

## INDIA'S BRIGHT FUTURE

The twenty-first century will belong to India. India will become a superpower of the world. Such announcements have been made by Indian politicians, economists and scientists. Many foreign scholars have also made predictions about the bright future of India. Will this dream come true? Are we really moving on the path of becoming a superpower, a developed nation? It is necessary to consider these questions.

There seems to be some solid basis behind these claims and predictions of India's all-round progress. In the last few years, India has proved its mettle in all fields. We have proved ourselves to be the world's largest and most stable democracy. Our economy is continuously progressing. We have defeated the last global recession with our wisdom.

Many of our companies have given proof of India's industrial efficiency by acquiring foreign companies. Our teachers, scientists and industrialists are showcasing their talent in foreign countries also. We have set new records in every field be it science, medicine, business, art, military power, education and culture. All these things strengthen our faith in the bright future of India.

There is no doubt that India has made remarkable progress in various fields. Our scientists have made many fundamental discoveries. Our progress in the fields of space science, medicine, development of weapons, industrial efficiency, telecommunication, nuclear power etc. is remarkable. Our progress in the economic field is evidenced by the stability and steady growth of our economy.

When major economies of the world were collapsing due to the global recession, the Indian economy proved its credibility by remaining unaffected by it. The increase in foreign investment and acquisition of foreign companies also proves the success of our economy. Apart from this, we have also made remarkable progress in the fields of education and culture.

The public also has an essential role in making India's future bright. It is the duty of every citizen to establish mutual harmony by rejecting caste, sect, personal interest etc. If all the Indian people unite and destroy the evils and cooperate in the progress of the nation, only then India will become a superpower of the world.

## Human Wildlife Conflict and delicacy of Nature

■ G L KHAJURIA

The oldest part of the framework goes back to the very beginning of human civilization in India (4000-5000 years ago) when a unique ethic of animal welfare and protection evolved to protect life other than human. Chanakya exposed the need to protect elephant forests in the Arthashastra and Asoka forbade the killing of animals for sport. And these are too of the several interventions that contributed to the preservation of nature in ancient and medieval India. The post-independence era saw the birth of the Indian wildlife protection act, 1972. A forward thinking law which is probably the single most important reason why we still have as much as we do today the active political support that wildlife conservation as a cause drew made the frame work of protection stronger.

If the frame work got its contours from the Indian populace and its elected representatives, it got its grain from the front line forest guards that protect wildlife through much of its range. More than 20,000 forest guards, foresters and range officers form the guardians of our wild, the van rakshak who toil day in day out to protect our wildlife. Though, like all government departments, this department too has been hit by corruption, the sloth and inefficiencies, it has remained on the who a hardworking and honest service that has protected wildlife from poachers, smugglers and sheer of neighboring villages. Finding the binding glue for the frame is providing by the innumerable men and women, tiger wallahs, herdsman, elephant conservationist and amateur nature enthusiasts to formed the clubs, conservation trusts and charitable societies to ensure that the official framework was buffered and enhanced.

Because of all these varied networks and support structures and despite a billion people crowding out nature the country still has more the half of the world's wild tigers not with understanding the current crises 655 of the Asian elephants, 855 of the greater one-horned rhinos and 1005 of the Asian lion.

India- the land of natural wonders and heavenly resources. India has about 2% of the total forest area of the world. However, the forests here are home to millions of flora and fauna. According to IUCN Red Book, out of 63837 species living in Indian forests, 19817 species are on the verge of extinction. In the present scenario where many species of flora and fauna are thriving for their existence, more number of threatened species is continuously getting added to the list. The situation is very tense. More than 10000 species are vulnerable, 5766 species are endangered and 3947 species are critically endangered. Here we are talking about the species and not the individual. The total population of endangered species is in the millions.

Most endangered species in India include Asiatic Lion, Bengal Tiger, snow Leopard, Nilgiri Tahr, Kashmiri Red Stag, black buck, One-horned Rhinoceros, Malabar Mahogany, Muesli, Red sandalwood, Assam Catkin Yew, ebony and Hinkley Oak.

The main reason for such disastrous condition of plants and animals is the loss and destruction of habitat

- ▶ over-hunting and over-harvesting
- ▶ Excessive exploitation of resources
- ▶ Introduction of invasive species
- ▶ Deforestation
- ▶ Human population growth
- ▶ Pollution
- ▶ Industrialization
- ▶ Urbanization
- ▶ Climate Change and Global Warming
- ▶ Acid rain
- ▶ Nitrogen pollution

Such a growth rate of species loss is not a good sign. Destroying the habitat of millions of flora and fauna is an inhumane act. Just think about being homeless for a while. The condition of wildlife is really pathetic. Our future generations will not be so lucky to see many of the species that we can easily see around us today. Natural resources are not just for our personal benefit. We should be morally bound and have a proper conscience about what we are doing. We are destroying the right to life of many species just because we are bound by our greed and false sense of superiority.

