the earthquake is said to be around 6:56 am.

Taking to X, the National Center for Seismology wrote, "An earthquake of magnitude 3.9 on the Richter Scale hit Ukhrul, Manipur at 6:56 am today". Further details are awaited.

AAP withdraws Guwahati candidate

GUWAHATI

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has decided to withdraw its candidate from the Guwahati Lok Sabha seat in Assam, shifting its focus to the Dibrugarh and Sonitpur constituencies for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. While AAP will not contest in Guwahati, it has confirmed its participation in the electoral race for the Dibrugarh and Sonitpur constituencies in Assam. However, the opposition parties had already nominated AJP leader Lurinjyoti Gogoi as their joint candidate for the Dibrugarh seat in Assam. In another noteworthy development, Assam Congress president Bhupen Borah has reached out to AAP, CPI and CPI-M with a proposal to forge an alliance for the 2026 assembly elections in the state.

WHO SAID WHAT

"We are closely monitoring how this act will be implemented. Respect for religious freedom and equal treatment under the law for all communities are fundamental democratic principles. We are concerned about the notification of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act on March 11,"

MATTHEW MILLERCHIEF
STATE DEPARTMENT
SPOKESPERSON USA



KRCTIMES

STAY-ENRICHED

AGNI-5 - A LANDMARK ACHIEVEMENT

India's recent successful test of the Agni-5 missile with Multiple Independently Targetable Re-entry Vehicle (MIRV) technology marks a significant milestone in the country's defence capabilities. The Prime Minister's commendation of the DRDO scientists underscores the importance of this achievement, not just for India but also on the global stage. The Agni-5's capability to deploy multiple warheads at different locations amplifies India's strategic deterrence posture. It places India in an exclusive league of nations with MIRV capabilities. This technological feat not only bolsters India's defence but also consolidates its status as a formidable force in the international arena. It is noteworthy that the project director of this crucial endeavour is a woman, indicative of India's commitment to gender inclusivity and the significant contributions of women in scientific and technological advancements. The indigenous development of the Agni-5 with state-of-the-art avionics systems and high-accuracy sensor packages signifies India's self-reliance in defence technology. This self-sufficiency is crucial for safeguarding national security interests and reducing dependence on external sources for critical defence equipment. With a striking range of 5000 km, the Agni-5 addresses India's long-term security needs, covering a vast geographical expanse, including parts of Asia and Europe. The deployment of the Agni series of missiles, ranging from Agni-1 to Agni-4, further fortifies India's defence architecture, providing a comprehensive shield against potential threats.

India's focus on developing capabilities to intercept hostile ballistic missiles, both within and outside the earth's atmosphere, underscores its commitment to enhancing regional and global security. This proactive approach towards defence preparedness is essential in the contemporary geopolitical landscape, characterised by evolving security challenges and complex threats.

India's adherence to international norms and regulations concerning nuclear weapons underscores its status as a responsible nuclear power, focused on deterring aggression and ensuring security. As India continues to invest in research and development, it reinforces its position as a leader in defence technology innovation. India must sustain this momentum, fostering a conducive environment for scientific advancement and technological innovation in defence and beyond.

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QUOTE OF THE DAY

The secret of happiness is something to do.

John Burroughs

SOME FRAGILE ASPECTS OF NEW EDUCATION POLICY 2020



DR NATER SINGH

It was on the 29th of July 2020 that the Union Cabinet of India approved the New Education Policy for Schooling and Higher Education (NEP). This new policy aims to replace the old education policy which has been in effect for 34 years since its genesis in 1986, and is said to be based on the four pillars of Assessment, Equity, Quality, and Accountability.

It intends to replace the prior 10+2 system of schooling with a 5+3+3+4 structure. The Government aims to make education more holistic, flexible, and multidisciplinary through this policy. However, as all things do, this New Education Policy also possesses some major advantages and disadvantages when compared to the old system. The National Education Policy (NEP) of 2020 has established a specific objective of introducing skilling and vocational education to 50% of school students by the year 2025, with the intention of extending this exposure to nearly all students by the year 2030.

But NEP2020 has many bottle necks which need immediate attentions. The following hurdles need a thread bearing discussion.

