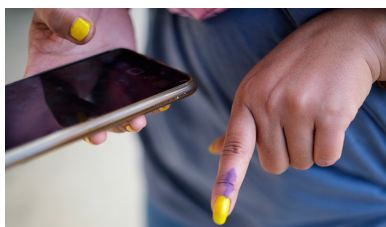




3/2023

# CityMatters

## Bribing the Electorate, Futilely



www.google.com

“We want free education and healthcare”, say Rajasthan’s public. This fact emerged in an unprecedented survey conducted by state government which have launched Vision 2030 document. Three crore and 14 lakh opinions were polled in this massive digital survey. Furthermore, thanks to the common sense of common people they also suggested that money on MNREGA be stopped and like China, supply equipment and inputs to rural homes and ask them to produce goods.



The biggest pain point was corruption asking for the whole governance system to be cashless. Furthermore, they also want stiff action against corrupt officers and politicians. Linked to this the second biggest pain point was dealing with hopeless bureaucracy, polity and the worst of them, the police.

If one looks at all this in the light of the pre-election doles or freebies, one wonders whether it will have any effect at all. Voting is done on several factors and not just freebies. People want good education, health care and employment opportunities, and not smartphones or cycles or alcohol.

Political parties, in a bid to secure votes, are offering extravagant freebies to the electorate, effectively using our money to bolster their chances of winning. This contentious issue recently found its way to the Indian Supreme Court, prompting a national debate on the ethics of such practices. How will the matter evolve is yet to be seen, but we are hopeful of some concrete steps.

The petitioner, advocate Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay, knocked on the doors of the Supreme Court seeking a directive to the Election Commission of India (ECI) to seize the election symbol or de-register political parties that promise or distribute what they refer to as “irrational freebies” like phones and tablets using public funds before elections. This practice violates the essence of free and fair elections enshrined in the Indian Constitution.

The Supreme Court issued a notice to the governments of Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, the Centre, and the ECI in response to allegations of freebies being offered to voters ahead of assembly polls in these states, all at the expense of the taxpayers.

These promises of freebies are not new in the Indian political landscape. Over the years, parties have employed various tactics, ranging from the unofficial distribution of cash and liquor to more official giveaways like farm loan waivers and gadgets like laptops and smartphones.

In conclusion, the widespread distribution of freebies in Indian politics also raises significant ethical concerns. While voters remain divided on their effectiveness, the Supreme Court’s intervention is crucial in ensuring transparency, data privacy, and fairness in the electoral process. The future of Indian politics will likely be shaped by how well leaders can address these evolving dynamics while upholding the principles of democracy and fairness.

Long ago, the late erudite P V Narasimha Rao, who had served as AP’s CM and India’s PM, had said that freebies do not really woo voters, because there are so many other factors which determine their voting behaviour.

*Pradeep S. Mehta*  
Pradeep S Mehta, Secretary General

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*P. S. Many sitting MPs are contesting the state assembly elections in Rajasthan. Will it not be moral for them to resign from their parliamentary positions and then contest? Or should they not resign their parliamentary seats whether they win or lose the state assembly elections.*

## India's G20 Presidency

### A catalyst for improving global cooperation

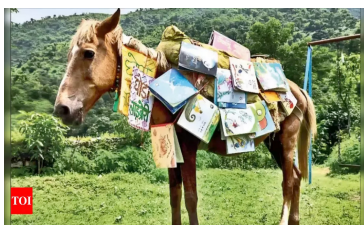
In India's G20 Presidency, the country is placing importance on global multistakeholder collaboration as a means to tackle the common challenges. The world has gradually recovered from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, but global growth remains fragile and inflation is stubbornly persistent.

The increasing frequency of extreme weather events — July was the hottest month on record — has made clear that urgent progress is needed on climate action and other sustainable development goals (SDGs) during this “decade of action”. (LM, 08.09.23)



### The Moving Horseback Library

Uttarakhand has faced a lot of natural disasters in recent months, which caused schools and colleges to



shut down. But against all odds, a unique four-legged library in Uttarakhand is winning people's hearts.

Shubham Badhani, a resident of Nainital, has started an amazing initiative of carrying books from village to village on a horse. This initiative was appreciated by Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India, on his morning radio show Mann ki Baat and Pushkar Singh Dhami, Chief Minister of Uttarakhand.

