


ABSENCE OF LITERATURE

We make compromises in life, the good deeds of life the basis of our life. But by comparing the misguided decisions made by them with our own lives, we learn from them and save lives from being ruined. 'Literature' is a web of words. In which the writer presents his imagination in such a creative way that he expresses his own personal experience through words and makes the readers feel through his written words everything that he himself has experienced. It reveals the great truths, hardships, thoughts, situations and feelings of life and paves the way for those who want to walk this path upwards and look at life up close. What is even more astonishing is the fact that it is a verbal exchange of ideas. It is now up to the writer to determine how well he is able to portray the words so that any of his writings will move like a movie reel in front of the eyes of the reader and the reader will be happy with that writer's writing. Be happy and feel sad inside at the time of the tragic event and the cheese of the heart flows from inside him through the eyes in the form of tears and comes to his face and the matter overwhelms his unconscious mind so much that, at all times he Think about what he read in the book. Through literature we gain knowledge on subjects like medicine, history, society and psychology used in ancient times. Reading 'literature' is not for everyone. Humility to read literature, ground level, control over thinking Reading books makes the mind better. According to an English scholar, books also have their own types, some of which we read in sections, some of which we read for food, some of which we read with ease and understanding. We focus our attention on them. Books are like true friends. Which remain in our lives forever and from time to time guide us like a good guide. It is very important for everyone from children to adults to read books, but it is even more important to learn from them and apply that knowledge in your life from time to time, so that in the ups and downs of life. Seek the help of bookish knowledge. To prevent the state of mind from deteriorating further, because books do not distract us, when we read a book we find ourselves floating in a sea of words. With this we get rid of the internal tensions. We find the solution to any problem by comparing it with the solution of the event written in the books and no one knows about our inner mind, worries and fears. Some moments are the most critical moments of life. At this time whatever picture comes to mind, it is a line on the stone. Wrong language, wrong vocabulary, wrong ideas, light literature spoils people's lives. But if good literature, good vocabulary, excellent ideas and high quality writers are given to the society at this time, then only the face of the society can change. Everyone can create their own life. One can live a high quality of pure life. It is also important for us to know about our past. If we don't know our history, there is nothing we can do. As the saying goes, 'Nations that forget their history are destroyed.' Everyone should be interested in reading literature. The absence of literature creates space in life. The existence of literature gives birth to human substance, humanity and good ideas in human beings, which is literature itself. This is the truth of life.



OFF 'D' CUFF

Drop dogmas to make full use the intellect

The internal urge to attain liberation in every sphere of life is a natural wont of every human being. The essence of the human mind is known as intellect. Intuition cannot be called the essence of mind. In fact, intuition is subtler than the mind. It is a special aspect of human existence and should be called the eleventh organ or the sixth sense. Discrimination between holy and unholy, permanent and impermanent, pure and impure in the intellectual sphere has a certain yardstick of its own. This yardstick should remain unstained. Due to the bondage of various types of exploitation and tyranny against the intellect in the physical sphere, the human spirit writhes in suppressed agony. Likewise in the mental sphere, the human capacity to think is snatched away. And in the same way in the intellectual sphere, when human beings try to think and act for their spiritual and intellectual unfoldment, various kinds of dogmas arise and create obstacles. A dogma is a preconceived idea that forbids human beings to outstep the limits of that idea or object. In this situation, the human intellect cannot freely function. Some people say, 'All right, we may not get the maximum utilization of our intellect, yet we can have at least ten to twenty percent of its services.' Wherever there is dogma, even ten to twenty percent of the human intellect cannot be properly utilized; and the meagre amount of intellect used is not something worthwhile. The greatest treasure of human beings is their psychic faculty, their

