

# Modi-Bill Gates discuss India's digital revolution Interact on AI, climate change, women empowerment

Chennai, March 30 2024: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday cautioned that a powerful technology like AI in unskilled, untrained hands holds significant risk of misuse, as he advocated the need for clear 'dos and don'ts' and use of watermarks on AI-generated content to curb misinformation and deepfake-related harms in the society.

In a candid, free-wheeling chat with Microsoft co-founder and billionaire philanthropist Bill Gates, Modi spoke at

length on how India has democratised technology for the benefit of its citizens, embracing the power of digital for improving lives, and exuded confidence that the country will take remarkable strides in the fourth industrial revolution, that has digital in its core.

During the discussion that touched on a slew of topics, from AI to Digital Public Infrastructure, the PM said in the case of deepfakes, it is crucial to acknowledge and identify that a

particular deepfake content is AI-generated, along with appropriate disclosures about its source.

Citing dangers of AI harms and deepfakes in a society, he said, misuse of his voice, for instance, can initially deceive and misguide people leading to widespread uproar.

"It is crucial to acknowledge that deepfake content is AI-generated and mention its source. These measures are important in early days. We need to establish dos and don'ts...we will need to

think about it seriously," Modi said.

The PM talked of "significant risk of misuse" when a powerful technology like AI is placed in unskilled and untrained hands.

"I suggest that we should start with clear watermarks on AI-generated content to prevent misinformation," he said, adding the idea is not to devalue AI creations but to recognise them for what they are.

Acknowledging the

importance of AI, the PM outlined how India extensively leveraged the new-age innovations during the G20 Summit. AI also helped to translate his speeches in different languages, he mentioned.

In the course of his conversation, the PM asked Gates to take a selfie via Namu app, as he demonstrated an AI-powered feature and face-recognition technology on the popular app. Gates lauded India's technological strides.



In a witty take on AI, the PM said, in India, mothers are referred to 'Aai' (a word that sounds similar to AI), and added that children here have become so advanced that they start

using the hi-tech term very early in life.

Modi said if people use AI merely as "magic tool" or rely on it out of sheer laziness, say in drafting letters, it

would lead to "great injustice".

He stressed that AI tools must be leveraged to enhance human efficiency and within a field of expertise.

# North East gateway to fostering ASEAN trade Insurgencies, imbalanced growth hindering progress. Disturbed areas under AFSPA extended in Assam

Chennai March 30 2024: The Assam Government, yesterday, extended the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 in four districts for six months from April 1. The State Government's political department issued a notification, stating that the 'Disturbed Area' tag under the AFSPA has been extended in areas covering Tinsukia, Dibrugarh, Charaideo and Sivasagar districts.

The question that really rankles the mind, "Are they really disturbed areas, if so for

how long?"

A colonial remnant AFSPA is a very brief law with limited provisions, just six sections which cover the ambit of the Act. Within these six provisions, the Government has the power to declare areas as disturbed areas and to give special powers to armed forces and also allows it to protect the armed forces acting under it. A plain reading makes it seem like a law that was made to protect an area which is in a disturbed or dangerous condition, necessitating

the use of armed forces along with civil power, to better protect the populace. But this succinct Act has engulfed Jammu and Kashmir and many states in the North East region for decades.

Under section 4 of AFSPA, an officer of the armed forces can fire upon or use force upon any person "acting in contravention of any law or order for the time being in force in the disturbed area", "after giving such due warning as he may consider necessary".

The personnel can even prohibit assembly of five or more persons and can prohibit carrying of "things capable of being used as weapons". The personnel can even destroy any "shelter" or fortified position from where armed attacks are likely to be made.

AFSPA is now applicable fully only in 31 districts of 4 Northeast states and partially in 12 districts. The Act is applicable in the entire [state] of Jammu and Kashmir.

The North East region of India has experienced various insurgencies over the decades, involving different ethnic, tribal and political groups.

There are many factors that contribute to unease in the North East region.

Historically, the region was not well administered under the British rule resulting in imbalanced growth; post Independence, tensions arose between these States and the Central Government; tensions between tribal natives and people migrating from other parts of India.

Added to historical issues, geographically, the region is not well connected with the present mainland India; development continues to be staggered due to lack of adequate funds from State Governments and various Central Governments; many parts of the region are under military control under the Armed Forces Special Powers Act.

