

# SELF RELIANCE Heeraben Modi epitome of selflessness and simplicity

The Government has taken several policy initiatives in the past few years and brought in reforms to encourage indigenous design, development and manufacture of defence equipment, thereby promoting self-reliance in defence manufacturing & technology in the country. These initiatives, inter-alia, include according priority to procurement of capital items of Buy Indian (IDDM) category from domestic sources under Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP)-2020; Notification of four 'Positive Indigenisation Lists' of total 411 items of Services and three 'Positive Indigenisation Lists' of total 3,738 items of Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs), for which there would be an embargo on the import beyond the timelines indicated against them; Simplification of Industrial licensing process with longer validity period; Liberalization of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) policy allowing 74% FDI under automatic route; Simplification of Make Procedure; Launch of Mission Def Space; Launch of Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) scheme by involving Start-ups & Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs); Implementation of Public Procurement (Preference to Make in India) Order 2017; Launch of an indigenization portal namely SRIJAN to facilitate indigenisation by Indian Industry including MSMEs; Reforms in Offset policy with thrust on attracting investment and Transfer of Technology for Defence manufacturing by assigning higher multipliers; and Establishment of two Defence Industrial Corridors, one each in Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu; Earmarking of 25% of R&D Budget for Industry led R&D; Progressive increase in allocation of Defence Budget of military modernization for procurement from domestic sources, etc.

Our defence industry is now capable of manufacturing wide variety of high-end requirements e.g. Tanks, Armoured vehicles, Fighter aircrafts, Helicopters, warships, Submarines, Missiles, Electronic equipment, Special alloys, special purpose steels, and variety of ammunition. Rapid progress has been made towards achieving complete Aatmanirbharta in the manufacturing of defence equipment required by our Armed Forces within the country. As a result of these initiatives, many State-of-the-art products including 155 mm Artillery Gun system 'Dhanush', Light Combat Aircraft 'Tejas', Surface to Air Missile system 'Akash', Main Battle Tank 'Arjun', T-90 Tank, T-72 Tank, Armoured Personnel Carrier 'BMP-II/III', Su-30 MK1, Cheetah Helicopter, Advanced Light Helicopter, Dornier Do-228, High Mobility Trucks, INS Kalvari, INS Khanderi, INS Chennai, Anti-Submarine Warfare Corvette (ASWC), Arjun Armoured Repair and Recovery Vehicle, Bridge Laying Tank, Bi-Modular Charge System (BMCS) for 155 mm Ammunition, Medium Bullet Proof Vehicle (MBPV), Weapon Locating Radar (WLR), Integrated Air Command and Control System (IACCS), Software Defined Radios (SDR), Lakshya Parachute for Pilotless Target Aircraft, Opto Electronic Sights for Battle Tanks, Water Jet Fast Attack Craft, Inshore Patrol Vessel, Offshore Patrol Vessel, Fast Interceptor Boat, Landing Craft Utility, 25 T Tugs, etc. have been produced in the country during the last few years.

Further, for the first time, a made-in-India Advanced Towed Artillery Gun (ATAG) howitzer gun developed by our industry was part of the 21-gun salute during the Independence Day celebration at Red Fort in Delhi.

## OFF 'D' CUFF Bid goodbye to year 2022 with a wake

As we prepare to say goodbye to the year 2022, it may be instructive to take a peek at the many ways by which different cultures face the death of a loved one or thing. In western tradition, when a person dies, a 'wake' is held to watch over and to stand vigil over the lifeless body before it is taken away for burial or cremation. This is different from 'church wakes', which were all-night service of prayer and meditation in the church, referred to as vigiliae, when each parish kept the morrow of its vigil as a holiday. The 'Encyclopaedia Britannica' says the wake tradition in churches existed from the earliest days of Anglo-Saxon Christianity, and these wakes soon became fairs when people from neighbouring parishes came over to join in the merry-making, and what were holy get-together events degenerated into drunken revelry and scandal.

The custom of 'holding a wake' over a corpse, may have started as a Celtic tradition, pre-dating Christianity. Initially, the body was watched over in case it was snatched away by evil spirits but later, the wake became a time for group prayer and meditation, and those who participated in the wake were given food and liquor. Later, wakes were moved from residences to funeral homes where family and friends came to view the body and share their memories, as tribute to the deceased. As a social gathering, a wake helps ease the pain of loss and encourages sharing of happy memories, and family members review and discuss the way forward.

