Reuse and Recycle for a Cleaner and Healthier India

"Beat Plastic Pollution", the theme for World Environment Day 2018, is a call for action and invites us all to consider how we can make changes in our everyday lives to reduce the heavy burden of plastic pollution on our cities, water bodies, forests and our own health.

Studies show that plastic is produced more than any other human-made material, except cement and steel. The total plastic production in 2015 was 380 million tonne. Out of the 8.3 billion tonne of plastic produced so far, only around nine percent was recycled, 12 percent was incinerated, while the remaining 79 percent was discarded in landfills or dumped in open spaces across the country.

Every year, the world uses 500 billion plastic bags. Plastic bottles are the biggest contributor in waste piling up as one million bottles are bought every minute throughout the world. 50 percent of the plastic, we use is single-use or disposable. According to the Central Pollution Control Board (2015), an average of 25,940 tonne of plastic waste is generated every day by the Tier-I and Tier-II cities in India.

Achieving the objectives of the *Swachchh Bharat Abhiyan* is practicable only if the country works towards reducing the generation of waste by inculcating simple habits like reduce, reuse and recycle, in tandem with proper segregation and treatment practices. Organic and biodegradable waste, which constitutes 50-60 percent of the country's urban waste, can be converted into compost, thereby solving half of India's waste problems.

Consider the tale of two cities from Kerala. The Thiruvananthapuram Municipal Corporation (TMC) is known for its innovation to improve its services…and one of the latest examples is its new approach to dispose of its municipal solid waste. The Corporation launched a campaign called "Ente Nagaram, Sundara Nagaram", which means "My City. Beautiful City" in 2014, after its failure over centralised solid waste management.

The decentralised waste management is successfully implemented in the city of Alappuzha in Kerala as well. The Alappuzha municipality took efforts to decentralise the waste management rather than continuing with the usual collect-and-dump type model in open landfills.

The experiments by Thiruvananthapuram and Alappuzha with decentralised waste management thus have inspired other municipalities to successfully replicate the same models within the state public consultation and participation of citizens from the very beginning, coupled with information campaigns across all sectors, is therefore, vital for the successful enforcement of the rules.

While India is hosting this year's 'World Environment Day', it is the right time for our cities to learn and replicate some of these successful models and contribute positively towards addressing the menace of plastic.
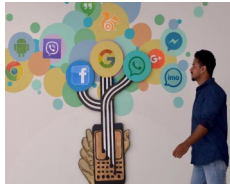
Pradeep S Mehta, Secretary General

www.google.com

INSIDE

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Tax Imposed on Social Media

The Ugandan government has imposed taxes on social media to raise money for the country and to avoid donor aid, a lawmaker said. Ugandans will have to cough up USh200 (US$0.05) a day to use popular platforms like Twitter, Facebook and Whatsapp.

Uganda's President Museveni is reported in local media as saying that social media encourages gossip. Parliamentary spokesman Chris Obore defended the law which comes into effect July 01, 2018, saying that as more Ugandans use social media it should become an important source of revenue for the country.

(https://edition.cnn.com, 01.06.18)

Pollution 'Name and Shame' Meeting

China's Environment Ministry has criticised senior officials from three cities for failing to fix serious pollution problems, in Beijing's latest attempt to name and shame regional governments for persistent environmental violations.

"Xi has become the driving force behind China's four-year war on pollution, and said he would use the full might of the Communist Party to reverse damage to the environment.

The President's direct involvement has turned environmental compliance into a matter of political loyalty, putting regions under even more pressure to comply with tough new rules and standards. *(DNA, 05.06.18)*

Women Driving Ban Lifted

"Lifting the ban on driving is likely to increase the number of women seeking jobs, boosting the size of the workforce and lifting overall incomes and output", according to Ziad Daoud, Dubai-based Chief Middle East economist.