Though, North East

can be India's gateway South East Asia, China and Myanmar have been interfering and providing support to militant elements.

North India covers eight per cent of India's land and accounts for 3.1 per cent of India's population. The integration and development of the region is critical for India's continued progress. With over 5,300 kms of international borders, it is apparent that any development strategy for the region must necessarily include collaboration, connectivity and a strategic roadmap.

A number of infrastructure projects were identified such as the North East Economic Corridor, inland water transport, North East ring road, Trans Himalayan Highway to address a number of issues pertaining to the current economic situation in region as well as exploit trade potential with

ASEAN countries. The projects with the development of North East industrial, roads, railways, airports, inland waterways and power sector will go a long way in helping the overall progress of the country.

A recent report, titled 'Emerging North-East India - economically and socially inclusive development strategies', prepared jointly by KPMG in India and FICCI, aims to highlight prospects that can be explored. The North Eastern region has the capability to develop as a self-sustaining economic unit of the country, while also contributing towards building a new and improved India, in line with the present government's aspirations.

The North East region of India comprises eight states Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura each with its

own distinct history and identity. The region shares its borders with Bhutan, China, Myanmar and Bangladesh and has been one of the most sensitive regions in India.

The Central government under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been making continuous efforts to end insurgency and violence in the region. Several efforts have been made for the overall development of the region.

The Central Government has identified three core objectives for the North East Region to to preserve its dialects, languages, culture, music and food to attract tourist inflows from India and abroad. The objectives will have to be fulfilled selflessly by political will and bureaucracy to end all disputes in the North East and ensure peaceful progress.

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## DMK MPs failed to raise Madurai AIIMS issue in Parliament: Palaniswami

Chennai March 30 2024: AIADMK General Secretary E d a p p a d i Palaniswami said, DMK MPs had failed to take the issue of Madurai AIIMS to the parliament. Palaniswami toured Virudhunagar and Madurai as part of his canvassing trail for the Lok Sabha election.



While campaigning for Dr P Saravanan in Madurai, Palaniswami said foundation stone was laid for Madurai AIIMS in 2019, during AIADMK's tenure. He said, Sports Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin could have taken up the issue at the parliament to expedite works on the project, like the AIADMK government had done for the Cauvery issue.

"DMK did not even fulfil 10% of its 520 election promises that it made, including waving off educational loans and cancellation of NEET. In fact, NEET issue has been DMK's poll promise since 2019. On the other hand, the AIADMK secured an order against the test.

Once the AIADMK comes to power, we will reveal all the corrupt practices of the DMK government," said Palaniswami.

Cautioning Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin to maintain decorum in criticising his political opponents, AIADMK general secretary E d a p p a d i K Palaniswami on Thursday said his party cadres would retaliate if Stalin overstepped the limits.

Launching a scathing attack on the Chief Minister, Palaniswami said Stalin went around campaigning that he (Palaniswami was spineless) but this was an unsavoury remark.

"He says I am

spineless. My spine is strong and you can check its strength. I am a farmer who toiled hard in rain or shine. Stalin, you should speak like a Chief Minister and think before uttering anything," Palaniswami said at a massive election rally here. "We can tolerate only to an extent. If you continue to belittle, then our cadres will start retaliating and your condition will worsen," the former CM said while garnering votes for ally DMDK's candidate for Virudhunagar constituency Vijaya Prabakaran, son of actor-politician late Vijayakanth, here.

Unlike the DMK, the AIADMK respected others and even their allies and served the people whether the party was in power or in the opposition, the AIADMK general secretary said.

"Vijaya Prabakaran

## Closing ceremony of the International Year of Millets 2023 took place at the FAO headquarters, Rome, Italy in a hybrid set up

Chennai March 30 2024: The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) organized closing ceremony of the International Year of Millets (IYM) 2023 on 29 March 2024 at the FAO headquarters, Rome, Italy. The high-level hybrid event that allowed participants to join both in-person and virtually and was graced by esteemed dignitaries from various parts of the world, including Additional Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Smt. Maninder Kaur Dwivedi from Govt. of India.

A group of people standing in front of a sign

Additional Secretary, Smt. Maninder Kaur Dwivedi, from Govt. of India, underscored the significance of India's thriving Millet ecosystem comprising various Start-Ups, Industries, FPOs, in increasing promotion and adoption of millets.

