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EDUCATION

The use of AI in classrooms

Manav Subodh explains the possible pitfalls and perks of integrating artificial intelligence into education

What do you think of when you imagine a small government school in rural India? It might involve some variations of modest infrastructure, limited resources and diverse learning levels across grades. What if you could work within these constraints and transform this learning environment completely to make it a space where students can thrive?

The potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been knocking on the Indian education ecosystem's door for a while now. We must consider the classrooms in rural India while discussing how and what to implement—not just the elite schools in urban centres. But before we let this technological revolution enter our classrooms, we must be careful to avoid the many possible pitfalls of thoughtlessly integrating artificial technology into our education.

Potential misuses of AI

To advocate for AI, one must become a fierce critic and realise that AI can be

misused or mishandled. This is why it is important to identify these potential misuses to start a discussion on how to mitigate them. Let's look at the potential misuse.

■ **Data privacy concerns:** Due to the pandemic-induced lockdown in 2020, digital platforms for education have seen exponential growth in recent years. But this also brought an insidious underbelly—the vulnerability of student data. In 2021, a leading e-learning platform in India witnessed a substantial data breach containing the data of thousands of students.

If we want to integrate technology into our classrooms, the first step is to teach students how to protect their online identities, data and information. Schools need to create curricula with courses on digital citizenship that teach how to be a responsible 'netizen' and exist safely in this virtual, digital space.

■ **Over-reliance on automation:** We have all heard stories about students using generative AI services like ChatGPT to cheat on school assignments or plagiarise their homework. We do not want a learning journey dictated by algorithms and AI alone.

The goal is not to obfuscate learning but to empower and supplement it. Even a service like ChatGPT is useless if you don't know how to design and create a prompt for what you need. This is why we must teach students and teachers how to use AI tools to learn more creatively and efficiently. These tools can be incredibly personalised learning aids, but only if we deploy them thoughtfully.

For example, schools can allow ChatGPT for project-based learning and

encourage a research mindset. Students can use ChatGPT as a co-pilot but write their hypotheses and interpretations, making classroom learning immersive and fun.

The right use of AI

■ **Personalised learning journeys:** AI doesn't merely complement traditional teaching methods; it can also tailor lessons and instructions to each student's needs and learning styles. Something even a team of dedicated teachers per classroom would struggle to achieve.

The outcomes of this can be profound—heightened engagement, increased comprehension, and a paradigm shift in the educational experience for students who once strug-

gled within the confines of conventional learning structures.

Studies show a positive correlation between the integration of AI and enhanced academic success. The evidence is in improved test scores

and the renewed zeal for learning exhibited by students who have experienced education enriched by AI tools.

■ **Addressing educational disparities:** Think back to that school in rural India, where educational opportunities can be as arid as the surrounding terrain. Here, AI can become a transformative force that transcends geographical barriers.

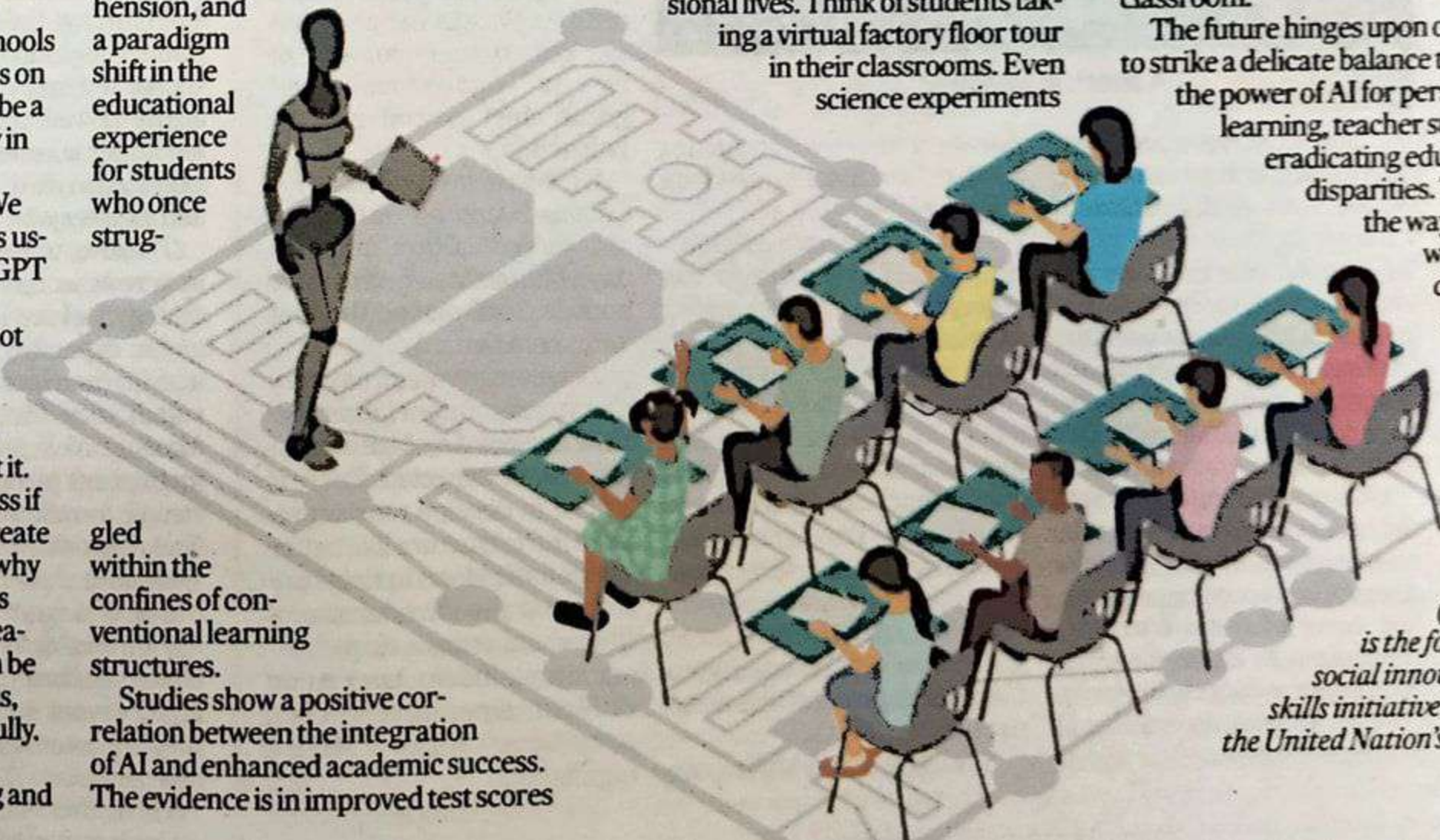
The combined powers of AI and immersive technologies like AR/VR can help students access a world-class education regardless of location and school. Students can also access immersive vocational training and pick up real-life skills to help them later in their professional lives. Think of students taking a virtual factory floor tour in their classrooms. Even science experiments

and virtual science labs can help solve school infrastructure issues.

■ **Teacher empowerment:** Most importantly, teachers benefit the most from thoughtful technology integration in classrooms. AI tools can assist teachers with administrative tasks and automate routine paperwork so that they can spend more time cultivating meaningful relationships with the students. This will allow schools to become a haven of supportive learning. Teachers can benefit immensely from assistance in designing question papers, classroom assignments, and capstone projects. Using chatbots as mentors and digital assistants can also bring fun to the classroom.

The future hinges upon our ability to strike a delicate balance to harness the power of AI for personalised learning, teacher support, and eradicating educational disparities. This paves the way for a future where every child has access and the opportunity to thrive.

(The author is the founder of a social innovation and skills initiative aligned with the United Nation's SDGs)



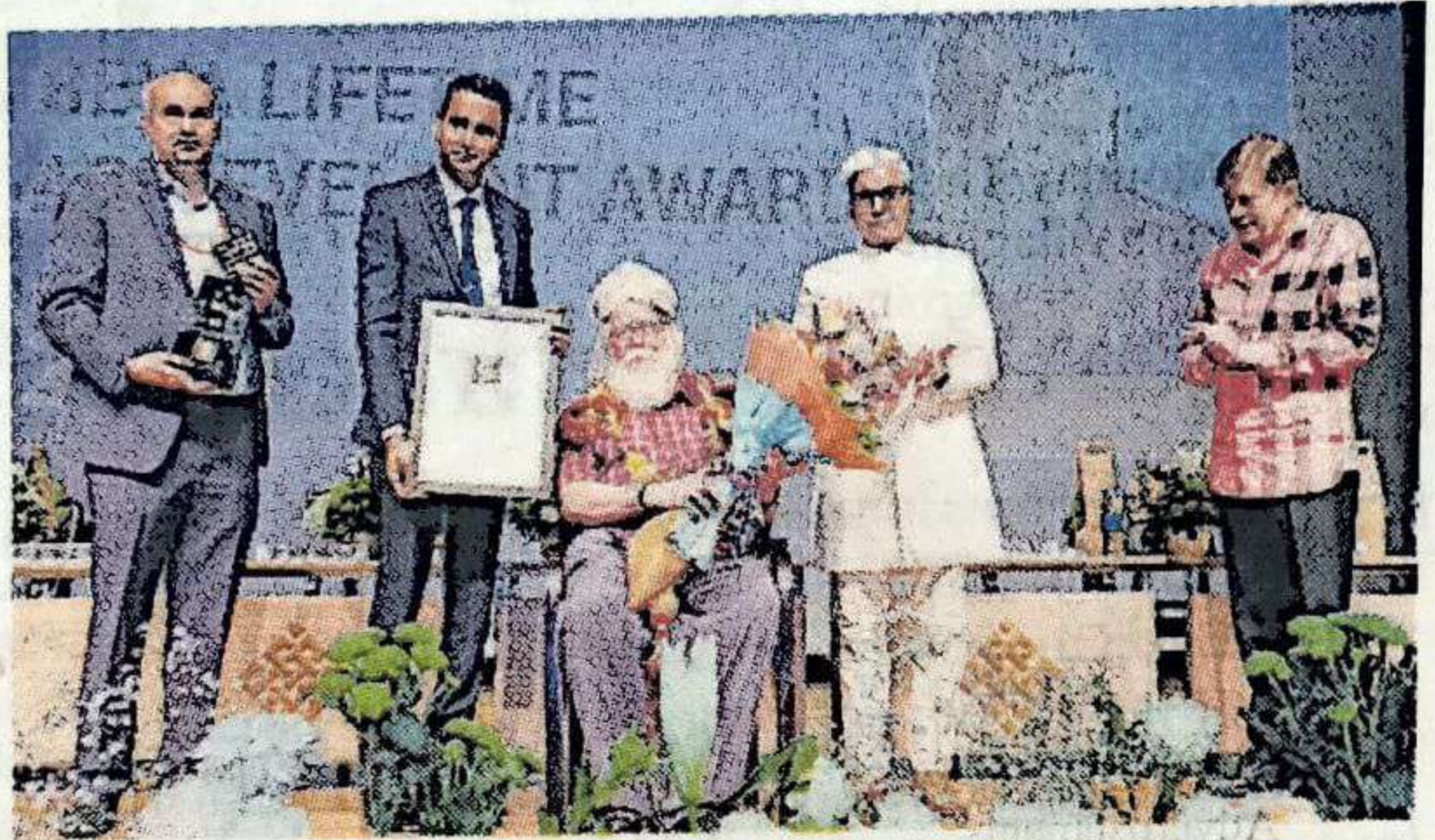
REVA University celebrates Founder's Day

The Founder's Day of REVA University was held on the occasion of the birthday of Dr P Shyama Raju, Chancellor, on January 6, 2024, at the campus. Dr Shyama Raju thanked his "family, extended family and REVA community for the wishes". He outlined his vision for REVA - to rank among the top 500 global universities. He called on REVA graduates to be societal contributors and leaders, eventually becoming job providers.

He highlighted the presentation of awards to distinguished individuals across various domains during the Founder's Day celebrations at REVA University. He described this tradition as an annual event for the REVA family, aiming to recognise and honour achievers for their noteworthy contributions.

REVA Lifetime Achievement Award 2024 was presented to Nambi Narayanan, scientist and Anant Nag, actor. TV presenter and actress Anushree was awarded the REVA Excellence Award.

Nambi Narayanan's contributions to India's space programme have been invaluable and his resilience and dedication to scientific pursuits have earned him recognition and respect. He said he was fortunate to have collaborated with scientific luminaries such as Prof UR Rao, Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, Prof Satish Dhawan and Dr Vikram Sarabhai. "I am fortunate, with limited resources, my



Nambi Narayanan (seated) receives the REVA Lifetime Achievement Award from Dr P Shyama Raju (fourth from left). Also seen (left to right) Dr M Dhanamjaya, Umesh S Raju and Anant Nag.



Anant Nag (seated) receives the REVA Lifetime Achievement Award from Dr P Shyama Raju (extreme right). Also seen (left to right) Nambi Narayanan, Dr M Dhanamjaya and Umesh S Raju.

team and I were able to make a substantial contribution to aerospace 50 years ago". He also praised REVA for creating a clean and green campus under the guidance of Chancellor Dr Shyama Raju.

Anant Nag commended Dr Shyama Raju for his vision of giving back to the community. He recalled Dr Shyama Raju's contribution for the completion of the Mekhri Circle project. "The budget allocated was Rs 118 crores and time given was one year.

However, Dr Shyama Raju finished it in just six months with Rs 24 crores."

Anushree said, "I am honoured to share the stage with Nambi Narayanan and Anant Nag. Dr Shyama Raju's vision of giving holistic education and thereby producing leaders is indeed commendable."

The event was presided over by Dr Shyama Raju. REVA University's Pro Chancellor Umesh S Raju, Vice Chancellor Dr M Dhanamjaya, trustees, faculty and staff were present.

Curated by **DH Brandspot**

ಗುವಿವಿ, ಇಂಗ್ಲೆಂಡ್‌ನ ಬ್ರಾಡ್‌ಪೋರ್ಟ್ ವಿ.ವಿ. ಸಹಭಾಗಿತ್ವದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಂತರರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಯ ಸಮ್ಮೇಳನ 'ನ್ಯಾನೊ ತಂತ್ರಜ್ಞಾನದಿಂದ ಕೃಷಿ ಉತ್ಪಾದನೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚಳ'

ಪ್ರಜಾವಾಣಿ ವಾರ್ತೆ

ಕಲಬುರಗಿ: ನ್ಯಾನೊ ತಂತ್ರಜ್ಞಾನದ ಸಮರ್ಪಕ ಬಳಕೆಯಿಂದ ಅತಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಜನಸಂಖ್ಯೆಯನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿರುವ ಭಾರತದಂತಹ ದೇಶದಲ್ಲಿ ಕೃಷಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಸ್ವಾವಲಂಬನೆ ಸಾಧಿಸುವುದರ ಜೊತೆಗೆ ಆಹಾರ ಭದ್ರತೆಯನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಬಹುದು ಎಂದು ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಉನ್ನತ ಶಿಕ್ಷಣ ಮಂಡಳಿಯ ಉಪಾಧ್ಯಕ್ಷ ಪ್ರೊ. ಎಸ್.ಆರ್. ನಿರಂಜನ ಅಭಿಪ್ರಾಯಪಟ್ಟರು.

ಗುಲಬರ್ಗಾ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯ ಹಾಗೂ ಇಂಗ್ಲೆಂಡ್‌ನ ಬ್ರಾಡ್‌ಪೋರ್ಟ್ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯದ ಸಹಯೋಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಸೋಮವಾರ ಆರಂಭವಾದ ಎರಡು ದಿನಗಳ ಅಂತರರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಯ ಸಮ್ಮೇಳನದಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾತನಾಡಿದ ಅವರು, 'ಭಾರತಕ್ಕೆ ಸ್ವಾತಂತ್ರ್ಯ ದೊರೆತಾಗ ಜನರು ಹಸಿವಿನಿಂದ ನರಳಬೇಕಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಹೀಗಾಗಿ, ಎಂ.ಎಸ್. ಸ್ವಾಮಿನಾಥನ್ ನೇತೃತ್ವದಲ್ಲಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಕೃಷಿ ಉತ್ಪಾದನೆ ಮಾಡುವ ನಿರ್ಧಾರ ಕೈಗೊಂಡಿದ್ದರಿಂದ ಕೃಷಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗಳಾದವು. ಕೃಷಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಆಧುನಿಕ ತಂತ್ರಜ್ಞಾನವನ್ನು ಅಳವಡಿಸಿಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದರಿಂದ ಆಹಾರ ಉತ್ಪಾದನೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚಾಗಿ ಎಲ್ಲರಿಗೂ ಆಹಾರ ಪೂರೈಸುವುದು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಾಗಿದೆ' ಎಂದರು.

ನ್ಯಾನೊ ತಂತ್ರಜ್ಞಾನದ ಬಳಕೆಯಿಂದಾಗಿ ಬೆಳೆಗಳಿಗೆ

2023ರಲ್ಲಿ 13 ಲಕ್ಷ ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಥಿಗಳು ವಿದೇಶದಲ್ಲಿ ವ್ಯಾಸಂಗ ಮಾಡಲು ತೆರಳಿದ್ದರು. ಪ್ರಸಕ್ತ ವರ್ಷ ಈ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ 18 ಲಕ್ಷಕ್ಕೆ ಏರುವ ನಿರೀಕ್ಷೆ ಇದೆ. ಅವರೆಲ್ಲ ವಾಪಸ್ ಬಂದು ದೇಶ ಸೇವೆ ಮಾಡಬೇಕು ಪ್ರೊ.ಎಸ್.ಆರ್. ನಿರಂಜನ ಉಪಾಧ್ಯಕ್ಷ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಉನ್ನತ ಶಿಕ್ಷಣ ಮಂಡಳಿ

ಸಿಂಪಡಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ರಾಸಾಯನಿಕಗಳ ಬಳಕೆಯನ್ನು ತಗ್ಗಿಸಿದೆ. ಸಮರ್ಪಕ ನೀರು ಹಾಗೂ ಪೋಷಕಾಂಶಗಳನ್ನು ಒದಗಿಸುತ್ತಿರುವುದರಿಂದ ಕೃಷಿ ಉತ್ಪಾದನೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚಾಗಿದೆ. ವೈದ್ಯಕೀಯ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ನ್ಯಾನೊ ತಂತ್ರಜ್ಞಾನದ ವ್ಯಾಪಕ ಬಳಕೆಯಿಂದಾಗಿ ಸಾಕಷ್ಟು ಜೀವ ಹಾನಿಗಳನ್ನು ತಪ್ಪಿಸಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. ಕೋವಿಡ್ ಮಹಾಮಾರಿಯನ್ನು ತೊಲಗಿಸಲು ಲಸಿಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ನ್ಯಾನೊ ತಂತ್ರಜ್ಞಾನವನ್ನು ಪರಿಣಾಮಕಾರಿಯಾಗಿ ಬಳಸಲಾಯಿತು ಎಂದು ಹೇಳಿದರು.

ಭಾರತವು ನ್ಯಾನೊ ತಂತ್ರಜ್ಞಾನ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಾಧಿಸಿದ ಪ್ರಗತಿಯನ್ನು ಗಮನಿಸಿ ವಿದೇಶಿ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯಗಳು ಇಲ್ಲಿನ ವಿಜ್ಞಾನಿಗಳೊಂದಿಗೆ ಒಪ್ಪಂದ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ತುದಿಗಾಲಲ್ಲಿ ನಿಂತಿವೆ. ಇದು ಹೆಮ್ಮೆಯ ವಿಚಾರವಾಗಿದೆ. ಅತಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಸಂಶೋಧನಾ ವರದಿಗಳನ್ನು ಅಂತರರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಯ ನಿಯತಕಾಲಿಕದಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸಿದ ದೇಶಗಳ ಪೈಕಿ ಭಾರತ ನಾಲ್ಕನೇ ಸ್ಥಾನದಲ್ಲಿರುವುದೂ ಸಂತಸದ



ಗುಲಬರ್ಗಾ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಸೋಮವಾರ ಆರಂಭವಾದ ಎರಡು ದಿನಗಳ ಅಂತರರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಯ ಸಮ್ಮೇಳನದಲ್ಲಿ ಹರಿಯಾಣದ ಅಮಿಟಿ ವಿ.ವಿ. ಡೀನ್ ಪ್ರೊ. ರಾಜೇಂದ್ರ ಪ್ರಸಾದ್ ದೀಪ ಬೆಳೆದರು. ಪ್ರೊ. ರಾಜನಾಳ್ಕರ್ ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಣ, ಬಿ. ಶರಣಪ್ಪ, ಪ್ರೊ: ಖಗಾನಿ, ಪ್ರೊ. ದಯಾನಂದ ಅಗಸರ, ಪ್ರೊ.ಎಸ್.ಆರ್. ನಿರಂಜನ, ಪ್ರೊ. ವಿದ್ಯಾಸಾಗರ್, ಪ್ರೊ. ಜ್ಯೋತಿ ಧಮ್ಮ ಪ್ರಕಾಶ್ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಿದ್ದರು

ಸಮಾರೋಪ ಇಂದು

ನ್ಯಾನೊ ತಂತ್ರಜ್ಞಾನ ಕುರಿತ ಅಂತರರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಯ ಸಮ್ಮೇಳನದ ಸಮಾರೋಪ ಇಂದೇ 9ರಂದು ಸಂಜೆ 4ಕ್ಕೆ ಗುಲಬರ್ಗಾ ವಿ.ವಿ.ಯ ಡಾ.ಬಿ.ಆರ್. ಅಂಬೇಡ್ಕರ್ ಸಭಾಂಗಣದಲ್ಲಿ ನೆರವೇರಲಿದೆ.

ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಉಸ್ತುವಾರಿ ಸಚಿವ ಪ್ರಿಯಾಂಕ್ ಖರ್ಗೆ, ಕೆಕೆಆರ್‌ಡಿಬಿ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷ ಡಾ. ಅಜಯ್ ಸಿಂಗ್, ಇಂಗ್ಲೆಂಡ್‌ನ ಬ್ರಾಡ್‌ಪೋರ್ಟ್ ವಿ.ವಿ. ಕುಲಪತಿ ಪ್ರೊ. ಶಿಲ್ಪೆ

ಸಂಗತಿ ಎಂದು ಪ್ರೊ. ನಿರಂಜನ ತಿಳಿಸಿದರು. ಹರಿಯಾಣದ ಅಮಿಟಿ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯದ ವಿಜ್ಞಾನ, ಎಂಜಿನಿಯರಿಂಗ್ ಮತ್ತು ತಂತ್ರಜ್ಞಾನ ನಿಕಾಯದ ಡೀನ್ ಪ್ರೊ. ರಾಜೇಂದ್ರ

ಕೊಂಡೊನ್, ಬ್ರಿಟಿಷ್ ಕೌನ್ಸಿಲ್ ದಕ್ಷಿಣ ಭಾರತದ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕಿ ಜನಕಾ ಪುಷ್ಪನಾಥನ್, ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಉನ್ನತ ಶಿಕ್ಷಣ ಮಂಡಳಿಯ ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕ ಪ್ರೊ.ಜಿ. ಚಂದ್ರಶೇಖರ, ಶ್ರೀಲಂಕಾದ ಯೂನಿವರ್ಸಿಟಿ ಆಫ್ ಪೆರಾಡೆನಿಯಾದ ಪ್ರೊ. ಜೆ.ಕೆ. ದಿಸ್ಸಾಯಕೆ, ಪುಣೆಯ ನ್ಯಾಶನಲ್ ಕೆಮಿಕಲ್ ಲ್ಯಾಬೋರೇಟರಿಯ ಪ್ರಧಾನ ವಿಜ್ಞಾನಿ ಪ್ರೊ. ಸಯ್ಯದ್ ಜಿ. ದಸ್ತಗೀರ್ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸುವರು. ಗುಲಬರ್ಗಾ ವಿ.ವಿ. ಕುಲಪತಿ ಪ್ರೊ. ದಯಾನಂದ ಅಗಸರ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷತೆ ವಹಿಸುವರು.

ಪ್ರಸಾದ್ ದಿಕ್ಕೂಚಿ ಭಾಷಣ ಮಾಡಿದರು. ಗುಲಬರ್ಗಾ ವಿ.ವಿ. ಕುಲಪತಿ ಪ್ರೊ. ದಯಾನಂದ ಅಗಸರ, ಬ್ರಾಡ್‌ಪೋರ್ಟ್ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯದ ಪ್ರಾಧ್ಯಾಪಕ ಹಾಗೂ ಸಮ್ಮೇಳನದ ಸಂಘಟನಾ ಕಾರ್ಯದರ್ಶಿ ಪ್ರೊ.ಎಸ್.ಎ. ಖಗಾನಿ, ಗುವಿವಿ ಕುಲಸಚಿವ ಬಿ. ಶರಣಪ್ಪ, ಸ್ಥಳೀಯ ಸಂಘಟನಾ ಕಾರ್ಯದರ್ಶಿ ಪ್ರೊ. ಜಿ.ಎಂ. ವಿದ್ಯಾಸಾಗರ್, ಪ್ರೊ. ರಾಜನಾಳ್ಕರ್ ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಣ ವೇದಿಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿದ್ದರು. ಕುಲಸಚಿವ (ಮೌಲ್ಯಮಾಪನ) ಪ್ರೊ. ಜ್ಯೋತಿ ಧಮ್ಮ ಪ್ರಕಾಶ್ ವಂದನಾರ್ಪಣೆ ಮಾಡಿದರು.



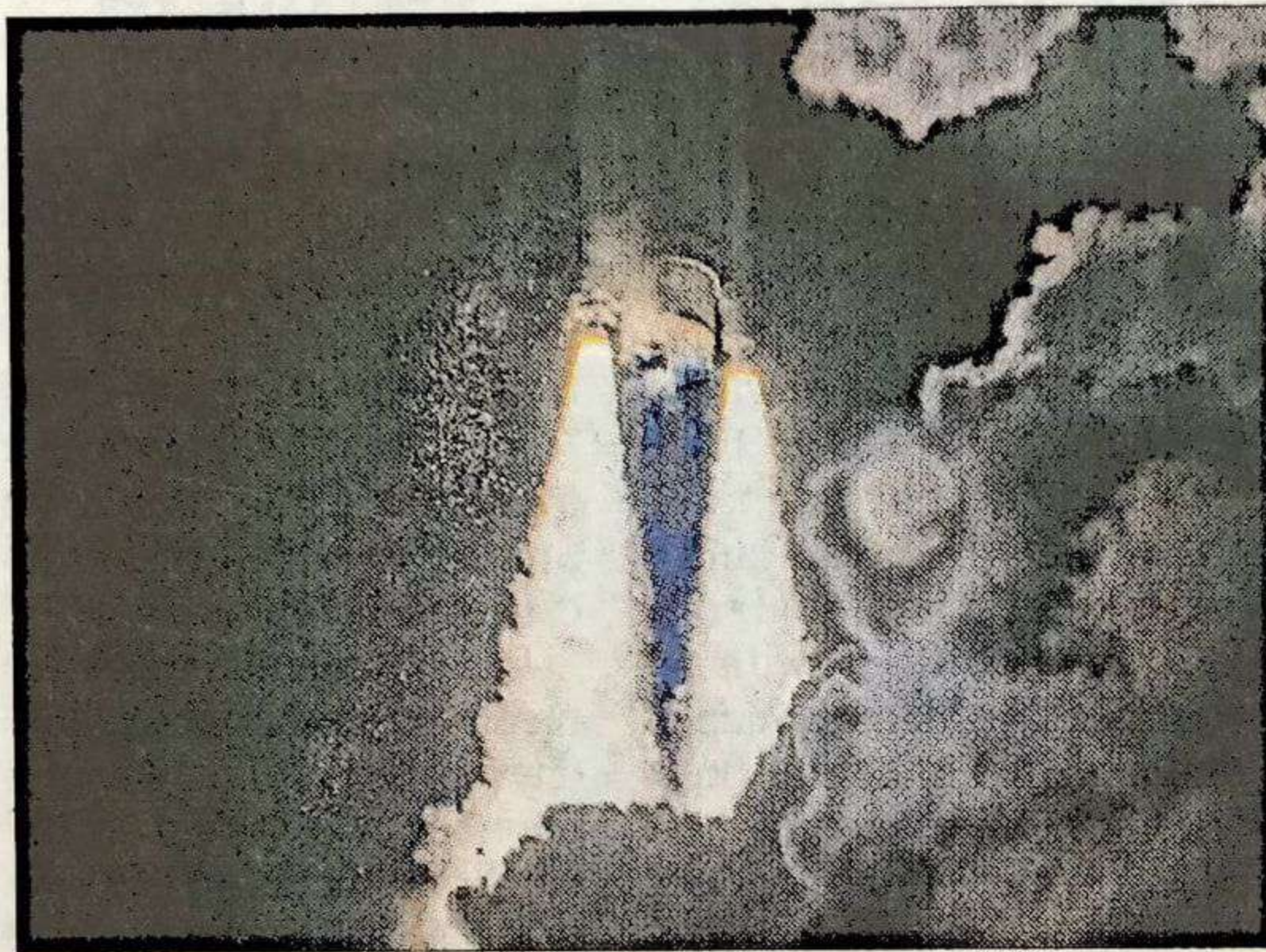
Most Important Topics For

Science & Technology

UPSC Prelims & Mains

First US lunar lander in over 50 yrs rockets toward Moon

Propels space race among private companies



The brand new rocket, United Launch Alliance's Vulcan Centaur, lifts off from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida on Sunday. AFP

CAPE CANAVERAL (US), AP/PTI

The first US lunar lander in more than 50 years rocketed toward the Moon on Monday, launching private companies on a space race to make deliveries for Nasa and other customers.

Astrobotic Technology's lander caught a ride on a brand new rocket, United Launch Alliance's Vulcan. The Vulcan streaked through the Florida predawn sky, putting the spacecraft on a roundabout route to the Moon that should culminate with an attempted landing on February 23.

"So, so, so excited. We are on our way to the Moon!" Astrobotic chief executive John Thornton said. The Pittsburgh company aims to be the first private business to successfully

land on the Moon, something only four countries have accomplished. But a Houston company also has a lander ready to fly, and could beat it to the lunar surface, taking a more direct path. "First to launch. First to land is TBD," to be determined, Thornton noted. Nasa gave the two companies millions to build and fly their own lunar landers. The space agency wants the privately owned landers to scope out the place before astronauts arrive while

delivering Nasa tech and science experiments as well as odds and ends for other customers. Astrobotic's contract for the Peregrine lander: \$108 million.

The space agency's new Artemis program looks to return astronauts to the Moon's surface within the next few years. First will be a lunar fly-around with four astronauts, possibly before the end of the year.

However, the historic mission was facing potential failure due

REACHING THE STARS

■ Peregrine lander is supposed to land on the Moon on February 23.

■ A soft landing on the Moon has been accomplished only by few national space agencies: the Soviet Union was first, in 1966, followed by the US, which is still the only country to put people on the Moon. China successfully landed three times, while India was the most recent to achieve the feat on its second attempt, last year.

to technical issues. Teams at ground control found they were unable to point the spacecraft correctly at the sun, necessary for its top-mounted solar panel to achieve maximum power generation for Peregrine's systems. "The team believes that the likely cause of the unstable sun-pointing is a propulsion anomaly that, if proven true, threatens the ability of the spacecraft to soft land on the Moon," Astrobotic tweeted.

'Tech must be affordable to poor'

Conference on recent advanced bio-nano composites begins at GU

KALABURAGI, DHNS

Technology should be cheaper and affordable to the underprivileged and farmers, said Karnataka State Higher Education Council Vice-Chairman S R Niranjana.

Addressing the inaugural session of a two-day international conference on 'Recent advanced bio-nano composites for enhancing human health' organised at Gulbarga University here on Monday, he said that people will not make a note of the technology if it is costly and complex due to the poverty in the country. Stating that India has made great achievement in the field of science and technology, he stressed the need to continue the advancements.

Pointing out that the agriculture sector is benefiting from the accomplishments in science and technology which give new ideas and solutions to combat severe problems, he said that more efficient and fewer contaminant nano-formulations are continuously produced for sustainable agriculture with the advent of nano-technology.

"Agriculture acts as the primary pillar of the developing economy and provides food for a better life. This sector has been facing many challenges including unpredictable climate change and contamination of soil with various harmful environmental pollutants like fertilisers and pesticides.



Karnataka State Higher Education Council Vice-Chairman S R Niranjana inaugurates a two-day international conference in Gulbarga University on Monday. DH PHOTO

Therefore, more innovative technologies are immediately needed to overcome these issues. Nano-technology has contributed to the agro-technological revolution," he said.

He said that the farmers need to grow crops in less time and good assortments in hybrids have reduced the harvesting cycle for many crops, resulting in good yield. Nano-materials in agriculture reduce the amount of chemical products sprayed and minimise nutrient losses in fertilisation apart from increasing the yield through optimised water and nutrient management, he added.

"Nano-technology has great promise in manipulating things at the atomic level to change many parts of medical treatment like diagnosis, monitoring for diseases, operating equipment, developing vaccine and medication delivery. But, it should serve the society by reaching to the common man. Modernisation and industrialisation of agriculture sector along with higher investment into it and legislative support are much significant," he explained.

Emphasising the need to provide quality education to the students, he said that this

will pave the way for proper research and innovations.

Delivering the key-note address, Haryana Amity Institute of Bio-technology Director Rajendra Prasad said that fungal infections constitute a significant and evolving aspect of human health, presenting diverse challenges. Ranging from superficial skin conditions to life-threatening systemic disease, these infections are caused by various fungi including yeasts, moulds and dermatophytes, he added.

"Understanding the diverse nature of these infections, addressing challenges like anti-fungal resistance and advancing research for innovative treatments are essential components in safeguarding human health from the complexities posed by fungal pathogens. Prevention and early diagnosis are pivotal in addressing fungal infections especially in high-risk populations," he opined.

University of Bradford Prof Shirley Condon, British Council Higher Education Programmes Head Rajendra Tripathi, Gulbarga University Vice-Chancellor Dayanand Aggar, syndicate member Raghavendra Bairappa and academic council member T Sankarappa were present.

Dark corners of the Web offer a glimpse at AI's nefarious future

NYT

STUART A THOMPSON

When the Louisiana parole board met in October to discuss the potential release of a convicted murderer, it called on a doctor with years of experience in mental health to talk about the inmate.

The parole board was not the only group paying attention.

A collection of online trolls took screenshots of the doctor from an online feed of her testimony and edited the images with artificial intelligence tools to make her appear naked. They then shared the manipulated files on 4chan, an anonymous message board known for fostering harassment and spreading hateful content and conspiracy theories.

It was one of numerous times that people on 4chan had used new AI-powered tools such as audio editors and image generators to spread racist and offensive content about people who had appeared before the parole board, according to Daniel Siegel, a graduate student at Columbia University who researches how AI is being exploited for malicious purposes. Siegel chronicled the activity on the site for several months.

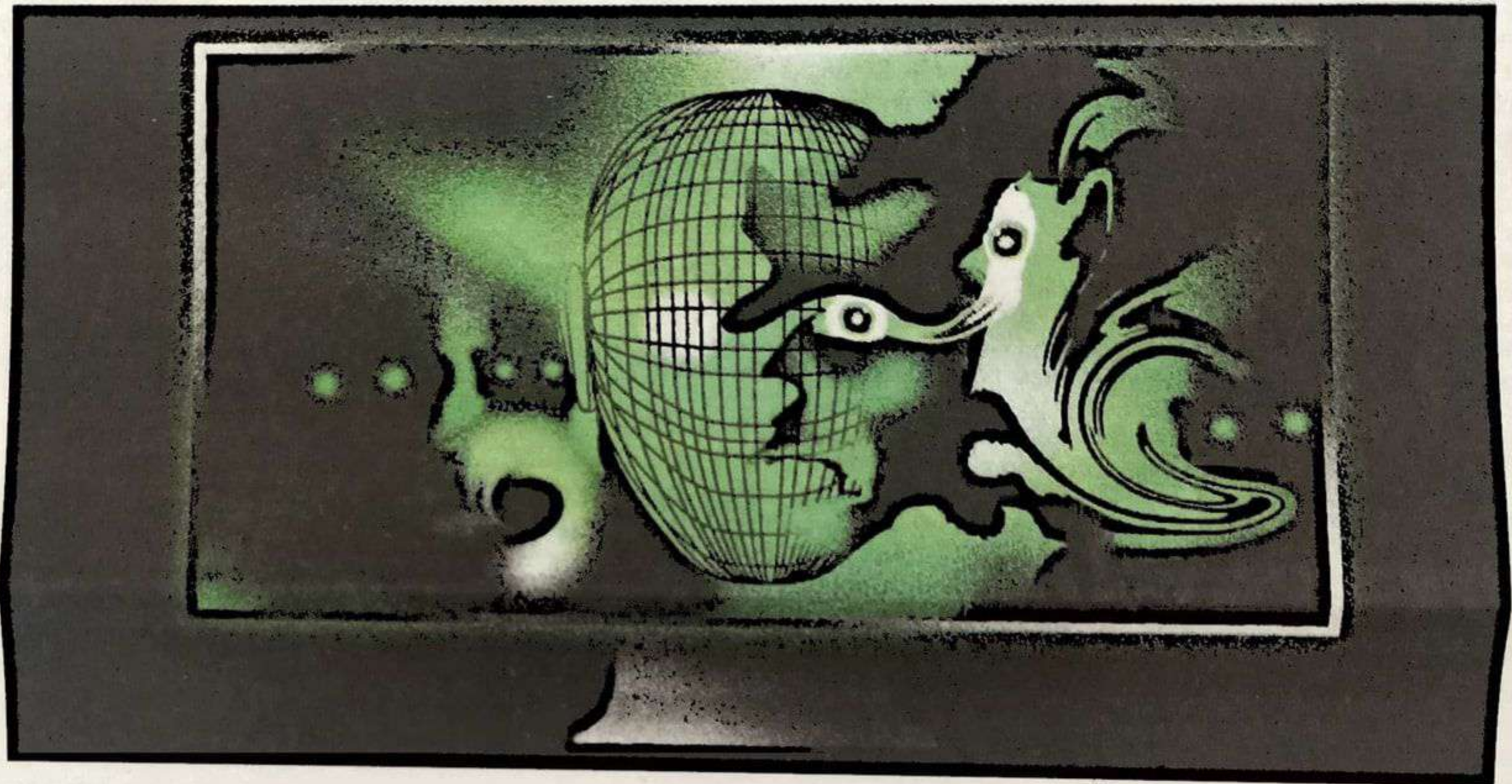
The manipulated images and audio have not spread far beyond the confines of 4chan, Siegel said. But experts who monitor fringe message boards said the efforts offered a glimpse at how nefarious internet users could employ sophisticated AI tools to supercharge online harassment and hate campaigns in the months and years ahead.

Callum Hood, head of research at the Centre for Countering Digital Hate, said fringe sites such as 4chan — perhaps the most notorious of them all — often gave early warning signs for how new technology would be used to project extreme ideas. Those platforms, he said, are filled with young people who are “very quick to adopt new technologies” such as AI to “project their ideology back into mainstream spaces.”

Those tactics, he said, are often adopted by some users on more popular online platforms.

Here are several problems resulting from AI tools that experts discovered on 4chan — and what regulators and technology companies are doing about them.

Artificial Images & AI Pornography
AI tools such as Dall-E and Midjourney gen-



erate novel images from simple text descriptions. But a new wave of AI image generators are made for the purpose of creating fake pornography, including removing clothes from existing images.

“They can use AI to just create an image of exactly what they want,” Hood said of online hate and misinformation campaigns.

There is no federal law banning the creation of fake images of people, leaving groups such as the Louisiana parole board scrambling to determine what can be done. The board opened an investigation in response to Siegel’s findings on 4chan.

“Any images that are produced portraying our board members or any participants in our hearings in a negative manner, we would definitely take issue with,” said Francis Abbott, executive director of the Louisiana Board of Pardons and Committee on Parole. “But we do have to operate within the law, and whether it’s against the law or not — that has to be determined by somebody else.” Illinois expanded its law governing revenge pornography to allow targets of nonconsensual pornography made by AI systems to sue creators or distributors. California, Virginia and New York have also passed laws banning the distribution or creation of AI-generated pornography without consent.

Cloning Voices

Late last year, ElevenLabs, an AI company, released a tool that could create a convinc-

ing digital replica of someone’s voice saying anything typed into the program.

Almost as soon as the tool went live, users on 4chan circulated clips of a fake Emma Watson, a British actor, reading Adolf Hitler’s manifesto, *Mein Kampf*.

Using content from the Louisiana parole board hearings, 4chan users have since shared fake clips of judges uttering offensive and racist comments about defendants. Many of the clips were generated by ElevenLabs’ tool, according to Siegel, who used an AI voice identifier developed by ElevenLabs to investigate their origins.

ElevenLabs rushed to impose limits, including requiring users to pay before they could gain access to voice-cloning tools. But the changes did not seem to slow the spread of AI-created voices, experts said. Scores of videos using fake celebrity voices have circulated on TikTok and YouTube — many of them sharing political disinformation. Some major social media companies, including TikTok and YouTube, have since required labels on some AI content.

President Joe Biden issued an executive order in October asking that all companies label such content and directed the Commerce Department to develop standards for watermarking and authenticating AI content.

Custom AI Tools

As Meta moved to gain a foothold in the AI

race, the company embraced a strategy to release its software code to researchers. The approach, broadly called “open source,” can speed development by giving academics and technologists access to more raw material to find improvements and develop their own tools.

When the company released Llama, its large language model, to select researchers in February, the code quickly leaked onto 4chan. People there used it for different ends: They tweaked the code to lower or eliminate guardrails, creating new chatbots capable of producing anti-semitic ideas.

The effort previewed how free-to-use and open-source AI tools can be tweaked by technologically savvy users.

“While the model is not accessible to all, and some have tried to circumvent the approval process, we believe the current release strategy allows us to balance responsibility and openness,” a spokesperson for Meta said in an email.

In the months since, language models have been developed to echo far-right talking points or to create more sexually explicit content. Image generators have been tweaked by 4chan users to produce nude images or provide racist memes, bypassing the controls imposed by larger technology companies.

