

Laundering case against Vaghela in ₹700cr 'scam'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) registered on Wednesday a money-laundering case against ex-Union minister Shankarsinh Vaghela and some others in connection with the sale of a prime National Textile Corporation (NTC) plot in Mumbai, which reportedly caused a loss of Rs 709 crore to the exchequer.

The CBI had filed a corruption case in the matter last year. The ED took cognizance of the CBI FIR and registered a case under provisions of Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) after identifying the "proceeds of crime".

ED officials said Vaghela, a former Gujarat CM, and others named in the FIR would soon be questioned. The case pertains to the sale of NTC land to a private Kolkata-based firm for a meagre Rs 29.35 crore when Vaghela was the textiles minister.

The CBI had alleged that the accused entered into a criminal conspiracy and transferred the land in a wrongful manner for Rs 29.35 crore, whereas its actual value was much higher.

It was alleged that during UPA term, Vaghela, who moved from BJP to Congress, had overruled re-

A money-laundering case against former Union minister Shankarsinh Vaghela was registered in connection with the sale of a prime plot of the National Textile Corporation in Mumbai



commendations of his ministry officials that NTC must make a detailed evaluation of the land before a nod for transferring it to the company was given. Besides Vaghela those named in the CBI FIR include the then chairman-cum-managing director of NTC K Ramachandran Pillai, its then director (technical) R K Sharma, senior manager (legal) M K Khare and a Kolkata-based private firm and its director.

The property in question is part of the 80,785 square metre land of 'sick' Madhusudan Mills which was taken over by NTC.

Cabinet clears new motor vehicle Bill

New Delhi: The government Wednesday approved the Motor Vehicle (Amendment) Bill 2016 that proposes hefty penalties for violation of traffic norms, including up to Rs 10,000 fine for drink driving and Rs 2 lakh compensation in hit-and-run cases.

The Bill also has provision of up to Rs 10 lakh compensation in case of road fatality.

“It is a historical step towards making our roads safe and saving lakhs of innocent lives,” said Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari.

He said the Bill includes penalties in the range of Rs 1000-Rs 4000 for over-speeding.

As per the Bill, driving without insurance will be punishable with Rs 2,000 fine and/or three-month imprisonment, while driving without helmets will attract Rs 2,000 fine and 3-month suspension of licence. The provisions also include that guardian/owner will be deemed to be guilty in case of road offence by juveniles. **PTI**



Minister Smriti Irani with senior BJP leader Murli Manohar Joshi at Parliament on Wednesday. *Anil Sharma*

Whitefly fear forces Punjab farmers to uproot cotton crop

VIKAS VASUDEVA

NEW DELHI: While farmers in parts of Punjab have started uprooting cotton crop fearing whitefly pest attack, officials from the State government and the Centre are touring the cotton-belt to monitor the situation.

The pest attack, which caused extensive damage to Bt cotton crop last year in Punjab and neighbouring Haryana, had been reported this year as well in a few villages of Malwa region, mainly Fazilka district of Punjab.

Farmers are worried that there could be increased infestation if the current hot and humid weather conditions continue to prevail for the next 15-20 days. An increase in jassid pest attack, which too sucks the crop like the whitefly, is worrying farmers in parts of Mansa and Bathinda

districts.

After facing farmers' wrath in the poll-bound State last year, the ruling Akali government and the Centre are taking no chances. The team of officials and experts touring the cotton belt for surveillance will hold a review meeting on August 3.

"We have been able to control the spread this season, as it is limited to 132 acres in a few villages... But the next 20 days or so are critical. If it rains it will be good for the crop. Whitefly pest grows and spreads in dry, hot and humid conditions," Jasbir Singh Bains, Director, Punjab Agriculture Department, told *The Hindu*. Mr. Bains is a part of the expert team.

Mr. Bains disagreed that farmers were uprooting cotton crop due to whitefly pest. "It's the late sown cotton crop that farmers have uprooted in

a few villages, to replace it with paddy to ensure better returns," he said.

Whitefly attack caused extensive damage to Bt cotton varieties last year in Punjab and Haryana, resulting in a drop of nearly 40 per cent in production. Bt cotton accounted for over 98 per cent of the total cotton sown last year in both the States. The remaining two per cent was the indigenous cotton varieties. This season too, Bt cotton accounts for over 93 per cent of the total cotton sown.

After the losses they suffered last year due to whitefly attack, farmers in both Punjab and Haryana have planted less cotton this year. In Punjab, the area has shrunk to 2.56 lakh hectares, against 4.50 lakh hectares last season. In Haryana, cotton has been sown in 5 lakh hectares this year, against 5.80 lakh hectares last year.

Land transfer for Ambedkar memorial gets nod

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: The Cabinet on Wednesday approved the terms and conditions for the transfer of 12 acres of land belonging to National Textile Corporation to the Maharashtra government for the construction of a memorial of B.R. Ambedkar.

“The Union Cabinet had already approved the transfer of 12 acres of Indu-6 Mill land to the government,” the government said in a release.

Vibrant textile traditions thrive in Northeast



Alka Raghuvanshi

artscope

It is handloom week and, for a diehard handloom fan like me, it gives me greatest pleasure to see the lead taken by the textile minister, Smriti Irani, to take forward the struggle to make handlooms the first choice for apparel especially among the younger people. And the initiative to turn the spotlight on the role played by women in the entire weaving process is really noteworthy. After all, women play a pivotal role in the process of weaving and spinning and in some areas like the Northeast and many other places it is women who do most of the weaving and keep the tradition alive.

Perhaps least known in other parts of the country are the vibrant and exquisite textile traditions of the Northeast. I have shared some really joyful moments in my extensive travels in the interiors of Northeast especially Assam with women weavers who went about creating saris, mekhla chadors as they sat under almost ramshackle thatched roofs with their rather basic looms weaving the most intricate dreams so joyfully, laughing, singing and cracking jokes. It is so ironical that so many of them wouldn't even have chance to wear some of the fabulous textiles they helped create.

