

3 killed as one truck rams into another

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Three persons, including a truck driver and a puncture repairer, were killed when the truck rammed into a stationary truck parked at outer ring road, Kisan Path, in Bijnor police station area on Sunday afternoon.

The deceased were identified as Shafiq Ahmed (30) of Hamirpur, truck driver Mahendra Jangid (33) and his helper Raju (40), both of Alwar in Rajasthan. The injured was identified as Ram Sewak of Sohramau in Unnao district. He has been admitted to SGPGI trauma centre where his condition is said to be critical.

SGPGI trauma centre where three of them were pronounced dead. A spokesman said the family members of the victims had been informed about the incident. In another case, a woman was found hanging from a tree in Mohanlalganj on Sunday morning. Police said the autopsy report would ascertain the cause of death and the investigation would be made accordingly.

Fraudster impersonating LDA employee arrested

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Ghazipur police on Sunday claimed to have arrested a man who allegedly duped multiple people by falsely claiming to arrange houses, flats, or land at discounted rates while impersonating a Lucknow Development Authority (LDA) employee.

The accused, identified as Syed Ishan alias Sonu from Jankipuram, works at a wood factory. He collaborated allegedly with his father and a relative in committing these crimes. Earlier, his brother-in-law Qazi Saif Rehman of Jankipuram (Sadbhavana Society), posing as a junior engineer at LDA, was also arrested in connection with the scam.

the latter had instructed a transfer of Rs 25,000. The victim received a false message crediting Rs 70,000 to her Google Pay account, and the fraudster persuaded her to return the excess amount. Subsequently, a total of Rs 94,500 was fraudulently withdrawn from her account in multiple transactions.



NOTICE

I have to changed my name from Jubi Anwar to Shabina Anwar W/O Mohd Anwar R/O 91/80-81 Dale Purwa Kanpur for future purpose.

NOTICE

I have to changed my name from Haji Ayub Khan or Mohammad Ayyoob Khan to Mohammad Ayub Khan S/O Mohammad Taqi Khan R/O EWS 27 Ganga Vihar KDA Colony Jajmau Kanpur for future purpose.

NOTICE

I have changed my name from GARIMA PANDEY To GARIMA BAJPAI W/O- AMIT PANDEY R/O 104 A/23 RAMBAGH KANPUR for future purpose

NOTICE

his is informed to that in my Highschool Certificate 2023 my name FAHEEM AHMAD and my father's name TUFAIL AHMAD spelling incorrect by mistake. My correct name FAHEEM AHMED and my father's name is TUFAIL AHMED as per Adhar Card- Faheem Ahmed S/o Tufail Ahmed, R/o 550A, Dariyabad, Prayagraj.

आवश्यकता है

एस.एस.जी. कॉलेज

ग्राम-मोस्ट रोड, फतेहपुर (सम्बद्ध- प्रो राजेश सिंह (रज्जु बैनाम) विश्वविद्यालय प्रयागराज) आवश्यकता है प्राचार्य एवं प्रवक्ताओं की कला संकाय हेतु- (1) प्राचार्य- एक पद (2) हिन्दी साहित्य- एक पद (3) शिक्षा शास्त्र- एक पद (4) इतिहास- एक पद (5) गृह विज्ञान- एक पद (6) अंग्रेजी साहित्य- एक पद (7) संस्कृत- एक पद (8) समाज शास्त्र- एक पद विज्ञान संकाय हेतु - (1) वनस्पति विज्ञान- एक पद (2) रसायन विज्ञान- एक पद (3) गणित- एक पद (4) भौतिक विज्ञान- एक पद (5) जन्तु विज्ञान- एक पद नोट:- वेतन एवं योग्यता यू.जी.सी. एवं राज्य विश्वविद्यालय के मानकानुसार देय होगा। इच्छुक अभ्यर्थी अपना आवेदन विज्ञान प्रकाशन से 21 दिनों के अन्दर विद्यालय के पोस्ट पर भेजें

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Srivastava braves heat, skips meals!

SHARMILA KRISHNA ■ LUCKNOW

It's 8:30 on Sunday morning, and a motley crowd led by the corporator of Paper Mill Colony, Rajesh Singh Gabbar, gathers near his office in a narrow lane, eagerly awaiting the arrival of BJP's Lucknow East Assembly bypoll candidate OP Srivastava.

LUCKNOW EAST ASSEMBLY BYPOLL



BJP candidate OP Srivastava on a campaigning spree on Sunday

Moving swiftly from door to door, Srivastava distributes pamphlets and warmly greets residents, touching the feet of elders. He also poses for photographs with locals. Rajesh Singh Gabbar, walking briskly alongside Srivastava, urges more residents to come out and meet their candidate.

The serene Sunday morning transforms into a bustling event as supporters parade through the streets, rallying residents from their homes to witness the campaign. By 9 am, the roads resemble midday due to the fervent activities, yet Srivastava continues without any protective gears

or shades. "The heat doesn't bother me, and meals are often forgotten during this hectic campaign," he remarks. When asked about voter awareness regarding the upcoming Lucknow East Assembly bypoll alongside the Lok Sabha elections, Srivastava expresses confidence in Lucknow's informed

electorate. "BJP is committed to public service," Srivastava emphasises, adding: "Our workers engage directly with the people." He notes overwhelming confidence in the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi among voters, expecting robust support on May 20. He particularly mentions strong enthusiasm from women and youth. Regarding the low voter turnout in earlier phases, Srivastava attributes the high turnout in Lucknow to public support for the BJP. He lauds the incumbent MP Rajnath Singh for his substantial contributions to Lucknow's development, highlighting significant infrastructure improvements. Gabbar mentions that the Paper Mill area has over 8,000 voters, mostly BJP supporters with some Samajwadi Party backers. He ensures all voters receive information slips and outlines plans to mobilise voters on polling day, providing transportation to polling stations. While the colony exhibits some infrastructure challenges, residents generally express satisfaction with the corporator's efforts. "We are pleased with his work," a female resident says.

Music therapy for LU students; MoU signed

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Institute of Women's Studies at Lucknow University and the Music Therapy Cell and Research Centre at Kashi Vidyapith, Varanasi, have announced the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for academic exchange. This partnership represents a significant step towards fostering academic collaboration and enhancing the educational experience for students and faculty at both institutions.

bers at LU. These sessions are designed to promote mental health and emotional well-being through the therapeutic use of music. Concurrently, the



Institute of Women's Studies will facilitate gender sensitisation sessions for students at Kashi Vidyapith, Varanasi. The MoU will remain in effect for one year with the potential for renewal to continue this fruitful partnership.