The New York Times

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HEALTH



IN BRIEF



605 new COVID cases; four deaths in last 24 hours

India logged 605 new cases of COVID-19 in the 24 hours to 8 a.m. on Monday, while the number of active cases of the infection stood at 4,002, the Union Health Ministry said. Four deaths – two from Kerala and one each from Karnataka and Tripura – had been reported. The number of daily cases had dropped to double-digits till December 5, 2023, but cases began to increase after the new variant JN.1 emerged and cold weather conditions. After December 5, 841 new cases were reported on December 31, official sources said. Of the total active cases, around 92% are recovering under home isolation. PTI



KAVITA BAJELI-DATT @ New Delhi

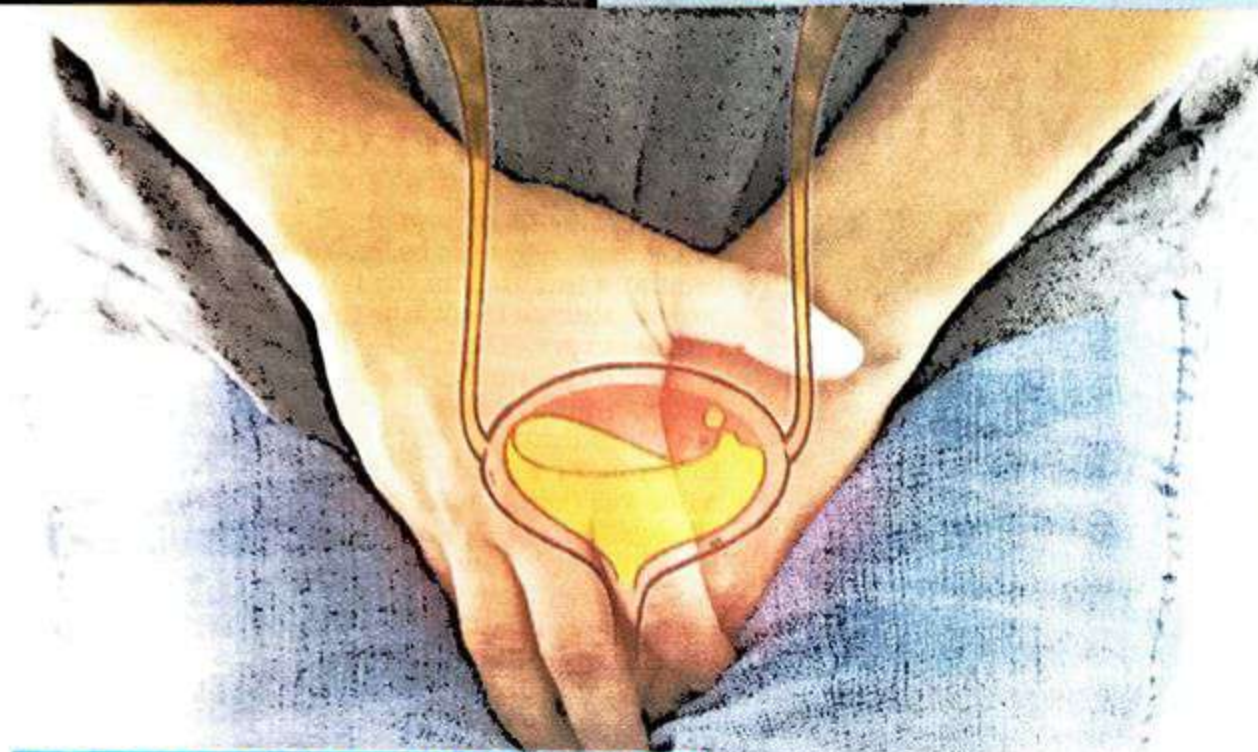
FIVE years back, a 50-year-old woman was diagnosed with advanced bladder cancer. Reluctant about bladder removal, she opted for creation of an artificial bladder. She underwent chemotherapy, followed by surgery and had an artificial bladder created. Today, the Kerala-based woman, who completed the treatment without any complications, remains well and cancer-free. In another case, a 55 year-old Delhi resident who was detected with the same cancer, robotic surgery was performed as the disease had not yet spread elsewhere. The patient was back to daily routines within two weeks.

New treatment methods like artificial bladder created using one's tissues and robotic surgery are improving outcomes and standard of living. "Nowadays, this is done with robotic surgery, which reduces morbidity of the procedure. These are advantages in the current era with new treatment methods like robotic surgery," said Dr Ginil Kumar P, professor and HOD of Urology, Amrita Hospital, Kochi.

Bladder cancer is a common type of cancer detected in both men and women, but its prevalence is high in men. Though both men and women can get bladder cancer, it is prevalent in men nearly four times more compared to women, with incidence rates of 9.5 per lakh males and 2.4 per lakh females globally.

"With proper evaluation and early diagnosis, bladder cancer can be treated completely," said Dr Vimal Dassi, director of department of urology, uro-oncology, robotics and kidney transplant, Max Healthcare, Vaishali and Noida, Uttar Pradesh.

Bladder cancer begins in the cells of the bladder - a hollow muscular organ in the lower abdomen that stores urine. As per GLOBOCAN 2020, an online database providing global cancer statistics and estimates of incidence and mortality in 185 countries for



BLADDER CANCER

NEW TECHNIQUES

IMPROVE TREATMENT OUTCOME

36 types of cancer, bladder cancer is ranked 17 in incidence and 19 in mortality in India.

"After prostate cancer, bladder cancer is commonly found among those above 60 years of age, especially men," said Dassi.

"Though smoking increases the chances of bladder cancer, in India, a lot of bladder cancer is not directly linked to smoking, and even non-smokers can get bladder cancer," said Ginil, who treated the Kerala-based

SYMPTOMS

Blood in urine (hematuria) | Frequent urination | Pain or burning sensation during urination | Back or pelvic pain | Urgency to urinate | Difficulty in urinating

TREATMENT OPTIONS

Surgery- Removal of the tumour or removal of the entire bladder (cystectomy) in advanced cases

Chemotherapy | Immunotherapy | Radiation Therapy | Targeted Therapy

woman. He added that genetic abnormalities can also cause aggressive bladder cancer. Other reasons for the disease are advanced age and exposure to certain chemicals.

"Occupational and environmental exposure, such as tobacco dyes, are the other factors that could lead to bladder cancer. Those working as rubber professionals, hairdressers, painters and leather workers are at increased risk of bladder cancer," added Dassi.

There are two types of bladder cancer. The first is non-muscle invasive, in which the tumour is removed via transurethral route using a cystoscope - endoscopy is done through the urinary tract - followed by intravesical therapy.

The second is muscle-invasive bladder cancer or metastatic bladder cancer. It is advanced bladder cancer in which the tumour has invaded the bladder wall and spread outside the bladder. This requires surgery.

"Treatment modalities for urinary bladder cancer encompass a range of options tailored to individual cases. These may involve surgical interventions, chemotherapy, immunotherapy and radiation therapy. Selecting a particular treatment strategy depends on the stage of cancer, overall health status and specific patient considerations," said Dr Satish Pawar, senior consultant and head of surgical oncology, CARE Hospitals, Banjara Hills,

Hyderabad.

While Cisplatin or carboplatin are the main chemotherapy drugs, there are various newer drugs and immunomodulatory agents for advanced cancer cases where patients do not respond to routine chemotherapy drugs.

"A significant breakthrough was when the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved Enfortumab vedotin (Padcev) and Pembrolizumab (Keytruda) on December 15 as newer drugs for first-line treatment for those in advanced cases," said Dassi.

However, patients with metastatic bladder cancer are often elderly and unfit to receive chemotherapy. In such clinical scenarios, immunotherapy such as Atezolizumab/Pembrolizumab as monotherapy can be a reasonable option. "Immunotherapy drugs have better safety profile than chemotherapy and can be easily tolerated in patients who are ineligible for platinum-based chemotherapy," said Dr Randeep Singh, senior consultant and director of medical oncology, Narayana Super Speciality Hospital, Gurgaon.

"The primary treatment of early urinary bladder cancer is surgery involving partial or complete removal of bladder along with lymph nodes in the same region (radical cystectomy)," said Singh.

"Robotic surgery offers many advantages such as reduced blood loss, minor scars, quicker recovery, improved outcomes and enhanced visualisation of the surgical field, coupled with patient satisfaction in the treatment of bladder cancer," added Dr Mohan Keshavamurthy, senior director, Fortis Hospitals, Bengaluru, and chairman, renal sciences specialty council, Fortis Healthcare.

Dr Akash Shah, consultant, urological and robotic oncoSurgeon, HCG Cancer Center, Borivali, Mumbai, said vigilance towards painless blood in urine, frequent urination, urgency or burning micturition are symptoms not to be ignored. "Apart from medical interventions, lifestyle modifications like quitting smoking, avoiding workplace irritants and maintaining hydration can mitigate risks."



XPLAINER

Shortness of breath can be caused by heart ailments

SYMPTOMS

Most common symptoms

- Suffocation
- Shortness of breath
- Unable to breathe
- Loss of consciousness due to difficulty in breathing

In some cases, pulmonary edema occurs slowly

- The patient may experience difficulty in sleeping
- Difficulty walking

Pulmonary edema can occur suddenly in a patient. In such cases, it comes with a sudden onset of breathlessness

ANNA JOSE @ Kochi

PULMONARY edema is a condition mostly seen in people who have a history of heart ailments. It is caused by build-up of excess fluid in the lungs, making it difficult to breathe.

"Pulmonary edema is a medical condition due to sudden fluid accumulation in the lung air spaces (alveoli). In most cases, this is caused by heart and kidney diseases. When the heart's functioning reduces, blood is not pumped throughout the body (including kidneys) properly. This leads to backlog fluid accumulation in the lungs causing pulmonary edema. As there is excess fluid in the lungs, they cannot take oxygen, causing severe breathlessness," said Dr Anand Kumar V, senior consultant cardiologist at Lakeshore Hospital.

Coronary artery disease and its consequences like heart attacks and post-attack sequelae causing reduced heart pumping, is

the commonest cause of pulmonary edema. The condition can also occur due to another heart disease like cardiomyopathies (impaired heart muscle function) and damage in heart valves (blocks, leakages etc).

There are two types of pulmonary edema. "Cardiogenic and non-cardiogenic pulmonary edema are the two types. Cardiogenic are those caused by heart diseases, while non-cardiogenic pulmonary edema is caused by infections like pneumonia, inhaling toxins and in rare cases after consuming drugs," said Dr Rony Mathew Kadavil, head of the department and senior consultant with the department of cardiology, Lisie Hospital, Kochi.

TREATMENT

THE condition must be treated immediately. "We have to give oxygen and sedate the patient. He or she may require high oxygen therapy, non-invasive ventilation or even invasive ventilation. However, the treatment

primarily is about treating the cause of the condition. If the condition is caused by a heart failure or a cardiac cause, we need to treat it. If it is due to a valve problem, treat the valve problem. If it is pneumonia, they are given antibiotics. The underlying cause must be treated," said Rony.

The prevalence of pulmonary edema is high in the aged population. "As we get older, the chance of reduced functioning of heart and kidney is high. Thus, the prevalence is high in the aged population. If the disease is caused by infections, youngsters will also be affected," said Anand. Preventing heart and kidney diseases by following a healthy lifestyle, diet and exercises can help. "Regular monitoring through BP and diabetes check-ups are important. In the case of heart and kidney diseases, the patient must be given immediate and effective treatment. If not, the chances of pulmonary edema are high," added Anand.



ಚಳಿಗಾಲದ ಅಂತ್ಯದ ಏಳು ದಿನ, ಬೇಸಿಗೆ ಆರಂಭದ ಏಳು ದಿನಗಳ ಈ ಅವಧಿ ಋತು ಸಂಧಿ ಕಾಲವೆನಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲಿದೆ. ಶೀತ ವಾತಾವರಣದಿಂದ ಬಿಡುಗಡೆ ಹೊಂದುತ್ತ, ಉಷ್ಣ ವಾತಾವರಣಕ್ಕೆ ನಿಧಾನವಾಗಿ ಹೊಂದಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದು ಎಂದರ್ಥ. ಚಳಿಗಾಲ-ಬೇಸಿಗೆ ಕಾಲದ ನಡುವಿನ ಈ ಎರಡು ವಾರ ವಿಶೇಷ ಕಾಳಜಿ ವಹಿಸಿದರೆ ಸಂಧಿಕಾಲದ ವ್ಯಾಧಿಯನ್ನು ದೂರವಿಡಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯ.

ಸಂಧಿಕಾಲದ ವ್ಯಾಧಿ ಬಾರದಿರಲು

ಕೃಷ್ಣ ಶಿರೂರ

ಋತುಮಾನ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗೆ ನಮ್ಮ ದೇಹ ಕೂಡ ಕೆಲವು ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗೆ ಒಗ್ಗಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲೇಬೇಕು. ಇದು ಪ್ರಕೃತಿ ನಿಯಮ. ಚಳಿಗಾಲದಿಂದ ಬೇಸಿಗೆಗೆ ಪ್ರವೇಶ ಪಡೆಯುವ ಸಂಧಿಕಾಲದಲ್ಲಿ ನಮ್ಮ ಆರೋಗ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಏರುಪೇರಾಗುವುದು ಕೂಡ ಸಹಜ. ಶೀತ, ಕಮ್ಮು, ಕಫ, ಪಿತ್ತ, ವಾತ, ಜ್ವರ, ಸಂದು ನೋವಿನಂಥ ವ್ಯಾಧಿಗಳು ನಮ್ಮನ್ನು ದೈಹಿಕವಾಗಿ ಬಾಧಿಸುತ್ತವೆ, ಮಾನಸಿಕವಾಗಿ ಕಿರಿಕಿರಿಗೆ ದಾರಿಯಾಗಲಿದೆ. ಒಂದಷ್ಟು ಮುಂಜಾಗ್ರತೆ ವಹಿಸಿದರೆ ಆ ವ್ಯಾಧಿಗಳ ತೀವ್ರತೆಯನ್ನು ಕುಗ್ಗಿಸಬಹುದು. ಹುಬ್ಬಳ್ಳಿಯ ಆಯುರ್ವೇದ ಮಹಾವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯದ ಸಹಾಯಕ



ಪ್ರಾಧ್ಯಾಪಕ ಡಾ.ಸೌರಭ ಎಸ್.ಕೆ. ಅವರು ಈ ಕಾಲ ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸುವ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ತಿಳಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ.

ಸಂಧಿಕಾಲದ ವ್ಯಾಧಿಗಳೆಂದರೇನು?

ನಾವೀಗ ಚಳಿಗಾಲದ ಅಂತ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದೇವೆ. ಇನ್ನು ಕೆಲವೇ ದಿನಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಬೇಸಿಗೆ ಕಾಲಕ್ಕೆ ಕಾಲಿಡಲಿದ್ದೇವೆ. ಅಂದರೆ ಶೀತ ಪ್ರಕೃತಿಯಿಂದ ಉಷ್ಣ ಪ್ರಕೃತಿಗೆ ನಾವು ಒಗ್ಗಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕಾದ ಕಾಲ. ಇದನ್ನು ಆಯುರ್ವೇದದಲ್ಲಿ 'ಋತು ಸಂಧಿ' ಎಂದೂ ಕರೆಯುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಚಳಿಗಾಲದ ಅಂತ್ಯದ ಏಳು ದಿನಗಳ ಜತೆಗೆ ಬೇಸಿಗೆ ಆರಂಭದ ಏಳು ದಿನಗಳೂ ಸೇರಿ ಎರಡು ವಾರಗಳ ಈ ಅವಧಿಯೇ ಸಂಧಿ ಕಾಲವೆನಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲಿದೆ. ಶೀತ ವಾತಾವರಣದಿಂದ ನಿಧಾನವಾಗಿ ಬಿಡುಗಡೆ ಹೊಂದುತ್ತ, ಉಷ್ಣ ವಾತಾವರಣಕ್ಕೆ ಹೊಂದಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದು ಎಂದರ್ಥ.



ಋತುಮಾನ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಯ ಸಮಯದಲ್ಲಿ ನೆಗಡಿ, ಮೂಗು ಕಟ್ಟುವುದು, ಕಮ್ಮು ಜ್ವರ ಉಲ್ಟಣಗೊಳ್ಳಲಿದೆ. ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಚಳಿಗಾಲದಲ್ಲಿ ಶೀತ, ಕಮ್ಮು, ಕಫ, ಜ್ವರ ಬಾಧಿಸುತ್ತಲಿದ್ದರೂ ದೇಹದಲ್ಲಿ ರೋಗನಿರೋಧಕ ಶಕ್ತಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿರುವ ಕಾರಣ ವ್ಯಾಧಿಯ ತೀವ್ರತೆ ಕುಗ್ಗಿರಲಿದೆ. ಅದೇ ಬೇಸಿಗೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ರೋಗನಿರೋಧಕ ಶಕ್ತಿ ಕುಗ್ಗುವ ಕಾರಣ ಈ ವ್ಯಾಧಿಗಳು ಉಲ್ಟಣಗೊಳ್ಳಲಿದೆ. ಕೆಲವರಿಗೆ ಉಸಿರಾಟದ ತೊಂದರೆ, ಮೂತ್ರವಿಕಾರ, ಮೈಗ್ರೇನ್, ಖಿನ್ನತೆ, ಪಿತ್ತ, ವಾಂತಿ, ನಿಶ್ಯಕ್ತಿಯ ರೂಪದಲ್ಲೂ ವ್ಯಾಧಿಗಳು ಬಾಧಿಸಬಹುದು. ಈ ಸಂಧಿ ಕಾಲದ ವ್ಯಾಧಿಗಳು ಎಲ್ಲ ವಯಸ್ಸಿನವರನ್ನೂ ಕಾಡಬಹುದು. ವೃದ್ಧರು, ಮಕ್ಕಳಲ್ಲಿ ತುಸು ಹೆಚ್ಚಿರಲಿದೆ. ನಾವು ಅನುಸರಿಸುವ ಆಹಾರ ಪದ್ಧತಿ, ಜೀವನಕ್ರಮ, ವ್ಯಾಯಾಮ, ಯೋಗದಿಂದ ಈ ವ್ಯಾಧಿಗಳನ್ನು ಹತೋಟಿಯಲ್ಲಿಡಬಹುದು.

ವಸಂತ ಋತುವಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಉಷ್ಣತೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿದಾಗ 'ವಮನ ಚಿಕಿತ್ಸೆ' ಅಂದರೆ ಔಷಧ ನೀಡಿ ಒತ್ತಾಯಪೂರ್ವಕವಾಗಿ ವಾಂತಿ ಮಾಡಿಸಿ ಆರೋಗ್ಯವನ್ನು ಕಾಪಿಡುವ ಚಿಕಿತ್ಸಾಕ್ರಮ ಆಯುರ್ವೇದದಲ್ಲಿದೆ. ಇನ್ನು ಸಂಧಿಕಾಲದ ವ್ಯಾಧಿಗಳಿಂದ ದೂರವಿರಲು ಮನೆಯಲ್ಲೇ ನಾವು ಕೆಲವು ಮನೆಮದ್ದನ್ನು ಅನುಸರಿಸಬಹುದು. ಮಜ್ಜಿಗೆ ಸೇವನೆ, ನೀರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಚಂದನ, ಕರ್ಪೂರ, ಲಾವಂಚದ ಬೇರುಗಳನ್ನು ರಾತ್ರಿಪೂರ್ತಿ ನೆನೆಯಿಟ್ಟು ಆ ನೀರನ್ನು ಕುಡಿಯುವುದರಿಂದ ಪಿತ್ತ-ಕಫವನ್ನು ನಿಗ್ರಹಿಸಬಹುದು. ಉಷ್ಣ ಪದಾರ್ಥ ಸೇವನೆ ಕಡಿಮೆಗೊಳಿಸುವುದು. ಪಾನಕ, ಕೋಸಂಬರಿ ಸೇವನೆ ಮಾಡುವುದು. ಜತೆಗೆ ಲಘುಆಹಾರ ಅಂದರೆ ತಿನ್ನಲು ಹಾಗೂ ಜೀರ್ಣಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಸುಲಭವಾಗಬಲ್ಲ ಆಹಾರಗಳ ಸೇವನೆ ಪಾಲಿಸಬೇಕು. ಉದಾಹರಣೆಗೆ ದಾಲ್-ಕಿಚಡಿ ಸೇವನೆ ಮಾಡಬೇಕು.



ಯಾವ ಹಣ್ಣುಗಳನ್ನು ಸೇವಿಸಬಹುದು ಎಂಬ ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆಗೆ ಋತುಮಾನದಲ್ಲಿ ಲಭ್ಯವಾಗುವ ಎಲ್ಲ ಹಣ್ಣುಗಳನ್ನೂ ಸೇವಿಸಬಹುದು. ಯಾವ ಋತುವಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಯಾವ ಹಣ್ಣುಗಳನ್ನು ಸೇವಿಸಬೇಕೆಂಬುದನ್ನು ಪ್ರಕೃತಿಯೇ ನಮಗೆ ನೀಡುತ್ತಿದೆ. ದ್ರಾಕ್ಷಿ, ದಾಳಿಂಬೆ, ಖರ್ಜೂರವನ್ನು ಸೇವಿಸಬಹುದು. ದಾಳಿಂಬೆ ಜ್ಯೂಸ್ ರೂಪದಲ್ಲಿ ಸೇವಿಸುವುದಕ್ಕಿಂತ ದಾಳಿಂಬೆ ಹಣ್ಣನ್ನು ನಾವೇ ಬಿಚ್ಚಿ, ಅದರಲ್ಲಿನ ಬೀಜಗಳನ್ನು ಜಗಿದು ತಿನ್ನುವುದರಿಂದ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಪ್ರಯೋಜನವಿದೆ. ದಾಳಿಂಬೆ ಬೀಜ ತಿನ್ನುವಾಗ ವಿವಿಧ ಹಂತಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಬಾಯಿ, ಕರಳು, ಜಠರ ಅವುಗಳಲ್ಲಿನ ಸಾರವನ್ನು ನಮ್ಮ ಹೀರಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದರಿಂದ ಅದರಿಂದ ಸಿಗುವ ಲಾಭಕ್ಕೆ ಸಾಟಿಯಿಲ್ಲ. ಬೀಜವುಳ್ಳ ಖರ್ಜೂರವನ್ನು ತುಪ್ಪದ ಜೊತೆ ಸೇವಿಸುವುದು ಕೂಡ ಉತ್ತಮ. ಎಷ್ಟು ತುಪ್ಪದೊಂದಿಗೆ ಸೇವಿಸಬೇಕು ಎಂಬ ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆಗೆ ಆ ಖರ್ಜೂರದಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಬೀಜದ ಪ್ರಮಾಣದಷ್ಟು ತುಪ್ಪ ಸೇವನೆ ಒಂದು ಅಳತೆಗೋಲು.