Lack of internet connections

According to the India Internet 2019 Report, 99 percent of internet users in the country utilise mobile phones rather than laptops or PCs to access the internet. In rural areas, laptops and desktops are used by just 2 percent and 1 percent of the population, respectively, whereas in urban areas, laptops and desktops are used by 6 percent and 4 percent of the population, in rural India is still extremely low, at only 27 percent. More than 40 percent of villages have yet to be connected to the internet grid as part of the Bharat Net increased.

Pressure and Competition for Students:

One of the primary con-

cerns with the policy is the potential increase in pressure and competition among students. NEP emphasizes the importance of standardized examinations and encourages board exams at multiple levels, starting from the early years. This approach may lead to an excessive focus on grades and performance, compromising the overall development and well-being of students

Narrowing of Subject Choices

The new policy proposes a shift towards a multidisciplinary approach, which aims to provide students with a broad range of subjects. However, this might inadvertently limit their options. With an increased emphasis on vocational education and skill development, subjects like arts, humanities, and social sciences may receive less attention. This narrow focus could hinder the overall intellectual and creative growth of students.

Insufficient Teacher Training and Support

The NEP 2020 falls short in adequately addressing the training and support needs of teachers. The lack of clear guidelines for continuous professional development and incentives may impact the quality of education imparted in classrooms.

Imbalance in Digital Infrastructure The new education policy places significant emphasis on digital education and e-learning platforms. Which can enhance access to education, it also exposes the digital divide prevalent in our society. Not all students have equal access to digital devices, internet connectivity, or resources required for online learning. This imbalance may further marginalize students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, exacerbating educational inequalities.

Standardize Challenges

The policy's aim to standardize education across the country may overlook regional and cultural diversities.

The one-size-fits-all approach might not cater to the unique needs and aspirations of students from different states and region.

According to ASER (Annual Status Of Education Report) 2023, only 57.3 percent of students demonstrate proficiency in reading sentences in English, with nearly three-quarters of them unable to comprehend the meaning of the text. The deficiency in basic mathematical skills is equally concerning, as demonstrated by the fact that only 39 percent of youth can accurately measure length using a scale when the starting point is not zero. A mere 43.3 percent can successfully solve division problems involving three digits by one digit. These revelations underscore the urgent need for a comprehensive overhaul of the educational framework to ensure a holistic and effective learning experience.

Disparity and Barriers

Compounding the challenges identified in the ASER 2023 is the disconcerting gender gap, particularly among 18-year-olds, reaching an alarming 32.6%. This discrepancy in educational opportunities between genders is not only an affront to the principles of equality but also poses a significant hurdle in achieving a more inclusive and equitable society. Addressing gender disparities in education is crucial to harnessing the full potential of the nation's human capital.

The ASER 2023 report sheds light on another critical issue – the lack of interest or viable avenues for vocational courses. Merely 5.6 percent of students in the 14-18 age group opt for vocational training or related courses. Recognizing the pivotal role of vocational education in preparing students for practical skills and employability, there is an urgent need to expand and promote vocational training programs, fostering a symbiotic relationship between education and industry needs.

A disconcerting trend highlighted in the report is the pervasive use of phones for entertainment activities among the youth. Nearly 80 percent of students in this age group use their phones primarily for non-educational purposes such as listening to music and watching movies. While technology can be a powerful educational tool, its overuse for entertainment detracts from academic pursuits. It is crucial to instill responsible and educational use of technology among students to harness its potential for enhancing learning outcomes.

(The author is former Principal)

'Role of teachers, parents vital in preventing drug addiction in youth': Tripura CM Saha

AGARTALA

Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha on Thursday said that increasing awareness and vigilance are essential ways to keep the youths away from drugs and emphasized the role of teachers and parents in this regard.

The Chief Minister earlier on Thursday inaugurated an awareness program on HIV/AIDS organized by the Tripura AIDS Control Society at Rabindra Satabarshiki Bhavan in Agartala.

Speaking on occasion, CM Saha said, "Children of the present generation are the wealth of our society, state, and country. It should be ensured that they do not get addicted to drugs and do not contract diseases like HIV/AIDS. Therefore, teachers as well as parents should be more aware and careful."