FIR against SP workers for vandalising Maharana statue

PNS ■ MAINPURI

A First Information Report (FIR) has been registered in Mainpuri Kotwali against Samajwadi Party workers for vandalising the statue of Maharana Pratap and indulging in hooliganism here on Saturday. It may be mentioned here that on Saturday, SP president Akhilesh Yadav held a roadshow in Mainpuri in support of his wife and SP candidate Dimple Yadav during which some SP workers allegedly raised indecent slogans at Maharana Pratap Chowk. After the roadshow, a group of SP workers climbed the statue of Maharana Pratap and vandalised it.

against the incident. Social media users are targeting Akhilesh Yadav for this incident and demanding a public apology from him. At the same time, the video of Chief Minister Yogi paying floral tributes at the statue of Maharana Pratap and the desecration of the statue by miscreants is also being shared widely. One user wrote: "Saifs of the Saifai brand Samajwadi Party have insulted national hero Maharana Pratap by vandalising his statue. On the other hand, Chief Minister Yogi ji had paid floral tributes at the statue of the national hero

after the end of the roadshow in Mainpuri. The difference is clear." Another social media user, Dr Richa Singh, wrote: "After Akhilesh's roadshow in Mainpuri, the statue of Maharana Pratap ji was vandalised. An attempt was made to break his spear. Yogi-Modi were abused. Akhilesh is coming' is no longer just a slogan, it has become a threat." Arun Rana wrote, "The act of disrespecting the statue of brave Maharana Pratap by SP supporters in Mainpuri is extremely condemnable. Strict action should be taken against all the accused."

Measures in place to fight heatwave

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Health department has taken extensive measures to prevent heatwave conditions, and the public is being educated on how to protect themselves from heat-related issues. Chief Medical Officer Dr Manoj Agarwal assured the people that there is no need to panic, as the department has made comprehensive preparations. All government hospitals are equipped with cold rooms, cold packs, ORS packets, pure drinking water, fans, coolers, and sufficient quantities of medicines to manage heat-related illnesses.



free ORS and clean wet cloths for body cooling have been provided. Various institutions and organisations, such as the Uttar Pradesh Housing Development Council, are collaborating to raise awareness. Resident Welfare Associations

TIPS FOR PROTECTION

- Avoid unnecessary outdoor activities between 12 noon and 3 pm.
- If you must go out, cover your head with a wet cloth or scarf.
- Use an umbrella and carry drinking water.
- Wear light-coloured, breathable clothing.
- Stay in well-ventilated rooms and use curtains to block direct sunlight.
- Stay hydrated, drink water even if not thirsty.
- Consume hydrating foods and drinks like mango panna, bael sherbet, juicy fruits (orange, watermelon, muskmelon), cucumber, buttermilk, pineapple, coconut water, lemonade, homemade lassi, and ORS solution.
- Prefer ground floor accommodations during the day.
- Provide shade and sufficient water for animals.
- Avoid caffeine, alcohol, and carbonated drinks as they cause dehydration.
- If working outdoors, avoid midday hours.
- Wear loose, light-coloured clothing and shoes when outside.

have been instructed to take measures against heatwave. Rotary Club has been engaged to raise awareness and take preventive measures through its volunteers. Additionally, an awareness meeting was held with Indian Industrial Association officials, chaired by the chief development officer, to educate the employees using promotional materials. Lucknow Vyapar Mandal has set up drinking water stations, while UPMRC has provided water at platforms, and the Transport department has

made similar arrangements at bus stops. Public awareness campaigns are being conducted through audio-video jingles and hoardings in the metro. The Lucknow Municipal Corporation is disseminating information through hoardings and LED displays across the district, and the District Basic Education Office is training its staff online. The Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram team is educating children about heatwave protection during school visits.

CITYBRIEFS

ICAR-CISH TO ESTABLISH CLEAN PLANT PRODUCTION CENTRE

A state-of-the-art clean plant production centre will be established at the Central Institute of Horticulture (ICAR-CISH) to produce disease-free plants meeting international standards. Experts recently visited ICAR-CISH to initiate this endeavour. A senior scientist said that the Government of India launched the Clean Planting Material Production Programme, in coordination with the department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, alongside the National Horticulture Board and Indian Council of Agricultural Research, New Delhi. "A \$20 million project has been approved to develop Clean Planting Material Production Centres in five regions across the country. ICAR-CISH is selected as one of these centres for mango, guava, and lychee.

PROF VERMA TAKES CHARGE AS ACTING VC OF BBAU

Vice-Chancellor of Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University Sanjay Singh handed over the responsibility to Prof NMP Verma, who took over as acting vice-chancellor. After getting the approval of President Draupadi Murmu, Sanjay Singh handed over this responsibility to Prof Verma, the senior most teacher of the university and head of the economics department. Besides, Sanjay Singh also took over the charge as Vice-Chancellor of Dr Shakuntala Mishra National Rehabilitation University, Lucknow.

WORKSHOP

The Centre for Advanced Studies recently organised a five-day workshop titled 'Advanced Legged Robots: Dynamics and Control'. The workshop focused on the hardware and software aspects of building four-legged robots. The participants were introduced to robot construction basics, including kinematics, dynamics, and control for legs, PyBullet simulation, ROS and Gazebo applications, actuators, transmission design, manufacturing challenges, control architecture, and robotics industry insights by dean of academics and workshop coordinator Dr Anuj Kumar Sharma. Another coordinator Dr Rabesh Kumar Singh emphasised the event's benefits for both the institute and students in robotics education, attracting attendees from various esteemed institutions. Meanwhile, Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Technical

ETHICS SESSION

In response to a government directive received in PGMER 2023, Dr Ram Manohar Lohia Institute of Medical Sciences organised a course in ethics session to enrich the education of medical students. Director Dr CM Singh emphasised the session's significance, aimed at establishing a solid groundwork in basic medical science, ethics, research methodology, and communication skills. The session featured lectures by faculty members on various topics, including OPD and ward etiquette, ICU rounds, delivering difficult news, patient counseling, medical ethics, and confidentiality.