Allowing Saudi women to drive could help the kingdom reap as much income as selling shares in Saudi Aramco. The move could add as much as US$90bn to economic output by 2030, with the benefits extending beyond that date. Selling as much as five percent stake in Saudi Arabian Oil Co. – at the most optimistic valuation – could generate about US$100bn. *(ET, 25.06.18)*

Creating New CBSE Record

Creating a new record in the Class XII CBSE examination, 17-year-old Noida resident Meghna Srivastava fell just one mark short of scoring 100 percent. A Humanities student, Meghna scored 499 out of 500, or 99.8 percent – the highest in the Board so far. The previous highest was 99.6 percent, scored by Raksha Gopal in 2017.

Meghna scored a perfect score in economics, psychology, geography and psychology, and 99 in English. She mentioned that an 'undying consistency' and managing to remain 'organised' helped her accomplish the feat. Meghna said she wants to pursue Psychology (Hons) from the University of British Columbia. Apart from psychology, her favourite subject is history, she said. *(IE, 27.05.18)*

AI System to Debate with Humans

IBM has built a new AI-based system called Project Debater which, as the name suggests, can debate skillfully and present arguments without bias. During its demonstration, Project Debater engaged in a battle of words against human debaters Noa Ovadia and Dan Zafrir on topics given straight at the event.

Now what makes it interesting is that the AI is not only capable of spewing facts from what it has been already fed previously in the form of raw data, but takes into account the opponents' arguments and understands the context of the statements said.

(DNA, 20.06.18)

World's Oldest Elected Leader

Mahathir Mohamad has been sworn in as Malaysia's next Prime Minister, becoming, at 92, the world's oldest elected leader following a stunning election win. Mahathir's opposition alliance broke the grip on power of Malaysia's Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition, which had been in power without interruption since Malayisa gained independence from Britain some six decades ago.

Mahathir ruled Malaysia with an iron fist from 1981 to 2003. Earlier on May 10, Prime Minister Najib Razak, the head of BN, and a former protege of Mahathir, conceded defeat saying, "I accept the verdict of the people".

(https://www.rferl.org, 10.05.18)

Top Clean Cities of India

Indore and Bhopal have retained their position as the top two cleanest cities for the second consecutive year and Chandigarh has been ranked as

the third cleanest city. New Delhi Municipal Council was ranked as the cleanest city among municipal bodies, while Greater Mumbai was found to be the cleanest among all state capitals.
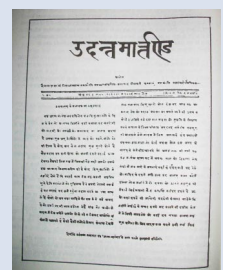
Vijayawada was reported to be the cleanest among big cities having more than one million population while Mysuru has emerged as the cleanest among cities with population of three lakh to one million. *(ToI, 16.05.18)*

Hindi Journalism Day

May 30 is celebrated as the 'Hindi Journalism Day' in India's journalism every year. On May 30, 1826 – the first Hindi newspaper of India called *Udant Martand* was edited and published. With this, the Hindi Journalism completed its 187 years in India. *Udant Martand* was the first Hindi newspaper in India, published from Calcutta. It was published on May 30, 1826, which is celebrated as the 'Hindi Journalism Day'.

However, *Udant Martand* could not be published for long due to higher postal rates as well as distant readership. *(JagranJosh, 31.05.18)*

Owning Half the World's Wealth

Millionaires and billionaires own nearly half of the entire world's personal wealth, which reached US$201.9tn in 2017, according to a new report.

'The share of global wealth held by millionaires increased to almost 50 percent in 2017, compared with just under 45 percent in 2012, driven mainly by higher wealth individuals investing in higher return assets", indicated the report.

North America remained the richest global region in 2017 in terms of personal wealth, which expanded by eight percent to US$86.1tn, it added.

(DNA, 16.06.18)

World's Oldest Person Dies at 117

The world's oldest person has died in southern Japan at the age of 117. An official in the town of Kikai said Nabi Tajima died in a hospital recently. She had more than 160 descendants, including great-great-great grandchildren.

