

Population Concerns: Balancing Numbers and Sustainability

RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat has recently stirred a nationwide debate by voicing his alarm over India's population dynamics. His concern highlights a paradox: while India is the world's most populous country, its population growth rate is steadily declining. Bhagwat's fears stem from the potential consequences of a society whose Total Fertility Rate (TFR) dips below 2.1, the replacement level necessary to maintain population stability. He paints a grim picture, warning that communities with such low fertility risk eventual extinction. His proposed solution—"Hum Do Hamare Teen"—urges every couple to have at least three children to counter this trend.

This call, however, is fraught with complexities, particularly in a country as diverse as India. The implications of this suggestion, especially when juxtaposed with the remarks of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, reveal a deeper narrative. At an election rally in Banswara, Rajasthan, Modi indirectly criticized a particular community for higher birth rates, equating "infiltrators" with those who have more children. This statement seemed to single out minority groups, creating a contradiction in the messaging from national leaders.

Adding to the discourse is a working paper by the Economic Advisory Council to the PM, which has likely fueled the RSS chief's concerns.

The paper reveals that between 1950 and 2015, the share of Hindus in India's population declined by 7.82%, while the Muslim population grew by 43%. For the RSS and its ideological framework, these numbers may appear as a demographic shift threatening the majority community. However, such an interpretation risks oversimplifying the complex socio-economic and cultural factors behind these trends.

Ironically, on World Population Day (July 11), Health Minister JP Nadda advocated for smaller families as a means to achieve the goal of a developed India or Viksit Bharat. His stance underscores the importance of controlled population growth in ensuring sustainable development. These conflicting narratives—from Bhagwat's call for larger families to Nadda's push for smaller ones—illustrate the delicate balance policymakers must strike in addressing population dynamics without fueling communal tensions.

India's declining fertility rate is not without its successes. An increase in contraceptive use and greater awareness of family planning have played pivotal roles in this achievement. However, the challenges of a low TFR are real, prompting states like Andhra Pradesh to abandon their two-child policy. Telangana is reportedly considering a similar move, recognizing that rigid family planning measures may no longer align with the country's evolving demographic realities.

While reversing time-tested family planning strategies may seem like a quick fix to demographic concerns, states must assess their readiness to handle the additional burden. Increased population growth would require expanded healthcare infrastructure, improved educational systems, and robust job creation efforts. The strain on resources could exacerbate poverty and inequality, undermining the very foundation of India's development agenda.

Furthermore, the politicization of population dynamics risks deepening societal divisions. Playing the numbers game, particularly when it stokes communal fires, can have far-reaching consequences for India's social fabric. Leaders must tread carefully, ensuring that their rhetoric does not polarize communities or undermine the nation's hard-earned progress in family planning and economic development.

India stands at a crossroads. Balancing the concerns of demographic stability with the need for sustainable growth requires a nuanced approach. Policies must prioritize equitable resource distribution and long-term social and economic stability over short-term political gains. Leaders across the spectrum must rise above ideological divides to craft solutions that serve the broader national interest.

Population is both a resource and a responsibility. As India navigates this delicate terrain, the focus must remain on empowering its citizens through education, healthcare, and opportunities rather than merely counting numbers. Only then can the country truly aspire to become a developed and harmonious nation.

Dilwale Dulhania De Jayenge' Leaves Audience in Splits

Udaipur: The monthly theatrical evening Rangshala, organized by the West Zone Cultural Centre (WZCC), Udaipur, featured the humorous play 'Dilwale Dulhania De Jayenge' on Sunday. Director of WZCC, Furkan Khan, informed that the play was staged at the Darpan Auditorium, Shilpgram, Udaipur. Written by Anurodh Sharma and directed by Supriya Sharma, the play was a satirical comedy featuring a cast of 20 artists. Amit Jha and Jhanak Sharma managed the music, Atul Gupta handled stage arrangements, Krishna Kashyap oversaw lighting, Ekta Sharma led costume design, and Nitin Saini served as the assistant director. The audience appreciated the witty dialogues and performances, praising the engaging portrayal of characters. The evening concluded with the felicitation of all the artists. Prominent attendees included Pawan Amarawat, Deputy Director (Programs), Durgesh Chandwani, Assistant Director (Finance and Accounts), Superintendent Engineer C.L. Salvi, and Program Executive Hemant Mehta. The event was hosted by Siddhant Bhatnagar.