E-AUCTION NOTICE

DAMAGED APPROX. 1,23,880 KG OF MS, CS & CI PARTS, APPROX. 2,620 KG OF SS PARTS AND APPROX. 5,900 KG OF ALUMINIUM PARTS. Interested Buyers are invited to participate in the e-Auction for the disposal of "Damaged" approx. 1,23,880 Kg of MS, CS & CI Parts, approx. 2,620 Kg of SS Parts and approx. 5,900 Kg of Aluminium Parts on "Per Kg" Basis. The salvage will be sold on "As is Where is", Whatever there is" and "No Complaint" Basis and belongs to M/s. Zuari Industries Ltd. The materials can be inspected at Vill-Khamaria Pandit, PO-Aira Estate, Distt.-Lakhimpur (Kher), UP-262722 on working days only between 06-05-24 to 14-05-24 between 10 AM to 5 PM. Kindly contact Mr. Sachida Nand Mishra at 9721456312 for inspection. E-AUCTION WILL BE HELD ON 15-05-24. Kindly contact Mr. Shamsheer Singh at 9709709992 to obtain the form containing terms & conditions of e-Auction or download them from website https://www.sealthedeal.co.in/ Auctioneers: Seal The Deal having registered office at 148, Pocket C2, Sector 5, Rohini, Delhi - 110085. Last date of Submission of Form & EMD Demand Draft is 14-05-24.



FIRST COLUMN

SUDARSHAN KRIYA: A KEY TO A PEACEFUL LIFE

A transformative path overcoming addiction with redemption



RAVI VALLURI

Some years ago, while I was posted at Gorakhpur, an Art of Living devotee happened to read my maiden book, *The Matter of the Mind*, wherein I narrated the efficacy of the Sudarshan Kriya technique and how it extricated me from the cesspool of alcoholism. Today by the grace of Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and the breathing technique of Sudarshan Kriya I am sober. The devotee connected me to a psychiatrist and soon along with two other faculty members, we began conducting courses for alcoholics and drug addicts at a rehab centre. They were around 40 and we were three. Some looked menacing, others disenchanted, a few engulfed by ennui. But in our arsenal was the potent cassette of Sudarshan Kriya enveloped with the divine benediction of Gurudev.

We began with gentle warm-ups. This was followed by pranayama and finally Sudarshan Kriya. A few hardened addicts attempted to derail the Kriya. But the febrile minds gradually settled as the rhythms of Soham resonated in the dingy hall.

Meaning of Sudarshan Kriya

The unique breathing technique of Sudarshan Kriya is the fulcrum of the Happiness Programme of the Art of Living. Su means proper, Darshan implies vision and Kriya is a purifying action.

Through the actions of our breath, we appreciate a proper vision of who we are. It is momentous to understand that nature runs on a rhythm. For instance, the sun rises and sets at a particular time, similarly, seasons arrive and exit at predetermined times.

Our emotions, feelings and thoughts are all cast in the symphony of rhythm. We are unable to distinguish between cacophony and symphony in this frenetic pace of life which is cannonaded by innumerable thoughts. When sounds are harmonised by the syllable of Soham we can term it as magical music.



Enlightenment is not accruing anything providential but harmonising our whole being rhythmically. During the breathing process participants feel varied sensations, emotions, laughter and weeping among others. Chanting "Soham" to match one's breath with a Guru's guidance is a relaxation technique that releases stress and promotes relaxation. Studies show that it can improve heart rate, cognitive function, breathing patterns and calmness in both mind and body. It may also have positive impacts on the endocrine system and potentially prevent Alzheimer's disease. This technique increases the body's energy levels.

This wonderful knowledge and wisdom have triggered humaneness to blossom. Every cell and particle of the body overflows with jollity and life is abundant with the glow of love and the body becomes the wick. Love and belongingness become a natural process of our inner being if practised unfailingly.

Several practitioners feel they can practice the breathing technique at home. But that is only walking half the path. It is indispensable and paramount that one must practice the technique daily and attend the follow-up once a week, where a certified Art of Living teacher plays the chant of Soham in Gurudev's voice as it reinvigorates the body and mind. One should also be wary of imitations available on YouTube these days. Breath is the very kernel of our very existence.

(The writer is the CEO of Chhattisgarh East Railway Ltd. and Chhattisgarh East West Railway Ltd. He is a faculty of the Art of Living; views are personal)

Consequences of illusionary conspiracy



NILANTHA LANGAMUWA

The wounds from the Easter Sunday Massacre linger, but within Sri Lankans' resilience lies a beacon of hope, illuminating a path forward amidst profound despair

After the Easter attack tragedy, there arose a chorus, delving into the search for a "mastermind" behind the barbaric attack. Known as the Easter Sunday Massacre, on 21st April 2019, eight suicide bombers detonated themselves, targeting selected places in Colombo and Batticaloa, resulting in the deaths of over 260 innocent people and injuring hundreds more. A former Attorney General, a key figure in this discourse, ignited speculation by suggesting a possible hidden agenda. However, his evasion of the court and avoidance of investigators seeking clarification on his previous Statements only intensified suspicions. Politicians, social activists, journalists and even ordinary citizens unwittingly propagated a conspiracy theory based on prejudices and unverified media reports.

From my perspective, this conspiracy theory inadvertently served a unique purpose amid the chaos and irregularities. It acted as a temporary balm, diluting the rising tide of animosity against Muslims and briefly restoring social equilibrium. Without it, the nation risked a recurrence of the 1983 ethnic riots, albeit on a larger scale. Yet, as the conspiracy theory gained traction, it altered the societal psyche, fostering normalcy among diverse ethnic groups, albeit with attempts by some to exploit the situation. What remains lamentable is that this theory misled the public and squandered an opportunity to establish a socio-legal framework for preventing future occurrences.

During my conversation with Malith Jayathillake, former National List Member of Parliament and head of the Sectoral Oversight Committee on National Security appointed by then-President Maithripala Sirisena, the overlooked reality became stark. The report he presented in February 2020 outlined proposals for formulating and implementing laws to ensure national security, eradicate new terrorism and extremism by fostering unity among races and religions. Regrettably, this invaluable contribution by lawmakers was largely ignored. Jayathillake dismisses the notion of a conspiracy behind the attacks, recognising instead a meticulously planned suicide mission inspired by the ideology of the Islamic State.

