

Special Campaign will be organized in all Polling Stations on 10<sup>th</sup> November, 2024 & 23<sup>rd</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> November, 2024. Reach your nearest Polling Station and contact BLO for Registration (Form 6) or Deletion (Form 7) or Correction & Shifting (Form 8) in Electoral Roll

Since 1920s the Oldest Daily...

# The Daily Telegrams

...the Largest Circulating Daily of the Islands

Partially cloudy sky and light to moderate rain is likely at one or two places over Sri Vijaya Puram. Maximum and Minimum temperature will be around 31.5°C and 24.0°C respectively on Sunday 10/11/2024.  
Maximum Temperature (°C) of Date: 31.6  
Minimum Temperature (°C) of Date: 24.3  
Relative Humidity (%) at 0830 IST : 075  
Relative Humidity (%) at 1730 IST : 087  
Sunrise time on 10.11.2024 (in IST): 0514  
Sunset time on 10.11.2024 (in IST): 1652  
Rainfall upto 0830 hrs of date (last 24 hrs)- in mm: 000.0  
Rainfall upto 1730 hrs of date in mm: 000.0  
Rainfall (Progressive total from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024 upto 0830 hrs (of date) in mm: 3072.0 mm



Regn. No. 34190/75

No. 304

Sri Vijaya Puram, Sunday, November 10, 2024

Web: dt.andaman.gov.in

Rs. 3.00

Pages 4

## Vice-President addresses 4<sup>th</sup> Convocation of NIT Delhi Research and innovation are key to attainment of the Goal of a Developed Nation: VP Education is Not Commerce, Education is Service to Society: VP

New Delhi, Nov. 9 (PIB)

The Vice-President of India, Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar said, "Research and innovation in a sense are key to the attainment of a goal of a developed nation. As a matter of fact, how high we are in the field of research and innovation will define our prowess to the global community. It will give cutting edge to our soft diplomacy." He further urged educational institutions to harness their potential as "crucibles of innovation and research" and called upon corporate entities to support this mission through substantial contributions. He



stressed, "Associations of trade, industry, business, and commerce must come forward to fuel research and spur innovation through liberal financial contributions." Addressing the 4<sup>th</sup> Convocation of the National Institute of Technology (NIT) Delhi in New Delhi today, the Vice-President spoke on the crucial role of alumni in

strengthening the educational ecosystem, urging active participation and contributions to alumni associations. He remarked, "Alumni of an institution are in several ways its lifeline. They are ambassadors of the institution. It is acknowledged method globally and nationally that the best way to pay back to your institution is

to be an active member of alumni association. I strongly urge to have an alumni fund making annual contributions is all important. Some of the best institutions globally have been on upward trajectory because these institutions are fueled by alumni energy. You have to conserve and converge your alumni energy for better prospects of all those

who step in this institution to get education", he said.

Shri Dhankhar also emphasized, "Education is not commerce. Education is service to society. Education is your obligation. You must serve. It is your duty, divine ordainment to pay back to the society, and the best way to pay back to the society is to invest in education. Investment in education is investment in human resource, investment in our present, investment in our future. It is through education that we discover our glorious past of thousands of centuries", he remarked.

The Vice-President remarked, "I must

(Contd. on last page)

## Foundation Day of Uttarakhand celebrated as part of 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' initiative in Raj Niwas

Sri Vijaya Puram, Nov.9

As part of 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' initiative and as per directives of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Govt. of India, the Foundation Day of Uttarakhand was celebrated enthusiastically today in Raj Niwas. Persons

hailing from Uttarakhand participated in the function. During the event, an interaction and experience sharing session was also conducted. A short documentary on Uttarakhand was screened. The function ended with high tea, group photograph and

presentation of mementos to invitees.

The participants thanked MHA, Govt. of India and Raj Niwas for the initiative and for providing them the opportunities and platform for interaction, a press release from Secretary to Lt. Governor said.

## Hon'ble MP meets Hon'ble Lt. Governor and discusses various issues concerning Isles

Sri Vijaya Puram, Nov.9

Shri Bishnu Pada Ray, Hon'ble Member of Parliament, A & N Islands yesterday met Hon'ble Lt. Governor, A & N Islands and held discussions on two important issues among other matters. The first issue raised by the MP was regarding integration of Andaman and Nicobar Islands Institute of Medical Sciences (ANIIMS) with the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS). After giving patient hearing, the Hon'ble



Lt. Governor is stated to have assured the MP that the matter will be looked into.

The second important issue raised by the MP was regarding immediate starting of the registration of sale deeds and the long pending diversion

cases of private land.

