Secular
Hindustan
English Daily

Editor In Chief : Mir Amjad Ali Khan

RNI:APENG/2002/09014

Vol : 2 Issue No:301 WEDNESDAY,25,NOVEMER,2026 Hyderabad Pages :8 Rs 2/-

Congress, AAP slam BJP-SAD alliance; farmer leaders call reunion 'highly dangerous'



CHANDIGARH: Punjab Congress president Pargat Singh slammed the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) for their re-alliance for the upcoming 2027 Punjab Assembly elections, calling it 'greed for power'.Singh claimed that both the parties lacked any development agenda or roadmap for taking the border state on the path of progress and prosperity."It is a directionless alliance," he alleged. "They have joined hands merely for their own development. They joined with a single motive to capture power in Punjab," he said, while asserting that both the parties do not have any chance of forming the next government in Punjab. He also asked SAD chief Sukhbir Singh Badal to explain to the people why he quit the NDA earlier.Leader of the Opposition in Punjab, Partap Singh Bajwa, described the alliance as a desperate bid by two parties that have lost the confidence of the people of Punjab.Bajwa said both parties were aware that Punjabis had rejected their politics and that neither could regain the lost political ground on its own.He said the reunion was not driven by any shared commitment to Punjab or its people, but by a mutual desperation to prevent their political extinction in the state."This is nothing but a marriage of political convenience between two rejected political forces. They may have come together hoping to revive their fortunes, but Punjab's political arithmetic is very clear: zero plus zero equals zero. No amount of political manoeuvring can manufacture public support that simply does not exist," he said.Reacting to the announcement of the SAD-BJP alliance, AAP leader Kejriwal said the two parties had repeatedly come together and parted ways for political interests."Sometimes they come together, sometimes they separate and then come together again. Our alliance is with the people of Punjab. We are working for the development of the state," he said.Kejriwal also asserted that the AAP's alliance was with the women, Scheduled Caste community, farmers and traders of Punjab. He said the people of Punjab have witnessed the work done by the Bhagwant Mann-led AAP government over the past five years.Kejriwal said the AAP government has been trying to address the problems affecting the state for several decades.Delhi AAP MLA Jarnail Singh said the SAD-BJP alliance would have no impact in Punjab, comparing the two parties to zeroes that added up to zero. He said the AAP was the only party in the country that sought votes on the basis of its work, adding that people should vote for it if they were satisfied with its performance.He said the AAP was the only party in the country that sought votes on the basis of its work, adding that people should vote for it if they were satisfied with its performance.Balbir Singh Rajewal, president of the Bhartiya Kisan Union (Rajewal) and senior member of the Sanyukt Kisan Morcha, said he was surprised that parties with different ideologies were coming together to seek power."Earlier, it was Waris Punjab De, Punar Surjit and the Bahujan Samaj Party; now it is the BJP and SAD. There is a financial emergency in Punjab. The AAP has been busy making jokes over the past five years, while the Congress is quiet because of its internal differences. Everyone wants to take over the reins of Punjab, but there is no agenda for development. Whichever party comes to power should work to pull Punjab out of the critical situation," he said.Raghbir Singh Benipal, organising secretary of the Jamhuri Kisan Sabha, said the alliance would not benefit Punjab."BJP is known for its Hindutva ideology, while Punjab is a land of diverse communities and brotherhood. During the 1984 riots, we supported each other. The BJP-SAD alliance will not prove beneficial for Punjab," he said.

India and Netherlands looking at boosting cooperation in clean energy, shipbuilding: MEA



India and the Netherlands have agreed to strengthen cooperation in areas of shipping, shipbuilding and green hydrogen, aligning with efforts to fully realise the potential of their strategic partnership.External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and his Dutch counterpart Tom Berendsen explored ways to deepen the overall trajectory of the bilateral relations at a meeting on Sunday.Berendsen was in New Delhi on a two-day trip to attend the inaugural meeting of the annual Foreign Ministers' mechanism to review the Roadmap of the India-Netherlands Strategic Partnership 2026-2030.The roadmap was unveiled during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the Netherlands in May.Jaishankar and Berendsen reviewed ongoing engagements across key sectors, including trade and investment, technology, defence and security, mobility, culture and people-to-people ties, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Tuesday."They welcomed the recent initiatives to enhance collaboration in areas of semiconductors, renewable energy and green hydrogen, and reaffirmed their commitment to realising the full potential of the strategic partnership," it said in a statement.The MEA said both sides underscored the importance of deepening cooperation in priority sectors of water, agriculture and health."They discussed deepening cooperation in maritime and shipping, particularly green shipping, port development and shipbuilding," it noted.The ministers also highlighted trade and economic ties as a key pillar of the partnership and emphasised the importance of the India-EU Free Trade Agreement in creating new opportunities."Both sides agreed to endeavour to hold the Joint Trade and Investment Committee (JTIC) at the earliest to deepen cooperation, address trade facilitation issues and promote investment," the MEA said.Jaishankar and Berendsen also exchanged views on regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest, it added.

'Saurav Das's growing influence made Centre stop him from flying to UK': CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke

Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) founder Abhijeet Dipke on Tuesday alleged that the Union government deliberately stopped party co-convenor Saurav Das from travelling to the UK because of his growing influence following the success of the CJP movement.His remarks came a day after Das alleged that he was prevented from flying to the UK to attend an event at the University of Oxford, where he had been invited to speak on the "cockroach movement".''Saurav's passport was issued by this government in 2019. He had gone abroad on the same passport twice, before the formation of the CJP. At that time, they (the government) did not find any discrepancy (in the passport). They found an error only after Saurav Das became a prominent activist and democratic face," he said while addressing a press conference in Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar.Dipke claimed a notice was served to Das only on Monday night when he was supposed to reach the Delhi airport."Why was the notice served so late, so that he cannot get time to reply? Why do they have so much fear?'' Dipke said.In a series of posts on X on Monday, Das said he was stopped at the immigration counter at the Delhi airport before boarding his 1 am flight to London."I have been stopped by this cowardly Modi Govt at the Delhi Airport from flying to London to deliver a lecture at the University of Oxford. This cowardly government did not allow me to board my flight to London, where I was invited by prestigious universities like Oxford, Cambridge, LSE, and Edinburgh to deliver talks on the cockroach movement," Das said.Dipke said Das was supposed to fly to the UK to talk about the CJP movement's "success"."Saurav Das was invited by the London School of Economics and the University of Oxford to talk about the CJP movement and its success in forcing the resignation of Dharmendra Pradhan (then Education Minister)."He was stopped at the (Delhi) airport last night and was told he cannot go out of India. Why can't an Indian travel abroad? Is he a criminal? The largest mistake committed by Das is that he didn't do any scam or fraud," Dipke added.In a swipe at the government, Dipke said Das was stopped because he didn't do any fraud like Vijay Mallya, Nirav Modi and Mehul Choksi.''If he had committed fraud, cheated people or looted banks, then he would have been given VIP clearance like Mallya, Nirav Modi, and Mehul Choksi, who fled the country as the Modi government did nothing to stop them. These people owe Rs 59,000 crore to the people of India, and still they were given clearance to fly abroad," he added.Dipke alleged that the government didn't want Indian students to go abroad and speak about the thoughts of Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar and Mahatma Gandhi."This government belongs to those big businessmen who do corruption and fraud," he alleged.He said the CJP will organise a 'Save Democracy and Constitution' rally in Nagpur on November 26."If they (government) think that youths will be scared by the crackdown, they are wrong. We will keep fighting and won't step back. We have also gone to Goa through the 'Kya Bolti Public' movement and we have decided to fight against alleged illegal handing over of lands to the businessmen there," he added.Dipke, meanwhile, criticised the government for allegedly cancelling the licence of a school belonging to activist Sonam Wangchuk."Sonam Wangchuk is placed under house arrest and the licence of his school was cancelled. Inspiration should be taken from this school. You may not agree with Wangchuk, but this is hampering the education of that school. This is anti-education,'' the CJP founder said.

'Chor hai tera chacha': Priyanka Gandhi slapped boy who teased her in school after Emergency

NEW DELHI: Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said she slapped a boy in school after he teased her following the Emergency, saying, "Chor hai tera chacha (Your uncle is a thief)".She narrated the incident during a conversation with her mother Sonia Gandhi and her brother Rahul Gandhi, a video of which was shared by them on social media platforms on Tuesday."After the Emergency, when dadi (Indira Gandhi) lost the election, we moved to a different house. I remember there was a lot of tension," Priyanka Gandhi says in the video.Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi reminisce about their first day at school after Indira Gandhi lost the election in 1977."I remember a little boy coming and telling me, 'Tera chacha (Sanjay Gandhi) jail mein hai, chor hai tera chacha'. So I slapped him; he started crying and went to the teacher, and I got a scolding," Priyanka Gandhi recalls in the video of her conversation with her mother and brother.Rahul Gandhi says he and his sister were different in school. The siblings playfully tease each other in the video, with Priyanka Gandhi recalling that she was a prefect in school."There was a difference because she (Priyanka) was not rebellious. She would follow the rules; she would be sweet and nice, and I was rebellious and asking questions and disturbing," Rahul Gandhi recalls.Priyanka Gandhi then says she was suited to the system, unlike Rahul."Even today, like in Parliament, it is the same difference that was there in class that we used to have. I would say 'good morning, namaste'. You were on your own trip," Priyanka Gandhi tells her brother. Rahul Gandhi also remembers that when he arrived at school after the Emergency, no one sat next to him. He also says that on his seventh birthday, none of his friends turned up, barring one, who is still his friend.In the video shared days after the launch of Sonia Gandhi's memoir 'Belonging: A Journey Of Love', the three are seen reminiscing about moments of joy, laughter and pain they felt at various points of their lives.From dominating headlines since its announcement in August to flying off bookstore shelves, Congress leader Sonia Gandhi's memoir has had a blockbuster run, with HarperCollins India CEO Ananth Padmanabhan saying last week that it has sold "over two lakh copies" in less than a week, broken multiple publishing records and emerged as one of the "biggest memoirs" in independent India's history.'Belonging: A Journey of Love' was officially launched at a packed event at ITC Maurya here last week, attended by the who's who of the Congress and the INDIA bloc, literary figures and a host of chief ministers, including Tamil Nadu's C Joseph Vijay.Describing her brother-in-law Sanjay Gandhi as a "man in a hurry", Congress leader Sonia Gandhi says in the book he had a "significant role" in decision-making during the Emergency despite lacking a constitutional locus standi for some of his political interventions.

NSA Doval meets Maldives Defence Minister in first high-level engagement since Muizzu's Pakistan visit

NEW DELHI: National Security Adviser Ajit Doval met Maldivian Defence and National Service Minister Hassan Rasheed on the sidelines of the 8th Colombo Security Conclave (CSC) Council of National Security Advisers meeting in the Maldives, with discussions focused on strengthening defence and security cooperation between the two countries.The meeting assumes significance as it marks the first high-level engagement between New Delhi and Male following Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu's recent visit to Pakistan, adding a diplomatic dimension to India's renewed security outreach to its strategically important Indian Ocean neighbour.Doval arrived in the Maldives to participate in the eighth CSC meeting, being held from November 24 to 26, 2026. The conclave brings together national security representatives from India, the Maldives, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, Bangladesh and Seychelles to discuss regional security priorities and strengthen coordination.The discussions come at a time when the Indian Ocean is witnessing growing strategic competition, with maritime security, geopolitical influence, counterterrorism and transnational threats emerging as key concerns

Is this the Pakistani sunset?

It's not Pakistan, but the North Koreans who are garnering all the global attention, these days. The testing of a whole family of missiles, topped up by a Hydrogen bomb has grabbed all the eye balls. But, nearer home for south and south Asian countries, another scene of an old play continues to be enacted. Pakistan continues to calibrate terrorism in Afghanistan and India. A state has been reached where most of the world has begun to hyphenate 'Pakistan & North Korea' together as rogue states.

In the case of North Korea, at least their internal situation is very much under control, be it by means fair or foul. However, in Pakistan's case the internal situation is in turmoil. For too long have they harboured too many terrorist organisations. Now, these establishments have found firm anchorage and challenge the authorities. Their leadership roams at will, often makes statements to the press and seem to be unaffected by the law enforcement agencies or the honourable legal institutions that can otherwise get a Pakistani prime minister to resign.

Parallel with the tanzeems finding firm anchorage in Pakistan, has gone on this business of exporting terror to neighbours. The Afghans are fed up. India has been informing the whole world. The Americans have off late stated it loud and clear. Even its all-weather friend China joined the chorus in the BRICS summit on September 4 to name the terrorist organisations that operate from its soil. The American President's speech on the new Afghan policy chastised Pakistan unequivocally. His stark statement conveyed that at least 20 organisations, in the American list of terrorist groups, operate from Pakistan.