"The number of HIV/AIDS patients is also increasing at an alarming rate in the state. On average, 150 to 200 people are infected with HIV every month.

In most cases, it is caused by injecting drugs into the veins. Therefore, it is not possible to stop this trend only by the efforts of doctors, police, AIDS control society, or teachers. To address this issue, people from all sections of society should come forward," he said.

CM Saha, who also holds the Health portfolio, mentioned that at one time in the 70s, Manipur had the highest number of AIDS patients. "Primarily, the increase in the number of drug addicts is due to injecting drugs. And now this trend has spread in Tripura as well, which is very worrying. Injecting drugs is one of the main causes of HIV/AIDS infection. In this case, we should sympathize with the victims instead of condemning them," he said.

"Increasing awareness and vigilance are crucial in keeping the youth away from drugs. The role of teachers, along with parents, is very important in preventing children from falling into drug addiction. Therefore, teachers must conduct awareness activities with students on these issues at least

once a week," CM Saha added.

He questioned why, if Prime Minister Narendra Modi has successfully managed to control the COVID-19 epidemic in around 150 countries, including India, the state cannot effectively tackle AIDS.

The Chief Minister also emphasized that to eliminate the horrors of AIDS, monitoring children in schools should be increased. "This social evil cannot be tackled by the police, education department, doctors, AIDS control society or parents alone. Therefore, every citizen of society should come forward with the message of awareness," he said.

Additional Secretary of the Health Department, Brahmjit Kaur; Director of the Health Department, Sanjib Debbarma; Director of the Higher Education Department, NC Sharma; Officer of the State NSS Cell, Prabal Kanti Deb; and Project Director of the Tripura AIDS Control Society, Samarjita Datta, were present as distinguished guests on the occasion.

TMC announces four Lok Sabha candidates for Assam

KOLKATA

The Trinamool Congress released a list of candidates for four Lok Sabha seats in Assam for the upcoming polls on Thursday, naming Gauri Shankar Sarania from Kokrajhar parliamentary seat. "Under the guidance and inspiration of Hon'ble Chairperson Smt. @MamataOfficial, we are pleased to announce the AITC candidates from four Parliamentary Constituencies in Assam," the Trinamool Congress wrote on X. Assam has 14 Lok Sabha seats. TMC's list of candidates includes Gauri Shankar Sarania from Kokrajhar, a seat reserved for Schedule Tribe (ST), Abdul Kalam Azad from Barpeta seat, Ghana Kanta Chutia from Lakhimpur seat, and Radhashyam Biswas from Silchar, a seat reserved for the Schedule Caste. The Lok Sabha elections are expected to be held in April and May this year. On Tuesday, the party announced former minister Zenith Sangma as its candidate from Meghalaya's Tura constituency for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. "AITC under the guidance and inspiration of Chairperson Mamata Banerjee, we are pleased to announce the Meghalaya candidate from the Parliamentary Constituency of Tura (ST) seat," the party said in a post on X on Tuesday.

Zenith Sangma, brother to former Meghalaya Chief Minister Mukul Sangma, is the party's first candidate outside of West Bengal, to be named for the general elections.

Kaziranga elevated corridor, Guwahati Ring Road get wildlife clearance

GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma informed on Thursday that key infrastructure projects in the state, including the Kaziranga elevated corridor and Guwahati Ring Road, have obtained wildlife clearance.

Sharing details on the construction of Guwahati Ring Road along with a six-lane bridge over the Brahmaputra over 63.44 km, with the total project cost estimated at Rs 5729.47 crore, the CM Sarma said bids for the project have already been invited and wildlife clearance and land acquisition have been achieved.

On the construction of a four-lane from Kaliabor to Numaligarh for a total length of 85.68 km, including an elevated corridor

of 35 km length in Kaziranga, at Rs 5,500 crore, CM Sarma said wildlife clearance has been obtained and land acquisition is ongoing at a fast pace.