All this is causing the breakdown of the ecosystem. Rare herbs of medicinal value are becoming difficult to find, it is a matter of great shame for the medical field. Crop yields are decreasing because the higher the number of species in an ecosystem, the higher the crop yields. This also affects the economy of the country. Ecosystem chains are badly disturbed.

Appropriate measures should be adopted to reduce the speed of extinction loss. Various national parks, sanctuaries, conservation reserves, community reserves and wildlife reserves should be established. Appropriate environment should be created in the in-situ conservation sites. Deforestation and tree plantation programs should be campaigned. Let us work together to create a healthy environment where every species and every organism has the right to live and the right to habitat.

(The author is former Senior Forests Officer (J&K).

■ TARUN CHUGH



Tarun Chugh

The golden chapter of Indian history and philosophy is associated with the martyrdom of Chhote Sahibzadas. The martyrdom of Chhote Sahibzadas set a new ideal of bravery. This idea was to remain steadfast in one's culture, religion and faith. This Lasani (Nonesuch) martyrdom also raised a new consciousness towards religious conversion in the countries of Asia. Our illustrious Prime Minister not only accepted this martyrdom as a historical event but also considered the impact of this martyrdom on the cultural history of India as powerful.

When 26th December 2022 was celebrated as "Veer Bal Diwas" for the first time in India, the whole country came to know what a huge sacrifice Guru Gobind Singh Ji had to make for the protection of the country and religion. When Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced 'Veer Bal Diwas', paying tribute to the martyrdom of Sahibzada Baba Zorawar Singh Ji and Sahibzada Fateh Singh Ji, sons of Sri Guru Gobind Singh, there was a feeling of respect for Prime Minister Modi across the entire country. On Veer Bal Diwas we also remember the courage of Sahibzadas and Mata Gujri Ji and Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji.

This incident of history still reminds us that the sacrifice made by the four Sahibzadas to protect the religion is recorded in history as the supreme sacrifice.

'Veer Bal Diwas' is celebrated in the honor of Sahibzadas. This date was chosen to honor the sacrifice of Chhote Sahibzadas, the four sons of the tenth Sikh Guru Guru Gobind Singh Ji. The day of sacrifice of Sahibzada Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh at the age of six and nine was observed on 26 December 2022. For the first time after Prime Minister Modi's announcement, a historic programme in honor of Sahibzadas was organized at Major Dhyani Chand National Stadium in Delhi.

# Veer Bal Diwas: Tribute to the martyrdom of Sahibzadas

Through this historical date, along with making small children aware of the story of bravery of Sahibzadas, a message was given to the youth and children of the country to be proud of their courage and strength.

'Veer Bal Diwas' is a new beginning to unitedly pay tribute to that sacrifice. Martyrdom Week and Veer Bal Diwas are full of sentiments and provide endless inspiration for the Sikh tradition. 'Veer Bal Diwas' inspires us that age does not matter in front of bravery. 'Veer Bal Diwas' will identify India and inspire us to know our past and build a powerful future. What is the potential of India's young generation? How the young generation of India has saved the country in the past, how our young generation has brought India out of darkness, this is what 'Veer Bal Diwas' will proclaim for the times to come.

Standing fearlessly alone in the face of cruelty and fear, Guru's brave Sahibzade was not afraid of any threat and did not succumb to anyone's greed. Sahibzada Zorawar Singh and Sahibzada Fateh Singh Sahib were imprisoned alive in the wall. On one hand cruelty crossed all its limits On the other hand, all the standards of patience, bravery and bravery were also broken. Sahibzada Ajit Singh and Sahibzada Jujhar Singh also set an example of bravery which will continue to inspire us for centuries. In a country which has such a heritage, such a history, it is natural to have self-respect and confidence.

In the golden age of independence, Prime Minister Modi ji started celebrating Veer Bal Diwas by taking a pledge to 'liberate the country from the mentality of slavery', in which there is a big message hidden for us. Today, when the youth of India have set out to take the country to new heights, the role of Veer Bal Diwas on 26th December has become even more important. The Sikh Guru tradition is not just a tradition of faith and spirituality, it is 'Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat'. It is also a source of inspiration for the idea of.