Trump also promised to cut off aid that has so long been used to target American service personnel in Afghanistan. Pakistan, a nation living on doles even after seven decades of independence, has been justifiably shaken. Pakistan has reacted to Trump's threat with varying tones, tenors and pitches. While the foreign minister talked about distancing themselves from terrorists, the defence minister reiterated the old parody; these organisations are the strategic partners of Pakistani Army. The new prime minister has kept his own counsel.

Perhaps an equally harsh blow was delivered in the BRICS meet in Beijing, when the joint statement of the participating countries named terrorist outfits operating out of Pakistan by name. The role of honour included Lashkar-e-Tayiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed. The fact of even China, Pakistan's sole all-weather friend, teaming up with the rest, surely causes enough consternation at Islamabad. In the recent past, the Russians have seemingly gone soft on Pakistan. The Indians leaning the American way may have been one of the primers. It surely is also driven by the desire to make Afghanistan more costly for the Americans.

However, it's doubtful whether the correct payback time is now for all that the Americans did to them when they ran Afghanistan in the 1980s. The reasons are simple. The USSR broke up in part due to its overreach, with Afghanistan being the biggest bleeding wound. No one knows why not to get into Afghanistan, better than the Russians. While relating with Pakistan, Russians will surely understand the losses it will incur in terms of its most lucrative arms market and a long history of a robust relationship. Pakistan has been a frontline state in the US lead Global War Against Terror. For the frontline state to lose its pole position and being identified as being part of the problem, is a huge shift.

An equally big issue is the tap being closed for funds to flow. Pakistan received US $3.5 bn in 2011 as compared to less than US $1 bn in 2016. Other than West Asians donors, there is only China left to fund. There are sound reasons for the Pakistani GDP growth rate to tumble. If the new American approach gathers momentum in the days ahead, Pakistan could be headed for sanctions that might just hasten the process. If they do try and stage another major attack in India, the sanctions may not be too far away.

In the interim, with American funding on the wane, Pakistan has opted for the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) bandwagon. The China-Pakistan-Economic-Corridor (CPEC) is the crown jewel of BRI. It passes through Gilgit-Baltistan, a territory that's disputed between India and Pakistan, and then traverses across the length of Pakistan to terminate at the Chinese funded Gwadar Port on the Arabian Sea that's been leased to a state run Chinese company for 40 years. The Pakistani government has not been able to sell the CPEC concept to its people. Pakistanis are not inclined to believe that CPEC will prove to be a high octane growth driver for their economy.

On the contrary, they are worried about landing in a debt trap, losing their strategic autonomy, detrimental impact on social cohesion and aggravation of insurgent/violent movements in Baluchistan and other regions that the CPEC arteries will pass through. Of all CPEC's impacts, the affect on an already fragile social cohesion is the most worrisome. As CPEC progresses, attacks on the assets being created will only increase, thus prompting the Pakistani state to respond in a heavy handed manner. It will, sooner or later, initiate a vicious cycle of violence between government forces and Islamist tanzeems.

The Americans have apparently distanced themselves from Pakistan, for good. The Chinese are feeling the heat with the gradual rise in the number of nations viewing Pakistan as the nursery of global terror.

Disability rights over time



In 1992, the United Nations announced that December 3 would be observed every year as International Day of Persons with Disabilities. While disabled persons continue to struggle to secure employment and navigate their way around with poor infrastruture, and are still treated as "others", it is worth recalling the advances in legislation on disability over the years.

The disability rights movement gained momentum in the 1970s when disability was started to be seen as a human rights issue. This is when the UN General Assembly proclaimed in 1976 that 1981 would be the International Year of Disabled Persons. Later, 1983-1992 was marked as the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), 2006 was a big step towards viewing persons as "subjects with rights" and not "objects of charity". (India is a signatory to the UNCRPD and ratified it in 2007.) Further, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development pledges to "leave no one behind". It states that persons with disabilities must be both "beneficiaries and agents of change". However, attitudinal, institutional, and infrastructural barriers remain, with the World Bank stating that 15% of the world's population experience some form of disability and that they "on average, as a group, are more likely to experience adverse socioeconomic outcomes than persons without disabilities".

In 2011, the World Health Organisation came up with a world report on disability for the first time. Its introduction showed how disabled persons aren't "other people", but that all of us at some point will be "temporarily or permanently impaired" and those "who survive to old age will experience increasing difficulties in functioning." In India, according to the 2011 Census, 2.21% of the population has one or multiple types of disabilities, making the country home to one of the largest disabled populations in the world. World Bank data suggest that the numbers are nearly four-five times higher. Legislation moved forward last year in India when the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act was passed, replacing the Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995. The 2016 Act recognises 21 kinds of disabilities compared to the previous seven, including dwarfism, speech and language disability, and three blood disorders.

The new Act also increased the quota for disability reservation in higher educational institutions from 3% to 5% and in government jobs from 3% to 4%, for a more inclusive society. However, legislation alone is not enough; implementation remains abysmal. For instance, data from the National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People show that 84% of seats for persons with disabilities lie vacant in top universities. While we have a long way to go in implementing these laws, we must also keep in mind that a one-size-fits-all approach is unhelpful for disabled persons. Levels and types of disabilities differ and so do needs.

Financial inclusion in rising India



"I dream of a digital India where mobile & e-banking ensures Financial Inclusion" "Financial Inclusion" is the way the Governments strive to take the common man along by bringing them into the formal channel of economy thereby ensuring that even the person standing in the last is not left out from the benefits of the economic growth and is added in the mainstream economy thereby encouraging the poor person to save, safely invest in various financial products and to borrow from the formal channel when he need to borrow. Lack of financial inclusion is costly to society and the individual.

As far as the individual is concerned, lack of financial inclusion forces the unbanked into informal banking sectors where interest rates are higher and the amount of available funds much smaller. Because the informal banking structure is outside any legislative framework, any dispute between lenders and borrowers cannot be settled legally. As far as the social benefits are concerned, financial inclusion increases the amount of available savings, increases efficiency of financial intermediation, and allows for tapping new business opportunities. State sponsored universal banking has therefore contributed to greater economic diversification in rural areas than is the case in more competitive banking environments.

