

Misleading data on livestock population from CMO raises eyebrows

Hyderabad: Officials from the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) have apparently shared misleading information on social media, seemingly aimed at discrediting the achievements of the previous BRS government. The inaccurate data, posted on X on Friday, starkly contradicts figures presented in the State government's own Socio Economic Outlook 2024 report, tabled in the Assembly just a day prior. The Chief Minister's Public Relations Officer Bolgam Srinivas shared the post, claiming that the latest State government census indicated a decline in the population of goats and sheep. He posted data suggesting that the number of sheep increased from 1,28,35,761 in 2012 to 1,90,90,836 in 2019, marking a 34.99 per cent increase. However, he also claimed the sheep population had declined to 1,24,14,299 in 2024. Similarly, he stated that the goat population increased from 45,75,695 in 2012 to 49,40,341 in 2019, before dropping to 38,02,609 in 2024.

"The then BRS government launched the sheep distribution scheme in April 2017, with promises to turn the shepherd community into millionaires, spending Rs 5,500 crore. But where did all the sheep go?" Srinivas asked in his post. However, contrary to these claims, the Socio Economic Outlook 2024 report published by the State government painted a different picture. It revealed that the current sheep population stood at 1.9 crore, and the goat population at 49.35 lakh.

Further, Telangana was contributing 25.67 per cent to the country's sheep population, highlighting the significant impact of the BRS government's initiatives. This has raised questions on why the misleading figures were shared on social media by the official from the CMO. Ironically, the union government which conducts the livestock census once in every five years, has conducted 20 Livestock Censuses so far, with the last one conducted in 2018-19. The Union Ministry of Fisheries, Animal



Husbandry and Dairying had recently commenced workshops for officials of different States to conduct the 21st Livestock Census for 2024 which is yet to begin.

New student orientation programs in U.S. universities for international students



New Student Orientation (NSO) programs are comprehensive in their approach to welcoming and integrating international students into U.S. universities. These programs leave no stone unturned in helping students acclimate to a new academic environment, understand cultural nuances, and build a supportive community. Typically held before the start of the academic year, NSOs provide a thorough introduction to campus life, resources, and expectations, ensuring that students

are well-prepared for their educational journey. Key Components of Orientation Programs: Welcome, and Introduction: Welcome Sessions: Universities often start with a formal welcome session led by university leaders, faculty, and current students. These sessions aim to make new students feel like part of the university community from day one. Campus Tours: Guided tours help students familiarize themselves with key campus locations, such as academic buildings, libraries, student centres, and residence

halls. Academic Orientation:

Advising and Registration: Academic advisors assist students in understanding their course options, registration process, and academic requirements. This ensures that students are well-prepared to start their classes. Workshops: Sessions on study skills, time management, and academic integrity are common. These workshops equip students with the tools to succeed in their studies. Cultural Adjustment: Cultural Awareness Sessions: These sessions address cultural differences and similarities, helping students navigate their new environment's social and cultural landscape. International Student Panels: Current international students share their experiences and tips for adjusting to life in the U.S., offering valuable peer insights. Practical Information: Immigration and Legal Information: Guidance on maintaining visa status, work regulations, and other legal matters is provided to ensure compliance with U.S. immigration laws.

Health and Safety: Information on health insurance, local healthcare options, and campus safety protocols is shared to prioritize students' well-being. Community Building: Social Events: Social activities, such as welcome dinners, cultural fairs, and recreational outings, are organized to help students make friends and build a sense of community. Student Organizations: Intro-

duction to various student clubs and organizations encourages involvement in campus life and fosters a sense of belonging. Benefits of Orientation Programs: Orientation programs facilitate a smoother transition by addressing potential challenges and providing resources and support.

Early academic advising, and workshops help students understand university expectations and develop effective study habits while cultural adjustment sessions enhance students' understanding of U.S. culture and improve their ability to navigate social interactions. Building connections with peers, faculty, and staff creates a support network that students can rely on throughout their academic journey. New Student Orientation programs play a pivotal role in the successful integration of international students into U.S. universities.

By addressing academic, cultural, and practical aspects of student life, these programs help international students feel not just welcomed and supported, but also a part of the university community, fostering a sense of belonging and value for their educational journey. - U.S. Consulate General Hyderabad. Please visit the U.S.-India Educational Foundation's website to learn more about studying in the United States: <https://www.usief.org.in/Hyderabad.aspx>

Justice BV Nagarathna's tryst with dissent

In a judiciary where consensus often prevails, Justice BV Nagarathna has emerged as a powerful voice of dissent. Poised to be the first woman Chief Justice of India in September 2027, justice Nagarathna's dissents in key cases have showcased her intellectual rigour and moral courage. The judge's bold and principled stands in high-profile constitution bench cases, ranging from demonetisation to hate speech, and on Thursday, in the mineral rights case, have cemented her reputation as a formidable defender of constitutional values even as she carves a niche for herself with her unwavering commitment to justice, often expressed through her dissenting opinions.

Elevated to the Supreme Court in 2021, Nagarathna's judgments in the top court reflect a deep-seated belief in the rule of law and the importance of upholding democratic values, even when it means standing against the tide of majority opinion. Delving into some of her most notable dissents will showcase her fearless approach and undeterred stance on critical legal issues. Demonetisation ruling Nagarathna's dissent in the demonetisation case in January 2023 stands out as a landmark moment in her judicial career. In a 4-1 ruling, she was the lone voice against the majority's decision to uphold the Centre's demonetisation decision. Her 124-page judgment critiqued the government's approach, emphasising that a matter of such magnitude affecting nearly 86% of the currency in circulation could not be implemented via an executive notification.

Nagarathna underscored that the Centre was obligated to present the proposal for demonetisation in parliament, allowing for a meaningful debate and discussion. She held: "On a matter as critical as demonetisation, having a bearing on nearly 86% of the total currency in circulation, the same could not have been carried out by way of issuance of an executive notification. A meaningful discussion and debate in the Parliament on the proposed measure would have lent legitimacy to the exercise." She asserted the role of parliament as the cornerstone of democracy, stating that it must be involved in decisions of such magnitude to reflect the will of the people. Her dissent highlighted procedural lapses, noting that the central board of the RBI had not been given sufficient time to assess the proposal independently. Justice Nagarathna's judgement was a powerful reminder of the necessity for legislative scrutiny in matters of national importance, reinforcing the role of parliament as the fulcrum of democracy. The hate speech case

In another significant dissent in January 2023, Nagarathna addressed the issue of hate speech. The constitution bench's 4-1 ruling avoided a comprehensive discussion on the implications of hate speech and held that no additional accountability or a legal obligation can be cast upon the public functionaries with respect to obnoxious statements made by them. Justice Nagarathna, however, took a firm stand, underscoring the greater responsibility of public figures and celebrities in refraining from incendiary statements. She asserted: "Public functionaries and other persons of influence and

celebrities, having regard to their reach, real or apparent authority and the impact they wield on the public or on a certain section thereof, owe a duty to the citizenry at large to be more responsible and restrained in their speech."