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intellect. When i cannot utilize this precious intellect to its fullest advantage, what more tragic situation could there be than this. So, we need the liberation of the human mind, and even before this, we need the liberation of the human intellect. Suppose the intellect wants to follow a particular path; in the meantime, dogma comes from all sides and forbids it, ‘Oh no! Don't take a single step further in that direction. If you do, you'll be doomed to hell for eternity.’ When the intellect wants to make the fullest utilisation of mundane wealth, dogma comes in and says, as it were, ‘Oh no, you must not do it. It is harmful for human beings; it is sheer blasphemy. It will lead to the degradation of humanity.’ When the human intellect becomes ardently eager to venture into a new enterprise in the psychic sphere, dogma again comes into the picture and insists, ‘Oh, no! You must not do this. It will bring about your ruin.’ Thus, in every sphere, at every step, dogma puts a blockade on the human mind, on the human intellect. That is why until we liberate our intellect from bondages, we cannot make its fullest utilisation. For the service of humanity, the intellect must be liberated from all sorts of bondages, dogmas, and unholy influences. Unless that is achieved, we cannot have a radiant future. If we want to herald the advent of golden dawn, we will have to bring about all-round emancipation of the human intellect through a relentless struggle against dogmas, backed by unlimited, uninhibited courage.

Shrii Shrii

■ DR R K BHARDWAJ & DR ANTRIKSH JAMWAL

The World Iodine Deficiency Day or Global Iodine Deficiency Disorders Prevention Day is observed every year on 21st of October to raise awareness of iodine deficiency and its devastating effects on brain development. Iodine is an essential micro-mineral required for normal thyroid function, growth, and development. Its deficiency can result in multifarious health and developmental disorders known as Iodine Deficiency Disorders (IDDs). These disorders may result in preventable mental retardation and can cause miscarriage, stillbirth and cretinism in severe form and learning disability in mild deficiency. Iodine is required for synthesis of thyroid hormones like triiodothyronine (T3) and thyroxine (T4), which have a role in thermoregulation, increasing cellular respiration and energy generation and have widespread effects on intermediary metabolism, growth, development, reproduction, muscle function, immune defence and circulation. A large geographic area of the world has soil deficient in iodine. About 29 per cent of the world's population, living in approximately 130 countries, is estimated to live in areas of deficiency. Iodine deficiency is more prevalent primarily in mountainous regions such as the Himalayas, the European Alps, and the Andes, where iodine has been washed away by glaciations and flooding. Iodine deficiency also occurs in lowland regions far from the oceans, such as Central Africa and Eastern Europe. Globally, 1.5 billion people are at risk for iodine deficiency disorders (IDD). Of these persons, 30-70 per cent has goitre and 1-10 per cent has cretinism. The clinical disorders of iodine deficiency tend to be more profound in geographic areas associated with coexisting selenium and vitamin-A deficiencies and in regions where goitrogens are fed in diet. Iodine content of plant varies with species, strains, climatic and seasonal conditions, and chemical fertilizer supplemented to plants. Cereals, wheat bran, and oil cakes are poor in iodine, whereas straws and green fodders contain marginally adequate content of iodine as per requirement by livestock. Stage of maturity and cutting time significantly affect the iodine content of the fodder. Iodine content of fodder decreases with fall in environment temperature and vice versa. The excessive use of chemical fertilizers like DAP and potash decreases the uptake of iodine from soil; conversely, supplementation of seaweeds in soil will increase the iodine content of soil. Nutritional iodine deficiency in livestock is the leading cause of thyroid gland disorders/goitre. It generally occurs in farm animals wherever human goitre is endemic. Goat is considered as indicator species of iodine deficiency because of browsing habits and less ingestion of soil compared to other grazing animals. IDDs are a major public health concern worldwide. It has been estimated that more than 200 Million people in India and 1.5 Billion people worldwide are susceptible to IDDs with approximately 71 million persons presently suffering from Goitre and other IDDs. A study of 2008 conducted by Department of Community medicine, SKIMS, Soura, Srinagar reported prevalence of goitre as 3.5, 10.3, 13.4, 21.2, 10.8 and 14 percent in Jammu, Kathua, Poonch, Doda, Rajouri and Udhampur, respectively. Goiter prevalence ranged from 3.5 to 21.2 percent, with the lowest rate in Jammu and the highest in Doda. Iodine deficiency was a serious concern in all of Jammu's neighbouring districts except Jammu. Females had a greater frequency of goitre than males (16.12 percent vs 10.10 per cent). Powdered salt was also found to be consumed by 75 per cent of the people in Jammu, with more than 98.5 percent of powdered salt having an iodine level of more than 15 ppm.

