

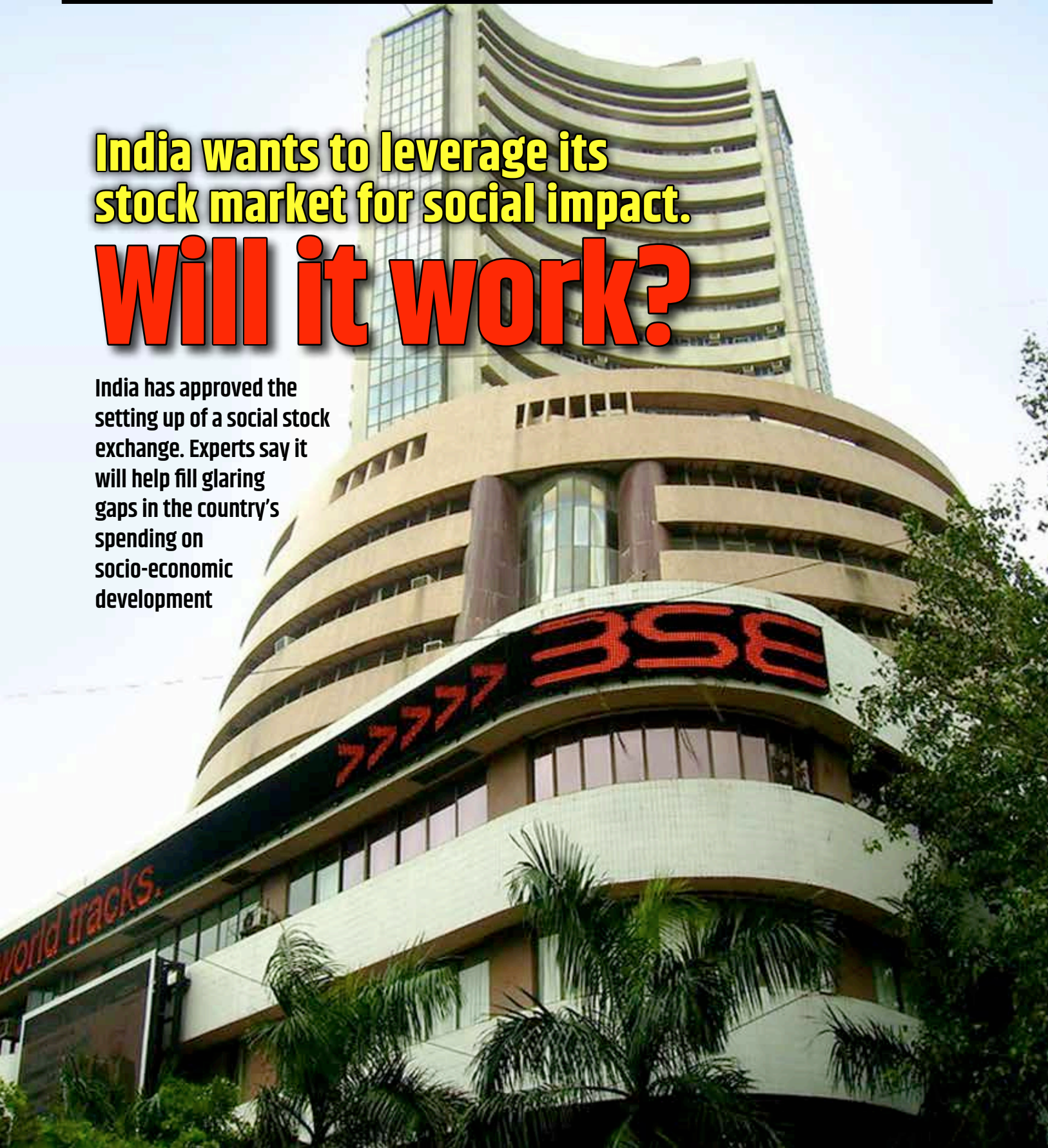
CSR TODAY

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stock market for social impact.**

Will it work?

India has approved the setting up of a social stock exchange. Experts say it will help fill glaring gaps in the country's spending on socio-economic development





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'Consign violence against women and girls'



Rajesh Tiwari
Publisher
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Impunity, silence, stigma and shame surrounding violence against women and girls (VAWG) has kept the persistent and devastating human rights violation largely unreported.

Every 11 minutes, a woman or girl is killed by an intimate partner or family member, the UN chief said ahead of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, commemorated on 25 November, urging everyone to "consign violence against women and girls to the history books".

The issue is at a serious level in India.

From the COVID-19 pandemic to economic turmoil, a range of stresses intensify physical and verbal abuse.

Meanwhile, misogynistic hate speech and sexual harassment trigger rampant online exploitation against women and girls.

"This discrimination, violence and abuse targeting half of humanity comes at a steep cost", Secretary-General António Guterres underscored in his message for the day.

"It limits women's and girls' participation in all walks of life, denies their basic rights and freedoms, and blocks the equal economic recovery and sustainable growth our world needs". He upheld that it is time for "transformative action" that ends violence against women and girls – the most pervasive human rights violation in the world.

The top UN official outlined what needed to be done, including that governments design, fund and implement national action plans to tackle this scourge.

Moreover, grassroots and civil society groups must be involved at every stage of decision-making and all laws "implemented and respected", so survivors can see their rights to justice and support upheld.

He also urged everyone to support public campaigns that challenge patriarchal norms and promote different forms of masculinities that reject misogyny and violence.

Five years ago, the #MeToo movement exploded, sparking global mobilization in preventing and responding to violence against women and girls.

Since then, unprecedented awareness and momentum have been created.

At the same time however, there has been a rise in anti-feminist groups – resulting in shrinking space for civil society, a backlash against women's rights organizations and a rise in attacks against women human rights defenders and activists.


Impunity, silence, stigma and shame surrounding violence against women and girls (VAWG) has kept the persistent and devastating human rights violation largely unreported.

The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women defines violence against women as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life."

The adverse psychological, sexual and reproductive health consequences of VAWG affect women at all stages of life and can happen to anyone, anywhere.

VAWG take many forms, such as

- Intimate partner violence, from battering to psychological abuse and marital rape to femicide.
- Sexual violence and harassment that can involve rape, forced sexual acts, unwanted sexual advances, stalking and cyber-harassment.
- Human trafficking, which encompasses slavery and sexual exploitation.
- Female genital mutilation.
- Child marriage.

Additionally, this violence continues hamper equality, development, peace and the fulfillment of women and girls' human rights – preventing the promise of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to leave no one behind. 

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Tata Power aids 'Green Tourism' at Ranthambore National Park in Rajasthan; Installs EV Charging points at The Tigress Resort

In order to encourage green mobility at tourism sites, Tata Power, one of India's largest of EV charging solutions providers, has installed Tata Power EZ Charging points at The Tigress Resort, Ranthambore in Rajasthan.

Ranthambore National Park is famous for its large population of Royal Bengal Tigers and visited by a large number of tourists and nature enthusiasts all-round the year. The collaboration aligns with Tata Power's commitment to make sustainable mobility mainstream.

The EV Charging points will encourage tourists to travel by electric vehicles, thus promoting adoption of green mobility alternatives. This will reduce the environmental impact of petrol and diesel run vehicles at the country's ecological tourist spots.

Highlighting the significance of the partnership, Tata Power spokesperson said, "We are delighted to partner with The Tigress Resort, Ranthambore to promote clean mobility at tourist sites. Nature and wildlife lovers can now use our EZ Charging points at the Resort and we look forward to them visiting the Ranthambore National Park in Electric Vehicles. This collaboration is one of many steps we are taking towards making sustainable mobility attainable across the nation." Tata Power has previously



also collaborated with amā Stay & Trails - an IHCL venture, to set up EV Charging points across its 11 destinations to promote green tourism across the country.

Commenting on the announcement, Surendra Dhabai, Vice President - The Tigress Resort, Ranthambore said, "We are delighted to partner with Tata Power EZ Charge to promote green mobility and encourage EV adoption among tourists. The Tigress Resort, Ranthambore concurs wholeheartedly with the national vision for sustainable mobility.

We are looking forward to creating a more elaborate EV infrastructure in our premises to further protect our green heritage and promote a sustainable co-existence between nature and nature lovers."

Tata Power is one of India's largest EV charging solutions providers, with over 3000 public and semi-public EV chargers in nearly 300 cities. The charging infrastructure is a mix of public charging, captive charging, home charging, workplace charging, and ultra-rapid chargers up to 240 kW for buses. Tata Power also has an expansive EV Charging network of over 450+ charging points across 350 national highways expanding across major national highways in the country. The points are available across all standards and are compatible with all-electric cars. Tata Power has also set up over 200 electric bus charging points installed across India.

Infosys Science Foundation Announces Winners of the 14th Infosys Prize

Six individuals awarded for noteworthy contributions to science and society

The Infosys Science Foundation (ISF) has announced the winners of the Infosys Prize 2022 in six categories – Engineering and Computer Science, Humanities, Life Sciences, Mathematical Sciences, Physical Sciences and Social Sciences. The Infosys Prize celebrates the achievements of the recipients and awards them for their contributions to science and research impacting India. The prize for each category comprises a gold medal, a citation, and a prize purse of USD 100,000 (or its equivalent in Rupees). The event was held at the Infosys Science Foundation's new office, in Bengaluru.

Panels of accomplished jurors comprising world-renowned scholars and experts shortlisted the winners of the Infosys Prize 2022 from 218 nominations. Over the past thirteen years, Infosys Science Foundation (ISF) has recognized the accomplishments of some of the best and creative scientific research that has contributed to every aspect of human life. In recognizing these outstanding researchers, ISF is not just celebrating their personal achievements but also encouraging young minds to explore science and research as a career option. The Infosys Prize counts among its laureates two Nobel Prize winners, two Fields Medal winners, a MacArthur fellow, and others who have gone on to hold high posts in government and academia.

Among those in attendance at the event were the trustees of the Infosys Science Foundation—Mr.

Kris Gopalakrishnan, Mr. Narayana Murthy, Mr. Srinath Batni, Mr. K. Dinesh, Mr. Mohandas Pai, Mr. Salil Parekh, and Mr. S. D. Shibulal.

Kris Gopalakrishnan, President, Infosys Science Foundation, said, “The Infosys Prize is promoting stellar research in India by identifying and rewarding individual scholars. Even as our laureates add to the sum total of human knowledge, their work has real impact in the here and now. We hope that their work will have far-reaching effects not just in solving our current problems but will set the stage for finding solutions for the existential crises facing humanity such as the effects of climate change, accessible diagnostics and healthcare, challenges of mental health, fulfilment of fundamental human rights, and others.”

Elaborating on the importance of funding science and research in India, Narayana Murthy, Founder – Infosys, Trustee – Infosys Science Foundation, said, “There is an urgent need for both government and private sectors to invest more in science and research. This is the best way forward to solve the many problems that confront us as a nation and humanity as a whole. Our researchers are the country's frontline warriors in the war against our grand problems. That is why we must encourage them. Winners of the Infosys Prize have gone on to do useful work in their desire to solve the daunting problems that face the nation and the world today.”

Winners of the Infosys Prize 2022 in the six categories are:

Engineering and Computer Science
The Infosys Prize 2022 in

Engineering and Computer Science is awarded to Suman Chakraborty, Professor of Mechanical Engineering, and Dean of Research and Development, Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur for his pioneering work in elucidating the interaction of fluid mechanics, interfacial phenomena, and electromechanics at the micro- and nanoscale. Using this understanding, he has helped to advance healthcare in resource-limited settings through the invention of novel low-cost medical devices for sensing, diagnostics and therapeutics.

Humanities

The Infosys Prize 2022 in Humanities is awarded to Sudhir Krishnaswamy, Vice Chancellor, National Law School of India University, Bengaluru for his insightful understanding of the Indian Constitution, especially his carefully argued account of the importance of the landmark ‘basic structure doctrine’ adopted by the Supreme Court in 1973 that guides and constrains various efforts to amend it, while also ensuring its stability in the face of executive and legislative outcomes in India's political life.

Life Sciences

The Infosys Prize 2022 in Life Sciences is awarded to Vidita Vaidya, Professor of Neurobiology, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Mumbai for her fundamental contributions to understanding brain mechanisms that underlie mood disorders such as anxiety and depression, including signals engaged by the neurotransmitter serotonin in causing persistent changes in behavior induced by early life stress and the role of serotonin in energy

regulation in brain cells. In a post-pandemic age when the focus on mental health has become ever more urgent and important, Prof. Vaidya's work is extremely contextual.

Mathematical Sciences

The Infosys Prize 2022 in Mathematical Sciences is awarded to Mahesh Kakde, Professor of Mathematics, Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru for his outstanding contributions to algebraic number theory. Prof. Kakde's deep work on the non-commutative Iwasawa main conjecture, his work on the Gross-Stark conjecture (with Samit Dasgupta and Kevin Ventullo), and his work on the Brumer-Stark conjecture (with Samit Dasgupta), resolves outstanding conjectures at the heart of modern number theory.

Often called the queen of mathematics, number theory studies the relationships between numbers and often has practical applications in areas such as cryptography.

Physical Sciences

The Infosys Prize 2022 in Physical Sciences is awarded to Nissim Kanekar, Professor, National Centre for Radio Astronomy, Pune for his study of galaxies in an era --the so-called "high noon" period -- in which stars were being formed at a maximum rate. Separately, his careful astronomical investigations have placed the strongest limit on possible secular variation of the fine structure constant and the electron-to-proton mass ratio. Prof. Kanekar's work has put India's radio astronomy capabilities on the world map.

Social Sciences

The Infosys Prize 2022 in Social Sciences is awarded to Rohini Pande, Henry J. Heinz II Professor of Economics and Director, Economic Growth Center, Yale University for her outstanding research on subjects of key importance, including governance and accountability, women's empowerment, the role of credit in the lives of the poor, and the environment. Her empirical findings, based on diverse methodologies, offer major promise and potential for policy design in emerging economies, including India. As discussions on the fallout from the climate crisis, social justice, and what makes for a just and equitable society become ever more urgent, Prof. Pande's work has tremendous implications.

DrinkPrime gives safe drinking water access to 750+ students in 6 institutions across Bengaluru

Less than 50% of India has access to safe drinking water. With #DonateWithDrinkPrime, a CSR initiative by DrinkPrime, the Bengaluru-based startup on a mission to make safe drinking water accessible to everyone, the company is providing 790+ people with clean and safe drinking water, out of which 754 are students. They have donated eight water purifiers and are associated with six institutions including five government schools and the YMC Kayaking Training Centre in Bengaluru.

"DrinkPrime was started to solve the problem of clean, safe and healthy drinking water access for everyone. While we are solving this for more than

1 lakh DrinkPrime users in urban areas, we realized that it's time for us to extend a hand to bring about a change in the lives of people in need of safe drinking water access. That's how we came up with the #DonateWithDrinkPrime initiative," said Vijender Reddy Muthyala, Co-founder and CEO of DrinkPrime.

Speaking about the impact of DrinkPrime's initiative, SG Kalpana, HM, Government Lower Primary School, Suggatta, said, "We used to pay Rs.5 per liter for drinking water! This along with transportation was a big hassle. Now the water is available immediately whenever we want and we are not worried about drinking

water at all! In fact, the students have increased their water intake due to the enhanced taste. Parents are delighted to see a water purifier installed in the school."

To take this mission a step further, DrinkPrime is also encouraging their customers as well as the public to download the mobile app and help the schools. This could be done by donating water or topping-up the donated water purifiers.

DrinkPrime has currently installed their customized water purifiers at Government Higher Primary School, Bettahalasur, Government Higher Primary School, Subhash Nagar, Government Higher Primary School, Bidaraguppe, Government Lower Primary School, Suggatta, Government School, Sonnappanahalli, and the YMC Kayaking Training Centre.



Girls' Trio from Port Blair & Delhi and Boy Wonders from Hyderabad & Bengaluru Declared Top 3 Winning Teams of Solve for Tomorrow

Teams Get a Total Grant of INR 1 Crore & 6-Month Incubation at IIT Delhi to Turn their Ideas into Reality

Samsung has announced the top three winners of the inaugural edition of Solve for Tomorrow in India, its national education and innovation competition that aims to support youth from around the country wanting to solve real life issues and transform people's lives with their innovative ideas.

Solve for Tomorrow is a CSR initiative by Samsung.

The top three winning teams – Sputnik Brain, Udaan, and Alpha Monitor – get a total grant of INR 1 crore and a 6-month incubation by the Foundation for Innovation & Technology Transfer (FITT), IIT Delhi, to strengthen their prototypes, and seek real-world consumer validation for their products and services.

Each of the winning teams received a certificate and a beautiful Solve for Tomorrow trophy that is inspired by the program logo and expresses boldness and aspiration. Each team member also received exciting Samsung products – a Samsung Galaxy Book2 Pro 360 laptop and Samsung Galaxy Buds2. The winning teams also got an 85-inch Samsung Flip interactive digital board each for their respective school or college.