This travelling library can be seen in various villages, including Gautiya and Kumaon. The horses along with multiple volunteers make weekly rounds to the villages so that the kids can issue new books and return the old ones.

(Tol, 31.08.23)

### Youth Faces Internet Restrictions

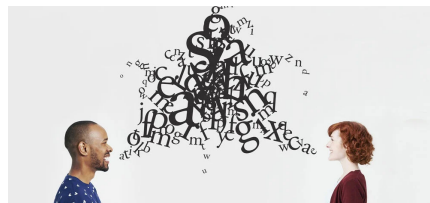
China is currently addressing concerns regarding the excessive usage of smartphones and the internet among its youth. The government has introduced new regulations aimed at curbing these habits.

These measures will directly impact Chinese youth by imposing restrictions on their smartphone and internet usage. Among the provisions are limitations on accessing online gaming during weekdays and a cap on the number of hours that can be spent gaming on weekends.

This move aims to address concerns related to the physical and mental health of children as well as their academic performance. (ET, 02.08.23)

### Choose Your Words Wisely

In today's ever-evolving social landscape, respectful communication is key. An essential facet of this is the proper usage of gender-neutral language. Recent events highlight the growing importance of using inclusive pronouns and terminology.



Language has the power to shape perceptions and attitudes. By respecting an individual's preferred pronouns, we not only acknowledge their identity but also create a more inclusive society.

So, let's choose our words carefully and ensure that we treat everyone with the respect they deserve. (ET, 03.09.23)

### Don't Overpay Your Card Dues

In the ever-evolving landscape of personal finance, prudence is key. It seems, however, that in the realm of credit card dues, a curious conundrum exists: Banks don't want you to overpay your dues, and for good reason.

When you overpay your credit card dues, your bank may be inclined to hold on to the surplus funds, albeit temporarily, instead of returning the money promptly. This allows the bank to earn interest on your funds, a practice not necessarily in the cardholder's best interest.

Therefore, it is prudent for credit card users to be vigilant, regularly reconcile their card statements, and pay only the amount due. (Tol, 15.09.23)

### A Record-Breaking Masterpiece

In a historic moment for Indian art, a masterpiece by Amrita Sher-Gil has shattered records by selling for a staggering ₹61.8 crore at auction. This remarkable achievement has not only highlighted the growing appreciation for Indian art but has also underscored Sher-Gil's iconic status in the art world.



Amrita Sher-Gil, often referred to as India's Frida Kahlo, is known for her deeply emotive and groundbreaking works. Her ability to intertwine Western techniques with the vibrancy of Indian culture set her apart as a trailblazer of the Indian art scene. (Tol, 18.09.23)

### A Monumental Marvel

In a remarkable display of craftsmanship, an artisan from Aligarh has meticulously handcrafted a colossal 400kg lock for the Ayodhya Ram Mandir, underscoring the enduring traditions of artisanal excellence in India.

The extraordinary creation is set to become a symbol of both security and spirituality. Crafted with painstaking precision, the lock is a testament to the rich legacy of craftsmanship that Aligarh is renowned for. It reflects the intricate skills passed down through generations and combines them with modern engineering to cater to the needs of a sacred site like the Ram Mandir.

(Tol, 07.08.23)



## France to Ban Islamic Abayas

In a move sparking heated debates and raising concerns over religious freedom, France is set to ban the wearing of Islamic abayas in schools. The decision aims to uphold the principle of secularism, which advocates for the separation of religion from the state.

The ban specifically targets abayas, full-length garments worn by some Muslim women, and is seen as an extension of the existing ban on the niqab and burqa in public spaces.

Conversely, critics view the ban as a violation of individual freedom and an infringement upon religious rights.

(Tol, 28.08.23)

## Phalke Award to Waheeda

Renowned Indian actress Waheeda Rehman, celebrated for her timeless performances in classic Hindi cinema, has been bestowed with the prestigious Dadasaheb Phalke Award.

The award, named after the father of Indian cinema, Dhundiraj Govind Phalke, is one of the most esteemed recognitions in the Indian film industry. Rehman's enduring legacy in the film industry serves as an inspiration to aspiring actors and a testament to the timeless artistry of Indian cinema.