ಸಂಧಿಕಾಲದ ವ್ಯಾಧಿಯನ್ನು ಹತೋಟಿಯಿಡುವಲ್ಲಿ ನಿತ್ಯ ಅಭ್ಯಂಗ ಕೂಡ ಸಹಾಯಕ್ಕೆ ಬರಲಿದೆ. ಎಣ್ಣೆ ಹಚ್ಚಿಕೊಂಡು ಬಿಸಿನೀರಿನ ಸ್ನಾನ ಮೈ-ಮನವನ್ನು ಸ್ವಸ್ಥವಾಗಿಡಲಿವೆ. ದೇಹವನ್ನು ಕಾಡುವ ನೋವುಗಳನ್ನು ಕಡಿಮೆಗೊಳಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬಹುದು. ಸಂಧಿವಾತದ ಬಾಧೆಯುಳ್ಳವರಲ್ಲೂ ಈ ಸಂಧಿಕಾಲ ನೋವಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಕೊಂಚ ಏರುಪೇರನ್ನುಂಟು ಮಾಡಲಿದೆ. ಚಳಿಗಾಲ-ಬೇಸಿಗೆ ಕಾಲದ ನಡುವಿನ ಈ ಎರಡು ವಾರ ವಿಶೇಷ ಕಾಳಜಿ ವಹಿಸಿದರೆ ಸಂಧಿಕಾಲದ ವ್ಯಾಧಿ ದೂರವಿಡಬಹುದು.

ನಿದ್ರೆ ಕೊರತೆ ಮತ್ತು ಕುಶಲ

ನಿದ್ರೆ ಕೊರತೆ ಮತ್ತು ಕುಶಲ

ಮಂಜುಶ್ರೀ ಎಂ.ಕಡಕೋಳ

‘ಚಿಂತೆ’ ಇಲ್ಲದವನಿಗೆ ಸಂತೆಯಲ್ಲೂ ನಿದ್ರೆ ಎಂಬುದು ಗಾಢವಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಪ್ರಕೃತಿಯಂತೆ ಲಭ್ಯವಾಗಿರುವ ನಿದ್ರೆ ಮನುಷ್ಯನನ್ನು ಉತ್ಸಾಹ, ಚಟುವಟಿಕೆಯಿಂದ ಇರುವಂತೆ ಮಾಡುತ್ತದೆ. ದಣಿದ ಮೈ-ಮನಸ್ಸನ್ನು ಆಹ್ಲಾದಗೊಳಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಆದರೆ ಒತ್ತಡ, ಆತಂಕ, ಖಿನ್ನತೆಗಳಿಂದ ಬಳಲುತ್ತಿರುವ ಬಹುತೇಕರಿಗೆ ನಿದ್ರಾಹೀನತೆ ಅಷ್ಟು ಸುಲಭವಾಗಿ ಒಲಿದು ಬರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ವೇಗದ ಬದುಕು, ಸದಾ ಗ್ಯಾಜೆಟ್ ಲೋಕದ ಬೆಳಕಿನಲ್ಲಿರುವವರಿಗೆ, ಒತ್ತಡದ ಜೀವನ ಶೈಲಿಯಲ್ಲಿರುವವರಲ್ಲಿ ನಿದ್ರಾಹೀನತೆ ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯ ಎನ್ನುತ್ತವೆ ವೈಜ್ಞಾನಿಕ ಅಧ್ಯಯನಗಳು.

ನಿದ್ರಾಹೀನತೆ?

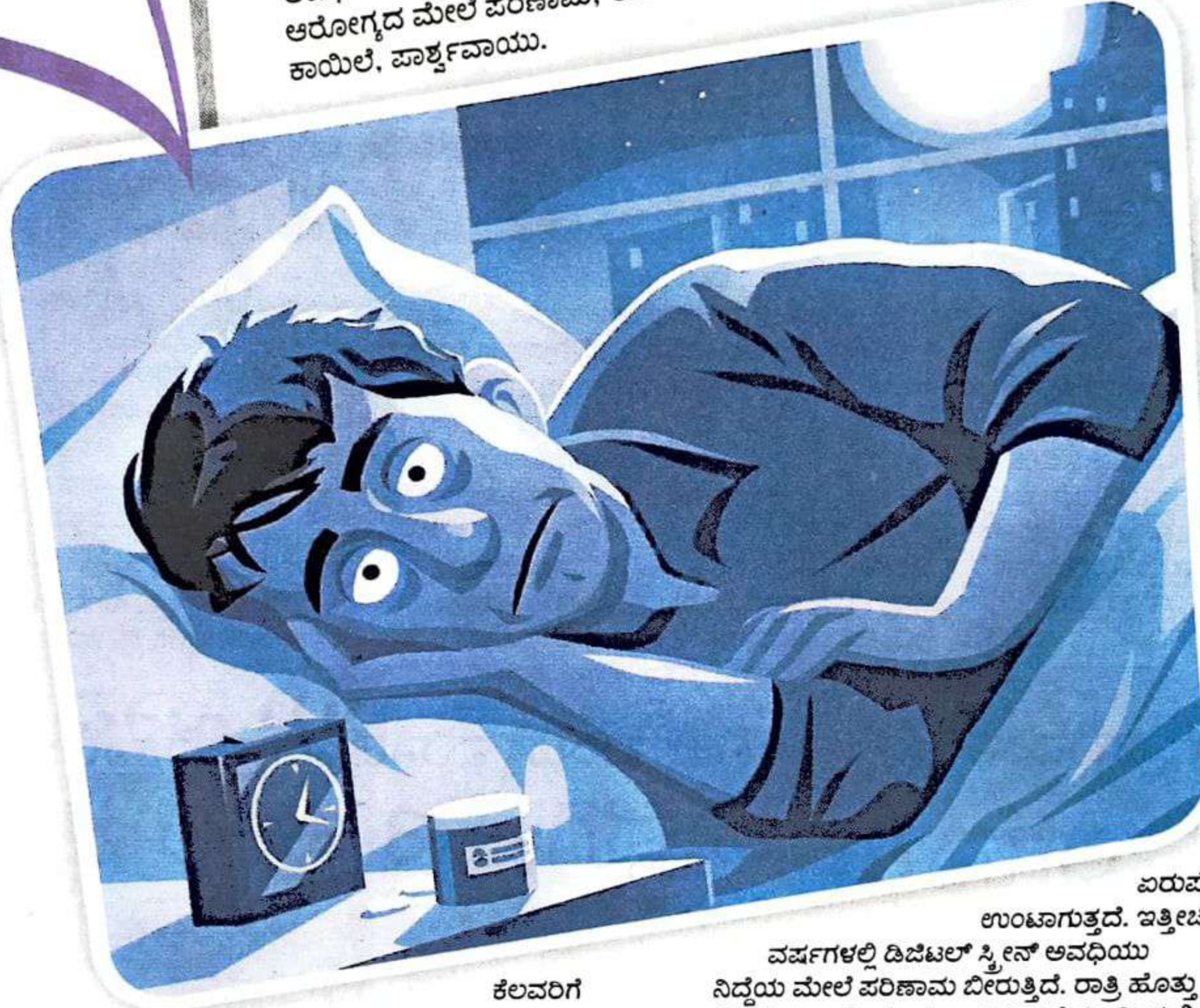
ರಾತ್ರಿ ಕಣ್ಣುಬಾ ನಿದ್ರೆ ಮಾಡಿ, ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ ಎದ್ದಾಗ ನವಚೈತನ್ಯವಿದ್ದರೆ ಆ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿ ಆರೋಗ್ಯವಂತ ಎನ್ನುತ್ತದೆ ವಿಜ್ಞಾನ. ಆದರೆ, ಶೇ 20ರಿಂದ 30ರಷ್ಟು ಜನರಿಗೆ ನಿದ್ರೆ ಅಷ್ಟು ಸುಲಭವಾಗಿ ಬರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ವಾರದಲ್ಲಿ ಕನಿಷ್ಠ ಮೂರು ಬಾರಿ ನಿದ್ರೆ ವಂಚಿತರಾದರೆ, ನಿದ್ರೆ ಬಂದರೂ ತಡವಾಗಿ ಬರುವುದು, ಮಲಗಿದಾಗಲೂ ನಿದ್ರಾಹೀನತೆ ಆವರಿಸದಿದ್ದರೆ, ಆವರಿಸಿದರೂ ಪದೇ ಪದೇ ಎಚ್ಚರವಾಗುತ್ತಿದ್ದರೆ ಅದನ್ನು ನಿದ್ರಾಹೀನತೆಯ ಲಕ್ಷಣ ಎನ್ನುತ್ತಾರೆ ನಿಮ್ಮಾನ್ಸ್ 'ಸ್ಲೀಪ್ ಕ್ಲಿನಿಕ್'ನ ವೈದ್ಯ ಡಾ.ಡಿ.ವಿ. ಶೇಷಗಿರಿ. ನಿದ್ರಾಹೀನತೆಯನ್ನು ವೈದ್ಯಕೀಯ ಪರಿಭಾಷೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಇನ್‌ಸೊಮ್ನಿಯಾ (Insomnia) ಎನ್ನುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಒತ್ತಡದಿಂದ ಬಳಲುವ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿ, ಜೀವನದಲ್ಲಿ ಒಮ್ಮೆಯಾದರೂ ನಿದ್ರಾಹೀನತೆಯ ಸ್ಥಿತಿಯನ್ನು ಅನುಭವಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ನಿದ್ರಾಹೀನತೆಯು ಕೆಲವರಲ್ಲಿ ತಾತ್ಕಾಲಿಕವಾಗಿದ್ದರೆ,

ಪರಿಹಾರಗಳು

- ದೇಹ ಮತ್ತು ಮನಸ್ಸನ್ನು ಸುಸ್ಥಿತಿಯಲ್ಲಿಟ್ಟುಕೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕು.
- ಮಲಗುವ ಕೋಣೆಯನ್ನು ಸ್ವಚ್ಛವಾಗಿಟ್ಟುಕೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕು.
- ಮಲಗುವ ಹಾಸಿಗೆಯನ್ನು ಸ್ವಚ್ಛವಾಗಿಟ್ಟುಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದು. ಆ ಸ್ಥಳವನ್ನು ಮಲಗಲು ಮಾತ್ರ ಬಳಸುವುದು.
- ಮಲಗುವ ಒಂದು ತಾಸಿಗೂ ಮೊಬೈಲ್, ಟಿ.ವಿ, ಕಂಪ್ಯೂಟರ್ ಗ್ಯಾಜೆಟ್‌ಗಳ ವೀಕ್ಷಣೆ ಮಾಡದಿರುವುದು.
- ಮಲಗುವ ಹೊತ್ತಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಯಾವುದೇ ಯೋಚನೆ/ಚಿಂತೆ ಮಾಡದಿರುವುದು. ದೇಹವನ್ನು ರಿಲಾಕ್ಸ್ ಆಗಿಟ್ಟುಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದು.
- ಸಂಜೆಯ ನಂತರ ಕಾಫಿ, ಟೀ ಪಾನೀಯಗಳನ್ನು ಸೇವಿಸದಿರುವುದು.
- ನಿತ್ಯವೂ ಸ್ವಲ್ಪವಾದರೂ ದೈಹಿಕ ಚಟುವಟಿಕೆಗಳನ್ನು ಮಾಡುವುದು. ಆದರೆ, ಮಲಗುವ ಮುನ್ನ ದೈಹಿಕ ಚಟುವಟಿಕೆ ನಡೆಸಬಾರದು.
- ನಿತ್ಯವೂ ಒಂದೇ ಸಮಯಕ್ಕೆ ಮಲಗುವ ಮತ್ತು ಎಳುವ ಅಭ್ಯಾಸವನ್ನು ರೂಢಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದು.
- ಮಲಗುವ ಸಮಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಆಹಾರ ಸೇವಿಸದಿರುವುದು, ಮಸಾಲೆ ಪದಾರ್ಥಗಳನ್ನು ಸೇವಿಸದಿರುವುದು.

ನಿದ್ರಾಹೀನತೆಯ ಅಡ್ಡಪರಿಣಾಮಗಳು

- ಆಯಾಸ, ಭಾವನೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಏರುಪೇರು (ಮೂಡ್ ಸ್ವಿಂಗ್).
- ಮಾನಸಿಕವಾಗಿ ಕಿರಿಕಿರಿ ಅಥವಾ ಕೋಪ.
- ಹಗಲು ಹೊತ್ತಿನಲ್ಲಿ ನಿದ್ರೆಯ ಮಂಪರು ಕವಿದಿರುವಿಕೆ, ನಿದ್ರೆಯ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಆತಂಕ, ಏಕಾಗ್ರತೆಯ ಕೊರತೆ, ಸ್ಮರಣಶಕ್ತಿ ಕುಂಠಿತ, ಶಾಲಾ-ಕಾಲೇಜು ಅಥವಾ ಉದ್ಯೋಗದ ಸ್ಥಳದಲ್ಲಿ ಕಡಿಮೆ ದಕ್ಷತೆ, ತಲೆನೋವು, ಒತ್ತಡ, ಹೊಟ್ಟೆಯ ಆರೋಗ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಏರುಪೇರು, ವಾಹನ ಚಲಾಯಿಸುವಾಗ ಅಪಘಾತ ಸಂಭವಿಸುವ ಸಾಧ್ಯತೆ, ತೀವ್ರ ನಿದ್ರಾಹೀನತೆಯಿಂದ ದೈಹಿಕ ಆರೋಗ್ಯದ ಮೇಲೆ ಪರಿಣಾಮ, ಅಜೀರ್ಣ, ಹೃದ್ಯೋಗ ಸಂಬಂಧಿ ಕಾಯಿಲೆ, ಪಾರ್ಶ್ವವಾಯು.



ಏರುಪೇರು ಉಂಟಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಇತ್ತೀಚಿನ ವರ್ಷಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಡಿಜಿಟಲ್ ಸ್ಪೀನ್ ಅವಧಿಯು ನಿದ್ರೆಯ ಮೇಲೆ ಪರಿಣಾಮ ಬೀರುತ್ತಿದೆ. ರಾತ್ರಿ ಹೊತ್ತು ಮೊಬೈಲ್, ಟಿ.ವಿ, ಕಂಪ್ಯೂಟರ್ ವೀಕ್ಷಣೆಯು ಮಿದುಳಿನ ಮೇಲೆ ಪರಿಣಾಮ ಬೀರಿ ಎಚ್ಚರವಿರುವಂತೆ ಮಾಡುತ್ತದೆ. ಆಗ ಮಿದುಳು ಬಲವಂತವಾಗಿ ರಾತ್ರಿಯನ್ನೇ ಹಗಲಿನ ಸ್ಥಿತಿಯನ್ನೆ ಹೊಂದಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಯತ್ನಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಕೆಲವರಿಗೆ ರಾತ್ರಿ ಸ್ವಲ್ಪ ಒಂದೆರಡು ತಾಸು ಮಲಗಿ, ಮತ್ತೆ ಹಗಲಿನಲ್ಲೂ ಕೆಲಕಾಲ ಮಲಗುವ ಅಭ್ಯಾಸವಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯವಾಗಿ ರಾತ್ರಿ ಪಾಳಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕೆಲಸ ಮಾಡುವವರಲ್ಲಿ ಈ ರೀತಿಯ ದಿನಚರಿ ಇರುತ್ತದೆ. ಹಗಲಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಮತ್ತೆ ಮಲಗುವ ಅಭ್ಯಾಸವಿದ್ದವರು ದೀರ್ಘಕಾಲದಲ್ಲಿ ನಿದ್ರಾಹೀನತೆ ಮತ್ತು ಇತರ ಆರೋಗ್ಯದ ಸಮಸ್ಯೆಗಳನ್ನು ಎದುರಿಸಬೇಕಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಯೊಬ್ಬ ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಎಳರಿಂದ ಎಂಟು ತಾಸು ನಿದ್ರೆ ಮಾಡಬೇಕು. ಕೆಲವರು ಇದಕ್ಕಿಂತ ಕಡಿಮೆ ಅಥವಾ ಅಂದರೆ ಐದು ತಾಸು ನಿದ್ರೆ ಮಾಡಿಯೂ ಲವಲವಿಕೆಯಿಂದ ಇರಬಲ್ಲರು. ಇಂಥವರನ್ನು ಶಾರ್ಟ್ ಸ್ಲೀಪರ್ಸ್ ಎನ್ನುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಅವರಿಗೆ ಎಳೆಂಟು ತಾಸಿನ ನಿದ್ರೆಯ ಅವಶ್ಯಕತೆ ಇರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಪುರುಷರಿಗೆ ಹೋಲಿಸಿದರೆ ಮಹಿಳೆಯರಲ್ಲಿ ನಿದ್ರಾಹೀನತೆಯ ಸಮಸ್ಯೆಗಳು ಹೆಚ್ಚು. ಮನೆಗೆಲಸ, ಕುಟುಂಬ ಹಾಗೂ ಉದ್ಯೋಗ ಹೀಗೆ ಹಲವು ಜವಾಬ್ದಾರಿಗಳು ಇರುವುದರಿಂದ ಮಹಿಳೆಯರು ಒತ್ತಡಕ್ಕೀಡಾಗುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಕೆಲವರ ಹೊರ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿದಷ್ಟೂ ಮಹಿಳೆಯ ನಿದ್ರೆಯ ಅವಧಿ ಕಡಿಮೆಯಾಗುವ ಸಂಭವವಿರುತ್ತದೆ ಎನ್ನುತ್ತಾರೆ ಡಾ.ಶೇಷಗಿರಿ.

ಕೆಲವರಿಗೆ ದೀರ್ಘಕಾಲದ ತನಕ ಇರಬಹುದು. ಅಂತೆಯೇ ನಿದ್ರಾಹೀನತೆಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ ಸುಮಾರು 80 ರೀತಿಯ ಸ್ಥಿತಿಗಳನ್ನು ನಿಮ್ಮಾನ್ಸ್ ಅಧ್ಯಯನವೊಂದರಲ್ಲಿ ಕಂಡುಕೊಳ್ಳಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಕಾರಣಗಳೇನು?

ಜೈವಿಕ, ಮಾನಸಿಕ ಹಾಗೂ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಅಂಶಗಳು ನಿದ್ರಾಹೀನತೆಗೆ ಕಾರಣವಾಗಬಲ್ಲವು. ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಒತ್ತಡದಿಂದ (stress) ಬಳಲುತ್ತಿರುವವರಲ್ಲಿ ನಿದ್ರಾಹೀನತೆ ಉಂಟಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಮತ್ತೆ ಕೆಲವರು ಖಿನ್ನತೆ, ಆತಂಕದ ಮನಸ್ಥಿತಿ ಹೊಂದಿದ್ದರೆ, ಇನ್ನು ಕೆಲವರಿಗೆ ವೈದ್ಯಕೀಯ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಅಂದರೆ ಮಲಗಿದಾಗ ಕಾಲುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ತೀವ್ರ ನೋವು ಇದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಂಥವರಲ್ಲಿ ನಿದ್ರಾಹೀನತೆ ಇರುತ್ತದೆ ಎನ್ನುತ್ತಾರೆ ಡಾ.ಶೇಷಗಿರಿ. ನಿತ್ಯದ ದಿನಚರಿ, ಜೀವನಶೈಲಿ ನಿದ್ರೆಯ ಮೇಲೆ ಪ್ರಭಾವ ಬೀರಬಲ್ಲದು. ಹೇಗೆಂದರೆ ನಿತ್ಯವೂ ಒಂದೇ ಸಮಯಕ್ಕೆ ಮಲಗಿ, ಎಳುವ ದಿನಚರಿ ಇದ್ದರೆ ದೇಹ ಮತ್ತು ಮಿದುಳು ಅದಕ್ಕೆ ಹೊಂದಿಕೊಂಡಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಆಗ ನಿತ್ಯವೂ ನಿಗದಿತ ಸಮಯಕ್ಕೆ ಮಲಗಿ, ಎಚ್ಚರವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಆದರೆ, ಕೆಲವರಲ್ಲಿ ಈ ದಿನಚರಿ ಸರಿಯಾಗಿರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ ಅಂದರೆ ಯಾವಾಗಲೋ ಮಲಗುವುದು, ಯಾವಾಗಲೋ ಎಳುವುದು ಆಗುತ್ತಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಹೀಗೆ ನಿಗದಿತ ದಿನಚರಿ ಪಾಲನೆಯಾಗದಿದ್ದಾಗ ಮಿದುಳಿಗೆ ಗೊಂದಲವಾಗಿ ನಿದ್ರೆಯಲ್ಲಿ



Business Finance

ESIC leads EPFO in workforce formalisation

ILLUSTRATION: BINAY SINHA

SHIVA RAJORA

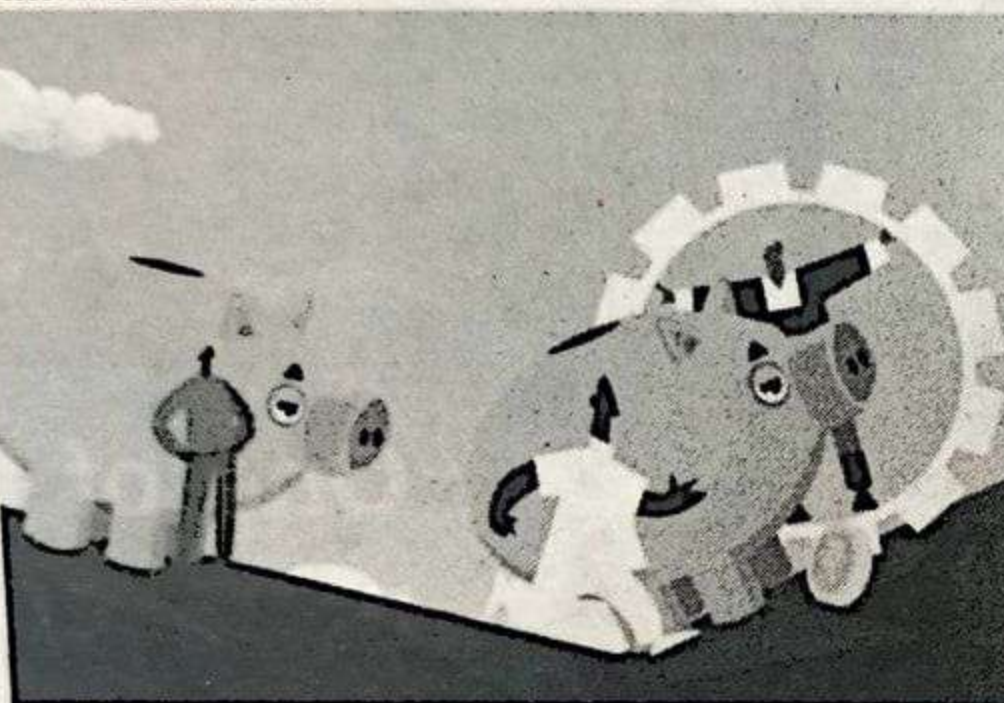
New Delhi, 8 January

Government-run Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) has been consistently leading in providing social-security benefits by formalising the workforce in the organised sector.

