

'Sabki Yojana, Sabka Vikas'

The 'Sabki Yojana, Sabka Vikas' initiative is a pivotal component of the Indian government's strategy to foster inclusive growth and development. Launched with the vision of ensuring that every citizen, regardless of their socio-economic status, benefits from the government's welfare schemes, this initiative aims to create a more equitable society.

India, with its vast and diverse population, faces significant challenges in achieving balanced economic development. Historically, various segments of society have been marginalized, leading to disparities in access to resources and opportunities. Recognizing the need for a concerted effort to address these issues, the government initiated the 'Sabki Yojana, Sabka Vikas' campaign as part of its broader 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas' framework.

The primary objective of the 'Sabki Yojana, Sabka Vikas' initiative is to ensure that all government schemes are designed and implemented with the needs of all citizens in mind. This encompasses:

Ensuring that marginalized groups, including Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, women, and the economically weaker sections, are specifically targeted in developmental schemes.

Educating citizens about the various government schemes available to them, ensuring they can access these benefits.

Encouraging citizens to participate in the planning and execution of development programs, thus making governance more responsive to community needs.

Establishing mechanisms to monitor the implementation of schemes, ensuring that benefits reach the intended recipients.

The initiative emphasizes the creation of targeted programs that address the unique challenges faced by different demographic groups. For instance, financial assistance schemes for women entrepreneurs or skill development programs tailored for youth.

Leveraging technology to improve access to information and services. The use of mobile applications and online portals has been instrumental in disseminating information about schemes and facilitating application processes.

A significant aspect of the initiative is the grassroots outreach programs that engage local communities. This involves local leaders and influencers who can bridge the gap between the government and the populace, ensuring that schemes are understood and accessed.

The government has instituted robust monitoring frameworks to assess the implementation of various schemes. Regular feedback from beneficiaries helps refine and improve these programs.

The 'Sabki Yojana, Sabka Vikas' initiative is implemented through a multi-pronged approach.

Engaging Panchayati Raj institutions and urban local bodies to ensure that schemes are relevant to local needs and contexts.

Training local officials and community leaders to effectively communicate and implement government schemes.

Utilizing mass media and social media platforms to inform citizens about available schemes and how to access them.

Collaborating with NGOs and community-based organizations to track the implementation of schemes and ensure transparency.

This year, the 'Sabki Yojana Sabka Vikas' Abhiyan marks several significant milestones, including a special initiative to commemorate the 75th Year of the Republic of India through Special Gram Sabhas on 2nd October 2024. These Gram Sabhas will focus on orienting Gram Panchayats (GPs) towards preparing their Panchayat Development plans (PDPs) for the financial year 2025-26, engaging over 2.55 lakh Gram Panchayats, 6,700 Block Panchayats, and 665 District Panchayats. Officers and Consultants from the Ministry of Panchayati Raj have been deputed to selected Gram Panchayats across different States / UTs to oversee and monitor the organization of Special Gram Sabhas on 2nd October 2024. Their presence aims to provide valuable insights and guidance, ensuring a more streamlined, inclusive, and structured process for developing high-quality Panchayat Development Plans.

As part of this campaign, special Gram Sabhas are being organized in over 2.55 lakh Gram Panchayats. These specially convened and well-designed Gram Sabhas serve as platforms for citizens to voice their opinions, share their needs, and actively contribute to the development planning of their areas. The People's Plan Campaign represents a significant step towards inclusive and participatory rural development in India. By encouraging the active involvement of rural citizens in the planning process, it aims to create development plans that truly reflect local needs and aspirations. The support and engagement of Panchayati Raj Institutions and rural local bodies are crucial for the success of this initiative and for realizing the vision of a developed India rooted in the strength of its villages. As the campaign unfolds, it is expected to foster a sense of ownership among rural communities towards their development processes, leading to more effective and locally relevant Panchayat Development Plans for the year 2025-26. The 'Sabki Yojana, Sabka Vikas' initiative is a commendable effort towards ensuring that development in India is inclusive and equitable. By focusing on the needs of all citizens and promoting participatory governance, it aims to create a society where everyone has the opportunity to thrive. However, continuous efforts are required to overcome existing challenges and enhance the effectiveness of this initiative. As India progresses, the success of the 'Sabki Yojana, Sabka Vikas' campaign will be a crucial determinant of its socio-economic landscape, fostering unity and shared growth across the nation.

BGSB University: Securing Greener Future; Preserves sustainable environmental footprint

Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University is located at the foothills of the great Himalayan Pir Panjal range. The University campus is located at a distance of approximately 8 km from the main city Rajouri. The University campus exhibits marvelous altitudinal, topographic and edaphic diversity. Climate and vegetation of the area is sub-tropical to sub-temperate type. The area of the campus is largely hilly and exhibits a rich diversity of flora and fauna.