With structural adjustment programs being introduced in the 1980s and 1990s, financial market reforms swept over many developing countries. At the beginning of 20th century, India had insurance companies (both life and general) and a functional stock exchange Scope of the financial inclusion is not limited to only banking services but it extends to other financial services as well like insurance, equity products & pension products etc. Thus, financial inclusion is not just about opening a simple bank account with a branch in an unbanked area. Adding the common man into the mainstream economy has other advantages as well as on the one hand it helps inculcate the vulnerable section of the society to save money for its future and the rainy days, take benefits of the economic activities of the country by participating in various financial products like, banking services, insurance & pension products etc., on the other hand, it helps the country to increase the rate of 'capital formation' which in turn, give a push to the economic activities in the economy by channelizing the money from every nook & corner of the country.

In the absence of people of a country financially included in the mainstream, they often tend to park their savings/ invest in the non-productive assets like land, buildings & bullion etc. While, financially included people can easily avail the credit facilities, whether they are sitting in the organised or unorganised sector, urban or rural sector. Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs) are the classic examples for providing easy & affordable credit to poor people and have got written innumerable success stories. This phenomenon of financial inclusion also helps government plug gaps & leakages in public subsidies & welfare programmes as government can directly transfer the subsidy amount into the account of the beneficiary rather than to subsidise the product.

In fact, the Government has even saved by around more than Rs. 57,000 crores in its subsidy bill and has ensured that the benefit of the subsidy reaches to the real beneficiary directly to him/ her. The NDA government led by Prime Minister Sh.Narendra Modi made itself committed, since beginning of its term, to give special emphasis on the financial inclusion of every person of the country. One of the most crucial of the several steps taken by this government is JAM- Jan Dhan, Aadhar & Mobile. Jan Dhan Yojna - with a view to increase the penetration of banking services and to ensure that all households have at least one bank account, a National Mission on Financial Inclusion named as Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojna was announced by Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi in his independence speech on 15th August, 2014 & the scheme was formally launched on 28th August, 2014. Within a fortnight of its launch, the scheme entered into the Guinness Book of records for opening a record number of bank accounts.

Large scale achievement was made by opening 29.48 crores accounts by Mid-August, 2017 out of which 17.61 crores accounts were in rural/semi-urban areas and the rest 11.87 crores in urban areas. The additional benefits on opening an account under Jan Dhan Scheme is the customer is issued a RuPay Debit Card having inbuilt insurance cover of Rs 1 Lakh. Besides, an overdraft (OD) facility of Rs 5,000/- is granted to the customer for satisfactory operation of account for 6 months. A life cover of Rs 30,000/- has also been granted to customers for opening the accounts up to a certain time period.

The scheme has been a great success and the 99.99% households out of the 21.22 crores households surveyed have been covered under this scheme by December, 2016. More than 44 lakh accounts have been sanctioned OD facility of which more than 23 lakh account holders have availed the facility involving an amount around 300 crores. Insurance & Pension schemes – In order to provide social security system for all citizens and especially to the poor and under-privileged people, the present government launched Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojna and Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojna.

The former scheme i.e., Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojna (PMSBY) covers the persons within the age slab of 18 to 70 years and a risk coverage of Rs 2 lakhs is provided at an affordable premium of Rs 12 per annum only. As per the date 12th April, 2017, around 10 crore people were enrolled under Pradhan Mantri Suraksha BimaYojana (PMSBY). The later scheme, i.e., Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojna covers the persons within an age slab of 18 to 50 years having a bank account. The life cover of Rs 2 lakhs is provided to the insured payable in case of death of the insured due to any reason. As on 12th April 2017 3.10 cr person were enrolled under PMJJBY.

Atal Pension Yojna – A scheme launched in 2015 is open to all bank account holders in the age group of 18 to 40 years and they can choose different contributions based on the pension amount. Under this scheme monthly pension is guaranteed to the subscriber and after him to his spouse and after their death, pension corpus as accumulated till the age of 60 years is returned to the nominee of subscriber. Central Government also contributes 50% of the contribution subject to a maximum of Rs 1000 per annum. As on 31st March 2017 a total of 46.80 lakh subscribers have been enrolled from Atal Pension yojana with a total pension worth of Rs1713.214cr. Varishita Pension Bima Yojana: All those who subscribe to the VPBY from 15th August 2014 to 14th August 2015 will receive an assured guaranteed return of 9% under the Policy. Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojna – Scheme launched in April, 2015 to provide formal access of financial facilities to Non Corporate Small Business Sector.

Swachhta Hi Seva Campaign

The President administered the Swachhta Hi Seva Pledge whereby the Nation resolved to create a clean healthy and new India. Addressing the gathering the President said "India is fighting a decisive battle for cleanliness and hygiene. Cleanliness is not the responsibility of only sanitation personnel and government departments; it is a multi-stakeholder national movement." Mahatma Gandhi had once famously said "sanitation is more important than political freedom.

" This statement underscored the criticality of sanitation in society. Inspired by these words, on August 15, 2014, the Prime Minister gave a clarion call to the Nation from the ramparts of Red Fort to fight filth and open defacation, change old habits and achieve a Swachh Bharat by 2019, to mark the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. He further said that "women's pride is an important issue in our villages today. The practice of open defacation must be stopped. Toilets must be built and used." The aim of the Swachh Bharat Mission is to achieve a clean and open defacation free India by October 2, 2019.

The objectives are generating demand for toilets leading to their construction and sustained use by all household members, promoting better hygiene behavior amongst the population and improving cleanliness by initiating solid and liquid waste management projects. The financial allocations under the Swachh Bharat Mission increased from Rs.2850 crores in 2014-15 to Rs.6525 crores in 2015-16, to Rs.10,500 crores in 2016-17, to Rs. 14000 crores in 2017-18. In the last 3 years, under the Swachh Bharat Mission, 48,264,304 toilets were constructed. Open Defacation Free Villages reached 2,38,966. Individual toilet coverage increased from 42 percent in 2014 to 64 percent in 2017. 5 States have declared themselves open defacation free.

The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation has said that the progress achieved is encouraging to reach the goal of an Open Defacation Free India by October 2, 2019. The Swachh Bharat Mission sought to reform the sanitation sector with the primary focus being on behavioral changes as the fundamental tool for achievement of Open Defacation Free outcomes. Inclusiveness under the Swachh Bharat Mission was achieved by designing public and community toilets keeping in mind the special needs of menstruating women, the elderly, the specially abled and small children. Further the Mission sought to promote gender sensitive information, education and communication/ behavioral changes. The Mission issued Gender guidelines in 2017 and Menstrual management guidelines in 2015. An innovative monitoring and evaluation system was put in place. The Swachh Sarvekshan was conducted for rural India and revealed that Mandi (Himachal Pradesh) and Sidhudurg (Maharashtra) were the cleanest districts in India. The Swachh Sarvekshan assessed 22 Hill districts and 53 Plain areas. National level monitors were hired to carry out sample-based checks of sanitation coverage and open defacation free status across the country.