This has happened with high growth in coverage in recent years as compared to the Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO), shows the government data.

ESIC offers the primary government scheme that provides socio-economic protection against sickness, disablement, and death, and in the case of maternity if there is a work-related injury to employees, whereas the EPFO focuses on pension benefits to organised-sector subscribers.

While ESIC is mandated to cover all organisations with a minimum of 10 workers and those earning up to ₹21,000 a



month, the EPFO is required to cover organisations with at least 20 workers.

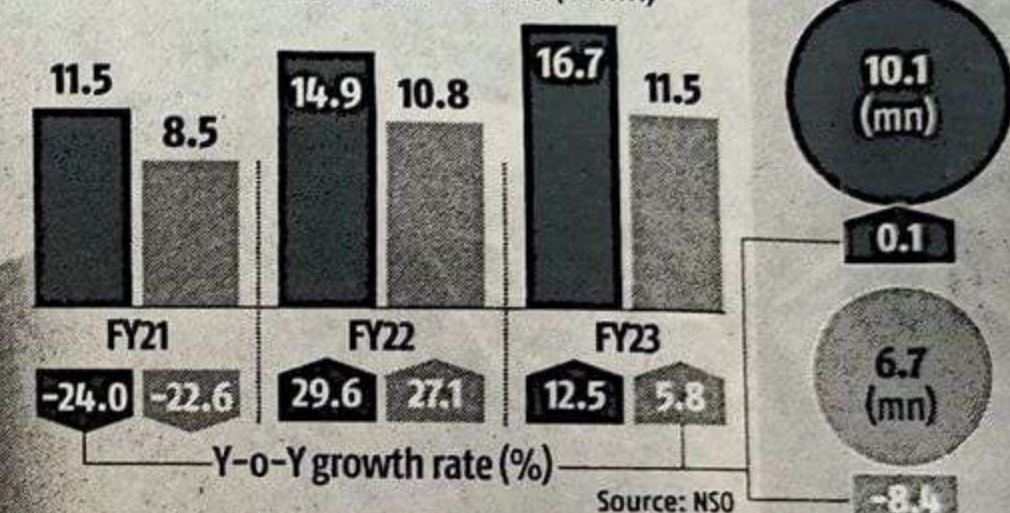
While the number of fresh registrations under ESIC during April-October increased marginally by 0.1 per cent this financial year, that under the EPFO declined 8.4 during the same time period, a *Business Standard* analysis of the latest data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) shows.

The data reveals the number of newly registered employees and contributing under ESIC rose marginally to 10.12 million between April and October in FY24, as compared to 10.11 million in the same period a year ago.

In contrast, the number of new subscribers under the EPFO fell to 6.7 million this year from 7.3 million in the previous year during the same period.

HOLDING FORT

Total new subscribers ■ ESIC ■ EPFO (in mn)



Similarly in FY22 and FY23, the pace of growth in new subscribers under ESIC stood at 29.6 per cent and 12.5 per cent, respectively, as compared to 27.1 per cent and 5.8 per cent, respectively, under the EPFO.

The data also shows the share of new women subscribers under ESIC increased marginally to 20.8 per cent (2.11 million) in April-October this year from 19.1 per cent (1.93

million) in the same period previous year, reflecting better coverage of the female workers in the workforce. Meanwhile, the number of new young subscribers belonging to the 18-28 age group declined to 6.22 million from 6.31 million in the period under consideration.

Recently, the labour ministry said the ESI scheme extended to 611 districts in 36 states and Union Territories

with a network of 161 hospitals and 1,574 dispensaries and the number of insured persons stood at 37.2 million, providing social security to more than 120 million beneficiaries.

"The ESIC is actively improving medical infrastructure, with the number of medical colleges increased to 8, MBBS seats increased to 950, and MD/MS seats increased to 275," the statement said.

KR Shyam Sundar, adjunct professor, Management Development Institute (MDI), said ESIC provided certain tangible benefits to its subscribers as soon as they registered themselves.

"Unlike the EPFO, which is a pension body and has a long gestation period as well, ESIC builds and creates infrastructure like hospitals and dispensaries at the grassroots. So the thrust is on bringing more people within its ambit and that may explain the higher growth in its subscribers," he added.

29,000 firms, ₹44,000-crore GST evasion exposed in fake invoice crackdown

Shishir Sinha

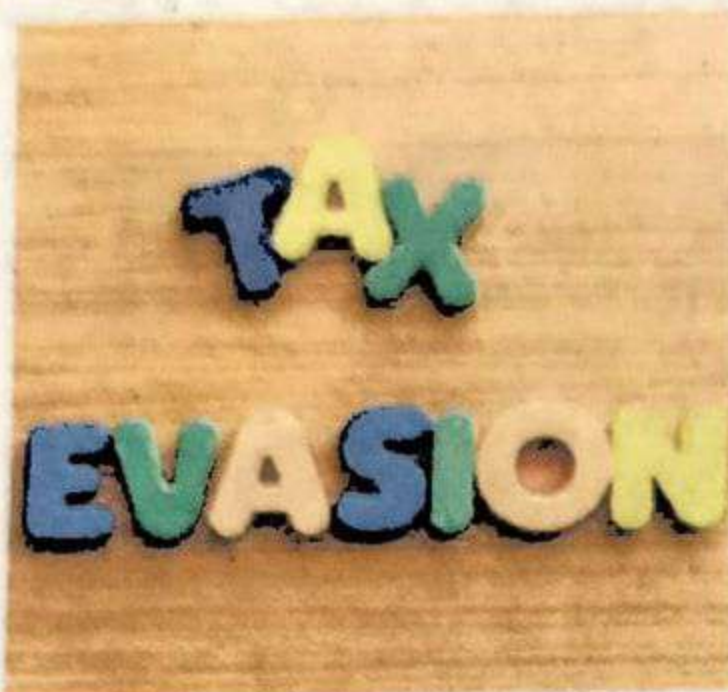
New Delhi

The Finance Ministry has reported that over 29,000 fake firms were identified and over ₹44,000 crore of GST tax evasion detected in a nationwide drive over 7 months.

The Ministry disclosed the results of a special drive to identify non-existent/bogus registrations and issue fake invoices without any underlying supply of goods and services. The drive started in mid-May last year. "A total of 29,273 bogus firms involved in suspected ITC evasion of ₹44,015 crore have been detected. This has saved ₹4,646 crore of which ₹3,802 crore is by blocking of ITC and ₹844 crore is by way of recovery. So far, 121 arrests have been made in the cases," a finance ministry statement said.

SPECIAL DRIVE

All Central and State tax administrations launched a special All-India Drive on May 16, 2023, to detect suspicious/fake GSTINs, conduct requisite verification, and take further remedial action to weed out fake billers from the GST ecosystem and safeguard government revenue. Based on detailed data analytics and risk parameters, GSTIN identified fraudulent GSTINs for State



and Central Tax authorities in the drive.

It was planned that details of such identified suspicious GSTINs, jurisdiction-wise, would be shared with the concerned State/Central Tax administration to initiate a verification drive and conduct necessary action. If, after detailed verification, it is found that the taxpayer is non-existent and fictitious, action will be initiated for suspension and cancellation of the taxpayer's registration. Further, the matter may be examined for blocking the input tax credit in the Electronic Credit Ledger. Efforts will also be taken to identify the recipients to whom such non-existing taxpayers have passed the input tax credit and to identify the mastermind and act.

The statement further added that in the quarter ending December, over 4,000 bogus firms that involved suspected ITC evasion of around ₹12,000 crore were detected.

The Government has taken various measures to strengthen the GST registration process. Pilot projects of biometric-based Aadhar authentication at registration have been launched in Gujarat, Puducherry and Andhra Pradesh.

Besides, the Government has moved to curtail evasion of tax through measures such as sequential filing of GST returns, system-generated intimation for reconciliation of the gap in tax liability in GSTR-1 & GSTR-3B returns and the gap between ITC available as per GSTR-2B & ITC availed in GSTR-3B returns, use of data analytics and risk parameters for detection of fake ITC, etc., the statement added.

Fake invoice means no real supply of goods or services but simply invoice issuance, which is used fraudulently to avail input tax credit (ITC). Unscrupulous elements misuse the identity of other persons to obtain fake/bogus registration under GST to defraud the government. Such fake/non-genuine registrations are used to fraudulently pass on input tax credits to unscrupulous recipients by issuing invoices without any underlying supply of goods or services or both.

Fake registrations and issuance of bogus invoices for passing off fake ITC have become a serious problem, as fraudulent people engage in dubious and complex transactions, causing revenue loss to the Government.

APPOINTMENT



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Mumbai
08/01/2024

Chief Executive Officer

28% GST: SC issues notice to Centre, DGGI on plea by online gaming firms

Shishir Sinha

New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Monday issued notices to the Centre and the Directorate General of Goods and Services Tax Intelligence (DGGI) on a plea filed by online gaming companies challenging the levy of 28 per cent Goods and Service Tax (GST) on all forms of online real-money gaming. However, it did not stay the notices.

Hearing petitions filed by Play Games 24 7 Private Limited and others, a bench of Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud with Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra sought response from the government. Another matter is pending before the Court as Centre appealed against Karnataka High Court staying notice to GamesKraft. The High Court ruling has been stayed.

NOTICES ISSUED

Last month, Finance Ministry informed the Rajya Sabha that 71 show-cause notices involving GST to the tune of over ₹1.12-lakh crore have been issued to online gaming companies during financial years 2022-23 and 2023-24 (up to October 2023). "As these notices are pending adjudication, the re-



TAX DEMAND NOTICE. Last month, the Finance Ministry informed the Rajya Sabha that 71 show-cause notices involving GST to the tune of over ₹1.12-lakh crore have been issued to online gaming companies during FY23 and FY24 ISTOCKPHOTO

spective GST demand is not yet determined under the provisions of CGST Act, 2017," Minister of State in Finance Ministry, Pankaj Chaudhary said in a written reply.

GST on online gaming has been a contentious issue. Earlier, online gaming companies supplying actionable claims were levying GST at the rate of 18 per cent on platform fees ranging from 5-20 per cent of the full-face value, disputing the 28 per cent levy on actionable claims in the form of betting and gambling supplied in online gaming before various legal fora.

ACTIONABLE CLAIMS

However, GST Council, in its meeting dated July 11, recommended that actionable claims supplied in casino, horse racing, and online gam-

ing are leviable to a GST rate of 28 per cent and recommended to carry out amendments in the law to remove any ambiguity.

In the 51st GST Council meeting held on August 2, a few States requested that the matter be reconsidered and after detailed discussion, the GST Council decided to continue with its earlier recommendation. Later law was amended and then there was spurt in issuance of show-cause notices. Though the government said that amendments in law are clarificatory in nature and it has always maintained that 28 per cent rate is applicable from July 1, 2017, but online gaming companies alleged that amendment in law is retrospective in nature and accordingly show cause notices have been issued.

'Individual income inequality fell during FY14-22'

FLAWED THEORY. The SBI Research report debunks K-shaped recovery and underscores how the Indian economy is performing well

Our Bureau

Mumbai

Individual income inequality has significantly declined during FY14-FY22 because of a "great migration" at the bottom of the pyramid, even as individual's weighted mean income has risen from ₹3.1 lakh to ₹11.6 lakh during FY14-FY21, according to SBI's economic research department (ERD).

The Gini coefficient estimated using ITR (Income Tax Return) data on the taxable income of individuals shows that individual income inequality has significantly declined from 0.472 to 0.402 during FY14-FY22, per an ERD report.

This co-efficient measures inequality on a scale from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating higher inequality.

Based on trends in ITR filing, the ERD assessed that 36.3 per cent of individual ITR

filers belonging to the lowest income group in FY14 have left the lowest income group and shifted upwards, resulting in 21.1 per cent more income for such individuals during FY14-FY21.

INCOME DISPARITY

Further, the income disparity of people earning less than ₹3.5 lakh has declined from 31.8 per cent to 15.8 per cent during FY14-FY21, indicating that the share of this income group in total income in comparison to their population has increased by 16 per cent.

The ERD said top 2.5 per cent of taxpayer's contribution in income has declined from 2.81 per cent to 2.28 per cent during FY14-FY21

"There is a palpable change in the income pattern of MSMEs too, reflecting the changing contours of industry and services as the formalisation drive brings more entities into the net.



POSITIVE OUTLOOK. ERD has projected the weighted mean income for FY22 to be in the range of ₹12.5 lakh to ₹13 lakh

Around 19.5 per cent of major micro-sized firms have been able to shift their income upwards, classifying them into small, medium, and large-sized firms," Soumya Kanti Ghosh, Group Chief Economic Adviser, SBI, said.

Out of these, 4.8 per cent of firms have transitioned themselves into small firms,

around 6.1 per cent of firms have transitioned into medium-sized firms, and around 9.3 per cent of firms have transitioned into large-sized firms.

This clearly indicates MSME units are getting bigger and getting integrated into larger value chains with initiatives like PLI (pro-

ductivity-linked incentive), Ghosh said. Based on the trends, SBI's ERD has projected the weighted mean income for FY22 to come in the range of ₹12.5 lakh to ₹13 lakh.

Ghosh observed that the weighted mean income represents a more nuanced and granular barometer of the increase in income within specific income brackets and their contribution to the overall increase.

Mean income would shoot up if income was increasing along any bucket (upper, middle, or lower), but weighted mean income would increase more when the contribution of each income group was increasing towards total income growth, he added.

RECOVERY THEORY

Ghosh emphasised that the oft-repeated conundrum debating a K-shaped recovery post-pandemic seems at best

flawed, prejudiced, ill-concocted, and fanning interests of select quarters to whom India's remarkable ascendance, signalling more the renaissance of the new global south, is quite unpalatable.

He opined that the patterns emanating from income (and its disposable part), savings, consumption, expenditure, and policy measures aimed at empowering the masses through phygital means and support systems, by way of a host of enablers, question the efficacy of using age-old proxies like low 2-wheeler sales or fragmented land holdings to support some pre-destined narratives of India not doing well.

Ghosh said that post-pandemic, the sales figures of 2-wheelers could reflect households reconfiguring their savings towards physical assets (real estate) and a not-too-small buyer percentage shifting to used/entry-level cars (substitution effect). Further,

tractor sales, another rural resilience indicator, have been quite gung-ho recently.

"There have been Inter-group and Intra-group transitions happening in two-wheeler and four-wheeler segments. In the Inter-group transition, people are buying expensive motorcycles and cars than what they have bought earlier.

"Under the intra-group transition, two-wheelers are being considered giffen goods with the rise in income, and people are substituting two-wheelers for the four-wheelers, he said.

The ERD assessed that post-pandemic there has been a two-way shift between savings channelised into physical assets from financial assets in consonance with the global trend to take advantage of lower interest rates.

However, recent data show that in India, there has been a shift towards financial assets since 2023 onwards.

PFRDA calls for tax breaks on NPS contributions under new tax regime

KR Srivats

New Delhi

Pension regulator PFRDA has urged the Finance Ministry to consider allowing tax breaks/deductions under the new tax regime for contributions made by employees towards their NPS account, which has now become the default system.

TAX BREAKS

Providing tax breaks for NPS contributions — akin to the Sec 80C deduction provided in the old tax regime — would boost savings for retirement and is a must if India has to evolve into a pensioned society, the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) has submitted to the Finance Ministry in its budget wish list.



BUDGET WISHLIST. Providing tax breaks for NPS contributions will boost savings for retirement and is a must if India were to evolve into a pensioned society, the PFRDA has submitted to the FinMin

Although the upcoming budget would only be an interim budget (vote-on-account), there is nothing that prevents the government from announcing its tax policy intent if it so desires, sources

said. This measure of allowing tax break for NPS contributions could always be taken forward in the full-fledged budget expected to be unveiled in June or July 2024, they said.

Even today, several developed countries allow tax breaks for voluntary pension account contributions, it was pointed out. India is aiming to be a developed country by 2047 and is looking to scale up its flagship pension programmes — the National Pension System and the Atal Pension Yojana.

Already, NPS, which started its journey in 2004 initially with new government recruits as a defined contribution scheme, has grown to touch the level of nearly ₹11-lakh crore, largely bolstered by the enhanced participation of private sector employees and individuals. In 2022-23, as many as a million new non-government subscribers enrolled in the NPS. PFRDA has, for the current fiscal, set its sights on enrolling 13 lakh new

subscribers from the non-government segment.

In Budget 2020, the Centre introduced a new income tax regime wherein tax slabs were altered and taxpayers were offered concessional tax rates. However, several exemptions and deductions, such as 80C, 80D, HRA, and LTA, were all done away with under the new regime. The removal of these deductions had led to only a few takers for the new tax regime.

To encourage taxpayers to adopt the new regime, several changes were introduced in Budget 2023 last year. The new regime was also made the default system.

While the previous tax structure encouraged taxpayers to get into the habit of saving, the new tax regime sought to favour employees with

lower earnings and investments, resulting in fewer deductions and exemptions.

Under the old regime, there were over 70 exemptions and deductions available, including LTA and HRA, and this would have helped reduce taxable income and lower tax payments. The most popular Section 80C deduction allowed for a reduction of taxable income up to ₹1.5 lakh.

PARITY WITH PF

PFRDA has also, in its budget wish list, made a case for level playing field as regards tax treatment between Corporate contributions to NPS and Provident Fund in respect of employees.

Currently, the tax-exempt contribution is capped at 10 percent for NPS and 12 percent for PF, sources said.



A right call or a regressive move?

Time will tell if the return of Rohit, Kohli to T20 fold is a prudent one

MADHU JAWALI
BENGALURU, DHNS

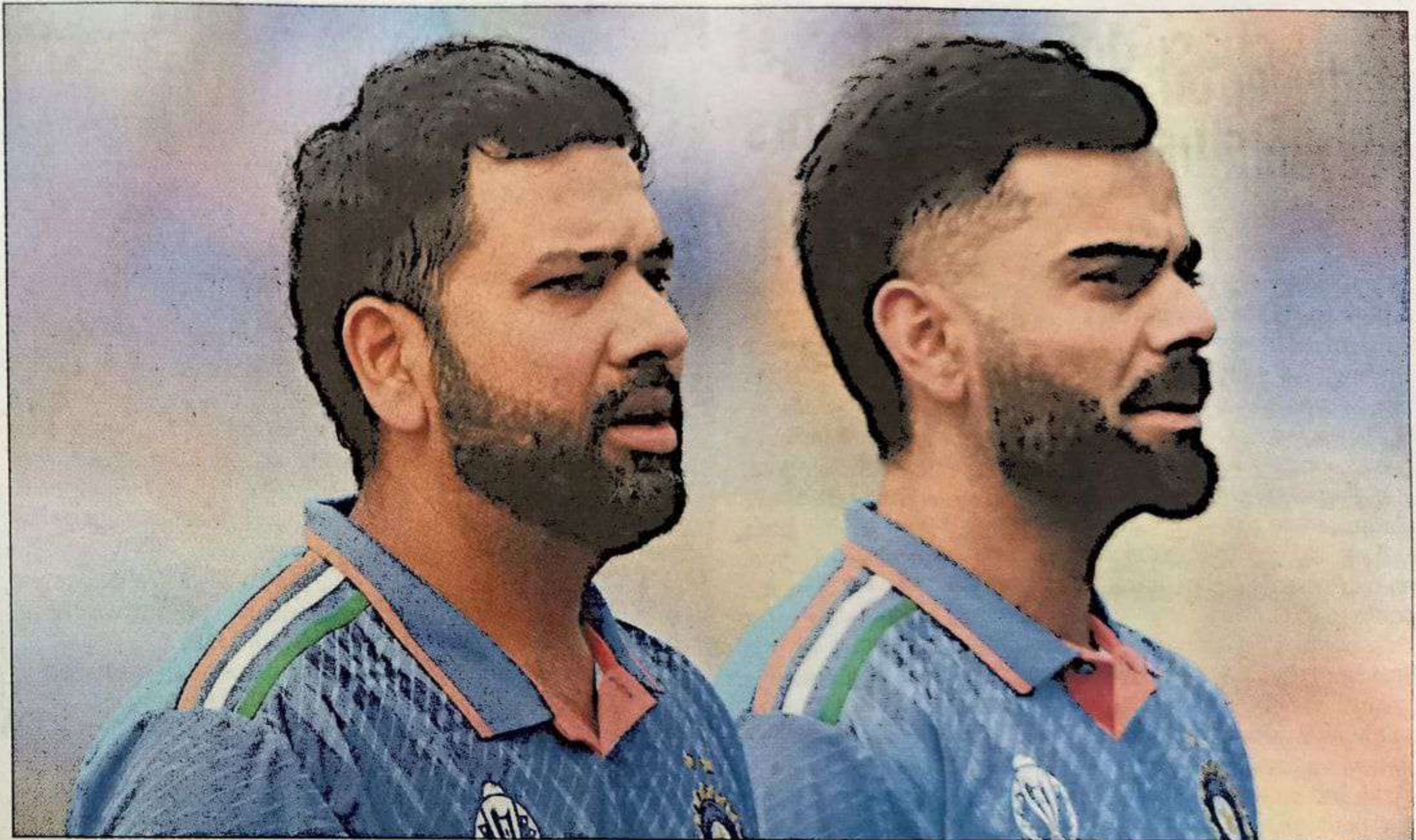
With every step forward, Indian selectors appear to take two steps backward thus restoring the status quo. The latest one is accommodating Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli in the T20I squad for the three-match series against Afghanistan.

