

KNOW YOUR MEDICINE Celebrating Gurupurab of Guru Nanak Dev

Know Your Medicine' (KYM) is an initiative aimed at promoting awareness and understanding about medicines, their uses, side effects, and potential risks. In a world where healthcare is continuously evolving, the importance of being well-informed about the medications one takes cannot be overstated. KYM is about empowering individuals to make informed decisions regarding their health by learning more about the drugs they use. This initiative plays a crucial role in fostering safe and effective use of medications, reducing the likelihood of misuse, and improving overall public health outcomes.

The core idea behind KYM is simple: patients should understand their medications, including their purpose, dosage, possible side effects, and interactions with other drugs. The practice of educating patients about their medicines ensures they are aware of how to use them safely, thus avoiding unnecessary complications.

Medicines may be sold under brand names or generic names. Knowing both is important for recognizing alternatives and understanding that a generic drug may have the same active ingredients as a branded drug.

It's essential to know why a particular medication is prescribed. This includes understanding the condition it treats and how it helps the body. For example, antibiotics are used to treat bacterial infections, while antihypertensive drugs lower blood pressure.

Patients must be clear on how and when to take the medication. This includes understanding the dosage, frequency, and whether the drug should be taken with food or water. Incorrect dosing, whether too high or too low, can have serious consequences on the effectiveness of the drug.

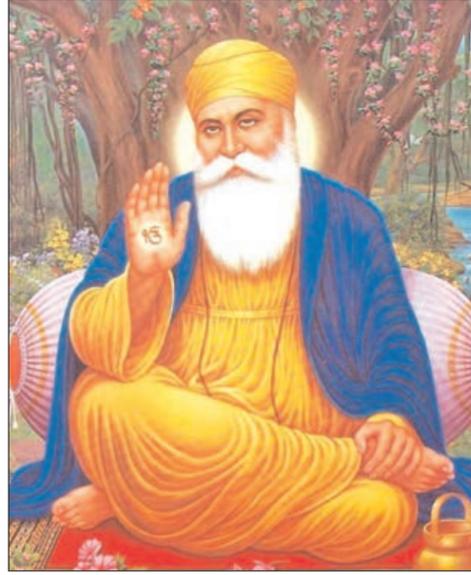
Every medication carries the risk of side effects, ranging from mild to severe. Common side effects like dizziness or nausea should be explained, but patients should also be made aware of rare but serious side effects. Knowing what to watch for can help in identifying adverse reactions early and seeking appropriate treatment.

Some medications interact with others, potentially altering their effects. For instance, mixing certain painkillers with blood thinners may increase the risk of bleeding. KYM educates patients on possible interactions between their prescribed drugs and over-the-counter medications, herbal supplements, or even foods. Certain medications come with specific warnings, such as avoiding alcohol while taking the drug or not using it during pregnancy. Understanding these precautions helps patients use their medicines safely and avoids complications. Some medications may need to be stored at specific temperatures or in a particular way to preserve their effectiveness. Patients are advised on how to store their medicines safely, particularly when it comes to temperature-sensitive medications like insulin. Knowing when to consult a healthcare provider about a medication is crucial. If side effects become severe or if the medication doesn't seem to be working, patients should know how to contact their doctor for advice. Pharmacists play a vital role in the KYM initiative. They are the primary professionals who interact with patients when dispensing medications. Pharmacists provide counseling to patients, ensuring they understand the specifics of their medication. In addition to this, healthcare providers such as doctors and nurses are essential in explaining the reasons behind a prescribed drug, how it works, and its risks.