Drawing on the insights of legal scholar Michael Rosenfeld, the judge highlighted the amplified impact of statements made by influential individuals. Justice Nagarathna's judgment was a clarion call for greater accountability, stating: "They are required to understand and measure their words, having regard to the likely consequences thereof on public sentiment and behaviour, and also be aware of the example they are setting for fellow citizens to follow." Emphasising the significance of free speech in a constitutional democracy, Nagarathna maintained that this constitutional right includes the right to dissent, disagree and adopt varying and individualistic points of view. "In fact, the right to dissent is the essence of a vibrant democracy, for it is only when there is dissent that different ideas would emerge which may be of help or assist the Government to improve or innovate upon its policies so that its governance would have a positive effect on the people of the country which would ultimately lead to stability, peace and development which are concomitants of good governance," the judge stressed. Her dissent underscored that the right to free speech also encompasses the duty to maintain dignity and respect, particularly for public figures. The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act case

In her dissent in the MMDR Act case, Nagarathna tackled the contentious issue of mineral royalty. While the majority of eight judges ruled that states have the legislative competence to levy taxes on minerals and mineral-bearing lands in addition to the royalty imposed by the Centre, she held that royalty is not merely a contractual payment but a statutory levy under Section 9 of the MMDR Act, akin to a tax. Her extensive 193-page judgment critiqued the majority's view, calling for a broad interpretation of Entry 50 to include parliamentary restrictions on state legislation regarding mineral rights. Justice Nagarathna cautioned against states engaging in a "race to the bottom" to derive additional revenue, which could destabilise the national market. She highlighted the adverse effects of treating royalty merely as a tax, warning that such a stance could lead to uneven mineral development, increased costs for industries reliant on minerals, and overall economic instability. Justice Nagarathna's judgment emphasised the need for legal stability and uniformity in mineral development policies, ensuring that states do not bypass parliamentary limitations. The GM crops case

Nagarathna's dissent in the GM crops case earlier this week further exemplifies her rigorous approach to environmental and public health concerns. She criticised the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) for its procedural lapses and undue haste in approving the environmental release of GM mustard. Her judgement on the two-judge bench was scathing, highlighting the lack of consultation with critical bodies like the Indian Council of Medical Research and the Ministry of Health. Underscoring the importance of



adhering to statutory protocols and the principle of public trust, her ruling on July 23 pointed out that the GEAC's decision violated the right to a safe and healthy environment under Article 21 of the Constitution. Nagarathna's dissent called for rigorous assessment and precautionary measures, underscoring the need to protect intergenerational equity and safeguard public health. Medical termination of pregnancy case

In a sensitive case concerning the abortion of a 26-week foetus, Nagarathna's dissent on a two-judge bench was a testament to her compassionate yet principled judicial philosophy. She held in favour of the woman's right to abortion, emphasising the socio-economic conditions and medical circumstances that warranted the decision. The woman, a mother of two, had approached the court stating that she was suffering from lactational amenorrhea and depression and was, therefore, unwilling to continue with the pregnancy. Nagarathna asserted: "This is not a case where the question of viable baby being born or unborn is to be really considered when the interest of the peti-

tioner has to be given more balanced width and reference the socio-economic situation in which the petitioner is placed, the fact that she already has two children, the second child being only one year of age and the fact that she has reiterated that her mental condition, and the medicines she is taking for a mental condition, do not permit her to continue with the pregnancy." Her judgment highlighted the importance of respecting a woman's autonomy over her body and her life choices, reinforcing the fundamental right to privacy and personal liberty. Nagarathna's tenure in the Supreme Court career is distinguished by her fearless stance on critical issues. Her willingness to stand apart from the majority's view demonstrates her courage and integrity as a judge. Her dissents are not mere disagreements but are deeply rooted in her judicial commitment to justice, democratic values and the protection of individual rights. As she prepares to ascend to the position of the CJ, her legacy of dissent will undoubtedly continue to shape the contours of Indian jurisprudence and uphold the highest standards of judicial conduct.

iPhone exports from India hit record high in April-June quarter

New Delhi: In yet another success story of India's local manufacturing push, iPhone maker Apple has achieved record exports numbers in the April-June quarter in the country, reaching around \$3.8 billion. Riding on the government's production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme, Apple reached a new all-time high in the Q1 FY25, according to industry data, as manufacturers continue to look at the 'China + 1 business strategy' to avoid investing only in the neighbouring country and diversify business into other territories.

In the last fiscal (FY24), the Cupertino-based tech giant saw its sales hitting new highs amid increased manufacturing and a growing premiumisation trend. The tech giant saw robust around \$8 billion sales in India in the last fiscal — a nearly 33 per cent surge (on-year). The growth came amid the premiumisation trend that has solidified in the world's second-largest smartphone market. According to industry estimates, iPhone shipments are projected

to increase by over 20 per cent this year on the back of domestic manufacturing support and strong distribution. Industry experts said that Apple continues to enjoy the strong brand pull and lately expanding its channel presence in the country which helped it to grow further. In the Union Budget 2024-2025, the government has announced to reduce the basic customs duty (BCD) on mobile phones, printed circuit board assembly (PCBA) and mobile chargers to 15 per cent from the current 20 per cent. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said that with a three-fold increase in domestic production and an almost 100-fold jump in exports of mobile phones over the last six years, the Indian mobile phone industry has matured. India's electronics sector experienced rapid growth, reaching \$155 billion in FY23. Production nearly doubled from \$48 billion in FY17 to \$101 billion in FY23, driven primarily by mobile phones, which now constitute 43 per cent of total electronics production.

Daimler India Commercial Vehicles Partners with Bajaj Finance to Offer Comprehensive Financing Solutions

Daimler India Commercial Vehicles (DICV), a wholly owned subsidiary of Daimler Truck AG ("Daimler Truck"), has announced a strategic partnership with Bajaj Finance, part of Bajaj Finserv Group, one of India's largest financial conglomerates to offer tailored financing solutions for its commercial vehicle customers and dealerships. This collaboration aims to enhance the accessibility and convenience of financing options across DICV's entire commercial vehicle portfolio.

