

SELF-DEPENDENCY IN COAL PRODUCTION

The recent assertion of Union Minister Pralhad Joshi that nation is likely to become Atmanirbhar in Thermal Coal Production in coming months is quite true as Coal India Ltd has signed MoUs with BHEL, IOCL and GAIL (India) Ltd for Setting up Coal Gasification Projects, thereby expected to achieve 100 Million Ton Coal Gasification by 2030. Union Minister of Coal, Mines and Parliamentary Affairs Pralhad Joshi said that in next few months India is likely to become Atmanirbhar in thermal coal production. Forty million ton of coal stock will be available with thermal power plants by March next year and as on October 1, 2022 the stock with thermal plants comes to 24 million ton. The Minister was addressing a function organized by Coal India Ltd., Ministry of Coal here today to sign MoUs with five leading PSUs for Coal gasification projects. For setting up four large scale coal-to-chemical projects through surface coal gasification route, Coal India Limited (CIL) signed three separate Memorandums of Understanding (MoU), one each, with three major PSUs of the country Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL), Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) and GAIL (India) Limited. In addition, NLC India Limited (NLCIL) is signing MoU with BHEL. To come up at an aggregated estimated cost of Rs 35,000 crore the proposed surface coal gasification (SCG) projects are planned to be set up in West Bengal, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. The MoU was inked in the presence of Pralhad Joshi, Minister of Coal, Mines & Parliamentary Affairs and Mahendra Nath Pandey, Minister of Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises. Dr V K Saraswat, Member(NitiAayog), Dr. Anil Kumar Jain Secretary (Coal), Arun Goyal, Secretary (Heavy Industries), Pankaj Jain, Secretary (MoPNG), Pramod Agrawal, Chairman, CIL, M. Nagaraju, Additional Secretary & Nominated Authority, CMDs of PSUs, and officials of Ministries of Coal , MoPNG & Heavy Industries & PSUs were also present on the occasion. Through SCG route coal is converted into syngas. This can be subsequently processed for downstream production of value added chemicals which are otherwise produced through imported natural gas or crude oil at enormous cost. As the country's four major PSUs huddle together, the move is aimed at reduced forex outgo, promoting self-reliance and capitalization of indigenous resources. Another upside will be employment generation with direct employment of around 1200 personnel and indirect employment to the tune of over 20,000 persons. With renewables and cleaner energy sources steadily gaining ground alternative use of coal, in future, through diversification assumes greater importance. With the country endowed with 344 Billion Tonnes (BT) of coal resources, with 163 BT, proven coal to chemicals through SCG appears a safe bet subject to commercial viability.

The Coal Ministry on a mission mode is fast tracking utilization of coal and has targeted to achieve 100 million ton (MT) coal gasification by 2030. Coal Ministry has also taken initiatives for allocating Rs. 6,000 crores to support CPSEs by incentivizing implementation of five coal gasification plants. While CIL the country's largest energy producer has identified SCG as one of its business diversification avenues, IOCL and GAIL bring to the table their decades of experience in taking up large-scale chemical and process plants. BHEL has conducted pilot studies with their Pressurized Fluidized Bed Combustion technology and customized it to suit the requirements of high-ash Indian coal. The initiative of CIL and BHEL will lead to commercialization of home-grown coal gasification technology. The synergy and partnership of all the four corporate giants will enable a perfect launch of complex SCG projects. Debasish Nanda, Director (Business Development) inked the pact on behalf of CIL.

Find Your Inner Spa

When we want to go for a retreat to relax, many visit a spa. Spas are designed to relax the body and mind. The word “spa” comes from Latin, which means “health through water.” For centuries, people felt that soaking in mineral-rich warm, thermal waters cures many illnesses. In ancient times, it was called “taking the waters.” This was meant to provide rejuvenation for the body and mind.

Most spas deal with relaxation of the body. Swimming pools, hot tubs, or Jacuzzis with their warm swirling waters relax every muscle. There are massage treatments of all varieties, some with gentle and some with strong pressure. All these help take the stress out of your body.

Medical researchers have found that stress reduction aids the health of your body. Dozens of ailments have been linked to a stress overload on the body. Thus, relaxation of the body is important for the maintenance of our health.

Spa experiences with physical treatments provide an experience where the body can learn to relax. We think of spas as beautiful places. There are beautiful furnishing and decorations designed to be calming. There is harmonious décor, with soft colours, flowers, and a pleasant environment.

Yet, there is a spa within us far more beautiful, harmonious, relaxing, and blissful than any of the best spas on earth.

