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ECOCIDE : ISN'T THE TIME RIPE TO CONSIDER IT EQUIVALENT TO GENOCIDE?

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(Patron)

The earth is not dying, it is being killed, and those who are killing it have names and addresses.

-Utah Philips

Agent Orange was a mixture of herbicides that United States military forces sprayed in Vietnam from 1962 to 1971 during the Vietnam War for dual purpose of defoliating forest areas that might conceal Vietnam forces and destroying crops that might feed the enemy. This 'Agent Orange' contained dioxins and they were toxic even in minute quantities. It had disastrous health consequences for the population, such as cancer and serious birth defects, which are still present. It was at this time that the crime of ecocide came to be recognised. Richard A. Falk, an American Professor Emeritus in Princeton University, in his work 'Draft Convention Against Ecocide' was the first one to define ecocide. His definition of ecocide included the use of weapons of mass destruction, use of chemicals for military purposes, use of bombs and artillery in such quantity that would impair the quality of soil, use of bulldozing equipment for military purposes and so forth. It was the first time an attempt was made to classify ecocide as a global crime. Falk's definition was a reaction towards the shameful act of the United States Army. Within the same time frame, another incident occurred during the Indo-China war where the environment was selected as a military target appropriate for comprehensive and systematic destruction. The war displaced many indigenous tribes from the place due to the excessive use of mining and bombing, destroying the environment on a very large scale.

The history is evident to the fact that environmental warfare had been used to defeat enemies by denying them access to cover, food, and other necessities of life in the countryside. During the Malayan Emergency in 1950s, to deny the insurgents any weapons they could use against the British Army, the latter spread herbicides and

defoliants throughout the Malaysian countryside. The herbicides and defoliants contained Trioxone, which is a part of 'Agent Orange' that was used by the America on Vietnam. The local population suffered magnanimously. Not only the forest life got affected but also the human population living around the jungle faced chronic health effects such as cancers, brain and nervous system disorder, birth defects, infertility and other reproductive problems, damage to body organs and the like. The direct contact with the harmful chemicals in herbicide led to loss of vision. 'The Chernobyl Disaster' is another example of ecocide where the explosion in one of the nuclear reactors at the nuclear plant released a large amount of radioactive material in the atmosphere. The technicians in the nuclear plant tried a poorly planned experiment, which led to the accident. The end result was a chain reaction that set off a number of explosions and a sizable fireball that blew the reactor's heavy steel lid off. The air currents carried the gas that the fireball released over great distances. The residents of Pripyat, Ukraine, who lived near the plant went about their daily activities in the early morning hours completely unaware of what had just occurred. However, within a few hours of the explosion, thousands of people fell uneasy. Later, they reported severe headaches and metallic tastes in their mouths, along with uncontrollable fits of coughing and vomiting. Initially, the authorities tried to hide the explosion which delayed the evacuation process for more than thirty-six hours of the incident. It was the Forsmark Nuclear Power Plant in Sweden that acknowledged the effect of Chernobyl Disaster which was located more than 1000-kilometres away and they declared to the world that a nuclear reactor administered by the

Soviet Union has exploded and it caused serious degradation of the environment in the area. Similar incident was reported in India's the Bhopal in the year 1984 better known as 'Bhopal Gas Tragedy'. The accident at the Union Carbide pesticide plant at Bhopal released 30 tons of highly toxic methyl isocyanate as well as other poisonous gases. These deadly gases lingered close to the ground, burning victims' throats and eyes and resulting in their demise. As the pesticide plant was surrounded by shanty towns, more than six lakh people were exposed to the deadly gas cloud that night. Within hours, there were carcasses of humans and animals all around the streets. Though the monetary compensation were paid to the human victims but the heavy gas that flowed through the local rivers, made the water poisonous killing the aquatic life. Many crops were also deemed unsafe for human consumption, and the entire region went into crisis due to food shortage. Even worse, the site was never properly cleaned by either Union Carbide or the Indian government.

Even today, the one and a half year long Russia-Ukraine war has furthered the degradation of ecosystem. This war has led to widespread and possibly serious and long-term environmental damage and the Ukrainian government, international observers and journalists are describing the damage as 'ecocide'. The humongous explosions polluted air, water and soil by emitting lead, mercury and depleted uranium just to mention a few toxic materials. Explosives like Royal Demolition Explosive (RDX) that are consumed can seriously harm the health. The buildings that are demolished during war emit cancer-causing dust for years. Already, more than 4 million people in Russia-Ukraine lack access to clean drinking water due to the destruction of civil infrastructure. It has been witnessed that the soil turned out to be unsuitable for farming for many years. Nuclear accidents are also more likely during these types of wars as the fighting near nuclear plants and the power outages could lead to a catastrophe similar to the one that occurred at

Chernobyl. Many inter-governmental projects for environmental conservation that had been ongoing for decades stand destroyed due to this war.

Moreover, the above mentioned ecocide incidents are just a tip of the iceberg. There have been various instances that have damaged the ecosystem brutally. For example, the Amazon Rainforest Deforestation, Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill, Aral Sea Desiccation, Great Barrier Reef Coral Bleaching, Industrial Pollution in Developing Nations to the name a few. It is high time that the safety measures be taken to save the planet. The consolidation of an effectively expanding human populace, constantly expanding monetary development or per capita fortune, the application of asset exhausting and polluting technology are all contributing towards ecocide.

This has led various thinkers, activists and lawyers to propose ecocide be considered as a heinous crime. Though 11 countries of the world have declared ecocide as a crime and more than 25 countries have lined up to criminalise it but the international law till date have not added it in the list of international criminal law. Polly Higgins, the famous British Lawyer in 2010 proposed to United Nations Law Commission to include 'ecocide' as fifth crime against peace in the Rome Statute. However, the plea fell on the deaf ears. It is suggested that the time is ripe to consider ecocide equivalent to genocide and include it as fifth international crime against peace before it's too late. We have to seek inspiration and motivation from the likes of Raphael Lemkin who developed the concept of genocide and made it as an international crime against humanity.

**'THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES':
IS THE NARRATIVE AN APROPOS REEVALUATE OR A PERIPHERAL HYPOTHESIS
IN THE CONTEMPORARY FAST FASHION ERA?**

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The Narrative- The Emperor's New Clothes, by H.C. Andersen's recites the tale of an emperor consumed by his obsession with clothing. In his pursuit of extravagant attire, he neglected the welfare of his kingdom, prioritizing his own appearance above all else. His vulnerability was exploited by two cunning swindlers who preyed on his insatiable desire for new clothes. These impostors, masquerading as skilled weavers, promised to create a garment of unparalleled magnificence. This fabric possessed a unique trait: it would remain invisible to those unfit for their positions or foolish in kingdom. The emperor, captivated by the idea of such a remarkable garment, eagerly provided the supposed weavers with the finest silk, thread, and significant sums of money. However, the fabric they claimed to weave was entirely fictitious. Deception reached its climax when the emperor paraded through his realm stark naked, as the swindlers convinced him that only the wise and capable could see the exquisite clothing. It was only a child who had the audacity to speak the truth, revealing the naked emperor and his foolishness. By this time, however, the damage had been done, and the unclothed emperor had become a subject of ridicule throughout the kingdom.

The Multifaceted Problem of fast fashion betokens the trendy clothes which quickly move from catwalk to stores, so as to give a hot look to its consumers. These cheaper, speedily manufactured clothes try to satisfy the appetite of people. Esther Perel remarks "in our consumer culture, we always want the next best thing: the latest, the newest, and the youngest. Failing that, we at least want more: more intensity, more variety, and more stimulation. We seek instant gratification and are increasingly intolerant of any frustration."

Nowhere are we, like the Emperor, encouraged to be satisfied with what we have, to think, 'this is good, this is enough'. The throw-away culture of insatiable consumer, demand for knock-offs of the season's "it" pieces is not without the ramifications. Ever since the industrial revolution through to the recent technological revolutions in mass media the consumerism has resulted in global injustices. The core focus of this endeavour is to highlight environmental issues and how psychological transformation can be a simple solution to this multifaceted problem.

According to the World Wildlife Fund's Report from 2019, the production of a single kilogram of cotton requires a staggering 20,000 litres of water. Certain credible sources claims 20% of all fresh water pollution is made by textile treatment and dyeing. The alarming statistics shed light on the immense water footprint associated with cotton cultivation. A poignant example of the environmental toll of cotton production is the tragic desertification of the Aral Sea, which stands as a stark testament to the detrimental impact of this industry. The negative consequences of this, equally extends to air pollution, land pollution and so on. Synthetic fibres like polyester, polyamide etc., although are a cheap commodity for the textile industry but just as nylon they are also unrecyclable and require 30-40 years for decomposition. Soil erosion, land degradation and threat to biodiversity are the other major environmental issues which are associated with fast fashion. Resultantly, in great numbers goats and sheep are overgrazed in pastures so as to catch up with the heavy demand of wool by this industry. Owing to the massive dumping of textile waste into the water bodies, micro plastics that come from micro fibres like polyester and nylon gets

consumed by aquatic animals which in turn not only endanger their existence but also has entered in our food chain. Regrettably, the recycling rate for such garments remains dishearteningly low, leading to their disposal in landfills—an alarming threat to our already fragile ecosystem. Compounding this issue is the concerning emission of greenhouse gases. Disturbingly, studies underscore that the fashion industry contributes to the release of millions of tonnes of carbon dioxide, accounting for a staggering 10% of global carbon emissions. This has cast consumers unwittingly as fashion victims, resulting in a deeply troubling confluence of environmental degradation and moral compromise. Like the Emperor, the victims of fast fashion have undue desires of self, insensitive towards its effects on ecological degradation.

Fessing Ecological Iniquity, in the pursuit of diminishing environmental pollution and curbing the exploitation of precious natural resources, the adoption of natural cellulosic and protein fibres emerges as a compelling eco-conscious choice. Among these sustainable alternatives, organic bamboo, often referred to as Bamboo Linen, stands out as a particularly promising option. This is owing to its unique characteristics that not only resonate with environmental stewardship but also herald a departure from conventional textile practices. Recycling of material and garments either at the end of a product's life or change of fashion can not only promote a circular fashion but will also minimize the waste production. Studies also target on various proactive practices like prevention, reduction and reactive practices like reuse, recycle and disposing off, to prevent environmental injustice. Again, corporate sustainability in the form of periodical environment certification, labelling, evaluating and trading fair trade tools, and other eco-friendly practices can be effective in preventing environment injustice.