■ **OMKAR DATTATRAY**

India is a land of different cultures, traditions and festivals so different festivals are celebrated by the people with great pomp and show. In these festivals unity in diversity is demonstrated which is the characteristic feature of the Indian nation. Thus the people of various faiths jointly celebrate these festivals and one such festival is the Jayanti of Guru Nanak Devji which is commonly known as the 'Gurupurab'. This auspicious day marks the birth anniversary of the first Sikh Guru - Guru Nanak. Gurupurab is the most sacred festival in Sikhism and it is celebrated throughout the length and breadth of the country & even abroad with great fervor and gaiety. On this important occasion of the birth anniversary of the first Sikh Guru, the message of the brotherhood and communal harmony as given by the Guru Nanak is spread throughout the country. Guru Nanak was born on Puranmashi of Kartik in the year 1469 according to Bikrami calendar. As per Bhai Bala Janamsakhi, Guru Nanak was born on the full moon of the Indian lunar month of Karthik. Sikhs celebrate Gurupurab in the month of November for this reason. Guru Nanak Jayanti or what is popularly called as Gurupurab is celebrated throughout India and abroad to mark the birthday of the great Guru.

This year it is the 555th birthday and it is celebrated as Prakesh Utsav of Guru Nanak Dev Ji. Guru Nanak Jayanti, the day of the birth of the Guru Nanak as depicted in some texts falls on 15th April 1469. Guru Nanak was born in Talvandi village of the Delhi Sultanate - present day Nankana Sahib which is situated in Pakistan. Guru Nanak is the founder of Sikhism and the first of the ten Gurus. His birth is celebrated world wide as Guru Nank Jayanti or Gurupurab on Kartik Poonmashi. The Guru Nanak's birth day in 2024 falls today on 15th November Friday which coincides with Kartik Shukalpaksh Poonmashi. Guru Nanak is also known as Baba Nanak and Nanak Shah and Nanak Lama in Tibet. Guru Nanak was born in a Hindu family and his parents were Kalyan Chand Das Bedi - Mehta Kalu and Mata Tripta. At the age of five, Nanak is said to have voiced interest in divine subjects. He would spend his time in spiritual discourse with Sufi saints to know more about Lord and spend time in meditation. So he is also known as a great spiritual saint. In the year 1487, Nanak married Mata Sulakkhni daughter of Mul Chand and Chando Rani in the town of Batala and was blessed with two sons. He said that Guru is God, God is Guru and in between, there is no difference. The day honors Guru Nanak Dev's teachings - promoting unity, equality, and selfless service - the core principles of Sikh philosophy. It emphasizes devotion, spiritual gatherings, and hymn recitations from Guru Granth Sahib. Guru Nanak says that do service sharing with others and giving to those who are less fortunate



nate and that is why in every Gurudawara, there is the system of Langer - food open for all and people do Sava, where people belonging to every caste, creed and religion would come and sit together. His teachings have profound social implications. He denounced caste system prevalent in Hinduism and stressed the inner spiritual awakening. In the festival of Guru Nanak Jayanti or Gurupurab celebration is usually similar for all Sikhs only the hymns are different. The celebrations generally commence with 'Prabat Pheris'.

The 'Prabat Pheris, or the early morning procession begins from the Gurudawars to proceed around the localities singing hymns. Generally two days before the Gurupurab, Akhand Path-the 48 hour non-stop reading of Guru Granth Sahaib, the holy book of the Sikhs is held in every Gurudawara.

The day prior to the birth day of the Guru Nanak a procession referred to as Nagarkirtan is organized. This procession is led by Panj Pyaras - five beloved ones. The head of the procession carrying the Sikh Flag known as the 'Nishan Sahib' and 'Palki'-pаланquin of Guru Granth Sahib. They are followed by teams of singers singing hymns and devotees singing in chorus. There are brass bands playing different tunes and Gatka displaying their swordsmanship through various martial arts and as mock battles using traditional weapons. The procession pours into the streets of the

towns. The passages are covered with banners and gates are decorated with flowers and flags for this special occasion. On the day of Gurupurab, celebrations commence early in the morning at about 4 to 5 a.m. This time of the day is referred as the Amrit vela. The day begins with the singing of Asaa-ki-vaarie morning hymns. This is followed by the combination of Katha and Kirtan meaning hymns from Sikh scriptures in praise of Guru Nanak. Following that is the Langar a special community lunch which is arranged and served at the Gurudawars by volunteers. The Gurupurab celebrations are especially colourful in Punjab, Haryana and Chandigarh and many more locations.