A massive survey covering 92000 households in 4626 villages across the country is being conducted. An additional 200 villages located on the banks of Ganga are being surveyed. Eminent personalities like Amitabh Bacchan was nominated as the Brand Ambassador for Swachh Bharat Mission and celebrities like Sachin Tendulkar and Akshay Kumar attended champion collector conclaves for motivational purposes. The Swachh Bharat Mission maintained a significant social media engagement for enhancing awareness levels and a newsletter Swachhta Samachar Patrika was published on a regular basis. A recent Bollywood film titled "Toilet – Ek Prem Katha" based on the Swachh Bharat Mission witnessed considerable box office success.

From owning a home to feeling at home

S. Indira Gandhi owns a brand-new house now. She is one of the first few from Sri Lanka's hill country Tamil community – that has a two century-history in the island – who can call this home, and the piece of land beneath it, her own. A full-time worker in a tea estate, the 33-year-old, along with her husband, is busy giving finishing touches to her cement-walled home in Dayagama, in Nuwara Eliya district in the Central Province. They have recently cut a path leading to the entrance of their home, where saplings bearing sprightly pink flowers pop up from either side. For the young couple, the home is much more than a secure place of residence, or a permanent dwelling.



From the time the British brought down hundreds of thousands of Tamils from south India in the 19th century to Sri Lanka, successive generations have been toiling in the country's plantations. Even today, most of them live in colonial-era line rooms — closely packed match-box like dwellings on the hills and many still work in the estates in difficult working conditions and with poor wages. Their story is better known as the global rise of the famed Ceylon Tea, a product that fetches precious foreign revenue, about $1.2 billion in 2016.

Following the transition from being stateless to becoming citizens in 2003, the ongoing change from being landless to owning a modest house on a small plot marks another significant shift for the community. Neither was an outcome of state benevolence. In fact, both followed persistent struggles by the nearly million-strong community and larger political dynamics. Houses such as Indira Gandhi's have been built by the Indian government as part of an initiative to construct 14,000 dwellings for Hill Country Tamils, to supplement the Sri Lankan government's own efforts towards providing housing in the region. In an earlier project, India built 46,000 homes in the island's Tamil-majority North and East for the war-displaced.

Malayaha (Hill Country) Tamils are quick to appreciate India's attention to their community. As Tamils of most recent Indian origin here, they have been invisible not just to the Sri Lankan state, but also to New Delhi and Tamil Nadu for most part. Without doubt, they feel some affinity towards Tamil Nadu and India, through ancestral and cultural links. "My father gave me that name because I was born the day Indira Gandhi died," says her namesake, smiling brightly.

All the same, many in her generation feel that the oft-used "Indian-origin" tag is both dated and distant. "Even my national ID defines me as a 'Sri Lankan estate worker'," says her husband, K. Vijayakumar. "We are people of this country." That is how they would like to frame their demands to the state – in the unmistakable voice of a rightful citizens, without tags that bear the baggage of uneasy histories.

In an apparent recognition of that emphatic voice, the Maithripala Sirisena-Ranil Wickremesinghe government put out an ambitious National Plan of Action for the social development of the plantation community, spanning five years beginning 2016. Among other initiatives, the plan envisions building 1,60,000 homes, financed partly with a government grant and the remaining with a 7.5% interest-loan. About 30,000 homes have been constructed so far.

For pensioner E. Sellappan, his new home in Hauteville Puram, built by the Minister of Upcountry New Villages, Estate Infrastructure and Community Development, is the only asset for his children. "This sonda veedu (own home) is the first recognition of my labour for my 36 years' work at the estate," he says. The government points to its share of challenges. Despite a widespread campaign from workers for 20 perches land each, the government could manage only seven (about 2,000 square ft). "Finding land is our main challenge. The plantation companies are rather reluctant to part with productive land, or end up giving land that has no easy access to the main road," says M. Vamadevan, an adviser to the Minister.

The gap between required resources and the actual allocations is also glaring. While the national action plan points to an estimated 15 billion Sri Lankan rupees investment in 2018 needed for the project – it will cost 70 billion rupees over five years – the annual allocation in the recent budget is only 2 billion rupees. Housing is only one of the many long-ignored demands of the workers, who face historic neglect and exploitation. From education, to health to fair wages, many of their concerns remain unaddressed.

"Even if wasps attack us, we have to put in our own money and get treated. Our struggle for a minimum wage of 1,000 (Sri Lankan) rupees earlier this year also failed after our political leaders signed a collective agreement with the companies. We are now stuck with 630 rupees a day," says estate worker R. Pushparani, squinting her eyes against the glaring sun, while she rapidly plucks tea leaves with both hands. In pointing out their current reality, she highlights the difference between a few workers owning homes, and all of them feeling at home.

'The government is perceived with fear'

It is the people, the party and the state I represent. There is no turnaround story on the politics of development that belongs to me as I am from a progressive party and one of the most developed states in the country. Our story is that of a developed state working towards being a hyper developed state. My government believes in keeping politics off of development and focusing on the betterment of people in every sphere. A government that delays development stands in the way of the people's right to a better tomorrow.

We live in a time when the government is perceived with fear. No government should be viewed as authoritarian, rather as a collective institution of people. No state can achieve fast paced development without its government being the best service provider. I'm sure textbooks, news articles or social media platforms have told you at some point about our high standards of living, HDI, male female ratio, life expectancy rates, literacy rates, low infant and maternal mortality rates and other such indices along with our exemplary palliative care far ahead of most developed countries. We are extremely proud of achieving them, but are not hung up on them. There is no point in repeating them here, instead I would like to tell you where we are headed.

This is not something to bring up only in election manifestos or while seeking votes. At the end of every day, we have to have served the people of our state and country. A way that we have brought accountability to our work is by issuing the first annual progress reports to show that our promises weren't empty. This also helps keep people in the loop. Our Navakerala action plan which was started a year ago has been our answer to the bottom-up approach. Its ideology is simple, your birth should not determine your future. For development to take place we must ensure that people are able to contribute. We are focusing on providing opportunities to those most dependent on the government. Those who access public healthcare, education and housing.