Whether by design or happenstance, the veteran duo was kept out of the T20I scheme of things for more than a year following India's loss to England in the T20 World Cup semifinal in November 2022. In the meantime, Hardik Pandya led the side, and when he got injured Suryakumar Yadav was handed the reins in the last two T20I series (vs Australia at home and vs South Africa in away rubber).

Yes, both Hardik and Surya are not available now due to injuries and Ruturaj Gayakwad is yet to recover after sustaining a broken finger on the tour of South Africa. But there was no crying need to summon the services of Rohit and Kohli as India have enough batting depth when it comes to limit-

ed-overs cricket. However, the decision to include the two in the ultra-abridged version has a larger import: the two white-ball greats want to have one final shot at World Cup glory (T20 World Cup in June) and the Ajit Agarkar-led selection committee has obliged. A lot will also depend on their performance in the upcoming Indian Premier League but the message is clear that the current and former captains are very much back in India's T20 set-up.

Since the heart-breaking defeat in the T20 WC semifinal, Rohit has been vocal about the need to change the batting approach at the top of the order. He thought India were too conservative in a format that demanded a fearless game. With even Test cricket embracing aggressive batting, India's T20 game was a far cry from what the rest of the world has moved on to. Rohit walked the talk during the ODI World Cup and scored 597 runs at a strike rate of nearly 126, the highest among Indian batters with a minimum score of 50 for the tournament. Overall, he was only behind Glenn Maxwell



The return of Rohit Sharma (left) and Virat Kohli is a clear signal that the veteran duo is in the race for a place in the squad for the T20 World Cup in June. AFP

(150.37), Heinrich Klaasen (133) and Travis Head (127) for batters with a minimum score of 200. There is an impression that he could be as impactful at the T20 WC but what about Kohli?

He was great during the ODI World Cup but the format and Rohit's brisk starts allowed him to play the game he is adept at. Does the present-day T20 style grant him the same luxury? His stats in the short-

est format are excellent (M: 115, Runs; 4008, HS: 122*, Avg: 52.73, SR: 137.96, 100s: 1, 50s: 37) but most of those runs came when T20 wasn't played the way it is today. Kohli isn't a power-hitter in the mould of Glenn Maxwell nor does he manipulate the field like Suryakumar; so, on the slow pitches of the Caribbean, would he find it hard to manufacture big shots? Evidence suggests so, but then how can you pick Rohit and not

Kohli? The stalwarts come in a package, so prudence be damned.

So where does that leave Tilak Verma who offers a left-handed option in the middle-order? Will Rinku Singh's spot be certain as a finisher, a job he has done with aplomb so far? Can Shubman Gill and Shreyas Iyer feel secure about their places in the playing XI? What message is being conveyed to those who have been

tried, and proven their mettle since the last T20 WC?

India may or may not win this year's T20 World Cup but the step is regressive irrespective. This has once again underlined the fact that India can't get rid of superstar-syndrome. You can't fault players for wanting to play but that's why we have paid selectors whose job is to make tough calls without considering reputations and the repercussions thereafter.

Varun, Esha seal Oly quota

Young Indians win men's and women's 10m Air Pistol events at Asian Qualifiers

JAKARTA, PTI

Young Indian shooters Varun Tomar and Esha Singh on Monday secured two Olympic quota places for the country with gold medals in the men's and women's 10m Air Pistol events of the Asian Qualifiers here.

The duo's qualification took the total number of Indian shooters bound for Paris to 15, equalling the highest-ever tally that was achieved in the Tokyo Games.

India can add more to the group headed for the Games in July-August this year when the remaining qualifiers are held.

India secured six medals on Monday, including two team golds, at the continental event.

The 20-year-old Tomar shot 239.6 in the final to claim the top position, while Arjun Cheema won the silver medal with a score of 237.3. Mongolia's Davaakhuu Enkhtaivan (217.2) won the bronze medal.

Earlier, Tomar (586), Cheema (579) and Ujjawal Malik (575) shot a total of 1740 to win the 10m air pistol team gold, while Iran and Korea claimed the silver and bronze medals respectively.



18-year-old Esha Singh grabbed the gold with a score of 243.1 in the women's 10m Air Pistol event. PTI FILE PHOTO

Tomar, a former junior world champion, is the cousin of Tokyo Olympian Saurabh Chaudhary, who won a gold medal in the 2018 Asian Games.

"It helped that I had someone like Saurabh to take guidance from as I don't have anyone in the family who is a shooter," Tomar, who comes from a farming family, told PTI.

The 18-year-old Esha then grabbed the gold in the women's event with a score of 243.1. The silver went to Pakistan's Kishmala Talat (236.3), while the bronze was grabbed by Esha's compatriot Rhythm Sangwan (214.5). The 21-year-old Talat also earned a quota for the Paris Games, becoming the third Pakistani shooter to achieve the feat.

Esha, Rhythm and Surbhi Rao also won the team gold

medal with a combined score of 1736.

Esha is a world championship gold-medallist in the 10m air pistol mixed team and 25m pistol team events.

A total of 16 quota places for the Paris Olympics are available at the continental showpiece here.

The 10m air pistol events for men and women have four quotas on offer with a maximum of three for the Indian shooters.

As many as 385 athletes from 26 countries are in action at the Senayan Shooting Range in Jakarta for 256 medals (84 gold, 84 silver and 88 bronze medals), besides the Paris quotas.

Ahead of this tournament, India had won 13 Olympic quota places in shooting across rifle, pistol and shotgun disciplines.

EDITORIAL

NEWS

OVER the last week, the Indian electronic media has been digging deeper to unravel some significant nuances of international geopolitics which ordinarily do not surface. The media is suddenly talking of an apparent return of global terror. There are likely signs that a 'second cycle of global terror' is upon the world. The earlier we realise it, the faster will the countermeasures be taken to neutralise a potential catastrophe.

What is this all about? The way I explain it is that from the end of the Cold War till 9/11, there was a period of development of global terror. It was relatively unorganised; finances were yet meagre and ideologies were not fully set. Such trends do emerge after long international standoffs of the kind the Cold War was and the results are mostly unpredictable. In this period between 1989 and 2001, international networking between terror groups was a challenge because communication was not easy, nor was movement of money or recruitment because passage of information too was limited.

The internet changed much. The 9/11 bombings set the pace and demonstrated the truly transnational nature of terrorism once modern communication technologies reached an optimum level. With the information and communication revolution, it was so much simpler to make ideologies go viral, cultivate young minds and draw out the passion from young men and women who were inclined to be misled by the false idea of romanticism attached to violence.

From an academic angle, the pre-global age of terror was from 1989 to 2001. Thereafter, terror's first cycle commenced and lasted till 2020. It became even bigger when the US entered Iraq in 2003 and proliferated beyond just Al Qaeda, which was the progenitor of trans-national terror. Some may argue that Japanese, Italian, German and Irish terror groups pre-dated this. No doubt they did, yet none had the international footprint to paralyse the world in the Al Qaeda way. Perhaps, had technologies been available, their abilities to take this beyond would have been unimaginable.

The first cycle started with the Twin Towers attack of 9/11 and reached its zenith in 2014-17 when the Islamic State (IS) or Daesh executed its reign of terror in the Middle East, demonstrating an ability to go conventional in warfighting strategy, alongside acts of terrorism. The first of its effects was the mass migration to Europe initiated by Syria's implosion, with immigrants attempting to merge

The Cold War's end presaged an age of global terror. The 9/11 attacks unleashed the next cycle. A number of current events are pointing to the next one

THE FIGHT AGAINST THE NEXT CYCLE OF GLOBAL TERROR

LT GEN SYED ATA HASNAIN (RETD)



Former Commander, Srinagar-based 15 Corps. Now Chancellor, Central University of Kashmir



SOUMYADIP SINHA

unsuccessfully into various nations. This was accompanied by an impetus to North African migration across the Mediterranean, resulting in the IS being able to penetrate some key European cities, establish strong networks there and create a fear psychosis among local populations. Right-wing ideologies rose across Europe due to the backlash from the migrations which were themselves a result of the proliferation of global terror in a short period of time.

It was with the defeat of the IS at Mosul in 2018—after a hard demonstration of grinding urban warfare by the Iraqi Army with contributions from Syria, Iran and even Russia—that the IS was finally evicted from the Middle East. However, as is wont in the current environment, it remained alive in a networked state. It at-

tempted to find moorings in Marawi in the Philippines, but was defeated there too. It tried the same unsuccessfully in Indonesia and finally settled on finding options in South Asia.

The April 21, 2019 Easter bombings in Sri Lanka had its roots in Southern India, where many efforts were afoot to find secure ground for the IS. The Indian intelligence agencies, already well-blooded by the experience of 26/11 and its aftermath, did not allow the IS the space to create an adequately productive base in India. Although it remains in existence, as is evident from the recent discovery of a car bomb in Coimbatore, the IS has primarily shifted focus to sanctuaries in Northern Afghanistan, where most global and regional terror groups had gravitated during the Coronavirus pandemic.

The pandemic changed the world geopolitically—more than it is credited for. Terror groups went silent, international travel and movement stalled. Except for the Afghanistan-Pakistan region, transnational terror saw a downturn. When the Ukraine war hit the world, global terror had drastically subsided to levels where one could presume the virtual end of that cycle. The indications for a second cycle started to reveal just as the US withdrew its forces from Afghanistan in August 2021 and a hunt for space commenced between various terror groups.

International terror groups were unable to find the means for revival as radical sentiment took a back seat in the fight for survival during the pandemic; the economics did not facilitate it either. Just as the Taliban took the initiative in 2022 to reverse its relationship with Pakistan's ISI, the Afghanistan-Pakistan region saw more terrorist attacks, a rising tide of radicalism and increase in network traffics. The eastern Nangarhar province was the main concentration. Then Hamas-Israel war opened the gates for a greater spread of radical ideology, through an awakening among the terror groups that were lying low.

In recent days, we have witnessed the Houthis of Yemen attempting to demonstrate their presence and relevance in the Red Sea. Hezbollah, with its huge army of sub-conventional fighters in South Lebanon, is inching towards a greater confrontation with Israel. The proxies of various nations are active in the Levant, while Iran itself has been hit by a terror attack at Kerman that caused 89 fatalities. Somali pirates, taking advantage of the fast-changing situation, may also be riding the bandwagon to make a buck and demonstrate their threat capability. A sudden increase in drug trafficking and clandestine drone flights to rebuild caches in J&K is also trending.

All these are early signs of the potential rise of groups who would like to gain significance. In Europe, where things have been relatively quiet, the Hamas-Israel war is stoking passion on both sides of the divide. The potential return of lone-wolf attacks always remains live. Before long, an all-out, long-term second cycle of global terror could well be stoked if a big event is successfully executed. The world has to wake up to the dangers of this, increase public awareness, sharpen intelligence, do deep dives into the wealth of social media data and be ready to defeat this phenomenon. Is there stomach for such action? That is a different analysis for the future.

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DECCAN HERALD

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An indictment of Gujarat government

The Supreme Court's order striking down the remission granted to 11 men convicted in the Bilkis Bano gangrape case of 2002 is a blow for justice and an indictment of the Gujarat government, which had ordered their release. It also exposes many leaders of the ruling party and others who had sought to justify the release of the convicts on the most spurious and unconvincing grounds. The judgement has corrected a major miscarriage of justice about which the nation had to be ashamed of. The Gujarat government's decision to release the convicts had shaken the nation's conscience just as the gangrape of Bilkis Bano had. She had got justice only after a long legal battle with the support of the Supreme Court. She has won it now also only from the court. The course of justice is not always easy, but it has prevailed. Justice BV Nagarathna, who pronounced the judgement with Justice Ujjal Bhuyan, said the law had to be guided by justice.

The court struck down the remission on legal and technical grounds, as it found that the Government of Gujarat, where the offence had taken place, was not the competent authority to take the decision on remission. The trial took place in Maharashtra, where the Supreme Court had shifted it, and the court ruled that it was the Maharashtra government that could take this decision. The convicts were released from jail on August 15, 2022. The court said that the Supreme Court order of May 13, 2022, which directed the Gujarat government to decide the remission as per the 1992 remission policy, was obtained by fraud and suppression of facts. It remarked that the exercise of power by the Gujarat government is an instance of usurpation and abuse of power.

While the court relied on the legal infirmity of the remission, it shows how wrong and unethical the Gujarat government's decision was. It was clearly a political decision in line with the Gujarat government's policy, which became clear in many cases, of shielding the accused in the 2002 riots cases and supporting the convicts. It should be noted that the government took the decision even as declarations of respect for women and support for women's rights were being made from the Red Fort in Delhi. The court's comments are pertinent in this context: "A woman deserves respect. Can heinous crimes against women permit remission? These are the issues which arise." The court has ordered that the released convicts be sent back to jail within two weeks. They may have the option to apply to the Maharashtra government for remission. That may be the final test of justice for Bilkis Bano.

The SC has ordered the released gangrapists of Bilkis Bano back to jail



ಅನಗತ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಕೆಣಕುತ್ತಿರುವ ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್

ಬಹಳ ಸುದೀರ್ಘ ಕಾಲ ಭಾರತದ ಸ್ನೇಹಿತನಾಗಿದ್ದ ದಕ್ಷಿಣ ಏಷ್ಯಾದ ಪುಟ್ಟ ದ್ವೀಪರಾಷ್ಟ್ರ ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್ ಇತ್ತೀಚೆಗೆ ಏಕಾಏಕಿ ಚೀನಾ ಕಡೆಗೆ ವಾಲುವ ಮೂಲಕ ಭಾರತದಿಂದ ದೂರವಾಗುತ್ತಿರುವುದು ಎಲ್ಲರಿಗೂ ತಿಳಿದ ವಿಚಾರ. ಆದರೆ, ಅಷ್ಟಕ್ಕೇ ಸುಮ್ಮನಾಗದೆ ಈಗ ಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಕೆಣಕುವ ದುಸ್ಸಾಹಸಕ್ಕೂ ಕೈಹಾಕಿದೆ. ಅನಗತ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಇಂಥದೊಂದು ಕೆಲಸಕ್ಕೆ ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್ ಮುಂದಾಗಿರುವುದು ಒಳ್ಳೆಯ ಬೆಳವಣಿಗೆ ಅಲ್ಲ. ಕೇವಲ ಬೆಂಗಳೂರಿನ ಶೇ.5ರಷ್ಟು ಜನಸಂಖ್ಯೆ ಹೊಂದಿರುವ ಸಣ್ಣ ದೇಶವಾದ ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್ ಭಾರತವಿರೋಧಿ ನಿಲುವನ್ನು ತಾಳಿದರೆ ಭಾರತಕ್ಕೇನೂ ದೊಡ್ಡ ನಷ್ಟವಿಲ್ಲ. ಆದರೆ, ಅದಕ್ಕೆ ಸ್ವತಃ ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್ ಅನುಭವಿಸುವ ಹಾಗೂ ತೆರಬೇಕಾಗಿ ಬರುವ ಬೆಲೆ ಬಹಳದೊಡ್ಡದು. ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್ ತನ್ನ ಆರ್ಥಿಕತೆ ಕಟ್ಟಿಕೊಂಡಿರುವುದು ಪ್ರವಾಸೋದ್ಯಮದ ಮೇಲೆ. ಅಲ್ಲಿಗೆ ಅತಿಹೆಚ್ಚು ಪ್ರವಾಸಿಗರು ಹೋಗುವುದು ಭಾರತದಿಂದ. ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್‌ಗೆ

ಕೇವಲ 5 ಲಕ್ಷ ಜನ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆಯ ಪುಟ್ಟ ದ್ವೀಪವಾದ ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್ ನಡೆಯಿಂದ ಭಾರತಕ್ಕೇನೂ ನಷ್ಟವಿಲ್ಲ. ಆದರೆ ಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಅವಮಾನಿಸಿದರೆ ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್ ತೆರಬೇಕಾದ ಬೆಲೆ ದೊಡ್ಡದು.

ಹತ್ತಿರದಲ್ಲಿರುವ ದೇಶ ಕೂಡ ಭಾರತವೇ. ಹೀಗಿರುವಾಗ ತನ್ನ ಗಾತ್ರ, ಜನಸಂಖ್ಯೆ ಗಿಂತ ನೂರಾರು ಪಟ್ಟು ಹೆಚ್ಚಿರುವ ಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಎದುರುಹಾಕಿಕೊಂಡು ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್ ಸಾಧಿಸುವುದಾದರೂ ಏನನ್ನು?

ಭಾರತದ ಲಕ್ಷದ್ವೀಪದಂತೆ ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್ ಕೂಡ ದ್ವೀಪ. ಅಲ್ಲಿರುವಂತೆ ಲಕ್ಷದ್ವೀಪದಲ್ಲೂ ಸುಂದರವಾದ ಬೀಚುಗಳು ಹಾಗೂ ಪ್ರವಾಸೋದ್ಯಮಕ್ಕೆ ಬೇಕಾದ ಅಂಶಗಳಿವೆ. ಪ್ರಧಾನಿ ಮೋದಿಯವರು ಲಕ್ಷದ್ವೀಪಕ್ಕೆ ಭೇಟಿ ನೀಡಿ ಭಾರತೀಯರು ಅಲ್ಲಿಗೆ ಪ್ರವಾಸಕ್ಕೆ ಗೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕೆಂದು ಸಲಹೆ ನೀಡುವುದು ಸಹಜ. ಅಷ್ಟಕ್ಕೇ ಅಲ್ಲಿನ ಸಚಿವರು ಭಾರತದ ಪ್ರಧಾನಿ ತಮ್ಮ ದೇಶದ ಪ್ರವಾಸಿಗರನ್ನು

ಕಸಿದುಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾರೆಂದು ಸಿಟ್ಟಿಗೆದ್ದು ಅವಮಾನಕಾರಿಯಾಗಿ ಮಾತನಾಡುವುದು ಒಂದು ದೇಶಕ್ಕೆ ಘನತೆ ತರುವ ಸಂಗತಿಯಲ್ಲ. ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್ ನ ಹಿಂದಿನ ಸರ್ಕಾರ ಭಾರತದ ಸ್ನೇಹಿತನಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಆಗ ಭಾರತ ಹಿಂದೂ ಮಹಾಸಾಗರದಲ್ಲಿ ಚೀನಾದ ಚಟುವಟಿಕೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಕಡಿವಾಣ ಹಾಕಲು ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್ ನಲ್ಲಿ ತನ್ನ ಸೇನಾನೆಲೆ ಸ್ಥಾಪಿಸಿತ್ತು. ಈಗಿನ ಸರ್ಕಾರ ಆ ಸೇನಾನೆಲೆ ತೆರವುಗೊಳಿಸುವಂತೆ ಭಾರತಕ್ಕೆ ಸೂಚಿಸಿದೆ. ಚೀನಾದ ನೆರವಿನ ಆಮಿಷಕ್ಕೆ ಬಲಿಯಾಗಿ ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್ ಹೀಗೆ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಶ್ರೀಲಂಕಾ, ನೇಪಾಳ, ಪಾಕಿಸ್ತಾನದಂಥ ಭಾರತದ ನೆರೆ ದೇಶಗಳು ಕೂಡ ಚೀನಾದ ಆಮಿಷಕ್ಕೆ ಬಲಿಯಾಗಿ ಕಷ್ಟ ಅನುಭವಿಸಿದ ವಿಚಾರ ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್ ಗೆ ತಿಳಿದೇ ಇರುತ್ತದೆ. ಆದರೂ ಅಲ್ಲಿನ ವಿದೇಶಾಂಗ ನೀತಿ ಭಾರತದ ವಿಷಯದಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಪರೀತವಾಗಿ ಬದಲಾಗುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಈ ಬೆಳವಣಿಗೆಗೆ ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್ ನಲ್ಲೇ ವಿರೋಧವಿದೆ. ಆ ವಿರೋಧ ಎಲ್ಲಿಗೆ ಹೋಗಿ ತಲುಪುವುದೋ, ಭೂ ರಾಜಕೀಯ ಸಮೀಕರಣಗಳು ಹೇಗೆ ಬದಲಾಗುವವೋ ಭವಿಷ್ಯವೇ ಹೇಳಬೇಕು.

ಶುದ್ಧ ಕುಡಿಯುವ ನೀರು: ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಪರಿಹಾರದ ಜೊತೆ ಬೇಕು ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಜವಾಬ್ದಾರಿ ನೀರಿನ ಲೋಟದಲ್ಲಿ ತಂತ್ರಜ್ಞಾನದ ಅಲೆ



ವಿಶ್ಲೇಷಣೆ

ಕೇಶವ ಎಚ್. ಕೂರ್ಣೆ

ಬೇಸಿಗೆ ಕಾಲಿಡುವ ಮುನ್ನವೇ ತಾಪಮಾನ ಬಿರುಸಾಗಿ ಏರುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಬರದ ಛಾಯೆ ದಟ್ಟವಾಗುತ್ತ, ನೀರಿನ ಕೊರತೆ ಎಲ್ಲೆಡೆ ಕಾಡುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಒಬ್ಬ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಗೆ ಪ್ರತಿದಿನ ಕನಿಷ್ಠ ಐವತ್ತೈದು ಲೀಟರ್ ನೀರು ಒದಗಿಸಬೇಕೆಂಬ ಮಹತ್ವಾಕಾಂಕ್ಷೆಯೊಂದಿಗೆ ಕೇಂದ್ರ ಹಾಗೂ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಸರ್ಕಾರಗಳು ಜಂಟಿಯಾಗಿ ಅನುಷ್ಠಾನಕ್ಕೆ ತರುತ್ತಿರುವ 'ಜಲಜೀವನ ಮಿಷನ್' ಯೋಜನೆಯ ಅಗತ್ಯ ಅರಿವಾಗುವ ಗಳಿಗೆಯಿದೆ.