Even in the middle ages, the ancient Ahom (present day Assam) kings, like the nobilities of Japan, patronised silk rearing and silk weaving. It was obligatory on the part of certain castes of rear silkworms, reel the yarns and practice weaving almost as a household activity. Mulberry silk was exclusively reserved for royalty, the muga for nobleman and the eri for commons — possibly because of the textures, purity of silk and lifestyles. It is interesting that now it is muga that is considered to be the veritable king of silks from the region, followed by pat and eri. Specific designs and styles of weaving set apart the tribes with a complex hierarchy firmly in place even till date, especially at the

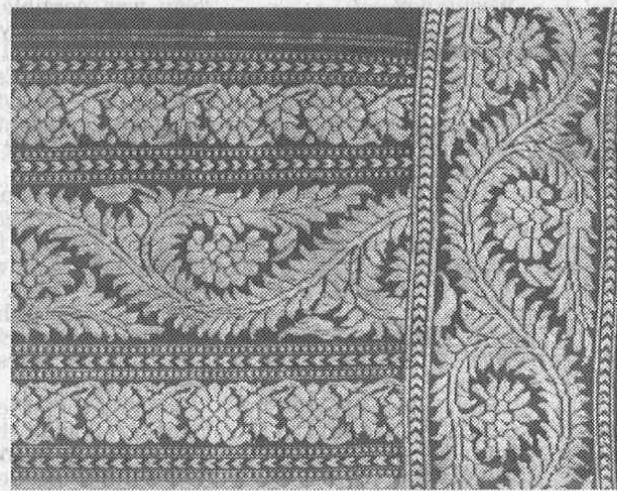
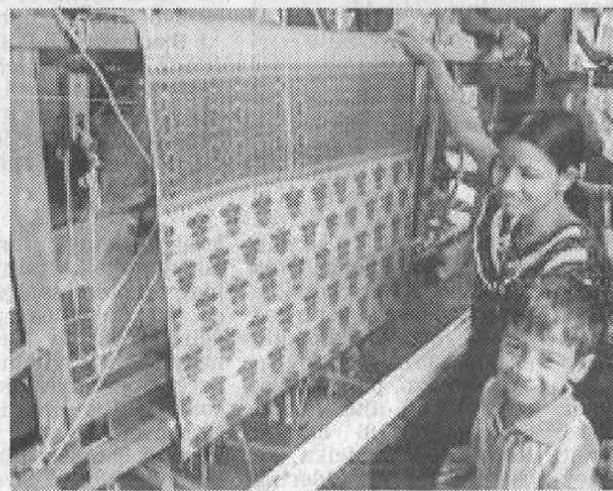
grass-root level.

In the women's market in Imphal, Manipur, which is in full swing at the crack of dawn, women from many parts of the hills and, of course, the valley have reserved spaces where they bring the vibrant phaneks (lungi-like apparel worn by women) woven by them and further embellished by intricate embroidery on them to sell. It is interesting that these phanek designs are peculiar to each tribe and they wear specific designs only. There were some with neutral "temple" designs that could be sported by anyone. Till date, I regret not buying an exquisite silk phanek in emerald green with brick red temples and matching chador that a woman weaver was selling in that market. The colour and texture of the fabric is still vivid in my memory even after two decades! In subsequent visits I made it a point to visit the market but never found anything as breathtaking!

In Nagaland almost exclusively wool and cotton is woven in small portable looms and since only narrow pieces can be woven on it, they are joined together. Incidentally, similar is the case in Manipur and other parts of the Northeast where the loin loom is in use. Naga tribes weave their specific sashes, shawls and other textiles, with designs peculiar to each tribe. All those red, white and black striped shawls that look same if not similar to the uninitiated have their own story to tell of tribes and their lifestyles and heroes. It is an entire language in itself.

In Arunachal Pradesh too, there has not been much external influence on the designs of the textiles although there has been some borrowing of motifs from neighbouring areas. The motifs, designs and patterns, however, are quite complex and their symbolic meaning and usages are rather significant.

Although a small state, Meghalaya's of the three



Clockwise from above: A woman weaver in Assam, artworks based on Northeast designs and an Assamese textile.

ancient hill communities: the Khasi, Jaintias and Garos. Weaving is the traditional occupation and the exclusive monopoly of Garo women and pursued by almost every family. Weaving can begin as soon as the first fruit of the new rice have been eaten. I have myself given a shot at weaving with a local girl and it is more difficult than it looks!

When cloth is being dyed, a whole lot of restrictions of food including not eating strong smelling foods and purity and cleanliness of body are observed. The most popularly woven textile is the dakmanda, worn from the waist to a little below the knee. The texture and durability of the endi silk produced in Meghalaya is

famous. The important centre for weaving endi silk is Sonidan, a village of about hundred bamboo huts. Besides Sonidan, women in other villages carry out endi silk weaving. Moreover, the production of jainsen (typical Meghalaya women's wear) with local mulberry silk has also been introduced.

In Mizoram too, there are a number of craftspeople and skilled artisans as weaving is an internal part of the Mizo culture and the women learn how to weave at an early age. Puans, somewhat like lungis, are woven in numerous designs on the traditional loin looms. All dyeing is done by women, and it is ana, or forbidden, for men to take part in the operation, as it is believed

that any man who touches dye or a cloth that is being dyed will be unable to shoot any game, and will be especially liable to suffer from consumption.

The reason why participation in dyeing results in bad luck in the chase is rather complicated. Animals are terrified of blood, and consequently are very afraid of the women due to menstrual cycles. The hands of man who takes part if dying are strained with the blue dye, and the smell of the dye hangs about them. The souls of the wild animals scent this at once, and when such a man approaches, they associate him in their minds with women, become very frightened, and refuse to allow him to approach

them. Hence, a man who helps his wife to dye cloth is always unlucky in the chase.