We could hold a wake for the year 2022. Some may see this year as an extension of recent years that traumatised us with the

Covid-19 pandemic, when considerable numbers of lives and livelihoods were lost. Others faced long-term disabilities. Hence, holding a wake for the year gone past would inspire us to review and reflect on all that has happened and we may discover that while some bad stuff happened, some good things happened, too. A social 'wake' watching over the 'corpse' of the year gone by, could be a novel way of paying tribute to the strengths we gained from whatever tragedies befell us, the friendships that endured and the support we received despite being ill or having failed professionally or in relationships; we could celebrate the familial bonds and friendlier workplaces in a new era of work-from-home routines. The last interaction with 2022 could be cathartic, with balance being the overriding principle rather than extreme stands.

Indic scriptures talk at great length about the need to cultivate the ability to observe as a witness – Sakshi bhav. So let's observe as witness, all that has happened, all that we experienced and felt, our vulnerabilities and weaknesses, our highs and lows, disappointments and so-called accomplishments. Because we live in a world of duality, every experience is valuable and every feeling of despondency, too, is part of being human.

The wake over a dead person is meant to 'highlight the idea that the loss is borne by the whole community' and 'honour the one who has passed'. We could do the same for 2022 and look forward to New Year 2023 that may well bring new challenges as well as new reasons to be joyful and peaceful.

-Narayani Ganesh

■ OMKAR DATTATRAY

The mother Heeraben Modi of our beloved prime minister has departed from this mortal world at the close of the year at the age of 100. It is a shock to the PM Modi as he loved and respected his mother most and is proud of his mother. All the political parties and the common people of the country are grieved over the passing away of the mother of our prime minister. The world leaders including American president Geo Biden has condoled the death of Heeraben Modi and expressed sympathy with Modi at this hour of grief. Heeraben Modi was an ordinary woman with extra-ordinary qualities. She was the embodiment of simplicity and selflessness and had experienced poverty in her life and reared her children very carefully and affectionately amid want, poverty and deprivation. Prime Minister Modi has himself stated that his mother used to clean the utensils and swept the houses of others for earning some money and used it for defraying household expenses.

Heeraben used to work hard with her sweat and blood and brought up his children including Modi as her husband worked in a tea stall in railway station for eking out his livelihood and Modi also helped his father at the tea shop. But despite penury Heeraben gave best education to Modi and other children and shaped their personalities. What Narendra Modi is today is because of the hardwork and upbringing of him by his mother and family.

In the shaping of the personality of Modi, the contribution of his mother was very great and cannot be exaggerated.

Heeraben was the ordinary women who had given birth to his son Modi who later on became the chief minister of Gujarat for 14 long years from 2001 to 2014 and then became the prime minister of the country for two consecutive terms. Heeraben is the mother of this world leader who has carved a niche for himself and for India in the comity

of nations.

It is because of the upbringing of Modi and because of the lessons of selfless service and distance from corruption by his mother Heeraben that we have such a brave heart and Karamyogi as our prime minister. In making and moulding of the personality of Modi, the role of his mother is enviable and it would not have been possible for him to occupy the top post of the country without the role and hard work and the lessons of simplicity and spirituality.

Though Heeraben had not seen the school and had no formal education but she was well versed in the stories of Ramayan and Mahabhartha and used to tell Modi stories from these scriptures.

She was unlettered but surpassed those who had formal degrees. Her personality had a profound influence and impact on shaping and moulding the personality of Narendra Damodardas Modi and without the inspiration and guidance and counseling of Heeraben, Modi could not have touched such heights in his political carrier. The blessings of Heeraben were always on Modi and she will continue to shower her blessings upon Modi from heaven. Heeraben was an epitome of simplicity, cleanliness, hard work and selfless service and she never differentiated between the people on the basis of religion. In the words of Modi, she treated a Muslim boy Abass with same love and affection which Heeraben showered upon her own children and never made any difference on the basis of faith. In fact what Modi is today is because of his mother who was very dear to Modi. Heeraben was so simple that even after Modi became the Prime Minister, she refused to have some new or other accommodation and continued to use her old room. After Modi became the chief minister of Gujarat, he wanted to honor his mother formally but she declined it saying that she is an ordinary woman. This was her greatness, simplicity

## The Unsung Tale of India's First Woman Teacher: Savitribai Phule

■ SUNITA BANGOTRA

Savitribai Phule may not be as famous as Mahatma Gandhi or Swami Vivekananda but her impact on the liberation of the Indian women has been no less significant. One of the earliest crusaders of education for girls, and dignity for the most vulnerable sections of society - dalits, women and widows, Savitribai broke all the traditional shackles of 19th century India under the British rule to bring in the new age of thinking. She can be legitimately hailed as the mother of Indian Feminism and Modern Girls' Education.