This recognition is not only a fitting tribute to her illustrious career but also a celebration of her enduring influence on Indian cinema.

(Tol, 27.09.23)

## The Wheat Revolution

In a remarkable tale of agricultural transformation, India owes its status as a global wheat-producing powerhouse



to a mere 100kg of seeds from Mexico. This groundbreaking development, known as the Green Revolution, began in the mid-20th century and had a profound impact on India's agricultural landscape.

Dr Norman Borlaug, an American agronomist introduced high-yielding wheat varieties to India. In 1966, he gifted 100kg of these seeds to Indian

scientists, kickstarting a movement that would change the destiny of Indian agriculture.

Today, India stands as a testament to the transformative power of agricultural innovation, all thanks to those 100 kgs of Mexican seeds.

(Tol, 29.09.23)

## Tech-Driven Approach in Autos

In a significant move towards a greener future, Modi has called upon the automobile industry to harness cutting-edge technology to reduce



emissions. Speaking at an industry event, he emphasised the critical role of the automotive sector in India's sustainable development and global environmental responsibilities.

With the Prime Minister's encouragement, the Indian automotive industry is poised to drive innovation and transform the nation's transportation landscape towards a cleaner and more sustainable future.

(Tol, 13.09.23)

## Accelerating to Success

In a bold move that promises to keep the wheels of the automotive industry spinning at a dizzying pace, car manufacturers are setting their sights on a collective target of achieving a

remarkable 4 million vehicle sales in 2023.

The automotive sector is revving up for an exhilarating year ahead with cutting-edge technology, innovative designs, and a renewed focus on sustainability.

The UK car companies are poised to capture the fast lane and steer towards an impressive sales figure, reaffirming their commitment to excellence and customer satisfaction.

(Tol, 13.09.23)

## National Unity for INDIA Alliance

In a powerful statement, Raghav Chadha, an influential figure in Indian politics, underscores the vital need for individuals to transcend personal ambitions in pursuit of the greater good of the nation. Chadha's message revolves around the INDIA alliance, a collective effort aimed at fostering unity and progress.

He believes that for this alliance to prosper, all must prioritise the welfare of the nation over personal gain. This call for selflessness echoes the timeless values of national unity and sacrifice.



It serves as a poignant reminder that to achieve true success, individuals must set aside their ambitions and work together towards a brighter future for India.

(Tol, 13.09.23)

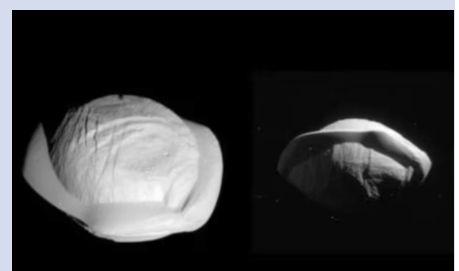
## NASA Reveals Cosmic Dumpling

It's a Ravioli, It's an empanada, It's a dumpling no it's Saturn's innermost moon. In a mesmerising celestial revelation, NASA recently shared captivating images of dumpling-like objects floating in the vast expanse of space.

These enigmatic cosmic phenomena, spotted through the Hubble Space Telescope, have left both astronomers and the general public in awe. Known as planetary nebulae, these objects are not dough-filled delicacies but rather gaseous shells of material expelled by dying stars in the final stages of their life cycle.

These vivid celestial dumplings are created when a dying star, like our sun, sheds its outer layers, leaving behind a glowing core.

(Tol, 29.09.23)

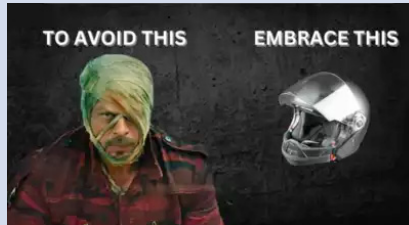


## UP Police Shares SRK's Iconic Look from Jawan!

In an attempt to encourage two-wheeler riders to wear helmets, the Uttar Pradesh Police's social media accounts posted a satirical appeal featuring Shah Rukh Khan from his latest movie "Jawan". In the event of a road crash involving a two-wheeler driver and a pillion rider, helmets are the most important safety equipment.