While shifting the lens onto these spheres along with waste management we want to build people up so that they can reach their potential without having to worry about their basic necessities. The housing scheme provides every individual with a right to a house and includes those currently living in poor housing conditions. Education standards shouldn't be reduced to be accessible.

Instead we are bettering public education to be at par with international standards. As far as healthcare goes, government hospitals are the last resort for many people and private hospitals are becoming more expensive every day. It is surprising that a sector that produced many like Florence Nightingale in the past is producing millionaires and billionaires today.

We are changing that by providing more beds, better facilities and cheaper life-saving medication. Our lifestyle disease screening which will be available to every individual of the state prevents health problems such as cholesterol, diabetes and blood pressure, from taking away the future of many families. Waste management is essential for every citizen. Without which soil, air and water quality will deplete drastically. This is why we believe in handling waste management to create a safer environment for the people of Kerala. One area that we have not performed up to the mark in the past is water conservation. Water has become a scarce commodity.

It is scary that inter-state disputes are taking place over water.

We can compete amongst our sister states, but not fight. We are serious about water conservation and are going to adopt more preservation mechanisms in the coming years. We have started to conserve our rivers and water bodies but more investment is required in this area. Even though it is a part of the Navakerala action plan, I would like to specifically speak about this just to emphasise its importance. Speaking of basic necessities, I'm sure nobody here will disagree that an accident victims chances of survival should not be dependent on their bank balance. Yet it has always been this way.

To fight this inequality we introduced the special trauma care scheme. The 48 hours after an accident is called the critical period. The treatment one receives during that time determines their survival rate. Our policy is that the victim should not be taken to the hospital based on their ability to pay the bill, but the one closest to the accident site. The government will use insurance to pay the hospital directly. This is in line with our belief that a human life's value is not something expressed in monetary terms. There have been many debates on whether corruption should be attacked from the bottom or the top. We believe in attacking it from both sides and crushing it.

At all levels there should be zero tolerance towards corruption. This is only possible if the government, judiciary and the media work with a much higher vigilance. It is not just about checking corruption that has already taken place, but preventing it from happening at all. You may think that it's easy for us to talk about corruption when we are one of the least corrupt states in the country. For us this is not a matter of pride. The word 'least' implies that we still have corruption and our goal of being corruption-free hasn't been achieved yet. Corruption is something that reduces efficiency, productivity and takes away from development. Without which resource mobilisation would increase tremendously.

People often let corruption and bribery demand go unreported out of fear that the corrupt flock together and protect each other. We will put an end to this. We are going to apply modern technology, algorithms, etc. to achieve this. Under this government, the only people who should fear are the corrupt themselves. We have seen the numbers and percentage points of those living in poverty reduce over the years. This may help a lot of people sleep at night in peace, but not us. Human beings aren't statistic points. Even one person left to suffer is a failure at every level. The idea of putting growth and development into percentage over actual changes in the standard of living is an outdated idea.

We have not achieved any success until the last hungry person is fed, the last sick person treated, the last child educated and the last homeless person has shelter. We want to make Kerala one of the most liveable place on earth. Safety of women and children, awareness, speedy correction of all types of crimes need to be included. Police modernisation is an integral part of that as criminals are getting more technology savvy. Governments need to out pace them. Credibility of the police force also needs to be improved drastically. We are modernising the police force not only in terms of equipment. We believe in bringing the best technology, awareness and most importantly humanity to the field.

Singing carols can make you happy, boost mental health

Love to be part of the choir singing Christmas carols? Singing in groups could not only make you happier, but also help improve mental health conditions like anxiety and depression, according to new research. The finding showed that people who took part in a community singing group maintained or improved their mental health. Community singing had positive effects on people's mental health, while for some it was a key to their recovery or maintenance of health, for others it induced fun and happiness.

Moreover, the combination of singing and socialising was an essential part of recovery because it promoted an ongoing feeling of belonging and well-being that often lasted a day or more as well as improved social skills and confidence. "We found that singing as part of a group contributes to people's recovery from mental health problems," said lead researcher Tom Shakespeare, Professor at the University of East Anglia (UEA).

For the study, published in the BMJ journal Medical Humanities, the team analysed participants who took part in the Sing Your Heart Out (SYHO) project -- an initiative which runs weekly singing workshops, aimed at people with mental health conditions as well as the general public. The research project followed the group for six months and undertook interviews and focus groups with participants, organisers, and workshop leaders.

Taking part on a weekly basis provided structure, support and contact that helped people improve their mood, feel good, and function better in day-to-day life. "We heard the participants calling the initiative a 'life saver' and that it 'saved their sanity'. Others said they simply wouldn't be here without it, they wouldn't have managed - so we quickly began to see the massive impact it was having," Shakespeare said.

This treatment can extend life of people with Parkinson's disease

According to a study, a treatment called deep brain stimulation (DBS) is linked to longer survival for Parkinson's patients. Researchers at the Edward Hines, Jr. VA Hospital in Illinois found that patients who received stimulation via an implanted device had a modest survival advantage compared with those treated with medication only. Parkinson's disease is a neurodegenerative disorder. It affects neurons in the brain that produce dopamine. Its cause is currently unknown, and so far there is no cure. Parkinson's itself is not fatal, but complications related to the disease often lead to death.

Common symptoms of Parkinson's disease include tremor, slowness of movement, limb rigidity, and walking and balance problems. People with Parkinson's disease have a shorter life expectancy than those without the disease. Previous studies have shown that DBS can improve motor function in people with Parkinson's disease. The treatment involves electrodes surgically inserted into specific areas of the brain. An impulse generator battery--similar to what is used in pacemakers--is also implanted, under the collarbone or in the abdomen. The battery creates electrical impulses that the electrodes deliver to the brain tissue.

Dr. Frances Weaver, lead author on the study, explained the benefit of DBS: "Overall, DBS surgery has been viewed quite positively by both patients and providers. There is an immediate effect on patients who have DBS on their motor function--the dyskinesia [involuntary muscle movements] is either gone or greatly reduced. The patient can move around and do things they hadn't been able to." While deep brain stimulation may improve function compared with those who do not receive it, little evidence exists on whether the treatment has any benefits to life expectancy.