Director-General, FAO, Dr. QU Dongyu in his opening remarks

at the official closing ceremony, commended the international community for their commitment to advancing millet-related initiatives and emphasized the crucial role of millets in achieving food security and nutrition for all.

A group of people sitting in chairs

Minister and Permanent Representative of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to FAO Mr. Yaya Adisa Olaitan Olaniran shed light on the significance of millets and outlined strategies for integrating millet cultivation into sustainable agricultural practices in Nigeria.

Further in the ceremony, attendees were treated to a captivating video showcasing the diverse range of activities and events organized under the International Year of Millets 2023 across different regions, fostering the global reach and impact of the initiative.

A group of people in a conference

roomDescription automatically generated

The ceremony came to a close with the concluding remarks of Deputy Director-General FAO Ms. Beth Bechdol expressing gratitude to all participants for their unwavering commitment and dedication to the success of the International Year of Millets 2023 and highlighting the importance of sustaining momentum in promoting millets beyond the designated year.

Following a proposal by India, backed by more than 70 countries, the United Nations General Assembly, at its 75th session in March 2021, declared 2023 as the International Year of Millets. The year-long celebration successfully raised awareness about the nutritional and health benefits of millet consumption, the suitability of millets for cultivation under adverse and changing climatic conditions, and the benefits of creating sustainable market opportunities

for producers and consumers. The closing ceremony served as a forum to take stock of the accomplishments of, and lessons learned from, IYM 2023 and identify priorities for future investments, particularly to address identified constraints and strengthen millets value chains.

The event showcased a series of insightful discussions and presentations underscoring the importance of millets in achieving sustainable development goals and its emergence as 'Global Superfood'. Director, ICAR-IIMR Dr. C Tara Satyavathi shared insights into India's R & D endeavours to develop a robust Millets value chain at a Roundtable Discussion on 'Research and Development for the Millets Sector,' a significant side event convened as part of #IYMClosingCeremony.

A special exhibition featuring showcase of millet-value added products from across the world and a live cooking were also organized.

## \*Rutless gangster \*5 times MLA \*Controversial criminal's chapter ends In jail since 2005, Mukhtar Ansari dies, slow poison suspected Freedom fighter's grandson, gangster politician

Chennai, March 30 2024: Jailed gangster-turned-politician Mukhtar Ansari died after he suffered a heart attack in Uttar Pradesh's Banda. The 60-year-old politician's health condition deteriorated after he broke his Ramzan fast, jail authorities said.



A five-time MLA from Mau in Uttar Pradesh, Mukhtar Ansari had over 60 cases pending against him and he was lodged in Banda district jail.

Controversy erupted over the death of jailed gangster-turned-politician Mukhtar Ansari after his son claimed that the former MLA was subjected to "slow poisoning" in prison. Ansari (60), who has been in prison since 2005, died of cardiac arrest in Uttar Pradesh's Banda.

He was brought to the Rani Durgavati Medical College in Banda from the district jail in "an unconscious state" at nearly 8.25 pm Ansari was hospitalised for around 14 hours on Tuesday after he complained of abdominal pain.

Ansari was in jail from 2005 in Uttar Pradesh and Punjab states for one or the other criminal case. In April 2023, he was convicted and sentenced to 10 years imprisonment for killing BJP MLA Krishnanand Rai by an MPMLA court.

Mukhtar Ansari was

handed a life sentence on 13 March 2024 in connection with a fake arm license case.

Born into a family with deep roots in India's struggle for independence, Ansari's descent into the underworld marked a stark departure from his illustrious lineage.

Born in 1960 in Uttar Pradesh's Yusufpur, Mukhtar Ansari's journey from the alleys of crime to the corridors of power was as controversial as it was captivating.

He was born into a family renowned for its contributions to India's freedom movement and post-independence political landscape. His paternal grandfather, Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari, was a prominent figure in the Indian National Congress and served as its president in 1927.

Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari was also involved with the Muslim League before distancing himself due to its separatist agenda. He also served as the Chancellor of Jamia Millia Islamia, a

position he held until his death in 1936.

On the maternal side, Brigadier Mohammad Usman, Mukhtar Ansari's grandfather, was a decorated officer in the Indian Army. He made the ultimate sacrifice in the Nowshera sector of Jammu and Kashmir during a conflict with Pakistan in 1948, earning the Maha Vir Chakra posthumously. Despite the noble legacy, Mukhtar Ansari chose a path markedly different. His criminal career began in the 1980s amidst the lawlessness of Purvanchal, a region notorious for its criminal gangs vying for government contracts.

