

LITERACY- BASIC NEED FOR DEVELOPMENT

It is very important to be literate for life development. Literacy takes our desires and aspirations skyward. Literacy expands the range of our thinking. The present time has become full of dynamic life and technology. In this time, it is very important for every person to be literate to keep pace with the world.

Literacy is the basic need of every country. One can move forward on the path of progress only when a person is literate. "Literacy permeates all walks of life," says Dyer.

It is essential for every individual to be literate for informed decision making, personal empowerment and community engagement. The self-image of a country is always based on the quantity, quality and extent of education of its total population. It is also an indicator of economic and social progress.

Literacy gives rise to our free thinking. People cannot help their children without literacy skills. Literacy is important for economic development as well as individual and community well-being. Our economy is enhanced when learners have high literacy levels. Becoming literate greatly improves economic opportunities. Self-esteem and empowerment increases. Provides measurable benefits for health and safety and strengthens one's relationships and civic engagement. Literate parents are the key to a child's success in school and life.

Literacy is an important instrument of power in India. Women who are literate can produce a generation of literate children. This generation will add skilled workforce to the country and India will be recognized among the developing countries of the world.

Air Pollution Grips the Globe



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Air is a free gift of nature to the humankind. It is an elixir of our survival and next follows water and that too in the purest form. But both these fixers are sadly facing serious onslaught and the crises on both these fronts is worldwide looming large whereby putting life systems to multihued hazards. The quality of air as well as of water becomes a matter of utmost importance in the presently prevailing scenario. It is a sad commentary that both these components are going to be degraded as a result of the pursuit of developmental processes. According to world health organization (WHO), air pollution can be described as substances put into the air by the activities of mankind. The main causes of pollution are automobiles, thermal power plants, agriculture, industries, quarrying and other multihued natural processes. During the process of combustion of fossil fuels, many oxides of carbon and there particulates are generated. Apart from various industries which generate other pollutants such as H2S, SO2, ammonia, oxides of nitrogen, Hydrocarbons and other toxic substance including ozone, lead and fluorides, All such pollutants and noxious gasses emit foul smells which aggravate the air pollution. The abnoxious emissions from various paper, leather industries similarly join the fray and give impetus to the already escalating pollution.

All these pollutants in a combined amalgamation which provide a plethora of multihued diseases such as respiratory track infections (RTI) asthma and so many of their allied. The quality of air prevailing over Indian subcontinent and even across the globe has unambiguously been disgusting and discouraging. The basic reasons are obviously industrialization understandable to all environmentalists, policy planners and other stake holders. And now of recent smog which has very badly gripped the capital is the alarming challenge to the inhabiting Delhites and to those in and around the capital city. Here again, the industrialization coupled with ever escalating motor vehicles especially of poorly maintained vehicles with leaded fuel.

The various pollutants as have been observed by national environmental engineering research institute (NEERI), Nowdelhi is with dismal revelation with red signal to one and all inhaling the polluted air. All this brewing scenario has further been aggravated emanating from the burning of harvested crops of Punjab, Haryana and most of the other states whose impact has spreaded far and wide giving birth to a multihued respiratory dis eases to the extent of death. Though the apex Court has issued categorical orders to put a blanket over such obnoxious emissions of haze emanating from the burning of harvested crops. Even the state government have on their own passed strict orders to shutdown this hazardous practice which all in their manifestation putting the human as also of other bioforms on the brink of annihilation. The prominent politicians, environmentalists and policy planners are to take a big stride in combating the hazard engulfing humankind.

Earlier also such smog and haze has had gripped the capital and created a similar sort of situation. Now, the people are with the only option either to stay indoor and in view of exigency they come outside with mask of various dimension.

The scenario has reached such extent that the school going children and kids have been forced to remain indoor. This has therefore, an adverse impact on educational front. even the business front has closed to standstill and the daily bread earners are high and dry. As a consequences, it is to say that the daily life routines have suffered a big Jolt. After all who owns the responsibility, with oozing confidence, one can very conveniently and safely assume that man is the only option for such an alarming impact on all sort of polluted air coupled with presently prevailing scenario and of haze and smog. How this polluted air with obnoxious gasses is to be plugged or averted is the biggest question of the day for which no easy solution is in sight.