As per the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by DICV and Bajaj Finance, innovative financial products will be specifically designed to meet the diverse needs of DICV's growing customer base, enhancing flexibility for businesses looking to acquire commercial vehicles. Mr. Sreeram Venkateswaran, President & Chief Business Officer, Daimler India Commercial Vehicles, said, "We are delighted to partner with Bajaj Finance, as this enables us to offer enhanced and accessible financing solutions to our customers. This collaboration strengthens DICV's ability to provide superior Total Cost of Ownership (TCO), representing a significant advancement in our commitment to deliver exceptional value and support. This partnership helps our customers grow their businesses with confidence and capitalize on new market opportunities." "The partnership will offer customer-focused finance solutions with faster turnaround times for loan approvals, streamlined credit appraisal processes, and customized financing options to suit various customer needs. Bajaj Finance will provide a comprehensive range



of finance products with flexible terms and conditions to cater to different business requirements. The enhanced accessibility and convenience provided by this collaboration will improve access to funds for fleet owners and dealerships, ensuring a seamless and hassle-free financing experience.

Commenting on this partnership, Anup Saha, Deputy Managing Director, Bajaj Finance, said, "Our partnership with Daimler India Commercial Vehicles is unique and set to redefine customer experience in the commercial vehicle financing space. We are rolling out bespoke solu-

tions for various customers from single truck owners to fleet operators providing them flexible financing options designed to optimize their cash flows and fuel their business growth. Our digital solutions leveraging the India Stack make the experience of owning commercial vehicles swift and seamless. The commercial vehicle industry is showing immense promise. Daimler's state-of-the-art products and the tech-led financing experience of Bajaj Finance will empower small and large fleet owners alike. The partnership will enable us to jointly contribute to the growth of India's

logistics and transportation sectors." Bajaj Finance can leverage the growing network of DICV to tap into new markets and customer segments, significantly broadening its footprint and enhancing its market penetration capabilities. Through this strategic alliance, DICV and Bajaj Finance are poised to drive significant value for their customers, offering innovative financial products and services that enhance business efficiency and growth. Further information on Daimler Truck is available at: Asia.daimlertruck.com and www.daimlertruck.com

Hyderabad to Host the 2024 IEEE 4th International Conference on Sustainable Energy and Future Electric Transportation (SEFET-24)



GOKARAJU RANGARAJU
INSTITUTE OF ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY
(Autonomous)



The Department of Electrical and Electronics Engineering of Gokaraju Rangaraju Institute of Engineering and Technology (GRIET) is proud to announce the 2024 IEEE 4th International Conference on Sustainable Energy and Future Electric Transportation (SEFET-24), co-sponsored by

IEEE societies PES, PELS, IAS & IES which will be held from July 31 to August 3, 2024, at the Hotel Plaza, Begumpet, Hyderabad.

SEFET-2024 aims to provide a platform for Engineers, Researchers, Scientists & Academicians to present their work, to share experiences and ideas in the ar-

reas of Renewable Energy, Electric Transportation, Power Electronics, Electric Drives, Control Techniques, Smart Grids, Communication Protocols, Intelligent Charging Infrastructure and Standards. The industry session will be conducted in collaboration with the Administrative Staff College of India (ASCI), and the keynote

speeches will be delivered by representatives from the National Power Training Institute (NPTI), IEEE India Council, and Women in Engineering (WIE) Hyderabad Section.

"We are excited to host this IEEE conference in Hyderabad, which has emerged as a hub for sustainable energy and electric transportation technologies," said Dr. Phaneendra Babu Bobba, the convener of the conference SEFET 2024. "Given the changing scenario under sustainable energy & electric transportation, this conference aims to put together the experts from these areas to disseminate their knowledge and experience for working in years to come. IEEE SEFET program will feature Keynotes and Plenary Sessions, Technical Paper Presentations, Industry Sessions and Awards". The conference is expected to attract many participants, including researchers, industry professionals, and students from India and abroad. The organizers are confident that the event will succeed and contribute to the ongoing efforts to promote sustainable energy solutions and electric transportation technologies.

Teachers must shape future generations to fulfil vision of a Developed Nation – Haryana C M

Chandigarh (JAG MOHAN THAKEN), July 30: Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini urged teachers to contribute significantly to the country's development, in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of transforming India into a developed nation by 2047. "Just as you have brought glory to your parents with your hard work, in the same way, you must work to hone the future generations to enhance the honour and respect of the country."

Chief Minister Saini made these remarks while addressing teachers from across the state at the state-level orientation program for newly appointed Trained Graduate Teachers (TGTs) held in Panchkula Monday. During the event, the Chief Minister also distributed appointment letters to the newly recruited TGT teachers. The Chief Minister said that within the next two days, the waiting list of TGTs, along with the detailed results, will be released with full transparency. He congratulated the newly appointed TGTs and highlighted that, in this result, the daughters have achieved remarkable positions through their outstanding performance.

Congratulating the newly appointed TGTs, the Chief Minister said that in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision, these teachers will play a crucial role in shaping future generations to build a developed India. He commended their success, which is a result of their hard work, and said that many teachers do the noble work of teaching children in slum areas even after their official duties. A teacher must embody the spirit of promoting education. By spreading knowledge, you not only contribute to the growth of others but also elevate your own name and progress, he added. He also outlined the current government's commitment to simplifying the lives of its people and accelerating development, building on the foundation laid by former Chief Minister Manohar Lal. The government's efforts have led to significant advancements, including the establishment of universities, medical colleges, and other educational institutions across the state. Notably, the vision to ensure that girls do not have to travel more than 20 kilometres for higher education has been realized, greatly improving access to college facilities for female students. CM Saini claimed that 1,41,000 youths have received government jobs based on merit during the last ten years.

Taking a dig at previous administrations, Chief Minister Saini pointed out that before 2014, recruitment lists were often published in newspapers before the results were announced. In contrast, today's news highlights stories of individuals like the son of a rickshaw driver achieving the rank of HCS in Haryana. This shift, he emphasized, has been brought about by the current government over the past decade. He also highlighted that the present government has ensured transparency in government jobs, emphasizing merit without any corruption or undue influence. Over the last 10 years, the government has provided 141,000 jobs based on merit, without any cost or favouritism. He challenged the opposition to account for their actions during their tenure. The Chief Minister said that the results for 745 posts were announced in



January 2024. Since then, thousands of recruitments have been completed for government positions from February to June. In July alone, 7,765 TGTs have been appointed. The Chief Minister said that under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership over the past decade, India has made significant progress in every field. Today this program is being organized in Panchkula, adjacent to Chandigarh and everyone has arrived here in just about three and half hours from any corner of Haryana, such changes have been achieved in the last 10 years. He criticized the previous government used to weaken the country and the state by resorting to lies, creating confusion and deceiving people through misinformation. He pointed out that some opposition members have threatened to dismantle the portals if they come to power. The Chief Minister urged vigilance against such individuals. Such people have set up Bharti Roko Gang also. They go to court to stop the recruitment announced by the government. He called on people to be wary of these anti-social forces and to alert others to their disruptive actions.