What the future generation of India will be like also depends on from whom it is taking inspiration, the huge sacrifice made by the Sahibzadas. Such an example is not found in any history

of the world. New India now under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi ji Correcting old mistakes made decades ago.

Any nation is identified by its principles, values and ideals. We have seen in history When the values of a nation change, within a short time its future also changes. And, these values remain safe when the ideals of the past are clear to the present generation. The young generation always needs inspiration and role models to move forward. The young generation needs to know the history of heroes with great personalities to learn and take inspiration.

In the nectar of independence, the country is making efforts to revive the history of the freedom struggle. We are all working to make the contributions of our freedom fighters, brave woman-tribal society reach the common people. A historical date like 'Veer Bal Diwas' will also play the role of an effective beacon in this direction.

Today is the day to bow before this holy martyrdom. The martyrdom of Sahib Zaron is a source of inspiration for the young generation and also the faith to be dedicated to the values of Indian culture. Today the whole world is feeling proud in assimilating the ideals of martyrdom of Sahib Zaron. The world of dreams of the Honorable Prime Minister is coming true. These glorious pages of history are leading our traditions on the path of becoming world leaders. This is the immortal lesson of world welfare.

We need to come together and take the message of Veer Bal Diwas to every corner of the country, so that the people of the country know the history of their sacrifice and sacrifice, people know the courage and bravery of their ancestors. In this series, the message of the lives of our four Sahibzadas should reach every child of the country and they should take inspiration from them and become dedicated citizens of the country. These ideals, inspiration and messages of ours will give new energy to our goal of a strong and developed India. Salutations at the feet of Veer Sahibzadas on Veer Bal Diwas!

(The author is the National General Secretary of BJP).

## GURU GOBIND SINGH JI- A WARRIOR SAINT

■ ID SONI

THE GREAT SAVIOUR: In a world of struggle and strife, a world of hunger and an unending wars, he appeared, the Prophet. He appeared like a Flame bringing to all the blessed message of the One God of Peace, the Akala Purukha, the Eternal Saviour of Humanity.

The greatness of the world is false and fleeting. Two greatness is given to a few. After reviewing the history of his times in India and west, we arrive at the conclusion that Guru Gobind Singh was the world's greatest saint and scholar in the seventeenth century. He was a practical mystic. He became a saviour of India by breaking the forces of Mughal imperialism and building of the Khalsa. We gaze at his picture and say to ourselves, "Here is a figure of a supreme beauty!" For in him, humanity was blended with service and both were kindled with the light of faith in God, the great saviour of the nations.

The Guru was born in 1666 at Patna. Looking back through the vista of more than three centuries, can we picture to ourselves the Guru and the India of his days? India disunited: India oppressed: Akbar's dream murdered by his successor: and Guru Gobind Singh the very picture of sadness! Iron has entered his soul. But he weaves it into a great vision, the vision of a free Khalsa. The word Khalsa means the pure. And the "pure" in heart become the servants of God and the prophets of freedom. When the Khalsa soul is purified, new missionaries and new martyrs will arise until the destiny of the Khalsa is fulfilled.

The Khalsa was meant by the Guru to be a symbol of true democracy. Members of the Khalsa dined together and worshipped together. The one great vow taken by every member of the Khalsa was services. Today many think of democracy in term of power rather than services. The Khalsa was a brotherhood of services. Power cannot solve the world's problem, but the spirit of service can, the spirit of fellowship, the spirit of love and sacrifice.

To us Guru Gobind Singh is wider than any creed, and his temple in the heart within is purer than our sanctuaries. Meek was he and content with obscurity: he had no restless desire for earth's honours, for distinction and eminence, so common, alas, in what the world calls "great men".

In loneliness and meekness he spends his time on a mountain height, away from crowds, with no desire for popular applause. India, alas, was then a subjection, and Hindu homes were subject to oppression and suffering. To Shri Gobind Singh comes one day a voice on the mountain-heights: "Gobind! Gobind! How long will you dwell in solitude? Must you always walk in meekness and meditation? Are

there not moments, hours, periods, when men, countries, nations must arise? Gobind ! Arise!" To Gobind comes the call similar to Krishna's call to Arjun on the Kurukshetra: Uttishta! Paramtapa!" "Arjuna! Arise!"

Blessed is Gobind. To him comes the call: "Uttishta!" "Arise!" He responds to the call: "Thy servant standeth, a sacrifice to thee, O Lord!" Shri Gobind Singh ji descends from the mountain height to the plain below. Guru Gobind Singh Ji arises to be the saviour of Hindustan, Gobind Singh Ji becomes a perfect sacrifice to the Sat Sri Akal, the true one, the Deathless one. Guru Gobind Singh Ji fulfills the destiny of his life.