The law enforcing authorities at the helm are helpless and are in a way failed to seek ways and means to ward off this health hazard. The only solution, therefore lies in general awareness and public sensitization particularly, the farmers around the capital who are burning the left overs of harvested crops which is breeding ground off shooting the obnoxious gasses in multihued forms whether we nomenclaturised it haze or smog.

And these obnoxious gases are giving birth to various respiratory diseases to the extent of asthma. It is therefore the ripe time to adopt all the possible measures by one and all to avert this malice before it engulfs our lives. Make Delhi and its adjoining areas smog free.

(The author is former Deputy Conservator of Forest).

The Remarkable Journey of Anaesthesiology: From Agony to Comfort & Safety

DR KANIKA GUPTA & DR SANDEEPIKA DOGRA

The journey of anaesthesia is a remarkable tale of discovery, innovation, and the relentless pursuit of pain relief and patient comfort during medical procedures. From ancient herbal remedies to cutting-edge technology in anaesthesia, the journey has been transformative, ultimately enhancing the safety and comfort of countless patients undergoing surgical interventions. World Anaesthesia Day, observed on the 16th of October worldwide, commemorates the significant milestone when it was first demonstrated in 1846 that surgical procedures could be performed without causing pain to the patient by administering anaesthesia. at Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston. Anaesthesia, a crucial component of modern medicine, has come a long way since its ancient origins.

Ancient Beginnings

In the pre-anaesthesia era, surgeries were typically performed without the use of modern anaesthetics. Patients undergoing surgery experienced intense pain and discomfort during the procedure. Surgeons relied on various techniques to minimize the duration and severity of pain, such as swift surgical techniques, and restraining the patient to limit movement.

In ancient times, civilizations like Egypt and Mesopotamia utilized herbal remedies like opium poppy and mandrake to induce a state of reduced consciousness for surgical procedures, mitigating pain and inducing a sleepy state. Alcohol and opium-based mixtures were also commonly used for their sedative and pain-relieving properties. Moving into the middle Ages, the discovery and widespread use of ether and chloroform in the 19th century revolutionized anaesthesia. These substances greatly improved the effectiveness and reliability of inducing unconsciousness and pain relief during surgeries.

20th Century Advancements

Throughout the 20th century, the domain of anaesthesia witnessed remarkable and transformative advancements. Innovations in drugs, techniques, equipment, and protocols vastly improved patient safety, comfort, and outcomes.

Inhalation Anaesthetics: The 20th century witnessed the popularity of inhalation anaesthetics such as nitrous oxide and newer agents like sevoflurane and desflurane. These offered rapid onset and precise control over the depth of anaesthesia, providing a safer and more predictable means of inducing unconsciousness during surgical procedures.

Intravenous Anaesthesia: The introduction of administering drugs directly into the bloodstream through intravenous anaesthesia revolutionized control over the depth of anaesthesia, enhancing patient safety and comfort during surgery.

Regional Anaesthesia: Techniques like spinal and epidural anaesthesia gained prominence in the early 20th century, allowing for the numbing of specific body parts. This minimized the need for general anaesthesia, reducing associated risks, particularly during surgeries and childbirth.

Modern Era

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1. Balanced Anaesthesia:

Modern anaesthesia techniques often involve a balanced approach, utilizing a combination of intravenous and inhalation agents to achieve the desired level of anaesthesia and analgesia. This approach ensures a smoother induction, maintenance, and recovery from anaesthesia, minimizing adverse effects and optimizing patient outcomes.

2. Patient Monitoring and Safety:

Advances in technology have revolutionized patient monitoring during anaesthesia. Continuous monitoring of vital signs, such as heart rate, blood pressure, oxygen saturation, and end-tidal carbon dioxide, ensures patient safety and allows for real-time adjustments in anaesthesia delivery.