Under the Stewart leadership of Prof. Akbar Masood, Vice Chancellor of the University the Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University during the last three years has taken up various initiatives including plantation drives, biodiversity conservation and water harvesting in the University campus to promote eco-friendly practices and reduce carbon footprint. The objective of these initiatives is to promote environmental awareness among students, staff, and faculty and to encourage community involvement in environmental conservation. These initiatives aim to mitigate climate change through carbon sequestration, support campus wildlife and biodiversity, creating a serene and eco-friendly campus environment and to inspire students to become environmental stewards.

Towards the accomplishment of the 'Green and Clean Campus' and To create mass awareness among people about the importance of ecological balance for better environment and healthy living, the BGSB University has organized many plantation drives in the campus in collaboration with various Government Departments. Last year, Vice Chancellor of the University, Prof. Akbar



Masood launched a special plantation drive on the campus by the women folks including female teachers, staff, scholars and students. The programme aimed at highlighting the crucial inter-connection between humans and nature, making the plants an inseparable part of the "family consciousness", leading to environmental protection and women empowerment. Each woman member among the teaching and non teaching faculty of the University took the responsibility of planting one sapling which they planted in the open spaces around their respective departments / residential area and other designated spaces in the campus. The University also organized plantation drives such as 'ek ped shaheed ke naam' and 'ek ped maa ke naam' in the campus. This year, the Vice Chancellor launched a mega plantation drive was to celebrate the birthday of Prime Minister Shri

Narendra Modi in which students, faculty and staff of the University participated. Moreover, as a part of Independence Day celebrations a two week plantation drive was launched by the Vice Chancellor in the campus involving the students, faculty and staff of the University. Around 20,000 saplings of various species have been planted during the last three years.

The topography of BGSB University campus is conducive for effective rain water harvesting. The ecosystem, so unique to the campus, further enriches prospects for it by arresting excess rain water flow during monsoon season. Depth ins have been dug and drain outlets constructed to channelize and regulate the speedy flow of rain water so as to carry it in fullness to the harvesting system.

The creation of the harvesting system where the

rain water is collected from multiple points on the campus represents a major sustainability initiative of BGSB University. This water is used as the source of drinking water for wildlife inhabiting the campus. The harvesting water comes in handy for gardening and cleaning requirements. Rain water harvesting is contributing to the promotion of bio-diversity at the University.

University Campus harbours various species of both flora and fauna. Therefore, the University considers that it is its social, moral, and legal responsibility to make the campus a safe haven for all flora and fauna. The

University celebrates World Animal Day every year through the organisation of activities which promote the welfare of animals. Awareness programmes, Workshops, Seminars and Conferences are organised every year for involving the youth towards wildlife conservation and management. The infrastructure of the University is built in an eco-sensitive manner taking into account the natural landscape and the environment in order to protect and live in harmony with the wild flora and fauna. The University conducts Plantation Drives (planting of saplings which are native to the area) within the Campus to increase the forest cover. The University collaborates with external agencies to equip the members of the faculty, staff and student community to understand the conservation importance of Wildlife.

Under the leadership of Prof. Akbar Masood, Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University is committed to advancing sustainability and fighting climate change by continuously working to decrease the environmental footprint.

■ OMKAR DATTATRAY

Navratri festival is celebrated twice in a year, once as Chaitra navratri and then as Sharad navratri. Both navratri's are celebrated with great devotion and traditional gaiety. The underlying essence and spirit is the celebration, respect and reverence to feminine power which is the cause and action of the universe. Thus navtatri is dedicated to the importance of feminine power without which we cannot think of the universe. Therefore by celebrating the navratri's, we actually celebrate feminine power as its significance is very great in the world and for all humanity. As the name implies, navratri consists of nine days and nights which are dedicated to the nine forms of the Shakti. During Navratri people especially the women keep fast and worship the small girls being the form of Shakti that is being the feminine power. Navratri shows and teaches us to revere and respect women and therefore we should learn to respect the women folk in the day to day life and only then we are successful in celebrating navratris. We should appreciate that before manifestation of the universe, when nothing else existed, what existed was the omnipresent formless Divine Consciousness. This is also called the static consciousness or Shiva in Hindu scriptures. When universe came into being, first of all from static consciousness manifested Dynamic Consciousness Shakti. Shakti is the feminine power of Shiva and is the creative force behind the world. Shiva as masculine power is not capable of creating anything without feminine power and hence first to manifest is His own creative feminine power as Shakti, who was then allowed to create the universe. This Shakti is also known as the Divine Mother, as everything in the universe has taken birth from its womb. This Divine Mother, which has given birth to the universe, also nurtures and sustains it, and has the power to destroy it. There are primarily and actually nine aspects of the Divine Mother which helps it to create, sustain and destroy or dissolve back the universe. There nine aspects of the Divine Mother are worshipped in the Hindu religion as nine shaktis during the nine day Navaratri festival. These nine forms of the Divine Mother (Goddess Durga) are named as Shalputri