In Tripura, till as late as the 19th century, every family had a loom, irrespective of caste or community. An ancient king named Trilochan (alias Subrai) was a great patron and he married many girls only to honour their skills. Cotton would be abundantly produced in the Jhoom fields in the hills. The Tripura women and even the princesses excelled in weaving coloured and richly embroidered cotton clothes. Handloom weaving is concentrated in the sub-divisions of Sadar, Soonamura, Khawai, Kailasahar and Belonia with motifs peculiar to the Chakma, Kuki, Lussai and

Reang tribes.

The main feature of Tripura handlooms is vertical and horizontal stripes with scattered embroidery in different colours, and designs are tribe peculiar. The Khakloo are a small, little known tribe who claim direct relationship with the Purum Tipra — a dominant community that ruled Tripura for centuries. The cotton is grown in the jhoom. Women do spinning and weaving only. It is forbidden for men to take any part in the operation, as it is feared that any man who participates in spinning or weaving will be struck by lightning. Similarly, there is a taboo on women in basket making: it is believed that if any woman weaves a basket, the male will be idle and timid and, as a result, he will not be successful in hunting.

The clothes the Kuki-Chin tribe women from Tripura wove in the past had designs that were copied from the skins of snakes. They were called by different names like Thangang, Saipi-khup, Pommongvom, and Khamtang. These clothes in the olden days were not allowed to be woven by the commoners. Only the chief's and the official's families were allowed to weave these clothes. It was also forbidden to put on these clothes while crossing a big river. It was feared that the cloth might attract snakes to the weavers. Many of these beliefs might seem quaint, but this is a living reality with the weaving communities there and taken rather seriously. I was warned by my local travel companions to never speak about it in jest.

A few years ago, the Lalit Kala Akademi was holding the Octave festivals of all the north-eastern states and I was curating and designing an art show for them. I put all this information to great use by creating panels covered with sitlapati mats from Tripura, phaneks from Manipur, bamboo baskets from Mizoram, miniature swords and spears from Nagaland and art from the entire Northeast to stunning effect — perhaps one of my most creative exhibition designs so far.

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AMBEDKAR MEMORIAL ON 12-ACRE INDU MILL LAND

New Delhi: The Cabinet on Wednesday gave its clearance to terms and conditions for transfer of 12 acres of Indu-6 mill vested with the National Textile Corporation (NTC) to the Maharashtra Government for construction of Dr BR Ambedkar memorial.

EX-UNION MIN VAGHELA BOOKED FOR NTC SCAM

New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has booked former Union Minister Shankarsinh Vaghela and others on charges of alleged money laundering in connection with the sale of some prime National Textile Corporation (NTC) land in Mumbai which reportedly caused a loss of ₹709 crore to the exchequer. The CBI had filed a criminal case of corruption last year taking cognisance of which the ED has now registered an offence under the provisions of Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). The agency has worked on the case after gathering inputs from the CBI and other agencies and also identified the “proceeds of crime” created by the accused. Vaghela, a former Gujarat CM, and others named in the FIR will soon be summoned for questioning. The case relates to the sale of NTC land in upmarket Worli area of Mumbai to a private Kolkata-based firm for a meagre ₹29.35 crore when Vaghela was Minister for Textiles in the erstwhile UPA Government. CBI had alleged that the accused entered into a criminal conspiracy and transferred the land in a wrongful manner, for a total consideration of ₹29.35 crore (approx), whereas its actual value was much higher, causing an alleged loss of about ₹709.27 crore to the Government exchequer.

PNS

GOVT APPROVES TERMS FOR LAND TRANSFER FOR AMBEDKAR MEMORIAL

NEW DELHI: The Cabinet on Wednesday gave its clearance to terms and conditions for transfer of 12 acres of Indu-6 mill vested with the National Textile Corporation (NTC) to the Maharashtra government for construction of Dr B R Ambedkar memorial. The decision was taken at a meeting of the Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi here.

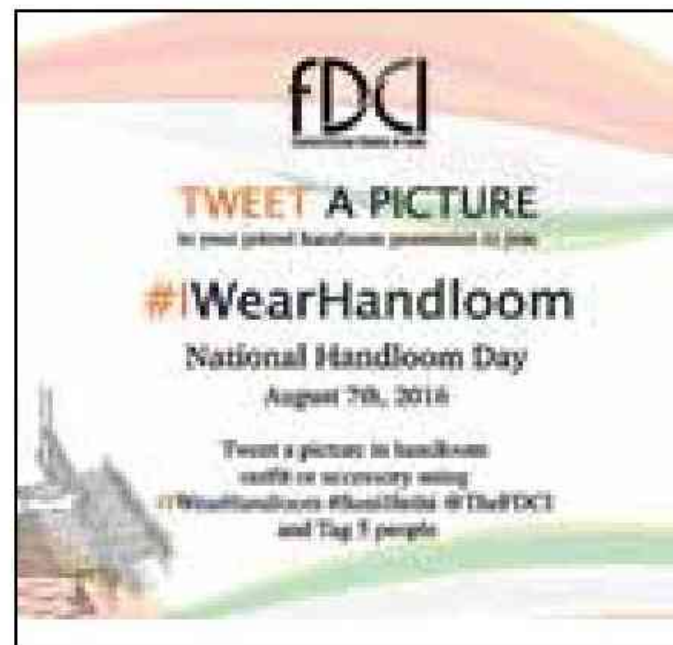
“The Chaityabhoomi of Bharat Ratna Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar is situated in the vicinity of the land of Indu-6 mill of NTC Mumbai, a place of pilgrimage for millions of Indians,” an official statement said.