Savitribai was born on 3rd January, 1831, in Naigaon of Satara district in Maharashtra. Child marriage was a common practice in those days and she was married at the age of nine to Jyotirao Phule, who himself was all of 13 at the time. Even at such young age Jyotirao saw her passion to study and learn, so he started teaching her to read and write at home. Little did he know he was laying the foundation of modern education in India.

In times when women were treated no better than cattle, Savitribai was firm in her resolve to educate herself. Soon she made it her life's mission to educate and liberate women in India from the male-dominant regressive patterns of the society. On January 14th, 1848, in Bhide Wada, Pune, Jyotirao started a school for girls and Savitribai started teaching in this school earning her the title of the first woman teacher of India. She was the first Indian to place universal and socially reforming education for all children in India at the core of her agenda.

For generations education was thought as the birth right of only Brahmins, children from other castes were denied the right to an education. However, in their school, children from all castes were invited to receive education. Eight girls, belonging to different castes, enrolled as students on the first day.

However, teaching by a woman was not an easy task then because education for girls was considered as a sin. Savitribai was subjected to intense harassment everyday as she walked to the school. A

group of men would follow her; and stones, mud and dirt were flung at her as she passed. But she was undeterred by all the opposition she faced from the society. She started carrying an extra saari with her to wear at school. She opened another school for adults the same year as her husband opened the school for girls. The number of girls increased to seventy during 1849-50. By 1951, she was running three schools with around 150 girl students.

This couple kindled by passion for their goal did not stop their work of educating girls from all sections of society. She innovated many new ways of teaching like telling short stories to make learning more interesting, taking sport sessions, reciting her own-made poems in front of girls. Her first collection of poems, Kavya Phule, was published in 1854 stressing the necessity of English and Education. Looking at her passion for education, people started sending their girls to schools themselves. Thus, it could be seen that Education for her was not merely alphabetical learning but a means of igniting the minds of women and others. Today, government programmes like the 'Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan', the Right to Education Act and the midday meal scheme that incentivize education, may seem like modern concepts, but even 150 years back Savitribai had set a precedent - she gave stipends to prevent children from dropping out of school. She was the teacher who inspired a young student to ask for a library for the school at an award ceremony instead of gifts for herself. She even conducted the equivalent of a parent-teacher meeting to involve the parents so they would understand the importance of education and support their children. Her schools imparted vocational training as well. Along with educating women, Savitribai also took on the responsibility for the health and well-being of young widows, another exploited group. During those days, widows, particularly the Brahmin widows were the easy targets for the males of the society in terms of sexual exploitation. Many women were driven to commit suicide by men who had exploited them to satisfy their lust and then deserted them. Most of the time, they happened to be pregnant due to lack of contraceptives or other

## Education is not 3Rs only but 3Hs Head Hand and Heart

■ SHIV KUMAR PADHA

The involvement of our politicians, bureaucrats, top brass of army and police in the scandals, scams, rackets, kickbacks, loot and wastages occupy front pages and become headlines of the news media these days. The tax evasion, possession of assets disproportionate to the sources of income by the bureaucrats and the politicians, criminal nexus of police and the politicians with the national and international mafia, custodial deaths in police captivity, collapsing of newly or under construction structures, involvement of doctors in the human organ trade rackets selling of the degrees by the fake universities and involvement of ministers and the politicians in the sex rackets has become a common feature of social and political life of the nation.

Theses pseudo educated high profile criminals have showcased morality, ethics, loyalties, conscience for sale.