Sputnik Brain's Shankar Srinivasan, a 22-year-old from Bengaluru, presented a wearable



device that helps reduce stress using safe brain modulation while the all-girl trio of Prisha Dubey, Anupriya Nayak and Vanalika Konwar of Udaan, 16-year-olds from Port Blair and Delhi, have developed eco-friendly, affordable and washable sanitary pads using shredded sugarcane bagasse. 16-year-old Hemesh Chadalavada of Alpha Monitor from Hyderabad, has developed a smart wristband to monitor Alzheimer's patients and alert their caregivers about changes in their behaviour.

The top three winning teams were selected at the Solve for Tomorrow Grand Finale event in New Delhi, where the Top Ten teams made their final pitches and showcased their prototypes to an esteemed Grand Jury. The jury comprised of entrepreneur and mentor Ankur Warikoo, Dr. Anil Wali, Managing Director of FITT, IIT Delhi, Dr. Archana Chugh, Professor at IIT Delhi and Dipesh Shah, Managing Director of Samsung R&D Institute - Bangalore.

At the gala evening – felicitation and awards ceremony – attended

by top executives and employees of Samsung, the Grand Jury, representatives from FIIT & IIT Delhi, mentors and families of the team members, each member of the top 10 teams were presented a certificate from Samsung and IIT Delhi and a hamper comprising Samsung Galaxy Book2 Pro 360 laptop and Samsung Galaxy Buds2.

In June this year, as part of its Solve for Tomorrow program, Samsung invited 16-22 year-olds in India to come up with innovative ideas in the areas of Education, Environment, Healthcare and Agriculture, the priority UN Sustainable Development Goals for India, with the aim of transforming the lives of people around them. The program offered to provide support to youth to turn their ideas into action. A record 18,000 plus registrations were received in the inaugural edition.

Presenting the trophy and the Grant cheque to the winners, Ken Kang, President & CEO, Samsung Southwest Asia, said, "Youth has

the power to innovate and solve the biggest challenges of the world. All the young Solvers are the future of India. They have the potential to change India and the world. We are proud of them and will work with them to turn their ideas into action and transform the lives of people.”

“In its first year, Samsung Solve for Tomorrow has managed to emerge as an enabler for the Indian

innovation ecosystem, creating an exciting community of young innovators. FITT and IIT Delhi are looking forward to incubating and mentoring the top three winners and help them take their ideas for societal impact,” said Prof. Rangan Banerjee, Director, IIT Delhi.

“We are overwhelmed by the response to the inaugural edition of Solve for Tomorrow. The Jury found

it extremely tough to choose the Top Three Winners as all the participants had brilliant ideas. We congratulate all the three winners and are delighted to support them in their future journey to unlock their full potential and strengthen our vision of Powering Digital India,” said Mr. Partha Ghosh, Head, Corporate Social Responsibility & Communications, Samsung Southwest Asia.

DreamFolks Services Limited adopts two schools as part of girl child empowerment initiative in Gurgaon

DreamFolks Services Limited, a dominant player and India's largest airport service aggregator platform facilitating an enhanced airport experience to passengers leveraging a technology-driven platform, has been working with two schools in Gurgaon, Haryana with the purpose to protect, safeguard, educate and empower the girl child.

Government School-Tigra village and Bagiya-a bridge school for underprivileged children in Gurgaon are being supported by DreamFolks under 'MISSION SAKSHAM', with the necessary repairs, installation of water coolers, new blackboards, and provision of text books, note books, bags, and stationery for the students. Liberatha Peter Kallat, Chairperson and Managing Director at DreamFolks Services Limited was accompanied by, the DreamFolks management team and employee volunteers for the distribution of study material to the schools on Friday, 14th October 2022.

Often, girls coming from low-income families are deprived of access to education due to their situation, and this initiative will give these girls an opportunity to pursue their dreams and hone their skills. DreamFolks aims to improve the livelihood of girls in the marginalized sections of society by protecting and safeguarding their interests, providing



them with quality education, skilling opportunities, a clean environment, and addressing any issues faced by them that are prevalent and need immediate attention. DreamFolks further strives to provide for the entire education of the kids in the future.

Speaking on the occasion, Liberatha Peter Kallat, Chairperson and Managing Director at DreamFolks Services Limited said, “I firmly believe by educating and empowering a girl child, we are facilitating the growth and development of an empowered woman, who has the potential to contribute immensely to the empowerment of our nation. These little girls have dreams which can transform

into bright visions given the right support, opportunities, and budding environment. I personally don't believe in any kind of gender bias, merit is all that matters. These girls need the right kind of backing and platform to showcase their merit and that is exactly what we at DreamFolks aim to do. Our objective is merely to contribute as a catalyst for their advancement.”

As a corporate, DreamFolks Services Limited is conscious of its role in society and is keen to contribute to social welfare measures. Their activities are focused on the following thrust areas namely, girl child - education, sports, health, and their overall empowerment.

SAGE Foundation signs MoU with Social Venture Partners India (SVP India) to scale their philanthropy operations across India and Asia



Under the MoU, 3 SVP partners will work with SAGE Foundation over 3 years to expand operations

SAGE Foundation, the CSR arm of The Shahani Group, has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Social Venture Partners India (SVP India), the Indian chapter of SVP International, a global philanthropic network, to scale up operations across the country as well as Asia. SAGE Foundation works with companies and NGOs to train underprivileged youth and make them employable for entry-level white-collar jobs, while SVP brings together donors, nonprofits and social enterprises to create a greater collective impact.

Discussing the partnership, Dr. Akhil Shahani, Managing Director, The Shahani Group, and Director, SAGE Foundation, said, "At SAGE Foundation, our focus has always been on nation-building through strengthening one of the most vulnerable sections of our population: the youth from low-income backgrounds. Due to a number of factors, they are deprived of access to quality education which, in turn, prevents them from being able to find secure and well-paying employment that can empower them to improve their lives as well as those of their families. We help them upskill in areas such as BFSI and Digital Marketing, and assist them in finding well-paying jobs that provide them with financial stability. We are thrilled to partner with SVP India - through this partnership, we hope to reach many more such youth across

India as well as Asia, and help them in improving their lives."

Commenting on the partnership, Gunjali Singh, CEO (Mumbai), SVP India, said, "We are immensely proud to collaborate with the SAGE Foundation and support them in their work that is enabling the livelihoods of a large number of Indian youth. The very essence of SVP lies in working in partnership to amplify impact, we can build a stronger ecosystem when we work together. In SAGE we perceive a shared vision. Their methodologies and programs designed to impart and enhance skills for sustainable growth are aligned with the social goals SVP espouses. We extend a very warm welcome to SAGE in joining the SVP fraternity and look forward to creating change that will define our collective future."

SAGE Foundation has been working with various partners since 2008, to provide skills training and job placements for India's under-resourced youth. Typically, due to their background, these youth only have access to low-paid blue-collar jobs, which are often short-term and uncertain as well. SAGE Foundation works to upskill these youth with the right training and knowledge to be able to secure entry-level, white-collar employment, which gives them the stability and security of a sustainable livelihood. Over the last few years, SAGE Foundation has trained thousands of low-income youth and has helped them secure corporate jobs at salaries ranging from INR 2.50 lakh to INR 5 lakh per annum.

SAGE Foundation uses an AI-driven ed-tech platform to help the

students develop key employability traits, such as English communication, sales skills, industry knowledge, professionalism, collaboration, and critical thinking and problem-solving, within 45 days. The organisation's employability model is highly capital-efficient, with the technology and admin costs being subsidised by its sister company, Smart Institute. The preponderance of the funds raised are utilised for implementing

skilling projects. Social Ventures Partners India, launched in 2012, is committed to improving communities, with a mission to cultivate effective philanthropists, strengthen nonprofits, and invest in collaborative solutions to tackle critical social challenges. The organisation helps interested entities in their philanthropic journeys by introducing them to the nonprofit and development ecosystem, giving them

opportunities for hands-on work with credible NGOs, and connecting them to other like-minded individuals in the city, country, and globally. SVP India has 7 chapters in the country, including Mumbai, Pune, Delhi NCR, Bengaluru, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, and Kolkata. Globally, SVP has over 40 affiliate organisations in 9 countries and is the largest network of engaged donors in the world with over 3,400 partners.

Star Health extends cover for child cancer survivors; proposes cover for their siblings

Star Health and Allied Insurance, in association with St. Jude's, marked the completion of one year of providing cover to children who were diagnosed and treated for cancer, under the St. Jude's programme called St. Jude's for Life. Through this programme, the insurer aims to add an additional 500 children this year. Star Health also announced that it will soon be offering insurance to the siblings of children who survived cancer. The new policy which is being designed, would provide health and accident cover to these children.

The unique initiative, initially founded in Memory of Rani Vicaji was launched on 4th November 2021, and covered 326 children from St. Jude's across India. The scheme included 270 children under Health cover and all 326 children under Accident cover. Star Health will continue to remain committed to the policies that were issued last year to over 300 Judians (children of the childcare centre who survived cancer). The initiative is an important milestone by Star Health and focuses on a much-overlooked gap in health insurance coverage. The Rotary Club

of Madras Temple City, was instrumental in facilitating this association and continues to work for the welfare of the children at St. Jude's.

"Today, marks one whole year of our association with St. Jude's, who are doing a wonderful job providing a positive and nurturing environment for children who are being treated for cancer. This insurance cover has provided these well-deserving children a health cover, enabling easier access to a normal life. We are extending our association this year by providing support to not just cancer-warriors but also their siblings so that parents and children can focus on their future. We are happy to be able to cover this often overlooked segment of society." said Dr S. Prakash, MD, Star Health and Allied Insurance Co. Ltd.

St. Jude's for Life ensures that the children who have won the battle against cancer - referred to as Judians - can fulfil their potential by offering them continued support. Providing them with health insurance and accident cover is one such vital step in that direction.

"At St. Jude's, we aim to ensure that timely and appropriate assistance is

available to all our alumni - proudly known as Judians - to empower them to complete their education, maintain good health, and lead successful lives. Providing them with health insurance and accident cover is a much-needed vital step in that direction. The paediatric cancer survivors are young and have a long life ahead of them. The health coverage enables them with a sense of security to lead a fulfilling life and work towards their goals and aspirations without any fear. We take great pride and happiness on a successful one year of the program," said Anil Nair, CEO, St. Jude's.

Commenting on the initiative, Dr. Rekha Shetty, Charter President of Rotary Club of Madras Temple City said, "It is a privilege to be associated with St. Jude's in Chennai and Vellore from day one. The insurance for children surviving cancer is unique and special even on a global level. The Rotary Club of Madras Temple City is proud to have facilitated this with Star Health and Allied Insurance Co. Ltd., through its Chairman & CEO Mr. V. Jagannathan and its Managing Director, Dr. S. Prakash."

Cummins Inc. and Tata Motors sign a Memorandum of Understanding to accelerate India's journey towards 'Net Zero' emissions

Cummins Inc., a global power solutions and hydrogen technologies provider, and Tata Motors, the largest commercial vehicle manufacturer in India, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to collaborate on the design and development of low and zero-emission propulsion technology solutions for commercial vehicles in India, including hydrogen-powered internal combustion engines, fuel cells, and battery electric vehicle systems.

The MoU was signed in the presence of N Chandrasekaran, Executive Chairman, Tata Sons, and Tom Linebarger, Executive Chairman, Cummins Inc. Senior officials and dignitaries from Cummins India and Tata Motors were also present during the MoU signing ceremony. On this occasion, N Chandrasekaran, Executive Chairman, Tata Sons and Chairman, Tata Motors said, "The shift to sustainable mobility is irreversible and Tata Motors is committed to be amongst the leaders of green mobility. We are taking definitive steps to drive this global megatrend forward in each of our businesses. Working with partners who share the same vision is essential for this transition and we are delighted to strengthen our long-standing relationship with Cummins for their next generation, hydrogen propulsion systems. We are excited to indigenize the cutting-edge hydrogen technology to offer our customers an expanded portfolio of green and future ready commercial vehicles, accelerate the



Cummins team at the MoU signing ceremony

adoption of sustainable mobility in the country, and to contribute towards India's 'net zero' carbon emission goals."

Commenting on the strategic collaboration, Mr. Tom Linebarger, Executive Chairman, Cummins Inc., said, "Climate change is the existential crisis of our time, and this collaboration between Cummins and Tata Motors accelerates our ability to address it. Cummins is well-positioned to help our customers successfully and seamlessly transition to economically viable decarbonized solutions.

Cummins and Tata Motors have a strong history of partnership, and the next step into low and zero-emissions technologies is an exciting development for zero-emissions transportation. Our collaboration in India is an important milestone

for Cummins and Tata as we work together to accelerate the shift to a carbon-free economy and a zero-emissions world. We strongly believe that this collaboration is a significant step forward to achieving India's Green Hydrogen Mission. I am excited to enable powering a cleaner and greener India."

In 1993, the two engineering companies came together to fulfill their goal of introducing best-in-class cleaner vehicle technology solutions to the Indian market - Tata Motors to deliver best-in-class mobility solutions in India and Cummins to power that vision through their products and services.

Driven by a shared ideology, common vision, and values of Integrity, Teamwork, and Excellence, this partnership has grown from strength to strength over the last

three decades. This MoU further solidifies their association and is aligned with India's vision of 'Energy for Sustainable Growth' and achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2070. India will be one of the first markets to receive Cummins' Hydrogen engines, an important technology to help drive decarbonization.

CUMMINS LOW AND ZERO EMISSION PRODUCTS

Cummins B6.7H hydrogen engine with up to 290 hp (216 kW) output and 1200 Nm peak torque is an all-new engine platform featuring cutting-edge technology to enhance power density, reduce friction losses and improve thermal efficiency. As a result, performance is transparent and compatible with the same transmissions, drivelines, and

cooling packages. The B6.7H hydrogen engine is being derived from Cummins fuel-agnostic platform offering the benefit of a common-base architecture and low-to-zero carbon fuel capability.

Cummins zero-emission product portfolio also includes its fourth-generation hydrogen fuel cell engine. Designed to meet the duty-cycle, performance and packaging requirements of medium and heavy-duty trucks and buses, the fuel cell technology is available in 135 kW single- and 270-kW dual modules. The systems have strong operating cycle efficiency and durability for a lower total cost of ownership. Cummins battery portfolio includes both Lithium Iron Phosphate (LFP) and Nickel Manganese Cobalt (NMC) battery packs, each of which targets a different duty cycle and use case.

Destination Zero™ is Cummins' strategy to go further and faster to reduce the greenhouse gas (GHG) and air quality impacts of its products and reach net-zero emissions by 2050. Cummins is pursuing a dual-path approach, meaning the company is reducing emissions from internal combustion engines while simultaneously investing in new, zero-emissions products. The company spends approximately \$1 billion annually on research and development of future technologies. Cummins' approach lowers emissions today; incorporates well-to-wheel emissions reductions by matching technology readiness with infrastructure readiness; drives wide-scale adoption due to affordability by using the right technology at the right time; and will achieve net-zero emissions by 2050.

Vedanta joins World Economic Forum's 1 Trillion Tree Movement

In a major step towards sustainability, Vedanta, a global diversified natural resources company, partnered with the World Economic Forum by joining 1t.org – the one Trillion Tree platform. As part of this movement, Vedanta pledges to grow 7 million trees for creating a resilient environment.

The company is one of the first in South East Asia to be a part of this noble initiative. Vedanta's pledge came in the run up to the COP 27 summit to be held at Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt.

Speaking on the initiative, Priya Agarwal Hebbar, Non-Executive Director, Vedanta said, "We are thrilled to join hands with the World Economic Forum for their 1 trillion trees movement. Our pledge of growing 7 million trees will be instrumental in fulfilling our ESG goals of combatting climate change and achieving net zero carbon emissions. It is a great platform to safeguard and restore the ecosystem and to further

our commitment towards building a sustainable future." Vedanta's Biodiversity policy and management standards ensure that they conserve and enhance the biodiversity while working to protect the natural ecosystem in their areas of operations. For this, the company has collaborated with various partners and indigenous people to develop integrated land use, habitat conservation, and restoration strategies and to implement the biodiversity mitigation hierarchy.

Sunil Duggal, Group CEO, Vedanta Limited shares, "Protecting our ecosystem is at the core of Vedanta's business ethos. The 1t.org pledge marks a significant step towards our vision of transforming the planet. Through reforestation, agroforestry, and mangrove restoration, we will be furthering our environmental conservation efforts. With our renewed focus on ESG, Vedanta has significantly moved up in the S&P Global Sustainability Rankings (erstwhile DJSI)

with a strong 14-point improvement in its sustainability score this year."

Sustainability has been part of Vedanta's core ethos and decision making with transformation for a sustainable future at the center of its business activities. This initiative is in line with the company philosophy as it is an emphasis on development for preserving and re-establishing the vital ecosystem services and biodiversity on which communities and economies depend on. Additionally, it would enable the firm in achieving its ESG goals and climate change mission.

World Economic Forum's 1 Trillion Tree (1t.org) movement aims to conserve, restore and grow one trillion trees worldwide. It seeks to repopulate the world's trees and combat climate change as a nature-based solution. The campaign is part of the WEF's efforts to accelerate nature-based solutions and was set up to support the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030.