ನೀರು ಒದಗಿಸಿದ ನಂತರವೂ ಎದುರಾಗುವ ಸವಾಲೆಂದರೆ, ಅದರ ಶುದ್ಧತೆ ಖಚಿತಪಡಿಸಿ ಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದು. ಬಹುಪಾಲು ಹಳ್ಳಿ, ಪಟ್ಟಣ ಹಾಗೂ ನಗರಗಳ ಕುಟುಂಬಗಳಿಗೆ ನಿರೀಕ್ಷೆಯ ಮಟ್ಟದ ಶುದ್ಧ ನೀರು ಈಗಲೂ ದೊರಕುತ್ತಿಲ್ಲ. ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ಪ್ರಮುಖವಾಗಿ ಎರಡು ಕಾರಣಗಳು. ಮೊದಲಿನದು, ನೀರು ಒದಗಿಸುವ ಬಾವಿ, ಕೆರೆ, ಹೊಳೆ, ನದಿ ಹಾಗೂ ಕೊಳವೆಬಾವಿಯಂಥ ಜಲಮೂಲಗಳ ಮಾಲಿನ್ಯ. ಅಲ್ಲೆಲ್ಲ ಸಾವಯವ ತ್ಯಾಜ್ಯ ಗಳು ಹಾಗೂ ಲವಣಾಂಶಗಳು ಮಿತಿಮೀರಿ ಶೇಖರ ವಾಗುತ್ತಿವೆ. ಅವು, ರೋಗಕಾರಕ ವೈರಸ್, ಬ್ಯಾಕ್ಟೀರಿಯಾ ಹಾಗೂ ಕೀಟಗಳ ಅಡಗುತಾಣಗಳಾಗುತ್ತಿವೆ. ಹಲವೆಡೆ ಹೆಪ್ಪಾಕ್ಸೋ, ಎಂಡೋಸಲ್ಫಾನ್, ಅಲ್ಮಿನ್, ಡಿಡಿಟಿ, ಎಂಡ್ರಿನ್ ತರಹದ, ದೀರ್ಘಕಾಲ ನೀರಿನಲ್ಲೇ ಉಳಿಯಬಲ್ಲ ಅಪಾಯಕಾರಿ ಕೀಟನಾಶಕಗಳ ಅಂಶ ಕಂಡುಬಂದದ್ದೂ ಇದೆ. ಹೀಗಾಗಿ, ಜಲಮೂಲಗಳ ಶುದ್ಧತೆ ಕಾಪಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದೇ ದೊಡ್ಡ ಸವಾಲು. ಜಲಾನಯನ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ತತ್ವದಡಿ ಸ್ಥಳೀಯ ನಿವಾಸಿಗಳು ಹಾಗೂ ಸರ್ಕಾರ ಜೊತೆಯಾಗಿ ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಿದರೆ ಮಾತ್ರ ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ಪರಿಹಾರ ಕಂಡುಕೊಳ್ಳಬಹುದು.

ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ಕಾರಣ, ಪೂರೈಕೆ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆಯ ದೋಷಗಳು. ಜಲಮೂಲದಿಂದ ಮೇಲಕ್ಕೆತ್ತಿ, ಕೊಳವೆ ಮಾರ್ಗಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಸಾಗಿಸಿ, ಜಲಾಗಾರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಿಸಿ, ಮನೆಮನೆಗೆ ವಿತರಿಸುವ ಹಂತಗಳೆಲ್ಲ ಅಧ್ಯಾನ್ಯಗಳ ಸರಮಾಲೆಯೇ ಇದೆ. ಮಾರ್ಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಸೋರಿಕೆ, ಚರಂಡಿ ನೀರಿನ ಮಿಶ್ರಣ, ಪ್ರಾಥಮಿಕ ಶುದ್ಧೀಕರಣ ಘಟಕವೇ ಕಟ್ಟುನಿಂತಿರುವುದು, ಅಗತ್ಯವಿದ್ದಷ್ಟು ಕ್ಲೋರಿನ್, ಅಯೋ ಡಿನ್, ಪೊಟಾಶಿಯಂ ಪರಮಾಂಗನೇಟ್ ತರಹದ ಶುದ್ಧೀಕಾರಕಗಳ ಕೊರತೆ...! ಆಡಳಿತದ ಭ್ರಷ್ಟಾಚಾರವೇ ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ಕಾರಣ ತಾನೇ? ಈ ವಿಷಮಸ್ಥಿತಿಯಿಂದ ಹೊರಬರಬೇಕಿದೆ.

ಇನ್ನು, ಲಭ್ಯವಾಗುವ ನೀರಿನ ಗುಣಮಟ್ಟ ವಾದರೂ ಎಂಥದ್ದು? ಜನವಸತಿಗಳ ಮಾಲಿನ್ಯ, ಕೈಗಾರಿಕಾ ತ್ಯಾಜ್ಯ, ಕೃಷಿಭೂಮಿಯ ಕ್ರಿಮಿನಾಶಕ ಹಾಗೂ ಕಳೆನಾಶಕ ಇವೆಲ್ಲ ಸೇರಿ ಜಲಮೂಲಗಳೆಲ್ಲ ಮಲಿನವಾಗುತ್ತಿವೆ. ಬಣ್ಣ, ವಾಸನೆ, ರುಚಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಕಟವಾಗದೆಯೂ ನೀರು ಅಪಾಯಕಾರಿಯಾಗಬಲ್ಲದು. ಹೀಗಾಗಿ, ಕುಡಿಯುವ ನೀರು ಬಳಸುವ ಮೊದಲು ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಶುದ್ಧೀಕರಣ ಕೈಗೊಳ್ಳುವುದು ಅನಿವಾರ್ಯ. ಶುದ್ಧಬಟ್ಟೆಯಲ್ಲಿ

ನೀರನ್ನು ಸೋಸಿ, ಕುದಿಸಿ ಕುಡಿಯುವುದು ಎಲ್ಲರೂ ಬಲ್ಲ ಪಾರಂಪರಿಕ ವಿಧಾನ. ಸೋಸುವಿಕೆಯು ಕಸ, ಕಡ್ಡಿ, ಕೊಳೆಯಂಥ ಸಾವಯವ ವಸ್ತು ಹಾಗೂ ಲವಣಾಂಶ ಗಳನ್ನು ಬೇರ್ಪಡಿಸಿದರೆ, ನೀರನ್ನು ಕುದಿಸಿದಾಗ ರೋಗಕಾರಕ ಸೂಕ್ಷ್ಮಾಣುಜೀವಿಗಳು ಸಾಯಬಲ್ಲವು. ಈ ಸರಳಕ್ರಮಗಳನ್ನು ಮನೆ, ಬಿಸಿಯೂಟ ನೀಡುವ ಶಾಲೆ-ಕಾಲೇಜು, ಸಾಮೂಹಿಕ ಊಟ ನೀಡುವ ಸ್ಥಳಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಅಗತ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಪಾಲಿಸಬೇಕಿದೆ.

ಆದರೆ, ಈ ಸರಳ ವಿಧಾನಗಳೂ ಸಾಧ್ಯವಾಗದ ವೇಗದ ಜೀವನಕ್ರಮ ಇಂದಿನದಾಗುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಹೀಗಾಗಿಯೇ, ಹಲವಾರು ಬಗೆಯ ಚಿಕ್ಕ ಶುದ್ಧೀಕರಣ ಘಟಕಗಳು ಮಾರುಕಟ್ಟೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಇಂದು ಕಾಣಿಸಿವೆ. ಕಾರ್ಯವಿಧಾನದ ತತ್ವಗಳ ಆಧಾರದಲ್ಲಿ, ಅವನ್ನು ಸ್ಥೂಲವಾಗಿ ನಾಲ್ಕು ಬಗೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಂಗಡಿಸಬಹುದು.

ಮೊದಲಿನದು, ಸೋಸುವಿಕೆ ತತ್ವದ 'ನೀರಿನ ಫಿಲ್ಟರ್'ಗಳು. ಇವುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಸೋಸುಕಡ್ಡಿಗಳು (ಕ್ಯಾಂಡಲ್) ಇರುತ್ತವೆ. ಮರದಪುಡಿ, ಮರಳು, ಸಿರಾಮಿಕ್, ಶುದ್ಧ ಸಿಲಿಕಾದಂತಹವುಗಳಿಂದ ಮಾಡಿರುವ ಈ ಸೋಸು ಕಡ್ಡಿಗಳ ಮೂಲಕ ನೀರು ಜಾರಿಹೋಗುವಾಗ, ಮಾಲಿನ್ಯಕಾರಕ ಅಂಶಗಳೆಲ್ಲ ಅವಕ್ಕೆ ಅಂಟಿಕೊಂಡು ಶುದ್ಧನೀರು ಪ್ರತ್ಯೇಕವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಕೆರೆ-ಬಾವಿಗಳ ನೀರು ಅಥವಾ ನಗರ-ಪಟ್ಟಣಗಳು ಒದಗಿಸುವ ಕೊಳವೆ ನೀರನ್ನು ಇವುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಶುದ್ಧೀಕರಿಸಬಹುದು. ಹಾಗೆ ಸೋಸಿದ ನೀರನ್ನು ಕುದಿಸಿದರೆ, ಸೂಕ್ಷ್ಮಾಣುಜೀವಿ ಗಳೂ ಸಾಯುತ್ತವೆ. ಇತ್ತೀಚೆಗೆ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿಗೊಳಿಸಿರುವ, ಪುನಶ್ಚೇತನಗೊಳಿಸಿದ ಶುದ್ಧ ಇಂಗಾಲದ ನುಣುಪಾದ ಪುಡಿಯ ಸೋಸುಕಡ್ಡಿಗಳಂತೂ ಮತ್ತಷ್ಟು ಪರಿಣಾಮ ಕಾರಿಯಾಗಿವೆ. ನೀರಿನಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಅನವಶ್ಯಕ ಅನಿಲ ಹಾಗೂ ದುರ್ವಾಸನೆಯನ್ನೂ ಅವು ದೂರಮಾಡ ಬಲ್ಲವು. ಕಡಿಮೆ ವೆಚ್ಚದ ಹಾಗೂ ವಿದ್ಯುತ್ ಅವಶ್ಯಕತೆ ಇರದ ಈ ಘಟಕಗಳ ಬಳಕೆ ಇಂದು ವ್ಯಾಪಕ ವಾಗಿದ್ದರೂ, ಬಹುಪಾಲು ವನವಾಸಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಕಡುಬಡ ಕುಟುಂಬಗಳಿಗೆ ಅವಿನ್ಯ ತಲುಪಬೇಕಿದೆ.

ಎರಡನೇ ಬಗೆಯದು, ಅಲ್ಪಪ್ರಮಾಣದ ವಿದ್ಯುತ್ ಬಳಸುವ 'ಅಯಾನ್ ವಿನಿಮಯ' ವಿಧಾನ. ವಿದ್ಯುತ್ ಸಂಪರ್ಕವಿರುವ ಇಂಗಾಲದ ಸಂಯುಕ್ತಗಳ ತಳುಪದರದ ಮೇಲೆ ನೀರು ಹಾಯುವಾಗ, ಅದು ನೀರಿನಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಮ್ಯಾಗ್ನೀಶಿಯಂ, ಕ್ಯಾಲ್ಷಿಯಂ ನಂತಹ ಅಂಶಗಳನ್ನು ಹೀರಿಕೊಂಡು, ಜಲಜನಕವನ್ನು

ಬಿಟ್ಟುಕೊಡುತ್ತದೆ. ಲವಣಾಂಶ ಹಾಗೂ ಇಂಗಾಲದ ಸಂಯುಕ್ತಗಳೆಲ್ಲ ಬೇರ್ಪಟ್ಟು, ಗಡಸುನೀರು ಮೆದುವಾಗು ತ್ತದೆ. ಕೊಳವೆಬಾವಿ ನೀರು ಶುದ್ಧಿ ಮಾಡಲು ಇದು ಪರಿಣಾಮಕಾರಿ. ಸೋಸುವಿಕೆ ಮತ್ತು ಅಯಾನ್ ವಿನಿ ಮಯ- ಈ ಎರಡೂ ತತ್ವ ಆಧರಿಸಿದ 'ಹೈದ್ರಿಡ್' ಘಟಕ ಗಳೂ ಈಗ ಲಭ್ಯವಿದ್ದು, ಅವಕ್ಕೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಕ್ಷಮತೆಯಿದೆ.

ಮೂರನೇ ಬಗೆಯದೆಂದರೆ, 'ಅತಿನೇರಳೆ ಕಿರಣ' ಬಳಸುವ 'ಫಿಲ್ಟರ್'ಗಳು. ಸೂಕ್ಷ್ಮಾಣುಜೀವಿಗಳೂ ಇದರಲ್ಲಿ ಸಾಯಬಲ್ಲವು. ಬೇಸಿಗೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಹರಿಯುವ ನೀರಿಲ್ಲದೆ ಜಲಮೂಲಗಳು ಪಾಚಿಕಟ್ಟಿ, ಹಸಿರುಬಣ್ಣಕ್ಕೆ ತಿರುಗಿ ದುರ್ವಾಸನೆ ಬೀರುತ್ತಿರುತ್ತವೆ ತಾನೆ? ಅಂಥ ನೀರನ್ನು ಸೋಸಿ-ಕುದಿಸಿದರೂ, ಸೂಕ್ಷ್ಮಾಣುಜೀವಿಗಳು ಉಳಿದು- ಬಿಡಬಲ್ಲವು. ಭೇದಿ, ಟೈಫಾಯಿಡ್, ಕಾಲರಾ ಬರಲು ಹಾಗೂ ಜಂತುಹುಳುವಿನಂತಹವು ಹರಡಲು ಇದೇ ಕಾರಣ. ನೀರಿನಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಅಂತಹ ವೈರಸ್, ಬ್ಯಾಕ್ಟೀರಿಯಾ, ಶಿಲೀಂಧ್ರ, ಏಕಕೋಶ ಸಸ್ಯ, ಹುಳದಂತಹವುಗಳನ್ನು ನಾಶಪಡಿಸಲು ಇದು ಪರಿಣಾಮಕಾರಿ ತಂತ್ರ.

ಅಂತಿಮವಾಗಿ, ಈ ಸೋಸುವಿಕೆಗಿಂತಲೇ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ- ಪಡಿಸುವ ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟ 'ಪೊರೆ'ಗಳನ್ನು ಬಳಸುವ 'ರಿವರ್ಸ್ ಆಸ್ಮಿಸಿಸ್' (ಆರ್.ಒ.) ತಂತ್ರ. ಜೀವಿಗಳ ಜೀವಕೋಶ ಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಅವಶ್ಯಕ ಅಂಶಗಳನ್ನು ಮಾತ್ರ ಒಳಸೇರಿಸಿ, ಅನಗತ್ಯ ವಾದದ್ದನ್ನು ಹೊರಗಿಡುವ 'ಜೀವಪೊರೆ'ಗಳಿರುತ್ತವೆ. ಆ ತತ್ವ ಆಧರಿಸಿ, ಈ 'ಕೃತಕ ಪೊರೆ'ಗಳನ್ನು ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿಪಡಿ ಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಕಡಲಿನ ಉಪ್ಪುನೀರೂ ಸೇರಿದಂತೆ ಯಾವುದೇ ನೀರನ್ನು ಈ ತಂತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಕುಡಿಯಲು ಯೋಗ್ಯವಾಗಿಸ ಬಹುದು. ಸಲ್ಫೇಟ್, ಫಾಸ್ಫೇಟ್, ನೈಟ್ರೇಟ್, ಫ್ಲೋರೈಡ್, ಕ್ರಿಮಿನಾಶಕ, ಕಳೆನಾಶಕ ಹಾಗೂ ಭಾರಲೋಹಗಳಾದ ಸೀಸ, ಪಾದರಸ, ಆರ್ಸೆನಿಕ್ ಸೇರಿದಂತೆ ಅಪಾಯಕಾರಿ ರಾಸಾಯನಿಕವನ್ನೂ ಬೇರ್ಪಡಿಸಬಹುದು. ಉಳಿದೆಲ್ಲ ತಂತ್ರಜ್ಞಾನಗಳಿಗಿಂತ ಇದು ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಪರಿಣಾಮಕಾರಿ.

ಆದರೆ, ಈ ತಂತ್ರಜ್ಞಾನದಲ್ಲಿ ಒಂದು ನ್ಯೂನತೆಯಿದೆ. ದೇಹಕ್ಕೆ ಅಗತ್ಯವಿರುವ ಲವಣಗಳ ಕನಿಷ್ಠ ಪ್ರಮಾಣವೂ ಇಲ್ಲದಂತೆ ಈ ಯಂತ್ರಗಳು ನೀರನ್ನು ಸೋಸಿಬಿಡುತ್ತವೆ! ಅಂಥ ನೀರನ್ನೇ ದೀರ್ಘಕಾಲ ಕುಡಿದರೆ ಕ್ಯಾಲ್ಷಿಯಂ, ಮ್ಯಾಗ್ನೀಶಿಯಂ, ರಿಬ್ಬಿಂಕ್‌ನಂತಹವುಗಳ ಕೊರತೆಯಾಗಿ, ರಕ್ತದೊತ್ತಡ, ಹೃದಯಕಾಯಿಲೆ, ಮೂತ್ರಕೋಶದಂತಹ ಸಮಸ್ಯೆಗಳು ಹೆಚ್ಚಾಗಬಹುದು. ಈ ಅಪಾಯವರಿತು ರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಯ ಹಸಿರು ನ್ಯಾಯಮಂಡಳಿಯು ಗೃಹಬಳಕೆಗೆ ಈ ಶುದ್ಧೀಕರಣ ಯಂತ್ರಗಳನ್ನು 2020ರಲ್ಲೊಮ್ಮೆ ನಿಷೇಧಿಸಿತ್ತು ಸಹ! ಒಂದು ಲೀಟರ್ ನೀರಿನಲ್ಲಿ 300- 500 ಮಿ.ಗ್ರಾಂ. ಲವಣಾಂಶ ಕಾಯ್ದುಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ತಂತ್ರಜ್ಞಾನ ಇರಬೇಕು ಎಂಬ ಸುಪ್ರೀಂ ಕೋರ್ಟ್‌ನ ಷರತ್ತಿನೊಂದಿಗೆ, 'ಪರಿಷ್ಕೃತ ಆರ್.ಒ.' ಈಗ ಪುನಃ ಮಾರುಕಟ್ಟೆ ಪ್ರವೇಶಿಸಿದೆ.

ಕುಡಿಯುವ ನೀರೂ ವಾಣಿಜ್ಯೋದ್ಯಮವಾಗಿ ರುವಾಗ, ನವೀನ ತಂತ್ರಜ್ಞಾನಗಳು ಬರುತ್ತಲೇ ಇರುತ್ತವೆ. ಇಂಥ ಸಂದರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿ, ಜನಸಾಮಾನ್ಯರಿಗೆ ಶುದ್ಧನೀರು ಹಾಗೂ ಸ್ವಲ್ಪ ಶುದ್ಧೀಕರಣ ತಂತ್ರಜ್ಞಾನ ಕೈಗೆಟಕುವಂತೆ ಮಾಡುವಲ್ಲಿ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಹೊಣೆಯಿದೆ. ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ 2022ರ ಜಲನೀತಿಯಲ್ಲೂ ಈ ಆಶಯವಿದೆ.

ಬೇಸಿಗೆ-ಬರದಲ್ಲಷ್ಟೇ 'ಜಲ-ಜಾಗೃತಿ'ಯಾದರೆ ಸಾಲದು! ನೀರಿನ ಲೋಟ ತುಂಬಿಸುವ ನೈಸರ್ಗಿಕ ಜಲ- ಚಕ್ರವನ್ನು ಕಾಪಾಡುವ ಹೊಣೆಯನ್ನು ಸರ್ಕಾರ ಹಾಗೂ ಸಮಾಜ ಸದಾ ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಬೇಕು.





ಅನಗತ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಕೆಣಕುತ್ತಿರುವ ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್

ಬಹಳ ಸುದೀರ್ಘ ಕಾಲ ಭಾರತದ ಸ್ನೇಹಿತನಾಗಿದ್ದ ದಕ್ಷಿಣ ಏಷ್ಯಾದ ಪುಟ್ಟ ದ್ವೀಪರಾಷ್ಟ್ರ ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್ ಇತ್ತೀಚೆಗೆ ಏಕಾಏಕಿ ಚೀನಾ ಕಡೆಗೆ ವಾಲುವ ಮೂಲಕ ಭಾರತದಿಂದ ದೂರವಾಗುತ್ತಿರುವುದು ಎಲ್ಲರಿಗೂ ತಿಳಿದ ವಿಚಾರ. ಆದರೆ, ಅಷ್ಟಕ್ಕೇ ಸುಮ್ಮನಾಗದೆ ಈಗ ಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಕೆಣಕುವ ದುಸ್ಸಾಹಸಕ್ಕೂ ಕೈಹಾಕಿದೆ. ಅನಗತ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಇಂಥದೊಂದು ಕೆಲಸಕ್ಕೆ ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್ ಮುಂದಾಗಿರುವುದು ಒಳ್ಳೆಯ ಬೆಳವಣಿಗೆ ಅಲ್ಲ. ಕೇವಲ ಬೆಂಗಳೂರಿನ ಶೇ.5ರಷ್ಟು ಜನಸಂಖ್ಯೆ ಹೊಂದಿರುವ ಸಣ್ಣ ದೇಶವಾದ ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್ ಭಾರತವಿರೋಧಿ ನಿಲುವನ್ನು ತಾಳಿದರೆ ಭಾರತಕ್ಕೇನೂ ದೊಡ್ಡ ನಷ್ಟವಿಲ್ಲ. ಆದರೆ, ಅದಕ್ಕೆ ಸ್ವತಃ ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್ ಅನುಭವಿಸುವ ಹಾಗೂ ತೆರಬೇಕಾಗಿ ಬರುವ ಬೆಲೆ ಬಹಳದೊಡ್ಡದು. ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್ ತನ್ನ ಆರ್ಥಿಕತೆ ಕಟ್ಟಿಕೊಂಡಿರುವುದು ಪ್ರವಾಸೋದ್ಯಮದ ಮೇಲೆ. ಅಲ್ಲಿಗೆ ಅತಿಹೆಚ್ಚು ಪ್ರವಾಸಿಗರು ಹೋಗುವುದು ಭಾರತದಿಂದ. ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್‌ಗೆ

ಕೇವಲ 5 ಲಕ್ಷ ಜನ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆಯ ಪುಟ್ಟ ದ್ವೀಪವಾದ ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್ ನಡೆಯಿಂದ ಭಾರತಕ್ಕೇನೂ ನಷ್ಟವಿಲ್ಲ. ಆದರೆ ಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಅವಮಾನಿಸಿದರೆ ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್ ತೆರಬೇಕಾದ ಬೆಲೆ ದೊಡ್ಡದು.