Congratulating the newly appointed teachers, Haryana Education Minister Smt. Seema Trikha said that the current government is focused on serving the people, not just holding power. She highlighted that the Chief Minister is dedicated to serving the state's 2.75 crore residents and advancing the policies set by former Chief Minister Manohar Lal. She expressed satisfaction that government jobs are now being awarded based solely on merit and

transparency. Mrs. Trikha described the present government as fair and transparent, adding that it has set records with the appointment of TGTs. She stressed that these teachers, selected for their capabilities, have a vital role in realizing the Prime Minister's vision for Amrit Kaal.

She underscored the crucial role teachers play, second only to parents, in nurturing safe and cultured children. She called for teachers to instil Indian values in students and to remind them of the sacrifices made by soldiers protecting the borders. Additionally, she suggested that children should be encouraged to say "Jai Hind" instead of "Good Morning," as this reflects a sense of patriotism and contributes to the vision of Amrit Kaal and a proud Indian heritage. Haryana Vidhan Sabha Speaker Gian Chand Gupta stated that the government has provided jobs to the youth

without any cost or corruption. He highlighted that no one has had to spend a single penny in this process, underscoring the government's commitment to transparency. This approach has instilled confidence in the youth, assuring them that jobs are now awarded based purely on merit. He also mentioned the rise of coaching centres as a result of this transparency. In his congratulatory remarks to the newly appointed TGTs, he urged them to pledge to deliver excellent education and contribute to advancing the state. On this occasion, the Chief Minister extended his heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to the renowned shooter Manu Bhaker, who won the bronze medal in the 10-meter air pistol mixed event, following her earlier success in the 10-meter air pistol event at the Paris Olympics 2024. He expressed that the entire nation is proud of Haryana's athletes.

Techie gangraped in Hyderabad by childhood friend, his cousin

Hyderabad: A 24-year-old software engineer was allegedly raped by two men, including her childhood friend, police here said on Tuesday.

The woman's complaint to the police said that on Monday night, her childhood friend, who also was her classmate earlier in school, wanted to celebrate her getting a new software job and both of them went to a restaurant-cum-bar in

Vanasthalipuram. Both of them consumed liquor there, after which the man took her into a room on the restaurant's premises and raped her when she was in an inebriated condition, following which a cousin of his also subsequently entered the room and raped her. The two men then left the place, and the woman called up her brother and told him what they had done, the complaint added.

Xiaomi India Raises the Bar with Redmi Pad Pro and Redmi Pad SE 4G: A New Era of Entertainment & Productivity Tablets

Xiaomi, a global leader in technology and innovation, is thrilled to build on the success of its tablet category by introducing two new models to the Redmi Pad Series - Redmi Pad Pro 5G and Redmi Pad SE 4G. Adding to the excitement, Xiaomi has also revealed the launch of the limited Panda Edition for its most recent Xiaomi 14 Civi in three attractive pop colors: Panda White, Hot Pink and Aqua Blue. The #PandaDesign edition of Xiaomi 14 Civi brings the perfect mix of chic and playful. With its sleek Black Mirror Glass and Luxe Vegan Leather, it's more than just a smartphone—it's a lifestyle upgrade.

Redmi Pad Pro 5G

Designed for the modern user, the Redmi Pad Pro 5G combines advanced features with seamless 5G connectivity, pushing boundaries and empowering creativity and productivity. Tailored for creative professionals and entertainment enthusiasts, it features a 12.1-inch 2.5K XL display with a 120Hz refresh rate, quad speakers with Dolby Vision Atmos, and a 10000mAh battery for up to 16 hours of video playback. Xiaomi HyperOS ensures seamless integration with Xiaomi smartphones. It is available in Graphite Grey, Quick Silver, and Mist Blue, with optional accessories like the Redmi Smart Keyboard and Smart Pen to enhance productivity. The Redmi Pad Pro will be available starting at INR 19,999, with an INR 2000 discount for ICICI and HDFC Credit Cards and EMIs. The Redmi Pad Pro 5G is priced at INR 22,999 for the 8GB + 128GB variant and INR 24,999 for the 8GB + 256GB variant, inclusive of the same discount.

Accessories include the Redmi Smart Pen and Redmi Keyboard, each priced at INR 3,999, and the Redmi Pad Pro Cover at INR 1,499.

Redmi Pad SE 4G:

The Redmi Pad SE 4G provides immersive viewing and efficient multitasking, delivering exceptional value and performance with practicality. It features a compact 8.7-inch 90Hz display and dual speakers with Dolby Atmos, complemented by a 6650mAh battery, MediaTek Helio G85 processor, and 4GB RAM for efficient performance. With TÜV Rheinland Low Blue Light and Flicker-Free certifications for eye comfort, it is available in Forest Green, Urban Grey, and Ocean Blue. The Redmi Pad SE Cover adds protection and improves viewing experience. The Redmi Pad SE 4G starts at INR 9,999 for the 4GB + 64GB variant and INR 10,999 for the 4GB + 128GB variant, with a INR 1000 discount for ICICI Credit Cards and Credit EMIs. The Redmi Pad SE 4G Cover is priced at INR 999. All products will be available on mi.com, Flipkart, and Xiaomi Retail Partners from 8th August, 12 Noon onwards.

Xiaomi 14 Civi limited #Panda Edition

The Limited Panda Edition Xiaomi 14 Civi stands out with its dual-texture design, combining vegan leather and a black mirror finish. Available in Panda White, Hot Pink, and Aqua Blue, it features the Snapdragon 8s Gen 3 chipset, a Leica Co-engi-

neered 50MP camera, and a 4700mAh battery. Xiaomi's HyperOS adds advanced AI features.

The Xiaomi 14 Civi will be available

The Budget has set out in detail its objectives and the action plans to achieve them. While the broad objectives are clear, the roadmaps to achieve the objectives, as spelt out in the Finance Minister's speech, are hazy. The impact of the Budget depends upon how effectively the projects are implemented. This is particularly so when its emphasis is on expenditures.