3. Tailored Anaesthesia:

Anaesthesia is now tailored to individual patient needs, considering factors like age, medical history, allergies, and the type of surgery. This personalized approach enhances the effectiveness of anaesthesia and contributes to a better patient experience.

4. Use of advanced technology :

Advanced technology in anaesthesia has significantly revolutionized patient care, enhancing precision, safety, and efficiency. From use of ultrasound for precise nerve blocks to automated drug delivery, these innovations empower anaesthesiologists to optimize outcomes and provide personalized anaesthesia management, ultimately improving overall healthcare experiences.

Expanding the Horizons -Role of Anaesthesiologist beyond Operating Room

An anaesthesiologist's role extends beyond the operating room (OR). While their primary responsibility is administering anaesthesia and monitoring patients during surgery, they also have several essential duties before and after surgical procedures:

1. Perioperative care: Anaesthesiologists assess patients

before surgery to determine their overall health and Anaesthesia needs. They review the patient's medical history, perform physical examinations, order necessary tests and develop a tailored anaesthesia plan for each patient to ensure safety and better outcome. In addition to this, anaesthesiologists continually monitor patients' vital signs and analgesia in the recovery room to ensure their safety after surgery.

2. Acute Pain Management: Anaesthesiologists often play a vital role in post-operative pain management. They administer pain relief techniques such as epidurals, nerve blocks, or intravenous medications to control pain and enhance the patient's recovery. They frequently provide pain relief for women during labor and delivery, such as epidural analgesia which is administered to alleviate the pain associated with childbirth.

3. Critical Care: Anaesthesiologists often take a pivotal role in intensive care units (ICUs), managing patients with mechanical ventilation, hemodynamic monitoring, and other critical interventions. During the COVID-19 pandemic, anaesthesiologists took the lead in managing airway issues and providing expertise in mechanical ventilation for patients experiencing respiratory distress. Their critical involvement significantly contributed to patient care and outcomes in this challenging healthcare crisis.

4. Chronic Pain Management: Anaesthesiologists also oversee a specialized Pain Clinic, focusing on assessing, diagnosing, and managing diverse pain conditions, including chronic and cancer-related pain. Utilizing a combination of medications, interventional procedures, physical therapy, and psychological interventions, they aim to effectively alleviate pain and improve overall quality of life.

5. Non-Operative room Anaesthesia: Anaesthesiologists' role extend beyond operation theatres and involves providing sedation to facilitate procedures such as endoscopy, interventional radiology, cardiac catheterization, and various diagnostic and interventional procedures.

6. Palliative Care: Palliative care improves the quality of life of patients and that of their families who are facing challenges associated with life-threatening illness. Anaesthesia providers are uniquely equipped to provide quality palliative care through their interpersonal skills, experience managing distressed patients and their families, knowledge of analgesic and sedative drugs and ability to monitor vital signs.

Thus, the field of anaesthesiology is pivotal in ensuring patient well-being and safety, extending beyond the operation theatres to diverse healthcare contexts. The proficiency in pain management, critical care, and perioperative care underscores the significance of anaesthesiologists within the healthcare team. Looking ahead, with advancements in medical science and technology, the future promises exciting prospects for anaesthesia and further enhancements in patient care.

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From Dreams to Reality: A.P.J. Abdul Kalam's Birthday Celebration

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Atal Bihari Vajpayee's Vision and Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam's Legacy

Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, two of India's most iconic figures, represent the embodiment of diverse ideals and dreams converging to shape the nation's destiny. Vajpayee, the stalwart leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Dr. Kalam, the revered "Missile Man of India" turned President, together carved a path that transcended political boundaries and exemplified the ideals of inclusivity and aspiration. As we celebrate Dr. Kalam's birthday and reflect on his journey "From Dreams to Reality," it's essential to remember the guiding principles set by leaders like Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who championed secularism and diversity even as he led a government that supported Dr. Kalam's rise to the highest constitutional office. Their combined legacy is a testament to India's rich tapestry of talent, dreams, and democratic values.

