

HEROES OF HISTORY

Indian Army veterans hold a distinguished and honorable place in the history of India, having served selflessly in the defense of the country. These individuals, who have dedicated their lives to the service of the nation, represent an invaluable legacy of discipline, courage, and sacrifice. The role of Indian Army veterans is multifaceted, with their contributions spanning from military service in times of war and peace to supporting national security, contributing to social welfare, and mentoring the youth of India.

Indian Army veterans are a critical component of the nation's defense framework, even after their retirement. Many have served in crucial operations and wars, such as the 1947-48 Indo-Pakistani War, the 1962 Sino-Indian War, the 1965 Indo-Pakistani War, and the 1971 Indo-Pakistani War, which led to the creation of Bangladesh. Their courage, tactical expertise, and leadership under extreme conditions helped protect India's borders and preserve its sovereignty.

In addition to combat operations, Indian Army veterans also contribute to peacekeeping and humanitarian missions, often being deployed to international conflict zones as part of UN peacekeeping forces. Their service has not only shaped India's defense history but also solidified its reputation on the global stage as a responsible and committed peacekeeper.

Once they retire, Indian Army veterans face a significant transition from military life to civilian life. However, their discipline, leadership, and resilience gained during years of service often make them valuable assets in the civilian workforce. Many veterans choose to pursue careers in corporate sectors, education, administration, or entrepreneurship, where they continue to exemplify qualities like dedication, leadership, and time management.

Additionally, veterans are often engaged in various philanthropic activities, such as working with NGOs, contributing to educational initiatives, or helping in rural development projects. Their ability to remain committed to social causes and work towards the greater good is a testament to their strong sense of duty.

Indian Army veterans also play an essential role in preserving the rich cultural heritage and values of the nation. They actively engage in community-building activities, mentoring youth, and supporting various initiatives that foster national integration and social harmony. Through interactions with young people, veterans pass on valuable life lessons such as discipline, respect, perseverance, and teamwork.

Veterans are often invited to schools and universities to deliver talks, share their experiences, and motivate students to aspire for excellence in both their academic and personal lives. Their stories of heroism and self-sacrifice have inspired generations to contribute to the well-being of the nation in their own ways.

The Indian government has instituted several initiatives to recognize the contributions of veterans and ensure their well-being. Institutions like the Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS) provide healthcare services to retired military personnel. The government also provides pension benefits and various welfare schemes aimed at improving the quality of life for veterans and their families.

Veterans often organize themselves into associations, where they come together to provide mutual support and strengthen camaraderie. These associations play a crucial role in addressing issues.

Feasibility and Perception of Natural Farming in J&K

DR BANARSI LAL

J&K is a mountainous Union Territory in which about 30 per cent of the area is under cultivation. Agriculture is the backbone of J&K. This sector provides employment directly or indirectly to about 70 per cent of its inhabitants. The average size of landholding in India is 1.08 hectares where as in Jammu & Kashmir it is 0.54 hectare. Agriculture contributes significantly to the economy of J&K which signifies the overdependence of the J&K on agriculture. Agricultural development harbinger the overall growth and development of J&K. The use of fertilizers and other agrochemicals has started to increase in J&K which deteriorates the soil health. Natural farming is a method of chemical-free agriculture drawn from the traditional Indian practices. It is a unique method of farming which relies on agro-ecology and reduces the cost of cultivation nearly zero. There is no need of expensive agro-inputs such as pesticides, fertilizers and intensive irrigation for natural farming. It has attained a wide success in many states of India especially in the Southern states. Government is stressing on this farming calling for a back to the basics of the Indian agriculture. It is an effective system of farming which sustains the agro-ecosystem including biodiversity and soil biological activities. Natural farming can prove as a major tool for the second green revolution especially in the hilly regions of India.

Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir is endowed with ample natural resources including soil, water, climatic conditions, diversity, topography, rich natural flora etc. which are conducive for the cultivation of a wide range of crops. High mountains and small hills, snow peaks, rivers and rivulets, glaciers, valleys and lakes, large forest areas, terraced fields and bugyals are the integral features of hilly areas of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Jammu and Kashmir lies in the North West of the country. Jammu and Kashmir is located between 32.17 and 37.06 North latitude and 73.2 and 80.36 East longitude in the Himalayan region. About 19.95% of the total geographical area of J&K is covered under forests. Jammu and Kashmir is a mountainous Union Territory in which about 30 per cent of the area is under cultivation. The agro-diversity of J&K varies from sub-tropical in Jammu region and temperate in Kashmir region. The average annual rainfall of these two regions is 1069mm and 660mm respectively. The average temperatures of these two regions are 24.5 and 13.3 Centigrade respectively. About 58 per cent area in J&K is under agriculture is rainfed and remaining 42 per cent is irrigated. Maize is first rank crop in J&K occupying one-third of the total cropped area, paddy at number second in

28.58 per cent area of gross cropped area and wheat at number three which covers around 26 per cent of the total cropped area. There is need to increase the income and employment in agriculture and allied sectors for the farmers in J&K. There is possibility to increase the production and productivity of the crops and to enable the farmers to increase their income and employment by adopting the new innovations in agriculture and establishing the infrastructure for the farm production. It is a serious concern that the interest of younger generation in J&K is dwindling towards agriculture.

J&K is situated in the North-Western part of India and most of its terrain is mountainous except some lower areas of Kathua, Samba, Jammu districts and the valley of Kashmir. On the basis of physiographic features, UT of J&K is divided into two main divisions (i) Outer Himalayas comprising of whole Jammu province and Lesser Himalayas which embodies whole Kashmir Valley. J&K possesses great altitudinal variation and diverse geological formations. The Jammu division of the UT has a very diverse landscape and climatic conditions and is divided into 10 Districts viz., Jammu, Kathua, Samba, Rajouri, Reasi, Udhampur, Ramban, Doda, Kishtwar and Poonch. Keeping in view the altitude, rainfall, temperature, humidity and topography in view, there are three distinct hill land situations in Jammu division viz., High hill temperate land pockets (Altitude 1500-4500 m above MSL), Mid hill intermediate land pockets (Altitude 800-1500 m above MSL) and Foot hills and plain sub-tropical lands (Altitude 220 - 800 m above MSL) of Jammu region bestowed with enormous diversity in climate, flora and fauna. The Jammu division covers a geographical area of 26,293 km<sup>2</sup> and is located between an altitude of 220-4500 meters above Mean Sea Level (MSL). Major part of the division is hilly or mountainous, including the Pir Panjal range which separates it from the Kashmir valley and the part of the Great Himalayas in the eastern districts of Doda and Kishtwar. There is a narrow strip of plains in the South. Temperature ranges from 0°C in January to 45°C in May and June. Upper mountainous Zone of the division is temperate and enjoys snowfall at higher elevations. Monsoon rainfall occurs from July to last week of September and maximum in July and August. Normal annual rainfall range is 887-2050 mm over the entire Jammu division.

The Jammu region of Union Territory of J&K is having a number of rivers namely Chenab, Ravi, Tawi etc. Agriculture occupies an important place in the economy of Jammu and Kashmir and about 70 per cent of its population depends on agriculture directly or indirectly. However, there is dissimilarity in priority sectors as thrust area for Kashmir division

is fruit crops, Jammu division has the dominance of field/grain crops. The spatial distribution of crops reveals that over 78 per cent of the cropped area is under food grains. The major field crops of the Jammu division are Wheat, Maize, Paddy, Mustard, Toria, Peas, Black gram, Lentil, Sesame, Mustard, Chickpea, Berseem, Oats, Bajra and Potato while important fruit crops are Mango, Guava, Citrus, Apple, Pomegranate, Walnut and Apricot. Only 30 % of the area is irrigated while 70 % of the region is dependent on rainfall for agricultural activities.