While we often travel to a spa, whether locally or in a distant destination, we may not be aware we have a spa within us for which we do not need to travel anywhere. You have your own

peaceful retreat within you. The inner spa can be accessed through meditation.

Meditation provides an instant spa for us no matter where we are. It can be used at home, at work, while traveling, or in any stressful situation. Meditation can help us relax physically. It can be done anytime, anywhere. When we sit in meditation, our body is calm and still.

Also, we are slowing down our brain waves, which automatically puts the body in a more relaxed state. It gives the body a chance to rejuvenate through spending time in a calm, stress-free state.

People visit spas for mental relaxation. Our mind is continually running as if on a treadmill. It hardly gets any chance to take a break from the stress and worries of everyday life.

We are continually thinking about our jobs, our finances, our health, our family, our relationships, and the complex situations that arise in life. It is hard enough to deal with thoughts about what we have to do, but we often accompany these thoughts with worry and anxiety.

A spa is designed to help calm our minds. The physical activities are designed to give the body a chance to slow down so our mind will be calm. Spas also offer various activities to reduce the stress in our minds

An outer spa may or may not calm our mind if you keep worrying and focusing on your problems. Meditation provides you an inner spa without going anywhere, which you can visit at any time or place, whether at work, at home, or in a stressful environment.

-Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj

White paper is not that white at all....!

■ Y V SHARMA

The White paper issued by Dr Farooq Abdullah recently, in response to the speech by the Home Minister of India during his very successful recent visit to J&K makes for a very interesting reading. He has published a list of the achievements while he & Omar Abdullah were the CMs of J&K plus Ladakh. Incidentally, what was the bottom line of the Home Minister's speech? His speech encompassed all kinds of corruption- political, economic & to top it all the corruption in the form of discrimination meted out to other two regions of the erstwhile J&K state resorted to by a couple of political families of J&K. The discrimination against other two regions of the state started from 1947 itself. The foundation & edifice of the new truncated state of J&K, after a sizeable portion of it was grabbed by the newly created nation named Pakistan, was laid by Sheikh Abdullah on the fundamental principles of discrimination with other two regions& deceit with whosoever came his way for fulfillment of his nefarious design. He ensured, by creating an environment of instability in the state through his evil political maneuvering that he & eventually his family & followers enjoyed the fruits of his adroit cleverness& his ability to throw dust into the eyes of several Congress leaders of the independent India especially Jawaharlal Nehru. In fact, NC kept the pot of separatism boiling under the protective garb of the temporary article 370 of the Indian constitution & used it to hilt to create communal divide in the state & disaffection amongst the people. NC created tools, most famous of which was Plebiscite Front& many of its affiliates, to ensure that there was no let up in fomenting resistance & ill will towards the Indian state. The unabated bloodletting of the innocent & gullible Kashmiris & others to-date is a result of this policy of the Kashmir centric political parties. An in-depth analysis will show that they harmed Kashmir & Kashmiris no end while enjoying pelf & power for themselves.

Now consider the following acts of the NC regime since 1947: While the 'autocratic' Maharaja Hari Singh fairly allocated 16 electable seats to Kashmir & 17 to Jammu in the Praja Sabha, elections to which were held in 1934, the Government of 'democratic & secular' Sheikh Abdullah arbitrarily 'disbursed' 43 seats to Kashmir province & 30 to Jammu province in the Constituent Assembly of J&K. Two seats were given to Ladakh. Elections to the constituent assembly were held in Aug - Sept 1951. These elections were rigged by the politico-administrative machinery of the Sheikh & all the 75 seats of the Constituent Assembly went to his party. This 'forcefully manufactured majority' was used by Sheikh to blackmail the Indian State in its case at the UN & was the first step by the 'democratic' Sheikh Abdullah to shift the balance of power unfairly to Kashmir though the population of Jammu & Kashmir provinces was 20.01 lakh & 17.29 lakh respectively as per the census of 1941. Therein started an era of acrimony, instability & deception in the polity & power structure of the unfortunate state of J&K leading it to corruption of its mind, body & soul. While at the incipient stage the foundations of the new state should have been laid on sound principles of administration & justice but these laudable objectives were not only given a short shrift but also looked upon in contempt. Fast forward to 1987, the elections were once again rigged by the NC party & the consequences are for everyone to see. That is not all the leadership of NC too dabbled with the terrorists believing that there would be