The play revolves around the love-hate relationship of a married couple, Raj and Simran, whose constant bickering escalates to the brink of divorce, leading to a divorce ceremony. Through vivid domestic scenes, the play offers sharp satire on societal issues like dowry practices, the commercialization of education, and the misuse of cultural preservation for hooliganism.

Turkish Filmmaker Graces Khajuraho Festival

New Delhi: Celebrated Turkish filmmaker Mustafa Ozgun will attend the 10th Khajuraho Film Festival, showcasing his globally acclaimed films COVID-19: Ground Zero and The Pink Thief. Known for his poignant narratives, Ozgun explores themes of resilience and humanity. He expressed excitement about sharing his work and engaging with Indian audiences.

The festival, marking its 10th anniversary, will feature screenings, interactive sessions, and panels. Ozgun's participation, including Q&A sessions, highlights the event's commitment to cultural exchange and impactful storytelling. His attendance reinforces the festival's growing reputation as a platform for diverse global cinema.

Royal Tulip Kicks Off Festive Season with Grand Cake Mixing Ceremony

The festive season began in style at Royal Tulip, Navi Mumbai, with a vibrant Cake Mixing Ceremony held on November 25, 2024. This cherished prelude to Christmas celebrations brought together the hotel's staff and management for a delightful and heart-warming event.

General Manager Mr. Wasley Fernandes and Executive Chef Satish Gupta led the occasion with enthusiasm and festive cheer. Mr. Fernandes expressed his joy, saying, "The cake mixing ceremony symbolizes togetherness, happiness, and the joy of the season. It's an opportunity for us to come together as one family."

The tradition of cake mixing, steeped in history, is believed to bring good fortune and prosperity. At Royal Tulip, it has evolved into a grand event that celebrates unity and joy. The venue was adorned with festive decorations, setting the perfect holiday ambiance. A long table, laden with a colorful assortment of ingredients like raisins, cherries, nuts, candied fruits, and aromatic spices, awaited participants. Honey, rum, brandy, and other spirits added a touch of festivity, blending into the mix for a rich aroma.

Participants, including staff members and management, gathered around the table, mixing ingredients with joy and camaraderie. The atmosphere was filled with laughter and conversation as everyone contributed to the festive spirit. The ceremony concluded with a group photo and a toast to the upcoming festive season.



Chef Satish Gupta led the ceremony, explaining the significance of each ingredient. He shared, "Every ingredient we mix today symbolizes love, prosperity, and happiness. It's a tradition that reminds us of the joy and togetherness of the season."

The cake mixing ritual brought everyone together, as participants donned aprons and gloves to join in the lively activity. The collective mixing of ingredients symbolized unity, while the spirits infused the mixture with festive energy. Laughter and camaraderie made the event memorable for all involved.

The rich and aromatic cake mix will now be stored to mature, ensuring Royal Tulip's Christmas cakes are nothing short of extraordinary.

The ceremony concluded with a round of applause and a heartfelt vote of thanks from the management. Royal Tulip reaffirmed its commitment to preserving traditions and creating joyful experiences for its guests and team. The hotel invites everyone to join in the upcoming Christmas festivities, promising magical surprises and culinary delights to celebrate the season. Stay tuned for more festive cheer from Royal Tulip.

Union Minister of Education Dharmendra Pradhan Unveils 'TheTeacherApp'

Udaipur: Bharti Airtel Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Bharti Enterprises, today launched TheTeacherApp, an innovative digital platform designed to revolutionize education in India by equipping educators with future-ready skills to meet the demands of 21st-century classrooms. Union Minister of Education, Govt. of India, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan unveiled the platform at a launch event held at the India Habitat Centre, Delhi. Also, present was Mr. Rakesh Bharti Mittal, Vice Chairman of Bharti Enterprises and Ms. Mamta Saikia, CEO of Bharti Airtel Foundation,



along with dignitaries from the education sector, school principals, teachers and B.Ed. students.

Reflecting on the unique advantages of TheTeacherApp, Mr. Rakesh

Mittal, Vice Chairman of Bharti Enterprises, said, "For India to thrive as a global economic leader, it is imperative that our education system equips the educators to foster creativity, critical think-

ing, and innovation. TheTeacherApp is a decisive step in this direction, offering teachers access to world-class resources and best practices that empower them to deliver exceptional learning experiences. We dedicate this platform to the untiring teachers of India who play a pivotal role in shaping the future of our nation. Over the past 25 years, Bharti Airtel Foundation has impacted over 6 million lives through educational initiatives. With this initiative, Bharti Airtel Foundation reaffirms its commitment to equip educators to excel in their mission of educational empowerment."