■ MAHARAJ KRISHAN RAINA

It is a chilly morning in late September, the air brimming with the fragrance of Crocus Sativus, the flower that produces the precious spice known as saffron, or Zafran by its Persian name. Against backdrop of lofty snow-capped mountains and a road lined with willow trees sits a field as big as a football pitch, packed with purple blooms. Villagers have already busied themselves before the break of dawn, fighting the cold in their traditional Pherans, and picking the delicate flowers in their wicker-baskets. The greatest step taken to protect pride of Jammu and Kashmir is awarding to it the Geographical Indication (GI) tag to keep adulterators and fakes at bay. Saffron is worth its weight in gold. Kashmiri saffron has been associated with elegance, sophistication, and hundreds of years of history. It should not be seen as merely another agricultural product, but rather as part of the region's historic and cultural heritage, which must be conserved and safeguarded. The coloring strength (crocin concentration), odour (safranal) and taste of saffron determine its quality (picrocrocin). Safranal concentration is high in the finest saffron. The Kashmir saffron is famous worldwide due to its very high crocin & safranal content. The quality and high labour cost renders it a high price. The GI certification will help farmers to get the best remunerative price and prevent the common practice of adulteration in saffron. In the Indian subcontinent, saffron is known by many names: Zafran in Urdu (derived from Persian), Kesar in Hindi, Kong Posh in Kashmiri, and Kungumapoo in Tamil. It was given a status by the Mughals. Turkey kings from Central Asia that made Kashmir their home in 16th century, taking saffron wherever they established court and introducing it into their cuisine. Under their rule, saffron, as a color and scent, became routine in the

World Iodine Deficiency Day

A study published in the Indian Journal of Medical Research (IJMR) in 2013 indicated that the entire population of India is at risk of IDD due to the soil of the subcontinent lacking in iodine. As a result, the wide variety of grains, lentils, fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds grown in India do not have sufficient amounts of iodine. No matter what type of diet you have in India, the amount of iodine in it is, therefore, very low and needs to be supplemented with the use of salt that is fortified with iodine. According to a recent survey by Nutrition International, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) and the Indian Coalition for the Control of Iodine Deficiency Disorders (ICCID), the percentage of Indian households that consumed adequate amounts of iodized salt in 2018-2019 increased to 82.1 percent. The survey showed that the awareness about iodised salt was higher in urban areas (62.2 percent) than in rural areas (50.5 percent), and most respondents found electronic mass media campaigns useful in spreading awareness. Iodine requirement & sources: Iodine is not synthesised in our body and requirement can be met through the food and water that we ingest. According to WHO guidelines, a daily iodine intake of 150 microgram is required to prevent IDDs and this can be achieved by using adequately iodised salt (15ppm) of iodine. As per expert Member of Indian Dietetic Association, the average salt intake in Indian homes range from 5-10g/day, of which, 30 per cent is lost during cooking and 70 per cent is absorbed, providing an average amount of 70µg/day. Apart from salt, milk is another source of iodine with 303µg/ litre. Half a litre of milk is the minimum quantity needed by adults to obtain the 150µg recommended dietary allowance. Sea Food such as tuna, shrimps, cod, scallops and egg yolks are also considered excellent sources of iodine along with vegetables and fruits like Sweet potato, onion, spinach, banana, and cantaloupe contain adequate iodine. The relationship of iodine content of soil, plant and animal products like milk has got importance here. If soil is low in iodine, plants/grasses growing on such soil will be iodine deficient and animal grazing and yielding milk will be low in iodine. Being, milk is good source of iodine, instead of normal intake of such milk, body iodine requirement will not be met and signs of iodine deficiency and hypothyroidism will develop. Iodine losses and Cooking methods: As mentioned above that 30 per cent of iodine is lost during cooking and 70 per cent is absorbed. Many studies indicated that the lowest losses were observed during shallow frying, where the salt cooking time was around a minute, while the highest losses were observed during pressure cooking, where the salt cooking time was around half an hour. Cooking losses were observed to be maximum during boiling followed by microwaving although least in roasting and deep frying. In high temperature and high relative humidity circumstances, an opened packet of iodized table salt may rapidly lose its iodine content due to oxidation and iodine sublimation. Therefore, salt should be properly stored in air tight container to prevent the iodine losses. Iodine in Environment: In general sandy soils are low in iodine. High clay content and high pH of soil interfere with the iodine uptake by plants growing on such soils. Iodine deficiency in large areas of the world is associated with iodine cycle in nature. Iodine occurs in the soil and the sea as iodide. Iodide ions are oxidized by sunlight to elemental iodine which is highly volatile. The concentration of iodide in seawater and air is about 50 ?g/l and 0.7 ?g/m3, respectively. Iodine in atmosphere is returned to the soil by rain and snow which has a concentra-

