

If you use your mind to study reality, you won't understand either your mind or reality. If you study reality without using your mind, you'll understand both. -Bodhidharma

SADAK SURAKSHA JEEVAN RAKSHA

Prevention of road accidents by using all road safety measures is necessary to save people while traveling on the road. Road safety measures are to keep all road users safe, including pedestrians, two-wheeler, four-wheeler, multi-wheeler and other vehicle users. All the following road safety measures are very helpful in avoiding all road problems. Some effective road safety measures are basic knowledge about the vehicle, defensive driving according to weather and road conditions, use of vehicle lights and horn, wearing seat belt, proper use of vehicle mirror, avoiding over-speeding, road lights. Understanding of traffic, maintaining distance from other vehicles on the road, proper understanding of how to handle troublesome situations, telecast of documentary awareness on TV etc.

It is very good and safe for all people to follow road safety measures throughout their life. Everyone should respect others and take care of their safety while driving or walking.

Guru Govind Singh: The Warrior Saint

ER. PRABHAT KISHORE

The land of India is dotted with several great personalities and the people of the country are justifiably proud to their deep-rooted religious traditions. Notable among them was the Dasmesh Pita Guru Govind Singh, who had the all-rounder personality of saints, poets, warriors and sacrificial great men. His whole family sacrificed for the safeguard of the Dharma and the pious Bharat Bhumi.

The holy land of Patna Sahib of ancient Pataliputra enjoys the glory, where the child Govind Rai was born. The ninth Guru of the Sikh sect, Guru Teg Bahadur, had come to Patna in connection with his "Sangat" along with his mother Nanakiji, wife Mata Gujri, brother Kripalchand and other courtiers. After staying for a few days in Gaighat, he left for Bengal and Odisha and Mata Gujri and other family members started living in the palace of Salish Rai Johari. Meanwhile, on the Saptami tithi (seventh day) of Shukla PakshaPaush month of VikramiSamvat 1723, boy Govind Rai incarnated on this holy earth. After spending the first four years of Govind Rai's childhood in Patna, his family returned back to Punjab and in 1672 they settled in ChakNanaki (now known as Anandpur Sahib).

When Govind Rai was only 9 years old, on 11th November 1675 his father Guru Teg Bahadur Ji sacrificed himself for the sake of Sanatan Dharma. At a young age, on 29th March 1676, on the day of Vaisakhi, Govind Rai was declared the tenth Guru of the Sikhs. At the age of 11, he tied the knot with Mata Jeetoji in Basantgarh, 10 km north of Anandpur. At the age of 17, his second marriage was with Mata Sundari and at the age of 33, his third marriage was performed with Mata Sahib Devan.

Guruji was a supporter of cultivating both Shastra (weapons) and Shastra (Scriptures) together. Poet hearted Guruji sent Sikh society to Kashi with the aim of making it a learned congregation and got many Sanskrit texts translated. He not only completed the Guru Granth Sahib, but also created compositions like DashamGranth, Jaap Sahib, Akal Ustat, BichitraNatak, ChandiCharitra, Shastra Naam Mala, AthPakhyanCharitraLikhate, KhalsaMahima etc. Along with education and religion, he prepared the organization of arms and army and got five forts constructed to secure Anandpur from the point of view of living.

Govind Rai founded the KhalsaPanth on the day of Vaishakhi in 1699 and uttered the Khalsa speech "WaheGurujiKaKhalsa, WaheGuruji Ki Fateh". He demanded five heads for the protection of faith and incidentally people from five different castes of five provinces of Bharat came forward to offer their Shish (heads). These five people were made to drink Amrit (nectar) and were given the name of PanjPyare. Gurujihimself became a Khalsa by drinking Amrit from the hands of these PanjPyare, and added the title of "Singh" to all the names including himself. It was made mandatory for everyone to have PanhKakar i.e. Kesh (hair), Kada (iron bracelet), Kaksha (short breeches), Kripan and Kangha (comb). He banned smoking, halal meat, fornication and adultery in the KhalsaPanth.

Mughal dictator Aurangzeb was very nervous after knowing Guruji's strong organizational power. He ordered his subedars and kings based in Punjab to attack Anandpur and arrest Guruji to present him in the Delhi court. Even after the fierce battle, the combined Mughal army did not succeed to defeat Guruji. Eventually Aurangzeb resorted to deceit and swore by the Quran on 21st December 1704 he requested Guruji to vacate Anandpur and allow to go elsewhere safely. But as soon as Guruji came out with his army and family, the pro-Mughal army, defying all the oaths, stormed from all sides on the bank of Sirsa river. While crossing the flooded river, Guruji's family separated from each-other. His two younger children, Baba Zorawar Singh (8 years old) and Baba Fateh Singh (6 years old) along with Mata Gujari wondered towards Sirhind and captured by NawabWajit Khan, who tortured them to accept Islam. After the refusal, both the brave sons were ruthlessly executed by burying them alive into a wall on 27 December 1704. After knowing heart breaking news of grandsons' death, Mata Gujari collapsed and gave up her life shortly.