A.P.J. Abdul Kalam: From Dreams to Reality

Born in Rameswaram, Tamil Nadu, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam's life was marked by

humble beginnings and an unquenchable thirst for knowledge. His journey led him to the Madras Institute of Technology, where he specialized in aeronautical engineering, paving the way for his remarkable career in aerospace and missile technology. Dr. Kalam's leadership at the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) contributed to India's achievements in space exploration and missile development, earning him the title "Missile Man of India." As the 11th President of India, Dr. Kalam continued to inspire, especially the youth, with his emphasis on innovation and self-reliance. His legacy stands as a beacon, guiding India towards a brighter future.

Atal Bihari Vajpayee's Commitment to Secularism

Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the prominent BJP leader and Prime Minister of India, was known for his commitment to secularism and inclusivity. Despite the BJP's association with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and its Hindutva ideology, Vajpayee emphasized that India's strength lay in its diversity. He consistently advocated for equal

participation of citizens, irrespective of their cultural or religious backgrounds. Under his leadership, the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), a coalition of several parties including the BJP, formed the central government. During Dr. Kalam's presidency, the NDA government's commitment to secularism was evident through its policies and actions.

Elevation of Dr. Kalam and Pratibha Patil

Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam's election as President was significant not only because he was a scientist but because it showcased meritocracy. His presidency was a testament to the recognition of outstanding contributions to science and technology. Furthermore, the NDA government, led by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, exemplified its commitment to diversity and inclusivity by electing Pratibha Patil, an Adivasi woman, as the President of India in 2007. This groundbreaking decision broke gender and tribal barriers, reinforcing the NDA's dedication to democratic and secular principles enshrined in India's Constitution.

The Enduring Legacy

In celebrating Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam's birthday, we pay homage to a man who tran-

sceded boundaries and inspired a nation. His life was a remarkable journey, from a small village to the Rashtrapati Bhavan, and his legacy continues to inspire generations. His story teaches us that dreams can become reality with hard work, dedication, and unwavering focus. The principles of secularism and inclusivity are fundamental to India's strength and unity.

The leadership of Atal Bihari Vajpayee and the NDA government during Dr. Kalam's presidency is a testament to the idea that India's diversity is its greatest asset. It underscores the importance of upholding democratic and secular values. As we celebrate his birthday, we honor Dr. Kalam and renew our commitment to the values he cherished: dreams, innovation, inclusivity, and a united India. His words, "Dream, dream, dream. Dreams transform into thoughts, and thoughts result in action," continue to resonate and guide us toward a brighter future. Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam's life journey from dreams to reality remains an inspiration, and his legacy lights the way for a stronger, more inclusive, and prosperous India.

(The writer is spokesperson of BJP Jammu and Kashmir).

Navratra Festival: Symbol of Women Empowerment

V.K MAGOTRA

The base camp of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Katra town near Jammu and its 13km trek up to cave is all set with colorful bunting, gates and floral decorations for the ensuing Shardiya Navratri commencing from October 15, 2023. Kudos to Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) for magnificent construction of "NAV DURGA PATH" skywalk and remodeled Parvati Bhawan projects which were recently inaugurated by President of India, Droupadi Murmu on her maiden visit to the holy cave at Vaishno Devi recently.

Empowering women has been strongly advocated in our scriptures since time immemorial. The emancipation of women against atrocities across the country including J&K UT continues to be unabated. The poverty, illiteracy, sexual harassment, degraded morale values are the root cause of deprivation and depression among the affected women. The ill effects of female feticide, gender inequality have become cause of the concern of the present society.

Navratra Festival Katra would go a long way in enriching the lofty ideals of Shakti Durga with special reference to reverence, honour and dignity of women. The Union Territory of J&K

perhaps is the only among few UTs/States of the country where daughters are held in high esteem even parents don't allow their daughters to touch their feet as a mark of respect like other youngsters. Thanks to Shri Mata Vaishno Devi who with Her Supreme Powers of energy shows the right path to all of us with no ill will or enmity towards anyone.