HCL Foundation scales its ground-breaking programs to supercharge progress for communities and environment

HCL Foundation, the corporate social responsibility (CSR) arm of HCLTech, said that in FY 2022 it invested Rs 216 crore across its community programs. This represents an increase of 500% from FY 2017, underscoring HCLTech's deep commitment to supercharging progress for communities where it operates.

During FY 2022, HCL Foundation invested over Rs 91 Cr for urban development initiatives and Rs 83 Cr for rural development and sharpened its focus on environmental action with an increased outlay of Rs 42 Cr. The Foundation's programs span healthcare, sanitation, poverty eradication, education, skilling and livelihoods, environment, and disaster risk reduction, addressing all 17 social development goals outlined by the United Nations.

To date, HCL Foundation has invested over ₹900 Cr in its community programs, making it one of the largest corporate interventions in India. HCL Uday, one of the flagship programs of HCL Foundation, was recently recognized by the Government of India with the National CSR Award for its urban poverty alleviation impact.

C Vijayakumar, CEO & Managing Director, HCL Technologies said: "At HCLTech, we have been guided

by our purpose to deliver tangible and sustainable progress for all our stakeholders. In an era of social distancing, HCL Foundation and its partners worked tirelessly with communities to multiply our program reach by over 12 times since 2016. Our projects are aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals



L-R Jill Kouri, Chief Marketing Officer, HCLTech and Dr. Nidhi Pundhir, Vice-President and Director, HCL Foundation unveiling the Annual Report 2022 of HCL Foundation

and monitored with internationally benchmarked processes and structures. We remain committed to the long road ahead, supercharging progress as we spread our impact to more global locations."

HCL Foundation also released its Annual Report for FY 2022 under the theme 'Source Code in Action'. Inspired by technology, the theme showcases the Foundation's efforts to create high-impact programs that can be source codes for solving socio-economic and environmental problems at scale.

Since its inception, HCL Foundation has delivered measurable impact through its programs.

- Over 3.7 Mn lives were impacted, of which over 50% are women
- 200 NGO partnerships to take development to the last mile
- Over 665,000 hours of volunteering by HCLTech employees
- 36 Bn litres water harvested.
- 105 water bodies rejuvenated
- 66,000 acres of land greened under community governance
- 931,400 kg CO₂e sequestered/ emissions reduced from saplings planted and abating stubble burning
- 298,358 people reached through disaster relief
- Over 48,000 animals treated and protected
- HCL Sports Scholar Anika Jerlin brought glory to India with 3 gold medals in badminton at the World Deaflympics 2022

"In 2011, we had made a promise – to be the source codes of economic-social and environmental development and empower the country's most vulnerable citizens to lead happy, healthy, dignified lives. Eleven years later, our source codes light up lives across 22 states and 3 Union Territories of India. The results speak of the depth and strength of our programs. Co-created and co-implemented in convergence with NGO partners and Government, they fill me with optimism that it is possible to break the cycle of poverty, including environmental poverty, in one lifetime." added Dr. Nidhi Pundhir Vice President & Director, HCL Foundation

Mukul Madhav Foundation, CSR arm of Finolex Industries, presents an award-winning film, 'Baitullah' a thought-provoking short film on child labour

Reaffirms commitment to rescue, rehabilitate & reintegrate exploited children in mainstream life

Most of us have become blind to child labour around us. Baitullah is a short film that is sure to open your eyes. Picturised on a little boy named Baitullah working at a tea stall in the city, it poses the question to the viewer. "What does this child need to do, to become like you?" A question that is met with awkward silence in the film, but hopes to ignite a conversation amongst viewers and the more fortunate.

Just the fact that you can read this article, makes you more fortunate. Millions of children across the world, and especially in India, are exploited and denied their childhood every day. They are kept out of classrooms and pushed into earning a daily wage for their family or a tout. Due to poverty, lack of awareness or just plain neglect and apathy. Most are hidden away in sweatshops making shoes, jewellery and firecrackers. But some are in plain sight. 'Chottu' at your friendly neighbourhood tea stall or lunch place.

Directed, written and produced by Jitendra Rai (M/S Matheno Films), the main protagonist is played by child artist Om Kanojiya, supported by Ishtiyak Khan and Vipin Sharma. The film has been nominated and selected at 85+ international and



national film festivals and has already won 26 awards.

Speaking on the evolution of the film, the director, Jitendra Rai said, "As a film maker I look at the world around me with my eyes wide open. I couldn't ignore the child labour I saw around me. But I was also left with a sense of helplessness. As a filmmaker, I chose to capture this helplessness, the silent appeal these children have in their eyes when they look at people better-off than them."

Rai adds, "This helplessness turned into hope, when I saw the work that is being done by organisations like Mukul Madhav Foundation. I am also grateful for their support of this film."

Speaking on behalf of Mukul Madhav Foundation, Ritu Chhabria

Managing Trustee, said "This film asks a question which started us on our journey working with marginalised and vulnerable children. How could each child enjoy the things we take for granted in our lives? We set out to put things in place, one small block at a time."

Established in 1999, Mukul Madhav Foundation works

with communities across India, uplifting the less fortunate with hope and dignity. Their work with children, especially those vulnerable to exploitation, assault and trafficking, is slowly tilting the scale at the grassroots. Supporting children with initiatives in education, nutrition and mental health. Offering a helpline, counsellors, and legal aid for children. Rescuing and rehabilitating exploited children, and then reintegrating them back into the mainstream. But even more importantly, strengthening the community. Giving parents and youth access to healthcare, sanitation, skill development and employment. Giving each of them a sense of dignity. With the belief that for children to be safe, first their community should feel secure financially and emotionally.

ITC strengthens its 360-degree Water Stewardship interventions with focus on PPPs; adopts a Three-Fold Water Management Approach

ITC Limited, one of India's leading multi-business conglomerates, has forged as many as 50 Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) with the Government and other institutions as part of its integrated and holistic initiatives to achieve water security and rural empowerment across India. ITC's 360-degree water stewardship programme is in alignment with the Government's key water initiatives including 'Jal Shakti Abhiyan', 'Atal Bhujal Yojana' and 'More Crop Per Drop'. Driven by the Sustainability 2.0 goals articulated by Chairman, Mr Sanjiv Puri, ITC is scaling up its interventions in replenishing water resources and water usage efficiency. It has also embarked on a programme to achieve water positive status at river basin level with focus on 4 basins across the country. The Ghod river basin has already turned water positive last year.

The Company has also partnered the Government in creating large-scale awareness on the need for equitable water management by participating in the ongoing India Water Week 2022. In recognition of its efforts in ensuring water security for all stakeholders, ITC also received the 1st prize in the 'Best Industry for CSR Activities' category at the third National Water Awards by Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India in 2021-22.

Over 54% of India is water stressed. Agriculture which forms the lifeline of the Indian economy is vulnerable to the threat of climate change. Recognising the critical need to address this challenge, ITC has

taken a three-fold approach to drive water security for its stakeholders and contribute to achieving the national goal of securing a sustainable water future for India. The 3-pronged approach that cognises the varied climatic zones and rain patterns in the country involves 1) a large-scale community based integrated watershed development initiative covering catchment treatment, water harvesting structures development, and groundwater recharge spread over 13 lakh acres in 16 states with over 25,000 water harvesting structures built and another 1.33 lakh acres under biodiversity conservation, 2) a unique demand side water management programme that focuses on improving water use efficiency of agriculture with the demonstrated achievement of water savings in the range of 20-45% across select crops and a total savings potential of 496 million cubic metres during 2021-22 3) maximizing water efficiency across all its operations.

Owing to its 360-degree water stewardship initiatives, ITC has earned the distinction of being the only global company of comparable dimensions to be water positive for over two decades. ITC's Paperboards & Specialty Papers unit at Kovai is only the second facility in the world and the first in India to be awarded the Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS)'s Platinum level certification – the highest recognition for water stewardship in the world. Going forward, the Company aspires to create rainwater harvesting potential equivalent to over 5 times the net water consumption by 2030 as a

part of its S 2.0 targets. ITC is in the process of implementing the AWS Standards at its units in high water stress areas and will progressively obtain AWS certification for these sites in by 2035.

Providing equal focus on achieving water efficiency within the fence, all ITC units are mandated to implement action plans to work towards reducing net water consumption, maximising rainwater harvesting and achieving zero effluent discharge through technology upgradation, advanced processes, stringent audits and international benchmarking.

Commenting on the Company's integrated water stewardship programmes, S Sivakumar, Group Head, Sustainability, Agri and IT Business, ITC Ltd said "Inspired by our credo of "Nation First, Sab Saath Badhein", ITC is committed to partnering with the Government in its journey to secure a sustainable and equitable water future for all. Having implemented a 360-degree water stewardship initiative with the help of community participation for over two decades, we have now embarked on a bolder water mission under our Sustainability 2.0 agenda that envisages scaling up our interventions manifold and setting ambitious targets both inside and outside the fence, whilst supporting large-scale sustainable livelihoods. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Government for organising the India Water Week 2022, which will go a long way in creating larger awareness and engendering action on the critical need for water sustainability."

Ambuja Cements wins ESG India Leadership Awards 2022 for Water Efficiency

Ambuja Cements Limited, the cement and building materials arm of Adani Cement and part of the Adani Group, has won the ESG India Leadership Awards 2022 for its initiatives on Water Efficiency, curbing Greenhouse Gas Emissions and overall leadership in the Environment category.

Ambuja Cements is aligned to the Adani Group's commitment to increase its ESG footprint by realigning its businesses with emphasis on climate protection, circular economy, creating low carbon products, focus on clean energy and increasing community outreach through its CSR program based on the principles of sustainability, diversity and shared values. It is an essential step towards the future and our goal of Nation Building. The Company ensures that social and environmental considerations are embedded into its decision making, strengthening its competitive edge.

Ambuja Cements has a distinctive approach to sustainability, which enables it to measure the impact it is creating on society and the environment. This also helps it to calibrate its business operations and actions accordingly. The Company has developed 2030 carbon emission reduction targets that have been validated by Science Based Target Initiatives (SBTi), and it has partnered with the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP), India's SBTi Incubator Program to implement a decarbonisation roadmap.

Ambuja Cements is also the first cement company globally to be named to the CDP 2021 'A' list for water security. It is 8 times water positive and 2.5 times plastic negative through co-processing of plastic wastes at its kilns.

"We are delighted to be recognized at the ESG India Leadership Awards 2022 for our distinct approach to sustainability across our operations which has set industry benchmarks in creating sustainable solutions for society and the environment," said Ajay Kapur, CEO, Cement Business & Ambuja Cements. "We will continue to promote an ambitious low carbon economy model and water efficiency. Aligned to our Group's vision, we aspire to be the most sustainable cement and building materials company in the country."

Dalmia Cement Wins Prestigious CII CAP 2.0° Award for Pioneering Climate Action Initiatives in India

Reinforcing its nationwide commitment towards sustainability, Dalmia Cement (Bharat) Limited (DCBL), India's fourth largest cement manufacturer and a subsidiary of Dalmia Bharat Limited, has won the prestigious 'Oriented' honour at the 3rd edition of the Climate Action Programme (CAP 2.0°) Awards by India's reputed industry trade association, the Confederation of Indian Industry's (CII).

Bagging the award for the second time, DCBL has become the only organisation to receive the coveted prize that celebrates pioneers in Climate Action in the nation's cement sector. The CII-ITC Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Development, in association with DSM, initiated the CAP 2.0° in 2018 to help companies prepare scenario analysis, implement Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) recommendations, and calculate internal carbon pricing.

Commenting on the win, Dr. Arvind Bodhankar, Executive Director & CRO, DCBL said "At Dalmia Bharat, we are paving the way for a sustainable future by surpassing global benchmarks and introducing innovative climate action endeavours. All our efforts are aligned with our corporate vision of being a leader in building materials and evoking pride in all stakeholders through customer-centricity, innovation and sustainability. We take pride in receiving this accolade from CII and look forward to mitigating climate change through our consistently innovative sustainable practices."

Some of the key efforts solidifying Dalmia Bharat's sustainability drive include promoting and incorporating the philosophy of 'Waste to Prosperity' to move from a grey to green reality. The company has been engaging with waste generators, policymakers, civil society and its employees to maximize waste utilization in its cement plants. Nearly 18% of the heat provided in its cement kilns is attributable to Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) and industrial wastes including non-recyclable plastic, pharma, etc.

With a total installed capacity of 37 MnT, Dalmia Bharat is the first cement group committed to becoming carbon-negative by 2040. The organisation serves as a climate catalyst for the global cement industry with a carbon footprint of 467 kg CO₂/ton of cement (Q2, FY 23).

Astro Motors NAVYA becomes First 3 Wheeler Electric Vehicle to reach Umling La Pass - Highest Motorable Pass in the World



Astro NAVYA, an EV (Electric Vehicle) 3 wheeler, manufactured by an emerging Electric Vehicle company, Astro Motors, successfully set the record, of reaching the world's highest motorable road at Umling La Pass, located in Ladakh at 19,024 FT. By achieving this feat Astro Motors effectively demonstrated its capabilities of penetrating the EV market with its range of high performance 3 wheeler cargo vehicles. Astro NAVYA is designed to cater to various geographical needs within India, right from the cold and steep mountain lands of Ladakh to the extreme heat of Delhi and Gujarat to hilly and extremely high moisture areas of Maharashtra and to high

traffic zones of Bengaluru. Astro NAVYA is a 3-wheeler cargo vehicle powered by a 10.2kwh battery with a payload capacity of 630 kgs and a top speed of 50kmph.

Astro NAVYA was driven by India's first female B.E.S.T licensed driver Pratiksha Das, backed by a strong team from Astro Motors. Commenting on this achievement, Vitan Jagada, Founder, Astro Motors said, "We are extremely thrilled about achieving this milestone and are happy to present a product that has demonstrated its capability at the highest level. Even the high altitude of the Ladakh region with thinner air and temperatures sub zero at 1pm did not impact the

performance of the vehicle, so this is very encouraging as the drive was carried out with a full payload. We are the only company to have successfully mated a manual gearbox to an electric motor and synchronised the same to maximise the performance and made it available for the public. We are on a mission to create trust in Electric Vehicles for people to transition from ICE vehicles with complete peace of mind and this is the first step in our journey."

"Our first offering falls under the cargo 3 wheeler L5 segment and has been engineered to overcome the challenges being faced by end users and complete with ICE vehicles. Currently Electric vehicle sales comprise of 2% of all automobile sales up from less than 1% last year and the government has set a target to increase this to 30% by 2030 opening up a US\$206 Billion opportunity. As per the current data the adoption of 3 wheeler EV's have seen a YOY growth of 101.32% and with the help of the government backed



FAME Policy there is a lot of incentive for people to switch to electric as the entire infrastructure required to support the migration to EVs is coming online PAN India. At Astro Motors we are focused on catering to various segments of the market and also plan to expand our territorial reach globally”, said Kunal Chandra, Co-founder of Astro Motors.

Hardik Dhanak, Co-founder and industrial designer who played a key role in designing Astro NAVYA added, “We identified the challenges

that were being faced by the fleet operators who were deploying Electric 3 wheelers and worked towards bridging the gap by out of the box thinking and engineered the product to meet the clients need and expectation. A cargo vehicle is constantly on the move in different conditions like bad roads, uncertain weather etc. so keeping all factors in mind we achieved the final design and ran multiple tests for clients across the country. We tested Astro NAVYA on the toughest roads, under

harshest weather conditions and roughest driving patterns. So The final frontier of Conquering the highest motorable road in the world without any difficulties or breakdowns was a milestone achievement for us and now we are extremely confident about our upcoming designs for future product launches. We are working towards making these extreme drives possible for individual buyers as well by providing unique solutions for their unique requirements.”

Mahindra Group signs Memorandum of Understanding with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

The Mahindra Group signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to support women's economic empowerment in India.

Under this MoU, both organizations will work jointly to undertake research and analysis, implement programs, and measure outcomes, focused on advancing women's empowerment. Women's empowerment is at the core of bringing about gender equality, poverty eradication, and inclusive economic growth.

This two-year MOU marks a significant step towards achieving the Mahindra Group's Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) commitment of impacting 1 million women annually from 2026.

The Mahindra Group, a global leader in ESG, envisions this partnership to act as a catalyst to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goal (5) on gender equality in India.

The MoU was signed by Dr. Anish Shah, Managing Director



& CEO, Mahindra Group and Mr. Hari Menon, Director, India Country Office, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The partnership will work in the area of gender equality, focused on programs enabling women's economic empowerment targeted towards underprivileged women. The scope will entail both organizations collaborating on joint programs and with key stakeholders such as the government, institutions, NGOs, corporates, etc.

Sharing his views, Dr. Anish Shah, Managing Director & CEO, Mahindra Group said, “We are delighted that

we have found a like-minded partner in the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to further our joint vision to empower 1 million women annually. This partnership is core to our Rise philosophy of driving positive change in the lives of our communities. Together, we will create a collaborative platform that will provide holistic solutions to underprivileged women across the country leveraging the power of technology, enabling us to Rise for a more equal world”.

Mr. Hari Menon, Director, India Country Office, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation said, “We are glad to partner with the Mahindra Group to advance our shared objective of accelerating progress towards India's national vision for gender equality and women's economic empowerment. It is exciting to see the ambitious goals of this partnership towards increasing women's workforce participation and building greater empowerment, in the economy and in society.”