As the first and sole line of defence against head injuries, helmets help protect against cranial and spine trauma. Unlike those in a four-wheeler, two-wheeler users are comparatively unprotected from road crash injuries owing to the absence of other safety equipment like seat belts and airbags and the structural security that the shell of a motorised four-wheeler provides against crash impact."

(Tol, 10.09.23)



28 order, Justice Diwaker termed the hearings by Justice Prakash Padia an instance of judicial impropriety.

"The single judge continued with the hearing of these cases for over two years, even though he had no jurisdiction in the matter as per the roster" Justice Diwaker said.

The Chief Justice further said the decision to withdraw the matter from the single judge and assign it to himself was taken in the interest of "judicial propriety, judicial discipline and transparency in the listing of cases."

(Tol, 13.09.23)

## Launches Global Biofuel Alliance

In a monumental stride towards a sustainable future, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the Global Biofuel Alliance, positioning India at the forefront of the global green energy revolution.



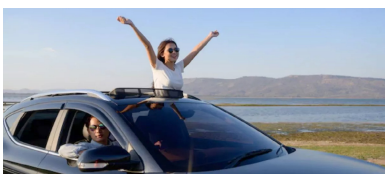
This alliance draws support from various nations, seeks to accelerate the production and use of biofuels, significantly reducing carbon emissions and fostering eco-friendly development. India's commitment to this endeavour underscores its dedication to combat climate change and marks a pivotal milestone in the quest for cleaner energy sources.

This alliance, as Modi affirms, will not only reduce environmental impact but also stimulate economic growth, affirming India's role as a key player in the global transition to greener energy alternatives.

(Tol, 11.09.23)

## Sunroof: A Bold Gesture

Sunroofs in cars were once considered a luxury feature, available only in high-end and luxury models.



However, in India, sunroofs are now offered in many mass-market cars, with prices starting at as low as ₹8 lakh.

However, looking out of a sunroof while a car is in motion is often misused by people, including children standing out of the top of the car. The Karnataka Police has warned that this activity is illegal and punishable by a fine ranging from ₹100 to 300.

(Tol, 10.09.23)

## Future for Green Mobility

In celebration of World EV Day, India's mobility landscape is poised for a remarkable transformation. With a burgeoning focus on sustainable transportation, the country is making significant strides in embracing electric vehicles (EVs).

India's EV market is experiencing remarkable growth, driven by government incentives and a growing environmental consciousness. As the nation accelerates towards EV adoption, we see a shift towards cleaner and greener transportation options.

This World EV Day, India stands as a beacon of change, symbolising a brighter, more eco-friendly future for mobility in the subcontinent.

(Tol, 12.09.23)

## HC Judge Presides Over Gyanvapi

In a legal twist that has garnered significant attention, an Allahabad High Court judge reportedly presided over the Gyanvapi case for a staggering two years without jurisdiction. In his August



## Nation Poll Predicts Modi's Term

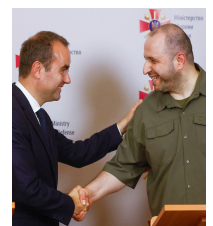
In a recent survey, the "Mood of the Nation" poll suggests that Modi is poised for a triumphant third term in the upcoming 2024 elections, defying the emerging opposition alliance known as INDIA.

The poll's findings reflect a continuing wave of support for Modi, showcasing his unwavering popularity among the Indian electorate. Despite challenges posed by a united opposition, Modi's leadership and the policies of the Bhartiya Janata Party appear to have struck a chord with the majority of voters.

(BT, 26.08.23)

## Forging Stronger Arms Collaboration

Ukraine and France have joined hands in a commitment to bolster their cooperation in the realm of arms and defence. This



collaboration holds significant promise for both nations, as it underscores their shared commitment to enhancing their military capabilities and security.

By working together, Ukraine and France aim to tap into each other's expertise and resources, potentially leading to the development of advanced defence systems and strategies. This united effort stands as a testament to the importance of international alliances in safeguarding global peace and security.

(Tol, 29.09.23)



### Road Safety in Rajasthan

The Rajasthan Transport and Road Safety Department recently held a meeting with over 20 stakeholders and various experts. They discussed the increase in accidents caused by two-wheeler riders because of the loss of helmets.