Examining Hyper-Consumerism, additionally, needs moral attention and introspection and one of the prominent among which is the change in personal habits of the consumer through the

change in the psyche. Consequently, to bring psychological change amongst the compulsive shop-alcoholic consumers, elevating and entailing some features amongst them could be the target areas. Elevating Consumer Citizenship through psychological-cum-legal transformation should be aimed for, as it targets a person to make his purchasing choice in respect to sustainable development. While shopping the consumer should be vigilant towards his social responsibility. He should realize that he is not just a consumer but a citizen as well and owes responsibility towards his fraternity. Unlike Emperor, a consumer citizen does not ignore others interests and is aware of the impact of his choices. This new global identity in form of consumer citizenship can bring transformative systemic change by adopting new rules on buying preferences, human solidarity and environment sustainability. Furthermore, the impact also extend to government policies in relation to industrial and corporate sector, by making relevant ethical choices. Insertion of Fundamental Duty of Sustainable Consumption in Article 51A of Indian Constitution can be a further positive move. Entailing Moral Introspection like the Republican Approach of the Greeks towards consumer citizen is another perspective, which focuses on the duties of an individual towards himself and society, and is also an apropos reevaluate. Aristotle in his work 'The Politics', states that an individual can be a good citizen if the duties to him are not externally imposed but he feels that obeying such duties is his intrinsic obligation. Plato too promotes the concept of 'Human Soul' where he feels that reason should rule our decision and not our appetites. The prevalence of 'Democratic Soul' in today's consumer driven society, as it works to seek out more desires to satisfy, is opposed to Plato's concept of Human Soul. The appetites are enhanced under 'Democratic Soul' and one finds the reason for happiness by accumulation of things. Wide range of stuff is available which instead of satisfying an individual's desires, develop the appetite. The liberation from these unlimited desires, unhealthy appetite, mindless

compulsion to consume could be achieved, mostly, by moral introspection. Khadi a Kosher, is also an apropos re-evaluate, because quantity has overpowered the question of quality. There is a need to revisit the Gandhian philosophy of khadi which was once used as an artistically beautiful rebellion against colonialism and today it can be a part of solution for major environmental crisis in the world. Gandhiji accentuated the idea that khadi should not be used just as a cloth, it has to be worn with the values which are inseparable to it. According to him, the message of the spinning-wheel is much wider than its size and is one of simple living, service towards mankind, so as not to hurt others and creating an imperishable bond between the rich and the poor, capital and labour, the prince and the peasant. Thus, as responsible citizens of India, it becomes our moral duty to adopt principles of khadi in our daily lives to achieve values, and ethics for clothing choices, a philosophy which our Father of Nation evolved.

Testing Hypothesis deduces that in the present era each individual plays the role of an Emperor, exercising the boundless privilege of indulging in clothing, often overlooking their responsibilities towards environmental injustices and a sustainable society. In the contemporary context, the fashion industry, social media, and advertising agencies play the role of the swindlers, enticing consumers with an illusionary world of trends, style, and glamour. The insatiable desire for new, trendy clothes has fostered a culture of hyperconsumerism, causing us to turn a blind eye to its detrimental consequences. Just as the Emperor learned that true wisdom lies in recognizing the reality behind the allure and making conscious choices that benefit all, we the consumers should also understand that the money in our pockets may belong to us as individual entities, but the natural resources belongs to all as a civilization. Hence, this scholastic slog is correspondingly, a child-like-shout to recognize our obliviousness about the ominous effects of fast fashion as we have already become victims of our own choices, priorities and

lifestyle. The narrative- The Emperor's New Clothes, is thus, an apropos re-evaluate in today's era of fast fashion as it serves as an aide-mémoire that our consumption should be sustainable; it's not just an peripheral hypothesis which is drawn for a multifaceted problem and being measured through simple sample, because every complex problem doesn't require complex solutions rather by preference, a basic shift of perception.

FUTURE OF WORK : A PROLOGUE OF TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT AND JOBS

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Unemployment, informal jobs, unsatisfactory income, and mismatch in the industry- required skills are the problems our country has been facing for a long time. It has been further aggravated due to the advancement of Industry 4.0 twined with the outbreak of Covid-19. From Delhi to Davos, public debate rages about the future of work in respect with Industry 4.0.

The world of work is changing. Industry 4.0 (robotization, artificial intelligence, Internet of Things (IoT), machine learning, etc.) including digital technology is central to these changes. According to a world economic forum report, by 2030, between 10 and 50 percent of any country's workforce will need to find an alternative occupation due to automation (World Economic Forum).

Technology has been reshaping work much prior to the first industrial revolution. With technological advancement the world of work changes. The previous three industrial revolutions led to the same feeling of anxiety among decision-makers that the adoption of new technology may cause the loss of existing jobs. Historically the threat of unemployment due to adoption of technology was witnessed. During the reign of Queen Elizabeth-I of England in 1589, when the patent for 'knitting machine' was done, it raised concern in the queen's head that this invention would take the job of poor artisans (Norman, 2023).

The first industrial revolution took place between the 18th and 19th centuries. In the 1880s, during the Qing Dynasty, China, the construction of railways was opposed, as it would lead to the loss of luggage-carrying jobs (World Bank, 2018). In the same decade, the invention of the water wheel

and steam engines also made the existing jobs much easy. It had changed the nature of work. The work which demands more human labour tends to be accomplished by machine. Before the invention of engines for carrying goods from one place to another requires humans. With the invention of steam engines now, the task of carrying goods was replaced by machines (steam engines pulling machine). Hence, it replaced the job of porter but at the same time, it created many new jobs on the river dock. This is one of the earliest incidences of job replacement by technological upgradation (Kanefsky & Robey, 1980). Still, in the early 19th century in America, some groups of people thought that new technologies would eliminate their jobs. Hence, they announced the famous Luddites movement, which was in opposition to the adoption of machines known to everyone (Thompson, 2017).

After World War II technological upgradation in the agriculture sector occurred at a rapid pace. Substituting animal power (mules and horses) to machine power (tractors) to plow the field have made farm activity more routinized which demands less labour in farm employment. Thus, mechanization in agriculture leads to the opportunity and incentive to increase non-farm employment among farm labourers. Globally, the world had seen a shift from agriculture to manufacturing (Dimitri et al., 2005). During the same period, the iron and steel industries were central to development. These industries start absorbing farm labourers into manufacturing. The inventions of iron and steel industries created many new jobs like boiler makers, ironsmiths, mechanics, etc. which did not exist previously (World Bank, 2018). In the first industrial revolution, job mechanization were witnessed.

Technology majorly made the work easy and hence shifted some workers from one task to another.

The second industrial revolution took place from 1870 to 1914. This period was a sequel to the previous one because many micro inventions occurred in this period (Mokyr & Strotz, 1998). The invention of electricity and combustion engines, which helped human labor to carry out various tasks easily, had shifted our economy from meagre production to mass production. Several other inventions like telephone, light bulb, and phonograph had revolutionized many jobs. Although at the beginning of the industrial revolution threat to employment was felt, it ultimately increased the demand for work and created many new jobs that did not exist previously.

The third industrial revolution was initiated during the 1980s and is popularly known as the digital revolution. It was an era of IT-enabled solutions, which streamlined the programmatic work and made technology more complimentary to human labour. However, the long-term effect of digital technology on employment is not predictable (Hilbert, 2001). Advances during this period include personal computers, information, and communication technology. The digital revolution is presumed to be the biggest threat to employment as people think that computers will replace their jobs. Little they were aware that their mode of working will change. Instead of doing the work manually, they have to use computers to do the work. Thus who were computer illiterate are more prone to lose their jobs. This invention created new job roles like software and hardware engineers, which have not existed before. Hence, we can see that until the third industrial revolution, technological upgradation was such that it complemented human work. With continuous progress in IT technologies, upgradation in the technical knowledge base, and new hardware, our technology become so sophisticated that it created machines that are capable of doing much work without human

interference. It means that machines are becoming intelligent (Schwab, 2017). Such inventions are categorized under the fourth industrial revolution and that's why it is different from the other three industrial revolutions.

The fourth industrial revolution (Industry 4.0) builds on digital revolution Emergence of new technological frontiers like artificial intelligence, robotics, 3D printing, IoT, autonomous vehicles, etc. represents in a new way how technology can be embedded within societies and human body. All these technologies connect between cyber and physical world (Mckinsey and Co., 2017). These technologies have the potential to replace not only unskilled workers but also skilled professionals in the medicine and finance sectors. For instance, AI programmers may teach robots and machines how to detect diseases with existing marker cases that may replace the first level of doctor consultation (Davenport & Kalakota, 2019). Not only in the healthcare sector but also in other sectors like transportation and logistics, multimedia, etc. are at higher risk of robotization. Some machines can replace many routine occupations like data entry operators, cashier and ticket clerks, assembly and factory workers, door-to-door sales workers, postal service clerks etc. Jobs that were once regarded as secure jobs, such as office workers, administrative personnel, etc. are also under the threat to automation and robotization. As predicted by Frey and Osborne that 47% of jobs in U.S. are at high risk of automation (Frey & Osborne, 2017).

In the era of industry 4.0 work that requires a high degree of imagination, creative analysis, and strategic thinking such as data analysts, big data specialists, robotics engineers, AI researchers, AI testers, E-commerce specialist, social media analyst, IoT specialist, etc. is harder to automate are having huge demand. Also in the current scenario, jobs with high interpersonal skills, teamwork and leadership like care workers, mental health therapists, and counselors have less probability of being automated.

All industrial revolution has brought fear of

technological (un)employment but proved untrue to date. At the dawn of the 4th Industrial Revolution, more and more people are aware of the challenges of job losses and unemployment. India has the world's largest youth population, which means a huge demographic advantage, compared to any anglosphere or sinosphere nations. Estimates suggest that around 65 per cent of India's total population is below the age of 35 years. It signifies that India can become the world leader in supply skilled labour to other nations.

The future of work entails people to re-train several times during their working life to learn and equip new technologies which was not the case before. To prepare our workforce for the future, continuous effort requires from all stakeholders - governments, policymakers, industry, academia, and civil society to advance the powerful emerging technologies in ways that limit the risk of unemployment and create a world that aligns with common goals for the future. All stakeholders need to work in convergence to promote the potential of upskilling and reskilling through government incentive schemes to increase the range of, and access to, continuing vocational education. Linking enterprise-based training to qualifications and educational frameworks provides for recognition and mobility. As said, future of work is going through transformational changes but with focus on 21st century skills-creativity, innovativeness, evidence based thinking, sense of art and aesthetics, collaboration and teamwork, problem solving and logical reasoning, coding and computational thinking, environmental awareness, water and resources conservation, etc. We can slowly start our journey of resonating and converging with Industry 4.0. This will mitigate the effects of job and skill crisis which youth of our country is currently facing.

Disclaimer: Views expressed in the paper are personal

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"FOSTERING A SHARED FUTURE : EMPOWERING YOUTH IN DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE"

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In 2022, India's population in the age group of 10-24 years accounts to 26 percent of its total population. Of these, a staggering 254 million people, constituting 18 percent of India's overall population, fall within the age range of 15-24. This makes India home to the largest youth population (United Nations Population Fund in the State of the World Population Report, 2023). This age group represents a significant proportion of population that is crucial for overall functioning of democracy. Therefore, it is vital to empower and involve the youth in democracy to create a strong foundation for the **"shared future"**.

The concept of shared future reflects the fact that policies and decisions made today will have a lasting impact on future generations. In light of this objective, India should tackle the obstacles encountered by its youth and create avenues for them to actively participate in strengthening democracy and enhancing governance. The present article provides an examination of the crucial role that young people play in shaping the future of our societies and provides practical recommendations for empowering them to participate effectively in governance.