Sharing Pride together

OUR CORRESPONDENT

IN A MOVE that aims to empower the handloom weavers of India, the ministry of textiles under the leadership of Minister of Textiles Department Smriti Irani announced #I wear Handloom-a *Twitter* based campaign to commemorate National Handlooms Day on August 7. ‘#I wear Handloom’ is a campaign to show support to a community which weaves the diverse fabric of our nation’s rich heritage and bring international fame to our nation.

It is a tribute to our women who contribute to 15 per cent of cloth production in India and 95 per cent of world handloom production thus appreciating these people for their



hardwork and dedication for keeping the nation’s tradition alive. I thank the Fashion

Design Council of India along with top designers across the country who have played a critical role in making this campaign a success and helping mainstream handloom globally, said Irani.

‘#IWearHandloom’ is a *Twitter* campaign that encourages the wearing and sharing of hand-woven garments and accessories.

The campaign began on August 1.

ED registers money laundering case against Vaghela

MUMBAI: The ED has booked former Union Minister Shankarsinh Vaghela and some others on charges of alleged money laundering in connection with sale of a prime National Textile Corporation (NTC) land in Mumbai which reportedly caused a loss of Rs 709 crore to the exchequer.

The CBI had filed a criminal case of corruption last year taking cognizance of which the Enforcement Directorate has now registered an offence under the provisions of PMLA.

Officials said the agency has worked on the case after gathering inputs from CBI and other agencies and also identified the “proceeds of crime” created by the accused.

They said Vaghela, a former Gujarat Chief Minister, and others named in the FIR will soon be summoned for questioning.

The case pertains to the sale of NTC land in upmarket Worli area of Mumbai to a private Kolkata-based firm for a meagre Rs 29.35 crore when Vaghela was Minister for Textiles.

MPOST

एक देश, एक टैक्स

जीएसटी के लिए राज्यसभा ने पारित किया संविधान संशोधन बिल

जागरण ब्यूरो, नई दिल्ली: एक देश, एक टैक्स का सपना अब हकीकत बनने जा रहा है। दशक भर से अधिक के इंतजार के बाद आखिरकार राज्यसभा से जीएसटी लागू करने को आवश्यक संविधान संशोधन विधेयक पारित हो गया। राज्यसभा में मौजूद 203 सदस्यों ने इसके समर्थन में वोट किया। माहौल कुछ ऐसा बना कि विरोध में खड़े अन्नाद्रमुक ने भी औपचारिक विरोध से बचते हुए वाकआउट कर विधेयक पारित कराने की राह आसान की। अब इस विधेयक को कानून बनाने के लोकसभा के साथ 29 में कम से कम आधे राज्यों की विधानसभाओं की मंजूरी की जरूरत होगी।

राज्यसभा में बुधवार को इस विधेयक पर करीब आठ घंटे तक चली चर्चा में कांग्रेस समेत तमाम विपक्षी दलों ने जीएसटी की अधिकतम दर 18 फीसद रखने की वकालत की ताकि आम जनता की जेब पर अधिक बोझ न पड़े। वित्त मंत्री अरुण जेटली ने चर्चा के जवाब में स्वीकार किया कि टैक्स की दर नीची रहनी चाहिए और केंद्र सरकार यह सुनिश्चित करने का प्रयास करेगी कि राज्यों के साथ एक उचित दर पर सहमति बने। उन्होंने स्पष्ट कर दिया कि टैक्स की दर तय करने का काम जीएसटी काउंसिल को करना है जिसमें राज्यों के साथ-साथ केंद्र की भी हिस्सेदारी होगी। इस काउंसिल में सभी राज्यों और सभी राजनीतिक दलों के प्रतिनिधि होंगे, लिहाजा कोई आवश्यकता से अधिक ऊंची दर रखकर जनता की नाराजगी मोल नहीं लेना चाहेगा।

जेटली ने आश्वासन दिया कि जीएसटी लागू होने पर महंगाई नहीं बढ़ेगी। उन्होंने उपभोक्ता मूल्य सूचकांक पर आधारित खुदरा महंगाई दर का उदाहरण देते हुए कहा कि जिन वस्तुओं और सेवाओं के आधार पर यह महंगाई

♦ जीएसटी दर अधिकतम 18 फीसद करने की पुरजोर मांग उठी

♦ सबसे बड़े कर सुधार पर दिखी अभूतपूर्व राजनीतिक सहमति



राज्यसभा में जीएसटी विधेयक पारित होने के बाद केंद्रीय वित्त मंत्री अरुण जेटली का मुंह मीठा कराते सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी मंत्री रविशंकर प्रसाद। प्रे

दर तय होती है, उनमें से 54 प्रतिशत पर जीएसटी नहीं लगेगा जबकि 32 प्रतिशत वस्तुओं पर जीएसटी की निम्नतम दर लगेगी। वहीं शेष 15 प्रतिशत पर जीएसटी की स्टैंडर्ड दर लागू होगी।

आश्वासन से इन्कार: विधेयक पर चर्चा के दौरान विपक्ष में इसके स्वरूप को लेकर काफी गहमागहमी रही। जीएसटी लागू करने के लिए अब केंद्र और राज्यों को स्टेट जीएसटी और सेंट्रल जीएसटी से संबंधित

राज्यसभा से जीएसटी बिल पारित होना ऐतिहासिक अवसर है। मैं सभी दलों के नेताओं को धन्यवाद देता हूँ।

— नरेंद्र मोदी, प्रधानमंत्री

जीएसटी से महंगाई नहीं बढ़ेगी। दैनिक आवश्यकता की 86 फीसद वस्तुओं पर जीएसटी नहीं लगेगा या कम होगा। हालांकि इसके बारे में फैसला जीएसटी काउंसिल करेगी।