To answer that question, the researchers looked at data for 611 Veterans with Parkinson's disease who had a deep brain stimulation device implanted. They compared this with data on 611 Veterans with Parkinson's but without the device. The data came from VA and Medicare administrative files from between 2007 and 2013. The researchers found that patients treated with deep brain stimulation survived an average of 6.3 years after the surgery, versus 5.7 years for the non-DBS patients after the date they might have gotten surgery based on their match to a surgery patient--a difference of eight months.

The researchers had paired each DBS patient with a clinically and demographically similar non-DBS patient–for example, in terms of age and symptom severity--and tracked survival from the date when surgery either took place, for the DBS group; or might have theoretically taken place, for the non-DBS group. The average age of veterans in the study was 69, reflecting the higher prevalence of Parkinson's among older people. The older age of the study group could have led to more deaths from age-related conditions, but the researchers point out that a majority of the causes of death for those who died during the study period were related to Parkinson's disease.

Making Chennai a water-wise

The public discourse on Chennai's ongoing water crisis has been along predictable lines. Source augmentation, deepening of waterbodies and giving rainwater harvesting a renewed emphasis are among the suggestions being made, apart from demand-side management. But these ideas, however well-meaning they may be, have their limitations. There is a compelling need for a paradigm shift in the way the water crisis is being viewed. When it comes to source augmentation, in the last 40 years, a couple of major projects were taken up for Chennai to tap both fresh water and sea water.

The Krishna Water Supply Scheme or Telugu Ganga Project (1996) and the New Veeranam Project (2004) were implemented using two important inter-State rivers — the Krishna and the Cauvery, both of which depend on the southwest monsoon (June-September). Though the Krishna Water Supply Scheme, if realised fully, can take care of at least half of the Chennai Metropolitan Area (CMA)'s projected water demand of 1,721 million litres a day (MLD) for 2020, Tamil Nadu has not received the assured quantum from Andhra Pradesh even once in the last 20+ years. As regards the Cauvery project, the 'upper-riparian attitude' of Karnataka determines the flow to Tamil Nadu. In effect, realisation of water by Chennai hinges on nature and inter-State ties, both of which are, more often than not, unpredictable.

Another source since 2017 for the city has been the abandoned stone quarries located on the outskirts, from where water is drawn for public water supply after treatment. Further, two desalination plants of 100 MLD each were commissioned in 2010 and 2013. Work has begun on another desalination plant of 150 MLD while steps are on to set up another 400 MLD unit. However, given the costs and environmental concerns, it is unlikely that Chennai can afford to stretch this option beyond a point.

Deepening of tanks and lakes, a popular option, is easier said than done. Issues such as the costs involved in removing and transporting the silt and inadequate disposal arrangements have bothered the authorities to such an extent that nothing much has been done. As regards rainwater harvesting (RWH), it cannot be a panacea and site-specific requirements will have to be kept in mind while putting up RWH structures. The model of storing rainwater and reusing it may demonstrate the efficacy of RWH.

Many of the options being suggested to overcome the distress situation faced by Chennai have been tried out in the past. Yet, just one bad monsoon has pushed the city to yet another water crisis. This scenario may get repeated in the future too. Even if there are bountiful monsoon years, the prospects of Chennai becoming a water-surplus city are remote. An official document prepared a few years ago estimated that the CMA, which covers not only Chennai Corporation but also nearby municipalities, town panchayats and village panchayats, will have a shortfall of 1,089 MLD in 2020. Even assuming that the southern peninsula experiences good southwest and northeast monsoons this year, the gap can come down only by a maximum of 400 MLD.

A note available on the website of The Energy and Resources Institute states, quoting the Central Public Health and Environmental Engineering Organisation, that the average water supply in urban local bodies of the country is 69.25 litres per capita per day (LPCD) against the service level benchmark of 135 LPCD. For a metropolitan city like Chennai, the benchmark goes up to 150 LPCD. If one were to go by the admission of Chennai Metrowater, the service level achieved in March 2018 was 112 LPCD. This is why the need for a paradigm shift becomes all the more important.

Just as in many other Indian cities, the concept of waste-water recycling and re-use has not yet caught the imagination of either the authorities or the public in a big way. The demand-supply gap will be a permanent feature of urban India unless society realises the critical importance of recycling and re-use of water. It needs to be noted here that on an average, 85 litres of water goes waste for every 100 litres utilised.

There is also another reason why the concept ought to be popularised. According to information furnished by the Centre, while urban areas of the country generate 61,948 MLD of sewage on a daily basis, the installed capacity of sewage treatment plants (STPs) is just 23,277 MLD. This means that only 37.5% of sewage generated can be treated. As per a conservative estimate, Chennai generates about 930 MLD of sewage, whereas its STPs can handle 727 MLD. With rapid urbanisation, the space for new plants is hardly available in peri-urban areas of Chennai, a scenario applicable to any other city in India. As a result, the city's rivers and canals have been reduced to carriers of raw sewage. Over and above these reasons, one of the targets set under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by UN member-countries in 2015, is to halve the proportion of untreated waste water.



Kiernan Shipka, from left, Anna Akana, Odeya Rush, Liv Hewson and Isabela Moner attend a photo call for "Let It Snow" at the Four Seasons Hotel in Los Angeles.

Krystle D'souza: Web space gives actors more time to prepare



Actress Krystle D'souza, who recently made her web debut with the show "Fittrat", says it was fun exploring the new medium. "In web shows, actors get more time to prepare for their roles. Before going on the set, we know what we have to speak and enact because we get ample time to do rehearsals. It's not the same in TV.

We work nonstop for daily soaps. Sometimes, we shoot for a day before its telecast. So, we don't get much time to rehearse. While working on the web show, I realised this difference between both the mediums," Krystle told.

"Fittrat", an ALTBalaji and ZEE5's web series, is the story of Tarini Bisht (Krystle), who comes from a humble background but has a clear goal of getting rich. She is the kind of girl who is a combination of beauty and brains and sees to it that she gets what she wants. Not only the medium, with the show, krystle shared that she has explored such role for the first time. "I have never done this kind of role before on screen. For me, it was something new and challenging. It is very important for actors to play different types of characters...otherwise it becomes monotonous. Even audience now expect different from us..so I am now trying to explore different sides and present something new for my fans," she added. Krystle rose to fame with her role of Jeevika in "Ek Hazaaron Mein Meri Behna Hai".