Born To Shine announces its 30 prodigy winners!

Born To Shine aims to nurture 30 girl child prodigies & empower them to pursue their talent in the field of art and culture

Born to Shine – ZEE’s flagship CSR initiative in partnership with GiveIndia, today felicitated top 30 girl child prodigies at an event hosted in Mumbai. It was an evening of celebrating Indian art forms and stories of talented girl child prodigies who will receive support to hone their talent through the scholarship and mentorship program. The Sarod icons, Amaan Ali Bangash and Ayaan Ali Bangash; ace violinist Dr. Sangeeta Shankar and her daughters, Ragini and Nandini; and the renowned dancer Guru Shubhada Varadkar performed at the event to encourage the winners.

Punit Goenka, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, Zee Entertainment Enterprises Limited, Zarina Screwvala, Managing Trustee & Director, Swades Foundation; Dr. Bindu Subramaniam, Co-Founder & CEO, Subramaniam Academy of Performing Arts; Samara Mahindra, Founder & CEO, CARER; and Rupak Mehta, Founder, Brahmnaad Cultural Society graced the jury panel and were spellbound by the impeccable talent showcased throughout the evening. The prodigies were individually felicitated by the jury members.

Launched in May 2022, the scholarship program’s mission is to nurture girl child prodigies and empower them to pursue their talents in the field of art and culture. The program, open for girl child



Zee's flagship CSR initiative- Born To Shine felicitates 30 girl child prodigies

prodigies between the age of 5 to 15, received more than 5,000 eligible applications across the country and the shortlisted candidates were auditioned across 8 cities.

Speaking at the inaugural event, Punit Goenka, MD and CEO, Zee Entertainment Enterprises Limited said, “For us to truly succeed as a Nation, we must nurture girls and their unique abilities, for they are the pride and future of our country! At ZEE, we are humbled to have played a small part in inspiring this change, not only by breaking stereotypes through our content on screen, but even through various social initiatives that champion the cause of women and girls at a grassroots level. ‘Born to Shine’ is yet another effort from our end to enrich the lives of girl children, by being the wind beneath their wings and serving as a springboard to their success. I truly hope that this initiative helps the 30 selected girl child prodigies pursue their passion and achieve immense

success; and as a result, give the rich arts and culture across our country, a new lease of life.”

The evening was dedicated to celebrating the beauty and the different hues of Indian art and culture. Speaking on the occasion, an overwhelmed Dr. Bindu Subramaniam said, “I think talent is prevalent everywhere, and what children need are opportunities. I think Born to Shine is a great way to find and mentor talent from underserved communities, which is something that I and SaPa have always felt is important. I’m grateful to be able to contribute to this project and can’t wait to meet the talent that is out there.”

Samara Mahindra was all praises for the parents who dedicate their lives to mentor and mould their child’s talents into a sustainable and refined form. “Indian culture is one of the oldest in the world and can be traced back to pre-historic settlements as early as the

3rd millennium. Programs like these which encourage the youth are imperative to give the fine arts system the importance it deserves. Additionally, it's essential to help stay connected with our roots and take pride in doing so."

Zarina Screwala expressed, "I would like to congratulate ZEEL and GiveIndia for this one-of-a-kind scholarship program that aims at empowering young girls to pursue art and culture. Art is not objective,

with a set algorithm to deliver the end product. It encompasses a lot of intangibles like imagination, empathy, perseverance, and patience. I hope that with endeavours like Born To Shine, our society starts accepting artforms as a career option soon!

Rupak Mehta added, "In today's dynamic world, ideas like BORN TO SHINE are the need of the hour because these young talented minds need a professional setup and mentoring to sustain their art

in the longer run. This scholarship and the mentorship program are like a blessing!

Talents have been revered and celebrated for eons in our culturally rich nation. But, not many have come forward to champion a cause for girls, especially for the ones who show immense promise at an early age. ZEE's flagship CSR program - Born To Shine is indeed a harbinger of hope for the aspirants of our society.

Shriram Transport Finance Company Safeguards 93,000 Truckers through Medical Care

One of the largest asset financing companies in India Shriram Transport Finance Company Limited (STFC) a part of the Shriram Group, has provided medical care to 93,000 members of the trucker community between April-September 2022 under its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program Mobile Medical Unit (MMU).

MMU has been started for the truck community and has served around 9.85 lakh beneficiaries with 85% from the truckers community to date since its inception in 2017. The program is driven by the National Health Mission's (NHM) vision of ensuring that all people in the country have access to quality and affordable health care and the need for Shriram to take care of those underserved in their ecosystem.

From April to September 2022, within the span of the first 6 months

- **Provided Medical care to 93,000 members of Trucker Community in 1HFY23**
- **Provided medical care to 9.85 lakhs beneficiaries through Medical Mobile Unit till date**
- **Free primary healthcare services to the trucker community since 2017**
- **14 Medical Mobile Units and 1 clinic setup since inception across 11 states**

of the year over 2000 camps have been conducted and 93,000 truckers have benefited from this initiative. Treating over 500 truckers on an average daily through 14 MMU's and 1 clinic. The medical camps have been conducted in the outskirts of 14 cities namely, Bengaluru, Bhubaneswar, Chennai, Guwahati, Hooghly, Jaipur, Kolkata, Mumbai, Nagpur, Patna, Ranchi, Silchar, Vapi and Visakhapatnam.

The truckers' community is largely cut off from the mainstream healthcare ecosystems due to its movable nature. Shriram Transport Finance's MMUs & Clinic provides free health checks, laboratory tests, and medicines to them. Most of the work in healthcare has been in the area of HIV, however, STFC provides basic, crucial and essential medical facilities for the transportation community which is inaccessible due to the mobile nature of the transport industry. The MMUs offer

free primary healthcare services, including free screening, diagnosis, treatment, and referral for non-communicable, communicable diseases, and minor ailments.

Awareness, education, and counselling programs are also carried out during these camps. Speaking of the medical care programme, Mr Umesh Revankar, VC & MD, Shriram Transport Finance said, "At STFC we believe in empowering the trucker community and the medical camps will help truckers to be more mindful of their health requirements and avail medical needs while on the go. The trucker community is the lifeline of the entire infrastructure and logistics ecosystem but in the rush to move/transport goods from one place to the other, their health suffers and with that, the future of their family also gets affected. We often talk about progress in economic activity without addressing the many challenges that the trucking community faces which is why we wanted to address some of their needs through the medical camps. We are committed to the upliftment of the trucker community".

Facebook announces 2022 Community Accelerator participants in India

Facebook announced the participants of this year's Community Accelerator Program from India. The 2022 Community Accelerator program is a four-month-long program that will provide selected community leaders of Facebook groups with training, mentorship and funding for an initiative that extends their community's impact. This year,

we received more than 4,800 applications from around the world. Selected communities from India include: UNIMO Universe of Moms, Genshin Impact Asia, Indian Birds, Balcony Gardening Tips, Telugu Moms Network, The Order of Pen, Office Memes

For Working Teens - OMFWT, WeWomen, Nishamadhulika Recipe Group (Official), Parent Tribe by SuperBottoms, Battlegrounds Mobile India, Depression and Anxiety support, Dog Lover, Delhi Foodiez and Backpackers & Travelers India (BATI).

Building community is at the heart of our mission, and supporting the leaders who foster community is an important part of that. That's why we continue to invest in and support the community leaders who offer encouragement, bring people together and drive change.

Selected community leaders will receive a grant of up to \$40,000.00 (USD) per community through our implementation partner T-hub in India. Community leaders will learn from experts through a customized curriculum and personalized

coaching, so they can organize and strengthen their communities. They will also have access to knowledge-sharing sessions with fellow top community leaders, and have the opportunity to network with key players in the industry. Lessons will include community identity foundations, leading action-oriented communities and sustainability to create the best digital communities.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Four month-long program will provide selected community leaders with training, mentorship and funding
- This year, we look forward to awarding upto \$40,000.00 (USD) per community through our implementation partner T-hub in India.

The program will help community leaders learn how to create an engaging community using various content formats. A key experience this year will be for participants to identify an initiative that will help deepen their community's impact by mobilizing

members around a goal and creating a development plan around it to be executed in 2023. These community leaders will also get an opportunity to collaborate with advocates and other leaders in the community-building ecosystem to bring their ideas to life.

The Community Accelerator selection committee looked for communities that would benefit most from our unique programming and have the capacity to engage fully in the program. The selection was based on multiple parameters including purpose, leadership experience, sustainability and commitment. Participants represent a diverse array of communities and address a range of global challenges, including those related to entertainment, travel, food, gardening, parenting, empowerment and more.

Infosys Foundation and Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan to promote Indian visual and performing arts

Infosys Foundation, the philanthropic and CSR arm of Infosys, announced that it has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (BVB) for the promotion of Indian visual and performing arts across India.

Through this engagement, Infosys Foundation and BVB will provide a platform to over 4,500 beneficiaries, including 3,000 artists from underprivileged communities towards preservation of traditional folk and classical art forms.

This collaboration focuses on keeping the visual and performing art forms of India alive by means of various activities such as weeklong festivals, camps, exhibitions, and publications, over a period of three years. The collaboration will give artists from across India a platform to portray their talents and take pride in their identities, thereby strengthening and unifying the artist community in the country.

Festivals are being held in Mysuru, New Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Thiruvananthapuram, Indore, and Chandigarh.

Krish Shankar, Trustee, Infosys Foundation, said, "Promoting art and culture has always been a focus area for us at Infosys Foundation. We believe that they make up the fabric of a nation's identity even in these fast-moving times. We are pleased to team up with Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan to encourage artists from various backgrounds to come to the forefront and display their talents, thus safeguarding various art forms from being forgotten over time."

Bayer, Rabo Partnerships and Mastercard join hands to accelerate the financial digitization of farmers

To economically empower smallholder farmers in rural India, Bayer, Rabo Partnerships and Mastercard have entered into a partnership to launch a scalable program to advance the digitization of the country's agricultural finance ecosystem. This collaboration brings together the decades of expertise of the three companies in digital & Agri finance and payments technology to bear upon the task of expanding access to agronomic knowledge, products, services, and partnerships. Over five years, the program aims to benefit 10 million smallholder farmers in India by enabling them to gain easier access to formal financial services.

Help farmers get the best value for their produce

Smallholder farmers account for 86% of India's agrarian economy but have difficulty sourcing quality farm products and are often at the mercy of middlemen when it comes to pricing. Mastercard's Farm Pass is a digital ecosystem platform that works offline, even with feature phones, connecting buyers, Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) and other agriculture ecosystem players with farmers digitally, and helping them get the best value for their produce. The solution, which serves over 600,000 farmers in India and two million globally, creates a standard interface for farmers and buyers that facilitates greater efficiency in the agriculture value chain. Banks often find it difficult to serve the rural ecosystem effectively as most farmers don't have a formal credit history thereby limiting access to any formal financial services beyond Kisan Credit Card and equipment finance. To further provide financing access

to farmers and FPOs, this partnership will continue to look at collaborations with local banks and financial institutions in India to create greater value for smallholder farmers and the entire Agri ecosystem. This will be enabled through data-driven scoring tools deployed with partner financial institutions along with credit analytics supported by Rabo Partnerships, which will give banks more comfort in serving smallholder farmers with a complete portfolio of financial services, including credit.

A unique cooperation

The program is part of Bayer's commitment to reach 100 million smallholder farmers worldwide by 2030 with much-needed inputs, digital tools and financial services. Bayer's FarmRise provides various digital advisory services to smallholders today and through Mastercard's Farm Pass digital platform, farmers will gain access to new marketplaces and a much wider pool of potential buyers, enabling them to improve their livelihoods in a commercially sustainable way. Rabo Partnerships will enable access to financial services over the platform by the Indian financial sector, by enabling data-driven credit scoring, credit analytics and product development within the partner financial institutions.

D Narain, President, Bayer South Asia and Global Head of Smallholder Farming said, "Bayer has been working with farmers to increase their income and productivity by enabling access to best-in-class products, the latest technology, and low-cost finance. Its initiatives like Better Life Farming, food value chain partnerships, etc. are already transforming the lives of millions of farmers in

India. We are delighted to now join hands with Rabo Partnerships and Mastercard to build a digital ecosystem, that will further help smallholders in India. Through this partnership, smallholder farmers will not only gain easier access to agricultural advisory services and direct market linkages, but also build their credit profiles and lower their input costs through access to institutional credit, allowing them to increase efficiency, improve crop yields, and grow their profits significantly."

Nikhil Sahni, Division President, South Asia, Mastercard said, "As part of Mastercard's pledge to connect one billion people to the digital economy, the company has been actively working with farmers in several countries to bring them onto a digital platform that directly connects them with buyers, empowering them to negotiate the best price for their produce. This is in line with the Indian government's efforts towards inclusive growth by leveraging technology. The collaboration with Bayer and Rabo Partnerships is helping build a very effective model of agricultural digitization that can serve as a global example." David Gerbrands, Global Head Advisory & Inclusive Ventures, Rabo Partnerships said: "Rabo Partnerships aims to contribute to the improvement of farmer livelihoods worldwide. Achieving this requires sustainable partnerships, which is why Rabo Partnerships is excited to partner with Bayer and Mastercard to establish a scalable digital ecosystem, enabling farmers and as well as other agricultural value chain partners with a wide array of services, including agro advisory, inputs procurement, marketing, and access to formal financial services."

CSR INDIA UNITED

Habitat for Humanity India partners with Rockwell Automation to provide home-based solar energy solutions to 355 marginalized families pan-India

The collaborative project benefits families in Delhi, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Manipur, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal.



Leading housing non-profit organization Habitat for Humanity India has partnered

with Rockwell Automation to provide sustainable and renewable energy solutions through solar home

lighting systems to 355 marginalised families in Bengaluru (Karnataka), Chennai (Tamil Nadu), Delhi, Pune (Maharashtra), Kangpokpi, Churachandpur and Tamenglong (Manipur) and Paschim Bardhaman (West Bengal). The NGO plans to implement solar energy solutions in every housing project it builds in the future.

After carrying out an in-depth need assessment and baseline survey, Habitat India identified 50 families each in Bengaluru, Chennai and Delhi; 40 families in Pune; 100 families in Manipur and 65 families in West Bengal. The families consist of daily wage earners, widows, people living with a physical disability, people belonging to the Irula tribe, Santhal tribe, Rongmei tribes and other low income or marginalised communities. Each solar home lighting system kit includes a charging point, a pedestal fan, solar battery, charge controller and LED lights.

Commenting on the initiative, Dr. Rajan Samuel, Managing Director, Habitat for Humanity India said, “Habitat for Humanity India believes in putting people at the centre of its work and builds healthy housing ecosystems which support decent homes with better sanitation, access to water as well as other household and community level infrastructure that is required to make a home adequate. Having access to solar energy will improve the living conditions of these 355 families. The family members can carry out their household activities beyond the daytime and the children can study at night too. We thank Rockwell Automation for partnering with us.”

In addition to the distribution of solar power appliances, the families were also given an orientation and demonstration towards usage and maintenance by Habitat for Humanity India with support from its on-ground partner Selco Foundation.

Union Jal Shakti Minister hails Meghalaya as the torchbearer state in providing tap water connections under JJM

Union Minister of Jal Shakti Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, has hailed Meghalaya as the torchbearer state in providing tap water connections under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM). During his visit to the state, minister praised the state for producing outstanding results in JJM implementation and substantially increasing the number of households with tap water connections in the state.

At the initiation of the JJM in August 2019, only 4,550 rural households in Meghalaya had tapped water connectivity. Today tap connections have been established in as many as 2.61 lakhs households.

“With 41.5% growth in tap connectivity, Meghalaya surpassed the national growth rate of 36% making it a role model state in JJM implementation”. “I have firm belief that Meghalaya will be able to provide tap water connections to the remaining households way before the deadline”; declared Shekhawat.

According to Shekhawat what makes the achievement of Meghalaya Government truly commendable is the fact that at the time of implementation of the JJM scheme, the State had less than 1 per cent coverage of tap water connected rural households. This according to the Minister clearly displays the quantum progress the state is making in ensuring safe and clean drinking water for its people under JJM.

“Meghalaya is the only state in India to qualify for ‘Performance Incentive Grant under JJM’ for 2 years in succession.” According to Shri Shekhawat, Meghalaya is also probably the only state with a holistic water policy and announced



Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat lauds Meghalaya for Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) implementation and remarkable growth in tapped water connectivity

From only 4,550 rural households in 2019, tapped water connectivity in Meghalaya has increased to a whopping 2.61 lakhs households in 2022

With 41.5% growth in tap connectivity, Meghalaya surpassed the national growth rate of 36%

that around Rs. 700 crores would be spent in the state under the watershed management in the process of which around 2500 ponds would be constructed.

The Minister also lauded the efforts of the Meghalaya government for the ambitious projects that it has undertaken for spring rejuvenation and watershed management. The achievements of Meghalaya in these sectors would become an example for other states to follow, he added.