The Hon'ble Lt. Governor also assured the MP that all other issues raised by him will be amicably resolved at the earliest. The meeting was cordial and productive, a press release from MP Office said.

## Special outreach prog. to provide benefits of different Schemes under Fisheries Deptt. organized at FLC Nimbutala & Mohanpur village

Mayabunder, Nov. 9

The Zonal Fisheries Office, North & Middle Andaman has initiated the special outreach camp to disseminate information regarding benefits of various Schemes being implemented by the Department of Fisheries, A&N Administration. In this endeavor, Special Camp was organized at FLC, Nimbutala under Rangat Sub-division on Nov.6, 2024. A large number



Special Outreach Programme at Nimbutala Village, Rangat

of fishermen Loan, to apply particularly from facilities under nearby fishing village PMMSY. The fishermen were also apprised on various aspects of sustainable fishing, mesh size regulation, impact of

ghost net on marine mammals. The Assistant Director of Fisheries requested the fishermen and community leaders to maximize their requirement by availing benefits of various schemes.

A similar programme was also organized at Mohanpur village under the Gram Panchayat, Kishorinagar on Nov.8, 2024, wherein large number of fishermen, fish

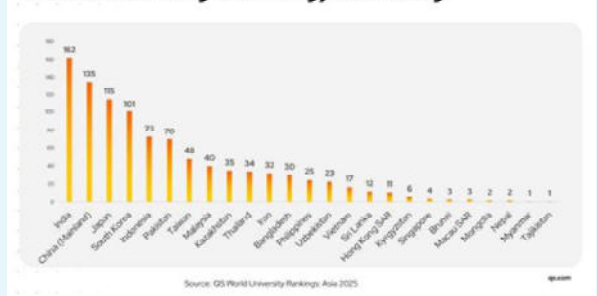
(Contd. on last page)

## India Shines in QS World University Rankings: Asia (2025) 7 Indian Institutes in Top 100

New Delhi, Nov.9 (PIB)

The QS World University Rankings: Asia 2025 reflect the dynamic landscape of higher education across the continent, spotlighting the top institutions excelling in academic and research excellence, innovation, and internationalization. This year's rankings emphasize the growing competition among

### Institutions by country/territory



Asian universities and showcase the region's commitment to advancing global educational standards.

This edition highlights India's impressive upward

trajectory in higher education across the continent. India boasts two institutions within the top 50 and seven in the top 100 of the QS Asia Rankings 2025, with the

Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IITD) leading at 44<sup>th</sup> place. The University of Petroleum and Energy Studies (UPES) achieved the most significant improvement among Indian institutions, climbing 70 spots to 148<sup>th</sup>, driven by notable advancements in nine of the 11 ranking metrics, especially in International

(Contd. on last page)

## NAPDDR & IRCA (SA) conduct awareness prog. on 'Ill Effects of Drug & Substance Abuse' at GSSS Bhatubasti

Sri Vijaya Puram, Nov. 9

The National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (NAPDDR), under the Directorate of Social Welfare in collaboration with the Integrated Rehabilitation Centre for Addicts (IRCA), South Andaman conducted an Awareness Campaign on ill effects of drug and substance abuse at Govt. Senior



Secondary School, Bhatubasti yesterday. About 126 students, along with the Principal and Teachers attended the programme.

Speaking on the occasion, Principal, Shri J. Dasan Pushparaj, emphasized the importance of the campaign and

(Contd. on last page)

## Skill development prog. on 'Importance of Water Quality Management in Aquaculture' held at Diglipur



Diglipur, Nov.9

ICAR-KVK, N&M Andaman (CIARI) organized a five-days skill development training program on 'Importance of Water Quality Management

in Aquaculture: Best Management Practices and Strategies for Sustainable Fish Farming' from November 4 to 8, 2024 at Community Hall, Radhanagar Gram

(Contd. on last page)

## A&N Police issues advisory on fake job offers

Sri Vijaya Puram, Nov. 9

Cyber fraudsters are misusing people's interest in Work From Home (WFH) opportunities and sending the fake job offers related messages on WhatsApp. Through these fake messages they try to victimize the users by sending them malicious phishing links and attempt to commit financial frauds. In this regard, Andaman and Nicobar Police



has issued the following advisory to safeguard the citizens against fake job offers:  
> Ignore the messages

received from unknown numbers.  
> Avoid clicking on unfamiliar links received through

(Contd. on last page)



Vice-President addresses 4<sup>th</sup> Convocation of NIT Delhi...

