

PM RASHTRIYA KRISHI VIKAS YOJANA

The PM Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (PM-RKVY) is a flagship initiative of the Government of India, aimed at enhancing agricultural development and promoting sustainable farming practices across the country.

Launched in 2007, the scheme has evolved to address the diverse needs of Indian agriculture, focusing on increasing productivity, improving farm incomes, and ensuring food security.

The program aims to boost the production and productivity of various crops through advanced agricultural practices and the use of high-quality inputs. Promoting sustainable agricultural practices is crucial for ensuring long-term viability.

The scheme encourages environmentally friendly practices that conserve natural resources. By enhancing productivity and promoting better agricultural practices, the scheme aims to improve the incomes of farmers, thereby uplifting their standard of living.

The PM-RKVY focuses on building essential agricultural infrastructure, such as irrigation facilities, cold storage, and market access, which are vital for enhancing agricultural productivity and profitability.

The program emphasizes skill development and training for farmers to enable them to adopt modern agricultural techniques and improve their farming practices.

The PM Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana is built around several key components that address various aspects of agricultural development.

The scheme encourages states to formulate their own plans for agricultural development based on local needs. This decentralized approach allows for tailored interventions that reflect the specific agricultural challenges and opportunities in each state.

Under the PM-RKVY, financial assistance is provided to state governments for the implementation of various agricultural development projects.

This includes grants for infrastructure development, research and development, and capacity-building programs.

The scheme promotes integrated farming systems that combine various agricultural practices, such as crop production, livestock rearing, aquaculture, and agroforestry. This holistic approach enhances farm productivity and sustainability.

The program encourages the adoption of modern technology in agriculture, including precision farming, remote sensing, and information technology solutions. These innovations can lead to better resource management and improved yields.

Strengthening agricultural research is a critical aspect of the PM-RKVY. The program supports research initiatives aimed at developing high-yielding and disease-resistant crop varieties, as well as innovative farming practices.

The PM Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana operates through a multi-tiered implementation mechanism. The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare at the central level formulates policies, provides financial assistance, and monitors the implementation of the scheme. State governments are responsible for the execution of the scheme, including the formulation of state-specific agricultural plans.

They also play a crucial role in coordinating with various stakeholders, including farmers, research institutions, and NGOs. District Agricultural Officers oversee the implementation of projects at the district level. They work closely with farmers to ensure effective utilization of resources and provide necessary guidance.

Since its inception, the PM Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana has made significant contributions to the agricultural sector in India.

The scheme has led to notable increases in the production of various crops, helping India achieve self-sufficiency in food grains and other agricultural products.

By improving productivity and providing access to better markets, the PM-RKVY has played a crucial role in increasing farmers' incomes, thus reducing rural poverty.

The scheme has facilitated the development of essential agricultural infrastructure, such as irrigation facilities, warehouses, and cold storage units, enhancing the overall efficiency of the agricultural supply chain.

The emphasis on sustainable agriculture has led to the adoption of eco-friendly practices among farmers, contributing to environmental conservation.

The PM Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana stands as a testament to India's commitment to agricultural development and sustainability.

By promoting productivity, improving farmer incomes, and fostering sustainable practices, the scheme aims to transform the agricultural landscape of the country. As India continues to evolve, the PM-RKVY will play a critical role in shaping a resilient and sustainable agricultural sector that meets the needs of its population while safeguarding the environment.