How much does the final Budget differ from the Interim Budget in terms of revenues and expenditures? There are only marginal differences on the expenditure side. On the revenue side, however, RBI's increased dividends made a relatively larger impact. As far as the government's gross and net tax revenues are concerned, there are only limited changes. Assuming a gross tax buoyancy of 1.03 and a nominal GDP growth of 10.5 per cent, the Budget has estimated a gross tax revenue of Rs 38.4 lakh crore. The underlying real GDP growth, stated in the Economic Survey in the range of 6.5 to 7 per cent, appears to be realistic given the previous year's high real GDP growth of 8.2 per cent.

As compared to the Interim Budget, the provision of tax devolution to the states has been increased by Rs 27,428 crore. The Govt's net tax revenues stand at Rs 25.83 lakh crore. Together with estimated non-tax revenues of Rs 5.46 lakh crore, total net revenue receipts amount to Rs 31.29 lakh crore. With a small provision for non-debt capital receipts and a fiscal deficit of Rs 16.13 lakh crore, the government's total expenditure is budgeted at Rs 48.20 lakh crore, involving an expenditure additionality of Rs 54,744 crore. All of this was allocated for increasing revenue ex-

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for Rs 45,999, inclusive of a Rs 3000 discount with ICICI Credit Cards, Credit & Debit Card EMIs, or an exchange bonus. The Xiaomi 14 Civi Panda White and Aqua Blue

variants will be available on Flipkart, Mi.com, and Xiaomi Retail Partners, while the Hot Pink variant will be available on Flipkart and Mi.com.

A clear goal, with hazy roadmap

penditures as compared to the interim budget. The overall expenditure has been divided in the ratio of 77:23 between revenue and capital expenditures. This arithmetic means that revenue expenditure growth increased marginally from 4.6 per cent in the Interim Budget to 6.2 per cent in the final Budget over the provisional actuals of 2023-24.

Total additional non-debt receipts as compared to the Interim Budget amounted to Rs 1.27 lakh crore. This was facilitated by a sharp increase in the transfers from the RBI. Out of the additional revenue receipts, about Rs 72,000 crore was used for reducing fiscal deficit which has now been brought down to 4.9 per cent of GDP as compared to 5.1 per cent targeted in the interim budget. The process of fiscal consolidation must continue, and the goal should be to get to 3 per cent of GDP as early as possible. This is important given the decline in household savings in financial assets as a proportion of GDP. In 2022-23, household financial savings were estimated at 5.3 per cent of GDP, a historical low. If private investment has to pick up, there must be a reduction in the drawing of financial savings by the government. There must be a larger space for the private sector to draw on savings.

A number of revenue side measures have also been announced which appear to be interim in nature. The budget speech mentions setting up a comprehensive review of the Income Tax Act 1961, which is to be completed in six months. On the direct tax side, one major change relates to rationalisation and rate increases with respect to the capital gains tax. There is some debate regarding the rationale of discon-

tinuation of indexing in the context of real estate assets. The proposed regime discriminates against older properties and the matter may be best reexamined in the upcoming review. Other measures appear to be in the right direction. In the case of personal income tax, we should move towards only one model namely the "new" model. It is not desirable to continue with two alternatives for too long. The removal of the angel tax is also a welcome step as it will facilitate a smoother flow of venture capital into startups.

As shown earlier, in the case of expenditures there is only a marginal increase in revenue expenditures as compared to the Interim Budget and there is no change in the budgeted amount of capital expenditures which remains at Rs 11.11 lakh crore. In fact, the non-defence capital outlay has been reduced by nearly Rs 21,000 crore which has been added to loans and advances. There is a provision for lending an interest free loan to the states to the tune of Rs 1.5 lakh crore. This scheme has been continuing since the Covid year of 2020-21. Available data shows that the offtake from this provision meant for capital spending has been quite limited and the full amount has not been utilised in any year by the states. It is also shown that some of the less developed states such as Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh have shown a higher percentage of utilisation.

Most of the expenditure schemes announced in the budget appear to pertain relatively more to future years. There is a need to quantify the success of similar schemes announced in the past. For example, self-sufficiency in oilseeds has been talked about for a long time.

The budget is over, let us talk about broader economic policy

It's half a move because it only seems to have embraced the pessimism of the intellect. The 2023-24 Economic Survey is a powerful exhibit of this line of thinking. It is categorical in admitting that India will not enjoy the kind of global tailwinds to growth, which were available to countries such as China a couple of decades ago. A sustained double-digit growth rate – this is what saw the meteoric rise of China's economic power – might not be in the realm of the possible is the unsaid implication. The survey cautioned against what could potentially be destabilising exuberance in the financial markets, unlike the hubris around rallying stock markets by the ruling party's top leadership. It also throws a reality check on whether India can really exploit the China+1 opportunity in global value chains without allowing Chinese investment in India, which poses serious national security challenges. These are all challenges to which there are no easy solutions. The Economic Survey, to be sure, is a purely intellectual exercise. It is the Budget which is supposed to translate economic thoughts into action. How has it done on the other half of the Gramscian dictum, namely, optimism of the will? To be fair, it is difficult for a government to show optimism after losing political capital in an election. A more appropriate task for it would be course correction. How does the budget do on this front? The biggest sign of a course correction in the budget's thinking is an acknowledgement of the fact that there is an employment problem in the Indian economy. This is a very different tune from the narrative the government and the ruling party have been peddling on improving headline employment numbers and entrepreneurship being the solution to the jobs problem in the recent and not-so-recent past. Will the government's approach to the jobs problem work? The intuitive answer is that it is unlikely. Nudges – this is what most of the measures announced in the budget are – are more likely to fix behavioural issues than hard macroeconomic constraints. There is good reason to believe the jobs problem is more in the realm of the latter than the former. The biggest proof of this is the stuttering private investment engine and historically low levels of core inflation. If companies are not willing to undertake investment and markets are not overheated, it is a clear reflection of a demand constrained economy. It is difficult to understand why they would want to hire a lot of new workers. What is the best way to solve this problem? The most obvious answer, namely, the government spending more, is not necessarily the correct one. The government has been running a high fiscal deficit between the pandemic and now and this has clearly not done much to solve the employment or demand problem. Solving the problem requires a deeper engagement with the Indian economy.