(Contd. from page 1)

advert to some areas that dot our discourse and need response. What we see around, sermonising to all and demonising our constitutional institutions is fast becoming a pastime even with those who constitutionally matter in the political arena. This does no good to the nation. It is a recipe for chaos and impeding our growth." Emphasizing the need for change, he stated, "Time to bid adieu to this and also I say with utmost restraint: time for our elites to be elites. To them I appeal-to be a worthy elite you have to be spurred by fervour of nationalism."

Reflecting on India's historical and democratic strength, the Vice-President declared, "Bharat, the oldest, largest, and functional democracy, needs also to be the world's most powerful. It can't be our dream. It has to be a dream retrieved; a position retrieved. A powerful Bharat will be an assurance for global harmony, peace, and happiness. Because we nurture our thought over centuries. We practice it. Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam-One Earth, one Family, one Future."

Shri Dhankhar called for an unwavering commitment to nationalism, stating, "This calls for unflinching commitment to nationalism in its fullness. National interest has to have precedence over partisan or otherwise interests." He also highlighted the necessity of economic nationalism, emphasizing that "Economic nationalism has to be a dominant concern for business. Howsoever justifiable, howsoever big in volume or fiscal quantum, there is no excuse for compromising economic nationalism. This denudes our commitment to the principle of keeping the nation first." However, he cautioned against superficial efforts, emphasizing, "A word of caution: in the name of commitment for research, let us not have something that is just surface scratching. It must be real, authentic research. We must be deeply critical that people who get aid and assistance for research and innovation must actually equip themselves admirably by performance in that domain."

The Vice-President, expressed confidence in India's corporate sector, "I'm confident our corporate leadership will rise to the occasion and commit their CSR funds liberally for this cause, through our institutions that are many and deserving." Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar concluded by urging the youth to pursue success with well-being, face challenges as growth opportunities, and serve a higher purpose. "Remember that every setback prepares you for a stronger, more impactful comeback," he said, encouraging a fearless approach and expressing gratitude for the opportunity to connect with the future stewards of India's progress.

Skill development prog. on 'Importance of Water Quality Management in...

(Contd. from page 1)

Panchayat, Diglipur in collaboration with Fisheries Substation, Diglipur of Department of Fisheries, A&N Administration.

This initiative was designed to inspire and empower rural farming communities in the district to engage in freshwater fish farming, enhancing their understanding of water quality management practices for sustainable aquaculture and broadening economic opportunities.

The training program was inaugurated by Smt. Nilima Sammdar, Pradhan in the presence of Shri Bikah Roy, Sarpanch of Radhanagar Gram Panchayat.

In her inaugural address, Smt. Nilima Sammdar motivated the farmers and farm women to adopt fish farming practices with scientific manner in their existing farms to get maximum returns. Dr. V. Damodaran, Sr. Scientist & Head, KVK highlighted the potential of the aquaculture sector in the North and Middle Andaman District.

During the technical sessions, Shri Subham Debroy, SMS (Fisheries Science) from ICAR- KVK, North & Middle Andaman, highlighted the importance of water quality in fish farming.

Dr. Vijay Prasad, Fisheries Inspector, provided an overview of various sustainable fish farming methods, a press release from CIARI said.