Let us, as a nation, explore about these persons. Are they literate, qualified or educated? During the pre as well as post-independence period education up to degree level was the prerogative of the elite class only. But With the passage of time the mushrooming of the universities and that of the degree colleges started taking place both in the private and public sectors which produced only the literates and qualified and not the educated. There are around 270 state level, 45 central and 140 Deemed universities in the country which include teaching, technical, central and agriculture universities. There are 20,000 degree colleges both in the private and public sectors which is more than the number of high and higher secondary school

ever existed in the country.

The swarms of the youth, emerging every year from these colleges and universities add to the already existing army of white collars in the country. The majority of them is an awakening, unenlightened, unregenerate, and irrational. They are undemocratic, dishonest, disrespectful, disloyal and disobedient in their behavior and are least interested in the welfare and development of the country as a result of which they indulge in such activities which in no way conform to the moral character expected of a true, loyal and dedicated citizen of the country.

Comparing literacy, qualification and education we come to the conclusion that they are poles apart from each other as regards their meaning and goals are concerned. There is a thin line between literacy and education. While literacy talks about imparting of 3 Rs i.e. reading writing and arithmetic or literacy, numeracy and technocracy (science), education is a lifelong process and power of acting with body, power of thinking with mind and the power of feeling with heart (3Hs) Head, Hand and Heart. We confuse qualification and literacy with education. A person who is highly qualified and literate can be less educated and vice versa. We often come across persons called as highly qualified in different subjects but lacking in basic ingredients of life, like being honest, being helpful, respecting elders, spiritual attitude and working for some good cause. The values cannot be imbibed only by going to school, colleges, studying text books or by filling one's mind with information, technical skills and useless material only which creates more problems than solutions but can be imbibed by inheritance, by

and non attachment. She was rightly a great woman which gave India a prime minister who Indianised political narrative and who changed the destiny of the country by his innovative bent of mind and scientific outlook. PM Modi loved and respected his mother very much and always visited her to get her blessings. He had profound love and respect for his mother and he was really very proud of his mother for her simple living and high thinking. Heeraben was so simple that she did not adore herself with gold and silver ornaments and it shows that she did not attach any importance to outer beauty but believed in inner beauty which is the real beauty and ornament. PM Modi's bond with his mother reminds us of a timeless and bondless love which only a mother can share with her sons and daughters. Prime minister's mother Heeraben breathed her last at the age of 100 years and it is no less than a miracle that she was hale and hearty till last and she is an inspiration for coreers of Indian's and will remain an inspiration to people even after her demise because such a great soul remains to inspire and guide us from heavens. On her death Prime minister Modi wrote, "In Maa I have always felt that trinity which contains the journey of an ascetic, the symbol of a selfless Karamyogi and a life committed to values." When I met her on her 100th birthday, she said one thing, "always remembered -work with intelligence, live life with purity" he further added. PM Modi tweeted on the demise of his mother Heeraben, "A glorious century rests at Gods feet. He recalled his meeting with his mother on her 100th birthday when she told him, "work with wisdom and live with purity." The last few days of her life she spent at the house of her other son Pankaj Modi. PM Modi penned down his emotional tribute to his late mother Heeraben, "A symbol of selfless Karmayogi." In June this year, Modi penned a heartfelt tribute to his

mother on her 100th birthday on his blog. He wrote the early struggle his mother faced, and how she coasted through the vicissitudes of life without ever compromising her principles of humility and self respect. He described his mother as a "simple and extraordinary" who never gave in to the lure of materialism. He also reveal that his mother had no assets to her name and he had never seen her wear any gold ornaments. Modi wrote in a blog as follows, When Narendra Modi wanted to felicitate Heeraben as a teacher of his life, after he became the chief minister of Gujarat, Heeraben declined. Heeraben Modi's life is devoted to values and selflessness. Maa Heeraben-In this short word lies the vastness /comprehensibility of love. There is the culmination of love inside her or we can say that she is the culmination of complete love. For Modi family mother Heeraben was the strength, energy, love, compassion and was synonymous with affection. She was not only the birth giver but also the life maker. She was the basis of the development of not only Narendra Modi but the entire family. She has woven the fabric of this family with her own hands. Constant progressive and cultural changes were made in the shape type, lifestyle, thinking, and mind of this family. It was the mother, the mother who changed both the fortune and picture of this family. In fact Heeraben created a world hero and leader in Narendra Modi is an irreparable loss, a trauma not only for his son but for the entire nation is what Lalit Garg said on the demise of Heeraben. In brief we can say that Heeraben was an embodiment of simplicity, selflessness and cleanliness who will continue to inspire millions of Indian's for many years. Heeraben is certainly a divine soul and she will have a place in heaven.