Concurrently, Dr Ameer Ali from Murdoch University's School of Business and Governance dispels conspiracy notions, attributing the attack to subsequent political manipulation. Yet, in probing the roots of extremism, he identifies a turning point in 1977 when the country embraced the free market. Within certain segments of the Muslim communities, exclusivism emerged, alienating inclusivism and sowing the seeds for the proliferation of extreme ideas within the societal fabric. In the aftermath of the tragedy, about a month later, I engaged in an interview with Jonah Blank, a Principal Investigator and Senior Political Scientist for RAND Corporation. Blank astutely highlighted two critical aspects of the Easter Sunday bombings in Sri Lanka. Firstly, he emphasised that the attack was a result of political negligence rather than being solely classified as an intelligence failure by various parties. Secondly, Blank pointed out that the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) did not choose Sri Lanka; rather, Sri Lankan extremists opted for allegiance to ISIS. Addressing the ongoing political crisis in the country, Blank remarked, "When the



AMID THIS TURBULENT PERIOD, THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE EASTER MASSACRE SERVES AS A DISTRESSING REMINDER OF THE COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY TO LEARN FROM THE PAST AND FORTIFY THE NATION AGAINST POTENTIAL THREATS

nation's two top officials are locked in open conflict, they can't cooperate to ensure the safety of the citizens." Despite my interview with Blank becoming a talking point in various media circles and social groups, rational arguments and factual information struggled to counter the persistence of conspiracy theories.

Complicating matters further, a full four years following the tragic incident, a British television channel not only fuelled baseless speculation but later begrudgingly admitted to a shocking lack of substantial evidence backing the allegations. These unfounded claims stemmed from a lone source purportedly recruited by a United Nations agency, casting a dark shadow over the entire narrative.

Amidst the discourse, I observed a political theatre unfolding, overshadowing the much-needed societal discussion. Those involved seemed more focused on accusing one another rather than earnestly seeking the truth. In the last five years since this barbaric attack, committees appointed by the President and Parliament have conducted investigations, producing lengthy reports. However, there is a noticeable absence of dialogue about future threats and the potential aftermath.

The tragic events unfolded against the backdrop of a nation grappling with its political identity and leadership struggles. Blank's insights into political negligence shed light on a systemic issue that extended beyond intelligence failures. Sri Lanka's socio-political terrain, marred by internal conflicts and power struggles, created an environment ripe for extremist ideologies to take root. The intricate web of political discord, coupled with a failure to prioritise national security, laid the groundwork for the devastating Easter Sunday attacks. As the media frenzy surrounding conspiracy theories intensified, genuine efforts to understand the

root causes of the attack were drowned out. Blank's observations about the political crisis resonated deeply, underscoring the importance of unity among leaders during times of national peril. However, the cacophony of blame-shifting and finger-pointing persisted, hindering the nation's ability to address the multifaceted challenges posed by this emerging social phenomenon.

Amid this turbulent period, the fifth anniversary of the Easter massacre serves as a distressing reminder of the collective responsibility to learn from the past and fortify the nation against potential threats. The committees' findings, though crucial, must be more than backdated analyses; they should serve as a foundation for proactive measures and policies to safeguard Sri Lanka's future. The narrative must evolve beyond the immediate aftermath to address the lingering societal scars and instil a renewed sense of resilience and preparedness. After spending nearly five years immersing myself in a myriad of materials and conducting extensive interviews with numerous sources on this heinous crime, I am compelled to acknowledge the absence of any substantive facts supporting conspiracy theories. Instead, what emerges is the chilling reality of negligence and deliberate ignorance in addressing extremism and the imperative need for robust deradicalisation efforts. I opt to accentuate the triumph of our adversaries—a triumph exacerbated by the gross negligence and underestimation displayed by defenders of national security and political stability.

Our genuine focus must now pivot resolutely towards preventing the recurrence of such crimes and sculpting a secure future for our nation, a nation that has too often lived amidst violence rather than peace, grappling with both internal and external threats. The repercussions of the Easter massacre extend

far beyond the economic sphere, infiltrating into an unprecedented degeneration of societal values. Regrettably, as we mark the fifth anniversary of the attacks, a pressing and profound necessity emerges for a narrative shift—one that moves beyond unsubstantiated accusations aimed at specific individuals. We must transcend the cycle of blame and retrospective scrutiny, opting instead for thorough approaches that delve into the underlying causes of extremism, fanaticism and terrorism regardless of ethnic or religious affiliations. This calls for a holistic approach, encompassing not only the reinforcement of intelligence and security protocols but also the fostering of a society that celebrates inclusivity, empathy and constructive discourse.

The journey toward healing and rebuilding necessitates a sincere effort from all corners of society. Ultimately, the aftermath of the Easter Sunday bombings underscores the resilience of the Sri Lankan people in the face of immense adversity. Looking forward, it is paramount to harness this collective strength and channel it into comprehensive strategies. These must not only confront immediate threats but also lay the foundations for a future characterised by security and harmony. The lessons distilled from this tragedy should propel the nation towards a collective commitment—a commitment to unity, understanding and the prevention of recurring horrors. Otherwise, in a society where the majority languishes in a deep slumber, indulging in unproven conspiracies and scapegoating a select few, we will only rouse from our stupor when the next tragedy inevitably befalls us.

(The writer is a Sri Lankan journalist. Views are personal)

Pakistani YouTubers: The art of subtle propaganda

As consumers of digital content, it is crucial to discern between genuine discourse and agenda-driven narratives

Today's warfare is increasingly characterised by information warfare tactics. Social media serves as an ideal weapon for conducting modern conflicts where the battle for narratives and perceptions plays a crucial role in shaping outcomes. In this digital context, the emergence of Pakistani YouTubers has garnered significant attention in India over the past five years. Their channels span various genres from reaction videos to those featuring interactions with common people in Pakistan and podcasts and discussions on geopolitics. However, a closer look reveals a subtle yet concerning trend in their content. Initially, these YouTubers sought to attract Indian viewership by praising India



SULAGNA MOHANTY

unabashedly. They lauded India's policies and economic growth and even expressed admiration for Prime Minister Modi and the BJP. Their narratives echoed sentiments of unity and regret over the partition, portraying India's economic liberalisation in the 1990s as a commendable move. This strategic approach garnered them millions of Indian subscribers. Even edu-

cated Indians appreciated such rare, seemingly sane views and analyses from Pakistani youth.