Women's Representation in Democracy: Status and Challenges

■ DR RAJKUMAR SINGH

Historically, women have been underrepresented in governance and decision-making processes, but over the past century, there has been progress in many countries. Women's political participation has evolved significantly over the centuries, shaped by social movements, legal reforms, and changing cultural norms. An overview of the key historical milestones include: a. Ancient Democracies: In early democracies, such as ancient Greece and Rome, political participation was limited to men, with women excluded from voting, leadership, and civic roles. Even though women occasionally held positions of influence through royal or religious roles (like Cleopatra in Egypt), formal representation in politics was virtually non-existent. b. Feudal and Monarchic Societies: In medieval Europe and other feudal societies, women were largely confined to private roles, though some wielded power as queens or regents. However, their involvement in governance was often through familial connections, not by democratic principles. c. 17th and 18th Centuries: The Enlightenment era saw the birth of modern democratic ideas, but even as movements for democracy and liberty flourished in the West, women were systematically excluded from the political sphere. The American and French revolutions, while championing equality and rights for citizens, did not extend these rights to women.d. Early Activism: The 19th century saw the rise of organized campaigns for women's political rights, particularly in Europe and North America. Women began to demand the right

to vote, a movement known as women's suffrage. e. Feminist Movements and Political Representation: Second-Wave Feminism (1960s-1980s): This movement focused not only on legal equality but also on issues like workplace discrimination, reproductive rights, and political representation. The feminist movement brought renewed attention to the underrepresentation of women in political institutions. f. Gender Quotas and Political Reforms: By the late 20th century, many countries began implementing measures to increase women's participation in politics. Gender quotas, whether voluntary or mandated by law, became an important tool in achieving greater female representation in parliaments and local governments.g. Increasing Representation: Over the past two decades, many countries have made significant strides toward gender parity in politics. Countries like Rwanda, with its mandatory quotas, have led the way with women holding over 60% of seats in parliament. The journey toward women's representation in democracy has been long and challenging, beginning with exclusion from public life and evolving into a global movement for equal rights.

Status of representation Today, women's representation in democracy continues to improve globally, but progress varies by region, and despite notable advances in some areas, women are still underrepresented in political leadership and decision-making roles across the world. a. Regional Variations: Nordic Countries: Countries like Iceland, Finland, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark consistently lead in women's political representation,

with women making up around 40-50% of parliamentary seats. These countries have strong gender equality policies and have implemented quota systems that contribute to higher female participation. Sub-Saharan Africa: While African countries like Rwanda and South Africa have made significant strides, with Rwanda having the highest percentage of women in parliament globally, other countries in the region still lag behind, with women holding fewer political leadership roles. Latin America: Countries like Bolivia, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica have seen notable progress, largely due to gender quotas. In some cases, women hold nearly half of parliamentary seats. Middle East and North Africa: The region remains one of the most challenging for women's political participation, though countries like Tunisia and Morocco have made incremental progress in recent years through constitutional reforms and quotas. Asia and the Pacific: Countries like New Zealand and the Philippines have relatively high levels of female political participation, while others, like Japan and South Korea, still face low representation of women in national legislatures. . Current Trends: Increasing Representation of Women in Green and Social Justice Movements: Women are playing prominent roles in global movements related to climate change, social justice, and human rights, such as Greta Thunberg's activism for climate justice and Jacinda Ardern's leadership on progressive policies in New Zealand. Focus on Gender-Responsive Policies: More women in politics has often led to an increased focus on policies related to healthcare, education, gen-

der-based violence, and social welfare. Women leaders are pushing for gender-responsive budgeting and programs aimed at improving the lives of women and marginalized communities. Gender Parity in the Digital Age: There is a growing movement to ensure that digital spaces and technologies are gender-inclusive, addressing the issue of online harassment faced by women politicians and advocating for better protections for women in digital political spaces. There is no doubt in the fact that gender quotas, parity laws, and international advocacy efforts have been instrumental in increasing the number of women in political offices, but ongoing issues like violence, discrimination, and cultural biases continue to limit women's full participation. Further reforms, stronger enforcement of quotas, and cultural shifts will be necessary to ensure women's equitable participation in democratic governance across the world.