The employment-income imbalance in agriculture is the biggest unfinished structural transformation question facing the Indian economy. What has the government done to solve this imbalance over the last ten years? The government's first big



intervention in agriculture was the introduction of direct income transfer via the PM-Kisan scheme before the 2019 elections. It was supposed to be a politically beneficial palliative and has been left like that. There is very little in terms of a structural impact which the scheme would have achieved. There has been a lot of talk about other things such as self-sufficiency in pulses and oilseeds but there is no concomitant fund allocation towards these goals. The second major policy intervention of the government was in trying to push the now-withdrawn farm laws during the pandemic. The claimed benefits of these laws were always questionable and they ended up burning political capital in the wrong place which has made the challenge of pushing critical sustainability reforms in states such as Punjab even more difficult. Would it not have been a better idea to spend the PM-Kisan money – it is about 30% of the total food subsidy spending – on something like expanding the procurement-based PDS system to include crops such as pulses which would have helped the trade balance as well as food consumption bill of poor consumers in the country? Has the government made a serious effort to try and tilt the balance of distribution of surplus value in the farm-to-food plate chain in favour of farmers away from traders?

Manufacturing There is merit in the government's focus on trying to break ground in the manufacturing of high-tech goods such as electronics and microchips. A lot of the China+1 game is confined to these sectors. Their limited employment impact notwithstanding, they are important from a trade balance and strategic insurance point of view. It is good that things are moving in the right direction. Of course, there is a lot of scope for more to be done here. But from a purely employment perspective, there is not much to be achieved here. How many jobs would India create even if all of the world's iPhones were to

be manufactured in India? In a lot of relatively more labour incentive consumer goods categories which are targeted at tapping into export markets of advanced economies, the limited size of India's domestic markets – think of better-quality sneakers for example – is an in-built disincentive for expansion of manufacturing activity. This basically means that the quest to expand manufacturing's employment footprint in India is more a second-order problem linked to the growth of incomes at the bottom of the pyramid and therefore demand for manufacturers rather than breaking some new intellectual ground in setting up a manufacturing policy. More purchasing power for basic consumer goods will mean more demand for their domestic production and this will eventually lead to improvement in quality and value creation which will allow India to increase its foothold in export markets for these commodities. The ongoing discussion about making sure that we adapt well to challenges from technological disruptions such as the impact of AI is clearly important. Difficult as they are to achieve, they will, even in the best-case scenario, ensure that the pace of white-collar service employment stays at its current levels. That is not going to be enough.

The real solution to India's employment challenge lies in a different area of services. India's social services continue to be severely understaffed and underfunded in most parts of the country. Quality perhaps is an even bigger problem than quantity in most areas. Abysmal learning outcomes at the school education level and poor employability of the students from the higher education system are a testament to this problem in education. Health is not a very different story. The net result is the worst of both worlds for the country. It is taking a toll on our human capital in the long term and inflicting a drain of wealth on the poor population which is spending

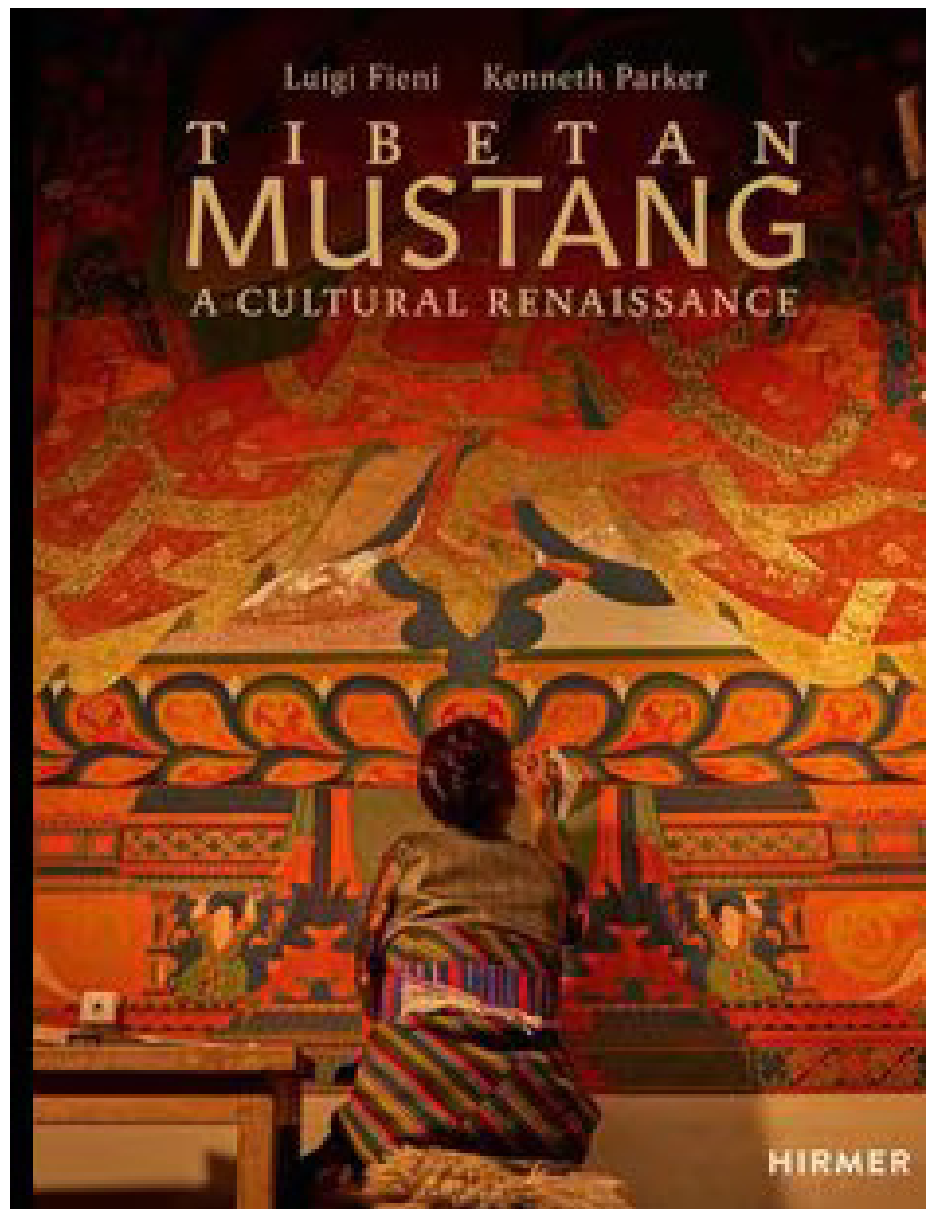
beyond their means to avail these poor-quality services from the private sector. A lot of the private sector activity in these areas can be termed as parasitic in nature which is emaciating our current and future incomes and demand. Once again this is not an easy problem to fix. Sure, the allocation for health and education continues to be much below levels which have been recommended by the government's own policy documents. But just throwing money at it is not going to do the job. Almost every state in the country is witnessing demands for the regularisation of teachers whose qualifications and capabilities are extremely suspect. Political considerations always encourage governments to ignore this problem and bring more and more sub-standard stock to the system. Private operators in health and education also continue to be a big source of political finance across the political spectrum at the local level. Instead of trying to build a consensus on this critical problem, the current government has actually alienated states by trying to force centralization in these sectors. The political controversies around the National Education Policy, governors fighting with state governments over vice-chancellors and NEET are clear examples of this. Would it not have been a better idea for the government to have paid attention to increasing allocations in these sectors and building political consensus to solve quality issues over the last ten years than spending money on one-time asset generation schemes? To be fair, spending money on one-time transfers for political purposes is not a problem confined to just the BJP in this country. Almost all political parties resort to this strategy to boost their political prospects even as critical spending on areas that matter for the future is ignored. In lieu of a conclusion The overall economic doctrine of the current government is not very different from other political parties.