SEVA SUCHNAYEIN							
ALL THE SAILINGS ARE SUBJECT TO WEATHER CONDITIONS NOTE: FOR SHIPPING RELATED QUERIES PLEASE DIAL TO TOLL FREE NUMBER 1003452714.							
Passenger tickets for Foreshore Sector 9 <sup>th</sup> November, 2024 onwards is being issued to the general public from 08.11.2024 (Fri) onwards.							
Passengers may book their tickets from DSS e-ticketing portal ( <a href="https://dss.andaman.gov.in/eticketing">https://dss.andaman.gov.in/eticketing</a> ) on all days from 09.00 AM to 04.00 PM and from STARS Ticketing Counter in all working days from 9.00 AM to 04.00 PM, except on Saturday from 09.00 AM to 12.00 PM.							
SRI VIJAYA PURAM - MAYABUNDER & DIGLIPUR							
Passenger tickets for the sailing schedule w.e.f 13 <sup>th</sup> November, 2024 onwards is being issued from 08.11.2024.							
Sl. No.	Name of the vessel	Date & Time of Sailing	From	To	Date & Time of Return Sailing	From	To
1.	Nalanda	13.11.2024 2100 Hrs	Sri Vijaya Puram	Diglipur via Mayabunder	14.11.2024 1500 Hrs	Diglipur	Sri Vijaya Puram via Mayabunder
2.	Nalanda	16.11.2024 2100 Hrs	Sri Vijaya Puram	Diglipur via Mayabunder	17.11.2024 1500 Hrs	Diglipur	Sri Vijaya Puram via Mayabunder
SRI VIJAYA PURAM - LITTLE ANDAMAN							
Passenger tickets for the sailing schedule on 12 <sup>th</sup> November, 2024 is being issued from 08.11.2024 onwards.							
1.	Nalanda	12.11.2024 0800 Hrs	Sri Vijaya Puram	Little Andaman	12.11.2024 2100 Hrs	Little Andaman	Sri Vijaya Puram
SRI VIJAYA PURAM - CAR NICOBAR VIA LITTLE ANDAMAN							
1.	MV Kalighat	20.11.2024 0700 Hrs	Sri Vijaya Puram	Car Nicobar via Little Andaman	21.11.2024 at 800 Hrs	Car Nicobar	Sri Vijaya Puram Via Little Andaman.
SRI VIJAYA PURAM - NANCOWRY VIA LITTLE ANDAMAN, CAR NICOBAR, CHOWRA, TERESSA & KATCHAL							
1.	MV Kalighat	14.11.2024 0700 Hrs	Sri Vijaya Puram	Nancowry via Little Andaman, Car Nicobar, Chowra, Teressa & Katchal	17.11.2024 0500 Hrs	Nancowry	Sri Vijaya Puram via Katchal, Teressa, Chowra, Car Nicobar & Little Andaman
SRI VIJAYA PURAM - CAMPBELL BAY & NANCOWRY							
1.	Sindhu	12.11.2024 0900 Hrs	Sri Vijaya Puram	Campbell Bay via Nancowry	14.11.2024 0800 Hrs	Campbell Bay	Sri Vijaya Puram via Nancowry
2.	Nalanda	19.11.2024 0900 Hrs	Sri Vijaya Puram	Campbell Bay via Nancowry & Katchal	21.11.2024 0800 Hrs	Campbell Bay	Sri Vijaya Puram via Nancowry
3.	Sindhu	26.11.2024 0900 Hrs	Sri Vijaya Puram	Campbell Bay via Nancowry	28.11.2024 0800 Hrs	Campbell Bay	Sri Vijaya Puram via Nancowry
Note: Embarkation of passengers will commence 02 Hours prior to the scheduled departure time of the vessel and boarding will be closed 30 Minutes before departure time. Passengers arriving late will not be allowed to board the vessel. The vessel will sail only after completion of survey procedure which will commence on completion of embarkation of passengers for issuance of 'B' Certificate as per MS Act. Further, with regard to cargo all the consigners are hereby advised to book actual quantity of cargo to be transhipped, as no excess cargo will be allowed.							
FORESHORE SECTOR:							
10.11.2024 (SUNDAY)							
1.	MV Jolly Buoy	10.11.2024 0630 Hrs	Sri Vijaya Puram	Swaraj Dweep	10.11.2024 0900 Hrs	Swaraj Dweep	Sri Vijaya Puram
2.	MV Strait Island	10.11.2024 0630 Hrs	Sri Vijaya Puram	Shaheed Dweep	10.11.2024 0845 Hrs	Shaheed Dweep	Sri Vijaya Puram
3.	MV Bambooka	10.11.2024 1100 Hrs	Sri Vijaya Puram	Shaheed Dweep	10.11.2024 1300 Hrs	Shaheed Dweep	Swaraj Dweep
		--	--	--	10.11.2024 1430 Hrs	Swaraj Dweep	Sri Vijaya Puram
4.	MV Strait Island	10.11.2024 1130 Hrs	Sri Vijaya Puram	Swaraj Dweep	10.11.2024 1400 Hrs	Swaraj Dweep	Shaheed Dweep
		--	--	--	10.11.2024 1530 Hrs	Shaheed Dweep	Sri Vijaya Puram
5.	MV Jolly Buoy	10.11.2024 1430 Hrs	Sri Vijaya Puram	Swaraj Dweep via Shaheed Dweep	11.11.2024 0530 Hrs	Swaraj Dweep	Sri Vijaya Puram via Shaheed Dweep
11.11.2024 (MONDAY)							
1.	MV Baratang	11.11.2024 0600 Hrs	Sri Vijaya Puram	Rangat via Swaraj Dweep & Long Island	11.11.2024 1200 Hrs	Rangat	Sri Vijaya Puram via Long Island & Swaraj Dweep
2.	MV Strait Island	11.11.2024 0630 Hrs	Sri Vijaya Puram	Swaraj Dweep	11.11.2024 0900 Hrs	Swaraj Dweep	Sri Vijaya Puram
3.	MV Bambooka	11.11.2024 0630 Hrs	Sri Vijaya Puram	Shaheed Dweep	11.11.2024 0845 Hrs	Shaheed Dweep	Sri Vijaya Puram
4.	MV Jolly Buoy	11.11.2024 1100 Hrs	Sri Vijaya Puram	Shaheed Dweep	11.11.2024 1300 Hrs	Shaheed Dweep	Swaraj Dweep
		--	--	--	11.11.2024 1430 Hrs	Swaraj Dweep	Sri Vijaya Puram