Even some Sindhis also celebrate this festival. Guru Nanak has travelled different countries of the world including Mecca in pursuit of the ultimate reality and truth. In Mecca he fell asleep with his feet towards Kabba, the most sacred site in Islam and was considered dishonoring the house of God. On this Nanak replied calmly and said please turn my feet in a direction in which God or house of God does not exist. Qazi took hold of his feet and rotated him around but when Qazi lifted his eyes he saw the Kabba standing in the direction of Guru Nanak's feet. Guru Nanak said that God dwells in every place and every heart. Then Qazi bowed his head in feet of Guru Nanak and apologized for his act. Such is the greatness of Guru Nanak. Guru Nanak taught the philosophy of the oneness of the mankind and denounced the caste system of the Hinduism. He said that service of the mankind is the service of the God and thus this service to mankind is followed in the Sikhism. Nanak preached and practiced love for all the creatures and also said that all religions are divine and lead to the same truth. Respect to all religions was taught by this great Guru. Communal harmony and brotherhood was the message of Guru Nanak thus communal harmony and co-existence was one of the pillars of his teaching. He taught love and respect to all the men belonging to all faiths. Guru Nanak was for a casteless and classless society and he revered and respected all religions equally. To him, there was no high and low. The teachings and the philosophy of Guru Nanak Jiis very relevant in today's world where greed and material welfare is supreme and name and fame is the order of the day. Thus in these days of greed torn world the philosophy of love and brotherhood of the mankind is very much needed. Let the Gurupurab bring peace, love and prosperity to the humanity and free us from the epidemic of Covid. All through his divine life, he stood for religious harmony, mutual brotherhood and love and respect to all the faiths which according to him are different paths to reach to the ultimate truth. May all of us imbibe the teachings of this great Guru of the humanity who always taught simplicity, truth and service to mankind.

How Tribal India Went from Forgotten to Empowered!

Before 2014, India's tribal communities faced an uphill battle, with their struggles largely invisible to the nation. For decades, they lived on the fringes, overlooked and left without the support needed to lead healthy, dignified lives. Basic amenities such as healthcare, education, and economic opportunities were either minimal or nonexistent in many tribal regions.

But since 2014, a transformative shift has occurred. The Modi government's focused initiatives have not only acknowledged the needs of tribal communities but have also prioritized these issues with urgency. From education to healthcare to economic empowerment, these communities are now seeing the kind of support and investment that had eluded them for generations.

Take Education, for example. Tribal children once had little hope of accessing quality schooling. The few Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) that existed before 2014 were sparse and under-resourced. Since then, the Modi government's focus on education has

led to a significant expansion of these schools. Today, 715 schools have been sanctioned, and 476 are already functional, serving over 1.33 lakh students. These schools are equipped with modern facilities, digital classrooms, and sports infrastructure, ensuring tribal children receive an education that's on par with their urban counterparts. Scholarships worth ₹17,000 crore have further empowered over 3 crore tribal students, giving them access to higher education and better career opportunities. The path that once seemed closed to tribal youth is now wide open, and they are stepping into a future full of possibilities.

In Healthcare, the story is no different. Before 2014, tribal communities had limited access to quality healthcare, with government support slow or out of reach. But since then, a new chapter has begun. Mobile medical units now reach the remotest corners of tribal areas, making healthcare services accessible. Additionally, over 1.5 crore toilets have been built in tribal areas, improving sanitation and reducing the spread of diseases. The health

and well-being of tribal communities are being prioritized, making a huge difference in their lives.

A nationwide push to eradicate sickle cell anemia—a disease that disproportionately affects tribal communities—has been a significant milestone under the leadership of PM Modi. The National Sickle Cell Anemia Elimination Mission, launched in 2023, targets complete eradication of this disease by 2047. Over 4.6 crore tribal individuals have now been screened, and diagnosis and treatment are underway, a level of healthcare intervention that would have seemed a distant dream only a few years ago. The goal is to cover 7 crore people through screening, counseling, and care, offering new hope to tribal communities.