, Brahmacharni, Chanderganta Kushmandi, Skindanata, Kyantyne, Kalratri, Mahagauri and Sededhatr. Durga is the inaccessible, invincible one and omnipotent, the main source of energy for creation. Shalputri is the mother of gross universe. All the gross objects and beings have manifested from this Shalputri aspect of the Divine Mother. Brahmacharni is the form of celibacy. As per sanatana Dharma, Durga in her Kali roopa fought demons for nine days and eventually freed mother earth from their atrocities. Thus the tenth day is celebrated as Vijaydashmi meaning the day of victory, triumph over bad elements. The Navaratri festival basically denotes the tremendous potential power, the feminine aspect of creation has within herself, which also draws down to the power of an ordinary/common women. In fact women is the epitome of the feminine aspect of creation and till she is respected, loved and treated as auspicious for the entire human race, she can give joy, peace and help in the growth of every aspect of creation. Shailputri is the daughter of the Mountain king Himavat, and is manifestation and form of the Hindu mother goddess Mahadevi, representing herself as the pure form of goddess Parvati. She is the first Navadurga venerated during the first day of Navratri, and is incarnation of Goddess Sati. Thus Maa Shailputri is one of the Navadurgas and is the provider of fortune and prosperity. Devotees hail her as mother nature and pray for their spiritual awakening. The second form of Navadurga is called Brahmacharni which means a devoted female student who lives in an Ashrama with her Guru along with other students. She is the second form of Mahadavi and is worshipped on the second day of Navratri. The goddess Brahmacharni is an aspect of Parvati and wears white clothes, holding a japamala in her right hand and a kamandalu in her right. She is the form of Navadurga who did severe penance and is the goddess of devotion and penance. The third form of Maa Durga is known as Chandraganta. On the third day of Navratri, this form of Durga is worshipped. She is called Chandraganta because on her forehead is half moon in the shape of Ganta. By her worship, the devotees are freed from all the troubles of this body and with ease

reach to supreme bliss. It is the Chandarganta who had killed the demon Maheshasura and freed the world from this cruel demon. The fourth form of Maa Durga is called Kushmandi. She has created the universe with her small smile and thus the name kushmandi. She is worshipped on the fourth day of Navaratri. Skandamata is the fifth among the Navadurga forms of Mahadevi. Her name comes from Skanda, an alternate name for the war god. She is the powerful goddess whose love and care helped lord Kartikeya to defeat the demon Tarkasura. Lord Shiva and Maa Parvati's first son, Lord Kartikeya, was also known as Skanda. Hence Maa Parvati is often referred to as Skandamata. She is believed to protect her devotees just like a mother protects her child from harm. The sixth form of Maa Durga is known as Katyani and she is an aspect of Mahadevi and the slayer of the tyrannical demon Mahishasura. In Shaktism, she is associated with the fierce forms of Shakti or Durga, a warrior goddess, which also includes Bhadrakali and Chandika. With the difficult penance of saint Kantiyan she took birth from the couple of Katayana as she was happy with his penance and hence the sixth form of Maa Durga is called Katayani. She is believed to bliss her devotees and benefits them. The seventh form of Maa Durga is known as Kalratri and she is worshipped on the sixth day of Navratri. She seems very dangerous and fearful, but she always gives good results and blessings. She is first referenced in Devi Mahatmya. Kalaratri is one of the fearsome forms of the goddess. She is the goddess of auspiciousness and courage. Kalaratri is traditionally worshipped during the nine nights of the Navaratri celebrations. The seventh day of Navaratri pooja in particular is dedicated to her and she is considered the fiercest form of mother goddess, her appearance itself invoking fear. This form of goddess is believed to be the destroyer of all demon entities, ghosts, evil spirits and negative energies, which flee upon knowing of her arrival. Kalaratri is also known as Shubankari meaning auspicious /doing good in Sanskrit, due to the belief that she always provides auspicious results to her devotees. Hence, it is believed that she makes her devotees fearless. Mahagauri is the