The soil type in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir is described as alluvial, which is mainly found in Kathua and Jammu districts. This soil is loamy with little clay content and has lime and magnesium in small quantities. The Kashmir valley, located in the temperate zone, also has alluvial soil that has high quantities of nitrogen and organic matter. The essential difference between natural and chemical farming is that in chemical farming farmer relies on the chemical interventions to manage pests and weeds and to provide plant nutrition. That means in chemical farming farmer depends on the synthetic pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers whereas natural farming relies on farm based natural formulations such as Beejamrit, Beejamrit, Ghanjeevamrit etc. Organic Farming and Natural farming both shun synthetic use of nutrients and chemicals. The main difference among both is that the inputs used in natural farming are produced on farm and are of natural origin, both from plants and animals. Indigenous breed of cow forms an important component of the natural farming. It has been observed that the fertilizer consumption (kg/ha) in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir is less than half that of entire country. J&K's fertilizer consumption is 61.9 kg/ha of NPK as compared to national average of 133.1 kg/ha of NPK (2018-19). When we look at the pesticide consumption data of the UT as a whole it may seem comparable with many other states.

Majority of farmers of Union Territory of J&K have small and marginal size of land holding which generate less income particularly in the hilly areas. Natural farming system is not new and it is being followed in J&K from ancient times. It is the tradition in J&K to add natural farming inputs in the soil which supplement nutrients and improve physical and biological properties of soils. Over the years, the farmers of the hilly Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir have adopted new agricultural technologies but still J&K is having low crop productivity of almost all the crops. There is need to develop systematic approach and plan for the development in natural farming in Jammu and

Kashmir as J&K has immense potential for natural farming. Significant steps have been taken by the government in order to highlight the importance of natural farming in the growth of J&K economy. There is need to make rigorous efforts to promote natural farming in J&K. Soil health deteriorates due to indiscriminate use of chemical fertilizers in the soil. In order to sustain the health of soil, natural farming is the best option. Natural farming is picking up pace in the Union Territory of J&K and there is need of awareness and trainings of farmers for natural farming. KVKs in J&K are promoting the natural farming by upgrading the knowledge and skills of natural farming among the farmers. A project on "Upscaling the Natural Farming through KVKs" has been launched by the ICAR to promote natural farming among the farmers. Farmers are guided on preparation of natural farming formulations such as Jeevamrit, Beejamrit, Ghanjeevamrit, Neematra, Agniasthra, Brahmastra etc. and use them in their fields for increasing their field soil fertility and produce the safe and healthy food.

Majority of the area of J&K is rainfed and have dryland type conditions. This rainfed hilly area should be the target to be covered under natural farming in the broader sense due to already low consumption of agro-chemicals. However, within this area potential pockets have been identified to start with natural farming in mission mode. Detailed survey will be conducted for identification of areas suitable for natural farming within the region. Union Territory Jammu and Kashmir is a vast region endowed with multiple climates ranging from sub-tropical to temperate.

It is predominantly hilly region and has numerous indigenous styles of agriculture. However, the proper documentation of such practices is rare. Documentation of such traditional practices is important and will give an insight into the type of natural systems that would be suitable for the region. KVKs will collect such data in detail from the respective zones of the dist. which will help to expand the area under natural farming. A step wise approach (pilot basis) is recommended to implement the natural farming practices in the selected areas. Appropriate policy framework and package of practices are needed to increase the adoption of natural farming in J&K. Institutional mechanism is also needed to promote the Natural Farming in J&K. The farmers of Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir can tap the opportunity of growing demand of natural farming products. Keeping the importance of organic products in view there is need to shift from chemical to natural farming.