Guruji himself, along with two elder sons and forty Shishyas, was surrounded by Mughals at Chamkaur village. He prepared the Kachchi Gadhof Chamkaur like a fort. With the resolve of "ChidiyanTe Main BaajTudaan, GidhildanKo Main Sher Banaun, Sava Lakh Se EkLadaun, Tabhi Guru Govind Singh NaamKahaun" he started sending Jatthas (groups) of five Sikhs to fight with the army of 10 lakh standing outside the fort. Both his sons Baba Jujhar Singh and Baba Ajit Singh were martyred while fighting bravely on the battlefield.

Fighting valiantly, Guru Gobind Singh reached the forest of Machiwarra according to the orders of the PanjPyare. When asked by Guruji's wife about their sons, pointing to the Sikhs present he said - "EnPutranKe Shish Par, VaarDiyeSutChaar, ChaarMuye To Kya Hua; Ye Jivit Kai Hajar." During his lifetime, Guruji fought a total of 13 battles against the Mughals and other Shivalik erud rulers. In the last phase of his life, Guruji used to preach Guru Vachan in Nanded (Maharashtra).

Meanwhile two Pathans, sent by the Nawab of Sirhind, disguised as disciples fraudulently injured Guruji by stabbing him in the stomach with daggers. Seeing his life journey at the end; one day Guruji, wearing royal dress and scriptures, called a meeting and announced that after him there would be no particular Guru and only the Granth Sahib would be the "Guru" of the Sikh sect. According to Indian tradition, keeping 5 paise and coconut, he got his head bowed in front of the Granth Sahib and at the age of only 42, he departed for heaven on 7th October 1708 (Ashvin month of VikramiSamvat 1765).

Guru Govind Singh Ji Maharaj was a unique symbol of the world's sacrificial tradition. The first philosophy of his life was that the path of Dharma is the path of truth and victory is always of truth. One should neither intimidate nor be afraid of anyone - "BhayKahuKoDetNahi, NahiBhayMaanatAan". The pious Bharat Bhumi will always be proud of this unique warrior saint son.

(The author is a technocrat & academician).

Agri Startups: Fostering Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Agriculture

DR. PARVEEN KUMAR

Very aptly called as the backbone of new India by Hon'ble Primeminister of the country Sh. Narendra Modi; the startups are changing the entire ecosystem of the Indian economy. These startups have encouraged innovations and entrepreneurship in the country. These innovation driven startups have lifted the country's ranking on Global Innovation Index 2023 from 81 to 40.04 out of 132 economies. Primeminister in the year 2022 announced January 16 as the National Startup Day to celebrate the spirit of the Indian ecosystem initiative. The Startup India is already a flagship initiative of the government of India intended to catalyze startup culture and build a strong and inclusive ecosystem for innovation and entrepreneurship in the country. An action plan has also been unveiled by Hon'ble PM comprising of nineteen action items spanning areas such as simplification and hand-holding, funding support and incentives and industry-academia partnership and incubation.

According to the department of Industrial policy and Promotion, Ministry of Commerce, Government of India, an entity shall be considered as a startup up if it is working towards innovation, development, deployment or commercialization of new products, processes or services drive by technology or intellectual property. A startup has certain fixed phases one following the others. It starts an initial idea on how it would create value, an entrepreneurial ambition on a potential scalable product or service. Then comes the concept; defining the mission and vision for initial few years with a strategy on how to get the product/service with some more members joining the process as cofounders or experts. It is followed by commitment on the part of every member with a shared vision, values and attitudes and the ability to develop the initial product/service. In the Testing phase assumptions are tested to validate solutions for further demonstrating among the initial users. The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are identified. After the testing is done and results are satisfactory, it is the time for next stage to scale up the startup. Scaling usually involves looking for bigger markets, more customers and at the same time attracting more financial resources. Now it is the time for estab-

lishment of the startup; achieving growth that can be expected to continue and to work for it. Once established the start up will easily attract financial and human resources. This will depend on vision, mission and commitment of the startup.