eight form among the Navdurga aspects of the Hindu mother goddess Mahadavi. She is worshipped on the eight day of Navratri. According to Hinduism, Mahagauri has the power to fulfill all desires of her devotees. The one who worships this goddess, gets relief from all the sufferings in life. She is the goddess of beauty and women. She is very powerful and is the bestower of all good fruits and results. Siddhidhatr is the ninth and final among the Navadurga aspects of the Hindu mother goddess Mahadavi. As the name Siddhi implies, the supernatural power or meditative ability and Dhatri means giver or awardee. She is worshipped on the ninth day of Navaratri. She fulfills all the divine aspirations. It is believed that one side of Lord Shiva's body is that of Goddess of Siddhidatri. Therefore Shiva is also known as Ardhanarishwara. According to Vedic scriptures, Lord Shiva attained all the siddhis by worshipping this form of Maa Durga. She is in fact the goddess of supernatural powers or Siddha's. On the ninth day of the Navaratri, nine small girls are worshipped as being the nine forms of Maa Durga and their feet are washed and they are offered fruits, money, utensils, etc. We Indians worship the feminine power during Navratri's but alas! in actual practice the women are heaped atrocities and they are harassed and even some are subjected to sexual assaults. There is talk of the empowerment of women but in actual world, the women folk is harassed and even molested. It is a big contradiction that on one side we worship the women and on other side there are the increasing cases of molestation and sexual assaults on the women which is very unfortunate and this way we nullify the essence and spirit of Navaratri pooja.

The best performance of the Navaratri celebrations is only when we learn to revere, respect and honor the women in the day to day life and in homes, places of worship, at workplaces, in educational institutions and at all the places because where women are respected, gods travel there. Thus the best way to celebrate the feminine power is that we should respect the women in the actual world.

(The writer is a columnist, social and KP activist)

Monkey Menace and its Management in Jammu region of J&K

■ DR. BANARSI LAL

Monkeys are wreaking havoc in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Their burgeoning population and habitat shift from forests to towns has created a new level of man-animal conflict in this hilly UT. Monkeys damage the crops and leave farmers grappling with losses that have badly affected J&K economy thus affecting the livelihood of the farmers. Increasing human-animal conflicts are posing enormous threat to food insecurity for small resource poor hilly areas farmers living in and around traditional forest areas. Hilly areas farmers are mainly have five major problems viz. dwindling water resources and dry spells, invasion by exotic weeds like Lantana and Parthenium in pastures and grazing lands, Rhesus monkey menace and marketing issues due to difficult terrains that have affected the livelihood of farmers, leading to large scale migration and leaving families dependent on state-subsidised food rations. The worst sufferer of monkey menace are hilly states/UT viz. Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir and Uttarakhand. Nevertheless, other states like Rajasthan, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Bihar and Delhi are also struggling to contain assaults by monkeys. The menace has now reached epic proportions with estimated loss of more than 3000 crores in India. While, in Himachal Pradesh direct and indirect damage to farm produce is estimated to around Rs.1000 crore annually. In the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir about 250 villages in Jammu lose farm pro-

duce worth about Rs 33 crore every year because of attacks by wild monkeys. But it is strongly believed that exact estimates are much higher; around 300 - 500 crores and like Uttarakhand many village residents opt to sell their farmlands than grow crops in Reasi, Udhampur, Jammu, Samba, Kathua, Ramban, Rajouri, and Poonch districts. Besides damaging crops, over hundred people are bitten by monkeys every day and this results in huge expenditure on vaccines for the victims to avoid transmission of many other disease germs like the Herpes B virus10 due to such conflicts. Unlike other countries, the Indians have many religious and traditional beliefs about monkeys and their killing is not desired, but frequent conflicts have affected the traditional bond between man and monkey. The current methods of dealing with monkey menace are inefficient and only contributed to further accelerating the problem. Challenges remain to develop efficient management and conservation strategies to resolve the man-monkey conflicts. Behavioural ecologists find several issues with translocations of monkey as a solution, while sterilisation programmes did not meet expected results in Himachal Pradesh. A pilot project on oral contraceptives in a 20 square km area of the tree-lined institute, studying monkey behaviour and food habits is being attempted. Initial results have been found satisfactory and the scientists are confident that the contraceptive will keep the runaway monkey population down. Traditional and conventional ways are continued to remain crucial for

the farmers in hilly region who are still practicing string to through stones (Gulali) and noise making methods like drum beating and firecrackers etc. to manage the monkey menace.