He was humble and he had a love for the poor. When he was at the height of his glory, when even the Mughal King sought his friendship, the great Guru did not forget to serve the poor, mountain people. How humble and, therefore, how truly great!

At whose feet and in whose Sanga did the great Guru learn the lesson of humility? He met and served many dervishes and fakirs; but he who influenced the Guru's life the most was his beloved father, Guru Tegh Bahadur. Did not great Guru Sri Gobind Singh Ji say to his father, when the Kashmiri Pandits came to him: "Who else is pure than you, my father?" Yes, on Guru Gobind Singh's life was the blessings of his martyred father.

Guru Gobind Singh Ji was a scholar and a poet, but there have been greater scholars and poets. He was a leader; he carried on his fight with skill and courage, but not alone for his leadership do we remember him. Power and authority pass away. Resources and riches had he at his disposal when at the height of his glory; but not for his wealth is he truly great, much greater wealth has been possessed by others. For one thing and for one thing alone we count him great. His life was filled with the spirit of sacrifice, cleverness and tricks do not make his history, it is the sacrificial men who build history. Guru Gobind Singh Ji is great for his absolute self-surrender to God and his unmatched sacrifice. Every day we recite the prayer, "Nanak sadaqurbani !" "Nanak, Thy servant, is ever a sacrifice to thee!"

But what do we sacrifice every day ? Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji was a perfect sacrifice. We may not reach his height, but some sacrifice we can do every day. Small sacrifices let us offer every day, and Our lives will be enabled, sanctified, abundantly blessed!

A WARRIOR-SAINT: In Guru Gobind Singh Ji's heart was the great Master, Guru Nanak Ji, the Beloved.

Therefore, was all Humility and Humanity in Guru Gobind Singh Ji's

heart. There was in it no ache of self, no pain of separateness. He gave all his self away. He received in his heart the Master Nanak and into it flowed the whole universe. "The wise man does not lay up treasures," said the great Rishi of China, Lao Tse. In the hallowed heart of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the only treasure was Guru Nanak Ji and the great Guru's Vision of the universal, the one in all, the one in all classes and communities, in all races and religions.

His action flowed from his heart. It was an angel-heart. It was a reflection of the Mother Heart of the universe. So he stood by the weak and downtrodden, the poor and forlorn. Listen to what he says to all who would hear:

Do they look down on you ?  
Do they say you are low birth ?  
I shall clothe you in fair garment of joy!  
I shall invoke the Fire of Heaven.  
To mingle with your blood !  
Are you not mine own,  
The chosen children of my Master ?

One day, Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji asked a cup of water. A noble-man's son offered him water in a shining cup. He was a young man: he was handsome: his hands were clean. But Guru Ji returned the cup, and the young man looked wonderingly into Guru Ji's eyes.

Then said the great Guru, "O young man ! It is true, your cup is a shining one and your looks are handsome and your hands are clean. But they have not laboured in the service of the saints and needy one. Such hands cannot be pure. Make your hands pure first ! And they will be purified through humility. Cast aside all caste pride. Be pure ! Be a servant of the poor ones ! And I shall drink of the water in your cup."

He was a hero and a patriot of the purest ray serene. To lowly acts of service he bent his hands to labour and to earn his daily bread. In that last period of his life, of which we seldom can think without tears in our eyes, he realised the dignity of manual labour. He realised that labour was worship. He realised, too, that they are truly blessed of whom God accepts the Yagna of suffering and isolation, of agony and tears.

With the last benediction of his earth life, he left to his disciples the Book Beloved, the Guru Granth Sahib, saying: "Today, the Wani, the Word, is your Master; your Guru." Yes, the living spirit of the Guru's speak, today, in the words of this 'Ever-Living Book' this inspired Testament of the saints, we say to ourselves, "Is not this 'Book' a revelation of the Akala Purukha to us all who are lost in maya of life?"

I believe that if the living word, the Bani of the Gurus and the Gurus and the Saints, the seers and the sages of India and Humanity, of all climes and races, could

reinspire the Sikh faith, it would indeed become a living faith and its message would thrill India again, from end to end. This may not be until we are filled with child-like spirit of the Sikh village-folk and their great Teachers, the Sikh-Gurus, the saint and Bhaktas of India.

Like Guru Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh drew together all the castes into one brotherhood; and the rich and the poor combined to form one fraternity, one mighty union of service and sacrifice, a living witness to one God. Guru Gobind Singh ji's dream, in building the Khalsa, was this divine dream of building a new race of Humanity nourished by love.