Ansari's first brush with serious crime was linked to the murder of Sachchidanand Rai in 1988 over a land dispute in Ghazipur. This marked the beginning of a long and dark journey that saw him embroiled in gang wars, notably against rival mafia Brijesh Singh, and implicated in the murders of Kapil Dev

Singh in April 2009, contractor Ajay Prakash Singh in August 2009, and Ram Singh Maurya.

Also during that period he too had to face many violent confrontations, including an ambush on his convoy in 2002 that left three of his men dead and sparked further bloodshed in the region.

Despite his notoriety, Ansari transitioned into politics, leveraging his influence to secure a seat as a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) from the Mau constituency five times, beginning in 1996.

While he was seen by some as a Robin Hood figure, others viewed him through the lens of his criminal activities.

His tenure in politics included affiliations with the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), where he was portrayed as a messiah of the poor, and later, the formation of the Quami Ekta Dal (QED) with his brothers after being expelled from the BSP.

## Defence Secretary visits Indian Coast Guard facilities in the North West Region

Chennai March 30 2024: Defence Secretary Shri Girdhar Aramane visited the Indian Coast Guard facilities in the North West Region on 28-29 March 2024. During the visit, he inaugurated the infrastructure for the Hovercraft Maintenance Unit (HMU) at Okha on 28 Mar 24. Coast Guard OTM and Married Accommodation at Inaz Village Veraval was inaugurated by Mrs. Gayatri Aramane on 29 March 2024. The Defence Secretary was also briefed about the upcoming 200 mtr ICG Jetty Construction work at Okha. He appreciated the role played by ICG, in safeguarding national maritime interests in

its area of responsibility.

The hovercrafts are based at Okha and Jakhau for maintaining surveillance in 50 Islands in the Area of Responsibility (AoR), Gulf of Kutch, in the shallow water and marshy terrain along the coast of Gujarat. The field facility for HMU will enable timely technical support, upkeep & maintenance of these hovercrafts which in turn will ensure optimum operational availability and keep them in ever ready state to meet any operational requirement. HMU facilities comprise of ACV parking for technical assistance, Office Building, Workshop and Maintenance Area.

The Coast Guard Residential Area (CGRA) at Inaz Village Veraval includes 60 Nos of Married Accommodations, an all-weather Helipad, living Accommodations for Subordinate Officers & Naviks, a Parade Ground, and a Mess. The presence of a helipad adds a strategic advantage to various operations in Veraval that includes addressing maritime emergencies, search & rescue missions, and surveillance activities.

ICG Regional Headquarters (North West) was established on 16 Dec 2009 at Gandhinagar. It executes ICG's mandated charter in maritime zones in Gujarat, Daman & Diu.

The ICG is focused on the development of berthing and other infrastructure which underscores, the commitment to equipping with advanced surface and air platforms. In addition to the recently inaugurated Jetty at Vadinar, ICG is also constructing 100 mtr jetty extension at Porbandar and 125 mtr jetty at Mundra in addition to the 200 mtr jetty at Okha. These events were witnessed by Director General Rakesh Pal, the Director General, Indian Coast Guard, and Inspector General AK Harbola, the Commander, Coast Guard Region (NW) along with various dignitaries of Central and State Govt.

## INDIA - MOZAMBIQUE - TANZANIA TRILATERAL (IMT TRILAT 24) EXERCISE CONCLUDES AT NACALA, MOZAMBIQUE

Chennai March 30 2024: The second edition of India-Mozambique-Tanzania Trilateral Exercise concluded at Nacala, Mozambique on 28 Mar 24. The week-long exercise underscores the importance of enhanced maritime cooperation and interoperability between the Navies of India, Mozambique, and Tanzania. INS Tir and Sujata participated in IMT TRILAT 24 from 21 - 28 Mar 24 through a series of joint exercises, training sessions and collaborative activities, providing invaluable opportunities for all three Navies to exchange knowledge, enhance capabilities and bolster maritime security in the region.

The IMT TRILAT 24 Exercise unfolded in two phases. The initial harbour phase from 21 to 24 Mar 24 saw intensive training sessions concurrently held onboard INS Tir at Zanzibar and INS Sujata at Maputo. Activities included vital training on Visit, Board, Search and Seizure (VBSS), Damage Control and Firefighting Drills, communication procedures and medical



lectures with CPR demonstration and casualty evacuation (CASEVAC).