At first, it was perplexing to witness the sudden change in tune from Pakistan, a country historically marred by animosity towards India. Suddenly, Pakistani YouTubers were singing praises for Jawaharlal Nehru as the best Prime Minister and socialism as the ideal policy for India. This abrupt shift raised eyebrows, especially considering Pakistan's track record of hostility towards India over the past 70 years. So, it begged the question how was it that Pakistanis have only now discovered virtues in Indian leaders and policies that they previously overlooked or actively opposed? But still, these

YouTubers were embraced by Indians with open arms, evident from the predominance of views and comments on their videos from India.

However, as time passed, their mask began to unravel. Channels focusing on geopolitics gradually began to push their agenda subtly. Considering Pakistan's precarious economic situation, these YouTubers advocated for the resumption of trade with India which was halted by their Prime Minister Imran Khan in 2019 as a protest against India's decision to revoke Article 370 in Kashmir. They openly criticised Imran Khan's decision, labelling it as foolish given the adverse impact it had had on Pakistan's economy. However, recently when the

Indian Government did not reciprocate to the India-Pak trade agenda, these YouTubers' tones shifted dramatically towards anti-India and pro-China propaganda. Suddenly, they started painting India as a regressive Hindu country with an authoritarian Government where minorities as well as the democracy are allegedly in grave danger. Now, they consistently invite guests onto their channel providing them with a platform to perpetuate anti-India and anti-Indian narratives.

It is striking how these Pakistani YouTubers seldom address the pressing issues within their own country. They seem conspicuously silent on the plight of minorities particularly the violence perpetrated against them.

While they are quick to produce videos condemning alleged injustices against Muslims in Palestine and India, they conveniently overlook similar atrocities within Pakistan.

Some YouTubers remain silent on the oppression of Muslims in China, despite evidence of human rights abuses against Uighur Muslims in Xinjiang. This raises questions about the sincerity of their activism and suggests geopolitical influences on their narrative.

Furthermore, it is noteworthy that these Pakistani YouTubers also openly criticise their Government and army, a rarity in Pakistan where dissent against the establishment is often met with severe repercussions. This raises suspi-

cions about their affiliations, true intentions and ulterior motives behind their digital presence. One cannot help but wonder if these YouTubers are planted by some foreign agencies to serve as mouthpieces for their agenda.

Here, the concern is that many Indian youths, unaware of this shift, continue to consume their content, inadvertently perpetuating the agenda. Many Indian intellectuals and geopolitical experts have begun to criticise these YouTubers for their manipulative tactics. Interestingly, this manipulation is not only limited to India but has been extended to Bangladesh too as these podcasters churn out videos portraying the 1971 war as a mistake. They label West Pakistan's attempt to

suppress and colonise East Pakistan as evil and this new narrative aims to attract Bangladeshi viewers first and subtly push their agenda later. In the era of information, overload critical thinking is our best defence against manipulation.

Hence, it is imperative to recognise and address this subtle propaganda and analyse the content the Indians consume. As consumers of digital content, it is crucial to discern between genuine discourse and agenda-driven narratives. Everyone needs to realise and understand that India stands for peace and brotherhood but not at the expense of its national security.

(The writer is an academician; views are personal)

Israel orders closure of Al Jazeera offices as Qatar mediates Hamas talks

AP ■ TEL AVIV

Israel ordered the local offices of Qatar's Al Jazeera satellite news network to close Sunday, escalating a long-running feud between the broadcaster and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's hard-line government as Doha-mediated ceasefire negotiations with Hamas flare in the balance.

groups in the region, drawing Netanyahu's ire. "Al Jazeera reporters harmed Israel's security and incited against soldiers," Netanyahu said in a statement. "It's time to remove the Hamas mouthpiece from our country."

Al Jazeera issued a statement vowing it will "pursue all available legal channels through international legal institutions in its quest to protect both its rights and journalists, as well as the public's right to information."

website and streaming links across multiple online platforms still operated Sunday. The ban did not appear to affect the channel's operations in the occupied West Bank or Gaza Strip, where Israel wields control but which are not sovereign Israeli territory.

measures against Israel. Shortly after the government's decision, Cabinet members from the National Unity party criticized its timing, saying it "may sabotage the efforts to finalize the negotiations and stems from political considerations."

killed an Al Jazeera cameraman as he reported on the war in southern Gaza. The channel's bureau chief in Gaza, Wael Dahdouch, was wounded in the same attack.

Protesters at USC comply with school order to leave their encampment

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Protesters left a Pro-Palestinian encampment at the University of Southern California early Sunday after they were surrounded by police and told they could face arrest if they didn't go.

Some Jewish groups had criticised the student's selection as speaker. Administrators later cancelled the entire main-stage commencement planned for May 10, when 65,000 people were expected to gather to celebrate graduates.

Driver dies after crashing into WH security barrier

Washington (AP): A driver died after a vehicle crashed into an outer perimeter gate of the White House complex, and the incident late on Saturday was being investigated as a traffic crash, police said.

Shooting in Los Angeles area injures 7

Long Beach (AP): A shooting in the Los Angeles area has left seven people injured, including four who were listed in critical condition.

Sunak promises to work 'as hard as ever' after local elections

PTI ■ LONDON

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak on Sunday promised to work "as hard as ever" after a disastrous set of election results saw his Conservative Party being unseated across several local authorities and even losing a mayoralty stronghold in the West Midlands region of England.

Conservative councillors and Andy Street in the West Midlands, with his track record of providing great public services and attracting significant investment to the area, but that has redoubled my resolve to continue to make progress on our plan," Sunak said in a statement.

show strong leadership. "Let me cut to the chase so no one wastes time over-analysing this: we must not change our leader. Changing leader now won't work: the time to do so came and went.

being re-elected for a record third term as London Mayor on Friday. But Starmer also appealed to the voters who had punished the party over its weak stance on the Israel-Gaza conflict, after analysis showed that Labour suffered losses to independents and the anti-war Worker's Party of Britain in areas with large Islamic populations as a result.

Trudeau touts Canada as a 'rule-of-law country' after arrest of three Indians

PTI ■ TORONTO

Canada is a "rule-of-law country" with a strong and independent justice system and a fundamental commitment to protect its citizens, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said, a day after three Indian nationals were charged with the murder of Khalistan separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar.

of the "potential" involvement of Indian agents in the killing of 45-year-old Nijjar, a Khalistan separatist. India has dismissed Trudeau's charges as "absurd" and "motivated."

cial but noted the force is "investigating connections to the government of India." Meanwhile, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Saturday said what is happening in poll-bound Canada over the killing of Nijjar is mostly due to their internal politics and has nothing to do with India.