Larsen & Toubro Construction Skills Training Institute  
&  
Government Industrial Training Institute (ITI), Dollygunj

JOINTLY ORGANISING

MEGA JOB MELA

From 6<sup>th</sup> November to 14<sup>th</sup> November 2024

UNMATCHED BENEFITS FOR TRAINEES:

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- Nutritious meals provided at no cost
- Uniforms and PPEs supplied free of charge
- Access to sprawling playgrounds for recreation
- 100% guaranteed placement on successful training completion across L&T job sites in India
- Overseas Opportunities
- Digital literacy and e-learning resources, enhancing employability
- Stipend ranging from ₹7,000 to ₹14,000 shall be paid during the on-site apprenticeship training, after 3 months of basic training.

100% Placement Assistance

  
Scan QR for Registration



Formwork Carpentry Trade Bar bending & Steel Floor Trade Advanced Masonry Trade Construction Electrician Trade Scaffolding Trade Fabrication- Pipe Welding Trade Plumbing Trade

Eligibility: ITI passed-outs or 10<sup>th</sup> /12<sup>th</sup> pass only Male candidates

VENUE: GOVT. INDUSTRIAL TRAINING INSTITUTE, DOLLYGUNJ, SRI VIJAYA PURAM

Special outreach prog. to provide benefits of different Scheme under Fisheries Deptt....

(Contd. from page 1)



Special Outreach Programme at Mohanpur Village, Diglipur



farmers, and unemployed youth attended the programme. In the special camp, three beneficiaries have shown keen interest in construction of Fish Kiosk while two beneficiaries have shown interest for procurement of insulated vehicle, two wheeler with ice box, etc. In the coming days, more such camps shall be organized in the whole

District for the welfare of fishermen, fish farmers and unemployed youth. More such camps shall also be arranged in different coastal villages under the District. The programme was arranged under the guidance of the Director of Fisheries, Ms. Jagtap Kalyani Rajendra, a press release from Zonal Fisheries Office, N&M Andaman said.

India Shines in QS World University Rankings:...

(Contd. from page 1)

Research Network, Citations per Paper, and Papers per Faculty. India's strongest average indicator scores are in Papers per Faculty and Staff with PhD.

Key Insights from QS World University Rankings: Asia 2025

This ranking assesses 984 institutions covering 25 countries in Eastern, Southern, South-Eastern and Central Asia. The QS World University Rankings: Asia 2025 allows institutions and students to make direct comparisons on institutional performance within their region, with a more granular approach to metrics.

> India stands out with the highest number of institutes in the latest rankings, showcasing a diverse array of both emerging and well-established universities.

> The country dominates the top ten universities in Southern Asia, with seven institutions making the list.

> **Top 50:** India features two institutions - IIT Delhi (44<sup>th</sup>) and IIT Bombay (48<sup>th</sup>).

> **Top 100:** Five institutions, including IIT Madras (56), IIT Kharagpur (60), Indian Institute of Science (62), IIT Kanpur (67), and University of Delhi (81), showcase India's robust academic standing.

> **Top 150:** Institutions such as IIT Guwahati, IIT Roorkee, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Chandigarh University (120), UPES (148), and Vellore Institute of Technology (150) highlight the depth of quality education.

> Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IITD) has achieved the highest ranking for India, moving up to 44<sup>th</sup> place from 46<sup>th</sup> last year, with an impressive employer reputation score of 99%.

> Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IITB) follows closely at 48<sup>th</sup> and boasts an employer reputation score of 99.5% and an academic reputation score of 96.6%.

> The University of Delhi has improved its ranking, moving up from 94<sup>th</sup> to 81<sup>st</sup>, achieving a high score of 96.4% in the International Research Network.

> Anna University achieved a perfect score of 100 in the Papers Per Faculty indicator, emphasizing high research output.

> 15 universities scored above 99% in the staff with PhD indicator, underscoring the high standard of education and teaching.