The sea phase commenced on 24 Mar 24, wherein INS Tir and INS Sujata embarked sea riders from the Tanzanian and Mozambique Navies respectively. Joint operations with Mozambique Naval ship Namatili and Tanzanian naval ship Fatundu showcased significant synergy and sustained efforts with the regional Navies in line with the vision of SAGAR (Security & Growth for All in the Region). The evolutions at sea involved simulated VBSS exercises and night manoeuvres. The

sea riders were imparted training on bridge watch keeping, damage control and firefighting. The ships also undertook joint surveillance of EEZ off Tanzania and Mozambique in the area of operation.

The closing ceremony, held onboard INS Tir and INS Sujata at Nacala, Mozambique featured representatives from all three navies. The closing remarks highlighted successful collaboration, understanding of maritime capabilities and shared objectives achieved during the exercise. It emphasised continued collaboration towards maritime security and regional stability underlining

India's commitment as the preferred security partner.

In addition to IMT TRILAT, various official and training exchanges, cross deck visits, sport fixtures and Yoga were held as part of the long range training deployment of the ships. The ships were open to visitors at Zanzibar, Maputo and Nacala, wherein more than 1500 people including school children, Indian diaspora and local populace visited the ship. Outreach activities were also conducted at Mizzizini orphanage center at Zanzibar and Obra Dom Orio Reception Centre at Maputo fostering bonds of friendship.

## GeM crosses Rs 4 Lakh Crore in GMV at the end of this Fiscal Year, doubles business in a year

Chennai March 30 2024: Government e Marketplace has closed this financial year with Rs 4 lakh crore in Gross Merchandise value (GMV) - doubling its GMV clocked at the end of previous Fiscal Year. This testifies to the portal's unique digital capabilities and functionalities that have facilitated greater efficiency, transparency, and seamlessness in public procurement.

The procurement of Services through the GeM portal has proved to be a pivotal force behind this staggering GMV. Nearly 50% of this GMV has been attributed to the procurement of Services, displaying a remarkable surge of 205% in terms of Services procured on GeM last FY. By creating access to market, GeM has been exceptionally successful in breaking down the cartel of established and renowned service providers, paving way for small domestic entrepreneurs to participate in government tenders from anywhere at any time. The vast repository of Services on GeM has enabled States to procure innovative solutions that cater to all their dynamic needs.

Increased engagement from States has also mobilized this

phenomenal growth in GMV. In this FY, highest procuring State like Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, and Delhi, have helped States well surpass the earmarked public procurement target of this year. The contribution made by central entities including Ministries and CPSEs has also greatly spurred the GMV. These Government organization have contributed to nearly 85% of this Rs 4 lakh crore milestone. Notably, Ministry of Coal, Ministry of Power and Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas and their subsidiaries have emerged as the highest procuring entities at the central level.

GeM's vast network of 1.5 lakh+ Government buyers and 21 lakh sellers and service providers have been made this incredible feat possible. Through comprehensive onboarding of last-mile buyers and sellers GeM has fostered engagement at the grassroots level. By integrating 89421 Panchayats and 760+ Cooperatives with its procurement Ecosystem, GeM has facilitated sustainable procurement while ensuring optimization in public spending at the very last level of administration.

Through its inclusive initiatives like

'Vocal for Local', 'One District, One Product', 'Startup Runway', 'Womaniya' etc., GeM has provided a level-playing field for domestic businesses to grow and thrive. Of the Rs 4 lakh crore GMV, orders nearly 50% have been awarded to marginalized seller segment such as Artisans, weavers, craftsmen, MSEs, especially women-led and SC/STs, SHGs, FPOs and Startups. GeM's collaboration with 5.2 lakh+ CSCs and 1.5 lakh+ India Post offices has served a phenomenal force in maximising outreach and capacity-building at micro levels. Through supportive handholding at every step to help diverse sellers and service providers grow their business on GeM, the platform has given impetus to hyper local economies across regions in India, resulting in job creation and greater incomes", said Shri PK Singh, CEO, GeM.