— अरुण जेटली, वित्त मंत्री

कानून बनाना होगा। विपक्ष ने भविष्य में संसद में आने वाले केंद्रीय जीएसटी और आइजीएसटी विधेयक को मनी बिल के तौर पर न लाने का आश्वासन वित्त मंत्री से मांगा। लेकिन वित्त मंत्री ने पूर्व में कोई ऐसी परंपरा न होने का हवाला देकर अस्वीकार कर दिया। ये विधेयक संसद के शीतकालीन सत्र में लाए जाने की उम्मीद है। उन्होंने साफ कहा कि जो बिल आज की तारीख में केवल प्रस्तावित ही है, उनके बारे में अभी यह कैसे कहा

कुछ होगा सस्ता कुछ महंगा

जीएसटी लागू होने के बाद आम उपभोक्ताओं पर क्या असर पड़ेगा। तमाम तरह के करों के स्थान पर सिर्फ एक ही टैक्स लगाने के कारण सैद्धांतिक रूप से वस्तुएं सस्ती होंगी। असलियत में भी वे वस्तुएं सस्ती होंगी जिन पर अभी वैट और उत्पाद शुल्क दोनों प्रमुख कर लगते हैं। लेकिन जिन वस्तुओं पर अभी सिर्फ एक कर यानी वैट, सर्विस टैक्स या उत्पाद शुल्क लागू हैं, वे महंगी हो सकती हैं क्योंकि जीएसटी की दर (संभावित दर 17-18 फीसद) मौजूदा टैक्स से कहीं ज्यादा होगी।

सस्ता

कार, यूटीलिटी वाहन



टू-व्हीलर



मूवी टिकट



पंखे व लाइटिंग



वाटर हीटर



एयर कूलर



पेंट



सीमेंट



टीवी



रेफ्रिजरेटर



मोबाइल हैंडसेट



महंगा

एयर टिकट



होटल व रेस्टोरेंट बिल



मोबाइल बिल



ट्रेन टिकट



अन्य सेवाएं



सिगरेट



कपड़ा व गारमेट



ब्रांडेड ज्वेलरी



दायरे से बाहर

रसोई गैस

हवाई ईंधन

पेट्रोल

नेचुरल गैस

डीजल

शराब

जा सकता है कि वे मनी बिल नहीं होंगे। वित्त मंत्री ने अपने जवाब में चर्चा के दौरान उठे तमाम सवालों का जवाब दिया। जेटली ने कहा कि जीएसटी के दायरे में कौन-सी वस्तुएं आएंगी और किन्हें जीएसटी से मुक्त रखा जाएगा, उसका फैसला भी जीएसटी काउंसिल में चर्चा के बाद ही होगा।

शेष पृष्ठ >> 10

विशेष आयोजन : जीएसटी की जीत

>> 9 और 10

एक देश, एक टैक्स

काउंसिल में विवाद की स्थिति में दो-तिहाई भार राज्यों के पास होगा और एक तिहाई केंद्र के पास रहेगा। साथ ही वोटिंग के वक्त काउंसिल के सदस्यों की कुल संख्या का तीन चौथाई उपस्थित होना आवश्यक होगा। जेटली ने कहा कि यह व्यवस्था इसीलिए बनाई गई है ताकि केंद्र या राज्यों पर मनमानी का आरोप न लगे।

पांच साल तक राजस्व की क्षतिपूर्ति

राज्यसभा में जिन महत्वपूर्ण बदलावों को जीएसटी से संबंधित संविधान संशोधन कानून का हिस्सा बनाया गया है, उनमें जीएसटी लागू होने पर राज्यों को होने वाली राजस्व हानि की पांच साल तक भरपाई सुनिश्चित करने के वैधानिक प्रावधान शामिल हैं। इससे पहले तीन साल तक शत-प्रतिशत भरपाई का प्रस्ताव किया गया था। दूसरे, सरकार ने राज्यसभा में रखे विधेयक में मैन्यूफैक्चरिंग करने वाले राज्यों को एक फीसदी अतिरिक्त कर की दर का प्रस्ताव भी वापस ले लिया है। जीएसटी लाने का एलान सबसे पहले साल 2006-07 के आम बजट में हुआ था। उस वक्त इसे पहली अप्रैल, 2010 से लागू करने का लक्ष्य तय हुआ था। सरकार ने फिलहाल इसे एक अप्रैल, 2017 से लागू करने का लक्ष्य रखा है। जीएसटी लागू होने के बाद केंद्र और राज्यों के करीब डेढ़ दर्जन परीक्षण कर समाप्त हो जाएंगे।

लेखनी में मानव मूल्यों का होना जरूरी



साक्षात्कार

साहित्य की सीमाएं अनंत हैं। हिंदी साहित्य में ऐसे कई वृक्ष हैं, जिन्होंने इसे शोध और अध्ययन से हरा-भरा बनाया है। साहित्य के ऐसे ही मजबूत और छायादार वृक्ष हैं साहित्यकार डॉ. रमानाथ त्रिपाठी। उत्कृष्ट साहित्य रचनाओं के लिए उन्हें उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार ने दीन दयाल उपाध्याय सम्मान देने का फैसला किया है। यह सम्मान उन्हें दीन दयाल उपाध्याय से प्रेरणा लेकर साहित्य सृजन करने के तहत देने का निर्णय लिया गया, जिसे इस साल सितंबर में दिया जाएगा। प्रस्तुत है जागरण संवाददाता शिप्रा सुमन से उनकी बातचीत के कुछ अंश:

■ दीन दयाल उपाध्याय सम्मान के लिए आपका चुनाव क्यों?

— मैंने जीवन में दीन दयाल उपाध्याय से सीखा है कि देश के लिए समर्पित होकर काम करना चाहिए। यह भाव मैंने लेखन में भी रखा है। जीवन में राष्ट्रीयता की प्रेरणा मैंने दीन दयाल से ही ली, जिससे प्रेरित होकर मैंने रामकथा उपन्यास लिखा। यह मेरी सबसे चर्चित रचनाओं में से है।

■ आपकी नई रचनाएं कौन सी हैं?