AGRI. STARTUPS: Agriculture in India is the backbone of country's economy. Since Independence, Indian agriculture sector has achieved many milestones. Leaving behind food scarcity, it is now the largest producer of many commodities and leading producer of many others. At 157.35 million hectares, India holds the second largest agricultural land in the world. All the 15 major climates in the world exist in India. The country is among the 15 leading exporters of agricultural products in the world. Despite so many achievements, certain inherent problems have been ailing this sector. Although country has the largest youth population, yet they are not interested in this sector; the use of modern technology is least and thus the situation demands taking immediate remedial measures. Given the diversity and vastness of Indian agricultural sector, the agri startups have emerged as a potential platform not only to leverage this sector with technology but also make this sector remunerative ultimately to connect the youths to this noble profession. Transformation of agriculture to agri-business through agri startups is now considered as one of the important strategies where enterprising farmers practice profitable agriculture. It results in farming community becoming become job providers instead of job seekers. The infrastructure set up by agri start ups at the villages will definitely lead to development of these rural areas. The present government under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi is focusing more on skill development of Youth. Different institutions and agencies are already on their job to make agri-preneurship as an engine of economic growth in the country. India's first Ministry for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) was established in November 2014. The ministry has the responsibility for both skill training and entrepreneurship.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Government of India has also started a flagship programme Agri Clinics and

Agribusiness Centers (AC&ABC) to create a pool of agri-entrepreneurs in the country. Under AC&ABC, National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE), Hyderabad is providing 45 days free residential professional hand holding training program to graduates from agriculture and allied sciences, environmental Science, botany, zoology, chemistry and those having studied agriculture at 10+2 level or those having a one year Diploma in Agriculture or allied subjects. Young people from rural areas do not have the access to same employment opportunities as their urban counterparts have. In order to skill the rural youths in different agriculture related vocations, a n o t h e r skill development programme of MANAGE called as Skill Training of Rural Youths (STRY) is being conducted in which youth from rural areas are being provided seven days skill training on different aspects. After getting the necessary skills they are eligible for financial assistance from banks by which they can set up their own income generating units in different enterprises like vermicompost, mushroom, seed production, food processing, value addition and other related activities.

Considering the vast scope of agri related business in the country, the government of India revamped the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) to RKVY-RAFTAAR, i. e. Remunerative Approaches for Agriculture and Allied Sector Rejuvenation'. The new revamped programme was to cater to the need and modalities for agribusiness promotion. Through this initiative, a thrust has been given to promote agri-preneurship and startups.

Two types of programmes are being conducted by knowledge partners of RKVY for those aspiring persons who want to go for agri-startups. The Agri Preneurship Orientation Programme is the basic level programme for those who have only an idea and want to work on that idea. Under the AOP, two months or 60 hours class room training is being provided to the aspiring agri-preneurs who are selected after a screening of their idea by a committee of experts. The selected persons during two months training are also given a monthly stipend of rupees 10,000. They have also to

go for internship with the already established startups. Once their idea qualifies for the startup, they are being given a grant in aid of rupees 5 lakh to put their idea practically into an enterprise. The Startup Agribusiness Incubator Programme (SAIP) is for those who are already working with their idea in the field but do not have the necessary resources and handholding and expertise to expand their business. They have the minimum viable product which they want to upscale. Such persons also after being given two months training are provided with grant in aid of rupees 25 lakhs to put their minimum viable product into a much larger scale. At present many Business Planning and Development Units also called as Agribusiness Incubators (ABIs) are set up across the country in different ICAR institutes and State Agricultural Universities (SAUs). Different ventures have successfully been graduated from these incubators. Similarly entrepreneurship opportunities are also created under Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), Primeminister Employment Generation Programme, Micro units Development Refinance Agency, Agriculture Infrastructure Fund and a host of other related programmes.

Different state governments are also promoting entrepreneurship in agriculture and allied sectors through many agencies and this has started providing dividend. Many young agricultural graduates have left their government or private jobs to set their own ventures. Their annual turnover now is running into crores; besides their venture also provide employment opportunities to many others. Till only a few decades back, government job was the only choice and preferred destination for all. But now with a holistic entrepreneurial ecosystem that stimulates so many entrepreneurial opportunities for the youths, their perception and mentality has tilted highly in favour of setting their own enterprises. They now understand that government cannot provide jobs to all of them. Instead by setting up their own income generating enterprises, they can provide jobs to others too, become self reliant and make the country a nation of job providers rather than job seekers.

(The writer is agriculture and social issues).

Whose Ram by the way?