no harm 'in making hay while the sun shone'. They were instrumental in sending the youth across the border for armed training with an advice that 'they should not be caught by the (Governor) Jagmohan's security forces'. NC released dangerous terrorists from the prisons in 1989 against the advice of the security forces & even against the advisory committee headed by High Court judge, who eventually became the standard bearers of the bloody separatist movement in Kashmir. This atrocious & callous attitude & non serious behaviour, while in Government or out of it, on the part of NC pushed the sensitive & strategically located erstwhile state of J&K in particular & the country in general into a tailspin for last three decades that its only the foresightedness of the leadership of Narendra Modi & Amit Shah that is enabling some sort of check on terrorism, economic development of the UT of J&K & also showing signs of recovery of morass that had set into its administrative machinery. Modi's mantra of 'Sabka Sath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas' is catching up with people of J&K. Recent rallies of Amit Shah at Rajouri & Baramulla are a testimony to it. Left to NC & its INC friends the state would already have been passed over under the 'Musharraf Plan', but the politically astute & mature people of the India ensured that such mischievous dispensations are bundled out of power so that the reigns of the country come into the hands of honest, caring, forthright& totally focused personality like Narendra Modi who has nothing but the interest of the Nation at his heart & mind.

Dr Farooq mentions that NC Govt provided Universities, Medical Colleges, Engineering Colleges& Degree Colleges in the state, but he conveniently forgets that the University, Engineering & Medical Colleges for Jammu region were sanctioned only after huge protests by the people of Jammu, especially the students. The memorials in front of the Science College in Jammu to the three students who got killed while protesting for University at Jammu & other memorial at Kishtwar are a proof to the sacrifices made by Jammunites for these elementary demands. Contrast it with the IITs, IIMs, AIIMS, tunnels on national highway, Jammu bye pass & a network of modern roads that have come or are coming up both in Kashmir & Jammu. The work on connectivity of Kashmir & various places in Jammu through railways is also moving at a fast pace. Srinagar airport handled a record number of 104 flights on a single day indicating the rise in tourist traffic to the valley.

Dr Farooq also mentions about construction of Uri, Salal & Dul Hasti power houses, but conveniently forgets that these power houses were built by NHPC which is a central power utility under the Ministry of Power, Government of India. In the same breath, he conveniently forgets to mention that the Upper Sindh Hydroelectric project built with a capacity of 105 MW doesn't even produce 50 per cent of its capacity since the day of its inauguration. Similarly, Cheneni, Canal, Ganderbal & Mohura power stations, all in state sector, were conveniently allowed to go down & under with skeletal or nil power generation from these power houses. The present dispensation is trying to revive these power stations but once the systems are allowed to rot for decades it becomes difficult to bring them back to life. The NC government never showed any interest in developing tourism sector in Jammu. They never allowed the heritage complexes of Jammu region to come on the national & international tourism map. Mubarak Mandi complex, the seat of Dogra power, that was witness to the cre-

ation of the magnificent J&K state by the Dogra kings was ravaged & obliterated ensuring that it becomes a symbol of victory for the 'quit Kashmir movement' launched by NC in 1946. So was the case with several forts & monuments dotting the landscape of Jammu region which could have turned into major tourist attractions. Areas in other Districts of Jammu region that could have been developed as tourist hub for national & international tourists were left to fend for themselves. A closer look at the funds allocated by their governments for Kashmir & Jammu region for development of tourism is a giveaway. Coming to development of power sector again. I am specifically picking up this sector because it is the backbone of development of any region in a state or a country. Out of total potential of 20,000 MW envisaged for J&K the major share of around 17,000 MW is from River Chenab flowing through the Jammu region. Since the Kashmir centric politicians ruled the state for most of the period fter independence they took no interest in development of this sector. UJH project that could have generated power & irrigated 30000 hectares of agricultural land in Kathua District was just forgotten. Similarly they took no interest in the development of power transmission & distribution network in erstwhile Doda & Rajouri/Poonch Districts. While they pushed the GoI to construct the 400 KV Jalandhar - Samba - Amargarh transmission line via Mughal Road claiming that they shall build 400 KV Grid station at Rajouri/Siot& associated network to cater to the electricity needs of this region, but they forgot about the Rajouri/Poonch Districts & instead took power supply straight to Amargarh to cater to the power needs in the Kashmir province. And then what did they do for erstwhile Doda District that is fast turning out to be the hub of hydel generation? This region is fed by a 1986 vintage transmission line that can supply power to the tune of only 65/70 MW while as the winter peak load requirement of these areas has risen to 140 MW & is increasing further very rapidly. This scenario was well known to the powers that be at the time of seeking approval for 400 KV Jallandhar - Samba - Amargarh line but the government of the time paid no attention to this & pushed for the line feeding power to Amargarh in the Kashmir Valley. Today the situation is such that availability of construction power to the upcoming prestigious power stations in the area is also a problem. This situation is now being addressed & it's quite likely that the 132 KV Ramban - Kheleni - Kishtwar line (that was languishing for more than 15 years) might get completed under central sector by the end of next year& it will also cater to the construction power requirements of the Hydel power stations coming up on River Chenab. Another critical transmission line languishing for 15 years is 220 KV Barn - Bishnah line. This line is critical for providing alternate electricity route to areas in Jammu region. In short the NC & other Kashmir based political dispensations always rooted for Kashmir without taking care of the other two regions especially as they derived their political power from Kashmir. Other two regions were nothing but colonies for them. Thus the speech of Amit Shah is to the point & accurate. Corruption of the Kashmir centric regional parties of J&K is very well known to the people of J&K who are adept at having their ears to the ground. The white paper of the NC thus is their method of befooling people through which they have not rebutted the corruption charge of the Home Minister.