ಹತ್ತಿರದಲ್ಲಿರುವ ದೇಶ ಕೂಡ ಭಾರತವೇ. ಹೀಗಿರುವಾಗ ತನ್ನ ಗಾತ್ರ, ಜನಸಂಖ್ಯೆ ಗಿಂತ ನೂರಾರು ಪಟ್ಟು ಹೆಚ್ಚಿರುವ ಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಎದುರುಹಾಕಿಕೊಂಡು ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್ ಸಾಧಿಸುವುದಾದರೂ ಏನನ್ನು?

ಭಾರತದ ಲಕ್ಷದ್ವೀಪದಂತೆ ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್ ಕೂಡ ದ್ವೀಪ. ಅಲ್ಲಿರುವಂತೆ ಲಕ್ಷದ್ವೀಪದಲ್ಲೂ ಸುಂದರವಾದ ಬೀಚುಗಳು ಹಾಗೂ ಪ್ರವಾಸೋದ್ಯಮಕ್ಕೆ ಬೇಕಾದ ಅಂಶಗಳಿವೆ. ಪ್ರಧಾನಿ ಮೋದಿಯವರು ಲಕ್ಷದ್ವೀಪಕ್ಕೆ ಭೇಟಿ ನೀಡಿ ಭಾರತೀಯರು ಅಲ್ಲಿಗೆ ಪ್ರವಾಸಕ್ಕೆ ಗೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕೆಂದು ಸಲಹೆ ನೀಡುವುದು ಸಹಜ. ಅಷ್ಟಕ್ಕೇ ಅಲ್ಲಿನ ಸಚಿವರು ಭಾರತದ ಪ್ರಧಾನಿ ತಮ್ಮ ದೇಶದ ಪ್ರವಾಸಿಗರನ್ನು

ಕಸಿದುಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾರೆಂದು ಸಿಟ್ಟಿಗೆದ್ದು ಅವಮಾನಕಾರಿಯಾಗಿ ಮಾತನಾಡುವುದು ಒಂದು ದೇಶಕ್ಕೆ ಘನತೆ ತರುವ ಸಂಗತಿಯಲ್ಲ. ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್ ನ ಹಿಂದಿನ ಸರ್ಕಾರ ಭಾರತದ ಸ್ನೇಹಿತನಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಆಗ ಭಾರತ ಹಿಂದೂ ಮಹಾಸಾಗರದಲ್ಲಿ ಚೀನಾದ ಚಟುವಟಿಕೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಕಡಿವಾಣ ಹಾಕಲು ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್ ನಲ್ಲಿ ತನ್ನ ಸೇನಾನೆಲೆ ಸ್ಥಾಪಿಸಿತ್ತು. ಈಗಿನ ಸರ್ಕಾರ ಆ ಸೇನಾನೆಲೆ ತೆರವುಗೊಳಿಸುವಂತೆ ಭಾರತಕ್ಕೆ ಸೂಚಿಸಿದೆ. ಚೀನಾದ ನೆರವಿನ ಆಮಿಷಕ್ಕೆ ಬಲಿಯಾಗಿ ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್ ಹೀಗೆ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಶ್ರೀಲಂಕಾ, ನೇಪಾಳ, ಪಾಕಿಸ್ತಾನದಂಥ ಭಾರತದ ನೆರೆ ದೇಶಗಳು ಕೂಡ ಚೀನಾದ ಆಮಿಷಕ್ಕೆ ಬಲಿಯಾಗಿ ಕಷ್ಟ ಅನುಭವಿಸಿದ ವಿಚಾರ ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್ ಗೆ ತಿಳಿದೇ ಇರುತ್ತದೆ. ಆದರೂ ಅಲ್ಲಿನ ವಿದೇಶಾಂಗ ನೀತಿ ಭಾರತದ ವಿಷಯದಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಪರೀತವಾಗಿ ಬದಲಾಗುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಈ ಬೆಳವಣಿಗೆಗೆ ಮಾಲ್ಡೀವ್ಸ್ ನಲ್ಲೇ ವಿರೋಧವಿದೆ. ಆ ವಿರೋಧ ಎಲ್ಲಿಗೆ ಹೋಗಿ ತಲುಪುವುದೋ, ಭೂ ರಾಜಕೀಯ ಸಮೀಕರಣಗಳು ಹೇಗೆ ಬದಲಾಗುವವೋ ಭವಿಷ್ಯವೇ ಹೇಳಬೇಕು.

ಕ್ಯಾಂಪಸ್ ಸಂದರ್ಶನ: ಮುಕ್ತವಾಗಿರಲಿ

ಕ್ಯಾಂಪಸ್ ಸಂದರ್ಶನವನ್ನು ಎಲ್ಲ ಶೈಕ್ಷಣಿಕ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಗಳಿಗೂ ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸಬೇಕು. ಕಂಪನಿಗಳು ತಮ್ಮ ಅವಶ್ಯಕತೆಗೆ ಅನುಗುಣವಾಗಿ ಮುಕ್ತ ಮನಸ್ಸಿನಿಂದ ನೇಮಕಾತಿ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆ ನಡೆಸುವಂತೆ ಆಗಬೇಕು

• ಪ್ರೊ. ಎಂ. ಎಸ್. ರಘುನಾಥ್

ಶಿಕ್ಷಣದ ಮೂಲ ಉದ್ದೇಶ ಏನೇ ಇರಲಿ, ಅದರಿಂದ ಉದ್ಯೋಗ ಖಾತರಿ ಎಂಬುದನ್ನು ಮನಗಂಡೇ ಬಹುತೇಕ ಪೋಷಕರು ತಮ್ಮ ಮಕ್ಕಳಿಗೆ ಶಿಕ್ಷಣ ಕೊಡಿಸುತ್ತಿರುವುದು ವಾಸ್ತವ. ಇದನ್ನು ಅರಿತೇ, ಒಂದೆಡೆ ಶಿಕ್ಷಣ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಗಳು, ಮತ್ತೊಂದೆಡೆ ಉದ್ಯೋಗದಾತರು ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಥಿಗಳ ಭವಿಷ್ಯದ ಜೊತೆ ಒಂದು ರೀತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಚೆಲ್ಲಾಟವಾಡುತ್ತಿರುವುದು ಶಿಕ್ಷಣ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿನ ಶೋಷಣೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಒಂದು.

ಈ ನಡೆ ಉನ್ನತ ಶಿಕ್ಷಣದಲ್ಲಿ, ಅದರಲ್ಲೂ ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಶಿಕ್ಷಣಕ್ಕೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ 'ಕ್ಯಾಂಪಸ್ ಸಂದರ್ಶನ' ಎಂಬ ಆಕರ್ಷಕ ಹೆಸರುಳ್ಳ ಪ್ರಲೋಭನೆಗೆ ಕಾರಣ ಆಗುತ್ತಿದೆ. ತಮ್ಮ ಮಕ್ಕಳನ್ನು ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಕೋರ್ಸ್‌ಗೆ ಸೇರಿಸಲು ಪೋಷಕರು ಪ್ರಧಾನವಾಗಿ ಪರಿಗಣಿಸುತ್ತಿರುವುದು, ಈ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ನಡೆಯುವ ಕ್ಯಾಂಪಸ್ ಸಂದರ್ಶನವನ್ನು. ಅಂದರೆ, ಪ್ರತಿಷ್ಠಿತ ಕಂಪನಿಗಳು ಪದವಿಯ ಮುಕ್ತಾಯಕ್ಕೆ ಮುಂಚೆಯೇ ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಥಿಗಳನ್ನು ನೇರವಾಗಿ ಉದ್ಯೋಗಕ್ಕೆ ಆಯ್ಕೆ ಮಾಡಿ ಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದನ್ನು ಖಾತರಿಪಡಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದೇ ಆಗಿದೆ. ಇದು ಒಂದು ರೀತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಉನ್ನತ ಶಿಕ್ಷಣ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಗಳನ್ನು ಕ್ಯಾಂಪಸ್‌ಸಹಿತ ಅಥವಾ ಕ್ಯಾಂಪಸ್‌ರಹಿತ ಎಂಬ ಕೃತಕ ವರ್ಗೀಕರಣಕ್ಕೆ ಒಳಪಡಿಸಿದೆ.

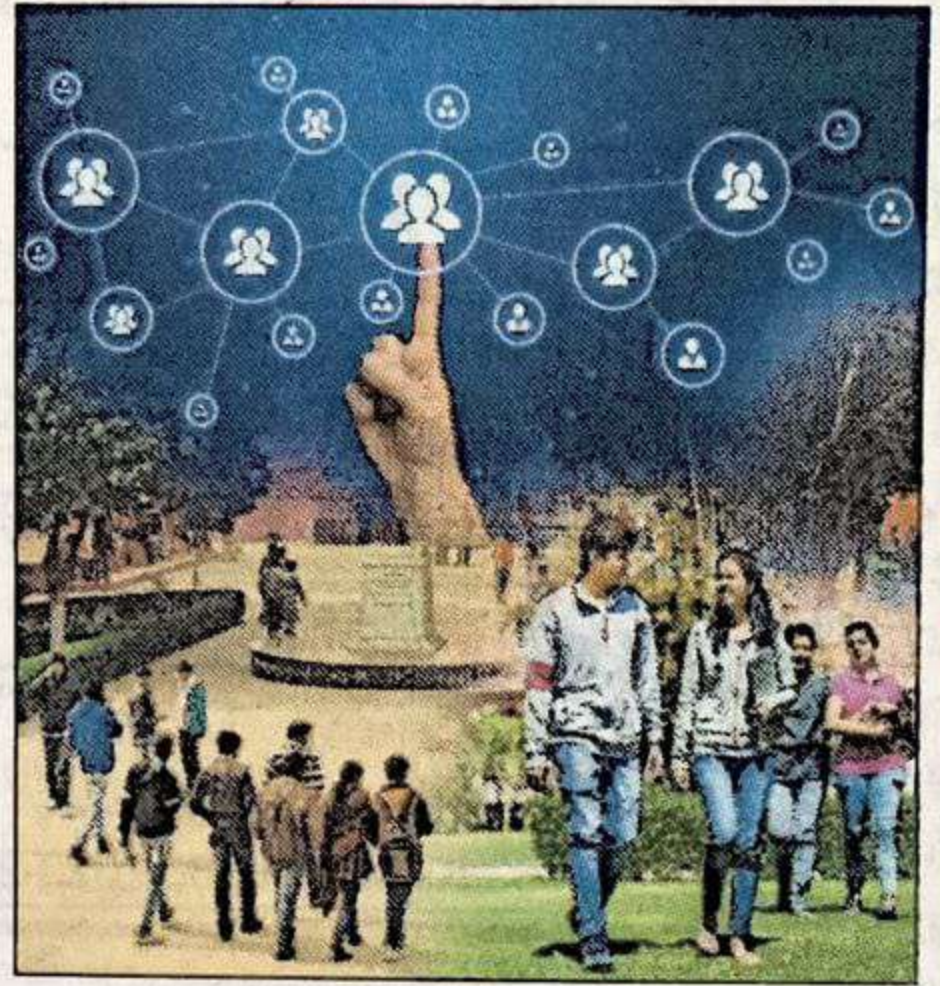
ದೊಡ್ಡ ಕಂಪನಿಗಳು ಪ್ರತಿಷ್ಠಿತ ಕಾಲೇಜುಗಳಿಗೆ ಭೇಟಿ ನೀಡಿ, ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಥಿಗಳನ್ನು ಸಂದರ್ಶನದ ಮೂಲಕ ತರಬೇತಿಗಾಗಿಯೇ ಉದ್ಯೋಗಕ್ಕಾಗಿಯೇ ನೇಮಕ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಈ ಆಕರ್ಷಕ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆ ಅನೇಕ ವರ್ಷಗಳಿಂದ ಮುಂದುವರಿದುಕೊಂಡು ಬಂದಿದೆ. ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಪರೀಕ್ಷೆಗೆ ಒಳಪಡುವುದು ಪ್ರತಿಭೆ ಮಾತ್ರವೇ ಅಥವಾ ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಥಿಗಳ ಸರ್ವಾಂಗೀಣ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿತ್ವವೇ ಎಂಬುದು ಕಂಪನಿಗಳ ವಿವೇಚನೆಗೆ ಬಿಟ್ಟ ಸಂಗತಿಯಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಆದರೆ ಈ ರೀತಿಯ ಸಂದರ್ಶನ ನಡೆಯುವುದು ಆಯ್ಕೆ ಕಾಲೇಜುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಅದರಲ್ಲೂ ನಗರದಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಕೆಲವು ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾತ್ರ. ಅಂದರೆ, ಆ ಕಂಪನಿಗಳು ಹೊಂದಿರುವ ಅಭಿಪ್ರಾಯದ ಪ್ರಕಾರ, ಪ್ರತಿಭಾವಂತರು ಅಥವಾ ತಮ್ಮ ಕಂಪನಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾರ್ಯ ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸುವ ಸಾಮರ್ಥ್ಯ ಉಳ್ಳವರು ದೊರೆಯುವುದು ಈ ಕಾಲೇಜುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾತ್ರ. ಹಾಗಾಗಿಯೇ, ಆ ಕಂಪನಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಈ ಕಾಲೇಜುಗಳು ಮಾತ್ರ ಪಠ್ಯ, ಮಿಕ್ಕವು ಅಪಠ್ಯ ಎಂಬಂತಾಗಿದೆ. ಅದಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಇಂತಹ ಕಾಲೇಜುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಶುಲ್ಕದ ಪ್ರಮಾಣ ತುಸು ಹೆಚ್ಚೇ ಇರುವುದು ಗೊತ್ತಿಲ್ಲದ ಸಂಗತಿಯೇನಲ್ಲ.

ಪೋಷಕರಿಗಂತೂ ಇಂತಹ ಕಾಲೇಜುಗಳಿಗೆ ಮಕ್ಕಳನ್ನು ಸೇರಿಸುವುದು ಪ್ರತಿಷ್ಠೆಯ ಸಂಗತಿ. ಶುಲ್ಕ ಭರಿಸಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಿಲ್ಲದ ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಥಿಗಳಿಗೆ, ಅಂತಹ ಕಾಲೇಜುಗಳೂ ಆಕರ್ಷಕ ಉದ್ಯೋಗದ ಪ್ರಲೋಭನೆಗಳೂ ಗಗನಕುಸುಮವೇ ಆಗಿರುತ್ತವೆ.

ಮಕ್ಕಳು ಪದವಿಯನ್ನು ಮುಗಿಸಲಿ, ಮುಗಿಸದಿರಲಿ ಉದ್ಯೋಗ ಖಾತರಿ ಎಂಬ ಜೀವನದ ಬಹು ಮುಖ್ಯವಾದ ಮಜಲಿಗೆ ಒಡ್ಡಿಕೊಂಡಿರುವುದರ ದ್ಯೋತಕ ಕ್ಯಾಂಪಸ್ ಸಂದರ್ಶನ. ಈ 'ಉದ್ಯೋಗ ಭಾಗ್ಯ'ದಿಂದ ಅನೇಕ ಕಾಲೇಜುಗಳ ಮಕ್ಕಳು ವಂಚಿತ ರಾಗುವುದರಿಂದ, ಎಲ್ಲ ರಂಗಗಳಲ್ಲೂ ಕಾಣಿಸಿಗುವ ಒಂದಲ್ಲ ಒಂದು ರೀತಿಯ ತಾರತಮ್ಯವು ಇಲ್ಲಿಗೂ ಈ ರೂಪದಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸಿದೆ. ಕಂಪನಿಗಳವರು ತಮ್ಮ

ಅವಶ್ಯಕತೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಅನುಗುಣವಾಗಿ ಈ ಕಾಲೇಜುಗಳಿಗೆ ಸಂದರ್ಶನ ನಡೆಸಲು ಭೇಟಿ ನೀಡುತ್ತಾರೋ ಅಥವಾ ಕಾಲೇಜುಗಳೇ ತಮ್ಮ ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ, ಶೈಕ್ಷಣಿಕ ಪ್ರತಿಷ್ಠೆ ಕಾಪಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು, ಹೆಚ್ಚು ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಥಿಗಳನ್ನು ಆಕರ್ಷಿಸಲು, ಸಂದರ್ಶನ ನಡೆಸುವಂತೆ ಕಂಪನಿಗಳನ್ನು ಒತ್ತಾಯಪಡಿಸುತ್ತವೋ ಎಂಬುದು ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟ ಆಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲ.

ಏನಾದರಾಗಲಿ, ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಥಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಉದ್ಯೋಗ ಭಾಗ್ಯ ದೊರಕುವುದು ಮಾತ್ರ ಅತ್ಯುತ್ತಮವಾದ ಆಶಾದಾಯಕ ಬೆಳವಣಿಗೆಯೇ ಸರಿ. ಆದರೆ, ಇದರಲ್ಲಿ ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟವಾಗಿ ಕಾಣುವ ತಾರತಮ್ಯ ಎಷ್ಟರ ಮಟ್ಟಿಗೆ ಸಮರ್ಥನೀಯ ಎಂಬುದರ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಯಾರೂ ಯೋಚಿಸುವುದಿಲ್ಲ.



ಕಲಬುರಗಿಯ ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಯೊಂದರ ಪ್ರಾಂಶುಪಾಲರು ಈ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆಯ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಇತ್ತೀಚೆಗೆ ದನಿ ಎತ್ತಿದ್ದರು. 'ನಾವು ಸಹ ನಮ್ಮ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಅತ್ಯುತ್ತಮವಾದ ಬೋಧಕರನ್ನು ನೇಮಿಸಿಕೊಂಡಿರುವುದಲ್ಲದೆ, ಉತ್ಕೃಷ್ಟ ಸೌಲಭ್ಯಗಳನ್ನು ಒದಗಿಸಲು ಪ್ರಾಮಾಣಿಕ ಪ್ರಯತ್ನ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದೇವೆ. ಈ ಮೂಲಕ ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಥಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಅತ್ಯುತ್ತಮವಾದ ಶೈಕ್ಷಣಿಕ ಪರಿಸರದಲ್ಲಿ ಶಿಕ್ಷಣ ಒದಗಿಸುವುದೇ ನಮ್ಮ ಗುರಿ. ಇಂತಹದರಲ್ಲೂ ಪೋಷಕರು ಮಾತ್ರ ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು, ಮೈಸೂರಿನ, ಅದರಲ್ಲೂ ಆಯ್ಕೆ ಕೆಲವು ಪ್ರತಿಷ್ಠಿತ ಕಾಲೇಜುಗಳಿಗೆ ತಮ್ಮ ಮಕ್ಕಳನ್ನು ಕಳುಹಿಸುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ಆದ್ಯತೆ ನೀಡುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಅಲ್ಲೆಲ್ಲೂ ಪ್ರವೇಶ ದೊರೆಯದಿದ್ದರೆ ಅಥವಾ ಯಾವುದೋ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕೆ ಅಲ್ಲಿಗೆ ಕಳುಹಿಸಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯ ಆಗದಿದ್ದರಷ್ಟೇ ಈ ಪ್ರದೇಶದ ಕಾಲೇಜುಗಳಿಗೆ ತಮ್ಮ ಮಕ್ಕಳಿಗೆ ಪ್ರವೇಶ ಕೊಡಿಸುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಇದಕ್ಕೆಲ್ಲಾ ಮುಖ್ಯ ಕಾರಣ, ಕ್ಯಾಂಪಸ್ ಸಂದರ್ಶನ ಎಂಬ ಮುಖ್ಯ ಪ್ರಲೋಭನೆ. ಇಂತಹ ಬೆಳವಣಿಗೆ ಆತಂಕಕಾರಿ ಅಲ್ಲವೇ' ಎಂದು ಅವರು ಪ್ರಶ್ನಿಸಿದ್ದರು.

ವೇಗವಾಗಿ ಬದಲಾಗುತ್ತಿರುವ ತಂತ್ರಜ್ಞಾನ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರದ ಬೆಳವಣಿಗೆಯಿಂದಾಗಿ, ಎಲ್ಲ ಬಗೆಯ ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಥಿಗಳೂ ಉನ್ನತಿ ಸಾಧಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಹಾಗಾಗಿ, ಅವರಿರುವುದು ಕೆಲವೇ ಕಾಲೇಜುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಎಂಬ ಪೂರ್ವಗ್ರಹವನ್ನು ಮೊದಲು ತೊಡೆದುಹಾಕಬೇಕಾಗಿದೆ. ಎಲ್ಲಾ ವರ್ಗದ ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಥಿಗಳ ಹಿತರಕ್ಷಣೆ ಮುಖ್ಯವಾಗಬೇಕು. ಕ್ಯಾಂಪಸ್ ಸಂದರ್ಶನ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಯನ್ನು ಎಲ್ಲ ಶೈಕ್ಷಣಿಕ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಗಳಿಗೂ ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸಬೇಕು. ಕಂಪನಿಗಳು ತಮ್ಮ ಅವಶ್ಯಕತೆಗೆ ಅನುಗುಣವಾಗಿ ಮುಕ್ತ ಮನಸ್ಸಿನಿಂದ ನೇಮಕಾತಿ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆ ನಡೆಸುವಂತಾಗಬೇಕು.



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