Before the sweltering sun set in, voters in the normally sleepy Central American nation lined up outside of polling stations, set to weigh promises of economic prosperity and migratory crack-downs with a corruption scandal.

Panamanians vote in election dominated by ex-president

AP ■ PANAMA CITY

Panamanians began voting Sunday in an election that has been consumed by unfolding drama surrounding the country's former president, even though he is not on the ballot.

While lacking Martinelli's spunk, Mulino has coasted on his connection to the ex-president. He is rarely seen without his blue "Martinelli Mulino 2024" cap and promised to help Martinelli if elected.

German teen surrenders for assault on EU candidate

Berlin (AP): A teenager surrendered to police on Sunday over an attack on a candidate from the party of Chancellor Olaf Scholz that fueled concern about intimidation and violence in the run-up to next month's election for the European Parliament.

the party of Chancellor Olaf Scholz that fueled concern about intimidation and violence in the run-up to next month's election for the European Parliament.



A seagull flies by as Pope Francis recites the Regina Coeli noon prayer from the window of his studio overlooking St. Peter's Square, at the Vatican, Sunday. AP/PTI

Deadly floods ravage southern Brazil: 39 lives lost

AP ■ SAO PAULO

Heavy rains in the southern Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul killed 39 people, with another 68 still missing, the state civil defence agency said Friday, as record-breaking floods devastated cities and forced thousands to leave their homes.

from the state capital, Porto Alegre, a massively swollen river swept away a bridge that connected it with the neighbouring city of Linha Nova.



A firefighter carries a girl rescued from an area flooded by heavy rains in Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul state, Brazil, Saturday. AP/PTI

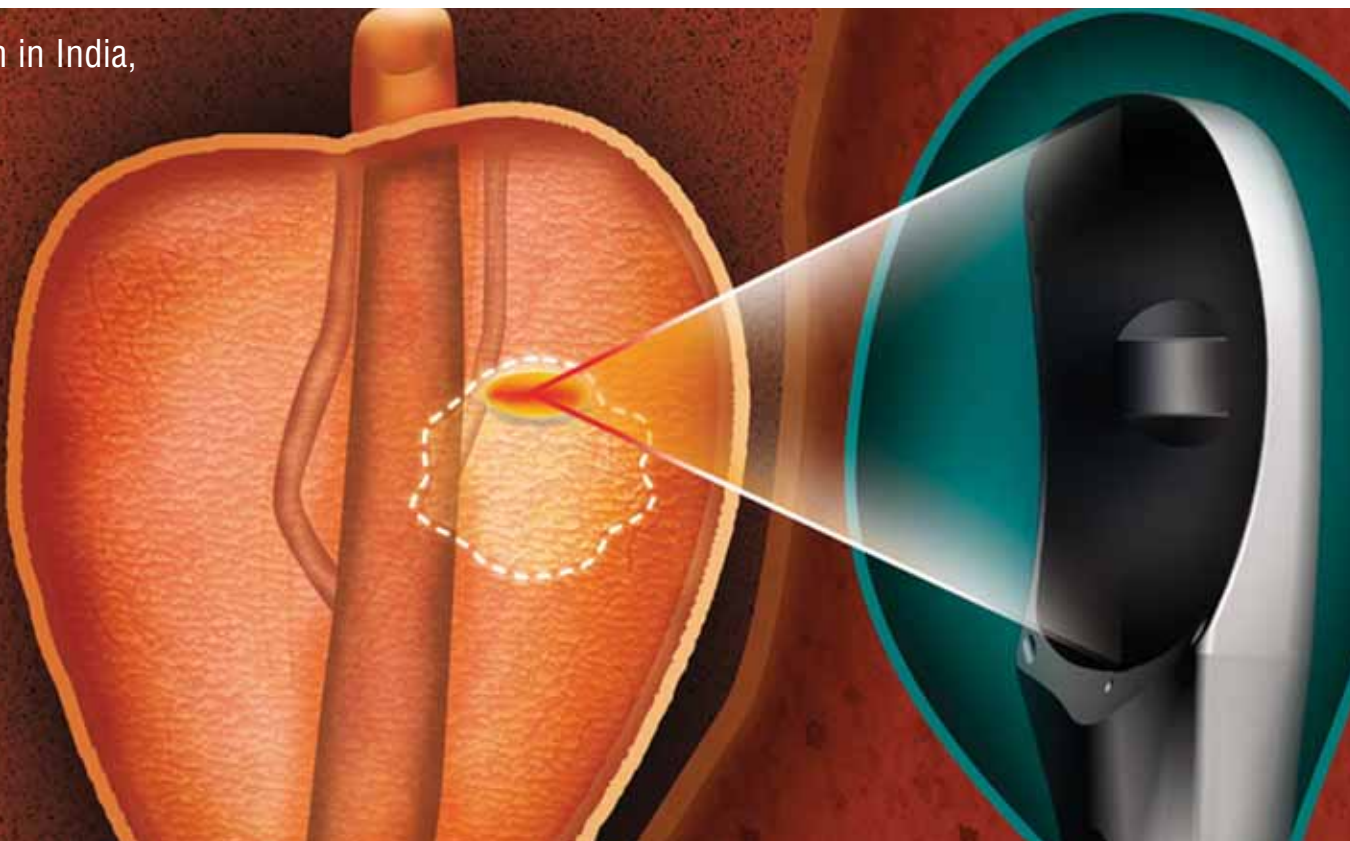
added, that they threw themselves into the water currents. Neumann's own neighbourhood wasn't inundated, but she said she's collecting rainwater in a basin to be able to cook.

city's central area is flooded, she added. "I don't even know how it must be. There must be nothing left."

the National Center for Monitoring and Alerts of Natural Disasters, told Brazil's public television network Friday. On Thursday night, Gov. Eduardo Leite alerted the state's population — known as gauchos — about the persistence of rains and floods.

Grande do Sul, who are victims by one of the largest floods we have ever known. Never before in the history of Brazil had there been such a quantity of rain in one single location," Lula said.

Prostate cancer poses a significant health concern in India, with 33,000-42,000 new cases annually. A recent Lancet report has warned of a sharp surge in cases in India by 2040, with many men being diagnosed in advanced stages, leading to fatal outcomes. Dr. Sudhir Kumar Rawal, a leading oncologist from RGCIRC, Delhi discusses advancements in treatment like HIFU therapy, with ARCHANA JYOTI



HIFU

Dr Rawal, kindly provide us an overview of prostate cancer and its prevalence in India vis-à-vis the world.