Earlier this financial year, GeM tide up with a leading tech firm, Tata Consultancy Services, with a vision to create a more versatile and secure technological Infrastructure by adapting new-age technologies to further enhance user experience, improve transparency, and

induce greater inclusivity. The objective is to revamp, re-design and build a new modern solution leveraging new technologies, while maintaining the current platform. Its deep configurability will ease the onboarding of diverse buyer organizations and Sellers/ Service Providers with dynamic needs.

Offering more than 12070+ product categories and 320+ service categories, GeM has become a one-stop shop for seamless public procurement, thereby opening up opportunities for sellers and service providers across the nation to showcase their Products and Services and to participate in government tenders in most transparent manner, promising them ease of doing business.

The portal started its trailblazing journey to Rs 4 lakh crore-landmark with Rs 422 crore in GMV in 2016. Its achievements in an astonishing short period of have propelled it to ascend one of the foremost public procurement platforms globally. Committed to enhancing efficiency, transparency and inclusivity, GeM is disrupting the public procurement domain.

## ECI's C-Vigil app a big hit with voters: over 79,000 violations reported so far through the complaints app since announcement of General Elections; 99 % cases disposed off

Chennai March 30 2024: The cVIGIL app of Election Commission of India has become an effective tool in the hands of people to flag election code violations. Since the announcement of General Elections 2024, over 79,000 complaints have been received as of today. Over 99% complaints have been resolved and close to 89% of these complaints have been resolved within 100 minutes. Speed and transparency are the cornerstones of cVIGIL app.

More than 58,500 complaints (73% of the total) received are against illegal hoardings and banners. More than 1400 complaints received pertain to money, gifts and liquor distribution. Close to 3% of the complaints (2454) pertain to defacement of property Out of the 535 complaints received for display of firearms and intimidation, 529 have already been resolved. 1000 complaints reported were for campaigning beyond



the prohibited period including use of speakers beyond permitted time.

cVIGIL app marks a significant leap forward in electoral oversight and reducing campaign clutter. It may be recalled that in the press conference for the announcement of the General Elections 2024, Chief Election Commissioner Shri Rajiv Kumar had urged citizens to be vigilant and use the app to report model code of conduct violations and distribution of any kind of inducements to voters.

cVigil is user-friendly and easy to operate application,

which connects vigilant citizens with the District Control Room, Returning Officer and Flying Squads Teams. By using this app, the citizens can immediately report on incidents of political misconduct within minutes and without having to rush to the office of the returning officer. As soon as the complaint is sent on the cVigil app, the complainant will receive a unique ID through which the person will be able to track the complaint on their mobile.

A trinity of factors working simultaneously makes cVIGIL a success. Users capture audios,

photos or videos in real-time, and a "100-minute" countdown for time-bound response to complaints is ensured. The app automatically enables a geo-tagging feature as soon as the user switches on their camera in the cVIGIL to report a violation. This means that flying squads could know the precise location of a reported violation, and the image captured by citizens could be used as evidence in the court of law. Citizens can also report complaints anonymously.

The app is one amongst the armoury of Apps built by the Commission to leverage technology and facilitate voters and political parties.

## METOC SEMINAR 'MEGHAYAN 2024' - AN INSIGHT INTO THE FRONTLINE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Chennai March 30 2024: The World Meteorological Day is commemorated every year on 23rd March. It marks the origin of World Meteorological Organization (WMO) on 23 Mar 1950 and signifies the invaluable contribution and essential role of the meteorologists in this field. As part of the World Meteorological Day celebrations, a METOC (Meteorological and Oceanographic) seminar 'Meghayan-24' was conducted by School of Naval Oceanology & Meteorology (SNOM) and Indian Naval Meteorological Analysis Centre (INMAC) at Southern Naval Command on 28 Mar 24. The seminar was based on the theme "At the Frontline of Climate Action" as promulgated by WMO for the year 2024.

The inaugural address was delivered by Admiral R Hari Kumar, Chief of the Naval Staff through

virtual mode. He highlighted the need for accurate and immediate focus on the pressing challenge of climate change and to work together in the collective pursuit of common goal of 'Achieving a Climate Smart Society' under the global framework for climate services of WMO. He reiterated Indian Navy's commitment to adopting long term sustainable policies to address the environmental concerns and integrating climate change considerations in the security strategy. While laying importance on reliable METOC support for safe & optimal Naval operations, he complimented the dedicated efforts and contributions of the Naval met specialists in this field providing crucial support across all domains.