tion in the range of 1.8-8.5 ?g/l. The return of iodine is slow and small in amount compared to the original loss, and repeated flooding further decreases iodine in the soil. High rainfall, snow, and floods increase the loss of soil iodine due to melting of glaciers in hilly area due to global warming. Pink or Himalayan salt is a kind of rock salt that is found in the foothills of the Himalayas in Pakistan region that also touches India It is chemically similar to table salt as it also contains up to 98 per cent of sodium chloride. Pink salt is also high in potassium, magnesium and calcium. Recently its use has seen some rise in a large number of Indian households and almost 25 per cent of the households in Jammu region use this crystalline salt, but in a study only 3.87 per cent samples had adequate Iodine levels. As it has been used by a lot of people in a way similar to what they had been using table salt, some researchers have found out that the Himalayan pink salt lacks iodine. Since, its use was widely prevalent in earlier centuries and the lack of iodine in it, very much indicates why the region where it was used widely was called as 'Himalayan Goitre Belt'. Prevention & Control of IDDs in Human: National Goitre Control Programme was launched in 1962 upon realizing the severity of the problem by Government of India. At the Central Council of Health's Annual Meeting in 1983, it was determined that all edible salt in India will be iodized by 1992. In April of 1986, the nation began a gradual implementation of the iodization salt process. The amended Prevention of Food Adulteration (PFA) Act of 1988 authorised the use of iodized salt. Upon incorporation of Iodine Deficiency Disorders, its name was changed to National Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Programme (NIDDCP) in 1992. It is being implemented in all States/UTs of India encompassing entire population. The two main goals of NIDDCP were to bring the prevalence of IDD to below 5 per cent in the country and ensuring 100 per cent consumption of iodised salt (15 ppm) at household level. The main objective of this programme is to survey magnitude of Iodine Deficiency Disorders, supply of iodized salt, monitoring of urine iodine excretion and health education of people. Under the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act 1954, the Government of India has issued a notification prohibiting the sale of non-iodized salt for direct human use in the nation with effect from May 2006. According to the findings of the National Family Health Survey-4 (NFHS, 2015-16), 93 percent of households consume iodized salt, compared to 73 percent in the NFHS-3 (2005-06). Jeevan Bindi: It is medically enhanced version of regular Bindi, embedded with iodine. It delivers daily requirement of iodine i.e., 100-150 micro grams, absorption through the skin. These are being supplied in Maharashtra to iodine-deficient people, particularly tribals. This initiative is supplemented with iodine pills available at community health centre. An iodine patch, designed like a regular Bindi, is expected to help one lakh tribal women in North-West Maharashtra battle iodine deficiency. Since these tribals don't consume iodized salt, they are usually deficiency in this nutrient. Almost every Indian woman wears a Bindi. Transforming these into iodine patches ensured that women got the required dosage of iodine without making changes to their daily behaviour: Let's take a message to aware our self and others about the importance of iodine in maintaining normal health by consumption of iodine rich foods, adequate iodised salt, taking all precautions to check iodine losses while cooking or addition of salt after cooking to prevent Iodine deficiency disorders.