A senior official stated, "Most road accidents happen with two-wheeler riders with victims suffering severe injuries because of not wearing helmets. Enforcement campaigns are carried out but due to lack of political will, strictness is lacking. When transport or traffic officials issue challans, people either call up elected representatives or directly call higher authorities. Strict enforcement can help save many lives."

(Tol, 31.08.23)

### 'No Bag Day' for Saturdays

In a commendable move aimed at promoting a more relaxed and holistic learning environment, the government



schools in Rajasthan are reinstating "No Bag Day" on Saturdays. This initiative, which was temporarily discontinued, has been reintroduced to alleviate the burden on young learners and encourage extracurricular activities.

By eliminating the need for students to carry their heavy school bags on Saturdays, the authorities aim to reduce physical strain and stress, allowing children to explore various aspects of their personality and interests.

"No Bag Day" is an opportunity for students to engage in sports, arts, and other creative pursuits, in line with a well-rounded educational philosophy.

(Tol, 24.07.23)

### Adopting Rainwater Harvesting System

In a concerning revelation, the Jaipur Development Authority (JDA) has reported that only 220 buildings in the city have adopted rainwater harvesting systems. This stark statistic, brought to light by JDA officials, raises serious questions about the city's commitment to sustainable water management.

Rainwater harvesting is a vital practice for a city like Jaipur, which often faces water scarcity issues. The limited adoption of this eco-friendly technique underscores the need for increased awareness and stricter implementation of rainwater harvesting in the city.

(Tol, 20.07.23)

### Green Warns Government

The Rajasthan government is planning to auction islands located inside the Bialpur and Mahi dams for tourism projects.

However, environmentalists are criticising this plan, arguing that it could damage the aquatic ecosystem and violate green norms. The government's goal is to raise ₹300 crore from the sale of these islands. The auction of the parcels of land is scheduled for September 29 and October 03, 2023.

While department officials claim that similar projects have been successfully implemented in other states and will increase revenue, some environmentalists are concerned about the potential harm to the dam ecosystem.

(Tol, 29.09.23)

### Fuel Pumps Cease Retail Operations

Fuel pump dealers have decided to resume their protest from October 01 by switching off the lights at the outlets between 8-10 p.m. The government has



shown no signs of heeding the demands of reducing VAT on petrol and diesel.

While this transition may cause momentary inconvenience, it underscores the commitment of Rajasthan to ecological sustainability and cleaner air for its citizens, promising a healthier and cheaper future.

(Tol, 29.09.23)

### LG VK Saxena Again in Rajasthan

The Lieutenant Governor of Delhi, VK Saxena, recently visited Rajasthan to search for artefacts and sculptures to adorn the National Capital. During his visit, Saxena personally handpicked pieces worth over ₹3 crore and bought them directly from the artisans to ensure maximum returns for their craft.



The aim behind his initiative is to generate employment and income for the artisans while beautifying Delhi. Additionally, Saxena plans to take the artisans to Delhi to show them where their creations will be installed.

(Tol, 29.09.23)

## Rajasthan to Enhance Air Quality Monitoring

Rajasthan is taking a giant leap towards ensuring cleaner and healthier air for its residents with 15 new air quality monitoring stations across the state. This significant initiative aims to provide real-time data on air pollution levels and improve environmental governance.

In a concerted effort to combat the rising concerns over air quality, the state government is deploying state-of-the-art monitoring stations in various locations, including Jaipur, Jodhpur, and Udaipur. The project is expected to be a game-changer in managing air quality and implementing effective pollution control measures.

These new monitoring stations will play a pivotal role in raising awareness about air quality and supporting policy decisions to combat pollution effectively.

(Tol, 27.09.23)



### Vote For BJP,' Minister Tells Farmers

Govind Ram Meghwal, the Disaster Relief Minister and Chairman of Congress's Election Campaign Committee sparked controversy by suggesting that angry farmers should vote for the BJP.

The farmers were protesting the inclusion of Khajuwala-Chhattargarh in the newly formed Anupgarh district. Meghwal's statement drew criticism from Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, who highlighted the internal divisions within Congress.

The farmers' demand to include the tehsils back in Bikaner has not been met, leading to ongoing protests.

(Tol, 29.09.23)

### Not to Contest Assembly Polls

Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat has dismissed rumours that he will be running in the upcoming Rajasthan assembly elections. He emphasised that decisions regarding party candidates will be made by the party's parliamentary board, and no discussions have taken place thus far.