The seminar witnessed presentations by guest speakers Dr. TVS

Uday Bhaskar, Scientist G, Indian Naval Centre for Ocean Information System (INCOIS), Hyderabad and Dr. Ragavendra Ashit, Scientist 'G', National Centre for Medium Range Forecasting (NCMRWF), New Delhi. They enlightened the audience on the latest techniques adopted by the scientific agencies and the climate data crunching undertaken to help the policy makers in decision making at national level. In addition, panel discussions were held on various topics of 'Effect of Weather and Climate Change on Naval Operations' by the specialist officers bringing out latest techniques adopted by the Indian Navy & Indian scientific organisations in providing METOC inputs/forecasts for operational evolutions.

On this occasion an indigenous mobile application INDRA (Indian Naval

Dynamic Resource for Weather Analysis) to disseminate weather related information and forecasts empowering optimal & quick decision making was also launched. The application has been developed by BISAG (Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics) in coordination with Directorate of Naval Oceanology and Meteorology, Indian Navy. The event was attended by Rear Admiral Upal Kundu, Chief of Staff, Southern Naval Command, Cmde Abhinav Barve, Commodore (NOM), Naval Headquarters and Mr. Miren Karamta, Director, BISAG. The seminar served as a platform towards sharing of knowledge & insights on weather and climate services as well as way ahead to face the challenges of climate change.

The future of underprivileged students' education hangs in the balance

Chennai, March 30 2024: Established in 1999, Rice MMS (Rural Institute of Community Education - Mathakondapalli Model School) in Hosur, Krishnagiri district, embarked on a remarkable journey with a generous grant of 90 crores from Teres des Homes (TDH - NL), a renowned Non-governmental organization in the Netherlands. Since then, it has been dedicated to offering top-notch education to numerous underprivileged students, empowering



them with a world-class learning experience. In 2014, a troubling turn of events unfolded at the school when Meru Miller took on the role of board secretary. Unfortunately, instead of upholding the school's values, Meru Miller engaged in a series of administrative

irregularities. Shockingly, over five hundred children, who were receiving free education, were expelled by the school administration. Adding to the dismay, Meru Miller and Oliver Salomon unlawfully sold the school's property, valued at a staggering sixteen crores, and were

involved in corrupt practices.

Journalist Mr. Sivaraman vehemently criticized this issue and lodged a formal complaint with IAS officer Mr. Dinesh Ponraj Oliver, urging for the removal of Meru Miller. He also insisted on the appointment of a new secretary in order to safeguard the educational rights of numerous underprivileged students. It is anticipated that the Tamil Nadu government will heed his plea and respond accordingly.

W.P.A. SOUNDARAPANDIAN HR.SEC.SCHOOL ASHWATHI MANIKANDAN ACHIEVING AS ATHLETE



Chennai March 30 2024: Ashwathi. M studying std 8th B Section at W.P.A. SOUNDARAPANDIAN HR.SEC.SCHOOL Ayanpuram, Chennai - 23 excels as shining athlete among the school students of ayanpuram. Resently she took place in,State level interschool athletic championship

- 2023 organised by CheetaH sports academy at SDAT Nehru park Chetpet . In this she secured first place in long jump and 100m.

Also she secured third place in 200 meter.In the school 53rd Annual sports meet ,she secured individual championship under

14 girls category held at ICF playground . In this she placed First in 100 meter, 200 meter , Long jump and secured second place in 400x 100 meter relay. She was honoured & appreciate by chief guest with medals and certificates. In zonal level games and sports organised by school education department

related with Bharathiyar Day Games / Republic Day Games & Republic Day Sports (2022 - 2023), she placed first in 80 meter hurdles. Correspondent & Secretary Thiru S. Muthumariappan and Headmistress Tmt.R.S. Latha appreciated M Ashwathi with medals and certificates.

Gold price hits all-time high

Chennai March 30 2024: In Chennai, the price of 22-carat gold has increased by Rs 1120 per sovereign

and is sold at Rs 51,120/sovereign.

Gold price in Tamil Nadu has been

fluctuating for the past few days. Following this, the price has increased tremendously.

Accordingly, the price per gram of gold is increased by Rs 140 and being sold at Rs 6,390 per gram.