Challenges before women Women in democracy face numerous challenges that hinder their full and equal participation in political life. These challenges are both structural and cultural, varying across regions, but some key obstacles persist globally. a. Cultural and Social Norms: Patriarchal Societies: In many countries, deeply ingrained patriarchal norms dictate that women's primary roles are in the home, not in public or political life. These cultural expectations often discourage women from pursuing careers in politics or participating in decision-making processes. Gender Roles: Traditional views about gender roles often prioritize men as leaders and decision-makers, while women are

expected to focus on family and care giving responsibilities. This cultural bias leads to fewer opportunities for women to enter politics or climb the political ladder.b. Violence and Harassment: Gender-Based Violence in Politics: Women in politics are frequently targets of gender-based violence, harassment, and intimidation. This can range from verbal abuse and online trolling to physical threats and assaults.

The purpose of this violence is often to silence and disempower women, discouraging their political participation. Online Abuse: With the rise of digital platforms, women politicians are increasingly subjected to online abuse, which often takes on sexist, racist, or misogynistic overtones. The psychological impact of this abuse can be profound, leading some women to leave politics or avoid running for office altogether. c. Unequal Political Participation: Voting Disparities: In some regions, women face barriers to voting, including lack of education, mobility, or access to information about the political process. In rural or conservative areas, women may also face family or community pressure to refrain from voting or participating in politics.

Normally, leadership roles in finance, defence, or foreign affairs are often reserved for men, limiting women's influence on critical policy issues. Thus, while women's representation in democracy has increased significantly over the past century, deep-rooted challenges remain. Cultural attitudes, structural barriers, and economic inequality continue to hinder women's full participation in political life.

(The writer is a youth motivator)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi: Living the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi

■ SUMITRA GANDHI KULKARNI



In April 2024, I went and casted my vote and was therefore relieved when in June 2024, Narendra Modi became Prime Minister of Bharat for the third time. Mahatma Gandhi or Bapuji as I call him was my grandfather. I lived with him till I was

19. This year, I turn 95 and I feel an urgency to compare Prime Minister Modi with Gandhiji and pen down my thoughts. Generations to come may want to know the views of a family member of Gandhiji who as an adult hadthe privilege of knowing both these human beings.

In my long years I have known many leaders. However, my association with Narendra Bhai stands out as extraordinary. It began during the challenging period of the 1975 Emergency. Though the exact moment can't be recalled, Narendra Bhai was then a young, dynamic Pracharak of the RSS.

In the 1970s sectarianism was continuing to eat away at the national fabric. As a Rajya Sabha member from Gujarat, I was deeply worried about the demographic change underway in the border districts due to heavy infiltration from Pakistan. The influx into Assam was even greater. No one in my Party,

the Congress took serious note of this issue. But I clearly remember how Narendra Bhai even at that young age cared about such matters. He was clearly committed to national issues and the politics of the moment didn't diffuse his focus.

Even in those days he was fully seized with the challenges that women faced in rural Bharat - personal hygiene; clean drinking water; primary health care for their families etc. Soon after becoming Prime Minister, he demonstrated exemplary courage and articulated the need for national cleanliness in his Independence Day speech. He launched the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan which improved sanitation and also the dignity and security of women across Bharat.

My grandfather believed in 'Jan Andolan' - people's movement as a basis of sustainable social change. Narendra Bhai's unwavering focus on the word 'Sabka' as in Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, and Viksit Bharat is the same. These are not mere buzz words for him. They are his drivers. His 'humanity first' leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic did not stop at our border, but embraced the entire world. Then again, he swam against the tide to free us from the choking yoke of Article 370. He is systematically completing the agenda that should have been completed after gaining independence. CAA is a case in point.

In this great land of Sanatan Dharma, political freedom was won by the spiritual force of many Masters such as Sai Nath of Shirdi, Shri

Ramana Maharshi etc., and Gandhiji became the instrument to spearhead this. It is no coincidence that decades later, Narendra Bhai has become the instrument to free us from the colonial mind-set. A second struggle of independence.

My grandfather, always said, 'Be the change you wish to see in the world.' Having closely witnessed Narendra Bhai's journey from an RSS worker to the Prime Minister of Bharat, I can say without a doubt that Narendra Modi personifies the change we have all longed for in our beloved Bharat.