In a meeting with party leaders, it was proposed to allocate 33 percent of seats to women in certain categories. The state unit has asked star campaigners such as the Chief Ministers of Uttar Pradesh and Assam, as well as Union Ministers and Prime Minister Modi, to hold rallies in various divisions of Rajasthan.

(Tol, 29.09.23)

### Community Health Officers Protest

A group of Community Health Officers (CHOs) from various parts of the state gathered at Shaheed Smarak in Jaipur. They were protesting for the regularisation of their services, revision

of pay grade to ₹4,800 and the merger of salary and incentive.

The leader of the CHOs, Bharat Beniwal, stated that they would continue to protest until their demands were met. In addition, ophthalmology assistants also protested at Shahid Smarak.

They demanded that the government resolve the discrepancy in their pay, approve allowances, and promotions, creation of new posts, and release the list of 117 newly selected eye assistants.

(Tol, 28.09.23)

### PM Narendra Modi to Address Rally

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's anticipated October 2 public gathering in Chittorgarh have begun, according to the BJP.

He will be returning to the state for the second time in seven days, making it his tenth visit in a year. On October 2, Modi will pay a visit to the Shri



Sanwaliya Seth Temple in Chittorgarh. He is going to lay the cornerstone and start a lot of development projects.

Party insiders say he will speak at a public meeting. Modi had previously spoken on September 25 at the Parivartan Sankalp Mahasabha in Jaipur. Joshi and opposition leader Rajendra Rathore will visit BJP state president CP Joshi's Lok Sabha seat to oversee the plans following the finalization of the PM's visit.

(Tol, 29.09.23)

### Arrested for Betting on Match

Police in Tonk, Rajasthan have arrested two men for allegedly running a betting racket on a cricket match between India and Australia.

During a house raid, police seized ₹17 lakh in betting slips, ₹1.16 lakh in cash, electronic betting equipment, and



six mobile phones. Four other men were also arrested in a separate raid for gambling in a different location in Tonk.

The police are currently interrogating the accused to gather more information about the betting racket.

(Tol, 28.09.23)

### The Man who Fought Polls Thrice

A 45-year-old politician from a relatively unknown political party, who had unsuccessfully contested thrice from the Alwar (Rural) assembly seat, has been arrested by the crime branch in connection with an arms case.

The Additional Commissioner of Police (Crime), Kailash Chandra Bishnoi, said that the accused, identified as Sawai Nath, a resident of Kanota in Jaipur, was arrested by the police. Along with the arrest, an illegal "desi katta" (country-made pistol) and two live cartridges were seized.

The police investigation has revealed that Nath had contested elections for the Alwar (Rural) constituency in 2007, 2013, and 2018 but had never won.

(Tol, 28.09.23)

## Millennials Dominating Drug Smuggling & Peddling

The Jaipur police's "Operation Clean Sweep" crackdown has revealed that drug trafficking and peddling in the city are increasingly being controlled by millennials. The analysis of the operation's outcome revealed that the most active participants in drug peddling are young people aged 18 to 25 and 26 to 40.

With 841 males and 167 females apprehended, the highest number of arrests were made in the age group of 26 to 40. Additionally, the police reported that impoverished and unemployed youth are the primary consumers of drugs, with different narcotics preferences found among different socio-economic groups.

(Tol, 29.09.23)



# India's Urgency to Implement Front-of-Pack Labelling System for Processed Food

By Pradeep S Mehta & Simi TB\*

*The introduction of warning labels is crucial to consumers, particularly those in rural areas, who face challenges such as limited access to nutritional and health information, language and literacy barriers, and health disparities. These warning labels enable them to quickly make informed and healthy choices as these labels act as visual cues, indicating the potential risks associated with consuming certain products.*



In today's fast-paced society, where convenience often surpasses nutrition, it is vital to look at the impact of ultra-processed foods on our health. While city dwellers have ample access to information about healthy eating choices, raising awareness among our rural folk is vital due to the rising non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in rural India. Several recent studies have unveiled this disheartening reality. For instance, a recent India Diabetes study conducted by the Indian Council of Medical Research highlights the escalating rates of diabetes, hypertension, obesity and cardiovascular problems in rural regions, surpassing previous estimations.