Prostate cancer is the second most commonly diagnosed cancer in men. As per the GLOBOCON report on prostate cancer, an estimated 1.4 million diagnoses and 375,000 deaths worldwide in 2020. The incidence is low in Eastern and South-Central Asia but rising. In India, the projected number of cases for 2020 was 51,979 and the numbers are only increasing. It is pertinent to note that there is an underestimation of incidence in India due to a lack of a population-based cancer registry, underreporting, and social stigma of cancer detection among others.

The prevalence rate of prostate cancer is higher in certain geographies within the country. As per the latest ICMR data Delhi-NCR reported the highest incidence rate of over 11.8 cases/million adults registered followed by Kamrup region of Assam with 10 cases/million adults and Thiruvananthapuram with 9 cases/million adults. Unfortunately, there is no conclusive data that could support specific preventive or dietary measures that reduce the risk of developing prostate cancer. In such circumstances, individuals should immediately reach out to a urologist in case of any urinary problem and those above 50 years of age should regularly undertake Blood Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) Test.

What are some of the key risk factors associated with prostate cancer, particularly in the context of India?

Prostate cancer is directly linked



DR. (PROF) SUDHIR KUMAR RAWAL
Medical Director and Chief of Genito Urology Services, Super Specialty Rajiv Gandhi Cancer Institute and Research Centre (RGCIRC), Delhi.

with genetic mutation. So, it can be hereditary as well as familial. In different studies association of different environmental and dietary factors have been found with prostate cancer. Hypertension, obesity, and hypercholesterolemia factors have increased risk. Dietary factors like high alcohol intake, coffee, fried fatty food, red meat as well as processed meat have been linked with increased association of prostate cancer. However, no conclusive data exist that could support specific preventive or dietary measures that can reduce the risk of developing prostate cancer.

How do you approach the diagnosis and staging of prostate cancer in your practice?

Prostate cancer is usually suspected when a patient presents with urinary symptoms and has raised PSA (Prostate-specific antigen) or abnormal digital rectal examination. With increasing awareness, many asymptomatic people regularly do blood PSA testing as part of

routine health checkups. Prostate cancer diagnosis requires prostate biopsy. We have the facility of the latest prostate biopsy techniques including the most precise MRI fusion transperineal biopsy (Artemis System). For local staging we do biparametric/multiparametric MRI. Metastatic staging requires a PSMA PET CT scan.

What treatment options are available for patients with prostate cancer, and how do you decide on the most appropriate approach for individual patients?

We have all possible treatment options for various stages of prostate cancer. We offer robotic radical prostatectomy/ High intensity-focused ultrasound ablation/ Hormonal therapy + radiotherapy for localized prostate cancer. For metastatic prostate cancer, treatment is hormonal therapy along with novel antiandrogens chemotherapy or radionuclide therapy. We are currently running a few trials for metastatic prostate cancer. The appropriate approach is individualistic for each patient. It depends on the patient's age, physical performance status, associated comorbid conditions, and disease stage. We always make shared decisions with patients after discussing the merits and demerits of each therapy option suitable for them.

Are there any emerging trends or advancements in prostate cancer treatment that you find particularly promising?

With the evolution of medical sciences, there are rapid advancements in prostate cancer treatment in India. There are advancements in the incorporation of genetic testing

SYMPTOMS

Prostate cancer may cause no signs or symptoms in its early stages.

More advanced prostate cancer may cause signs and symptoms such as:

- Trouble urinating
- Decreased force in the stream of urine
- Blood in the urine
- Blood in the semen
- Bone pain
- Losing weight without trying
- Erectile dysfunction

and related therapy, robotic technologies, more targeted radiation therapy, non-invasive treatment like HIFU, availability of newer antiandrogens, oral hormonal agents, and gene-directed radionuclide therapy. I am hopeful for new gene-directed therapy that can increase the survival of patients with metastatic disease.

Can you provide an overview of what HIFU (High-Intensity Focused Ultrasound) treatment entails and how it works as a treatment option for prostate cancer?

HIFU works by treating only the portion of the organ affected by cancer with a safe margin while sparing the remaining normal healthy tissue. It precisely delivers ultrasound waves inside the prostate. Ultrasound energy gets converted into thermal energy inside the prostate. Thus, cancer cells get killed by heat. HIFU is typically used as a treatment option for localized prostate cancer. It is also used as a palliative therapy option after the failure of hormonal therapy and radiation therapy

What are the typical eligibility criteria for patients considering HIFU treatment for prostate cancer?

HIFU is a treatment option for a select group of prostate cancer patients. Although there are no strict criteria, it is best suited for low-risk and intermediate-risk prostate cancer patients. Typically, it is done for patients whose PSA is less than 20 ng/ml, Gleason score ≤ 7, disease has not spread outside the outline of the prostate.

What are the potential benefits of HIFU compared to traditional treatment options such as surgery or radiation therapy?

HIFU therapy has various advantages over surgery and radiation therapy:

- Usually done as a daycare procedure
- Does not require any skin cuts/ incisions
- Relatively painless procedure
- Recovery is usually quick and most men return to their normal activities within two-three weeks
- Treats the small cancer areas with little damage to nearby tissue, nerves and muscles
- Consequently the rates of urinary leakage and erectile dysfunction are significantly lower than radical treatments
- Even after recurrence, the patient remains eligible for repeat sessions of focal therapy or other options (surgery/radiation)

What are the potential risks and side effects associated with it?

HIFU is a relatively safe procedure and has no significant risks associated with it. Long-term cancer survival data (after 10 years) is not yet available for focal therapy. About 20-30% of patients may need a second session of

focal therapy for recurrent cancer. Less than 1% of patients may develop a hole between the rectum and the urinary passage (termed a rectourethral fistula). This may need urethral catheter placement for a few months or surgical repair in case it does not heal on its own.

Can HIFU be used as a primary treatment for localized prostate cancer, or is it typically recommended as a salvage therapy after other treatments have failed?

HIFU is typically used as treatment for localised prostate cancer. It is also used as salvage therapy after the failure of hormonal and radiation therapy.

Are there any long-term considerations or follow-up care that patients should be aware of after undergoing HIFU treatment?