Read an excerpt from a photobook on a cultural renaissance in Nepal

In the late 1990s Lo Monthang village, set at an average altitude of 3,850 meters, was disconnected from modern civilization. The village lacked basic forms of communication (e.g. telephone and Internet), and there was no electricity. Three days by horseback were necessary to reach Lo Monthang from the nearest airport, Jomsom, while walking could take nearly a week. To work in such a remote site required very meticulous planning for each season's work. The amount and the selection of needed materials had to be chosen judiciously since it was not possible to purchase additional supplies on site. Besides, because of the lack of telephones, Internet and a feasible way to ship whatever was needed, it was impossible to get anything from Europe or even Nepal before the end of each season.

Since there was no electricity, it was crucial to carry more than an electric generator, enough fuel, and spare parts to provide adequate lighting in the dark worksites throughout the summer. From a technical point of view, it was challenging to have enough power for the professional lights to produce the right color temperature in order to avoid as much as possible metamorphism problems in the retouching process. One more challenging task was the transportation of bulky or fragile equipment on site, since the only way to deliver these items was on horseback or by porters. Chemicals, consolidators, generators and light bulbs had to be packed extremely well to prevent damaging or breaking key materials that could not be replaced on site. Practical solutions were devised on site even for the simplest of operations... What would be very easy to buy ready-made in the Western world became a challenge to be made ex-novo in the Himalayan environment.

Material storage during the cold season was a serious concern as well: because of very low temperatures, Himalayan winters could have affected the chemical, physical and mechanical properties of some conservation materials. Thus, the amount of required chemicals had to be carefully estimated in order not to leave any leftovers on site. When it was not possible, a storage system was implemented to protect the chemicals in a warmer environment by wrapping them in several layers of blankets during the cold season. Furthermore, given the extreme temperatures of the winter months, it was possible to run the project only between spring and fall. On August 8, 2018, HH the 42nd Sakya Trizin held the first Monlam Chenmo Puja in Tubchen Monastery after ages of oblivion. Thousands of people gathered from all over Mustang to listen to his teachings and to pray together with their religious leader. For the occasion all scaffoldings were dismantled—though Restoration Phase II was still ongoing—and the whole assembly hall was packed with monks and all members of the royal family. There was not a single square centimeter without a praying soul in it. Villagers were all dressed up in their best traditional attires, and an endless procession queued for hours to get a blessing from HH the 42nd Sakya Trizin. Witnessing those moments was like a jump back in time. The sight and the atmosphere in front of my eyes appeared as if they were coming out from a movie trying to depict how a religious ceremony would be held in the 15th century. On August 8, 2018, the Mustang conservation project received the best reward ever conceivable. There were no medals, no garlands or gold. There were just believers. Enlightening a 15th-century monastery once again.



Digital data protection bill showcases India's commitment to user safety: Centre



New Delhi: Amid the changing landscape where cyber-criminals use novel methods to steal personal data, the Digital

Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023 upholds individuals' rights to safeguard their data, incorporating established prin-

ciples for its protection, the government has said. According to Ministry of Electronics & IT, these principles include obtaining consent for lawful and transparent use of personal data, limiting its use to specified purposes, minimising data collection to necessary levels, ensuring data accuracy and timely updates, restricting storage duration to the required period, implementing robust security measures, and enforcing accountability through penalties for breaches and data adjudication.

The Act also imposes stringent protections on personal data transfers, as exemplified by the Reserve Bank of India's directive under Section 10(2) and Section 18 of the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007, mandating the storage of payment system data within India. "These provisions underscore the Act's commitment to robust data protection standards and restrictions on personal data transfers,

which remain in effect under its framework," said the IT Ministry. As the country continues to harness the benefits of digital transformation, maintaining stringent data protection standards will be crucial in fostering trust, resilience, and sustainable growth in its digital economy. The country has emerged as a global leader in the digital landscape, with more than 936 million Internet subscribers. Keeping such a staggering figure in mind, the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) has registered several cases of cybercrimes during the last three years. The Centre has also established the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) to enhance the coordinated response of law enforcement agencies to cybercrimes. The government launched the 'Citizen Financial Cyber Fraud Reporting and Management System' to facilitate the immediate reporting of financial frauds and prevent fund siphoning by fraudsters.

Kargil Vijay Diwas: Celebrating the uncommon courage of Indian soldiers

In the poem "Horatius," Thomas Babington Macaulay writes, "To every man upon this earth death cometh soon or late. And how can man die better than facing fearful odds, For the ashes of his fathers, and the temples of his gods." Fearful odds certainly existed in the months of May, June, and July 1999, when scores of young soldiers, led by equally young officers, launched themselves up the steep and rocky mountain slopes to dislodge Pakistan Army intruders from Indian soil. Today, 25 years later, some of them are household names—Capt Vikram Batra, Capt Manoj Pande, Rifleman Sanjay Kumar, and Rifleman Yogendra Yadav (all four Param Vir Chakra awardees, the two Captains posthumous), Capt Amol Kalia, and Capt Saurabh Kalia. As the nation celebrates the 25th anniversary of the Indian Army's victory over the Pakistan Army in Kargil, Dras, Mushkoh, and Batalik, we take a look at some brave troops who are not commonly known but whose uncommon courage stands as a testimony to the spirit of courage and sacrifice of the Indian soldier.