Bobby Deol: I really didnt capitalise on my stardom



He made a promising start with "Barsaat" in 1995, tasted success with films like "Gupt: The Hidden Truth", "Soldier", "Ajnabee" and also faced failure. Actor Bobby Deol, the blue-eyed boy of nineties Bollywood, says he really did not capitalise on his stardom. "I really didn't capitalise on my stardom, I guess everybody's destiny is written but its never the end of the road if you keep working hard. You can always achieve a lot in life as an actor," Bobby told.

The actor, who made a comeback on the big screen after four long years with "Race 3" in 2018, is now looking forward to his "new innings". His latest film, the multistarrer 'Housefull 4" opened in the Diwali weekend. I am looking forward to this new inning of mine, where I get the opportunity to play characters that are totally out of my comfort zone. I am really glad that I am in this happy zone right now," he said.

With a string of hits in the nineties, Bobby was one of the hottest property the industry had at that point of time. How does he look back at his journey? "It's been a great journey for me in the nineties, and the 2000's. It feels good that I am still working, and being able to be an actor who still gets interesting characters to play," said Bobby, who is all pumped up with the release of "Housefull 4".

He added: "Yes, times change with every new generation. New things become more popular and there is a different lifestyle for every generation. Things have changed a lot but that's what life is all about." Both "Race 3" and "Housefull 4" are multistarrers. Did he ever fear of getting overshadowed?

"The question of being overshadowed is something I really don't look in to. All I can say is it was great to be a part of these franchises because a lot of people go to see these films, and millions of people will be there watching. I will get a chance to be seen by all of them. So, for me, who has just restarted his career, it is a great opportunity to get noticed by the young generation that has not really seen my work as much as the older generation has," he said.

It's been over a two-decade run for Bobby. The 50-year-old actor believes that age is not detrimental to an actor's career. "Well, age is just a number and there are a lot of actors who have survived the delimitation of age. I think I am very blessed to have the energy and the focus right now in my life, to keep working as long as I can," he said. What kind of work is he looking forward to? "I am looking forward todoing a lot of good characters because whenever I watch movies I have always enjoyed artistes who play great roles. Thus, I am looking forward to playing some interesting characters," he said.

Work keeps me grounded: Raveena Tando

Raveena Tandon turned a year older on Saturday, and it was a working birthday for the "Mohra" actress. Raveena, who is currently judging the dance based reality TV show "Nach Baliye 9", reserved the day for work and quality time with her family.

"Usually on birthdays, people examine their lives. I think it's best to do that while at work. My family is the centre of everything I do. Spending time with loved ones and my kids helps me appreciate the little joys of life. I am fortunate to have a loving family and also an extended work family. Both keep me grounded," she said. She also celebrated her birthday on Friday evening on the sets of "Nach Baliye 9". She was surprised when her whole family, including her parents, in-laws and daughter, turned up to celebrate the occasion. Raveena, 45, recently featured in the recreated version of her hit song "Sheher Ki Ladki".

Comedy is one of the toughest genres to execute: Anees Bazmee



Filmmaker Anees Bazmee, who is gearing up for the release of his next directorial venture "Pagalpanti", has said that comedy is one of the toughest genres to execute for a big audience.

"I have written scripts of many films including emotional drama, romantic films and suspense thrillers but even today, I honestly feel scared when I write a comedy because it is one of the toughest genres to execute for a big screen audience," said Bazmee, while interacting with the media at the launch of the song "Tum par hum hain atke yaara" of the film "Pagalpanti".

Present at the occasion on Thursday in Mumbai were members of the film's cast including John Abraham, Anil Kapoor, Ileana D'Cruz, Kriti Kharbanda, Arshad Warsi, Pulkit Samrat and Urvashi Rautela, besides producers Bhushan Kumar and Kumar Mangat. Bazmee has directed several comedy films such as "No Entry" (2005), "Welcome" (2007), "Singh Is Kinng" (2008), "Ready" (2011) and "Welcome Back" (2015). All along, he has avoided the Bollywood tendency to utilise dialogues and songs with double meaning to create humour.

"I don't have any objection with double meaning dialogues that are being written in other films, but personally I feel if you have a pen, you have some sort of skill and intelligence and if you are ready to do some hard work, then you don't need to find these short cuts. I always write my films keeping in mind that kids are going to watch my films," he said. "Pagalpanti" revolves around three men, considered losers by all, who plan to get rich along with their girlfriends by fooling two gangsters and robbing their money.

Tannishtha : The city of Rome is a character in my film



Actress-turned-filmmaker Tannishtha Chatterjee, who was quite determined to shoot her debut film "Roam Rome Mein" in Rome, says that the city plays an important role in the story, as the narrative revolves around feminism.

"I had to go to Rome to shoot the film. That was a fact I knew from the beginning, even though I had no budget initially. My film looks at the city of Rome from a different angle because, we must not forget, Rome is the city where the genesis of modern feminism started. I had to go and shoot the film there for that historical context, because feminism is a part of my narrative. The city of Rome plays a character in the film," Tannishtha told.

The film has been screened at the Jio MAMI 21ST Mumbai Film Festival With Star, after doing the rounds of the global festival circuit with screenings at Busan International Film Festival and Rome Film Festival. According to Tannishtha, the global audience, especially the people of Rome, got a chance to revisit the historical memories of their culture through her film.

"Even in the reviews, critics said that though the city Rome has been shown in many Hollywood films as well as Bollywood films, the audience got a fresh perspective of the city, especially the places I have shown," mentioned the actress, who is known for her performance in films such as "Dekh Indian Circus", "Parched", "Angry Indian Goddesses" and "Brick Lane". "Roam Rome Mein" features Nawazuddin Siddiqui, Vineet Kumar, Isha Talwar and Italian actors like Urbano Barberini, Pamela Villoresi along with Tannishtha.

Apart from the context of feminism, the film also shows how patriarchy continues to exists in Roman society. "There is a history of patriarchy in their society.

My film raises questions on this topic. There were so many Italian artists, painters, poets, playwrights, singer-songwriters who were never celebrated but started the conversation on feminism and raised voice against gender discrimination," said Tannishtha. "My film also pays tribute to them. Today, it is easy for us to talk on feminism but it would have not been possible without them, who started the movement 1,400 years ago," she shared.



Jennifer Garner presents Hollywood breakthrough director award at the 23rd annual Hollywood Film Awards at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills, California.

Published By : Mir Amjad Ali Khan 16-9-407/A, , Old Malakpet, Hyderabad -36 Contact No : + 9885106759. R.N.I.APENG/2002/09014,
Email:Editorial@hindustandailynewspaper.com www.hindustandailynewspaper.com