The chief minister said the scheduled completion time of the six-lane bypass in Guwahati is August 2024, adding that the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has worked relentlessly to ease congestion in Guwahati city, thereby bringing respite to the people of Assam from regular traffic woes, adding that it was owing to its continuous and sincere efforts that the work could be completed almost five months ahead of the scheduled time, he said.

CM Sarma on Thursday inaugurated the Basistha flyover and the

Jaynagar underpass as a part of the six-lane Guwahati bypass at a function in Guwahati. The four-lane work of the Guwahati bypass was carried out earlier by the NHAI. To ease the traffic congestion in Guwahati city, the NHAI has taken up the upgradation of this bypass from the existing four lanes to six lanes, including the construction of flyovers and underpasses at important junctions such as Boragaon, Garchuk, Lokhra and Basistha at a combined cost of Rs 443.93 crore. The length of the Guwahati bypass is approximately 17 km where four flyovers have been constructed. Underpasses at Jaynagar and Beharbari have also come up, adding to the convenience of commuters.

'Opposition is colluding with dark forces of corruption': Sarbananda Sonowal

DIBRUGARH

Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Sarbananda Sonowal on Thursday said that the opposition is colluding with Congress, which is known for its dark forces of corruption, violence, disharmony, and indifference that wreaked havoc among the people of Assam for many decades.

According to an official statement, Sonowal said that the deep corruption nurtured by inefficient and corrupt Congress governments has denied people their rights for far too long. The people of Assam are no different. Assam lost so many lives due to the corrupt, inefficient and indecisive governments. It is sad to see how the opposition is colluding with Congress who are known for its dark forces of

corruption, violence, disharmony and indifference that wreaked havoc among the people of Assam for many decades.

"Sad to witness how the opposition is controlled by Congress. For everything, we had to march on the street, raise slogans, and make protests. But, all these changed with Modi ji as the PM of the country. There has been no other Prime Minister who has visited the Northeast more than 60 times in the last 10 years. This shows how Modi has put the onus of growth and development of the region and why Modi terms the region as the powerhouse of India's economic growth. Together we must, and we will bring Akow Ebar, Modi Sarkar," he said.

The Union Minister received a warm welcome at the Chabua Lahawal

and Duliagan constituencies where the BJP party workers and supporters filled the air with energetic sloganeering of 'Akow Ebaar, Modi Sarkar' (Once More, Modi Sarkar).

Sonowal expressed his gratitude to the people for their energetic support for the third consecutive term of Narendra Modi as the Prime Minister. "The mood and expectations of the people have been guaranteed by the welfare delivery of the Narendra Modi government. The kind of response seen at the meetings shows huge support for the BJP," Sonowal said.

Adding further, Sonowal said that as part of the NDA, the AGP, the Samyukta Gana Shakti, and the UPPL will work together in the interest of building a new Assam and India. "We aim to strengthen Assam and strength-

en India under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji. The welfare scheme of the Modi government has helped the people of Assam and the country to live with dignity.

The BJP-led NDA government under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji has been able to achieve remarkable success in its 10-year tenure. The quality of life has improved with social security, and enriched rights of people with dedication and honesty in creating this democratic atmosphere," he said.

Sonowal further added that due to Modiji's good governance with the idea of 'Jan Bhagidari, Jan Andolan', India has gained a position of prominence on the global stage. Congress failed India for more than six decades.

SIT to probe 'push' theory behind CM Mamata Banerjee's injury



KOLKATA

A special investigation team (SIT) of Kolkata Police will probe the "push" theory behind the forehead injury that West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee suffered as she fell down at her residence while walking.

The "push" theory surfaced after the Director of S.S.K.M. Medical College and Hospital, Manimoy Bandopadhyay said,

on Thursday night, that the Chief Minister might have been "pushed" from behind at her residence.

While speaking to the mediapersons, the S.S.K.M. director said that the injury might have been caused "within the vicinity of her home due to some push from behind".

Sources from the city police said that officers from different

departments will be included in the SIT which will probe the matter. The investigation process by the SIT will be directly overseen and supervised by the city police, Vineet Kumar Goyal.

It is learnt that the members of the SIT will be examining the CCTV footage both in the inner and outer peripheries of the official residence of the Chief Minister at Kalighat in South

Kolkata. The SIT members will also question the security personnel deployed at the residence of the Chief Minister.