Youth play a central role in legislature and politics in representing the needs and perspectives of young people in decision-making. Promoting the role of younger politicians and parliamentarians ensures that democracy remains relevant, diverse, and representative. However, the youth faces several challenges in terms of their under-representation in decision making process, policy development and implementation. Hence, it becomes crucial to overcome the obstacles hindering their involvement and offer necessary assistance and opportunities for the active engagement of youth in governance. This way, we

can work towards a collective future where all segments of society, including the youth, play an integral and meaningful role in shaping their own lives. As preliminary steps, efforts such as youth-led political organizations, mentorship programs, and campaigns can address the aforementioned challenges and empower young people in political participation. To institutionalize youth participation in governance and policy-making, high-level stakeholders must make efforts to engage youth in community governance. Programs such as internships, exchanges, and leadership training can facilitate learning experiences and networking opportunities. Youth councils, youth-led organizations, and youth-adult partnerships offer platforms for youth participation, ensuring their opinions, ideas, and concerns are heard and considered. With the power of social media, young people can express their opinions and engage directly with politicians and express their support or dissent towards political policies and statements. Providing a strong institutional support, G20 can also play a key role in promoting the growth and development of young leaders and entrepreneurs by enabling intra-G20 mobility for youth leaders. There are several successful examples where the youth has participated in the democratic framework and has led towards community development. One of the notable examples is that of Ms Bhakti Sharma who contested and also won the election for the post of Sarpanch. Her leadership has been instrumental in the development and progress of the village through the efficient utilisation of government funds and filling gaps in administration. The Government of India also provides avenues for understanding its functioning through internships. For instance, the

Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and NITI Aayog offers internship programme for young Indian researchers and recruits young researchers through its Young Professionals programme. Another notable initiative by the Government of India is Bharatiya Chhatra Sansad, also known as the Indian Student Parliament. It is a non-political forum that primarily works with 25000 colleges and more than 400 universities in India to mobilise and empower young people. The Bal Sabhas are supported by CSOs and UNICEF in formulating their tasks, and drafting notes and briefings for the Gram Panchayat. Inputs from the Bal Panchayat were included in the 14th Finance Commission's recommendations and regularly fed into the budget and planning for Maharashtra's Gram Panchayat plans. The success of the pilot projected to buy-in from other state governments, with plans to roll out Bal Panchayats across the country. By empowering young people to participate in community governance, India can create sustainable and inclusive communities that are responsive to the needs and perspectives of all members. By investing in the development of the skills and knowledge of the youth, leveraging digital mediums, and supporting youth-led initiatives, India can ensure that the perspectives of future generations are heard and integrated into decision-making processes.

FAITH AND THE FOREST: ROLE OF INDIGENEITY AND SPIRITUALITY IN SUSTAINABLE FOREST CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT

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“Faith can move mountains.”

-Matthew 17:20

Faith is the most pivotal aspect of the life of millions of people across the world. In primitive societies and indigenous cultures worldwide, there exists a symbiosis between humans, nature and the divine that is being increasingly replaced and removed in the modern context. The role of colonial regimes in dismantling these indigenous systems and ways of life is particularly relevant. The holistic and sustainable approach of viewing humans and nature as two sides of the same coin, with divinity as the uniting thread, is regarded as outdated. This is precisely the problem in terms of modern approaches to conservation and environment.

Ecocentrism, which often lies at the heart of indigenous cultures and faith systems, came to be replaced by anthropocentrism by colonial regimes worldwide. Nature was merely reduced to a tool and a resource that could be deployed, controlled and exploited to satisfy human wants as one pleased, and nothing was out of bounds. Traditional forest dwellers in India, for example, became the single biggest casualty in this greed for natural resources that left the indigenous tribes and traditional forest dwellers displaced and disowned through successive changes in forest laws that paved the way for ‘scientific’ use (read large-scale overexploitation) in place of ‘primitive’ practices (read indigenous cultural practices and livelihoods). This mindset of disdain towards indigenous traditions, particularly in forest conservation and its interplay with indigenous faith systems, has remained entrenched in the policies of the post-colonial states. This is particularly disconcerting for the indigenous groups who are dwindling in numbers across the world due to various factors.

Modern conservation policies and initiatives do

not factor in these traditional conservation practices, policies and indigenous knowledge and attempt to recast them in line with its ‘scientific’ view of nature. The lives, livelihood and existence of these groups are inextricably intertwined with these cultural practices. Modern states often discount and undermine these traditional groups in the pretext of modernity as being an antithesis to modern conceptions of sustainability as understood and developed by law. On the contrary, there exists a rich body of resources and practices that establish the exact opposite that indigeneity forms the very basis and foundations of sustainability. Indigenous culture and traditions, particularly imbued with faith-based practices concerning the forest, have a deep-rooted conception of sustainability embedded within them. To disregard and undermine these practices goes against the very notion of sustainability.

A case in point is the hunting practices of the indigenous tribes of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. This unique practice that dates to several hundred years dictates that whenever a hunter is involved in hunting wild animals, particularly wild boars, a branch from the largest tree would be broken conspicuously after the hunt. This serves a crucial sustainability purpose, viz., an indication/warning to other hunters not to engage in hunting in the area immediately thereafter. Another hunter could hunt in that area only after that specific branch regrows. This acts as a check on overhunting and ensures that hunting is not carried out therein until that branch regrows fully.¹

Plants and trees were one of the oldest forms of worship in India and across the world and predated the worship of deities and gods.² Sacred

forests, groves, trees, animals and deities have played an important role in ensuring sustainable use and conservation of forest resources by tribal groups with fear of divine chastisement and wrath serving to control any untoward acts. Examples range from the Bon Bibi/ Bon Durga and Dakshin Rai in West Bengal, Aranya Devi in Bihar, Chowdi in Karnataka, Labasa in Meghalaya, Orans in Rajasthan, Niyamgiri in Orissa etc.

It can also be argued that the concept of mindfulness for the environment and sustainable use of its resources in consumption habit, which is imbued in the terminology of LiFE (Lifestyle for the Environment), has already been entrenched in indigenous systems and cultures that are required to be unearthed. The divine and the sacred in tribal cultures can be tethered with this initiative. Moreover, a specific limb of the initiative 'LiFE' is leveraging local cultures and focusing on individual behaviours which can draw from the tribal cultural traditions and practices.

LiFE initiative is aimed at combatting the triple crisis of environmental pollution, climate change and biodiversity loss through the collective action of individuals in daily lives premised on the notion of 'Pro-Plant People' (P3). There can be no doubt that the rich heritage and practices of tribal communities and groups across the nation and the world over can be harnessed for this mission. Tribal communities and forest dwellers who share a singularly unique bond with forests and nature can be forerunners in the concept of 'Pro-Planet People' (P3), paving the way for sustainable and environment-friendly practices in forest management.

FAITH AND FOREST : INDIC PERSPECTIVES

Trees have been treated as sacrosanct from time immemorial by humans. During the ancient period, forest and nature were worshipped by man, and it was a sine qua non for his survival. Nature, in general, and forests, in particular, have been held in high regard in almost all religions and cultures around the world. References in ancient Hindu texts³ and scriptures make it evident that

they held nature and forests with utmost respect and sanctity. Similar references can be found in Biblical⁴ and Islamic⁵ texts and scriptures.

Kautilya's Arthashastra, which is considered an important work on statecraft, politics and public administration during the Mauryan period, has numerous references to forests and their management. It lists three types of forests viz., a). Productive Forests (2.2.3) are subdivided into forests which render forest produce (Dravyavana) and Elephant forests (Hastivana). b). Non-Productive forests are subdivided into frontier forests, wildlife sanctuaries (Mrigavana) and recreational forests. Apart from these types, forest areas were also allocated for hermits and scholars (Tapovan) (2.2.2).⁶ It also states that forest areas allocated to ascetics cannot be claimed as war booty.⁷

While discussing the economic administration of the state, it also lays down that it is the duty of the king to ensure that the productive forests and elephant forests are kept in good repair.⁸ All forests were owned by the state, and forest produce, termed as 'kupyā', was a major source of the state's wealth. It also provides for a well-established system of forest administration with officers such as Nagavanadhyaksha (Chief Superintendent of Elephant Forests) and Kupyadhyaksha (Chief Superintendent of Productive Forests). Moreover, a person who commits arson in relation to a productive/elephant forest was punished with death by burning.⁹

Faith-based practices associated with forest dwellers and tribes were largely protected, and the rulers did not intervene, with the exception of rebellion by forest tribes against the king. The kingdom was divided into 'vana' (forest) and 'kshetra' (settled terrain). The 'vana' was closely associated with tribal cultures, and the 'kshetra' was associated with non-tribal cultures and religions.¹⁰ The 'ashrama' (ascetic forest) served as a buffer between the conflicting ecologies¹¹ of the 'vana' and 'kshetra', which were also categorised as 'aranya' and 'janapada', respectively.

The sacred and divine with greater fluidity and variance were prevalent in 'vana' through sacred groves, trees, and animals reflected through the 'vanadevata' (forest deity). In each of the 'kshetra', which was the settled terrain forming the village and urban area, there was a 'kshetra pala' (guardian deity).

The Vanadevata was the protector of the forests and all its living beings. The deity was believed to protect the forests from thieves and natural calamities. It can be argued that the forest deity is the reflection of ecocentrism which is expected in modern conservation strategies. The reproach of the divine acted as a potent tool to regulate human behaviour concerning the forests and was harnessed in the protection of forest resources. Thus, there emerged a synergy between animistic tribal cultures within the broader prism of Hinduism that played a pivotal role in regulating and governing the relationship between humans and nature through the medium of the divine. During the medieval period, the predominant focus was on the exploitation of forest resources. The Mughal rulers gave importance to the construction of gardens, orchards and green parks. There was no blanket ban on the felling of trees. However, certain categories were classified as royal trees, which were protected by royal decree.¹²

The modern era, particularly the early British period, was marked by scant regard and indifference towards forest conservation. During colonial rule in India, the forest policy gave much importance to the exploitation of forest resources without concern about conservation. The British required cheap raw materials, including timber and other forest produce, for the production of ships and trains. India teak was found to be most suitable for the aforesaid purpose, and it was used in large quantities during the Anglo-French wars, which resulted in the devastation of the Western Ghats. The British started the reservation of teak forests in the year 1806, which can be considered the first attempt to regulate the timber trade.¹³

FAITH AND THE FOREST : LEGAL REGULATION IN INDIA

In 1855, Lord Dalhousie framed the Forest Charter, which led to the regulation of wasteland by changing its status into government property in India. It also restricted the use of forest land by rural communities. The Forest Act, 1865 empowered the government to acquire, by notification, forest land provided it does not impinge on the rights of existing communities and persons. The Imperial forest department was set up in the year 1864 with Inspector General Dietrich Brandeis as the head of the Forest Department to survey and map forests of India.¹⁴

The Indian Forest Act, 1878 dealt with forest conservation for the first time and listed three types of forests, viz., Reserved, Protected and Village Reserved forests. Under the scheme of the enactment, there was overall state control of reserved forests with limited access to local communities, and it also provided for contesting of reservation of forests. The striking feature was that the customary use of forest was considered a 'privilege' at the mercy of the ruling class and not a right.¹⁵

The Indian Forest Act, 1927 omitted the community rights recognised under the previous regime and also, for the first time, empowered the state or provincial government to constitute reserved forests. In the British period, sacred groves were merged with reserved forests resulting in the end of tribal communities' separate control over them.¹⁶ From the foregoing discussion, it is evident that forest conservation in the ancient and medieval periods was done primarily for security, religious and administrative purposes. Though the British period marked the beginning of a legislative framework in relation to forest resource management, the ultimate objective of such policies and legislations was to ensure the colonial hegemony of the British to the exclusion of the native interests.¹⁷ Section 4 of the Indian Forest Act, 1927 conferred the power to reserve forests on the state government.