Simple rules of life did Sri Guru Gobind Singh ji give to Khalsa whom, indeed, he loved with the love of his Mother Heart.

Some of these rules were- Eat little, sleep little, talk little, love compassion, And serve the poor! Forget not this, thy home my child! Is not a palace, But a forest, a Tapobana! So live as an anchorite at heart!

Guru Gobind Singh ji dedicated his life to the service of poor. He stood up, in courage unsurpassed in the history of our nation, to challenge a power which many thought was omnipotent. Wounded was he, again and again, in his fight for India's freedom, the fight for the poor and forlorn. But he rose again and he fought again. The fear of fear fell from him: for the flame of His Presence touched his heart, and he declared, "His grace hath made me fearless!"

What magic was there in his word, his mere presence, his face divine? He transferred meek men into fearless lion-hearted warriors of the light. The very Himalayas were a part or his soul! Sikh history is a wonderful record of sufferings endured for faith and freedom. His disciples were trained in a school of hardship: they believed that life must not be hoarded but poured out as a sacrifice.

Guru Gobind Singh ji hath written his name in sacrifice. It is a name which shines as a star in heaven. In moments meditation we often said to ourselves, By what small things we die! Goliath died by a stone, Krishna by a little arrow of a huntsman, Christ by a kiss! Guru Gobind Singh ji was stabbed by an ungrateful man whom the great Guru forgave.

Happy, indeed, are the few, the chosen few, who gave their all in service and sacrifice and who, in giving their all, found the One Supreme in whom East and West are one! such men have appeared but at rare intervals in history, men, who could almost command the very force of nature and stir the very stones to life. Such a great soul was Guru Gobind Singh ji-A GREAT WARRIOR-SAINT. We are not orphans on the earth. This master-man lives.

(The writer is President, Home of Aged & Infirm, Ambhalla, Jammu).

## YOUR COLUMN

### Ram Lalla Idol

Dear Editor,

Politicians are not novice to issue baseless statements. Eagerness to break the news before any others break prompt them to issue statements without getting confirmation. The Ram temple trust has clarified that no decision has been taken yet on the Ram Lalla idol to be installed. According to those associated with the Trust, the decision will be taken in consultation with Shankaracharya Vijayendra Saraswathi and other seers. It is correct that no unilateral decision can be taken in matters of far-reaching significance and effect. What was the hurry to announce that the idol carved by sculptor Arun Yogiraj has been chosen to be enshrined at the new Ayodhya temple without properly ascertaining which the of the three idols is going to be installed? The Trust has clarified that whatever may be the decision taken, it will be announced at the appropriate time. It goes without saying the decision cannot be kept in secrecy. It is astounding that some politicians have congratulated the sculptor Arun Yogiraj. It is good if

the idol sculpted by him is finally chosen for installation. If any other idol is chosen for installation, the level of disappointment at the announcement that his idol has been chosen is higher than the disappointment he would undergo for not choosing his idol for consecration in sanctum sanctorum. All the three idols cannot be installed in sanctum sanctorum. Two of the three idols ready for installation will be naturally rejected for installation in the sanctum sanctorum. People eager to announce any news must understand that the source of information they rely upon must be reliable to the public also. The news brought out should be unassailable and must be pucea. Otherwise, the announcers of false news become object of ridicule.

K.V. Seetharamaiah

## Urgent Need to Eradicate Terrorism in Kashmir

Dear Editor,

It is with deep concern that I am writing regarding the recent surge in terrorist incidents in Kashmir. While statistics may suggest a slight reduction in such incidents, the harsh reality remains that Kashmir is still far from being free

of terrorism. It is high time for the government to take decisive action against this menace by collaborating with defense experts and formulating a comprehensive strategy to uproot terrorism from its very core. A coordinated action plan needs to be developed to ensure that we permanently eliminate this menace.

The ordinary people of Kashmir aspire for peace and tranquility. They have endured immense hardships and are yearning to live a life devoid of fear. They are eager to move forward alongside the mainstream, but there are a few disruptive elements both from inside and outside that continue to undermine their efforts. It is imperative that these elements are identified and neutralized to restore peace in the valley. Additionally, stringent measures must be implemented to prevent infiltration of terrorists across the border.

Kashmir has suffered for far too long, and it is our responsibility to support its people in their pursuit of a better tomorrow. I urge the government to prioritize the implementation of modern and effective counter-terrorism measures, and to demonstrate an unwavering commitment towards eradicating terrorism from Kashmir.

Dr. Shiben Krishen Raina