Similarly, a study conducted in 2022 by the All-India Institute of Medical Sciences indicates that 38.6 percent of adults and 35.4 percent of Indian children suffer from non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, surpassing the global average of 25 percent.

Furthermore, according to official records, in 2022, there were 8.08 lakh fatalities attributed to cancer out of a total of 14.61 lakh cases. This marks a steady annual rise when compared to the 7.89 lakh cases recorded in 2021.

Nonetheless, there are indications that the genuine count of cases could be two to three times greater than the officially documented numbers, raising substantial concern. These distressing findings collectively indicate that the primary factors behind these trends are the increased consumption of ultra-processed foods, sedentary lifestyles, high-calorie diets and obesity.

The introduction of warning labels is crucial to consumers, particularly those in rural areas, who face challenges such as limited access to nutritional and health information, language and literacy barriers, and health disparities. These warning labels enable them to quickly make informed and healthy choices as these labels act as visual cues, indicating the potential risks associated with consuming certain products. For instance, a warning label on foods high in sugar, sodium or trans fats could help individuals avoid such items that contribute to obesity, hypertension or heart disease.

The implementation of warning labels in many other countries has already helped empower consumers to prioritise their health and choose healthier alternatives, thereby aiding in the reduction of NCDs.

The well-being of our rural consumers is just as important as that of their urban counterparts. By sensitising rural communities about the impact of ultra-processed foods on health, emphasising the significance of making informed nutrition choices and advocating for easy-to-understand front-of-pack labelling and warning labels, we can enable rural consumers to take control of their dietary decisions.

Access to accurate and easily understandable information is essential in promoting healthier food choices and improving overall health outcomes in India.

\*Secretary General and Assistant Policy Analyst at CUTS International.

This article first appeared in Money Control, August 23, 2023 and can be viewed at: <https://tinyurl.com/27e2b5b9>



## Ethical 6G – Identifying Elements of Ethical Framework for 6G

*As countries transition to 5G technology and explore 6G, collaboration between nations like India and Australia is crucial to establish ethical frameworks and secure cyberspace. The Australia-India Cyber and Critical Technology Partnership seeks to enhance cyber resilience and best practices in critical technology development in the Indo-Pacific region.*



Increasing technological penetration has also resulted in increased cybercrimes. Cyberspace is now being considered a zone of modern warfare, and thus cyber security is akin to national security. However, no multilateral rules prescribe any minimum standards that can guide countries in securing their cyberspace. Further, few leading countries are disproportionately shaping international discourse on the issue.

It is said that the deployment of 'reliable' telecommunication networks is necessary for secure and resilient cyberspace. Today, many countries are deploying the 5th Generation (5G) telecommunication technology. Movements in the 6th Generation (6G) telecommunication technology development have begun, but it is concentrated in a few leading countries. Countries like India and Australia are jointly aspiring to be forebearers in the advancement of 6G technology.

Development and deployment of 6G technology may bring in unanticipated challenges. Hence, such development should not be severed from building safe, secure and accessible cyberspace. In this regard, developing an ethical framework for this is imperative. This will be critical from the perspective of a safe, secure and accessible cyberspace and the perspective of trade and investment in the digital sphere.

Recently, India and Australia have agreed to increase bilateral cooperation in the digital economy, including cyber governance, cyber security, and cyber and critical technologies, focusing on capacity building and innovation. The India-Australia partnership has a common objective to develop an open, secure, free, accessible, stable, peaceful, and interoperable cyberspace and technologies that adhere to international law.

Therefore, this one-and-a-half-year project is being undertaken

under the Australia-India Cyber and Critical Technology Partnership. The purpose of the Partnership is to shape international discourse on cyber and critical technologies. It aims to deepen institutional linkages between Australian and Indian researchers, businesses and government on cyber and critical technology issues. It will further support India and potentially other countries in the Indo-Pacific to improve their cyber resilience and foster best practices in critical technology development.

The study will create an understanding of potential ways and areas of institutional collaboration between Indian and Australian governments, businesses and academia concerning the development and deployment of 6G technology. It will provide an ethical framework for the development of 6G technology which can be used for creating a secure cyberspace in the Indo-Pacific region.

Sources: BT: Business Today; ET: Economic Times; LM: Livemint; Tol: Times of India

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