— नवीन कृतियों में 'कामरूप' और 'शंख सिंदूर' हैं। मैंने इन रचनाओं को असम और बंगाल की संस्कृति को ध्यान में रखते हुए रचा है। कामरूप का अन्य भाषाओं में भी अनुवाद किया गया है। शंख सिंदूर में बांग्लादेशी सभ्यता का जिक्र है।

■ वर्तमान राजनीतिक परिप्रेक्ष्य के विषय में आपके विचार क्या हैं?

— अगर कोई दल राष्ट्रहित के बजाए वोट बैंक के लिए काम करता है तब वह गलत है। राजनीतिक दलों को सत्ता से अधिक सेवा पर ध्यान देना चाहिए। नागरिकों को शुद्ध राष्ट्रभक्त बनाने की दिशा में कार्य करना चाहिए। सत्ता जरूरी है लेकिन उसका प्रयोग समाज और राष्ट्र के विकास में किया जाना भी उतना ही जरूरी है।

■ महिलाओं की सुरक्षा और राष्ट्र निर्माण में उनकी भागीदारी के बारे में बताएं?

— महिलाओं की शिक्षा पर जोर दिया जाए। समाज में उनके लिए विकृत सोच को खत्म करना जरूरी है। उन्हें अपना प्रतिद्वंदी न समझे बल्कि उन्हें आगे बढ़ने के



विलक्षण विद्वान हैं डॉ. रमानाथ त्रिपाठी

इटवा जिले के औरैया कस्बे के पास क्योटारा गांव में जन्मे डॉ. रमानाथ त्रिपाठी हिंदी साहित्य के क्षेत्र में जाना-माना नाम हैं। डीयू के हिंदी विभाग में प्रोफेसर रहे डॉ. त्रिपाठी ने रामकथा पर शोध किया। संस्कृत, बंगला, उड़िया, नेपाली, गुजराती भाषाओं में भी निपुण वह विलक्षण विद्वान हैं। उनकी कृतियों में 40 पुस्तकें शामिल हैं, जिसमें रामगाथा और दंडकारण्य, कामरूप, नूतन रामकथा और रामकथात्मक उपन्यास व 'वनफूल' व 'महानगर' (आत्मकथा) प्रमुख हैं। भारत, मॉरीशस, अमेरिका व इंग्लैंड की अनेक पत्रिकाओं में उनकी 300 रचनाएं प्रकाशित हो चुकी हैं। रचनाओं के लिए उन्हें तुलसी सम्मान, साहित्य भूषण, अज्ञेय पुरस्कार, तुलसीदास की 5वीं जन्मशती के मौके पर हिंदी अकादमी पुरस्कार सहित विविध क्षेत्रों में कुल 30 पुरस्कार दिए गए हैं। डॉ. त्रिपाठी दो वर्ष तक भोपाल के भारत भवन की निराला सृजन पीठ के निदेशक भी रहे हैं। कठिनाइयों के बीच बचपन गुजारने वाले डॉ. त्रिपाठी के पिता गांव के स्कूल के हेड मास्टर थे। राष्ट्रीय स्वयंसेवक संघ से भी उनका जुड़ाव रहा है।

लिए प्रेरित करें और सुरक्षा प्रदान करें। ऐसी शिक्षा हो जिसमें महिलाओं का सम्मान करना सिखाया जाए। सिनेमा, टीवी और विज्ञापन के कुप्रभाव के कारण गलत घटनाएं होती हैं।

■ साहित्यकारों द्वारा पुरस्कार लौटाने के बारे में क्या कहेंगे?

— मैं पुरस्कार लौटाने के सख्त खिलाफ हूँ। इस प्रकार की पाखंडी धर्मनिरपेक्षवाद देश को बर्बाद कर रहा है। यह एक कड़वा सत्य है।

■ रामायण और आपके उपन्यास में क्या भिन्न है?

— मैंने वाल्मिकी रामायण के आधार पर इसकी रचना

की है। मैंने इसमें ऐसे राम के जीवन की चर्चा की, जो जनजीवन से जुड़ा है। पाठक इसे पढ़कर यह महसूस करेंगे कि वह राम काल में पहुंच गए हैं। इसमें रामकालीन दंडकारण्य का चित्रण किया गया है। इसमें प्राकृतिक सौंदर्य का विस्तृत वर्णन किया गया है। इसमें जंगल के जीवन और उसके ऐतिहासिक पहलू को मूल में रखा गया है। पेड़-पशु, पहाड़ सभी का सुंदर चित्रण है, जो पाठकों को आकर्षित करती है। इस दंडकारण्य में भौगोलिक वर्णन के साथ वन्य जातियों और प्रजातियों के बीच राम की स्थिति को दर्शाया गया है।

■ रामायण पर शोध के बारे में बताएं?

— रामायण पर मेरा शोध करीब 50-60 वर्ष का है। मैंने कई भाषाओं में इसका अध्ययन किया और उसे अलग अलग क्षेत्र के लोगों के नजरिए से समझने का प्रयास किया। इसके लिए कई भाषाओं को भी सीखा। शोध को तीन खंडों में बांटा। जिसमें भारतीय भाषाओं में रामकथा, विदेशों में रामकथा और आदिवासियों में रामकथा को शामिल किया। मेरा दृष्टिकोण भी इसमें है, जिसके तहत 1. परिवार समाज के लिए त्यागजीवन, 2. सदाचार और नैतिक जीवन चरित्र, 3. दलित और उपेक्षित लोगों को अपनाना, 4. आततायी शक्ति के विरोध में निर्भय होकर संघर्ष करना।

■ युवा लेखकों को क्या संदेश देना चाहेंगे?