Envirogreen Consultants Earns "Category A" Recognition

Udaipur: Envirogreen Consultants (India) Pvt. Ltd., based in Udaipur, has been awarded "Category A" recognition for mineral exploration by the Ministry of Mines, Government of India. The recognition was announced during a prestigious event held in Delhi at Hotel Ashok under the esteemed presence of Union Coal and Mines Minister Shri G. Kishan Reddy. This event marked the inaugural auction of coastal minerals under the Blue Economy initiative, a significant step towards sustainable development and resource management.

The Blue Economy concept focuses on the responsible utilization of marine resources, ensuring a balance between economic development, environmental sustainability, and social equity, particularly in coastal and marine areas. Through this initiative, the Government of India aims to promote economic growth while protecting marine ecosystems and ensuring the well-being of local communities.

During the ceremony, Shri G. Kishan Reddy handed over the "Category A" certificate to Envirogreen Consultants, recognizing their expertise and commitment to responsible mineral exploration. Dr. Neeraj Srivastava, Project Coordinator of Envirogreen, along with his team members Shiv Kumar Lakhara, Chetan Choudhary, and Ms. Deepika Patra, received the award with pride. Yashwant Paliwal, the Public Relations Officer of Envirogreen Consultants, expressed his gratitude and emphasized the importance of responsible mineral exploration in advancing India's vision for sustainable development. This recognition highlights Envirogreen Consultants' role in contributing to the nation's growing mineral exploration sector while adhering to environmental and social responsibilities.



India Industrial Fair 2025: Empowering Small Industries

Udaipur: The 11th India Industrial Fair, organized by Laghu Udyog Bharati, will be held from January 10-13, 2025, at Delhi Public School (DPS), Udaipur. The event aims to unite entrepreneurs, experts, and industrial enthusiasts to empower small industries and drive industrial growth.

Prakash Chandra, All India Organization Minister, emphasized that the fair would act as a catalyst for small industries, fostering innovation, technical advancements, and healthy competition. He highlighted its role in boosting local production, quality, and global market access. The fair will feature high-quality product displays and technical discussions, providing networking opportunities for entrepreneurs and investors. Chandra drew inspiration from the India Manufacturing Show in Rajkot, which led to over 100 technical agreements, and expects similar success in Udaipur.

Nearly 60 stalls have already been booked, with national interest growing. The fair is set to establish Udaipur as a hub for small industries and technological innovation.

Mewar Polytext Wins Best Employer Award for the Third Time

Udaipur: Mewar Polytext Ltd., Udaipur, was honored with the prestigious "Best Employer of the Year - 2024" award for the third consecutive time. The award was presented by Deputy Chief Minister Diya Kumari at a ceremony organized by the Employer Association of Rajasthan

in Jaipur. The award was received on behalf of Mewar Polytext by Managing Director Sandeep Bapna and Shilpa Bapna.

Ratul Puri Highlights Hindustan Power's Water Scarcity Initiative

Ratul Puri, Chairman of Hindustan Power, praised the company's efforts to combat water scarcity in rural Uttar Pradesh through its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative. Launched in 2022, the program has installed hand pumps in water-stressed villages, providing clean water to thousands of underserved families. Puri emphasized the importance of clean water as a basic human right and the initiative's impact on education, health, and productivity. By aligning with government programs like the Jal Jeevan Mission, Hindustan Power is fostering long-term sustainable development and empowering communities to overcome water-related challenges.

Reliance Digital's 'Black Friday Sale' Offers Massive Discounts

Mumbai: Reliance Digital has launched its much-awaited 'Black Friday Sale' starting Thursday, November 28th, and running through December 2nd. During this sale, customers can avail exciting offers on smartphones, laptops, home appliances, and other electronics at Reliance Digital stores, My Jio stores, and online at RelianceDigital.in. Special discounts are available with

select debit and credit cards from ICICI Bank, IDFC First Bank, and OneCard, offering up to ₹10,000 off. Additionally, customers can enjoy cashback of up to ₹22,500 on consumer loans from Bajaj Finserv and IDFC First Bank.

Highlights of the sale include the iPhone 16 available for just ₹70,900 and the iPad available at ₹1,371 per month on EMI. Customers purchasing Apple Watches will also earn walking points. Discounts of up to ₹25,000 are being offered on refrigerators, and an air fryer worth ₹8,995 can be purchased for only ₹1,999. Gaming laptops are starting at ₹46,990, and customers can get up to ₹26,000 off on OLED TVs. Under the "Buy More, Save More" offer, customers can enjoy 5% off on one item, 10% on two items, and up to 15% off on three or more items.