Insiders in city police said that the matter is being viewed with extreme seriousness by the city police considering that it involves the security aspects of a V.V.I.P. like the Chief Minister. Besides investigating the "push" theory behind the mishap, the existing security arrangements at the Chief Minister's residence will also be reviewed.

On Thursday evening, the Chief Minister received a forehead injury after she tripped while walking within her residence premises. She was immediately taken to the nearby S.S.K.M. Medical College and Hospital.

Later in the night she was released from the hospital after the doctor had put four stitches on her forehead.

Almost an hour after her release from the hospital the S.S.K.M. director had an interaction with the mediapersons and during the course of interaction the "push" theory surfaced.

Return to simultaneous polls recommended by EC in 1983, Law Commission in 1999, Niti Aayog in 2017: Kovind panel



NEW DELHI

The concept of simultaneous elections has been featured in many reports and studies since 1983, essentially implying a return to the previous practice of conducting polls concurrently, the high level panel on 'one nation, one election' has noted. The panel led by former president Ram Nath Kovind submitted its report to President Droupadi Murmu on Thursday, recommending simultaneous elections for Lok Sabha and state assemblies as the first step followed by synchronised local body polls within 100 days.

"The concept of simultaneous elections has been featured in many reports and studies, essentially implying a return to

the previous practice of conducting elections concurrently. In its inaugural Annual Report in 1983, the Election Commission of India advocated the idea of conducting simultaneous elections for both the House of the People and the State Legislative Assemblies," the report said.

The Law Commission studied the various issues involved in the conduct of elections and recommended in its reports of 1999, 2015 and 2018 (draft) the adoption of the practice of simultaneous elections to free citizens, political parties and government authorities from the encumbrance of asynchronous elections. "In 2002, the National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution recognised the bane of separate elections and urged for

the restoration of simultaneous elections. The Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice made a thorough study of the issues involved in holding of elections in 2015 and recommended that simultaneous elections will be necessary to enable India to move on to the path of high economic development," the report said. "The Committee, in its report on the "Feasibility of holding simultaneous elections to the House of the People (Lok Sabha) and State Legislative Assemblies," acknowledged several reasons supporting the idea of conducting elections simultaneously," it added. In January 2017, NITI Aayog formulated a working paper titled "Analysis of Simultaneous Elections: The What, Why and How," exploring the prospect of holding concurrent elections for the House of the People and State Legislative Assemblies. "The document examined current constitutional provisions and the financial and logistical considerations associated with simultaneous elections and formulated a framework for the implementation of such synchronized electoral processes.

SC refuses to entertain plea alleging irregularities in functioning of EVMs

NEW DELHI

SC refuses to entertain plea alleging irregularities in functioning of EVMs

"Every method has its plus and minus points," the Supreme Court on Friday said as it refused to entertain a plea alleging irregularities in the functioning of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs). A bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna, Dipankar Datta and Augustine George Masih said this court has already examined several petitions time and again

and dealt with various issues related to the functioning of EVMs. "How many petitions shall we entertain? Recently, we have dealt with a plea related to VVPAT. We cannot go by assumptions. Every method has its plus and minus points. Sorry, we cannot entertain this under Article 32," the bench told petitioner Nandini Sharma, appearing in person. The bench recorded in the order that the issue raised in the petition has been examined by the apex court in various petitions.

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“A Decade of Science - Technology Panorama for Aatmanirbhar Bharat” - Report Launched - Capturing Key Technological Advancements in Last Decade

“A Decade of Science - Technology Panorama for Aatmanirbhar Bharat” report was unveiled by Hon’ble Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology (S&T), Minister of State for Prime Minister’s Office (PMO), Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) and Department of Space (DoS) Dr. Jitendra Singh, in the event held on 14th March 2024 at Vigyan Bhavan.

The Technology Panorama report captures the glimpse of technological advancements made by various Ministries and Departments of Government of India. The report is prepared by the Office of Principal Scientific Advisor to the Government of India (OPSA) under the leadership of Prof. Ajay Kumar Sood (PSA), in collaboration with the Foundation of Advancing Science and Technology (FAST) India with contributions from 22 Ministries, Departments and Agencies of Government of India.