(The author is Spokesperson BJP J&K UT).

Unique festival of Karwa Chauth

■ OMKAR DATTATRAY

The pious land of India is famous in the whole world for its festivals, fairs and festivities and the crown of the country - Jammu & Kashmir is no exception to it. The married women of north and western India especially the married Hindu women celebrate the unique festival of Karwa Chauth for the longevity of the life, safety, security, good martial life and relations as well as for the prosperity of their husbands. Even some unmarried girls who long for good partners in their future life also celebrate the fast of Karwa Chauth. This year the festival of Karwa Chauth will be celebrated on 13th October. The festival of Karwa Chauth is dedicated to elephant God Lord Ganesha and Mata Karwa and it is an annual festival and is celebrated with fanfare and great pomp and show by the married women who keep Nirjal-Vrat and break the fast after the appearance of moon at night on the offering of water by the husband. Throughout the day of fasting the married women pray for the long, healthy, prosperous and happy and contented married life of their couple. The Karwa Chauth is a unique festival in the sense that in other religions such festival dedicated to the husbands by the married women is not found and this lends credence to the fact and ritual that the Indian and to be specific the Hindu married women are Pativrata and they do not think in their wildest dreams about the other men and in fact their husbands are their gods and they take pleasure in serving them. The preparations for celebrating of the festival of Karwa Chauth are made well in advance and the married women eagerly wait for the coming of this festival and on this occasion they pray for the blessing and long life of their husbands. There is a good and inspiring story behind the celebration of the Karwa Chauth festival and the story runs as this.

The story behind this festival is this that a married woman named Karwa lived near river Tungbhadra river. One day her husband while bathing in the river Tungbhadra was caught by a crocodile and it was pulling his leg and the poor man was crying for help. On seeing his husband being caught by the crocodile the women tied the crocodile with a thread and fastened the thread with a tree. She solicited the help of Yama but he showed helplessness and said that the time for the departure of crocodile has not come yet. However Karwa protested and threatened to curse Yama and on this Yama was much impressed and he got her husband freed from crocodile and spared his life observing the fasting from morning to evening up to the appearance of the moon. The married women even abstain from taking of the water throughout the whole day for the welfare and long life of their husbands. There is great significance of this festival and in the total fasting on this day. The fasting on the occasion of Karwa Chauth helps in creating a strong bond of relationship between the couples and this bonding gets stronger by the observance of Nerjalla Vrat throughout the day and the husband takes it as a big favor for them from their wife as this shows the complete loyalty of the wife towards their husband. The festival of celebrating of the Karwa Chauth is the great testimony of the rich cultural and traditional legacy of India and in the observance of the fast on the occasion of the Karwa Chauth shows the great and pious rituals and traditions and because of this the festival is very unique as the women pray for the longevity of the life and welfare of their husbands. Karwa Chauth as already said is a festival celebrated by Hindu women of northern and western India on the fourth day after Katika Purnima. Karwa Chauth is one of the main festivals of Hindus and is celebrated with gaiety, fervor and