Commenting on Shekhawat's observations, Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma observed “The government of Meghalaya is striving hard to provide tap water access to every citizen. We thank Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat for his unstinting support to our state in JJM implementation. His kind words of encouragement and appreciation of our efforts will motivate us to work even harder and bring the benefits of 'Jal Jeevan' mission to every Meghalayan household. Our state's JJM team will leave no stone unturned for Meghalaya to receive the JJM performance incentive for a record third year in succession. We will pursue our mission of achieving 100 % functional household tap connection with renewed vigor.

Tata Communications aims to empower 5 million women by 2024

Tata Communications, a global digital ecosystem enabler, today launches Phase 2 of its 'School of Hope and Empowerment' (S.H.E) project intended to provide entrepreneurship education and professional guidance to 5 million women by 2024 across the states of Bihar and Odisha in India. Phase 1 of the project has motivated women to complete the education series and be empowered with knowledge and skills to set up and manage a business independently, ensuring access to quality education for all.

"The Phase 1 of School of Hope and Empowerment project has advanced the well-being of women in Jharkhand and empowered them to play a pivotal role in advancing their family and the larger community," said Aadesh Goyal, Chief Human Resources Officer, Tata Communications. "In Phase 2, we are now scaling up this project by 10X to help women in the States of Bihar and Odisha in India. Through this project, we are extending access to self-empowering learning modules, local support ecosystem and micro communities to bridge the rural and gender

development gap." Phase 1 of the project, launched at the 2021 UNESCO World Conference has surpassed its target and brought entrepreneurship education to over 1 million women in the state of Jharkhand in just 1 year well before the committed 3 years.

The empowered women of this project are an embodiment of courage and confidence, overcoming structural barriers including gender stereotypes, household responsibilities, financial constraints, social pressures. A multi-media, multi-stakeholder impact communications initiative, this project is designed in collaboration between Tata Communications and The Better India to support and educate women from rural parts of India. As reported in the Tata Communications Sustainable Development Report 2022, sustainability is built on the premise that positive economic results are possible when we effectively manage our environmental, social and governance (ESG) activities and is aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDG) in policy and practice. The School of Hope and Empowerment

Project aligns with the UN SDG number 5 (Gender Equality) and number 8 (Economic Growth). It is empowering youth and rural communities (especially women) economically and socially through vocational, entrepreneurship and life skills training which enhance access to resources, new technology and financial services, thereby supporting them in becoming active contributors to the economy.

To celebrate and recognise the success of phase 1 of this project, both partners have unveiled an education video series featuring real-life women entrepreneurs with their stories. One such story is that of Kalawati Kumari, a resident of village Kurumdegi in Simdega district of Jharkhand. A beneficiary of the project, she won a business grant to set up a flour mill which today she manages with her own funds. She also creates and fosters relationships with her customers and operates the flour mill. "The workshop trained on subjects like book-keeping of accounts, managing customer relations, shop environment, the importance of saving," said Kalawati.

Unacademy Signs an MoU with Department of Education, Govt of Rajasthan, to enhance accessibility to quality education

India, 21 November, 2022: Unacademy, India's largest learning platform*, today announced the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Rajasthan Council of School Education, Department of Education, Government of Rajasthan to enable Government students to prepare for various competitive exams. Unacademy will offer 1500 Learners subscription based scholarships to help them achieve their goals.

Unacademy will identify 1000 children of Government schools in Rajasthan through a series of aptitude tests for an Unacademy scholarship to help them prepare for

competitive exams. Students from class 9th till graduation can apply for the test.

As an extension of Unacademy's mega national program 'Shikshodaya' - Unacademy shall also extend scholarships to up to 500 top ranking girl students.

Unacademy will also organize Unacademy Connect sessions to help scholarship students with career related queries through structured guidance sessions on upskilling and emerging career opportunities.

Courses for which scholarships are being offered are: NEET-UG, IIT-JEE, NDA, UPSC, SSC and NTSE Foundation.

Medyseva's Flagship Initiative “Har Ghar Swasth” Spreads Awareness on menstrual hygiene amongst rural women this 'Daan Utsav'

Medyseva, a Madhya Pradesh based telemedicine health care startup recently conducted 'Daan Utsav' in several parts of the country to create awareness on the present state of menstrual hygiene management in rural areas, and what measures and initiatives can help fill the implementation gaps under its flagship campaign "Har Ghar Swasth". Despite the multiple signs of progress, the harsh truth is that only about 30% of women have access to sanitary napkins in India.

This means that the majority of women in the county are still struggling for the very basic needs, and are fighting the societal taboos.

Dr. Vishesh Kasliwal, Founder & CEO, Medyseva shared, "Lack of menstrual hygiene is connected with negative effects such as infections of the reproductive and urinary tract, which may lead to future infertility and birth complications. Proper knowledge about menstrual hygiene and its application can improve adolescent girls' reproductive health to a great extent. Many women in rural areas cannot afford the expense of sanitary napkins. We at Medyseva strongly believe in creating a year-long advocacy for creating awareness with free consultation on menstrual hygiene by team of gynecologists, distribution of free Sanitary napkins and fighting societal taboo."

The initiative under the flagship campaign 'Har Ghar Swasth' was flagged off this year during Joy of Giving week across 6 Medyseva Kendras in Madhya Pradesh, Gonda



Team Medyseva with school students



Medyseva spreading awareness on menstrual hygiene



Medyseva distributing Sanitary Napkins

(UP), Ahmednagar (Maharashtra) and Odisha in the month of October". The health-tech start-up focuses on telemedicine in rural India offering Consultation and services like Pathology, Radiology, Hospitalization, Ambulance and Home Care Services. Thus, covering the entire spectrum of services from having virtual consultations to getting surgeries, from booking diagnostic tests to digitizing medical records.

The pandemic showcased the large gap in India's healthcare services, especially in rural and remote villages of India. Medyseva thus aims to ensure that every rural citizen of India has access to high quality doctors and medical services at their convenience and at affordable prices and working towards empowering existing healthcare offerings in tier 2 and tier 3 regions with a sustainable regional outreach.

Sabre partners with The/Nudge Institute and TAP to develop social and emotional skills among underprivileged children

‘Giving Back Together is Transformational’ – Sabre successfully did it with The/Nudge Institute and The Apprentice Project (TAP)

Sabre Corporation, a leading travel technology provider, today announced a collaboration with The/Nudge Institute—formerly The/Nudge Foundation, an action institute that works with governments, markets, and civil society to build resilient livelihoods for all—and The Apprentice Project (TAP), a non-profit organization dedicated to empowering underprivileged children. This partnership aims to provide skill development programs among children of low-income daily wage earners, specifically in areas like social and emotional skills, 21st-century skills, and various other skill development areas.

Sabre, being a travel technology expert, is ensuring that TAP builds a technically scalable and performance system. Using Natural Language Processing (NLP), Sabre is helping train TAP WhatsApp bot ‘TAP Buddy’ which supports the response to millions of queries from children. Currently, the NLP feature acts as a help desk and is used by 7000+ children, and the bot has already answered 100’s of queries through its unique answering mechanism in the last two months. They are now ready to impact thousands of children at scale.

TAP Buddy, powered by NLP and AI, along with gamified behavioral

nudges, makes the learning personalized, yet the model is highly scalable for 100 million children. Sabre mentors are additionally supporting the effort through direct interactions during planning and implementation. In 2021-22, TAP worked with 3500 children and the primary challenge was answering the queries posted by children on the WhatsApp bot. They also looked into the bot’s function and scalability, when the numbers of users would be in millions. TAP is currently working with around 10,000 children and intends to scale up to one lakh in the coming years. Nearly 250 million kids from low-income communities in India lack the socio-emotional learning (SEL) skills, opportunities, and exposure to thrive in the 21st century. TAP is one such initiative whose vision is to empower all children to become leaders of today and tomorrow. TAP is working towards building SEL skills and knowledge among these children through self-learning videos delivered via WhatsApp chatbot, TAP BUDDY. The self-learning videos include Arts, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math), Digital, and Financial Literacy, thereby inculcating essential skills such as creativity, problem-solving, communication, and financial literacy.

"We are deeply committed to building socio-emotional skills in kids of the age groups of 10 to 14 years daily wage earners who have a monthly income of about Rs.12,000. I am particularly heartened by the support we have received from Sabre for this program. Sabre Mentors provided feedback and suggestions during the regular

and off-cycle, which helped build constant communication between Sabre and TAP teams at each step of the Sabre/Nudge program. Every empowered child is a step in the right direction for us," said Anand Gopakumar, Co-founder and CEO, The Apprentice Project.

Speaking on the partnership, Sriram Gopalswamy, Vice President, Site Reliability Engineering, Sabre Global Capability Center, Bengaluru, said, "At Sabre, we always strive to improve how we interact with the community. We are dedicated to giving back to society as part of our Corporate Social Responsibility goals and focus on community initiatives that promote education and capacity building for future generations. We are privileged to be a part of this initiative by working towards building on one of the biggest problems faced by Indian students today, from low-income communities that lack opportunities to succeed in this fast-paced environment. The partnership with The/Nudge and TAP helped us to work on creating livelihood opportunities at scale."

"Sabre is a strong partner for The/Nudge’s Incubator program, working closely to achieve our shared vision of supporting exceptional non-profit entrepreneurs with the potential to solve India’s critical developmental challenges at scale. The Sabre team’s deep involvement, including providing the entrepreneur with mentoring support and additional funding has helped the start-up achieve great momentum for their work," said Subhashree Dutta, Managing Partner, Social Entrepreneurship, The/Nudge Institute. 🟩

Godrej Group launches the New-age ABCD on Children's Day aiming to shape the minds of the future generation of India - #NewAgeABC

On the occasion of Children's Day, India's oldest conglomerate introduces a new version of ABC song that's contemporary, inspiring and more educational. The Godrej Group's Good & Green mascot, Maahi, attributes new meanings to each alphabet. Sung in the same tune as the traditional ABC, it makes the learning process easy and catchy. The song can help our little ones to grow and live better, thereby promoting a society and nation that thrives better.

The new-age ABC song was released on the Group's social media pages.

A for Air	B for Balance	C for Clean
D for Diverse	E for Equality	F for Family
G for Green	H for Healthy	I for India
J for Joy	K for Kindness	L for Learn
M for Mosquito-free	N for Nutrition	O for Optimistic
P for Pray	Q for Questions	R for Respect
S for Safety	T for Thank You	U for Unity
V for Victory	W for Wellbeing	X for Xercise
Y for Yummy	Z for Zero Carbon	

Children are the future of our nation and this generation is more technologically advanced being used to operating cell phones and catching up faster with learnings and values. Despite our progress, we have become less sensitive to how our habits and behaviour impact our society, our nation, and our planet. The song aspires to help us raise our children to be genuine, well-aware and streetwise individuals who learned facts and values this early in their lives.

For example, here's how the song helps solve the problems we face today by inculcating good values.

1. Good planet-loving values: A for Air, G for Green, Z for Zero Carbon
2. Good Social Values: D for Diverse, E for Equality, K for Kindness, R for Respect, U for Unity.
3. Good Living Habits: B for Balance, C for Clean, M for Mosquito-free, P for Pray, T for Thank you, W for Well-being, X for Xercise
4. Good eating habits: H for Healthy, N for Nutrition, Y for Yummy
5. Good habits to be self-reliant: L for Learn, O for Optimistic, S for Safety, Q for Questions,
6. Celebrating life: F for Family, J for Joy, V for Victory
7. Love for the nation: I for India 🇮🇳



Castrol India introduces 100% recycled bottle for its premium engine oil brand

Castrol, a leading lubricant player in India, is introducing new, more sustainable packaging for its premium engine oil brand, Castrol POWER1 ULTIMATE. The brand is now being packed in a 100% Post-Consumer Recycled (PCR) bottle made from reprocessed plastic waste instead of virgin plastic. The use of PCR plastic decreases plastic waste, reduces carbon emissions, and supports a more circular economy.

Castrol's new packaging is a part of its global PATH360 aim to reduce its plastic footprint by half by 2030[3]. Castrol's PATH360 focuses on three areas of saving waste, reducing carbon, and improving people's lives, with an overall aim of helping Castrol become net zero by 2050 or sooner[4].

The new packs are being used for the Castrol POWER1 ULTIMATE product range and will start to appear on the shelf soon. Consumers will not incur any incremental cost arising from the transition to the new, more sustainable packaging.

Speaking about the initiative, Sandeep Sangwan, Managing Director, Castrol India Limited, said, "Plastic waste management is an important aspect of Castrol's sustainability roadmap for India. In 2021, we introduced new light-weight bottle designs for our medium packs (3 to 5 litres) that reduced our plastic use on average by 20% per bottle[5]. These new Castrol POWER1 ULTIMATE bottles are our next step on Castrol India's journey to reduce the use of virgin plastic, we believe that they are the first 100% PCR plastic lubricant bottles in India." Adding further, Sandeep Sangwan shared, "As part of our Extended Producer Responsibility[6], we are also working with key stakeholders with the aim of collecting, reusing, and recycling all the plastic we place on the market. As the technology and supply chains for recycled packaging evolve, we plan to continue exploring innovations in more sustainable packaging for more Castrol products." 🌱

**India wants to leverage its
stock market for social impact.**

Will it work?

India has approved the setting up of a social stock exchange. Experts say it will help fill glaring gaps in the country's spending on socio-economic development, according to Rohit Inani

India's BSE Ltd, formerly the Bombay Stock Exchange, is trying to tap demand for green investments with an exchange-traded fund tracking its S&P Carbonex - a share index which places greater emphasis on greener companies. Image: Niyantha Shekar / Flickr

Indian social businesses and organisations will soon be able to raise funds on the stock exchange, with the securities regulator having approved the setting up of a social stock exchange.

This could help spur impact investing and fill the gaps in India's public sector spending, say impact investors and social sector organisations, at a time when government coffers are strained and inflation worries are stalling public spending.

In October 2022, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) - which last year approved the setting up of the Social Stock Exchange (SSE) - published a detailed framework for the exchange that will operate within the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE), the country's largest.

Non-profit organisations and for-profit enterprises working toward creating social impact could list and freely trade their shares on the exchange for a range of socioeconomic causes such as healthcare, education, poverty alleviation, malnutrition and affordable housing.

HOW IT WOULD WORK

The idea was first floated by finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman in 2019 for social organisations to raise funds from institutional and retail investors. The SSE concept was first tried out in South Africa in 2006, when the South African Social Investment Exchange (SASIX) was launched at the Johannesburg Stock Exchange. The idea is simple: just like investors invest in listed companies all over the world by buying their shares, they invest in social impact projects, thereby making capital available for the social sector.

The idea is attractive for a large emerging economy such as India facing tough development challenges.

"If we want money to flow easily into a sector then we have to make it easy for people to invest in the sector. This is the idea behind a social stock exchange: that one could invest in high quality [social] projects on a platform that is well regulated, and bring in more money into the marketplace than what is currently being invested," said Ramraj Pai, chief executive officer of Impact Investors Council (IIC) in Mumbai.

SEBI, India's financial regulator, will allow non-profit organisations registered as charitable trusts to list and issue zero-coupon bonds on the exchange. Zero coupon bonds are debt securities that help raise money in the market but without the obligation to pay annual interests and principal. Additionally, for-profit social businesses could raise money by selling equity or investments by mutual funds.

However, both non-profit and for-profit listed entities would be required to file annual impact assessment reports, to be audited by social auditors, showing the extent of impact achieved such as the total number of targeted people reached, the changes effected in their lives and the challenges and gaps in implementing the project.

An SSE can complement public spending, said Astrid J. Scholz, a

social entrepreneur and founder-managing partner of Sphaera. "If government efforts are not big enough then there is a role for philanthropy and increasingly there is a role for impact investing. And in such a scenario, it could be helpful to have an SSE," she said, adding, "If investors in India are generally excited and open to investing in private offerings in an alternative stock exchange, then it might be a very powerful mechanism."

"[The SSE] will bring vibrancy to the upstream impact incubation and acceleration pipeline by unlocking capital for impact start-ups and SMEs, ultimately creating healthier downstream impact markets," Amit Bhatia, founder of Gurugram-based Aspire Impact, a social enterprise, told Eco-Business. India's annual impact investments - which were about \$2.6 billion in 2019 and are growing at a rate of 26 compounded annually - will receive a boost, he said.

WHY INDIA NEEDS AN SSE

Despite being one of the fastest-growing economies globally, India faces mounting development challenges. About a quarter of its population is poor, according to a government policy think tank. In 2022, it ranked 107 among 121 countries in the Global Hunger Index, recording the highest child wasting rate anywhere in the world; and ranked 132 out of 191 countries and territories on the 2021/22 United Nations' Human Development Index (HDI).

In 2021-2022, India spent about 8.6 per cent of its gross domestic product on the social sector. However, when compared to other large emerging and advanced economies, its public spending remains low. For instance, in 2019, India spent about 3 per cent of GDP on healthcare while China - with an economy more than five times the size of India's - spent more than 5 per cent.

In 2020, India's prime minister Narendra Modi reasserted India's goal to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. However, according to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals report for 2022, India faced challenges in making progress on 11 out of the 17 SDGs.