Similarly, it also provides the power to recognise certain rights in the proposed reserved forest and de-reserve the same. The State government had the power to assign to the village community a reserved forest designated as a village forest. It also confers the state government the power to regulate the use of forest land though the state government does not own it in certain cases. It recognises the practice of shifting cultivation for the first time and the power of the state government to regulate the same. The state government is empowered to regulate the movement of timber and other forest produce in other matters.

The first forest policy post-independence was declared in the year 1952, giving impetus to social forestry and agricultural forestry. Immediately post-independence, large tracts of forest land vesting in zamindars and other princely states were taken over by the union government. The underlying objective was the green movement in India which proposed to restore and maintain 60% of land in the hills and 20% in the plains, and an overall 33% of the total geographic area under forest cover.

The first major legislative attempt at forest conservation was made through the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. It lays down its avowed objective of checking deforestation and conservation of forests and specifies restrictions on the use of forests for non-forest purposes and de-reservation of reserved forests without the prior consent of the Central government. It also regulates the diversion of forest land by way of lease or otherwise to any private persons. Thus, the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 limits the powers of the state government to a large extent to ensure the conservation of forests and prevent deforestation.

The serious depletion of forest resources due to various other reasons necessitated a review of the situation in the late 1980s by developing an innovative approach to forest conservation. The National Forest Policy was once again revised in 1988, which envisaged community involvement in

the protection and regeneration of forests. It accorded the highest priority to sustainable management of the forest resource. It also stipulates that the rights and concessions relating to forest produce by tribes and other marginalised communities living within and near forests must be fully protected. The domestic requirements of fuel-wood, fodder, minor forest produce and construction timber should be the first charge on forest produce.

Similarly, the Biological Diversity Act, 2002, was enacted pursuant to the Convention on Biodiversity with the three-fold objective of conserving biological diversity, sustainable usage of its components and equitable benefit sharing. It also creates a three-tier structure of authorities to manage bio-diversity, viz., the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) at the national level, State Bio-diversity Boards (SBBs) at the state level and Bio-diversity Management Committees at the local level. Under the Act, the Central government has the power to notify threatened species, and the state government has the power to notify biodiversity heritage sites. Some of these biodiversity heritage sites have great sacramental and religious value to the tribes.

Another important legislation harmonising the pre-existing relationship between the tribes and the forest is the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006. The legislation vests the forest rights and occupation in forest land in forest dwelling Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers who have been residing in such forests for generations but whose rights could not be recorded and to provide for a framework for recording the forest rights so vested and the nature of evidence required for such recognition and vesting in respect of forest land.

FAITH AND THE FOREST: INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

The United Nations has also started emphasising the interplay between faith-based organisations and conservation efforts to fulfil the objectives of Sustainable Development Goals and the Agenda

2030 through the 'Faith for Earth' Initiative launched by the United Nations Environment Programme in 2017. The main pillars of this initiative are threefold, viz., to enable faith-based entities, organisations and leadership advocacy in environment protection, foster green investments and develop green assets by faith-based organisations in the implementation of SDGs and to provide knowledge and networks to enable their faith-based leaders to effectively communicate with decision-makers and the public.¹⁸

Another important facet of the 'Faith for Earth' Initiative is reflected through CREATION which encompasses principles of Communication, Respect, Empowerment, Action, Transformation, Inspiration, Organisation and Network. It corresponds to following shared values, viz., Communication with stakeholders at all levels; Respect for all religious/spiritual beliefs; Empowerment and engagement of stakeholders; Action in consonance with communal belief systems and individual reflection; Transformation to responsible lifestyle in individual behaviour premised on their faiths; Inspire novel and innovative methods to achieve 2030 Agenda; Organise knowledge and other resources related to faith and sustainable development; and Network – build a strong network between and faith-based organisations.¹⁹

As part of its Faith for Earth Initiative, the UNEP, in tandem with various other organisations, has launched the interfaith rainforest initiative, which aims to co-opt the moral authority, commitment and influence in the concerted efforts with the twin objective of securing the world's rainforests and well as its guardians, i.e., the indigenous peoples. Thus, the United Nations has repeatedly underscored the role of indigenous tribal groups and faith-based practices in effectively implementing modern conservation measures. This model has been successful in countries like Rwanda, Congo, Ethiopia, Cambodia, Peru, Indonesia, Brazil and Columbia through the multi-faith alliance of Buddhist, Christian and Islamic

religious groups to combat deforestation and protect its rainforest²⁰. The Guru Nanak Sacred Forest Initiative undertaken by the Sikh community under the aegis of EcoSikh organisation involved in afforestation in Canada, UK and Ireland now expanding its ambit to India is another classic example. The model of the Interfaith Rainforest Initiative can be replicated with the role and assistance of faith-based organisations in India, taking into the fold the tribal communities, particularly in community forestry schemes.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, there has emerged a discourse in the last few decades in India and around the world that views the existence of traditional forest dwellers as a hindrance to environmental protection and conservation. This is far-fetched from the truth and the ground reality as these forest dwellers and traditional groups are the final buffer from unchanneled corporatisation of forest resources. Thus, the core argument of this article is to contest these claims that indigeneity is rooted in so-called 'primitive' and traditional practices as being at loggerheads with sustainability. It paves the way for unlearning and recasting the understanding of indigeneity in evolving sustainable development frameworks that adequately factor in and account for indigenous practices.

FOOT NOTES :

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3. Atharva Veda (5.30.6) - "Man's paradise is on earth. This living world is the beloved place for all. It has the blessings of Nature's bounties. Live in a lovely spirit."
4. The Tree of Knowledge or the Tree of Life in the Biblical account of Paradise.
5. Jami` at-Tirmidhi (14:90).
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8. Id. at 75.

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**UNLOCKING CLEAN ENERGY POTENTIAL VIS-À-VIS
THE ENERGY CONSERVATION ACT, 2022**

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Clean energy, sustainability and climate change are intertwined current issues of debate that have attracted significant global attention in the wake of deteriorating environmental conditions in the realm of environmental jurisprudence highlighted through various international cooperative efforts such as United Nations Framework for Climate Change, G-20 Summit, United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (Goal-7) which have been actively working in protecting environmental harm being caused by energy sector. In the domain of energy sector's ever-increasing expansion, energy production, distribution and consumption have direct and indirect impacts on the overall environment including air and water pollution, greenhouse gas emissions resulting in habitat destruction and resource depletion. To curb these harmful effects, environmental law comes into play as it devises standards and guidelines which must be observed to minimize the harmful effects of the ever-expanding energy sector.

Climate change, driven primarily by greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuel use, poses a significant threat to our planet and requires urgent action. Consequently, the transition to clean energy sources has emerged as a crucial strategy to mitigate climate change and ensure a sustainable future. Clean energy, including renewable sources such as solar, wind, hydro, and geothermal power, offers a promising pathway to reduce and contain greenhouse gas emissions, minimize environmental impacts, and promote long-term sustainability. The importance of clean energy can be analyzed more clearly by addressing the climate change crisis and devising measures for achieving a resilient and low- carbon future. For fostering an equitable and sustainable shift to mitigate the impacts of climate change and

achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) requires the rapid and widespread adoption of renewable energy worldwide, while minimizing negative impacts on the environment. The potential of renewable energy to decarbonize the power sector is enormous, aligning with the seventh SDG of "affordable and clean energy." Scenarios that consider the SDGs and to limit global average temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre industrial levels, as outlined in the Paris Agreement, heavily rely on transitioning to renewable energy. This necessitates a doubling of annual investments in renewable-based power from 2019 to 2050, amounting to \$607 billion per year. The progress in renewable technologies presents an exceptional opportunity to proactively mitigate environmental risks by leveraging expert knowledge before widespread implementation takes place.

INDIA AND CLEAN ENERGY POTENTIAL

The Indian government has demonstrated strong commitment towards promoting clean energy through its extensive efforts in formulating and implementing relevant laws and policies. These initiatives aim to accelerate the transition to a low-carbon economy and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

One of the key measures taken by the government is the implementation of 'The Energy Conservation Act, 2001 as amended in 2022', which becomes a significant piece of legislation that plays a pivotal role in promoting energy efficiency and facilitating the adoption of clean energy sources in India. With the increasing global attention on mitigating climate change and transitioning towards sustainable energy practices, the Energy Conservation Act provides a comprehensive

framework for conserving energy, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and promoting the use of renewable energy technologies.

To support the growth of solar power, the government launched the National Solar Mission in 2010. This initiative sets ambitious targets for solar energy capacity addition, encourages investment in solar projects, and provides financial incentives and policy support to drive solar deployment across the country.

The Indian government has also established the Green Energy Corridors Initiative to strengthen the transmission infrastructure for renewable energy. This initiative focuses on developing dedicated transmission lines to evacuate power from renewable energy-rich regions to consumption centers, enabling smooth integration of clean energy into the grid.

Furthermore, the government has implemented the concept of Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs), which are tradable instruments representing the environmental attributes of one megawatt-hour of renewable energy generation. RECs provide an additional avenue for obligated entities to meet their renewable purchase obligations and promote market-based trading of clean energy.

These efforts are complemented by the creation of institutions such as the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) and the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) which play a crucial role in formulating policies, implementing programs, and driving initiatives for clean energy adoption and energy efficiency.

Through these laws and initiatives, the Indian government is actively working towards fostering a favorable regulatory environment and incentivizing the deployment of clean energy technologies.

THE ENERGY CONSERVATION ACT, 2022: HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The Energy Conservation (Amendment) Bill, 2022, was recently presented in the Lok Sabha and

subsequently enacted as law on 8th August 2022. This amendment holds great importance as it underscores India's commitment to sustainability and its pursuit of a net-zero economy by 2070.

The original Energy Conservation Act (ECA) of 2001 served as a foundation for promoting energy efficiency and conservation. It established norms and standards for appliances, equipment, and building construction to ensure the efficient utilization of energy. The legislation also established the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) as a statutory body responsible for coordinating and enforcing the provisions outlined in the ECA.

In 2010, the ECA underwent its first amendment to broaden its scope and encompass additional areas. These included energy conservation norms for buildings, enhanced energy efficiency standards for appliances and equipment, and the establishment of a framework for energy savings trading among energy-intensive designated consumers (DCs). It also allowed appeals to be heard by the Appellate Tribunal for Electricity (APTEL). The recent second amendment to the ECA signifies the Indian government's proactive approach in addressing critical energy sector issues. The amendments tackle pressing concerns and are essential for India's decarbonization efforts. The Energy Conservation (Amendment) Act, 2022 centers around the transition to sustainable energy practices, giving preference to renewable energy sources and green hydrogen. This Act aligns with India's five-point agenda presented at the 26th Conference of Parties (CoP 26) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change held in Glasgow in 2021. R.K. Singh, Union Minister of New and Renewable Energy quoted on the floor of Rajya Sabha, "India has emerged as a global frontrunner in the realm of renewable energy, showcasing commendable progress and achievements." He also highlighted a notable initiative contributing towards this success, the UJALA scheme known as Unnat Jyoti by Affordable LEDs for All, which has played a pivotal role in distributing LED bulbs to households across the country. As a result, this program has

yielded impressive outcomes, including a reduction of 105 million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions and a remarkable saving of 129 billion units of energy. India's commitment to addressing climate change is further exemplified by its significant achievements in emissions reduction. Having pledged during the COP21 summit in Paris to reduce the emissions intensity of its economy by 33-35% by 2030, India has already accomplished a reduction of over 30% as of 2022. In the words of Vaibhav Chaturvedi, Fellow, the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), "The passing of the Energy Conservation Amendment Act gives legislative teeth to India's domestic carbon credits trading market."