With the Forest Rights Act's rigorous implementation, significant progress has been made in recognizing and protecting tribal land rights. Before 2014, tribal communities had little security over their lands, living in constant fear of encroachment and displacement. This lack of control over their land perpetuated a cycle of poverty and loss of culture. But under the Modi

government, a landmark shift has taken place. The Forest Rights Act has been actively enforced, resulting in over 23 lakh land titles granted to tribal families, covering more than 1.9 crore acres. This historic move has empowered tribals to cultivate their land, practice traditional livelihoods, and safeguard their ancestral heritage without fear of displacement. For tribal India, land is not just a resource but a source of security and dignity in a new era of empowerment. Economic empowerment is another area where transformation has been profound. Before 2014, tribal communities often depended on forest resources for their livelihood but lacked support or means to leverage these resources effectively. Today, initiatives like the National Bamboo Mission have redefined the economic landscape for tribals. By declassifying bamboo as a tree, the government opened new avenues for tribal families to harvest, process, and sell bamboo, providing them with a sustainable source of income. Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVKs) have also supported over 45 lakh tribal beneficiaries, helping them add value to forest produce and boost

their incomes. Under PM-KISAN, about 1.2 crore tribal farmers now receive direct financial support, empowering them to invest in agriculture and improve their productivity. These initiatives are not just transforming tribal economies; they are laying the foundation for self-reliance and long-term prosperity.

In terms of Infrastructure, tribal communities had long been isolated, especially in Naxal-affected areas. Poor road connectivity, lack of clean water, and unreliable transportation were daily struggles. But since 2014, there has been a massive push to connect these remote areas to the mainstream. Thousands of kilometers of roads have been constructed, linking tribal villages to urban centers and opening up new opportunities for education, healthcare, and trade. The government's focus on infrastructure has bridged gaps that existed for decades, ensuring tribal communities are no longer cut off from the world around them.

Perhaps one of the most heartening changes has been in the Cultural Recognition of tribal communities. For years, the contributions and sacrifices of tribal heroes were largely

forgotten. But now, under the Modi government, there has been a concerted effort to honor these unsung heroes. The birth anniversary of the great tribal leader, Birsa Munda, is now celebrated as Jan Jatiya Gaurav Diwas, paying tribute to his immense contributions and sacrifices for India's freedom struggle. The renaming of railway stations, such as Habibganj to Rani Kamalapati Railway Station, and the creation of Tribal Freedom Fighter Museums across the country have also given tribal heroes the recognition they deserve. This shift in cultural perception is instilling a sense of pride and identity among tribal communities, reminding them that their history is as integral to India's heritage as anyone else's.

The transformation of tribal India from neglect to empowerment is not merely a promise—it is a reality being shaped every day through government policies and initiatives. The struggles that once defined the lives of tribal communities are now being addressed with urgency and care, paving the way for a brighter, more inclusive future for India's tribal population (PIB).

Role of Public Relations-I

■ **ER. PRABHAT KISHORE**

In a democracy, such as ours, the existence and growth of any business eventually depends, not only on the public support in purchasing its products and services, but more importantly on the sanction of the general public.

Legislatures, who enact law governing and regulating business, are elected by, and represent, the public. The management of public companies derives their power from and owes their tenure to the shareholders, who are members of the general public. Its employees are recruited from the public and live amongst the public. Therefore, it is only good business policy to practice 'Public Relations' to inform, to educate, to persuade, through effective communication, and create understanding and obtain the willing co-operation of various public of business.

The skills and techniques to create and develop mutual understanding are provided by public relations (PR) practitioners. But first, it is essential to define the objectives having been agreed, on which a PR programme can be drawn up. These may be both long term and short term but, as John Maynard Keynes once said, 'in the long term all of us will be dead.' So, it is necessary to define the perspective of the long-term.

Some form of research is necessary both before the PR programme is drawn up and when a PR campaign has gathered momentum. In most business enterprises top management consists of wise people but there is no fun in flying blind when one can use a reader.