— हिंदी साहित्य में नित नए लेखकों का आगमन हो रहा है। इनकी रचनाएं अच्छी होती हैं, लेकिन उन्हें पढ़ने में अब मैं सक्षम नहीं हूँ। लेखनी में कभी भी विचारधारा का अंधाधुंध प्रचार गलत है। मानव मूल्यों का होना जरूरी है। रचना ऐसी हो जिसे पढ़कर पाठकों पर गलत असर न पड़े। साहित्य प्रचारात्मक नहीं होना चाहिए।

■ स्वतंत्रता आंदोलन की यादें?

जब मैं 12 वर्ष का था तब स्कूल की परीक्षा में उर्दू के पेपर में अंग्रेजों के खिलाफ कुछ पंक्तियां लिख दी थी। उसके बाद मुझे फेल कर दिया गया। जब दोबारा परीक्षा दी गई तब मुझे सख्त निर्देश दिए गए कि ऐसा कुछ न लिखूं और स्कूल इंस्पेक्टर ने 100 कोड़े लगाने के आदेश दिए। बाद में बच्चे होने की वजह से छोड़ दिया गया। करीब 18 वर्ष की आयु में थाने पर झंडा लगाने गया। गोलियां चलने से आसपास कई साथी शहीद हो गए। लेकिन मैं पकड़ में नहीं आया।

Indian Farmers Adopt Desi Cotton Variant



NEW DELHI Thou-
sands of cotton
farmers across
north India have

switched to the new local variety, spelling trouble for seed giant Monsanto in its most important cotton market outside the Americas. Officials peg the area planted at 72,280 hectares, up from roughly 3,000 hectares last year.

ED Books Vaghela for Money Laundering



New Delhi: ED on Wednesday registered a money laundering case

against former Union textile minister and ex-Gujarat CM Shankarsinh Vaghela and others including then chairman-cum-MD of National Textile Corporation (NTC) for the sale of a prime property in Mumbai allegedly at 'throwaway prices' to a private company. CBI had named Vaghela in an FIR registered last year where it said ex-NTC CMD Ramachandran Pillai, RK Sharma, then director, and MK Khare, then senior manager, for allegedly causing a loss of ₹709 crore to the exchequer through the sale of NTC land in Parel. - OPB

Etailers Out of Cash, Out of Fashion

Portals like Freecultr, Zovi and Fashionara on verge of closure; environment tougher with ecomm giants focusing on the space

Shambhavi Anand & Rasul Bailay

New Delhi: Despite fashion being a key growth driver for online retail in India, some e-commerce ventures in this category find themselves on a sticky wicket.

Unsuccessful attempts to raise money or find buyers is forcing some of these portals, which had resorted to deep discounting to lure customers but are now confronted with a cash crunch, to close or scale back their operations.

Sequoia Capital-funded e-commerce company Freecultr, which was in talks with Arvind Group for a possible sell-off, has shut down its website, say two people familiar with the development.

Sandeep Singh, cofounder of Freecultr, that sells own brands of fashion and lifestyle products, said the website is currently not operational because there is a "technical error".

"We are in a transition and a team is looking into it," he said. Singh declined to comment on why the e-commerce remained shut for days altogether. "I can't comment on shut-down," he added.

Currently, Freecultr's website does not even appear in a Google search. The company last updated its Facebook page in March and Twitter timeline on April 5.

Survival Threatened

The going is getting tougher for smaller online fashion retailers amid drying up of funding options



Some of the fashion startups who have either scaled back or shut down include:

■ **Freecultr**, backed by Sequoia Capital

■ **Zovi**, backed by SAIF Partners and Tiger Global

■ **Fashionara**, backed by Lightspeed Venture Partners and Helion Venture Partners. Its founder Arun Sirdeshmukh has joined Amazon as the head of its fashion

■ **Fashion and You** backed by Sequoia & Norwest & Smile Group

Etailers like Amazon and Flipkart, which owns Myntra and Jabong, are looking at fashion and lifestyle as growth drivers

Companies with deep pockets such as Aditya Birla Group, Tata Group, Arvind and Reliance Retail are also making a mark

The online fashion segment is currently estimated at

\$2 billion and is estimated to swell to \$20 billion by 2020, surpassing consumer electronics as the largest category



Another fashion e-commerce site, Zovi, backed by SAIF Partners and Tiger Global, has stopped selling directly via its website and buyers are directed to its products sold on Flipkart and Ama-

zon. There are no products listed on the site and customers are greeted by a message that reads: "Sorry for interruption. We are shifting our warehouses. We will be back soon. You can still continue to keep directing our products at Amazon and Flipkart."

Manish Chopra, CEO of Zovi, denied any plans of shutting the por-

tal. "At present we are not selling directly via the portal but we are selling through our marketplace partners," he said citing shifting of warehouse from Delhi to Bengaluru as the reason.

Working closely with marketplaces like Amazon and Flipkart has always been important part of the company strategy and will remain so, he added. Zovi's last update on its social media accounts — Facebook and Twitter — was in May informing buyers about the ongoing sale for men's t-shirts.

Online marketplaces like Amazon and Flipkart are looking at fashion and lifestyle as growth drivers and companies with deep pockets such as Aditya Birla Group, Tata Group, Arvind and Reliance Retail are jumping on the band wagon.

Last month, Flipkart-owned Myntra acquired Jabong to consolidate its position in this segment, although the price it paid was a fraction of what the owners of Jabong were originally expecting.

The online fashion segment is currently estimated at \$2 billion and is estimated to swell to \$20 billion by 2020, surpassing consumer electronics as the single largest online category.

But the going is getting tougher for smaller online fashion retailers amid drying up of funding options.

Fashionara, an online retailing venture focussed on fashion and lifestyle, folded up few months ago after struggling amid dwindling business and cash crunch. It was backed by Lightspeed Venture Partners and Helion Venture Partners. Its founder Arun Sirdeshmukh has joined Amazon as the head of its fashion portfolio. Older fashion ecommerce portals, like FashionandYou.com are struggling with fund raising options.