A pilgrimage to the holy Shrine of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi ji is considered exhilarating and one of the holiest pilgrimages of our time. Shri Mata Vaishno Devi resides in a holy cave located at the foothills of Trikuta Parvat; "NAVRATRA or NAVRATRI" is a combined word which means "Nine Nights". Shri Mata Vaishno Devi is considered an incarnation of three supreme energies- Maha Kali - (Supreme Energy of Dissolution) Maha Lakshmi-(Supreme Energy of Maintenance) and Maha Saraswati (Supreme Energy of Creation). All human beings attribute the three mentioned qualities & their behavior is determined by these to lead a meaningful life, a proper balance among these three is necessary. In other words, nine sacred nights of Navratra are described as "an occasion to bring everything in balance". Thus, the holy shrine of Mata Vaishno Devi is unique in the entire world.

The origin of Vaishno Devi is as mysterious as several other shrines. As per geological investigation & research of the holy cave, approximately since one million years the pilgrimage continues. As per Vedic history of Vaishno Devi there was no presence of THE DIVINE FEMININE in the past while Rigveda found their presence in the mountain Trikuta. It especially focuses upon Shakti Durga worship practice that continues since Puranic era. The history is enriched with many important references regarding the details about traditions & facts related to this shrine which supports its holiness. This pilgrimage is too symbol of "Secularism" where people from all walks of life irrespective of caste, colour and creed seek blessings of Mata for their well being.

Vaishno Devi also known as Mata Rani, Trikuta, Vaishnavi is a manifestation of Hindu Mother Goddess Mahalakshmi. The words "Maa & Mata" are commonly used in India for mother which is held in high reverence. Though "Power" is referred in Vedas-Puranas in many forms. But whole of the Universe is governed through this amazing Power-Shakti. Be Durga, Parvati, Vaishnavi, Laxmi or any so called forms of Power. This Power is pervasive in Trikuta Hills. The life giving energy Goddess Shakti Durga

who is in every being as a supreme energy. The divine feminine pervades all space and time as the indestructible energy, taking care of well being of one and all, protecting the world.

The nine day Navratra festival at Katra has attained global prominence. Besides pilgrims a large number of tourists pay their obeisance to the holy shrine of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi during the Sharad Navratra which would culminate on Mahanavmi, on 23rd October, 2023.

Special attractions of the festival would be cultural programs, folk dances, including magic shows/staging of Maa Sherawali musical play; Mushiaras, National Devotional songs competition, rural sports etc. The various Government/ Non-Government agencies including Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board/ NGOs have drawn up special plans to showcase the religious traditions as well as popular culture of the region among the millions of pilgrims during this period. In view of the auspicious festival, the Central Bureau of Communication, Jammu under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting is organizing a multimedia exhibition and cultural programmes at Government Higher Secondary School, Katra.

YOUR COLUMN Divorce at 89/82?

Dear Editor; A bizarre incident of husband moving the Supreme Court for dissolution of marriage at the age of 89 years has been reported. The plea of wife at the age of 82 years, that she does not wish to die as a divorcee has been considered by the Supreme Court. The petitioner's request for dissolution of marriage on the formula of "irretrievable break down of marriage" has been turned down under Article 142 of the Constitution of India.

The relationship between husband (appellant) and wife (respondent) strained when the husband who had served in the Indian Army was stationed in Madras in January 1984. Then the wife chose not to accompany him. Rather, she chose to stay with parents-in-law and later with her son. The court is of strong opinion in its 24-page judgment that despite the increasing trend of filing divorce proceedings in the courts of law, the institution of marriage is still considered to be a pious, spiritual and invaluable emotional life-net between the husband and the wife in Indian society. The court has also noted in its order that in these days divorce does not constitute a stigma. It is true. But the courts should do more to keep the warring couples together than granting divorce unless other-

wise it is absolutely necessary.

Marriages are consummated or pontificated in the presence of relatives and friends. The courts do not have any role in the marriages taking place. The court's interventions are necessary to break the marriage if the woman is in need of alimony from her husband. There are umpteen number of cases wherein husband and wife are in estrangement. The courts do not take cognisance of the couples living in separation. It means not taking divorce through the courts of law is not an offence so long as the couples do not go for next marriage without the consent of each other or so long as there is no objection by one against the other.

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