Her town of Kikai is in Kagoshima prefecture on Kyushu, the southernmost of Japan's four main islands. She became the world's oldest person seven months ago after the death of Violet Brown in Jamaica, also at the age of 117. According to a US Research Group, 116 years old another Japanese woman, Chiyo Yoshida, is now the world's oldest person in its records.

(ET, 23.04.18)

Park Gets 24 Years Prison

A South Korean court jailed former President Park Geun-hye for 24 years over a scandal that exposed webs of corruption between political leaders and the country's conglomerates.

Park became South Korea's first democratically elected leader to be forced from office last year when the Constitutional Court ordered her out over a scandal that landed the heads of two conglomerates in jail.

The court also fined Park, the daughter of a former military dictator, 18 billion won (US$16.9mn) after finding her guilty of charges including bribery, abuse of power and coercion.

(BL, 07.04.18)

Panel to Formulate Happiness Index

Andhra Pradesh will soon set up a Happiness Commission and evolve a standardised index to measure 'happiness'. In an effort to build momentum towards these goals, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu said that the State's new greenfield capital at Amaravati would be planned and developed keeping happiness at the forefront of governance priorities.

Naidu said, "We want Amaravati to be among the top three happiest cities in the world on globally recognised benchmarks". In April 2017, Andhra Pradesh became the second state in the country, after Madhya Pradesh, to set up a department dedicated to happiness.

(Mint, 11.04.18)

Harmful Chocolate Production

Your favourite chocolates may be significantly harming the environment, say scientists who found that the UK chocolate industry produces about 2.1 million tonne of greenhouse gases in a year.

Researchers from the University of Manchester in the UK assessed the impact of ingredients, manufacturing processes, packaging and waste. The study estimates that the UK chocolate industry produces about 2.1 million tonne of greenhouse gases a year. This is equivalent to the annual emissions of the whole population of a city as large as Belfast.

(IE, 03.04.18)

3D Printed Houses for Rent

What do you do when there are too few skilled bricklayers to meet national housing demands? Figure out a workaround – like 3D-printed houses. That is the solution the Dutch construction company Van Wijnen and

researchers from Eindhoven University of Technology in the Netherlands came up with.

The city of Eindhoven soon hopes to boast the world's first commercially-developed 3D-printed homes, an endeavour known as Project Milestone. Construction on the first home begins this year and five houses will be on the rental market by 2019, project organisers said. *(https://qz.com/, 07.06.18)*

Walkway for Smartphone

Authorities in the Chinese city of Xi'an recently inaugurated a special sidewalk lane designed for 'phubbers'

– people who walk while staring at their smartphones and ignore everything around them.

Painted red, green and blue and featuring pictures of smartphones, the special lane is located on the busy Yanta Roan, in Xi'an, and is 80 cm wide and 100 m long. Chinese media reports that a large shopping mall overlooking the smartphone-user lane had been asking authorities for it over a month, which suggests that it is just a marketing scheme.

(http://www.odditycentral.com/, 07.06.18)

M&A Deals Worth US$25bn

Corporate India announced merger and acquisition (M&A) deals worth US$25bn in May 2018, significant jump over the same period last year thanks to the US$16bn Walmart-Flipkart deal, stated a report. According to assurance, tax and advisory firm Grant Thornton's latest Dealtracker, there were 46 transactions worth US$25,656mn in May this year, as against 35 deals worth US$897mn in the year-ago period.

The Walmart-Flipkart deal also marks the biggest acquisition in the E-commerce space and Walmart's biggest overseas deal. This deal alone contributed to 62 percent of total M&A values for the month. *(ToI, 06.06.18)*
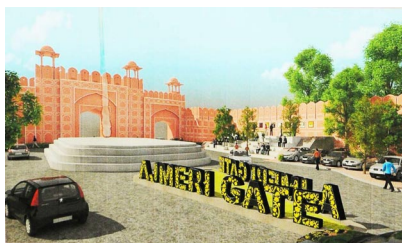
Exclusive Cyber Police Station

To check the increasing number of cyber-crimes, the Jaipur Police Commissionerate is all set to have an exclusive cyber police station at its *Khasa Kothi* office. The proposed station would be an advance cell equipped with efficient and cyber savvy staff and other logistic support to crack cyber-crimes in and around the Pink City.