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

measures. Saddened by this, Phule couple immediately started a shelter home-Balhatyapratibadhakgrhi for such Brahmin widows in their own house. They put up advertisements all over the city and at places of pilgrimage announcing it as a "way to avoid Kalapani (life imprisonment in the Andamans)" and thus, the information about the shelter home spread. By 1873, 66 Brahmin widows had come to this shelter home from different places. They also adopted a child of a Brahman widow Kashibai who later grew up to continue the work started by them.

She realized that the plight and worse condition of women is due to patriarchal values and mindset of the people. Thus, women should be organized in a manner that one should feel the power of collectiveness and could fight against the atrocities done to her in the society. It was due to her efforts that a Mahila Mandal was formed in Pune in 1852. This Mahila Mandal started working for the empowerment and liberty of the women by fighting against the prevalent social evils.

Savitribai broke yet another taboo when she led the funeral procession of her husband. Even today, the Hindu last rites are considered to be the sacred privilege of men alone. When Jyotiba passed away in 1890, warring relatives tried to wrest the rights of performing the last rites away from Yeshwant, their adopted son, faulting his parentage. Savitribai took the 'titve', or the funeral mud-pot, herself and led the procession.

Even the fear of death did not deter this brave woman from doing what she felt was right. In 1897, when the plague hit Pune, she was at the forefront. She even carried young Pandurang Babaji Gaikwad, a 10-year-old boy, from Mundliwa to the clinic strapped to her back. Ironically, he beat the infection but Savitribai caught it and in March 1897, she breathed her last.

Every educated woman in India today owes a debt to Savitribai Phule for fighting for their rights. Let her 189th birthday be a reminder that her legacy needs to be carried forward by the generations to follow.

values. Kothari commission and National Policy Of Education speak in unison that "Education should be for fostering love for the country and the countrymen, pride in India's cultural heritage, maintain national integrity, honesty, dignity of labor, respect for national symbols and Indian constitution. Therefore the disciplinary education is that which educates the common student to respect their elders, do mental exercise, do meditation as it was used in the previous educational system like Guru Kula.

Even more than six decades after independence we as a nation couldn't provide the type of education to the youth which could make them honest, disciplined, dedicated, loyal, and democratic and patriot to the backbone. In the absence of these needed values the terrorists, divisive, disrupting and antinational forces are raising their heads and are striking at the targets fearlessly. The politicians and the bureaucrats spare no chance in minting money and becoming multimillionaire overnight. The high profile criminals are gradually eating into the vitals of society and the country. We have plenty of time left to correct our educational set up so that our educational institutions produce the citizens who are honest and sincere to the backbone and are accountable for their deeds before the countrymen. These high ranking bureaucrats and politicians should keep the interests of the nation above their never ending greed because 'there is sufficiency in the world for man's need but not for man's greed'.

(The writer is a social activist from Basohli).

## YOUR COLUMN Appeal to LG Manoj Sinha

The terrible tragedy that occurred yesterday in Dhangri Village in the Rajouri district illustrates the appalling state of affairs in the UT of Jammu and Kashmir. The episode conclusively demonstrates that human rights, including those of children, are in jeopardy. Despite the established security processes and measures, the terrorists had exter-

minated four people and one child, in addition to leaving dozens of others traumatized and wounded. In particular, the massacre in Dhangri village highlights the plight of border residents in J&K. Residents of twin border areas have faced invisible foes for decades, whether in the form of mortar fire from across the Line of Control or cowardly terrorist attacks. Moreover, the intersectionality of other vulnerabilities has already rendered the lifestyle of the residents of that region unbearable, and because of incidents of the aforementioned nature, a calculated move by the perpetra-

tors is likely to demoralise the local populace and create fissures between different communities that have lived in the vicinity for centuries. At this time, a self-reflective approach is required to compel the State to implement proper strategic steps to control and reverse attacks of a similar description. In addition, the state must establish conditions and situations that facilitate victim restitution and rehabilitation.

Dr. Nitán Sharma  
Purani Poonch, Poonch (J&K).