Follow-up is very important after HIFU like any other intervention. After HIFU, the patient's PSA level is expected to fall and then remain low. PSA testing is performed at 3-6 monthly intervals for the first few years after the procedure. The Urologist may perform imaging in the form of mpMRI at frequent intervals to track the response of the lesion to treatment, and the development of new lesions in the treated area or elsewhere in the prostate. A rising PSA may indicate that the prostate cancer has returned.

Finally, what advice would you offer to men regarding prostate cancer prevention and early detection?

If you feel any urinary problems, immediately visit a urologist to get evaluated. Start blood PSA screening from 50 years of age.

AIIMS Resident Doctors' annual academic conclave held

Resident Doctors Association (RDA) of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Delhi, hosted its annual academic conclave, RDACON 2024, bringing together an assembly of professionals in healthcare, health technology, and artificial intelligence. Chief Justice of India (CJI) DY Chandrachud who graced the occasion, in his address emphasized the essential collaboration between the medical and legal professions, underlining their complementary roles in society.

He also spoke on the rights of the LGBTQ community, sharing personal anecdotes and stressed on the importance of inclusivity in healthcare. He also emphasized the crucial role that medical professionals play in shaping a more equitable society.

The conclave commenced with poster and oral presentations by AIIMS residents and researchers, showcasing the latest advancements in medicine and research. The RDA AIIMS said it remains committed to fostering collaboration, innovation, and inclusivity in healthcare, and looks forward to building on the success of RDACON 2024 in future editions.

Kids and adolescents find joy in learning new words: Study

A new research from Royal Holloway University, led by Professor Saloni Krishnan, suggests that children and adolescents, aged 10 to 18, derive intrinsic joy from learning new words. The study involved 345 participants who deduced word meanings from sentence contexts across 40 trials.

Notably, participants reported positive emotions like happiness and excitement during word acquisition, highlighting the motivational aspects of language learning. The findings, published in Developmental Science, underscore the importance of leveraging these emotional rewards to enhance educational strategies, particularly in neurodivergent populations like children with dyslexia.

TOP 10 ANTI-AGING FOODS

Anti-aging foods and intermittent fasting could also promote metabolic health by improving insulin sensitivity, reducing inflammation, and enhancing mitochondrial function, which are all implicated in the aging process.

Courtesy: @OrganicLiveFood



CHHAYA: A contraceptive beyond family planning

Introduction of the CHHAYA pill, approved by the Government, marks a significant step in expanding contraceptive options for women, enhancing accessibility and reproductive autonomy, says DR ASHWINI ANIL KUMAR SIRAPANASETTY

The Government's approval of new contraceptive methods, particularly the non-hormonal contraceptive pill Centchroman, marks a pivotal moment in advancing women's reproductive health rights. Centchroman, known as "Chhaya" in public health facilities, offers women a hormone-free contraceptive option, expanding their choices and accessibility to family planning services. It is available in the market as a "SAHEL" tablet.

Who can use it?

- Can be safely used by all women once it is confirmed that they are not pregnant.
- Can be used by women of any age, including those who are unmarried or who do not have children.
- Women who had side effects with Mala-N/Mala-D can also opt for this method.
- It can be used by postpartum women who are breastfeeding as soon as they feel comfortable after delivery but before 4 weeks. Centchroman does not affect the quantity, quality and composition of breast milk.

BENEFITS

- It causes less bleeding during the monthly period, and also makes the interval between two menstrual cycles longer. This is beneficial for anaemic women.
- Can be adopted as postpartum (earlier than 4 weeks of delivery) or post-abortion contraception



- (within 7 days of completion of abortion).
- It does not impact the quality or quantity of breast milk.
- Woman can become pregnant immediately after discontinuing the method.
- Women who are not recommended to use hormonal methods can use this method.
- No interference with sexual intercourse/ pleasure.

LIMITATIONS

- It does not protect from HIV and RTI/STI.
- Every client should be screened by a trained provider before starting Centchroman, just like other oral pills.

Where can a woman get it and how it should be taken?

- It is available in all public health facilities. It is also part of the

ASHA kit. However, the first dose can be provided only after proper screening at a health facility by a trained provider (doctor, CHO, SN, LHV, ANM).

The non-hormonal contraceptive comes in a strip of 8 tablets. To begin the use of Chhaya, the woman is advised to take the first pill on the first day of the period (which is the first day of bleeding) and the second pill three days later (on the 4th day of bleeding).

This pattern of days are repeated through the first 3 months. Starting from the fourth month, the pill is to be taken once a week on the first pill day and should be continued on the weekly schedule regardless of her menstrual cycle.

What in case of 'missed pills'?

You should tell the woman that if she forgets to take the pill, she should take the missed pill as soon as she



DR ASHWINI ANIL KUMAR SIRAPANASETTY
Obstetrics/ Gynecologist Surgeon and Senior Counsellor in Army Wives Welfare Association

remembers that it has been missed. If she misses taking the tablet by 1-2 days (less than 7 days), she should take the missed pill as soon as she remembers and continue the normal schedule. In addition, she should use a backup method like a condom till the next period, just to ensure complete protection. If she forgets to take pills for more than 7 days, then the current pack should be discarded, condoms should be used till she has her monthly bleeding and then she should start taking a new pack like a new user; that is, twice a week for the first 3 months followed by once a week thereafter. Unlike traditional contraceptive pills, Centchroman does not contain hormones, making it suitable for women of all ages and reproductive stages. This inclusivity is particularly

significant as it accommodates unmarried women and those without children, empowering them to take control of their reproductive decisions.

Centchroman's safety profile further enhances its appeal. Women who have experienced adverse effects with other contraceptive methods, such as hormonal pills, can turn to Centchroman without concerns about hormonal side effects. Moreover, its compatibility with breastfeeding ensures that women can use it without compromising their lactation or the health of their newborns.

Needless to say Centchroman's introduction reflects India's commitment to promoting reproductive rights and gender equality. By offering women a safe, effective, and accessible contraceptive option, the government aims to empower women to make informed choices about their reproductive health. Moreover, it underscores the government's recognition of family planning as a fundamental human right and a key driver of social and economic development. Moving forward, continued efforts to raise awareness about Centchroman and other contraceptive options will be crucial. Comprehensive sexual and reproductive health education programs can help dispel myths and misconceptions surrounding contraception while empowering women to make informed decisions about their bodies and futures.