According to statistics of the National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB), Rajasthan is placed at an alarming fourth in the 2011 list of highest number of cyber-crimes in the country and Jaipur is the most vulnerable city to such crimes.

(DNA, 05.05.18)

Smart City Project Loses Pace

Constant changing of CEO's has put brakes on the Jaipur Smart City Mission project. Four CEOs of Jaipur Smart City Ltd. have been changed

in the last two years. None of them have been able to complete full term as nobody lasted for more than six months.

In the absence of regular CEO, the work of Smart City Project has not been able to catch the speed. Mayor Ashok Lahoti, *Bharatiya Janata Party* Legislator and Councillor have raised questions about the works of Smart City projects. There has been controversy over the smart city project of *Ajmeri Gate* and *Kishanpol Bazar*. *(DNA, 02.05.18)*

Short Film Selected for IIFSA

Jaipur filmaker Tanmay Singh's featururette *Mariyan Lights* has been chosen for the 7th Edition of International Film Festival of South Asia (IFFSA), Toronto (Canada). The 20 minute film which has been entirely shot in Jaipur, and is Tanmay's second short film. The premiere will take place in Canadian city Brampton on May 18, 2018.

Tanmay has been writing for the renowned crime serial *CID* for the past 10 years. The earlier one, entitled, *The Masterpiece* was premiered at Jaipur International film festival in 2011. *(DNA, 06.05.18)*

New Head of Anti-corruption Unit

The BCCI has recently appointed former Rajasthan DGP Ajit Singh as the Head of its Anti-Corruption Unit, replacing former Delhi Police Commissioner Neeraj Kumar. A 1982 – Rajasthan cadre IPS officer, Singh retired as Director General of Police, Rajasthan on November 30, 2017.

He will take charge of the office ahead of IPL 2018 and will be based out of BCCI headquarters at Cricket Centre, Mumbai. Having served the Indian Police Service for around 36 years, Singh comes with a wealth of experience in anti-corruption operations, investigative work and field policing. *(DNA, 01.04.18)*

New Guinness World Record

With yoga fevering up across the world as people's go-to fitness mantra, millions celebrated 'International Yoga Day' on June 21, 2018. However, it was an Indian city named Kota of Rajasthan that stole the day with a new Guinness World record.

Keeping in mind the trend of huge group gathering for performing collective task to create records, people of Kota performed yoga together in huge number and set a new Guinness World record on the

occasion. Celebrating the fitness day on June 21, a number of people stretched their bodies and flexed their muscles to inhale the deep breath of fitness. *(BL, 22.06.18)*

Rising Graft Level

State government's efforts to curb corruption have apparently fallen flat as far as public perception is concerned, suggests a recent survey.

The CMS Indian Corruption Study that covered 13 states of the country including Rajasthan, has revealed that 51 percent of people hold the perception that corruption levels have shot up in the state over last year.

Rajasthan was held among the 'poor performers' when compared to the national average. The study states that public perception towards state government's commitment to reduce corruption has declined from 30 percent in 2017 to 11 percent in 2018. *(DNA, 18.06.18)*

Rising Tiger Population

The tiger population in Rajasthan has gone up with the birth of 28 cubs in the last two years, said wildlife officials. "25 tiger cubs were born in Ranthambore (National Park) and three in Sariska (Tiger Reserve) from 2016 to 2018 till date", Rajasthan's Chief Wildlife Warden G V Reddy mentioned.