The primary focus of the Amendment Act, 2022 lies in the widespread adoption of renewable energy sources, the establishment of a national carbon market, the implementation of carbon trading, and the authorization of non-fossil energy resources to drive decarbonization efforts and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals outlined in the Paris Agreement.

KEY PROVISIONS AND AMENDMENTS IN THE ACT, 2022 :

To meet ambitious climate targets, the Central Government has passed the Energy Conservation (Amendment) Act, 2022. This amendment strengthens the regulatory framework for energy consumption and promotes energy efficiency in the country, building upon the two-decade-old Energy Conservation Act of 2001. Salient features of this Act are:

1. **Introduction of carbon credit trading:** The Act allows for the creation of a carbon market through the notification of a 'Carbon Credit Trading Scheme' (CCTS) by the Central Government. Carbon credits, earned from reducing greenhouse gas emissions, can be traded under this scheme in accordance with the Paris Agreement's Article 6. Entities complying with the CCTS will be issued carbon credit certificates, which can be voluntarily purchased. Carbon credits represent tradeable permits for a

specified amount of carbon emissions. This scheme has been envisaged by insertion of Sec 14AA of the Energy Conservation Amendment Act, 2022.

2. **Prohibition of non-conforming products:** The Central Government has the power to prohibit the manufacture or import of equipment, appliances, vehicles, or vessels that do not adhere to the specified energy consumption norms. Non-conforming industrial units can also be ordered to cease operations.

3. **Applicability to residential buildings:** The scope of the Act is expanded to include residential buildings. Previously, the Act only applied to commercial buildings with a specific connected load or contract demand. The existing Energy Conservation Building Code is replaced with the 'Energy Conservation and Sustainable Building Code' to reflect this broader scope and commitment towards sustainability which will set norms for energy efficiency conservation, renewable energy usage, and other green building requirements.

4. **Increased penalties:** The Amended Act introduces higher monetary penalties, with specific references to vehicle manufacturers and vessels that do not comply with energy consumption standards. This provision is covered under Section 26 of the Act, 2022.

5. **Obligation to use non-fossil fuel sources:** The Amendment Act empowers the central government to set energy consumption standards. It introduces the provision for designated consumers to meet a minimum share of their energy consumption from non-fossil fuel sources. Different consumption thresholds can be specified for different consumer categories and non-fossil fuel sources. Designated consumers include industries like mining, steel, cement, textile, chemicals, petrochemicals, as well as the transport sector including Railways, and commercial buildings as specified in the schedule.

6. **Standards for vehicles and vessels:** The scope of the Amendment Act extends to include

vehicles (as defined under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988) and vessels (including ships and boats) for specifying energy consumption standards.

7. Regulatory powers of SERCs: The Amendment Act grants State Electricity Regulatory Commissions (SERCs) the authority to impose penalties under the Act and enables them to make regulations for fulfilling their functions.

The Act's requirement for non-fossil fuel consumption also supports the development of green hydrogen production capacity and the effective implementation of the Green Hydrogen Policy announced last year.

CONCLUSION :

In nutshell, India holds immense potential in harnessing clean energy sources and is actively engaged in pursuing a sustainable energy future. With its vast solar and wind resources, the country has taken significant strides towards the deployment of renewable energy technologies. Initiatives such as the UJALA scheme have amply demonstrated the remarkable impact of energy conservation efforts, leading to substantial reductions in carbon emissions and energy consumption.

The Energy Conservation (Amendment) Act, 2022 is a steppingstone towards enhancing clean energy efficiency, promoting renewable energy sources, and advancing sustainability in India. Through the Act, India has formulated energy consumption norms, introduced renewable purchase obligations, and promoted energy audits and energy managers. This framework has helped drive the integration of renewable energy sources, improve energy efficiency in buildings and industries, and incentivize the adoption of clean energy technologies.

India's commitment to clean energy is not only crucial for achieving its climate goals but also provides significant opportunities for economic growth, job creation, and energy security. By capitalizing on its renewable energy potential, India can further strengthen its position as a global leader in clean energy adoption and contribute to global efforts in combating climate change.

As India continues to prioritize clean energy and enhance the implementation of the Energy Conservation Act, it is poised to unlock even higher clean energy potential. By leveraging technological advancements, promoting research and innovation, and fostering partnerships and collaborations, India can pave the way towards a sustainable and resilient energy landscape, ensuring a greener and brighter future for the coming generations.

ENDNOTES:

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ACHIEVEMENTS & ACTIVITIES

University Institute of Laws,
Panjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana

UIL: ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

1. Invited Lectures

- On February 24, 2023, the NSS Unit of Panjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana, organized a Guest Lecture on the theme "Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women" as part of Panjab University's G20 Youth Fortnight. The guest speaker, Mrs. Indu Rani, shared her inspiring story and highlighted the role of education in empowering women. The session was interactive, with students actively engaging and asking questions. Prof. (Dr.) Aman A. Cheema, Director of Panjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana, also spoke about women's entrepreneurship and India's start-up landscape.
- On February 28, 2023, the University Institute of Laws, Panjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana, organized a Guest Lecture to commemorate National Science Day, celebrating the discovery of the Raman Effect by India's first Nobel Laureate in Physics, Sir C. V. Raman, on February 28, 1928. The seminar was conducted under the guidance of Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema, Director of PU Regional Centre, Ludhiana. Prof. (Dr.) Ashish Virk and Dr. Nisha Jindal coordinated this event. Mrs. Kusum Lata, a State and National awardee and retired Principal of Government High School, Ludhiana, served as the resource person. She enlightened students about global technological innovations that contribute to our well-being and encouraged them to learn from the life experiences of great scientists worldwide. The lecture also featured several fun-based science activities to explain fundamental scientific phenomena. Students from B.A.LL.B. and LL.B. attended the program, and Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema concluded the event by expressing her gratitude to the coordinators and sharing her thoughts on scientific zeal and curiosity with the students.
- On March 1, 2023, the University Institute of Laws, Panjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana, organized a Guest Lecture on the theme "Practical Implications of Labour Laws" under the guidance of Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema. The resource person for the session was Adv. Anil Arora, a specialist in Labour Laws with 37 years of experience. He has successfully settled numerous industrial disputes for major clients. Mr. Anil Arora provided insights into labour laws through a presentation and explained various dispute resolution methods and the journey of cases to labour courts and tribunals.
- On March 3, 2023, the University Institute of Laws, Panjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana, organized a guest lecture on "Role Of Women in Panchayati Raj Institutions" under the guidance of Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema. Dr. Aditi Sharma and Mrs. Homa Bansal were the coordinators of this event. The lecture aimed to enlighten students about current affairs and provide a platform for them to express their views. Prof. Rupinderjit Kaur, District Development and Panchayat Officer, Ludhiana, discussed the role of women in Panchayati Raj Institutions, highlighting the challenges and government initiatives. The event concluded with an interactive question and answer session.
- On March 6, 2023, the department organized a guest lecture on "General Cancer Awareness & Screening" in observance of World Cancer Day. The theme for 2023 was "Closing the Care Gap." The lecture was conducted under the

guidance of Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema, Director of PURC, Ludhiana. Adv. Vandana Bhanot and Adv. Sunil Mittal coordinated the event. Dr. Jyoti Gupta Anand, Consultant in the Department of Medical Oncology at Yashoda Cancer Institute, Gaziabad, delivered the lecture, emphasizing the importance of cancer awareness and prevention. She discussed various types of cancers, their origins, and prevention methods, including lifestyle changes and regular checkups. The lecture concluded with an interactive session, and Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema expressed gratitude to the speaker for sharing her expertise.

- On March 21, 2023, the University Institute of Laws, Panjab University Regional Centre in Ludhiana organized a "Panel Discussion on Gender Neutrality in Law". The event aimed to explore gender equality issues within different personal laws. Prof. Aman Amrit Cheema, the Director, guided the discussion divided into three sessions. Distinguished panellists from various legal sectors discussed topics such as Hindu personal laws, Muslim and Parsi personal laws, and other related issues. The event had a profound impact on aspiring legal experts and inspired their participation in debates and discussions.
- On February 23, 2023, as part of Panjab University's G20 Youth Fortnight, a guest lecture on "Lifestyle for Saving the Environment" was organized under the guidance of Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema, Director of PU Regional Centre, Ludhiana. Dr. Neelam Batra (NSS Program Officer, PURC) and Adv. Sarita Paul served as faculty coordinators for the event. Dr. Sarika Verma, Director of Allergy Doc & Chairperson of IMA Gurgaon Women Doctors' Wing, discussed the importance of adopting a sustainable lifestyle to protect the environment. She emphasized the principles of "Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle" and addressed the negative impacts of fast fashion and E-waste. The lecture included a Q&A session to engage the audience.

- To mark International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, the University Institute of Law, Panjab University Regional Centre Ludhiana, organized a lecture on "Drug Abuse: Current Understandings, Identification, Impact on Human Beings, and Treatment." Dr. Devender Kumar, Assistant Professor in Clinical Psychology at PGIMER, Chandigarh, delivered the lecture on July 7, 2023, via virtual mode. Dr. Kumar discussed the adverse effects of various drugs on physical and mental health, emphasizing the need for awareness and prevention. Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema, Director of Punjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana, expressed gratitude to the speaker, and the event was successfully coordinated by Faculty Coordinator Adv. Sunil Mittal and Student Coordinators Jaya Singh Ahluwalia and Jesus Goyal.

2. Activities related to G20

- As India hosts the G-20 from December 2022 to November 2023, Panjab University, Chandigarh, was privileged to be selected as one of the 76 universities for hosting lecture series and organizing student-centric activities. Panjab University Regional Centre's IQAC organized a session on "Empowering Women: A Key to Sustainable Development" on February 20, 2023. Dr. Aditi Sharma, Associate Professor at the University Institute of Laws, Ludhiana, served as the resource person. Dr. Pooja Sikka and Dr. Samni Singla coordinated the event. The session began with Director Professor (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema's insightful remarks. Dr. Sharma discussed the background of sustainable development goals and the significance of gender equality in achieving them. She also highlighted the challenges and achievements in this context, including low female representation in Indian Parliament and economic disparities. The session concluded with a call to recognize that gender equality involves both genders and is essential for development.