Present practices of crop protection from monkey menace and wild animals: The following measures are taken in crop protection from monkeys and wild animals:

Manually guarding the fields: To protect the crops, farmers deploy labours during day and night or if fields are small, farmers on their own protect the crops. Farmers use crackers, gun fires for scaring away the monkeys / wild animals. Cost of labour is very high due to shortage of labour. Deployment of labour to guard field crops from monkey menace do not always guarantee 100% protection of crops due to human limitations of functioning in difficult terrain & adverse weather and night hours.

Crop diversification: To avoid crop damage from monkey menace and wild animals, many farmers have changed their cropping pattern from traditional crops which are generally consumed by monkeys to newer crops like aloe vera, ginger, garlic, turmeric, marigold, medicinal and aromatic plants, which are not consumed / damaged by monkeys. Value addition in floriculture and lenongrass are opening new avenues of income and employment for the farmers of hilly areas. of

Sterilising monkey to control population: HP Forest Department is undertaking sterilization of monkeys in Shimla, Hamirpur, Kangra and Unadistricts to control the monkey pop-

ulation. Till December 2013, a total of 77,280 monkeys were sterilised. H.P. Forest Department is leading the innovative programme of monkey sterilization to control the ever increasing population of monkeys. Four Monkey Sterilization Centres (MSCs) located at Tutikandi (Shimla), Sastar (Hamirpur), Gopalpur (Kangra) and Boul (Una) are operative in the State. The sterilization in males is done through thermocautericoagulative vasectomy and in females through endoscopic thermocautery-tubectomy. The impact of monkey sterilization programme in stabilizing the monkey population is visible in many pockets of the State. The full impact of sterilization on monkey population shall be discernible in future when sterilization of considerable monkey population shall be achieved.

The Solution:

While number of alternatives are practiced by farmers and government to protect the crops from damage by monkeys and wild animals, none of these assure 100% success in crop protection. A new technique of power fencing is seen as ultimate solution. The solar powered fence electrifies the fence with pulsating current and these pulses are the "shock" felt by an animal that touches an electrified fence. Unlike a conventional fence, an electric fence is a psychological barrier such that animals learn to respect the fence. Any periphery can be solar

fenced, though the cost differs with respect to the area to be fenced.

The Solar Power Fencing Technology:

The fence is like barbed wire fencing with multiple strands of plain wires and

metal/cement/wooden posts to hold the strands in position. The wires carry high voltage current. The Solar Power Fence gives a sharp, short but a non-lethal shock to the intruder and creates psychological fear, against any tampering. The alarm incorporated in the system gets activated and alert the inmates of the protected area. These are tailor made fences and can be designed according to customer needs and site condition. The following diagram describes the solar fencing system:

Human and Animal safety

The electric shock is completely safe and non-lethal for human and animals. The animal / human touching the fence will keep himself away from the fence. As current is pulsating (not live) and passing at every 1 to 1.2 second and only for amilli-second (1000th of second) of time, the animal gets enough time to get away from the fence. The pulsating current will not grab the animal which generally happens in continuous current which causes contraction of muscles / cramps and prevent the animal from moving away from the fence leading to electrocution. In solar fencing, even if an animal is trapped in the fence, after 10 consecutive shocks the system will trip and hooter will sound so that farmer can intervene and no death causes. Further, the wire used in the fencing is plain (not barbed wire) the animals will not be trapped in the fence. Further, on touching the fence by any animal a hooter will sound to alert the farmer so that human intervention can be made to free the animal. A warning board is placed at 10 m interval to caution the human

about power fencing. If someone cuts the fence wire a security alarm will sound to alert the farmer for intervention. Two alarms are provided to ensure sounding of alarms in case one is failed. Before installing the system on its farm, Dr. YSPUIH, Nauni, Solan had obtained a certificate from Medical College, Bangalore to the effect that the shock from solar fencing is safe. All the safety features need to be insisted from the company installing the fencing. Certificates from competent authority regarding human/ animal safety of energizer may be insisted from the executing company.

Monkey Repellent

Monkeys can be expelled by the direct stimulation on their central nerves, through the sonic/ultrasonic wave. The sonic/ultrasonic wave attacks the auditory and nervous system of pests causing pain and discomfort. The only high-powered ultrasonic monkey repeller with special "Multiplex Modulated Sweeping Ultrasonic Sounds" available in India. These high intensity ultrasonic sound waves (10-65 KHz) are out of the range of hearing of humans and most household pets, except pests. These nerve-crushing sounds directly penetrate their brain and nervous systems and make them uneasy and act abnormally-such as frantic jumping, stampeding which result in the voluntary repulsion against ultrasonic wave areas and monkeys find it impossible to stay in such radiated areas. The monkey repeller device can get rid of monkey menace and nuisance effectively. Ultrasonic wave causes great pain and discomfort to monkeys but does no harm to humans.