OMKAR DATTATRAY

This important and baffling question haunts the people of this country called Bharat is as to whose Ram is by the way? Maryada Purshottam Bhagwan Ram belongs to whole humanity and the whole universe. Lord Ram is not the possession of any political party and more so of the BJP and no political party should politicize Ram. None of the political parties has the inborn and inherent right to trade on Lord Ram and no political party is the broker of Ram and should not hijack the consecration and inauguration of grand Ram temple at Ayodhya. The fact is that Lord Ram belongs to whole of India and is of all Indians. Ram is our cultural, national and spiritual icon and besides being the incarnation of Lord Vishnu, Ram was the ideal king to be emulated and followed. Even our constitution talks of the Ram Rajya and so our political parties including the treasury benches and opposition parties should sincerely make conscious efforts for establishing Ram Rajya in the country as it is the ideal governance which aims at the welfare of all sections of society including the minorities. Muslim community should have no reservation about Ram Rajya because it is not against any religious community. The father of nation Mahatama Gandhi was the great advocate of Ram Rajya and therefore to this big secularist Ram Rajya is needed in India as there is no discrimination with any faith in this as it is the ideal rule which is in the interest of the country and it is based on the principle of tolerance which is the foundation of the Indian culture, tradition and legacy and therefore all of us should work towards the establishment of Ram Rajya in the country. Ram is not the personal property of any party including the BJP and no political party has the right and license to

trade on the name of Ram and therefore all the political parties should desist from politicizing Ram and Ram temple and it has to be seen whether the inauguration of Ram temple and consecration of Lord Ram will solve the Ram temple issue for all times to come. It is a welcome development that Khalid Ansari one of the main litigants in the Ramjanamboomi/Babri Masjid case will take part in the inauguration of the Ram temple. Since the apex court of the country has decided the important case and has given its verdict in favor of the Hindu community as it has observed that there was a Hindu temple below the disputed structure and all the people irrespective of religious affiliation should welcome the historical verdict and thus the controversy should now naturally die and pave way for a grand Ram temple so that Idol of Ram Lalla will be installed in the sanctum sanctorum of the grand temple. Ram is in the blood and DNA of this land and he is the very essence and breath of this land called Bharat. Besides Ram is our cultural, national and spiritual icon and the god to be emulated and followed. Ram is of the whole humanity and no political party has any right to politicize Ram for vote bank purpose. But unfortunately political parties without any exception are politicizing and politicking on Ram for their selfish interests and for getting votes in the largest democracy of the world. Ram is the breath and soul of this nation and our nation has no meaning without Ram and therefore Ram is revered and worshipped by the Indians irrespective of any faith and religion. The great Urdu poet Iqbal has termed Ram as Imman-je-Hind and this clearly shows that Ram is of all of us transcending the religious barriers. Thus the political parties should not decline and refuse the invitations for participation in the grand inauguration

ceremony and consecration of Ram Lalla. But to our dismay congress, SP, RJD, Shiv sena Uddhava, left parties, JDU and some other so called secular parties have refused to attend the inauguration ceremony of the Ram temple and all these parties of opposition bloc are doing petty politics over the inauguration and consecration of Lord Ram at Ajodhya on January 22. For the historical event of inauguration and consecration of Ram Lalla, there is unprecedented surge in the tourist footfall before the 22nd January 2024. Ayodhya presents the blend of tradition, spirituality and modernity and she has the distinction of being a religious, spiritual and modern city which is rightly the proud of all Indians. Millions, who may not agree with Ram's ideals, engage with his story, which calls upon them to confront their own behavior. The million dollar question is who is Ram and whose Ram? The question is simple but the answers to it are complex, more so because there are multiple answers, rather than an answer. Over the centuries, these many answers have come in us in texts, in songs, in paintings, dance, in folk lours, in every form of expression, both religious and secular. Ram has captured our imaginations so much so that we tell his story in whatever forms are available to us. Ram appears variously in all these art forms, indicating that there are many Rams. Or rather Ram means different things to different people. For millions of people in India and across the world, Ram, the hero of the Ramayana, is God, an incarnation of Vishnu who took human form at the cusp of the Treta and Dwapar Yug to stabilize dharma in the world of humans. As the prince of Ayodhya, Ram undergoes many hardships but stands firm in righteousness at all times. For believing Hindus, this makes him as the moral exemplar, the ideal man, willing