India boasts of the biggest impact investing market in Asia, but a 2022 report by Bain & Company found that to achieve the SDGs by 2030, India would need to spend about 13 per cent of its GDP every year, far lower than what it actually spends. Additionally, even as the wealth amassed by India's billionaires has shot up exponentially, their philanthropic giving has increased at a slower pace.

Hence, both investors and social sector organisations say, an SSE could prove useful by leveraging India's financial markets for development, for the first time.

Another hurdle for funding for non-profits in India has been the crackdown by the government on foreign sources of funding, said Varun Aggarwal, founder of India Migration Now, a migration research, policy, and advocacy organisation in New Delhi. The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) controls the flow of foreign funding to non-profits. In January 2022, the government cancelled the FCRA license of about 6,000 non-profits including Oxfam India and the Missionaries of Charity associated with the late Mother Teresa, choking the flow of capital to a variety of social sector projects.

"Funders are uncertain, non-profits are uncertain. If we look at the last 10 years, especially in the last three to five years, we have seen foreign funding for non-profits become a big challenge because of the FCRA stringencies," Aggarwal said.

TO MAKE IT REALLY WORK...

Investors and financial experts say investing in SSE needs to be a more

lucrative opportunity, and suggest that the SEBI and the government could offer tax breaks to investors, for instance. Else, investors may not want to invest in a sector with low financial returns.

Pai of IIC said even as investors look for good quality projects that can deliver returns, SEBI must put in place an incentive structure "because all investors are not philanthropists".

Global evidence of SSEs' success is hard to come by.

A 2021 study by the International Center for Not-For-Profit Law in Washington D.C., United States, and Samhita Social Ventures in Mumbai, found that of the seven SSEs it reviewed, four were no longer in operation, and most lacked a robust business model. Additionally, the study found that the investors in SSEs favoured organisations based on their size rather than quality of work and were biased against small and local organisations.

"The question is does an SSE accelerate the flow of capital or does it increase the volume of capital that is available to social enterprises — and I think the answer is: Maybe. There are only a handful of SSEs in the world and the evidence base is not strong one way or the other," Scholz said.

Jayati Ghosh, professor of Economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst in the United States, said private sector investing cannot replace public investment as private sector investors seek to maximise returns, which, according to her, would be a hurdle toward bringing about any longer term and meaningful social impact.

"Much of the required investment must necessarily be public investment, since some of these activities are never likely to be commercially profitable even though they are socially necessary," Ghosh said.

Ghosh cited health and education as examples of sectors where

universal, quality services are unlikely to be commercially profitable. "There are significant asymmetries of information that make it necessary for strong regulations when private investors do enter. [Hence] it is critical to have high levels of public investment. In these areas, public investment must be the first priority."

Yet, as central banks worldwide raise interest rates to rein in inflation fuelled by pandemic-induced supply chain disruptions and the Russian invasion of Ukraine, financial market risks have risen amid warning by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) of a looming global recession. This means that investors would become risk-averse.

Experts Eco-Business talked to said that even though financial conditions remain tight globally, this is a step in the right direction for India to be able to divert more capital toward social sector finance. "We are starting from scratch," Pai said.

According to Scholz, there is no evidence to suggest that capital flow toward creating social impact would get hampered by recessionary fears or rising interest rates. For instance, she said, that even if the economy were down, there would be a need to put money into providing clean drinking water.

Bhatia, of Aspire Impact, said that without any tax breaks or incentives, investors have invested more than \$10 billion into India's impact investment pool. He said that India, as a market, has a high investor premium, which would also show up in both impact investments and an SSE.

"With over a dozen impact unicorns, India is and will remain a leading impact nation, especially through this decade of SDG action," Bhatia said. 📍

(Source: <https://www.eco-business.com/news/india-wants-to-leverage-its-stock-market-for-social-impact-will-it-work/>)



India's new long-term strategy for net zero at COP27 'clearly articulates' its climate intention, say experts

It did not set an emissions peak year, but experts involved in drafting the plan, which for the first time sketches out how the world's second biggest consumer of coal will meet decarbonisation goals, say future iterations may do so, writes **Madhur Singh**

Experts familiar with the inner workings of how a new long-term strategy for India's net-zero targets was drafted are defending the plan as a clear articulation of India's intention for low-carbon development, with sectoral plans laid out.

This is amid some criticism from civil society that the broad-brush plans lack teeth. The national report, released on Monday at the United Nations COP27 climate summit in Egypt, zeroes in on how India, the world's fastest-growing major economy and second-largest consumer of coal, will decarbonise six key sectors of the economy. These are electricity, transport, urbanisation, industry, carbon removal and forests.

The strategy for the first time sketches out how India will meet its decarbonisation pledge made in 2021 to achieve net-zero emissions by 2070. Its environment minister Bhupender Yadav, speaking at a COP27 event marking the report's launch, described it as an important milestone.

Navroz Dubash, professor at New Delhi-based think tank Centre for Policy Research, an organisation involved in drafting the document, told Eco-Business that the strategy should be viewed as a "living document" that will serve as a base for future iterations of India's plans, when asked why India made no indication of when it aims to peak carbon emissions, nor set out new or interim decarbonisation targets in its plan.

Dubash explained that India could seek to outline more specific targets in the future, including by using quantitative modelling methods. The strategy announced November 14 will still make for a "system transformation", as it includes sectors that thus far do not have long-term goals for decarbonisation, such as transport. It will provide clarity to the



India's minister for environment, forest and climate change Bhupender Yadav (left) participating in a ministerial meet with his counterparts from Brazil, South Africa and China on the sidelines of COP27 in Egypt. Image: Bhupender Yadav / Twitter

bureaucracy as well as to the private sector, he added.

Under the landmark agreement, all countries are required to submit a strategy document to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) showing how they will help combat global warming. These plans are known as a Long-Term Low Emissions and Development Strategies (LT-LEDS). Despite a 2020 deadline for the plans, just 56 countries have so far submitted one. India is the last of the world's five largest economies to do so.

Sectoral mitigation plans missing agriculture

Ulka Kelkar, director of the climate programme at research think tank WRI India, believes the strategy will play an important role in bringing together different ministries overseeing various sectors of the economy and provides an opportunity for better coordination.

"Going forward, India will need detailed sectoral roadmaps and milestones, along with its net-zero targets, and avoid investments that

are incompatible with a low-emissions and climate-resilient future," she said.

She specifically highlights a section in the report on adaptation and resilience which reiterates India's calls for climate finance and technology transfer from rich countries. Loss and damage has been a recurring topic at this year's COP27 summit. Negotiations on how the developed world should help pay for climate change-related devastation in vulnerable regions are now formally on the COP agenda.

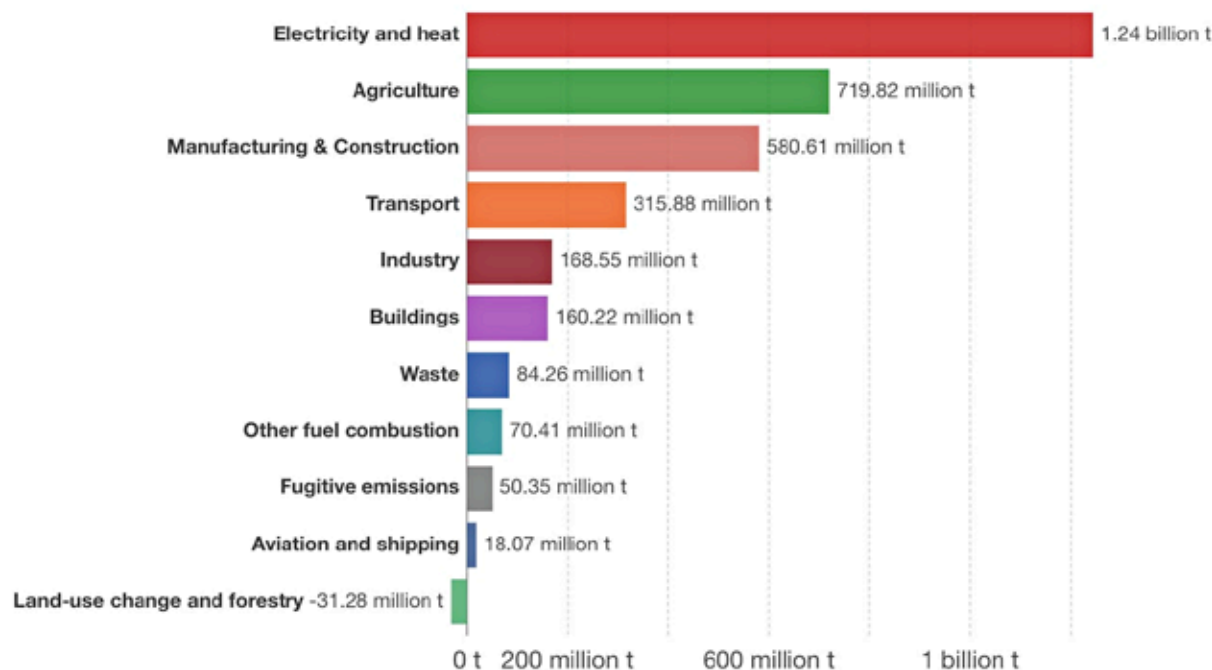
Among the new sectoral decarbonisation plans, agriculture has been omitted. The sector emitted more greenhouse gases (GHGs) than India's transport and industry combined, according to 2019 statistics.

Kelkar said that there are still opportunities for India to reduce methane emissions from agriculture, by improving feed use, as well as reduce water usage. She added that a policy-led shift towards planting less water-intensive millets rather than paddy, can significantly reduce agricultural emissions.

Greenhouse gas emissions by sector, India, 2019

Emissions are measured in carbon dioxide equivalents (CO₂eq). This means non-CO₂ gases are weighted by the amount of warming they cause over a 100-year timescale.

Our World
in Data



Source: Our World in Data based on Climate Analysis Indicators Tool (CAIT)

India has consistently maintained that the methane emissions from the two highest emitting activities in the Indian farm sector – enteric fermentation in cattle stomachs and paddy cultivation – are “survival” emissions of small farmers and not “luxury” emissions. Agriculture has historically been left out of India’s international commitments for climate action. The sector was also not included when India made pre-2020 voluntary commitments for emission intensity targets.

Nuclear and coal


India’s energy plans laid out under the long-term strategy also include a push for nuclear – a three-fold increase from the current 7 GW of installed capacity – as well as for green hydrogen, fuel cells and bio-fuels, in addition to solar and wind. It emphasises that while the share of

coal in installed capacity and supply of power will decline, coal will be needed for grid stabilisation and to guarantee India’s energy security.

“[The] key factors will be the price reduction trajectory of electricity storage systems and financial support and technology transfer from developed countries,” the document said about reducing India’s reliance on coal.

The strategy calls for more research into emerging technologies including coal gasification, carbon capture, utilisation and storage systems, biomass co-firing and beneficiation technologies, among others, and emphasises that India’s per capita coal consumption in 2019 was only half the world average. “Thus, it is inconsistent to focus disproportionately on lower coal use instead of lower total emissions,” it added. “India was likely to peak

coal before the end of this decade and many studies in fact highlight that it can be achieved by 2025,” said Vibhuti Garg, director for South Asia at the think tank IEEFA, “But the Russia-Ukraine War and the increasing price of renewable energy and energy storage have shifted the timelines.”

At this juncture, energy security and economic growth are the main concerns of the government, so it is unlikely to announce a coal peak. “But there is urgency and all efforts towards energy transition need to accelerate. India should be looking at stabilising the situation at home and should announce a coal peak in the near future,” said Garg. 

Source: <https://www.eco-business.com/news/indias-new-long-term-strategy-for-net-zero-at-cop27-clearly-articulates-its-climate-intention-say-experts/>



Scientists warn a third of people face life in climate hotspots

Johan Rockström tells the UN COP27 climate summit that more people face threats from weather disasters to water and food shortages.

About 1.6 billion people now live in climate change “vulnerability hotspots”, a number that could double by 2050 if fossil fuels continue being used at the rate they are today,

scientists warned at the COP27 UN climate talks in Egypt.

That would put a third of the world’s population at risk of weather disasters, water and food shortages, displacement and other threats that could spur social instability, said

Johan Rockström, director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research in Germany.

Limiting global temperature rise as a result of climate change to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) - the more ambitious target of the 2015 Paris Agreement - “is not a goal, it is a physical limit”, he warned at a press conference.

“Go beyond it and we are likely to trigger tipping points,” such as irreversible melting of Greenland ice that could set in motion 7 metres (23 feet) of sea level rise over time,

enough to swamp key coastal cities, he said.

Scientists, who have been issuing a drumbeat of increasingly frank reports and warnings about growing climate risks, are hoping to inject that urgency into UN climate negotiations that started this week in the Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh.

With fossil fuel emissions still rising, despite a need for them to fall by 45 per cent within eight years to keep the 1.5C goal alive, scientists are thinking about how to better grab attention to enact change.

“How we can deliver this message and try to attract more action?” said Mercedes Bustamante, an ecologist at the University of Brasilia.

List of insights

At COP27 on Thursday, leading climate scientists presented a list of 10 insights into the latest global warming science, in simple language and tailored toward policy suggestions - a far cry from the data-heavy science reports once delivered at COP meetings.

Among the key points, they said the ability of people to adapt to coming climate impacts is limited - which means faster emissions cutting is crucial - and worrying new climate-related health threats are on the rise, including from heat extremes.

“We know from COVID our health systems are really unprepared for shocks and stresses. Climate change is a major shock and stress already affecting many of our countries,” said Kristie Ebi, a specialist in global warming impacts on health at the University of Washington.

In addition, climate change impacts - from slow-moving crises such as drought and sea level rise to weather disasters - are increasingly displacing people from their homes and worsening conflict threats, the scientists said.

“Climate change, while not a direct cause of conflict, is an ampli-

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**You can't negotiate
with the planet, you
can't negotiate with
the atmosphere.
You're only hurting
yourself if you
underestimate the
power of Earth
systems.**

JOHAN ROCKSTRÖM
Director, Potsdam Institute for
Climate Impact Research

fier of social instabilities,” Rockström said.

Broadly, “human security requires climate security” the list of insights noted.

“If we want to have a secure and peaceful future we need to address climate change very rapidly,” Rockström said.

Reducing forest losses and other land degradation is also key, scientists say, as nature and soils currently soak up a quarter of the world's emissions, effectively keeping planet-heating carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere.

As well, to effectively tackle warming, societies need to move away from GDP growth as a measure of success and use “human well-being” as the key indicator, a move that would “factor in the true human cost of climate change,” Rockström said.

Ensuring local people have a major say in what climate-resilient development should look like in their communities is also crucial to ensuring limited money is effectively spent, the scientists said.

Finance revamp

Lastly, a major shift from incremental change to a fundamental revamp of how global finance works - something being widely discussed at COP27 - is crucial to ensuring needed money flows to climate-smart projects, not damaging ones, they said.

“All the good work on sustainable finance is still operating within the current existing business models, which are not substantially shifting the allocation of capital to meaningful mitigation,” Rockström said.

Changes are “only scratching on the surface ... not shifting financial flows at the pace and scale required”, he added.

One thing that could help, Rockström said, is putting an economic price on the cost of emitting climate-changing pollution that reflects its damage - a cost likely in the range of \$200 per tonne of pollution emitted.

Current carbon prices are much lower, with the highest, in Europe, at no more than \$100 per tonne.

A higher price would give businesses “very clear signals where we need to innovate and reform,” Rockström said.

His overall message for negotiators from nearly 200 countries at COP27, he said, was that they should not ignore clear scientific warnings about the risks of climate inaction.

“You can't negotiate with the planet, you can't negotiate with the atmosphere,” he said. “You're only hurting yourself if you underestimate the power of Earth systems.”

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(Source: <https://www.eco-business.com/news/scientists-warn-a-third-of-people-face-life-in-climate-hotspots/>)



Progress toward the globally agreed Sustainable Development Goals—which include ending poverty and hunger and are due to be achieved by 2030—is sliding, according to the UNDP administrator. Image: UN Women Asia and the Pacific, CC BY-SA 3.0, viaFlickr.

Economic crisis hits development progress in poor nations, UN says

At COP27 in Egypt, UN development chief Achim Steiner says more funds for green energy and climate adaptation could stem losses.

Decades of development progress are at risk as economies are pushed backward by climate change losses, the Covid-19 economic fallout, a growing cost-of-living crisis, and soaring debt and inflation, the UN development chief said at COP27 in Egypt.

“We essentially document a regression - and regression that is virtually universal across the board,” said Achim Steiner, who leads the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Progress toward the globally agreed Sustainable Development Goals - which include ending

poverty and hunger and are due to be achieved by 2030 - is sliding, he said, with some countries finding themselves back where they were in 2016.

The economic pain is making it harder for many governments to find the funding needed to roll out clean energy and tackle climate change - something that would have been easier when interest rates were still low, Steiner said in an interview.

With 54 countries now in debt distress - and getting close to defaulting - “it will be more costly to

step in,” he added. But multiplying global crises, particularly the war in Ukraine, are also creating new incentives to swap fossil fuels for renewable energy, with its possibilities for cheaper power bills once in place and greater energy independence, he said.

It has also become clearer that demands for environmental protection and economic advancement are “no longer forces pulling in opposite directions”, especially as renewables like solar become the cheapest source of energy, Steiner said.