He described this as an achievement and a morale booster, considering the high mortality rate in tigers due to natural and anthropogenic causes. The current strength of tigers in Rajasthan stands at 85, including 70 in Ranthambore, 14 in Sariska and one in Mukundara Hills National Park. *(BS, 18.05.18)*

Leap in *Swachh* Rankings

After facing repeated criticism, the Pink City has reason to rejoice as it took a giant leap in *Swachh Survekshan* rankings this year. City mayor Ashok Lahoti and Jaipur Municipal Corporation (JMC) CEO Ravi Jain received the award for becoming the fastest mover state capital of India from Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Indore, Madhya Pradesh.

From a lowly rank of 215 last year, Jaipur catapulted to 39th cleanest city in *Swachh Survekshan* 2018. Udaipur with a ranking of 85 was the other city from Rajasthan that figured in the top 100.

(ToI, 25.06.18)

Rise Passengers by 30 Percent

Introduction of cheaper flights, discounts through various apps and enhanced buying capacity of the air travellers have attributed to the 30 percent growth of passenger traffic at the Jaipur airport in the first four months of 2018 compared to last year.

According to officials of Airport Authority of India (AAI), Jaipur till March 31, 2018, Jaipur airport had witnessed 47 lakh air passengers including domestic and foreign travellers. Authorities are already working to de-congest the terminal 2 of the Jaipur airport as extension work at terminal 1 situated at *Sanganer*. *(ToI, 12.06.18)*

New Tourist Spot

An ecotourism project spread over 64 hectare of land, the *Kishan Bagh*, would be among the tourist spots in Jaipur by October 2018.

The Jaipur Development Authority (JDA) has initiated work on all the remaining modules as the project reaches its final stages.

Located in the foothills of Nahargarh, *Kishan Bagh* is part of stabilised sand dunes and nearly 30 acre JDA land extending in Nahargarh Sanctuary. Tender for all remaining modules, entrance plaza, ramp, walkway, visitors centre, botanical exhibit, etc. have been released and the work is expected to be completed by October 2018. *(DNA, 18.06.18)*

Contender for Jaipur Metro

The Jaipur Metro phase-2 might take a route off the previously proposed *Tonk Road* as Jaipur Metro Rail Corporation (JMRC) advances to review the detailed project report (DPR). The consultancy firm appointed to review the DPR in a recently submitted traffic study has

suggested *JLN Marg* as an alternate route.

However, the entire phase II is now under review, expected to cost more than 10,000 crore, it was a bit too expensive. The consultancy firm to review the DPR has also been asked to look for options to reduce cost while improving the connectivity. *(DNA, 09.05.18)*

Getting UNESCO Heritage City Title

As the Pink City has been placed on the tentative list for World Heritage City by UNESCO for its outstanding universal value, the state administration has chalked out a strategic plan to bag the title.

JMC CEO Ravi Jain said, "A team from UNESCO will visit the Walled City area in September 2018. Directions have been issued to maintain the heritage structures in the walled city area and not to tamper with the originality of such structures. Moreover, work to restore the façade around the walled city is underway". *(ToI, 19.06.18)*

Making Metro a Priority

While the ruling party BJP continues to sit over the Jaipur Metro phase-II project for over four years, 67 percent residents of Jaipur have shown interest to shift to Metro transport if corridor is constructed on *Tonk Road*.

Having 470 cars per thousand people in city, the need for Metro train on this route is increasing. As vehicles have increased manifold, the roads in the city are becoming congested and the average travel speed has dropped to less than 20 kmph. The average travel speed in non-commercial areas of city reduced from 28 kmph in 2009 to 18 kmph in 2018. *(ToI, 02.06.18)*

Need to Increase Corridor

French firm EGIS Rail SA recently conducted a traffic study of the city and has recommended extending the proposed Jaipur Metro phase-II corridor by nearly 8 km. As per the new proposal, the total length of the corridor will be 31 km proposed from *Sitapura* to *Vishwakarma Industrial Area*, road number-14.