to sacrifice his own happiness for what he knows to be good and true. He willingly forgoes his birth right as heir to the throne, destroys those who have strayed from the path of Dharma, gives up his beloved wife because his citizens doubt her integrity and establishes righteousness in Kosala. Ram stories have been told by Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, Muslims, by women, Dalits, Dravida and Adivasis. They have been told in cultures that lie far away from where the story was born, and are told with every new technology available, in languages spoken by a few hundred people as well as those spoken by entire nations. In each of these Ram reflects the time and place of the telling, and the ideology of the teller. In Buddhist versions, Ram is bodhisattva, who delays his own enlightenment in order to help other creatures. In Jain Ramayanas, Ram is an illustrious being who adheres to Jain principles of non-violence. Within Hinduism too, Rama's story has been modified countless times-Bhavabhuti's Uttaramachaitra changes the tragic separation at the end of Valmiki's story and reunites Ram and Sita on earth. Tulsidas amplifies Rama's divinity and effects his reunion with an equally divine Sita in heaven, and Kamban ends his story of Ram with a triumphal coronation in Ayodhya, after Ravana is killed in the battle. In short Ram is of all the humanity and he belongs to all of us transcending the barriers of religion, race, caste, language, creed and sex. Ram is worshipped in different ways by different people and he belongs to whole humanity and thus cannot be belittled as he is omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent and therefore cannot be confined to any religious sect because he belongs to all.

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

YOUR COLUMN

Bilkis Case

Dear Editor;

The eleven convicts have been ordered by the Supreme Court to surrender in 2 weeks and walk back to jail in the Bilkis case. The remission of life sentence of the convicts by the Gujarat government incurred the wrath of the Supreme Court for usurping the powers of the Maharashtra government. The bench of Justices B.V. Nagarathna and Ujjal Bhuyan held the view that the Gujarat government is not the appropriate government within the meaning of the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code to take decision on remission. The offence was committed in Gujarat but the trial was conducted in Maharashtra on the orders of the Supreme Court. Wearer only knows where shoe pinches. It is natural that the premature release of the convicts pained the Bilkis since she had undergone the trauma during the Gujarat riots. It was tragic that the victim lost her 3-year old child and seven members of her family. The judgment is welcome. But the doors for convicts seeking remission of sentences have not been closed. They are at liberty to move the Maharashtra government for remission of sentences since it is the appropriate government in view of the fact that the trial was conducted in that state. The opposition parties have welcomed the judgment not because the judgment assuaged the feelings of Bilkis but because the judgment has come against the Gujarat government. Bilkis Bano was the victim of mob frenzy following the

burning of the coaches of train in which 59 kar sevaks and Hindu pilgrims were travelling and they were burnt alive. Everyone talks of Godhra carnage but hardly do the people talk the source of trouble that entailed in Godhra carnage. The family members of these kar sevaks were in grief. More often than not the source of trouble is either forgotten or ignored. Trouble mongers and trouble creators deserve more stringent punishment than the ones who respond in the language the trouble makers understand. If the kar sevaks had not been killed, the Godhra incident would not have occurred. Bilkis Bano case is also the fall-out of kar sevaks burning. Godhra incident was reaction for action. Sympathy should go to both the sides. There is little for the opposition parties to cheer about the indictment of the Gujarat government by the Supreme Court. The courts have praised and admonished the governments irrespective of the parties in power. It is appalling that the killing of 59 kar sevaks did not get as much attention by the media, politicians and public as the Bilkis Bano case. It must be noted that the kar sevaks were killed without any provocation from the deceased.

K.V. Seetharamaiah

Revive Old Age Pension

Dear Editor;

It is brought to the notice of the Jammu and Kashmir UT Administration that the monthly pension of the senior citizens above 60 years or above have been suspended/stopped for the last some months and putting the elderly persons to grave problems and multiple hardships.

At advance age, these men or women, are left to their cruel

fate and miserable conditions as in many cases they are neither helped by their off-springs nor have any support system in the evening of their life! The UT Administration must come to their rescue immediately.

The pension scheme was in vogue in last few years but suspended recently. It is worth mentioning that some of them were getting this meagre assistance of Rs 1000 monthly Pension to make ends meet for daily necessities but now even this support by the UT administration in Jammu and Kashmir has been denied now. Notably, this scheme of Old Age pension is prevalent with even higher dues in many other States and UTs in the Bharat.

It is prayed that the Lt Governor, Manoj Sinha, Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo and Com-Secretary, Social Welfare, Sheetal Nanda must take of their plight along with miserable conditions and restore the Old Age Persons for all the needy and deserving elders who are disadvantaged at their old age without much support system in Jammu and Kashmir. The geographical, border situation and climatic conditions too further add to their misfortune.

As this Old Age pension is prevalent in all other parts of the country so socio-economic justice must be provided to these old persons-male and females--in UT of Jammu and Kashmir, which is part of the largest democracy in the world!

Will the UT Administration act firm and fast to dispense justice to this vital section of our society with monthly pension support system as early as possible.

O P Sharma