That means there are still strong possibilities to wrest the world off using coal, oil and gas and onto a greener development path, despite the economic headwinds around the globe, he said.

The problem - particularly for poorer, debt-ridden countries - is finding the money to actually install clean energy, which has higher upfront costs but produces decades of cheap power.

Drowning in debt

One solution to boost renewable energy faster - and reap the development benefits that come with it - may be debt forgiveness, Steiner said. “For many countries this is an absolutely horrendous moment,” he said. “They can’t go to the financial markets.”

Debt forgiveness - or debt-for-climate swaps, in which money freed up from cancelled debt goes directly into climate projects - would be like “putting a scalpel to a festering wound”, painful but necessary, he added. A momentum-gathering push at COP27 to reshape international financial institutions to make it easier for money to flow where it is needed also is part of the puzzle, he said. “Our financial system needs to evolve with the size and nature of the challenges,” Steiner said. “We need better institutions.”

Barbados Prime Minister Mia Mottley has proposed a revamp of

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This is not a law-making convention. This is essentially negotiating an extraordinary transition in our economies, with 8 billion people sitting at the table.

ACHIM STEINER
Administrator, United Nations
Development Programme

post-World War II international financial systems, dubbed the “Bridgetown Agenda”, designed to boost climate funding flows and make them easier to access for debt-strapped countries.

The proposal has won some early key backing, including from France’s President Emmanuel Macron. Sameh Shoukry, Egypt’s COP27 president, has also called for new finance that is “sustainable and cheap”. “Undoubtedly this is an important gap in climate action,” he said.

Adaptation and risk

Besides powering up green energy investment, more money is needed to help countries adapt to climate change impacts that are already happening, and to reduce the risks, so as to stop development efforts sliding, Steiner said.

The UN “Adaptation Gap” report, released this month, says developing countries may need as much as \$340 billion a year by 2030 to stay ahead of wilder weather and rising sea levels. Finding much-needed private investment for adaptation efforts is difficult, because the returns are less

clear and often seen as having only local impact, it noted.

But Steiner, whose agency is trying to create a pipeline of adaptation projects to attract investment, said the shortfall in finance has far wider implications than many people realise.

Flood-battered Pakistan, for instance, is likely to see its exports of key commodities like cotton and rice hit, which affects international markets and commodity prices. Making payments on its debt will also be tougher with less income.

“When nations such as Pakistan undergo the kind of profound shock they’ve just gone through, when small island nations in the Caribbean every year worry about in 12 hours losing a third or more of their GDP ... you have created an economically impossible scenario,” Steiner said.

That has direct implications for rich countries and the global economy - not just those nations being slammed the hardest, he said.

“The wealth of many of the savers in many of the wealthy countries are inexplicably linked to the economies of the Global South,” he added.

Success at the COP27 negotiations in Sharm el-Sheikh, he said, will require leaving the talks with a sense that climate action is pushing forward “built on shared interests, transparency, mutual accountability and trust”.

“This is not a law-making convention,” he noted. “This is essentially negotiating an extraordinary transition in our economies, with 8 billion people sitting at the table.”

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How can a world population of 8 billion be more sustainable?

Reaching net zero and protecting nature and the environment require major shifts at the UN COP27 climate summit and beyond.

The global population will reach a new milestone of 8 billion on Nov. 15, the United Nations has projected, with the number of people on earth having doubled in less than 50 years.

That figure is expected to reach 9.7 billion in 2050 and peak at about 10.4 billion during the 2080s amid dwindling growth rates, the World Population Prospects report said.

This comes at a crucial time for the planet as climate change and nature loss caused by human activities - from the food that people eat to the fossil fuels burned for energy - are having an increasingly significant impact on life.

“How will we answer when ‘Baby 8 Billion’ is old enough to ask: what did you do for our world and for our planet when you had the chance?” UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said at the COP27 climate summit in Egypt on Monday.

The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) has warned that “unprecedented” action to cut greenhouse gas emissions will be needed to reach global targets of limiting



Farmers harvesting rice in White Thai village in Mai Chau, Hoa Binh province, northern Vietnam.

Image: World Bank Photo Collection, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Flickr.

warming to 1.5 degrees C above pre-industrial temperatures. Meanwhile, as forests continue to be cleared and oceans polluted, human impacts are destroying nature and biodiversity: wildlife populations have fallen by more than two-thirds since 1970, according to the World Wildlife Fund (WWF).

As negotiators discuss nature protection at COP27, climate advocates have called for the global economic system to put a price on planet-heating emissions, and to value the services provided by nature - from storing carbon to regulating rainfall.

With the number of people living on the planet only set to soar further in the coming decades, what can be done to make human life more sustainable?

Accelerate renewable energy

Despite the rise in renewable energy technologies such as solar panels and wind farms, most of the energy that people use to power industry, transport and buildings is still polluting. Fossil fuels account for around 80 per cent of energy production, according to the International Energy Agency (IEA), and global demand for energy is surging as the population grows and economies continue to develop.

The IEA says the path to net zero planet-heating emissions by 2050 requires a “massive deployment” of all available clean energy technologies, with investment needing to more than triple by 2030.

Renewable energy technologies have become much cheaper over

the past decade. In 2021, two-thirds of newly installed renewable power had lower costs than the cheapest fossil fuel-fired option in G20 countries, the International Renewable Energy Agency said.

Make buildings greener

Another change needed to work towards a sustainable future concerns the buildings where people live and work. From the construction of buildings with cement, steel and other materials, to the energy used within them, buildings account for 38 per cent of global energy-related carbon dioxide emissions, according to UNEP.

New technologies are being developed for low-carbon cement and steel, while research suggests that substituting these materials for timber could significantly cut building emissions.

Meanwhile, existing buildings need to be retrofitted to become more energy efficient, such as with more effective insulation and the installation of heat pumps.

If implemented worldwide, using heat pumps instead of traditional boilers and furnaces could cut CO₂ emissions by 3 billion metric tonnes each year, according to consulting firm McKinsey & Company.

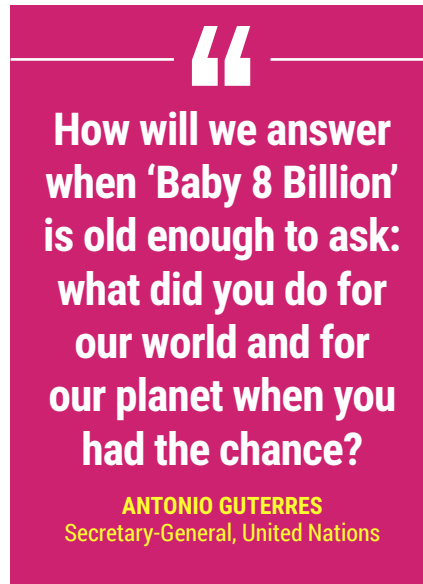
Reduce meat in diets

With the United Nations estimating that there will be nearly 2 billion more mouths to feed by mid-century, changing global diets is also considered vital to protecting the planet.

From agricultural production to transport and packaging, the food system is responsible for around one-third of human-caused greenhouse gas emissions.

Scientists say one of the best ways to protect nature and the global climate is to consume less meat.

About 70 per cent of the world's agricultural land is used for producing meat and dairy goods, even though the products amount to less



than 20 per cent of the total food calories available globally.

This is piling pressure on forests and other natural areas.

Experts say governments can encourage the shift to plant-based diets through public procurement of meat alternatives, national dietary guidelines and banning advertising of meat.

Promote cleaner transport

In order to reduce emissions from traditional vehicles, automakers are doubling spending on electric vehicles and batteries to \$1.2 trillion by 2030.

But experts say a “modal shift” is also needed to encourage people to abandon their private vehicles for public transport, walking or cycling - especially in cities - such as in Germany and Spain where cheap rail tickets have cut emissions.

As well as reducing pollution, more active transport can tackle physical inactivity and obesity - which causes one million deaths per year in Europe, according to the World Health Organisation.

Countries also need to cut down on flying to reach net zero. The aviation sector accounts for around 2.8 per cent of global CO₂ emissions, and just 1 per cent of the

population cause half of all aviation emissions, says the NGO Transport & Environment.

Tackle fast fashion

The fashion industry is the second biggest consumer of water after agriculture, and accounts for up to a tenth of greenhouse gas emissions, according to UNEP. In Britain, the charity Oxfam said that around 13 million items of used clothing end up in landfills every week.

To make the industry greener, analysts say more must be done to curb production and keep clothes in use for longer - such as through repair, renting and repeated use.

End damaging subsidies

One of the biggest barriers to these changes are government subsidies for fossil fuels and other industries like agriculture and fisheries which are damaging the climate and nature. From cash payments to tax breaks, research by the Business for Nature coalition found that at least \$1.8 trillion is being spent on environmentally harmful subsidies each year.

Climate activists and conservationists have been pushing governments for decades to reform damaging subsidies and repurpose them towards more sustainable practices - such as regenerative agriculture instead of intensive farming.

At the upcoming UN COP15 meeting on biodiversity in Montreal in December, a new global framework is being drafted that aims to redirect \$500 billion of these subsidies each year. 🌱

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Youths calling for more climate finance during a demonstration at COP27 on Friday, 18 November, 2022.
Image: Eco-Business/Liang Lei.

COP27: AMID COMPROMISES, WORLD FINDS SOLACE IN LOSS AND DAMAGE BREAKTHROUGH

Developing countries now dare to hope that they have enough money to tide through rising climate risks, though many details need to be ironed out in the coming year. Efforts to slash emissions, meanwhile, appear to have taken a back seat, writes **Liang Lei**

After two weeks of tough and sometimes bitter negotiations that ran overtime by nearly two days, some 200 countries agreed to set up a fund to help climate vulnerable nations cope with increasingly severe climate disasters.

Attendees at the closing plenary of the COP27 climate summit in Egypt burst into applause as the loss and damage fund was agreed upon at around 4 a.m. on Sunday (20 November). It was cleared as the top item on the agenda, about two hours before all other tasks were ticked off.

“My friends, we heard the calls, and we responded,” said COP27 president and Egypt’s foreign affairs minister Sameh Shoukry in his closing speech.

The deal represents the one ticket item that received the broadest support among countries both rich and poor, amid others that either had decisions kicked down the road, or had some countries grudgingly agree to as a compromise.

The loss and damage agreement calls for a fund to help “developing countries that are particularly vulnerable” to climate risks, a group that is currently not well-defined. A 24-member committee, to be formed, will have to come up with the groupings by the COP28 climate summit next year, where countries are expected to agree to the details of the fund.

Money is to come from a “wide variety of sources”, which the deal suggests could include non-government organisations and businesses. The fund should also work in parallel with existing initiatives that address climate loss and damage, the agreement states.

Calls for loss and damage funding had been echoing for decades, but particularly bad extreme weather

events this year, along with a COP summit venue in Africa – one of the badly affected regions, meant that the demands were especially forceful. COP27 was the first time that funding for loss and damage was included as an agenda item, instead of just technical talks.

“The establishment of a fund is not about dispensing charity. It is clearly a down payment on the longer investment in our joint futures,” said Sherry Rehman, Pakistan’s climate change minister. Pakistan’s record mid-year flood was cited repeatedly during COP27 in calls for climate reparations.

The agreement on the fund was by no means predetermined, with talks sending mixed signals till the last hours.

The first proposal at COP27 came from the G77 and China group of mostly developing countries on Tuesday (15 November), which called for a fund paid for by developed countries by end-2023. Ralph Regenvanu, Vanuatu’s climate change minister, said the bloc had discussed walking out if it did not get its way.

The European Union counter-proposed on Thursday a fund to help only the “most vulnerable countries”, paid for by a “broad donor base” – understood to include China and rich countries still classified as “developing”. The bloc also wanted countries to pledge to slash emissions faster as part of its plan.

Critics said the EU was trying to break the unity of developing countries by offering money only to some. Tuvalu, a Pacific nation, voiced support for the EU proposal on Friday morning, jumping ahead of the Alliance of Small Island States, a bloc Tuvalu is part of.

By Saturday morning, the EU also said it was ready to walk away from bad deals, raising fears that the entire climate congregation could end bitter and empty-handed on loss and damage.

“We are worried that we could run out of time,” said Steven Guilbeault, Canada’s climate minister, on the same morning.

“Negotiations are on the verge of a breakdown, even more so than other years,” David Tong, a campaigner from advocacy group Oil



Nabeel Munir, lead negotiator of the G77 and China bloc, speaking with delegates at COP27 on the night of Saturday, 19 November, 2022. Image: Eco-Business / Liang Lei.

Change International, who has been to eight COP summits, also said.

Observers say the vague wording of who needs to pay in the final draft could have helped to push it past the finishing line – even if it means more loose ends in the years ahead. The G77 and China bloc is understood to have initially stood firm in its ask for only countries deemed developed in a 1992 classification to pay for the fund. Member countries like Qatar, Singapore and the United Arab Emirates are considered developing states.

“The [G77 and China bloc] is a coalition of very different types of countries, from the least-developed to the most-developed,” said Nisha Krishnan, director for climate resilience in Africa at US non-profit World Resources Institute.

“To keep that coalition going, they do need to understand and balance the needs of all of the members,”

Krishnan said, explaining why the bloc did not push to broaden the donor base.

Grace Fu, the sustainability and environment minister of Singapore, said the city-state will discuss with other parties and figure out how it can “play a part” in the formal arrangements.

“There is a certain historical context to how climate finance has come about; it has to be based on the agreed basis in the Paris Agreement of common but differentiated responsibility. That is a position that all parties have agreed to, and must continue to be the basis of discussions going forward,” Fu said. She added that Singapore will participate in talks with the “right spirit of cooperation and collaboration”.

“Common but differentiated responsibility” is a global principle agreed in 1992 that the whole world is obliged to act on climate change,

but industrialised nations bear greater burden.

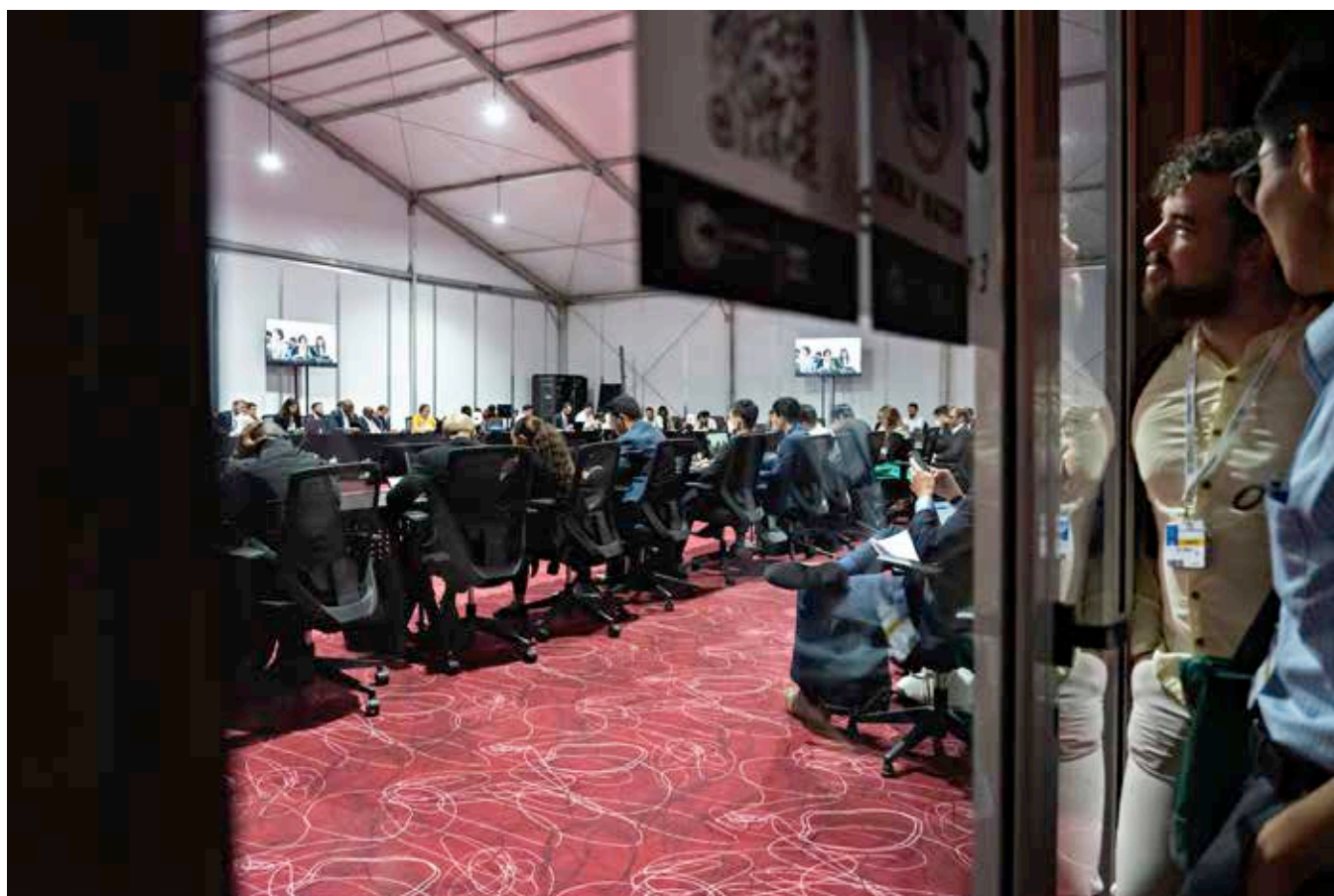
There is also the fear that the new fund is yet another toothless fund.