Rifleman Shyam Singh was born on January 26, 1974, in Kalara village, Shimla District, Himachal Pradesh. A keen Army aspirant, he enlisted in the 13 Jammu and Kashmir Rifles (JAKRIF) in 1994. During Operation Vijay in Kargil, Rifleman Shyam Singh volunteered to be a member of the Charlie Company Commander's assault force entrusted with capturing area Flat Top at Point 4875 in Mushkoh Valley. He braved tough and unforgiving terrain and heavy enemy shelling to lead the column confidently towards the goal. As daylight broke, Shyam Singh carried on with the assault, not caring for his safety. He pounced on one Pakistani infiltrator with his bayonet, killing him and wounding another. However, he was critically injured by an enemy sniper from an adjacent position and succumbed to his injuries, but not before securing the objective. Subedar and Honorary Captain Raghunath Singh Subedar and Honorary Captain Raghunath Singh Born in Gurdaspur district, Punjab, in December 1962, Subedar Raghunath Singh was tasked on July 7, 1999, with capturing the strongly fortified area known as "Ledge," beyond Point 4875 in Mushkoh Valley. As the leading Platoon Commander of Delta Company, 13 Jammu and Kashmir Rifles, Subedar Raghunath found that the company was unable to advance beyond Point 4875 due to heavy artillery shelling and automatic gunfire from well-fortified sangars along the 700-meter-long cliff. Outflanking the enemy position was impossible due to the harsh terrain. Therefore, Subedar Raghunath Singh, sensing the gravity of the situation, volunteered to lead the Company on a risky daylight operation. He killed two intruders in the ensuing hand-to-hand struggle and continued firing on the fleeing adversary, not caring for his own safety. A resident of Bhiwani district, Haryana, the 44-year-old but superbly fit and agile Subedar Randhir Singh was given the task to lead his platoon for an assault on the tactically important Tololing Ridge in the Drass Sector on June 3, 1999. The well-stocked and fortified post of the Pakistan Army infiltrators



was in a treacherous mountainous terrain covered with snow at a height of over 15,000 feet. The advance of the platoon, led by Subedar Randhir Singh, was impeded due to heavy machine gun fire from one of the sangars of the intruders. Subedar Randhir Singh, who was in the lead, immediately deployed his platoon and, with a small team, crawled ahead to the sangar and neutralized the machine gun in close combat, killing two intruders. In the process, Subedar Randhir Singh sustained grievous injuries but pressed ahead, directing, motivating, and leading his platoon from the front and refusing to be evacuated or abandon the mission. On encountering a second enemy sangar, though badly injured and bleeding, he charged at the enemy, killing one intruder in hand-to-hand combat. His daredevil act inspired his men to charge at the enemy, thus gaining vital ground on Tololing Ridge, which facilitated the capture of Point 4590. Subedar Randhir Singh later succumbed to his injuries, making the supreme sacrifice for the nation. Rifleman Mehar Singh was born on June 1, 1975 in Village Uperkot, Baloh, District Mandi of Himachal Pradesh. He was enlisted in 13 JAKRIF in August 1995, at the age of 20. On June 20, 1999 Rifleman Mehar Singh was manning a Light Machine Gun when his company was tasked to attack and dislodge enemy intruders occupying Point 5140, a tactically important peak overlooking the entire Drass sector. He was asked to provide covering fire to the assaulting column. Rifleman Mehar Singh, with utter disregard to his personal safety and notwithstanding the almost unscalable rocky terrain, severe cold, heavy enemy shelling and direct fire, stealthily moved forward and opened accurate covering fire on the enemy causing panic while his fellow soldiers moved in for the decisive hand to hand assault. Seeing no further requirement of

covering fire, Mehar Singh pounced on the enemy and got into a hand-to-hand fight which finally led to the capture of the vital post. Naik Dev Prakash was born in Dhundala village of Una District, Himachal Pradesh and was enlisted in the Indian Army in March 1980. During the Kargil conflict, Naik Dev Prakash was the Section Commander in the Bravo Company of his battalion that was tasked to assault and recapture Point 5140. He was part of the troop sent to attack Point 5140 on 20 June, 1999. As per the plan, Naik Dev Prakash approached the feature covertly with his Section. Displaying effective command and control, he reorganised his Section and inspired them to attack the enemy sangar along the Western Spur.

He offered to lead the way with his Section and, exhibiting excellent field craft, stealthily reached 30 metres short of the enemy sangar. Braving the intense enemy artillery shelling and direct fire, he and his Company Commander personally attacked the enemy sangar, taking the enemy by surprise. This act of valour led to the killing of two enemy intruders in a hand-to-hand fight and the retaking of a strategically significant feature. Naib Subedar Karnail Singh was born on April 4, 1962, in Raniwala village of Amritsar District in Punjab to Sardar Gurnam Singh and Bhajan Kaur. He enlisted in the 8 SIKH on September 29, 1982. During the Kargil War he fought in the battle of Tiger Hill, which is one of the highest peaks in the Dras-Kargil area of Jammu and Kashmir. The recapture of Tiger Hill was among India's major objectives during the war. Naib Subedar Karnail Singh displayed exemplary bravery, courage and kept motivating his comrades to fight till the last in the face of enemy. Naib Subedar Karnail Singh and a Section of 8 SIKH were deployed on the reverse slope of Area Helmet when they came under heavy enemy fire from Tiger

Hill, Rocky Knob and a feature called Trig Height at around 0600 hours on July 6, 1999. Heavy fire from three directions was soon followed by a counter-attack with 15 enemy personnel. The enemy managed to close in and an intense hand-to-hand fight ensued. Though outnumbered, Naib Subedar Karnail Singh and his men fought back with immense courage and gave back measure for measure. Leading from the front and rallying his men around him, Naib Subedar Karnail Singh and the jawans with him were seriously wounded in the fire-fight but managed to hold on. The enemy launched a second counterattack with 40 to 45 personnel. Despite his wounds, Naib Subedar Karnail Singh challenged the enemy and charged at them with his men, inflicting heavy casualties in close combat. He killed four enemy intruders and injured many more, once again forcing them to withdraw. Along with his valiant men, Naib Subedar Karnail Singh kept the enemy at bay till he succumbed to his injuries. In fact, the remaining men with him also made the supreme sacrifice. A native of Chhina Bet village of Gurdaspur District, Nirmal Singh enrolled in Indian Army on Sept 21, 1976. During the recapture of Tiger Hill, he displayed extreme bravery, and kept motivating his comrades to fight till the last in the face of a marauding enemy. Subedar Nirmal Singh was leading a small team to establish a foothold on Tiger Hill in Dras Sub Sector on July 5, 1999. While assaulting, Subedar Nirmal Singh noticed enemy movement. But before the enemy could react, he fired at the enemy and inflicted heavy casualties, forcing them to retreat. Subedar Nirmal Singh then quickly approached the objective and captured it. Then Subedar Nirmal Singh deployed his platoon on a forward slope. At 0600 hours, the enemy opened fire and followed it up with a counter attack on the position held by Subedar Nirmal Singh's men with 15-16 intruders.