- On February 24, 2023, the University Institute of Laws, Panjab University Regional Centre in Ludhiana, organized a "Documentary Screening of 'Blood Diamonds'" as part of India's G20 presidency. The event aimed to raise awareness about the importance of a sustainable lifestyle. The faculty emphasized the negative social impact of "fast fashion" and its association with discrimination, violence, and human rights abuses. Students from B.A.LL.B. and LL.B attended the event, and Prof. (Dr.) Aman A. Cheema concluded by expressing gratitude to the coordinators.
- On February 27, 2023, a silent March was organized by the University Institute of Laws, Panjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana, as part of India's G20 presidency's "Bodhi: An Awareness Drive." Prof. (Dr.) Aman A. Cheema, Director of PU Regional Centre, Ludhiana, flagged off the March, which aimed to highlight the need for sustainable consumption patterns in society. The event drew attention to the issues of wastage and rising costs due to unbridled consumption. Students from B.A.LL.B., LL.B., and LL.M. participated in large numbers. The event successfully encouraged reflection on the importance of sustainable consumption for the well-being of current and future generations.
- On February 28, 2023, the Internal Quality Assurance Cell, University Institute of Laws, Panjab University Regional Centre Ludhiana, in collaboration with PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry, New Delhi, organized a stand-alone session on "India's Trade Prospects with G20 Countries." Dr. S.P. Sharma, Chief Economist of PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry, served as the resource person. Dr. Pooja Sikka and Dr. Samni Singla coordinated the event. Dr. Sharma, with 25 years of diverse experience, discussed the role of the G20 in today's global economic environment, emphasizing its significance in connecting the world.
- Also, on February 28, 2023, the University Institute of Laws organized a special lecture on "G20: Gender-based Wage Difference in the Labour Market" under the guidance of Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema, Director of PU Regional Centre, Ludhiana. Dr. Rajni Bagga and Ms. Homa Bansal were the coordinators. The lecture explored gender inequality in the labour market, discussing topics such as employer discrimination, policies, and landmark cases. Mrs. Aparna MB (IAS), Assistant Commissioner, Ludhiana, was the resource person, and the event featured an interactive Q&A session.

COLLEGIATE ACTIVITIES

I. NSS-Related Activities

- Students from the University Institute of Laws, PURC, Ludhiana, enthusiastically participated in the National Youth Festival 2023, held from January 12th to 16th, 2023, in Hubbali /Dharwad, Karnataka. Four student volunteers, namely Manmeet Kaur, Ishan Bhardwaj, Yati, and Aniket, had the privilege of experiencing India's rich cultural diversity under the guidance of NSS Officer, Dr. Neelam Batra, and Director, Prof. Aman Amrit Cheema. The National Youth Festival featured a Youth Summit with eminent personalities from various fields delivering lectures on topics such as mental health, animation, innovation, and the future of startups in India. Cultural festivities in the evening showcased talented artists from the music and dance industry, with Prime Minister Sri Narendra Modi gracing the inauguration ceremony in Hubbali. A Food Fest allowed different states to present their cuisines, offering insights into the country's diverse culinary heritage. Volunteers also participated in a cultural exhibition, exploring the rich cultural traditions of various regions. The festival was a rewarding experience for all participants.
- On January 25, 2023, the University Institute of Laws, Panjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana, observed National Voters Day with

an interactive discourse on the institute campus. The event aimed to enhance students' knowledge of the voting system in India under the theme "NOTHING LIKE VOTING, I VOTE FOR SURE." Dr. Baljinder Singh Dhillon (Returning Officer, 65-North Ludhiana), Ms. Anita Gulati (SVEEP Incharge), Mr. Amit Arora (Supervisor), and others graced the occasion. They shared information about the functioning of voting machines, the importance of unbiased voting, and the overall voting system in the context of the changing political landscape. Prof. (Dr.) Aman A. Cheema, Director of PURC, Ludhiana, provided guidance for the event, which was coordinated by Dr. Nisha Jindal.

- On February 23, 2023, the NSS Unit at the University Institute of Laws, Panjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana, organized a Poster Making Competition as part of Panjab University's G20 Youth Fortnight. The theme of the competition was aligned with India's G20 Presidency: "VasudhaivaKutumbakam" or "One Earth, One Family & One Future." This event was held under the guidance of Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema, Director of PU Regional Centre, Ludhiana. Dr. Neelam Batra coordinated the event, which saw enthusiastic participation from students in B.A.LL.B. and LL.B. programs. Dr. Rajnish Saryal and Adv. Sarita Paul served as the esteemed judges for this competition.
- The NSS Unit at the University Institute of Law, Panjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana, actively participated in the "National Integration Camp" organized by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India. This camp was held at the University of Engineering and Management, Sikar Road, Jaipur, Rajasthan, from February 27, 2023, to March 5, 2023. Prof. (Dr.) Aman Cheema and Dr. Neelam Batra, NSS Programme Officer, provided guidance for this event. Two NSS volunteers, Naman Chauhan (B.A.LL.B. 6th Semester) and Simranpreet Singh (B.A.LL.B. 6th Semester), were selected to represent their

institution. Dr. Neelam Batra led the Chandigarh region's contingent, consisting of 18 volunteers, with 10 from Punjab and 8 from Himachal Pradesh. During the camp, numerous seminars were conducted, featuring erudite speakers who shared insights on topics such as Women Empowerment, Mission Life, India's Path to Development, Government's Role, Youth's Vision for India's Future, Gender Equality, and Sustainable Development. Simranpreet Singh and Naman Chauhan actively participated in activities like debates, poster making, and extemporaneous speaking, with a specific focus on G20 and Y20 themes. Approximately 200 NSS volunteers from across India participated, fostering the exchange of ideas on various subjects. In addition to these informative sessions, participants engaged in yoga, aerobics, and a campus cleanliness drive. Dr. Neelam Batra, NSS Unit Program Officer, led daily meditation sessions to emphasize its importance. Cultural events showcased the rich cultural diversity of different states, with Chandigarh contingent volunteers receiving praise for their traditional performances. A visit to various Jaipur City locations, including temples, palaces, and forts, provided a cultural experience. The camp culminated in a cultural parade and a valedictory session attended by dignitaries, including the MLA of Chomu Constituency, Regional Directorate of NSS, Jaipur, and the Vice-Chancellor of UEM. Dr. Neelam Batra received a memento, and certificates were awarded to all NSS volunteers from the Chandigarh contingent for their active participation. The camp's various sessions, cultural events, and visits proved to be a fruitful endeavour.

- The NSS Unit of the University Institute of Laws, Panjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana, paid tribute to freedom fighters Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, and Sukhdev on March 22, 2023, to commemorate Shaheedi Diwas (Martyrs' Day). The event, held under the guidance of Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema, Director of PU

Regional Centre, and NSS Program Officer Dr. Neelam Batra, featured floral tributes to these freedom fighters. A documentary on Shaheed Bhagat Singh, titled "Inquilab" and directed by Gauhar Raza, was screened. Students also paid homage through patriotic songs and poems.

- The NSS Unit of the University Institute of Laws, Panjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana, organized an awareness seminar on "Organ Donation" on August 6, 2023. Dr. Sourabh Sharma, Manager-Projects and Outreach at ORGAN-India, an initiative by Parashar Foundation, an NGO dedicated to organ donation and transplantation in India, served as the guest speaker. This informative event was held under the patronage of Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema, Director of Punjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana. It was organized by Programme Officer Dr. Pooja Sikka, Adv. Sunil Mittal, and Ms. Sumanpreet Kaur.
- To address environmental concerns, students planted 100 trees at PU Constituent College, Village Kariyal, Dharamkot, Distt. Moga, to promote environmental consciousness. This collective effort aimed to create a positive impact. The NSS unit of the University Institute of Laws collaborated with the NSS Unit of Panjab University Constituent College, Dharamkot, Distt. Moga, to organize an Awareness Drive on Drug Abuse on August 31, 2023, in Village Kariyal, Dharamkot, Distt. Moga, as part of the 'Meri Maati, Mera Desh' Campaign. The event's patrons were Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema, Director, Punjab University, Ludhiana, and Prof. (Dr.) Ashish Virk, Principal, PU Constituent College, Village Kariyal, Dharamkot, Distt. Moga. Faculty members Dr. Pooja Sikka, Program Officer, and Ms. Sumanpreet Kaur coordinated the event. During the event, Prof. (Dr.) Ashish Virk addressed the villagers, emphasizing the severity of drug abuse with the message "Choose not to use! Chase your dreams, not drugs." IPTA, an NGO, presented a Nukkad

Natak vividly portraying how college students are coerced into drug usage and how their lives and families suffer due to their relentless drug needs. The NSS volunteers engaged with the villagers, emphasizing the importance of awareness and staying away from drugs. The village's sarpanch, Rupinderjeet Singh, appreciated and expressed gratitude towards Prof. (Dr.) Ashish Virk and all other volunteers, acknowledging their dedicated presence in the village. These efforts in spreading socio-legal awareness about drug abuse, along with a door-to-door grassroots campaign, were recognized as significant contributions toward community betterment.

II. Skill Development Competitions

- The Legal Aid Committee of the University Institute of Laws, Panjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana, organized a Poster Making competition on January 25, 2023, to commemorate Republic Day. The theme of the competition was "Legal Awareness." Dr. Aditi Sharma and Dr. Pooja Sikka judged the event, which saw enthusiastic participation from many students. Participants not only showcased their artistic abilities but also demonstrated their intellectual capabilities by addressing various aspects of legal awareness in their posters. Simranpreet Singh (B.A.LL.B. 6th Semester) won the first prize, Aarti Gautam (B.A.LL.B. 8th Semester) secured the second prize, and Sukhpreet Kaur Gill (LL.B. 2nd Semester) claimed the third prize. Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema provided guidance for the event, and faculty coordinators were Dr. Vaishali Thakur and Ms. Sumanpreet Kaur.
- The University Institute of Laws, Panjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana, organized a dance competition titled "Tapping Feet" on February 16, 2023. This event aimed to showcase the talents of budding dancers under the guidance of Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema, Director of the institute. Dr. Harpreet Kaur Vohra and Ms. Homa Bansal organized the event, which featured 13 solo performances

and four group performances that captivated the audience. In the solo category, Ms. Srishty of BA.LL.B. (4th Semester) secured the first position, while Divseerat Kaur of BA.LL.B. (4th Semester) and Garima of BA.LL.B. (2nd Semester) tied for the second position. The first prize in the group dance category went to Ms. Arti of BA.LL.B. (8th Semester) and Ms. Monika from BA.LL.B. (8th Semester). Prizes and certificates were awarded by the judges to the winners and volunteers, who were also commended for their exceptional performances.

- A Slogan Writing competition was held on February 21, 2023, at the University Institute of Laws, Punjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana, in celebration of 'International Mother Language Day.' Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema, Director, provided guidance for this event organized by Ms. Shalini Verma and Mr. Baldev Singh. The competition aimed to foster love for students' mother tongue. Dr. Nisha Jindal and Advocate Renu Sharma served as the jury for the event. Simranpreet Singh (BA. LL.B. 6th Semester) secured the first prize, Aastha (BA.LL.B. 4th Semester) claimed the second prize, and Triveni Chauhan (BA.LL.B. 4th Semester) won the third prize. During the event, Director Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema encouraged students to participate in such competitions and highlighted the importance of preserving one's mother tongue.
- On March 7, 2023, the University Institute of Laws, Panjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana, organized an Intra-departmental Declamation Competition as part of India's G20 presidency. The event, guided by Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema, Director of PURC, Ludhiana, aimed to educate students about the significance of sustainable development in modern society. Adv. Vandana Bhanot and Adv. Sunil Mittal coordinated the event. Students actively participated and shared their thoughts on the topics "Financing Cities of Tomorrow" and "Reducing Carbon Footprints." Dr. Rajnish Saryal and Dr. Harpreet Kaur Vohra served as

the judges, with Mr. Aakash Goyat of B.A.LL.B. (8th Semester) winning the first position and Ms. Simarpreet Kaur of B.A.LL.B (8th Semester) securing the second position. The event featured students from B.A.LL.B. and LL.B. programs and concluded with Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema expressing gratitude to the coordinators and students while sharing her viewpoint on sustainable development's role in society.

- Panjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana, organized the Teej Utsav on August 10, 2023, in the Annie Besant Hall, under the able guidance of Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema, Director. The event featured delightful performances, including dance and singing by students, and a Teej Competition that rejuvenated the audience's enthusiasm. The winners received titles such as Ms. Teej, which went to Divseerat Kaur (B.A.LL.B. 5th Semester), Sohni Mutiyaar awarded to Loveleen Kaur (LL.B. 3rd Semester), Gidhyaan di Rani secured by Divya (B.A.LL.B. 2nd Semester), PURC da Chobar bagged by Simranpreet Singh (B.A.LL.B. 4th Semester), and Ghaint Gabru won by Nipun Sharma (B.A.LL.B. 2nd Semester). The event was skillfully anchored by Anuvanshjeet Kaur, Gursimran Kaur, Aarushi, and Aishmeen, and it proved to be a successful endeavor. Student Coordinators Hardik, Akshita, and Volunteers Naman Chauhan, Nitin Kumar, Aniket, Simranpreet Singh, and Jesus Goyal played significant roles in organizing the event. Dr. Vaishali Thakur, Dr. Rajni Bagga, and Ms. Sumanpreet Kaur convened the event.
- To commemorate Independence Day, the University Institute of Laws, Panjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana, organized a quiz competition on August 16, 2023, under the guidance of Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema, Director of Punjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana. The quiz, titled 'Freedom Struggle: A Journey from Plassey to Partition,' was convened by Dr. Meera Nagpal. Teams were named after freedom fighters, including Birsa Munda, Aruna Asaf Ali, Subhash Chandra Bose,

and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. Jessica and Astha Paliwal, students from B.A.LL.B. 5th Semester, emerged as the winners. Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema commended the active engagement of the students during the quiz. The quiz masters, Jesus Goyal and Tarushi Monga, designed rounds dedicated to the Revolt of 1857, Partition, and battles fought by regional powers against the British. Lavanaya Khanna, another student convener, added interest to the quiz by posing questions related to the freedom struggle to the audience. The University Institute of Law, Panjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana, organized a Panel Discussion on the case Hrishikesh Sahoo vs. State of Karnataka (Writ Petition No. 48367 of 2018) on August 22, 2023. The event focused on the issue of Marital Rape and was held under the guidance of Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema, Director of Punjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana. The event was successfully coordinated by Faculty Coordinators Adv. Vandana Bhanot and Adv. Sunil Mittal, along with Student Coordinators Jesus Goyal and Deeksha.

III. National Moot Court Competition and National Judgment Writing Competition

- On March 28-29, 2023, the University Institute of Laws, Panjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana, organized two prestigious national-level competitions: the National Judgment Writing Competition and the National Moot Court Competition, 2023, conducted in a hybrid mode. These competitions were conducted under the able guidance of Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema, the Director of Panjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana. Dr. Nisha Jindal and Dr. Samni Singla served as the coordinators for these events. A total of 15 teams from all corners of India participated in the National Moot Court Competition, which kicked off on March 28, '23. On the first day, we hosted Preliminary and Quarter Final Rounds. On the second day, we held the Semi-final and Final Rounds. The Final Round featured two

outstanding teams: UPES, Dehradun, and Maharashtra National Law University, Nagpur. The distinguished panel of judges for the final round included Hon'ble Justice Darshan Singh (Retd.) from the Punjab and Haryana High Court, Sh. B.S. Sandhu, Chairperson, PLA, Ludhiana, District and Sessions Judge (Retd.), and Advocate B.K Goel. These esteemed judges also graced the Valedictory Session as guests of honor, where they shared insights into the conduct lawyers should adopt and stressed the importance of learning through such competitions. Ultimately, the team from MNLU, Nagpur, emerged as the winners of the National Moot Court Competition, 2023, with the team from UPES, Dehradun, securing the Runner-Up position. Speaker 2 of MNLU, Nagpur, was awarded the Best Speaker Award, Hukam Raj of UILS, Panjab University, Chandigarh, received the Best Researcher Award, and the Best Memorial Award was bestowed upon the team from HPNLU, Himachal Pradesh. The Judgment Writing Competition aimed to enhance students' skills in creative lawyering and innovative judging. The team of Ashish Kumar and Md Arsam from Central University of South Bihar emerged as the winners of the National Judgment Writing Competition, with the team of Sayma Firdaus and Anjali Kumari from the same institution being declared as the Runners-Up.

IV. G.K. Chatrath Memorial Legal and Cultural Fest - Astrea

- On February 26, 2023, the University Institute of Laws, Ludhiana, organized Astrea under the esteemed guidance of the institute's director, Prof. Dr.Aman Amrit Cheema. The faculty conveners, Dr. Neelam Batra, Dr. Rajnish Saryal, and Adv. Renu Sharma, coordinated various legal and cultural events, including client counselling, The Great Bare Act, legal capsule, lens mania, Nukkad Natak, and poster making. Participants exhibited their knowledge and talents in all these events. The most anticipated event of the fest was the celebrity advocacy,

which proved to be extremely interesting and engaging. Raghav from GNDU, Jalandhar, clinched the title in The Great Bare Act, with Suraj Devgan from PURC as the runner-up. The team from Govt. Rajindra College, Bathinda, emerged victorious in the Nukkad Natak competition, with CT University as the runner-up. In Legal Capsule, Gauravveer Sohal and Ashutosh Sharma from Punjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana, secured the first position, while Ridhima Bansal and Shreya Maurya from PURC stood second. Muskan Solanki from the Department of Laws, PU, Chandigarh, secured the top position in celebrity advocacy, along with Aakash Goyal from PURC, Ludhiana, as the runner-up. Hemantjit Singh from GNDU, Jalandhar, and Noordeep Kaur from GHG Institute of Law, Sidhwan Khurd, secured first and second positions, respectively. More than 150 students from various parts of India, including Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, and even Mumbai, participated in this two-day fest. The day concluded with a valedictory ceremony, where all the winners and participants were honoured by the Honourable chief guest Ms. Anu Chatrath, Senior Advocate, Punjab and Haryana High Court, Chandigarh. Day 2 featured various events such as Snoop-it-up, Impromptu, Dress Code, and Crowd Attraction. Participants once again showcased their knowledge and talents in these events. Miss Shimla 2011, Bhavdeep Kaur, declared the team from CT University as the winner, with the team from PURC, Ludhiana, as the runner-up. Adv. Gurdeep Bakshi declared Samridhi Kapila from Govt. College for Girls, Ludhiana, as the winner of Impromptu. The day concluded with a talent hunt show, where participants displayed their skills in different events like Bhangra, Haryanvi dance, Sufi singing, classical dance, histrionics, poem recitation, stand-up comedy, etc. Mr. Imran Athar, Director of Theatrical Plays, and Ms. Purva Kathak exponent served as the judges. More than 170

students from various parts of India, including Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Mumbai, etc., participated in this two-day fest.

V. Live Telecast of Union Budget

On February 1, 2023, the Internal Quality Assurance Cell at the University Institute of Laws, Panjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana, organized a live telecast session of the Union Budget 2023, starting from 11:15 a.m. This session was conducted for the students of Panjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana, under the able guidance of the worthy Director, Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema. During the session, the Honourable Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented the Union Budget 2023 and outlined its priorities, including inclusive development, infrastructure and investment, green growth, unleashing the potential, youth power, reaching the last mile, and financial sector. This valuable information sparked lively discussions among the students about the Union Budget and its impact on the Indian Economy. Following the event, a colloquy session was held, in which Dr. Pooja Sikka, faculty coordinator, provided an overview of the entire budget and explained it in terms of macroeconomic indicators. She also presented the sector-wise impact of the Union budget. Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema, in her address, shared her views on the pros and cons of Budget 2023-2024, offering an inspiring vision. She emphasized that the budget has prioritized maximizing the fiscal impulse to improve potential growth while adhering to medium-term fiscal sustainability. Dr. Vaishali Thakur, Dr. Nisha Jindal, and Dr. Samni Singla also shared their perspectives on the budget. The session was efficiently coordinated by student coordinators Nandini and Naman (B.A.LL.B. 6th Semester) and Yashika (B.A.LL.B. 4th Semester). The event concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr. Nisha Jindal and Dr. Samni Singla, faculty coordinators of the event.

VI. Educational Visits

Panjab University Regional Centre Ludhiana organized an educational trip to Rajasthan from February 20 to February 26, '23. The faculty members responsible for conducting the trip were Mr. Surender Kumar, Ms. Tamanna Kohli, and Ms. Sumanpreet Kaur. During the trip, students enjoyed a Jeep Safari, Camel Safari, ATV rides over sand dunes, and witnessed a breathtaking sunset in Jaisalmer. They also experienced a captivating cultural program of Rajasthan that introduced them to local traditions. The students explored attractions such as Jaisalmer Fort, Kothari's Patwa ki Haweli, Sajjangarh Fort with marvelous architecture and interiors adorned with intricate designs and paintings. The journey continued to Udaipur, the "City of Lakes," where students marveled at the majestic City Palace and enjoyed boating at Lake Pichola and Fatehsagar Lake. The trip's highlight was savoring Rajasthani cuisine, Daal Baati Churma, which delighted all participants. The entire trip provided unforgettable memories.

ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Teams of UIL, PURC Won National Moot Court Competitions

The students of University Institute of Laws, Panjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana bagged First position in the 1st Sardarni Manjeet Kaur Memorial National Moot Court Competition, organized by CT University, South Campus, Shahpur, Jalandhar, on April 25 and 26, 2023. This competition witnessed participation from prestigious law colleges and universities across the country, providing a platform for law students to showcase their skills in legal research, drafting, and advocacy. Under the guidance and support of Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema, Director of PURC, Ludhiana, along with faculty coordinators Dr. Nisha Jindal and Dr. Samni Singla, our students worked tirelessly to prepare their arguments and delivered them with precision during the competition. Their dedication paid off as they

brought home the prestigious trophy. Ajitabh Sharma, Simarpreet Kaur, and Srishti Punj, students of B.A.LL.B. 8th Semester, represented the Institute and secured the winners' trophy along with a cash prize of Rs. 11,000. Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema extended her congratulations to the team, highlighting that their achievement will inspire other law students to excel in their respective fields.