Research is a word that seems to frighten many people. It conjures visions of long beard intellectuals working away in the backrooms on problems of no conceivable practical significance. Many people discount the value of research and say they prefer to rely on their own judgement. In this connection, there is much truth in the story of the man who, when gives the results of research, say 'It is not true'. When it has been proved beyond doubt that it is true, he says, 'It has no practical value'. When it has been shown to have distinct practical possibilities, he says, 'The research has only proved what was already known.'

Public Relations is essentially an art of persuasion and in order to influence people, it is obviously helpful to know as much as possible about the way in which people think and the manner in which they react to particular circumstances.

There is also urgent need for research into the results of public relations actively. Too little is known about the effects of PR pro-

grammes on public attitudes and public action.

In discussing the place of PR in any organisations, one important point has to be noted it relates to the nature and functions of PR, as contrasted with those of other departments such as production, finance, marketing, personnel etc. While all the latter departments are largely concerned with the respective spheres responsibility PR tends to flow over the whole gamut of business and management. From this point of view PR has been called an extended arm of management. Each department or aspect of business and industry has its specific PR problems and tasks, and those have to be tackled by PR with the top man of each department and top management.

If, therefore, an organisation takes its PR responsibilities seriously, then the PR men must be given the status and position they deserve. Public relations must have full and continuing access to the top management if it has to succeed in its job. Not because PR men are anything special, but because PR is ultimately the responsibility of the top management. Too many organisations misuse or waste their PR men e.g. in employing PR men as organisers of VIP hospitality and travel. This is not the job of public relations, or perhaps only a small

part of PR.

A good PR man represents the management and communicates the policies, problems and performances to the public on the one hand, and feeds back the socio-economic and political trends and public opinion to the top management and counsel them on possible lines of action, on the other. Therefore, fearlessness and objectivity are essential qualities in PR practitioners. And top management must create the necessary environment for such attitudes. A PR man that feeds the management with what it like to hear, viz., the glory and greatness of the organisation, is doing himself and his company little good.

All this underlines the importance of selection of PR man in regard to their abilities to counsel wisely; use effectively all the techniques of communication and their personnel and personality attributes. Good PR men can do the company a great deal. The difference is considerable, and top management must recognise this and pay more attention to the recruitment and training of PR men, and create the necessary environment for good PR men to practice their skills and techniques.

For its day-to-day existence and functioning, a business has to be reckoning with its public. Each firm

has to plan its communications programme by carefully assess in the relative importance of its key public, the messages that it wishes to convey, the selection of the specific media through which its key groups could be reached most effectively and economically.

In the present Indian context one of the most important segments of any business public is government. In our country, government is at the driver's seat of the economy, and any business is dependent for its existence functioning and growth on govt. policies and action, and therefore, must communicate effectively with government in the case of a large public or private undertaking. Communications with government assume even greater importance for a number of reasons. Firstly, because the company is accountable to govt. Secondly, because government is run not only ministers but by a large number of officials at various levels in the ministries and departments, many of whom may influence a decision. Lastly, government, in its turn, is answerable to Sansad and the public. Communications with MPs is also very important since parliamentary proceedings receive such wide publicity. It is to the interest of any company to communicate with MPs and tell them about its performance and problems.

Large public and private undertakings are always in the news and are under the searchlight of public scrutiny and attention. In spite of the fact that the Doodarshan, private electronic channels and Cinema have a wider audience than the press, public opinion in Bharat is largely influenced and moulded by what is read in the press. There is, of course, no obligation on any organisation to have any dealings with the press, but since the activities of all large companies, both in the public and private sectors, affect the public interest, the press will publish reports and comments irrespective of whether they have received a company's co-operation or not. Communicating with the press, or press relations is, therefore, of vital importance in the interests of any company's PR department.

Press relations are essentially a two-way operation. It is the link between the organisation and the press and vice-versa. On one hand, the organisation supplies information and news for publication, and initiates comments, articles and features, on the other hand, reports in the press show that the public thinks about it.

(The author is a technocrat and educationist. He studied Journalism and Mass Communication at Patna University).