Unveiling of Report: “A Decade of Science - Technology Panorama for Aatmanirbhar Bharat” [from left to right: PIB ADG Dhiraj Singh, PSA Prof Ajay Sood, Hon’ble Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh, Scientific Secretary Dr. Parvinder Maini, Co-Founder FAST Varun Aggarwal]

“The progress made over the last 10 years in the realm of science and technology is for all to see. The work done in the last decade is helping in realising the vision of making the next 10 years as India’s Techade” - Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi

The launch event was joined by Secretary (Earth Sciences) Dr. M. Ravichandran, Secretary (Biotechnology) Dr. Rajesh Gokhale, senior officials from various ministries, senior officials from PIB, media representatives, invited guests from academia and industry and colleagues from Office of PSA and FAST. ADG

Press Information Bureau Shri Dhiraj Singh welcomed all the dignitaries and shared a few insights on India’s technology advancement journey in the last decade through some of the references from the “Technology Panorama” report.

“Advancements in science, technology, and innovation are powerful drivers for progress and it shapes economies, enhances quality of life, and propel nations toward a brighter future” - emphasised PSA Prof. Sood in his opening remarks. He also presented the highlights of the report and mentioned that this report captures key missions and initiatives by the Govt of India through the lens of (a) systematic capability building, (b) pushing frontiers of research for future preparedness, (c) enabling research and development in areas of national priorities, and (d) ensuring citizen impact through scientific improvement. In his presentation, Prof. Sood touched upon key highlights with respect to technological advancements in sectors including Energy, Exploration, Public Service, Agriculture, Livestock and Biotechnology, and Health.

Shri Varun Aggarwal, Co-founder, FAST, stated that while reports of similar nature usually look at S&T metrics of papers, patents, etc., the uniqueness of this report lies in looking at the impact of science on furthering India’s social and economic goals. He further mentioned that what is captured in this report is just the tip of the iceberg with respect to the actual scale and depth of impact that Indian S&T ecosystem has achieved in the last decade. He also expressed his aspiration that these achievements will have a multiplier effect in coming years and India is poised to become a top S&T nation globally.

Chief Guest, Hon’ble Minister Dr Jitender Singh, while delivering his special address, highlighted that there is a growing sense of



esteem in Indian science and scientists, and our S&T ecosystem is poised to make the country a frontline nation in the world. Dr. Singh also recounted the immense contribution made by pioneering Indian science leaders such as Dr. Vikram Sarabhai, Prof. C V Raman, Dr. Homi Bhabha, and Dr. S.S. Bhatnagar in laying the foundation for India’s growth trajectory. He emphasised that our S&T advancements not only increase our national capabilities but also set global benchmarks. Dr. Singh talked in detail about success and impact of some of the key national missions such as Mission Covid Suraksha, and AROMA mission and underscored the importance of industry and private partner-

ships for success of many such missions. He also provided the anecdote of DBT and Bharat BioTech partnership during covid pandemic as a successful example of Government-Industry partnership.

Hon’ble Minister delivering his address as Chief Guest of the launch event.

Minister Dr. Singh shared his thoughts on how various technology missions and initiatives of Govt of India are designed with a commitment to enhance the lives and livelihood of farmers, rural and marginalised communities. Remembering Hon’ble Prime Minister’s famous ‘Startup India Standup India’ clarion call from 2015 Red Fort speech, Dr. Singh underscored the remarkable growth of India’s startup eco-

system - from being from 350 startups to over a lakh, with the emergence of numerous unicorns in different sectors. Minister Dr. Singh also spoke about salient features of various missions such as Deep Ocean Mission, Green Hydrogen Mission, Quantum Mission, Semiconductor Mission, and policies for bio-manufacturing, drone deregulation etc. He pointed out the leadership role India is taking in various global efforts including International Solar Alliance and Global Biofuel Alliance. “Science and Technology is a great Democracy Equaliser” - Dr. Singh mentioned in his closing statement.

The report can be accessed using QR or the link provided above.

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