Shriram Finance Launches #TogetherWeSoar Campaign

Shriram Finance Ltd., a leading financial services provider, has introduced its new campaign, #TogetherWeSoar, emphasizing partnership and resilience in achieving aspirations. Featuring cricket icon Rahul Dravid as the brand ambassador and actor Naseeruddin Shah narrating the Hindi ad film, the campaign celebrates teamwork and empowerment.

With lyrics by K.S. Chandrabose (Telugu) and Madhan Karky (Tamil), the campaign connects across India's diverse regions. It will be promoted nationwide through print, digital, TV, and Pro Kabaddi League broadcasts. Executive Director Elizabeth Venkataraman highlighted the brand's focus on fostering partnerships to enable dreams and financial growth for all Indians.

Abhishek Pandey, Ties the Knot



Abhishek Pandey, the son of veteran Bollywood film journalist Kali Das Pandey, recently married Anjali, the daughter of Bhagwan Pandey from Ichak (Hazariabagh, Jharkhand). The wedding took place at Hotel Palace in Hazariabagh. On this auspicious occasion, along with the bride and groom's family members and close friends, several distinguished guests, including actor Ramji Chauhan, were present to bless the newlyweds.

It is worth noting that Kali Das Pandey, a prominent film journalist and critic, has played a significant role in the promotion and marketing of several superhit films. Currently, he is playing a key role in the promotional campaigns of several high-budget upcoming films, including "Game Changer", "Kantara: Chapter 1", "Vanvas", "Salaar Part 2", "Pushpa 2: The Rule", "Thandell", and "Jai Hanuman".

Film "Jhanjharpur" Teaser Unveiled in Goa

Mumbai: The teaser for Jhanjharpur, starring Bollywood's glamorous Bengali actress Apurva Dutta, was launched at the NFDC Film Bazaar in Goa. Directed by Bihar's Naveen Chandra Ganesh, the film explores Bihar's ancient Launda Nach tradition, offering a rich portrayal of the state's cultural heritage.



Produced under the banner of Saw Films by Shashank Sudhakar Rao Saw, the movie features captivating music by Sai Samarth and Vivek Mulay. Shot across Bihar and Mumbai, Jhanjharpur will be showcased at the 30th Kolkata International Film Festival from December 4-11, highlighting its significance in Indian and international cinema.

Constitution Day Sparks Political Debate

On Constitution Day, marking the 75th anniversary of India's Constitution, the celebrations were marred by political tensions. Prime Minister Modi praised the Constitution's role in India's progress, emphasizing its full implementation in Jammu and Kashmir. He acknowledged Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's contributions and the government's initiatives for women, senior citizens, and the poor.

Meanwhile, Congress launched a "Constitution Protector Campaign," accusing the ruling government of undermining the Constitution. Congress leaders, including Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi, criticized the BJP, calling for a return to ballot paper elections and highlighting concerns about equality and rights. Kharge also targeted industrialist Gautam Adani over alleged funding of the BJP's campaign and called for the banning of EVMs.

As celebrations continue, political parties remain divided, raising questions about their commitment to upholding the Constitution's spirit.

Rohit Sharma Joins ixigo Trains as Ambassador

Indian cricket icon Rohit Sharma is now the brand ambassador for ixigo Trains, India's leading app for train travel. The collaboration features a vibrant ad campaign where Rohit appears as a rapping ticketman, highlighting ixigo's user-friendly features like live train status, ticket availability, and seamless booking.

Dinesh Kumar Kotha, CEO of ixigo Trains, lauded Rohit as the perfect choice to connect with audiences nationwide. Rohit, managed by RISE Worldwide, expressed excitement about partnering with ixigo, praising its innovative approach to transforming train travel. Together, they aim to enhance stress-free, efficient travel for millions across India.

Upamanyu Chatterjee Wins 7th JCB Prize

Lorenzo Searches for the Meaning of Life by Upamanyu Chatterjee, published by Speaking Tiger Books, has won the 2024 JCB Prize for Literature, earning a ₹25-lakh award. The ceremony was held at JCB India's Ballabgarh headquarters, where CEO Deepak Shetty presented the award, celebrating Indian literature's richness.

Judges hailed the novel as a masterful exploration of faith, spirituality, and human resilience. Literary Director Mita Kapur highlighted the Prize's legacy in amplifying impactful narratives. The iconic 'Mirror Melting' trophy by Thukral and Tagra further cemented this honor for Chatterjee's exceptional storytelling.