While I do not subscribe to hagiography, I must be impartial. The most striking similarity between Bapuji and Narendra Bhai is that their public lives are rooted in the spiritual core of Sanatana Dharma. They both are - Sthithapragnya - unaffected by both, the bouquets and the brickbats. Such a person knows that Truth eventually prevails and therefore has no resistance to waiting patiently for that to happen. This would explain the characteristic silence of Narendra Bhai against relentless onslaughts by his political opponents. This is a sign of a Raja Rishi.

As per our scriptures before Dharma is restored, there is always a churning. Negativity is the first output of such a churning, and these negative forces oppose Truth. Daily we are witness to the extents of this negativity. Even national interests are compromised for political gains. In such circum-

stances, it takes a person who has absolutely no interest in power, and is incorruptible - to put the interests of the poor and the nation above everything else. It is therefore our duty to acknowledge that even as we enjoy the fruits of Narendra Bhai's efforts, but did not give him the commensurate electoral mandate, he is unaffected and quietly continues with his duty. Let me state without hesitation that had Bapuji been alive today, he would have been a great supporter of Narendra Bhai. Bapuji would have been the first person to warn us about those who have usurped his name and who have made it their life's mission to misuse it to divide us for their political gains.

It will come as a surprise to the many detractors of my grandfather, and those of Narendra Bhai, that Narendra Bhai has rejuvenated Gandhiji's ideals by actually integrating them into modern Bharat's development agenda. Directive principles of State policy have become State policy. By doing so he has ensured that Gandhiji's legacy continues to seep vigorously and ceaselessly into our nation's psyche. Narendra Bhai just like my grandfather will also have to stand the test of public scrutiny. But, as Lord Krishna told Arjuna, what matters is to do your job and leave the result to Truth - which will prevail eventually. I have faith that history will finally judge both Bapuji and Narendra Bhai kindly.

(The writer is the granddaughter of Mahatma Gandhi)

Our lives depend on the internet and social media

■ SURJIT SINGH FLORA

Significantly, we are reliant on the internet. Regarding both our academic pursuits and our personal lives, we are concerned. There is an urgent requirement for all of us to have access to it at any time and from any location. In every aspect, the Internet has dominated our lives, and it would not be an exaggeration to say that it has become an indispensable requirement for the current generation.

Smartphones, laptops and other modern technological tools like internet and social media have become an integral part of our lives. While the Internet has brought us many benefits, it has also created many challenges for us.

While the 'digital revolution' has reduced the distance between people living in different parts of the world, it has also widened the gap in the real social relations of people. Apart from this, excessive use of the Internet is also having negative effects on the mental health of children. In fact, the habit of using a mobile phone in a child is instilled by the parents.

Improved our quality of life and streamlined our processes. The artificial intelligence assistants such as SIRI, Alexa, and Google Voice assistants are recognized for their efficiency.

The search engines, such as Google, have addressed nearly all of our inquiries.

YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, and various messaging applications provide entertainment options. Providing numerous opportunities for learning and talent demonstration, they are offering young individuals a platform to present their skills.

Are we utilizing these platforms effectively? It is not the case. The attention span is diminishing due to continuous engagement with these platforms throughout the day and night. At least once in an individual's lifetime, the experience of cyberbullying is encountered. We can expect a significant number of offensive and controversial posts as a result of this initiative. This indicates that we are not enthusiasts of entertainment, but rather connoisseurs of spices. We aim to express offense regarding each individual post. What is the reason for this? Human emotions are being manipulated by external influences seeking attention consistently. The dark web presents significant risks, particularly for adolescents and children who continue to face various challenges associated with it. It is anticipated that a resolution will be achieved regarding the current web entrapment, allowing for a transition to a more relaxed and comfortable lifestyle.