"Yes you are right, new funding rounds have been a challenge for all players in the space and Fashion and You is no exception," said Harish Bahl, CEO of Smile Group which is a minority shareholder in the company. Bahl added that he was not the official spokesperson of the company, whose major shareholders include Sequoia Capital and Norwest.

It has closed some of its large warehouses in the last few months, including the one in Gujarat, according to people familiar with the company. Bahl, said that the warehouse closed as the company has moved to a marketplace model.

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New hope for man-made textile segment as GST regime likely to 'erase' disparity in duty rates

fe Bureau

New Delhi, Aug 3

AS THE country braces for a goods and services tax (GST) regime, the man-made textile segment, long neglected by policy makers, finally expects a "level-playing field" vis-a-vis cotton textiles.

At present, while man-made fibres attract a 12% excise duty, cotton fibres attract none. This duty disparity has distorted the domestic consumption pattern in favour of the cotton fibre, contrary to the global trend.

Although the actual GST rate applicable to textile and garment products will be announced in due course, senior textile industry executives say the current disparity in the excise duty rates of cotton and man-made fibre will be "erased", unless the government decides to give some exemption to cotton fibres. Industry executives expect a GST rate of around 15%, if the peak rate is 18%, arguing that textile



and garments are essential items.

"Man-made fibre-based products will be more competitive vis-a-vis textiles items based on cotton fibre. This will be a good policy push, in sync with the global realities," said noted textile expert DK Nair, who is also an adviser to South Indian Textile Mills Association. However, both cotton and man-made fibre are also subject to 4-5% state VAT, which will be subsumed by the GST.

However, if the duty treatment of all cotton and man-made fibres remains the

same, prices of textile items made of cotton fibre could rise a tad, Nair added. But equal tax treatment will give a push to man-made fibre production and subsequent exports.

The industry has long been complaining that the duty disparity is preventing domestic producers from scaling up operations and, consequently, hurting India's export competitiveness in man-made textiles. This is because while man-made fibres account for around 70% of the world's total fibre consumption, they make up for less than 30% of India's demand.

The government in June announced radical changes to labour laws, apart from some concessions to the garments sector, aimed at boosting exports of textiles and garments by \$30 billion over the next three years from \$40 billion in 2015-16. Last year, the textile ministry had recommended a reduction in the excise duty for the man-made textile sector to 6% from the current 12%. However, such a step was never approved by the government.

Farmers cotton on to new seed, in blow to Monsanto

New Delhi/Mumbai, Aug 3: In a tiny hamlet at the heart of the cotton belt in northern India, Ramandeep Mann planted Monsanto's genetically modified Bt cotton seed for over a decade, but that changed after a whitefly blight last year.

Mann's 25-acre farm in Punjab's Bhatinda district now boasts "desi", or indigenous, cotton shrubs that promise good yields and pest resistance at a fraction of the cost.

Mann is not alone.

Thousands of cotton farmers across the north of India, the world's biggest producer and second largest exporter of the fibre, have switched to the new local variety, spelling trouble for seed giant Monsanto in its most important cotton market outside the

Americas.

The Indian government is actively promoting the new homegrown seeds, having already capped prices and royalties that the world's largest seed company is able to charge.

"Despite the whitefly attack, farmers in northern India are still interested in cotton, but they are moving to the desi (indigenous) variety" says textile commissioner Kavita Gupta.

Official estimates peg the area planted with the new variety at 72,280 hectares in north India, up from roughly 3,000 hectares last year.

That is still a tiny percentage overall, and most farmers in the key producing states of Gujarat and Maharashtra are sticking to Monsanto's GM cotton, which has been in-



strumental in making India a cotton powerhouse.

And the impact of whitefly, a pest that thrives in dry weather, may not be as big this year, as monsoon rains are likely to be plentiful. Experts said two straight droughts fanned last year's infestation.

But the new seed is still a setback for Monsanto, which

has also been hit by a roughly 10% decline in cotton acreage in India this year as farmers switch to crops like pulses and lentils in the aftermath of the whitefly blight.

Seed sales slide

Monsanto's Bt cotton sales in India have fallen 15% so far in 2016, said Kalyan Goswami, executive director of the

Monsanto has also been hit by a roughly 10% decline in cotton acreage in India this year as farmers switch to crops like pulses and lentils in the aftermath of a whitefly blight

National Seed Association of India.

The firm, which last year sold some 41 million packets of Bt seeds in India, could stand to lose up to ₹5 billion (\$75 million) due to lower sales and the steep cut in royalties enforced by the government earlier in 2016, according to Reuters calculations.

The company, which unsuccessfully challenged India's decision to slash royalties in the courts, declined to comment for this article.

But in the wake of the whitefly infestation, Mahyco

Monsanto Biotech (India) Pvt Ltd (MMB), a joint venture with India's Mahyco, said last year that Monsanto and its Indian licensees marketed their product as resistant to bollworms, not other pests.

Some experts were optimistic the indigenous cotton seeds developed by the Central Institute for Cotton Research (CICR), which comes under the farm ministry, would catch on over time.

"Just wait for the crucial three to four years to see a complete, natural turnaround. By then most farm-

ers will give up Bt cotton and go for the indigenous variety," said Keshav Raj Kranthi, head of CICR.

Kranthi said planting a hectare with the Indian variety cost less than half the ₹80,000 farmers paid to sow Bt cotton over the same area, and the crop yield was almost as high.

Unlike GM seeds, farmers could also store and replant the local seeds the following year, he added.

Some experts voiced caution over the new variety, however. "By all accounts, the indigenous cotton looks pretty promising, but it will be put to test this year," said Devinder Sharma, an independent food and trade policy analyst. "It's a potential game changer, but it has to succeed first."

Reuters