> North Eastern Hill University and University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore attained a perfect score of 100 in faculty-student indicator, demonstrating top-tier academic credibility.

The Indian education sector has made impressive strides, both globally and within Asia, as evidenced by the QS World University Rankings 2025. India earlier saw the inclusion of 46 institutions in the 2025 edition compared to just 11 in 2015 edition showcasing a 318 per cent increase in last 10 years among G20 nations. This growth underscores India's commitment to fostering academic excellence and enhancing global competitiveness. India's educational landscape shines as a model of growth and resilience at Asia level also with two institutions in the top 50 and seven in the top 100 in Southern Asia region. Led by the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IITD), ranked 44<sup>th</sup>, India showcases strengths in key areas such as "Papers per Faculty" and "Staff with PhD," underlining its dedication to quality education and impactful research. This achievement emphasizes India's ability to balance research productivity with high-caliber teaching, establishing it as a formidable competitor among global education powerhouses and solidifying its reputation as an emerging hub for higher learning in Asia.

A&N Police issues advisory on fake job...

(Contd. from page 1)

messages on any online platforms.

> Only visit authorized company/organization website for valid job-related information.

> Install updated anti-virus on your digital devices for security and protection.

> Immediately block the number and report against such fake offers.

> Keep yourself updated about the Cyber frauds and scams.

> Enable 2 Factor authentication and finger print options provided by the platforms.

> Ensure that you always follow safe online practices.

For assistance, information or enquiries, contact the Cyber Crime Police Station, A&N Islands, over National Helpline No. 1930 and A&N Police Helpline No. 9531856083 or visit [cybercrime.gov.in](https://cybercrime.gov.in), a press release from SP (CID) said.

Last date for submission of online applications for admission to Class IX & Class XI in JNV Panchawati extended

Rangat, Nov. 9 further been extended

The last date for submission of online applications for admission to Class-IX & Class XI in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Panchawati, N & M Andaman against the vacant seats through Lateral Entry Test for the Session 2025-26 has

up to Nov.19, 2024. Candidates may apply free of cost by visiting the link for Class IX- <https://cbseitms.nic.in/2024/nvsix> and for Class XI - [https://cbseitms.nic.in/2024/nvxi\\_11](https://cbseitms.nic.in/2024/nvxi_11), a press release from JNV said.

NAPDDR & IRCA (SA) conduct awareness...

(Contd. from page 1)

encouraged students to participate actively in the educational sessions.

Earlier, Ms Shirley, PGT, Govt. SSS Bathubasti welcomed the gathering. Dr. M.K Mahato, (IRCA), South Andaman led a session on drug abuse prevention, emphasizing the physical and mental health risks associated with drug use, strategies for resisting peer pressure, and the importance of building supportive relationships with family and friends. He also informed students about the 24/7 Helpline No. 112, available for drug-related complaints and counselling, and shared his personal contact number for additional support.

The Project Assistant, NAPDDR, also engaged with the students, offering insights on effective study techniques and ways to stay focused. Her session aimed at guiding students on avoiding negative influences and maintaining a positive mindset, a press release from Directorate of Social Welfare said.



# Trachoma-Free India

## Introduction

Clear eyesight is one of life's most precious gifts, essential for daily activities, education, and overall well-being. However, several diseases, such as trachoma, pose serious threats to eyesight, potentially leading to irreversible blindness if left untreated.

Trachoma, a highly contagious bacterial infection, has been a major cause of preventable blindness worldwide.

According to WHO estimated 150 million people worldwide are affected by Trachoma and 6 million of them are blind or at risk of visually disabling complications. Among them the infective stages of trachoma are usually found in children.

In a significant public health achievement, India has been officially declared free from trachoma by the World Health Organization (WHO). This milestone comes after years of dedicated efforts by the government to protect the vision of millions, emphasizing the importance of healthy eyesight for every individual.

### What is Trachoma?

Trachoma is a devastating eye disease caused by infection with the bacterium Chlamydia trachomatis. The primary source of trachoma infection is the eye secretions of infected individuals, it can be transmitted through several routes, including:

- Close physical contact, such as playing together or sharing a bed, especially among mothers and affected children.
- Sharing towels, handkerchiefs, pillows, and other personal items.
- Houseflies, which can carry the infection.
- Coughing and sneezing.

**Environmental risk factors that promote the transmission of trachoma include:**

- Poor hygiene practices.
- Overcrowded living conditions.
- Water scarcity.
- Inadequate latrines and sanitation facilities.