In the existing DPR, the corridor length is 23 km (*Sitapura* to *Ambabari*). However, after witnessing the increase in vehicular congestion on the route, the firm has proposed an increase in length of the corridor. *(ToI, 02.06.18)*

Opportunities for Start-ups

'Challenge for Change' is a partnership opportunity by Government of Rajasthan. In this scheme, you would be empowering Rajasthan to be the *Digital-sthan* of the country. The youth, working professionals or start-up entrepreneurs can come forward with their innovative and creative ideas or take up projects offered by the government.

"In order to foster start-ups there is no criteria for prior turnover, experience and earnest money deposit", Raje announced and said that work contracts worth up to one crore shall be sanctioned. The start-ups that can come up with the best solutions shall be selected. *(IE, 07.06.18)*

Recording Patients Diseases Online

Disease of each patient will be registered now online under the new system developed by the health department with an intention to keep a check on outbreak of diseases.

The health department of Rajasthan will now be able to keep a record of the total number of patients coming to different hospitals for specific diseases prevalent in different areas of the state.

Earlier, there was no system of registering disease against the name of patient coming to the government hospital. However, now hospitals will register disease along with the name of the patient coming to the hospital. *(ToI, 04.06.18)*

Leading the E-governance Pack

Prabodh Krishna*

The initiatives launched by the government of Rajasthan is leaving no stone unturned in empowering the citizens of the state

Rajasthan has become the frontrunner in the race of digital leader of India. The vision of Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje has ensured the state progressing manifolds compared to other states. By being the first state to implement an integrated and unified e-governance framework and architecture, Rajasthan has become an e-governance hub.

The state's department of IT and communications is committed to providing efficient, reliable and transparent government to residents and industry sector in the state. Adhering to the vision of good governance – 'Suraaj', they have been successful in accomplishing a digitally developed state.

Rajasthan has focussed on long term structural improvements in various sectors ensuring overall growth and progress. In four years, the government has transformed the state through prudent e-initiatives making the state front-runner in the digital race. This makes Rajasthan government's Department of Information Technology & Communications (IT&C), the winner of the 'Technology Leader of the Year' award. Rajasthan, has evolved as one of the leading states, with a robust system of e-governance delivering enormous services to the residents.

The necessity of IT enablement in the departments has brought the unified and integrated service delivery mechanism beforehand through various web services. When service delivery is now becoming a priority for states across India, Rajasthan is already a ground-breaker ensuring service delivery with more than 51,000 Common Service Centres (CSCs) or *eMitra*, extending the reach of government to practically every doorstep.

The multiple flagship schemes initiated by the department of IT&C marked monumental milestones with best in class success figures. These schemes run as a common thread among the 6.89 crore residents with the widespread viable benefits to ensure their defined objective. As stated by Vasundhara Raje, "Rajasthan is not going ahead, Rajasthan is going to stay ahead", the launch of *e-Mitra+* defines it completely.

e-Mitra+ is a cutting-edge computerised kiosk that offers easy access to more than 300 government and private services.

Technological advancements in e-governance have made unhindered service delivery possible for every citizen of the state through *e-Mitra+* kiosks. *e-Mitra+* is a next-generation self-service interactive kiosk with 17" high-definition touch screen that displays digital signages to guide you through the process. This one-stop service delivery touchscreen kiosk is fully automated with no manual intervention required.

This makes *eMitra+* the most suitable choice for 'Best Technology Innovation' of the year. The *e-Mitra+* kiosk gives video conferencing facility to more than 40,000 places in Rajasthan. A common man can connect through this platform to register his complaints to concerned government officers and the number is growing with every passing day.

With over 5.65 crore enrolments and more than 39.7 crore transactions already, *Bhamashah Yojana* has brought Rajasthan to the forefront of financial inclusion and women empowerment, leveraging Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) to its best for centralised direct benefits transfer and centralised resident data hub.

Rajasthan has shown and ensured that the dream of financial inclusion envisioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is implemented to its best. Within four years the state has attained this goal by vigorously working towards making Rajasthan a prosperous state. Rajasthan with its e-governance framework is embarking upon a digital revolution.

**Correspondent with BW Businessworld*
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