“Right now it is an empty fund, and we have a huge challenge ahead to ensure that developed countries contribute to it, in line with justice and equity. We must not see a repeat of the abysmal performance of rich countries failing to provide the already inadequate US\$100 billion a year promised over a decade ago,” said Sara Shaw, a campaigner from advocacy group Friends of the Earth International.

Developed countries only fulfilled about 80 per cent of the US\$100 billion a year pledged at the 2020 deadline.

Climate mitigation falters

While loss and damage captured the mindspace of COP27 attendees for much of the two weeks, the



Observers peek into an off-limits meeting running late into the night at COP27 on Saturday, 19 November, 2022. Image: Eco-Business/ Liang Lei.

final hours of the COP27 talks were instead dominated by disagreements on how ambitious the final summit decisions should be in slashing fossil fuel use and global emissions.

Word got around that some oil and gas producing countries, Saudi Arabia and Russia among them, wanted to weaken texts on energy transition. A mention of increasing 'low-emission' energy appeared next to a call to scale up renewables in the final draft of COP27's main decision text, which was accepted by all parties.

Wael Aboulmagd, Egypt's top climate diplomat, said "low-emission" energy does not exclude natural gas, and that an immediate switch to renewables for some countries is "impractical".

Natural gas has the lowest carbon content of all fossil fuels when burnt and many countries regard gas as a "transition fuel" towards renewables. However, scientists have said that gas still produces too much carbon pollution to be relevant in credible decarbonisation scenarios.

At the COP27 closing plenary, a Saudi Arabia representative, speaking on behalf of the Arab Group of about 20 countries in the region, repeated the stance that countries should focus on reducing emissions instead of cutting specific energy sources.

There is also no mention of the phase down of all fossil fuels, seen by many as an upgrade to a call made at COP26 last year to phase down coal. The new clause was raised by India a week ago and received the support of some 80 countries, including the United States and nations in the EU.

However, none of the five drafts since Thursday that eventually led to the final cover text includes the anti-fossil fuel clause, and the final text repeated a call from COP26 to phase down unabated coal power and retire inefficient fossil fuel subsidies. Also copied from COP26 were

mentions of keeping global warming well below 2°C and pursuing efforts towards 1.5°C.

The plan for a "mitigation work programme" meant to drastically scale up decarbonisation ambition before 2030 was stymied by a clause of not imposing new targets or goals. Under agreed rules, the work programme also cannot have a timeline that moves faster than that of national voluntary pledges under the Paris Agreement – which countries are obliged to update only every five years.

"Too many parties are not ready to make more progress today in the

are "perilously weak". Manuel Pulgar-Vidal, global climate and energy lead for environmental group WWF, said that the loss and damage deal risks becoming a "fund for the end of the world" without greater ambitions to slash emissions.

"We cannot afford to have another climate summit like this one," Pulgar-Vidal said.

Nonetheless, there are additional bright spots beyond loss and damage from COP27. Multilateral development banks have been asked to reform their practices and priorities, amid criticism that they are too risk-averse to invest in some developing

Natural gas has the lowest carbon content of all fossil fuels when burnt and many countries regard gas as a "transition fuel" towards renewables. However, scientists have said that gas still produces too much carbon pollution to be relevant in credible decarbonisation scenarios.

fight against the climate crisis. There are too many attempts to even roll back what we agreed in [COP26 in] Glasgow," said Frans Timmermans, executive vice-president of the European Commission.

Timmermans said the EU "reluctantly" agreed to all the COP27 decisions to not kill the loss and damage fund that developing countries urgently need.

"We had to give up some of the things we wanted, to help other parties and this process move forward. We can live with that but I urge [parties] to acknowledge that when you walk out of this room, that we have all fallen short," he said.

Friends of the Earth International said that apart from loss and damage, the outcomes from COP27

countries' climate projects. The call for renewable energy was more prominent this time round. More details have been added to a programme for building up the world's climate adaptation capabilities.

"We need to use this package as a springboard to restore trust in our process," Simon Stiell, chief of the climate change arm of the United Nations, said of the COP27 decisions.

"There is absolutely no point putting ourselves through all that we have just gone through, if we are going to participate in an exercise of collective amnesia the moment the cameras move on," Stiell said. 🟩

(Source: <https://www.eco-business.com/news/cop27-amid-compromises-world-finds-solace-in-loss-and-damage-breakthrough/>)

In tying a sacred thread, Indian villagers restore their forests

During the annual Vriksha Raksha Bandhan festival, villagers celebrate their connection to nature, pledging to keep away loggers and only use the forest sustainably.

The dense forests near a small village in eastern India reverberated with chanting and the beating of drums as hundreds of villagers gathered to tie decorated threads around the trees.

In an annual ritual that has been performed in Lukaiya for the past 20 years, people consecrated the trees with floral garlands and smears of vermilion and turmeric paste as they pledged to protect the forest from the axe and the saw.

Held in villages across Jharkhand state, the Vriksha Raksha Bandhan festival - “vriksha” is Sanskrit for “tree” - stems from an ancient Hindu celebration of Raksha Bandhan, when sisters tie embellished bracelets called rakhi around their brothers’ wrists to symbolise love and protection.

“Each of these trees has been a member of our family for many years. We dare anyone to cut down any of them,” Shakuntala Kisku, who leads an all-women brigade dedicated to protecting the forest near Lukaiya said in an interview.



Communities around the world are channelling age-old beliefs and traditions into conservation, using their cultural connection to nature to save carbon-absorbing forests. Image: sandeepachetan, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Flickr.

From India to Kenya and the Colombian Amazon, communities are channelling age-old beliefs and traditions into conservation, using their cultural connection to nature to save carbon-absorbing forests and build livelihoods that rely on keeping trees alive.

The festival in Lukaiya, in Dhanbad district, started in 2005, when then-divisional forest officer Sanjeev Kumar brought together about 35 villages to revive what was at the time a stretch of barren land dotted with sparse bushes and tree stumps. “I was shocked by the indiscriminate felling of trees by

the local communities,” said Kumar, who is now a chief forest conservator for Jharkhand state.

Threats of fines and other punitive measures were no deterrent to people cutting down trees to sell, he said.

Kumar had heard about other villages using rituals to protect trees, including school teacher Mahadeb Mahato who, 10 years earlier, had started a similar effort in Dudhmatia as a way to revive the local forest and stop wild animals wandering into the village to look for food.

By creating Vriksha Raksha Bandhan, Kumar hoped to similarly

encourage the people of Lukaiya to take conservation into their own hands.

Today the once-bare stretch of land is covered in 100 hectares (247 acres) of native trees, mainly sal and mahua, also known as honey tree.

The festival has spread to more than 1,000 villages across the state, Kumar said, and he has heard from environmentalists in other Indian states and places as far off as Singapore, England and Sierra Leone who are all starting their own version.

“Once a tree is ritualised, its protection is our responsibility,” said Sitamani Mahato, who is part of the forest protection team in Arani, a village in Jharkhand’s Simdega district.

Villagers take turns keeping watch in the forest during the day, looking out for outsiders who try to cut any of the trees. At night, forest rangers take over protection duties.

If villagers spot any loggers, they surround the encroachers, seize their tools and take them to the village head to face a penalty, usually a ban on using the water in local streams or grazing their cattle in village pastures.

The village head might offer to lift the ban if the logger devotes some time to protecting the forest.

“The idea behind the festival was to create a sense of ownership and belonging towards the forests, and to convert erstwhile tree fellers into tree protectors,” Kumar said.

Benefiting farmers

According to India’s latest Forest Survey, just over 21 per cent of the country is forested, a slight rise from 2019 partly due to a nationwide tree-planting campaign that aims to have a third of the country covered in carbon-absorbing trees by 2030.

Kumar said the tree protection festival helped boost forest cover across Jharkhand state by 85,000 hectares between 2005 and 2020.

Farmer Sukhdeo Prasad, whose village of Banpura in Dhanbad



The idea behind the festival was to create a sense of ownership and belonging towards the forests, and to convert erstwhile tree fellers into tree protectors.

SANJEEV KUMAR
Chief Forest Conservator,
Jharkhand

district celebrates the festival every year, said revitalising the local forest has led to the return of various plants and wildlife and helped feed nutrients back into the soil.

Farmers can grow multiple crops throughout the year - including maize, rice, vegetables and wheat - when a few years ago the degraded soil could only handle one crop at a time per season, he said.

Prasad and other farmers in the area say they are earning up to 50 per cent more from their crops than they were two decades ago.

Crucially, for him, younger generations can now see a future in farming.

“Forests have improved productivity in our fields. The youth are motivated to stay and work in their own village, rather than migrate out in search of work,” he said.

Bringing together tree conservation and cultural traditions can be an effective way to revive forests anywhere in the world, said Baldeo Prasad Sharma, an environmentalist working with the Indian Red Cross Society.

“Initiatives like these connect trees to man (as well as) linking ecology with the local economy,” he said.

Economic connection

In Lukaiya, Kumar says the economic connection between forests and local populations is just as vital to the success of the Vriksha Raksha Bandhan festival as the emotional connection.

“Our ultimate strategy was to link the forests with the livelihoods of the villagers,” he said.

The sal and mahua trees, for instance, produce fruit and seeds that can be cooked into cakes and used to make oil, butter or home-made liquor, while mahua bark - always collected from the forest floor, never pulled off the tree - is used in medicine.

Mahato in Arani village says produce from the local forest earns more than 3,000 people an annual income of about 30,000 Indian rupees (\$367) each.

The income boost was motivation enough to change for one former tree feller, who asked that his name not be used.

Every week or so he used to join a small group who entered the forest at night to chop down trees to sell for timber, until he was caught by the villagers, he said.

Today his ability to earn a living selling forest produce depends on keeping the trees standing and he regularly joins other villagers and forest rangers in Lukaiya to nurture newly planted saplings and protect them from being eaten by cattle.

“We realised the forests are our lifeline and who better than us to protect them?” he said. 📌

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The population of non-human primates –
like monkeys, apes, tarsiers or prosimians
– are declining rapidly around the world.

Image: Gerald Tan, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Flickr.

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE VITAL IN SAVING VULNERABLE PRIMATES FROM EXTINCTION

A new study in Science Advances finds that primate species found on Indigenous people's land face significantly less threats to their overall survival compared to species found on non-Indigenous lands, writes **Kimberley Brown**, Mongabay.com

The declining population of non-human primates, like monkeys, apes, tarsiers or prosimians, mainly due to deforestation and habitat loss, has long been a concern for researchers. At least 68 per cent of all primates are in danger of extinction, while 93 per cent have declining populations globally.

But a new study released in the journal Science Advances, shows that primates have healthier populations when their range overlaps with Indigenous peoples' lands. The authors conclude that, in order to save primates, we need to protect Indigenous autonomy over their territory.

This is the latest paper to acknowledge that Indigenous peoples and their traditional beliefs, practices and knowledge systems based on living with local ecosystems and exploiting them sustainably, hold important conservation lessons for the world.

"In writing this paper, the realisation we came to was that probably the single most important action one could take to prevent the primate extinction crisis is to allow Indigenous peoples to maintain sovereignty over their land," says anthropologist Paul Garber, professor emeritus at the University of Illinois and one of the lead authors of the new study.

Speaking to Mongabay by video call from his home in the United States, Garber says one of their goals

was to conduct a global study that could serve as a base for further research. The authors, which include 29 biologists, anthropologists, ecologists and other researchers around the world, collected data from the Neotropics (Mexico, Central and South America), Asia and Africa, where most of the over 500 species of primates live.

What they found was that 93 per cent of all primate species found in non-Indigenous territories were classified as threatened (either Vulnerable, Endangered, or Critically Endangered) by the IUCN. However, only 55 per cent of primate species whose range overlaps with Indigenous territory were classified as threatened – and this number only decreases the greater the overlap between primate range and Indigenous territory.

"There is no primate species that's only found on Indigenous lands," says Garber. "But what we found is that as the per cent of the species range increases on Indigenous peoples' lands, so when it's 25 per cent 50 per cent [on Indigenous lands], then those species are less likely to be considered threatened, or to have declining populations. So they are more correlational."

One exception was most regions of Africa, says Garber, mainly due to different colonial histories. In many African nations, European colonisers evicted Indigenous communities from their lands in order to create large national parks, protected areas and game reserves. Because of this,

the vast majority of primate species diversity is still to be found in these parks and reserves that are not recognised as Indigenous territory, he explains.

Traditional knowledge and 'source-sink' hunting

Many Indigenous communities have a long ancestral relationship to their territory, and are dependent on it for their physical, cultural and spiritual well-being, says the new report. They have learned how to exploit these ecosystems in sustainable ways in order to not extinguish the resources they depend on, and continue to pass on these teachings through their traditional beliefs, knowledge systems and social norms.

In protecting these forests, Indigenous communities are also protecting the habitat of primate species around the world.

Garber gave the example of sustainable hunting practices within many Indigenous territories, referred to as the source-sink dynamic. Community members hunt in areas called "sinks," which is an area within 10 to 15-kilometre (6 to 9-mile) radius around Indigenous settlements.

But there are other areas designated as non-hunting areas, such as sacred landscapes, that are "source" areas. Animals migrate from the source area to the sinks, so there's a constant replenishment of animals to hunt in sink areas, without needing to enter the source area

and extinguish the whole species. This is what Garber calls “taking advantage of the resilience of the [natural] system.”

Many communities also have diversified economies that include fishing, hunting, and collecting other plants and animals, while some communities only consume primate species during a particular festival, or only hunt once a year, so they don’t overexploit these populations, says Garber.

“They simply have learned over long periods of time in the environment, and based on their systems of knowledge, on how to exploit environments sustainably. It’s something that we feel Westerners or other cultures could really draw from,” says Garber.

Professor Christopher Golden, ecologist and epidemiologist at the University of Harvard who also participated in the study, spoke to Mongabay about the Betsimisaraka people in Northern Madagascar, and their cultural taboos around hunting that contribute to conservation.

This includes a story they tell each other about the Avahi, or woolly lemur, which only has one baby each time it gives birth. There is a taboo against hunting the animal as they are “just like humans and cannot sustain any deaths,” say local populations, as Golden documents in one of his prior studies.

Golden says most other hunting taboos in Northern Madagascar, where he has been working for over 20 years, are more driven by public health concerns rather than a conservation ethic. But they end up giving the same result.

Many communities, for example, will avoid hunting primate species that transmit illness or have allergies or toxins, which the communities have identified using their own traditional epidemiological knowledge.

“At the end of the day, you could really say that it is that Indigenous

“
We are facing a moment where if something doesn’t change, we’re going to lose these primates rapidly.

PAUL GARBER
Professor Emeritus, University
of Illinois

wisdom that is driving the conservation impact [...] the fact that they understand the mechanism by which the environment could present illness to people, creates the conservation kind of ethic in and of itself,” says Golden.

However, not all Indigenous communities are the same.

The new report also outlines examples where new hunting technologies introduced in Indigenous communities, where shotguns replaced blow darts, has directly led to local extinctions of primate species. This was the case with the disappearance of orangutans in several sites in Borneo, and the extirpation of spider-monkeys in the Central Amazon.

But Garber says these examples are the exception rather than the rule. While Indigenous peoples also exploit their environments, there’s no question that the larger danger to primates are external factors causing large-scale deforestation and habitat loss, mainly roads and infrastructure projects and the expanding agriculture frontier.

Closest living relatives at risk

Primate species are also facing a number of other threats, says the

report. This includes climate change, unsustainable hunting, the trade of wild meat and primate body parts, and the dispossession of Indigenous lands.


Primates are very sensitive to these environmental changes and exploitations, as they have low birth rates, usually only one offspring at birth for most species, and in some cases only give birth once every few years – much like humans.

“We’re dealing with a very vulnerable kind of species,” says Garber. “They’re also a good indicator species. If primates are having problems, then other species will soon follow,” he adds.

Garber, who has been studying non-human primates for over 40 years, says this mammal group plays an important role in helping maintain healthy ecosystems, both as pollinators and food dispersers, and their role feeding on insects and smaller mammals and vertebrates.

As the closest living relatives to humans, studying the behaviours of various primates in the wild can also give insight into human behaviour and evolutionary changes that cannot be found in fossil records.

Researchers agree that the only way to save the primate population is for states to do more to protect the sovereignty of Indigenous peoples over their territory. That includes increasing land tenure and titling in these territories, barring destructive extractive and infrastructure projects, and actually punishing intruders, such as illegal hunters, miners, loggers.

“We are facing a moment where if something doesn’t change, we’re going to lose these primates rapidly,” says Garber. 

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(Source: <https://www.eco-business.com/news/indigenous-knowledge-vital-in-saving-vulnerable-primates-from-extinction/>)

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