The University Institute of Laws, Panjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana, is equally proud to share that its students secured the first position in the Panjab University Swami Sarvanand Giri National Moot Court Competition, 2023, as part of 'Legal Odyssey' organized by the University Institute of Legal Studies, Panjab University SSG Regional Centre, Hoshiarpur, held on April 21 and 22, '23. This competition witnessed participation from top law schools and universities across the country Under the guidance and support of Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema, Director of PURC, Ludhiana, along with faculty coordinators Dr. Nisha Jindal and Dr. Samni Singla, our students surpassed all other teams to claim the coveted first position. The team demonstrated exceptional legal acumen and analytical skills in their arguments, earning praise from the judges. Jessica, Jesus Goyal, and Shristy, students of B.A.LL.B. 4th Semester, represented the Institute and secured the winner's trophy and the trophy for the best memorial, along with a cash prize worth Rs. 30,000. A team of three students from the University Institute of Laws, Panjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana, achieved the first position in the National Moot Court Competition organized by Bharati Vidyapeeth (deemed to be University) Institute of Management and Research, New Delhi, held on March 31 and April 1, 2023. This competition witnessed participation from 39 Indian Universities. Under the guidance and persistent support of Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema, Director of PURC, Ludhiana, and with assistance from faculty coordinators Dr. Nisha

performed exceptionally well. They impressed the judges with their research, legal reasoning and oratory skills, leaving no stone unturned in their quest for victory. Khushi Aggarwal, Divyansh Yadav, and Sneha Shukla, students of B.A. LL.B. 4th Semester, represented the Institute and secured the trophy, a cash prize of Rs. 21,000, and gift vouchers worth Rs. 10,000 each from Addictive Learning Technology Private Limited (Law Sikho). Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema congratulated the students and wished them the very best for their future endeavour.

2. Quiz Competition

Taniya, an LL.B. 4th Semester student at the University Institute of Laws, secured the first position in an Online Quiz Competition organized by the Pro bono Club of the Department of Law, School of Legal Studies, Central University of Punjab, Bathinda, under the aegis of the Department of Justice, Ministry of Law and Justice, Government of India, held on March 15, '23. She earned a trophy and a certificate of merit. The quiz questions were based on the theme of Pro Bono Legal services, NALSA, schemes for victim compensation, Free Legal Aid schemes, and the Constitution of India. Under the able guidance and continuous support of Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema, Director of Panjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana, and faculty coordinator Dr. Nisha Jindal, students consistently perform exceptionally well. Prof. (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema congratulated the winner and extended best wishes for her future endeavors.

3. Women's Deadlifting Championship

Shanal Jain secured the 1st prize in the Open Punjab Men's Benchpress and Women's Deadlift Championship under respective weight categories, held in Sudhar, Punjab. She owes her success to her coach, Gurpreet Powerlifter Sony.

4. State Award for Raising Awareness

On the occasion of International Zero Waste Day, Kirti Bhardwaj, a BA.LL.B. 6th Semester student, received the state award for her efforts in raising awareness about the 4R's of waste management and managing plastic and E-waste in U.T Chandigarh on March 30, '23. She received the award from Shri Sanjay Tandon, President of Competent Foundation Chandigarh, Shri Kanwarjeet Singh, Senior Deputy Mayor, UT, Chandigarh, Shri Nemi Chand, State Liaison Officer. NSS, Prof. Dr. Renu Trikha, Chief Advisor Mission Waste to Wealth, Smt. Neena Kalia, Deputy Director, Education Department under Mission Waste to Wealth, organized by the Department of Environment, Chandigarh Administration, Chandigarh Pollution Control Committee, Department of Education in association with Swarmani Youth Welfare Association.

UIL: FACULTY ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

Prof. (Dr.) Arti Puri

Guest Lectures/ Addresses:

- Presented a lecture at the National Seminar on "Diverse Dimensions of Women Empowerment in the Present Scenario: Issues and Challenges" held at G.H.G Institute of Law, Sidhwan Khurd, on February 16, 2023.

Prof (Dr.) Aman Amrit Cheema

Guest Lectures/ Addresses:

- Invited Lecture : "Spirituality and the Legal Profession to commemorate the 74th Republic Day, organized by Panjab University Regional Centre, Sri Muksar Sahib, on January 25, 2023.
- Invited Lecture : "An Apparent Clash Between Personal Laws and Secular Laws vis-a-vis Child Marriages in India: The Communal, Medical, and Legal Ramifications organized by Panjab University Constituent College, Dharamkot, on February 3, 2023.

- Invited Lecture as Resource Person : "Gender Equality and Women Empowerment", organized by the Life Long Learning Department, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, at Village Achrawala, Sanganer, Jaipur, on March 10, 2023.
- Invited Lecture: "Categorization of a Child as an Adult vis-a-vis Juvenile Justice Act, 2015: Is it Justified?" organized by UFYLC, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, on March 11, 2023.
- Invited Lecture : "From Imposing Criminal Sanctions to Protecting DRUG Abusers' Health: Does EURASIA Need to Learn the Portugal Way?" at "Special Topics on Asian Community: Legal, Environmental, Political, and Social-Cultural" course in collaboration with Eurasia Foundation from Asia, Tokyo, Japan, organized by University Institute of Laws, Punjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana, on April 13, 2023.
- Panel Discussion on the sub-theme "Domestic Violence Against Men" at the Panel Discussion on Gender Neutrality in Personal Laws, organized by University Institute of Laws, Panjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana, on March 21, 2023.
- Invited Lecture on "Is Stealth Theocracy a Dimension of State Gaslighting?" organized by Eurasia Foundation, Tokyo, Japan, on April 21, 2023.
- Invited Lecture at the National Conference on Women Across Disciplines, organized by the Department of Lifelong Learning, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, on August 7-8, 2023.
- Invited Lecture on "Anti-Ragging Laws in India", organized by the Department of Animal Biotechnology, Guru Angad Dev Veterinary and Animal Science University, Ludhiana, on August 16, 2023.

Published Articles / Editorials / Write-ups :

- Wrote an editorial titled "The Necessity of Restorative Justice in Ecocide Crimes" published in the University Institute of Laws Bulletin, Inaugural Issue, 2023 Edition, pp-13.

Prof. (Dr.) Ashish Virk

- Principal (Additional Charge), Panjab University Constituent College, Karyal, Dharamkot, Dist. Moga, Punjab. (Since May 2, 2023, to Present)
- Member, Board of Studies in Law (UG/PG), Panjab University, Chandigarh, from April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024.

Guest Lectures/ Addresses:

- Keynote address : on "Post-Genderism: Beyond the Gender Binaries" at the Inaugural Session of the National Seminar on 'Gender Binary (IES): Praxis, Projections, and Reflections,' organized by the Post Graduate Department of English & IQAC of Gobindgarh Public College, Alour, Khanna, on January 19, 2023.
- Invited Lecture on "Skyboxification of Life: Can Fundamental Duties (Article 51-A) Generate Moral Limits to Our Economic Approach?" organized by Panjab University Constituent College, Dharamkot, Punjab, on March 1, 2023.

Published Articles / Editorials / Write-ups :

- Authored an editorial titled "Status Anxiety & The Power of Snub: Can the Principle of Fraternity Clear the Air?" published in the University Institute of Laws Bulletin, Inaugural Issue, 2023 Edition, pages 4-5.

Dr. Rajnish Saryal

Guest Lectures/ Addresses:

- Invited Lecture on "Climate Change and Energy Security of India: Shifting Ideas and Evolving Policies" at the National Conference themed: 'Transformation, Survival, and Sustainability in a Post-COVID World and Creating a New Bharat: Some Dimensions from Punjab', Organized by MCMDAV College, Chandigarh, on May 26-27, 2023.

Published Articles / Editorials / Write-ups :

- Published an article titled 'Trishul vs Cross' : Hindutva, Church, and the Politics of Secularism in Christian-majority States of North-east India" in Modern Asian Studies, a premium journal of Cambridge University Press in the area studies. The article is published Open Access under the Creative Commons License facilitated through

the Transformative Agreement between Panjab University and Cambridge Universities Press, UK.

Dr. Pooja Sikka

Published Articles / Editorials / Write-ups :

- Published an article titled "Income Inequality in the Post-Covid Era: Recent Global Trends" in Research Journal of Arts Management and Social Sciences, Vol 24, pp 181-187, March 2023.
- Published an article titled "The New Normal in the Global Economy: Economic Recovery and Growth in the Post-Covid Times" in PHD Chamber Journal of Ideas and Innovations, Edition 5th, pp 21-25, April 2023.
- Published an article titled "An Insight into the Social and Economic Determinants of Employment with Special Reference to Female Labor Workforce Participation" in Third Concept, Vol 37, No. 437, pp 75-79, June 2023.
- Published an article titled "Entrepreneurship for Local Economic and Employment Development in Developing Countries" in Sanshodhak, Issue 2, June 2023.
- Published an Articles Titled "Fiscal Policy Options and Responses during a Global Crisis: Lessons for the Developing Countries from the Covid-19 Pandemic" Arthshastra Indian Journal of Economics & Research, Vol 12, Issue2, April-June 2023

Paper Presentations:

- Presented "Economic Inequality and Intellectual Property Rights Regime: Linkages and Implications" at the International Conference on "Intellectual Property Rights in Globalized World; Contemporary Society and Economics" held at Panjab University Regional Centre Ludhiana, on March 27, 2023.
- Presented "The Economic Regularities between Economic Growth and Income Inequality in the State of Punjab" in a one-day National Seminar on "Understanding the Contemporary Socio-Religious, Economic, and Political Issues in Punjab" held at Panjab University Rural Centre Kauni, on April 29, 2023.

Ms. Tamanna Kohli

Guest Lectures/ Addresses:

- Participated in a webinar on "Information Technology Laws" organized by Legal Pathways on January 29, 2023.

Paper Presentations :

- Presented "Social Media and Women Empowerment" at the National Seminar on "Diverse Dimensions of Women Empowerment in the Present Scenario: Issues and Challenges" held at G.H.G Institute of Law, Sidhwan Khurd, on February 16, 2023.
- Presented "Intellectual Property Rights: Need for a SUI genesis regime for non-codified Traditional Knowledge with special reference to prevention of biopiracy in India" at a One-day International conference on "Intellectual Property Rights in Globalized World, Contemporary Society and Economics" organized at University Institute of Laws, Punjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana, on March 27, 2023.

Ms. Homa Bansal

Published Articles / Editorials / Write-ups :

- Published an article titled "Dowry: A Tradition that Killed Thousands" in "National Journal of Criminal Law," Vol 6, Issue 2, 2023.

Paper Presentations:

- Presented "Rule of Law and Constitutionalism: A Comparative Study" at the 4th International Conference on "Comparative Law" organized by Amity Law School, Noida, Amity University Uttar Pradesh, and School of Business & Law, Edith Cowan University, Western Australia, on February 10-11, 2023.
- Presented "Keshvananda is the Constitution Itself - A Prophecy" in the Two Day National Seminar on "Completion of 50 years of Basic Structure Doctrine: The way ahead" organized by the Department of Laws, Panjab University, Chandigarh, in collaboration with Bar Council of Punjab and Haryana, on March 31 - April 1, 2023.
- Presented "Preventive Detention under the Indian Constitution: Assessing its impact on

Prisoners' Rights" at the International Conference on Human Rights and Constitutional Law hosted by the Centre for Legal Research and Studies at Vidhi Aagaz on April 9, 2023.

- Published "Importance of Fundamental Duties for India's Development" in Panjab University Law Review Volume 61 Part 2, 2023.

Ms. Sumanpreet Kaur

Paper Presentations :

- Presented "IPR in Textile and Clothing Sector" in a One-Day International Conference on "Intellectual Property Rights in Globalized World, Contemporary Society and Economics" at University Institute of Laws, Punjab University Regional Centre, Ludhiana, on March 27, 2023.



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