enthusiasm by the married women in dedication and in favour of their husbands and the festival has got much importance and significance in Hindu religion and therefore the men should cooperate and encourage their wives in the observance of the fast and in fact the festival of Karwa Chauth strengthens the bond of relationship and married life of the couples. Karwa Chauth is one day festival celebrated annually by married Hindu women in which they observe total fast from sun rise to moonrise and the wives keep complete fast without drinking water and food for the safety, security and long life of their husbands. Keeping a fast without drinking and eating food throughout day is not easy but the doting wives perform all these rituals with much love and respect for their husbands. If we talk about the literal meaning of Karwa Chauth, it means offering Argya to moon using an earthen pot known as Karwa on the Chaturthi of Kartika month. The festival falls on the fourth day of the dark fortnight in Kartika month every year. Though the origin of this festival is still very hazy, there are some anecdotes associated with it. These are -Karwa Chauth story of Queen Veervati, Karwa Chauth Story of Queen Draupadi, Karwa Chauth story of Karwa, Karwa Chauth story of Satyavan and Savitri and the story of Karwa is more relevant and is the widely held view about the festival and so it has been outlined in detail at above. The festival of Karwa Chauth holds utmost importance in the Hindu culture. The prominence of this festival can be widely observed in the northern and north western regions of the country. As already said India is a country of festivals and rituals. From north to south, east to west there are a number of festivals. One major and significant festival celebrated in northern part of the country is Karwa Chauth. Married Hindu and Sikh women celebrate

Karwa Chauth by fasting for the long life and well being of their husbands. The idea behind celebrating of the festival is to pray and wish for the well being, prosperity, longevity of their husbands. Karwa Chauth is made of two words, Karwa means an earthen oil lamp and Chauth means fourth. The day of Karwa Chauth is celebrated close to Diwali, exactly falls on the fourth day of the first fortnight of Kartik. The Kartik month celebrates the harvest time, where it is for meeting people and celebration. The Karwa Chauth is a celebration of the beautiful bond between the husband and wife celebrating love togetherness. Karwa Chauth has become an occasion than prayer. Karwa Chauth began as a festival for celebrating sisterhood and social importance. In earlier times, girls were married at a young age, according to the tradition the girls had to leave the house to stay with the in laws. After the wedding the girls would become lonely and no one to share their problems and love. On the day of wedding a small ceremony used to be conducted, where a woman becomes the bride's god sister for the life time and shared a sanctified bond of friendship. The God sister would share and empathize with the bride in times of troubles, stress and hardships, sharing their problems with each other. The festival of Karwa Chauth was created to celebrate the friendship, sisterhood and togetherness. Karwa Chauth was celebrated to relationship, but with changing times became a fast observed by the married women for the well being and longevity of their husbands. In brief the festival of Karwa Chauth is very unique and has got great importance for the Hindu community and it is celebrated with gaiety and fervor by the married women and shows the pious and sacred bond between the husband and the wife.

(The author is a columnist, social and KP activist).

YOUR COLUMN Importance of climate education in India

Dear Editor,
India has ranked last (180) in the Environment Performance Index (EPI), 2022, recently released by Yale University. India's Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change rejected the EPI methodology, pointing out several oversights in the way countries have been assessed. The fact that the EPI methodology does not take in to account historical track records of emissions while assuming hypothetical future projections pushes back the international community to the discord between developing countries who now need to bear the burden of development as well as environmental protection, while developed economies who built their GDP with unbridled pollution in the past now need to focus on the latter alone.

On the other hand, the Indian government and industry must recognise the wake-up call. While regulations for measuring, disclosing, and mitigating emissions are still woefully lax in India, there is inadequate knowledge, resources, and skills amongst industries to do so. Publicly listed companies are under regulatory pressure by Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to measure, disclose and hopefully mitigate their emissions, albeit without much support. Nevertheless, when these companies attempt to modify their processes, products, energy sources, and supply chains, they will need funds, new technologies, and people with appropriate skills.

As per a January 2022 report by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water, India can potentially create about 3.4 million jobs by installing 238 GW solar and 101 GW new wind capacity to achieve the 500 GW non-fossil electricity generation capacity by 2030. Thus, job opportunities abound to help make India's climate transition, but where are the people to take up these jobs? To meet India's net zero targets by 2070, the Indian government

will need to create well informed policies that keep the interests of its most vulnerable population at the centre of its climate action. To deliver India's net zero promise, the 'new way of business' needs India's brightest talent to study climate change and work in the field of climate change mitigation. In response to the urgent need to skill top talent in climate jobs, Stanford University's first new school in 70 years has been established to accelerate solutions to global climate crisis. Recently, a handful of leading universities globally have established climate schools as well. The assessment and ranking of countries, or for those matter even companies, on their environment and sustainability performance by credible organisations usually have a singular aim of nudging the relevant entities to improve. This seems to be the case of EPI as well. The Indian government needs to focus on areas for improvement in its environmental performance. This must imperatively include urgently ramping up climate education in India.

Vijay Garg.