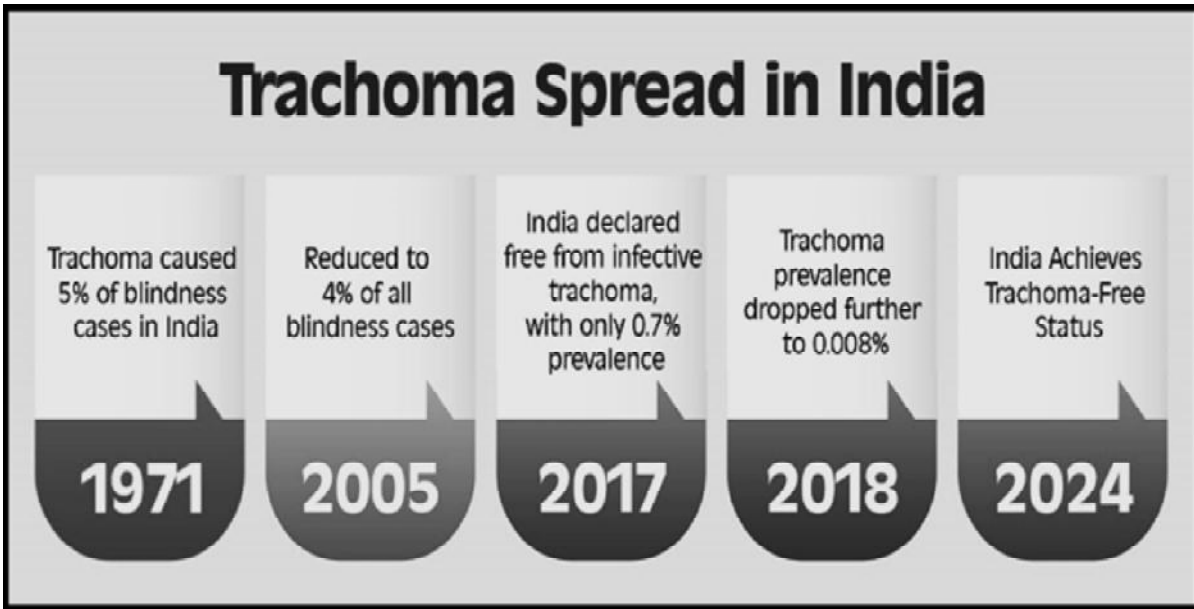
Addressing these risk factors is crucial to breaking the cycle of transmission and preventing the further spread of the disease.

### Children are more vulnerable to trachoma:

As children experience repeated infections, scarring can occur on the inner surface of their upper eyelids. This scarring leads to a painful condition known as **trachomatous trichiasis**, where the eyelid margin turns inward, causing the eyelashes to constantly rub against the eyeball, but the hazards don't end there. If left untreated, this condition can lead to visual impairment. Research shows that individuals may need to endure more than 150 infections over their lifetime to develop severe complications associated with blinding trachoma.

### India's Victory Against Trachoma

During the 1950s and 1960s trachoma was a significant public health concern in India. States like Gujarat, Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, and the Nicobar Islands were heavily impacted, with over 50% of their populations affected during that period. By 1971, trachoma was responsible for 5% of all blindness cases in the country. In response to this pressing issue, India implemented a series of measures aimed at eradicating the problem.