In order to feed or feed one and a half year old children, parents' hand over mobile

phones to them. By doing this, the habit of being busy with the mobile phone is gradually formed in the children. If the mobile phone is taken away from them, they start screaming or crying as if someone has beaten them. During the covid lockdown, children's classes started being held online. After that the work of online classes was stopped but the habit of children's mobile was not a holiday. There are many other reasons why children become addicted to the Internet.

Anxiety can be a challenging experience, often characterized by feelings of worry, fear, or unease. It may manifest in various ways, affecting both mental and physical well-being. Understanding its triggers and symptoms is essential for managing it effectively.

We tend to be more interested in what others are doing instead of dedicating time to ourselves. Individuals who dedicate excessive time to social media may find themselves facing depression and anxiety, as it negatively impacts their thought patterns and emotional well-being.

Maintaining good mental health is essential for academic success, professional growth, and personal well-being. Therefore, it is advisable to dedicate just half an hour each day rather than consuming your entire day.

Stalking: Smartphones are bringing people together. When you consistently share your location, your social media friends are aware of your whereabouts. Teenagers frequently update their status, sharing what they're watching, listening to, reading, and where they are checking in. This habit evolves into an addiction and leads to hyperactivity as individuals constantly seek new updates from their friends. They review each notification and alert to ensure a timely response, as they consider promptness essential. Teenagers connect with new friends on social media and rarely take a break. These connections may be virtual, yet they can lead to feelings of anxiety and contribute to depression. Some teenagers experience feelings of loneliness when their virtual friends are unavailable or do not respond promptly. They approached every status update and text with utmost seriousness. Parents should engage in meaningful discussions with their children and provide guidance on navigating the situation. Teenagers particularly need their parents' complete attention.

Cyberbullying: A cyberbully refers to the act of utilizing social media platforms to disseminate false, humiliating, or aggressive information directed at particular individuals. Among the significant effects of social media, cyberbullying is a troubling phenomenon that has emerged as a concerning issue. Individuals who experience extended periods of cyber-bullying frequently face psychosocial

challenges such as depression, isolation, loneliness, stress, anxiety, diminished self-esteem, and in some cases, may contemplate suicide. The absence of a system to identify individuals behind cyberbullying accounts is contributing to the prevalence of these behaviors.

Lack of Sleep: Social media ranks as one of the primary contributors to sleep deprivation in today's teenagers. They frequently find themselves anxious about the content their friends are posting and sharing. Adolescents tend to remain engaged on social platforms for extended periods when not encouraged to take a break. If these actions are taken, particularly during sleep time or right before sleeping, there is a significant chance that their sleep will be disturbed. The readings provide insight into the significance of sleep and the potential dangers linked to sleep deprivation.

Decreased Self-esteem: Many teenage girls begin to compare themselves to celebrities after engaging with social media, aspiring to achieve a slim, attractive, and affluent appearance similar to theirs. During adolescence, it is common for individuals to emulate those they admire or view as role models. This mimicry can adversely impact their self-esteem and sense of worth. The results of various studies indicate that girls who dedicate more time to social media in order to present themselves like celebrities often find themselves isolated from their friend groups. Their friends do not embrace them.

Social Isolation: A statistical relationship exists between social media usage and social isolation. When teenagers come across pictures or videos of a party they weren't invited to, it can lead to feelings of anxiety. It is referred to as "fear of missing out" or FOMO. Often, teenagers think they are engaging with various individuals through social media, yet they are, in reality, disconnected from the present moment and their own lives. It may lead to increased feelings of isolation and contribute to a sense of FOMO.

Unrealistic Expectations: It's no shock to say that Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat contribute to unrealistic expectations and relationships. It is not possible to verify the authenticity of someone else's actions.

In a perfect world, honesty would prevail on social media; however, the dynamics of showbiz and promotional tactics are unlikely to shift anytime soon. Instagram and YouTube celebrities, including influencers, utilize such strategies to attract audiences. Lack of Focus: The negative effects of social media on students are readily apparent today. Various tasks, including schoolwork, classwork, or homework, demand heightened concentration to manage important responsibilities; however, many teenagers now tend to engage with