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Kong Posh: The Kashmiri Gold

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royal kitchens. It became well-known in biryani, the gold rice stacked with meat. It was used in lamb stews; in breads like Sheermal, a sweet, thick flat bread dipped in saffron water that is today eaten in Lucknow; in fruit sherbets as an antidote for tired; and in Phirni, a rice pudding made with spices and enjoyed in North India and parts of Pakistan. There are many local legends about how saffron came to Kashmir. One says that in 12th century Sufi saints Khawaja Masood Wali and Sheikh Sharif-u-din Wali offered a local chieftain a saffron bulb after he cured them of an illness while they were traveling. Another story claims that the Persians brought it with them in 500 BC to further trade and market. A third story brings the spice back to the Hindu Kings who mixed it into hot water to create love potions. While saffron's origination is questionable, there is a common consensus: Kashmiri saffron is the sweetest, most precious spice in the world. Its stands are thicker and more fragrant than its counter-part from Iran, who is responsible for 90 per cent of the world's saffron production. Kashmiri farmers sell it for Rs 2,50,000 or US \$ 3,385. Kashmir's saffron is grown in Pampore, south of Srinagar. Besides adding flavour to food, it holds immense importance in pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, perfumery, and the textile dye-producing industry. Pampore has enjoyed a bountiful harvest of the spice this season thanks to the National Mission on Saffron (NMS). A geographical indication (GI) is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin. In order to function as a GI, a sign must identify a product as originating in a given place. In addition, the qualities, characteristics or reputation of the product should be essentially due to the place of origin. A geographical indication right enables those who have the right to use the indication to prevent

its use by a third party whose product does not confirm to the applicable standards. Saffron is grown in Kashmir due to its distinct geo-climatic conditions. These give the product a one-of-a-kind value and prevent it from being replicated elsewhere. However, due to adulteration, supposed illegal imports from Iran, and inadequate marketing and branding practices, this sector remains mostly untapped. Saffron farmers and processors may establish more successful enterprises by combining the GI of Kashmir saffron with a smart marketing and branding technique. It can assist in the development of a dependable and well-known brand for Kashmir saffron. It will also help to increase consumer loyalty, product distinctiveness and distinctness, legal protections, and higher profit margins, at both the national and international levels. The saffron flower has three parts - the flower petals that goes in for medicine, the yellow strands which don't have much use, and the red strands in the middle - the pure saffron. A single flower produces just three red strands; and 1 gram of saffron is made from around 350 strands. So, for a Kilogram of the spice more than 1,50,000 flowers are scanned. Unfortunately unscrupulous practices like selling the yellow strands mixed with the red are common. Following are the goals of ensuring effective protection of 'Kashmir saffron' through GI: ▶ Prevent wrongly-used Kashmir's name to sell saffron worldwide; ▶ Deliver authentic Kashmiri saffron to consumers; ▶ Allow the commercial benefits of the brand 'Kashmir' to reach legitimate saffron producers in Kashmir. The GI label will assist the tourism industry by projecting a positive image of the place. It's a useful market-access too lasts and adds value to the items that are designated this title, allowing them to access larger markets. Producers will be able to promote dis-

tinnet products with easily recognized qualities. Through this, agro-tourism can be given a boost. It will also encourage employment of local rural, shifting the attention of the youth from the widespread terrorism in the valley towards something productive and income-generating. The fields are a great source of motivation too; located along the national highway, tourists can be tempted to make purchases. It is a long-lasting marketing technique which will bring value to the region of Kashmir and increase faith and goodwill in the minds of people. Thousands of kilograms of Iranian saffron is imported through various routes and blended with Kashmir saffron by several local vendors who have established clients across India. This activity has been going on for years, and the profit from this counterfeit transaction is in the millions of dollars. A growing number of farmers in Kashmir's saffron region have turned their saffron crops into apple orchards. Growers are forced to shift to fruit production since they don't receive acceptable prices for their goods. Saffron is among the many products, like Walnuts and Namda, which give an exclusive profile to Kashmir. Saffron of Kashmir is the best in the world. Its uniqueness comes from the fact that it is grown at an altitude of 1,600 - 1,800 meters above mean sea level. It has longer and thicker stigma and aroma. Kashmir had nearly lost its name as a producer of world's best saffron; thanks to adulterators, so much so that the people have no identification of genuine saffron. Shopkeepers across India will sell you small pretty boxes of 'Asli Zafran' claiming it to be Kashmiri, while in reality they are colored stands used in maximum sweets imitating Saffron. GI certification should go a long way restoring Kashmir's saffron its old reputation and its foreign market. It is expected the GI tag will help Kashmiri saffron gain more prominence in the export market.

Vivek Koul
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