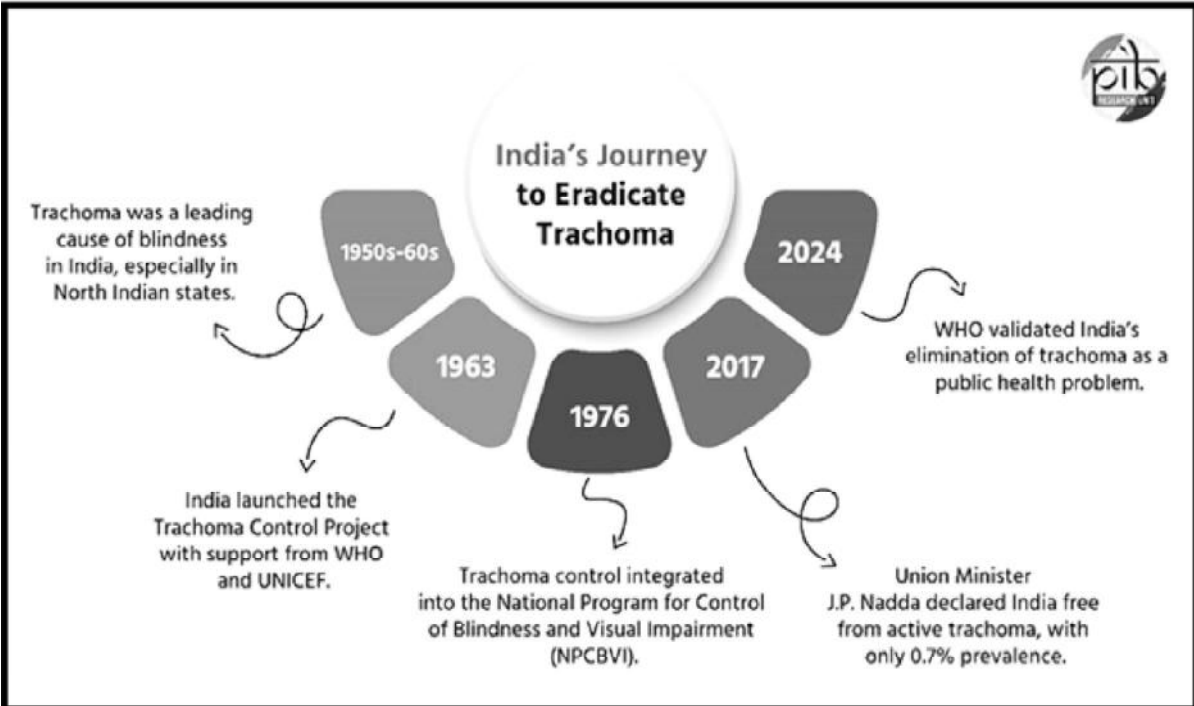


### Initiatives to Combat Trachoma

Recognizing the urgent need to combat the trachoma health crisis, India implemented several key interventions under the **National Programme for Control of Blindness and Visual Impairment (NPCBVI)**. A pivotal moment in this effort was the adoption of the **WHO SAFE strategy**, which aimed not only to treat existing cases but also to prevent future infections through improved hygiene practices. Have a look to the various steps taken by India over the time to combat trachoma:

1. **Launch of the National Trachoma Control Program:** In 1963, the Government of India, with support from WHO and UNICEF, launched the National Trachoma Control Program. This initiative laid the groundwork for comprehensive trachoma management, focusing on:

- **Surgical Treatment:** Addressing the blinding stage of the disease, known as trachomatous trichiasis
  - **Antibiotic Distribution:** Clearing existing infections
  - **Facial Cleanliness:** Promoting hygiene to reduce transmission
  - **Environmental Improvements:** Enhancing access to water and sanitation.
2. **Integration into National Programs:** In 1976, trachoma control efforts were integrated into the broader NPCBVI framework, ensuring sustained focus and resources for elimination activities.
3. **Significant Progress:** In 2005, trachoma accounted for 4% of all blindness cases in India. Remarkably, by 2018, this figure declined to just 0.008%. The success of these efforts was validated through a series of impact assessments, pre-validation, and trichiasis-only surveys, confirming that elimination targets were met in all previously endemic regions.



Through these continuous efforts, India has made significant strides toward eradicating trachoma. **By 2017, India was declared free from infective trachoma.** This announcement came during the release of the National Trachoma Survey Report (2014-17) by the then Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, J.P. Nadda. The survey findings were promising, indicating that active trachoma infections had been eliminated among children in all surveyed districts, with an overall prevalence of only 0.7%-well below the World Health Organization's (WHO) elimination threshold of 5%.

Despite this remarkable progress, the commitment to public health did not end there. From 2019 to 2024, India continued its vigilant surveillance for trachoma cases across all districts to ensure that the infection did not re-emerge. This ongoing monitoring is crucial for maintaining the hard-won status of being trachoma-free, demonstrating India's dedication to safeguarding the eye health of its citizens and preventing avoidable blindness.

### WHO Applauds India's Effective Measures Against Trachoma

WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus praised India's commitment to alleviating the suffering caused by trachoma, emphasizing the vital collaboration among the Government, healthcare professionals, and international partners that made this milestone possible. India now stands alongside Nepal, Myanmar, and 19 other countries that have also successfully eliminated trachoma as a public health issue. However, the disease continues to be a challenge in 39 other nations, affecting approximately 1.9 million people globally and leading to irreversible blindness in many cases.



### Conclusion

India's journey to becoming trachoma-free showcases the strength of teamwork in public health and community support. By adopting the WHO SAFE strategy the country has successfully lowered the rates of this serious eye disease. The cooperation among Government bodies, healthcare workers, and international partners has been key to this success. As India joins other nations that have eradicated trachoma as a public health issue, it highlights the need for ongoing efforts, consistent public health programs, and a dedication to ensuring that future generations can enjoy good eyesight.