TNCC Chief K. Selvaperunthagai released Congress propaganda book titled "Pasiam Veezhatum, Dhesiyam Meelattum" written by TNCC Deputy Chief A. Gopanna which reveals BJP's 10 year tyrannical rule and Modi's disloyalty to the people of the nation. The first copy of the book was received by DMK Organizational Secretary R.S. Bharathi in an event held at Kamarajar Hall, Teynampet. Tamil Nadu Congress leader M. P Ranjith Kumar and other members were present.



Toyota Kirloskar Motor Honoured with 'Commendation for Significant Achievement', under its Corporate Social Responsibility, at the 18th CII-ITC Sustainability Awards

Chennai, March 30 2024: Recently, Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) was recognised for its best CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) practices under the category 'Commendation for Significant Achievement' presented at the 18th CII-ITC Sustainability Awards. This is a testament to the company's relentless social efforts and the robust framework for CSR governance and its successful implementation.



For this award, the TKM CSR activities were evaluated by the CII-ITC assessors under the defined parameters that included Learning & Innovation adopted across all its CSR projects. The company's social initiatives demonstrated strong alignment with these parameters. Furthermore, as a part of its CSR implementation process, TKM conducts periodic internal assessment overseen by a board-level CSR committee, to actively monitor and comprehensively measure the impacts, ensuring objectivity, credibility, and commitment to compliance. Over the years, the company has implemented diverse assessment tools and systems to evaluate its performance and bolster community

enhancement and environmental stewardship through sustained initiatives.

Notably, TKM's CSR strategy embodies a dual focus on "Empowering Communities" and "Enriching Environment". Driven by innovation and guided by the principle of Kaizen (continuous improvement), TKM's CSR projects are organized into six key pillars: Skill Development, Road Safety, Education, Environment, Health & Hygiene, and Disaster Management. Additionally, its sustainable CSR model emphasizes community ownership, unified interventions, behaviour change, and stakeholder engagement.

Sharing his thoughts, Mr. Vikram Gulati, Country Head and Executive Vice President for Corporate Affairs and

Governance, TKM, said, "At TKM, we are honoured to receive the 18th CII-ITC Sustainability Award. We firmly believe in the strong connect and the inclusivity that lies between business growth and societal progress. With a keen eye on enduring interventions, we are focused on catalysing positive behavioural changes especially through our child to community approach. Our continuous efforts are to actively engage with communities, understand their unique needs, aspirations, and challenges and tailor well thought programs to address the specific issues faced by them with sustainability at the core.

TKM has been successful in attaining sustainability in CSR by incorporating long-term strategic planning, engaging stakeholders to collaborate & support, timely project

implementing effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track the project progressions, thereby aid the absolute community necessities.

This award reaffirms Toyota's commitment to driving positive change and making a meaningful difference in the lives of people and the community. So far, we have achieved an outreach of over 2.3 million beneficiaries through our various social interventions. As we continue to evolve and adapt, we remain committed to optimal resource allocation and gauging effectiveness of all our CSR projects to enable stronger and meaningful interventions for the societal development."

Rooted in Toyota's global vision, TKM's CSR programs are dedicated to fostering a resilient and sustainable society.

Traders plan to down shutters in protest against flying squad check

Chennai, March 30 2024: Traders' organisations in the city have raised concern over their business being affected due to vehicle inspections conducted by the flying squads formed to enforce the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) for the Lok Sabha elections.



Grain merchants at Koyambedu Wholesale Market Complex said retail traders from other districts such as Chengalpattu and Kancheepuram visited the Koyambedu market, which was a hub of perishable goods. With the cash limit sealed at Rs. 50,000, merchants were unable to purchase sufficient goods. The sales have reduced to 35%-40% of the normal sales as

customers fear carrying huge amounts of cash, said a wholesale grain merchant.

The Tamil Nadu Vanigar Sangankalin Peramaippu plans to down shutters in protest of harassment faced by farmers, traders, and the public till April 19 if the issues are not resolved.

In a press briefing held the city on

Thursday, A.M. Vikramaraja, the body's president, said it had already submitted a memorandum to the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) earlier this month, seeking an increase in cash limit to Rs.2 lakh. Similar petitions detailing on issues affecting traders whenever the MCC is in place were also submitted to the Election Commission

of India. Vikramaraja alleged that even traders carrying cash within the allowed limit faced problems during the inspections and seized cash was returned in places such as Ashok Nagar in Chennai and in Karur. Representatives of the traders' body plan to meet the CEO in a few days.