(The writer is Chief Scientist & Head of KVK Reasi, SKUAST-J)

Cooperatives: The Key to a Sustainable and Inclusive Global Future

MURLIDHAR MOHOL

The recent International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) Global Cooperative Conference 2024 in New Delhi was more than just a spectacle of global gathering of leaders from over 100 countries; it was a testament to the growing importance of cooperatives in shaping a sustainable and equitable future. During the event, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi launched the United Nations' International Year of Cooperatives 2025 (IYC 2025), a significant global initiative aimed at bringing the spotlight on the critical role cooperatives play in advancing the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This year will mark as a turning point in global economic and social discourse, where cooperatives will increasingly be recognised

not merely as tools of local development but as nodal players in the global economic development.

**The Cooperatives Model: Rooted in Community, Poised for Global Impact**

At the heart of the cooperative model lies a simple yet powerful concept: people working together for mutual benefit. Cooperatives emphasise collective ownership, shared responsibility, and democratic decision-making. These principles have led to remarkable successes across the world, from agriculture to healthcare, from financial services to energy production.

In India, cooperatives have been instrumental in rural development. The success of Amul and similar cooperatives is a testament to the potential of cooperative models to drive both economic development and social justice. Further, dairies like Amul support women-led development in rural areas by empowering women who are engaged with milk producing societies for

their business activities. Through its cooperative model, such cooperatives offer leadership roles, skill development, and financial support, enabling women to gain economic independence, further strengthening their role in the community and economy.

**India's Leadership in Promoting the Cooperative Model**

India has long recognised the value of cooperatives as a tool for economic transformation and social progress. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi presence at the ICA Global Cooperative Conference highlighted India's deep-rooted commitment to the cooperative movement. His address during the launch of the International Year of Cooperatives 2025 underscored the role of cooperatives in building a self-reliant, prosperous nation. The Prime Minister's speech also spotlighted the cooperative sector's ability to empower marginalised communities, particularly in rural India, where cooperatives remain the backbone of sectors

such as agriculture and dairy farming. Under Shri Narendra Modi's dynamic leadership, the Indian government has made significant strides in enhancing the cooperative sector. The steps taken by the Government to promote co-operatives reflect the recognition that co-operatives are not merely a relic of the past but are an important link in contemporary economic and social development.

**The Vision of 'Sahkar se Samridhhi': Theroadmap for Cooperatives Revival**

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's leadership and Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah's guidance has played a critical role in reshaping India's cooperative landscape. Under their direction, India is moving toward a modernised cooperative framework that aligns with the demands of a digital economy. Their vision of leveraging technology to expand the reach and effectiveness of cooperatives is especially crucial

in an increasingly digital world. The future of cooperatives lies in their ability to evolve with changing times, integrating modern tools to improve efficiency and sustainability.

**A Global Agenda: Cooperatives and the SDGs**

As nations grapple with economic inequality, climate change, and social unrest, cooperatives offer an alternative model for growth-one that is inclusive, democratic, and resilient. The cooperative model's emphasis on solidarity, mutual support, and democratic participation positions it uniquely to address key global problems. By providing a framework that prioritises people over profits, cooperatives ensure that the benefits of economic activity are more widely distributed, empowering the underserved and helping bridge societal gaps. By linking the cooperative movement with the Sustainable Development Goals, India has established itself as a global advocate for

sustainable and inclusive development. In short, cooperatives are key to achieving an inclusive and sustainable global economy.

**The Road Ahead: A Cooperative Future**

Cooperatives are not just an economic tool, but they are a powerful means of achieving social justice, economic equity, and environmental sustainability.

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and the guidance of Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah, the vision of 'Sahkar se Samridhhi' can build a better future for our country of 140 crores people. By promoting cooperatives as vehicles for social and economic development, we can create a world where prosperity is shared, inequalities are reduced, and communities are empowered. It's time to recognise that the future of our global economy depends on cooperation and that cooperatives hold the key to building a fairer, more sustainable world for all.

ACCIDENTS ON THE INCREASE

ISHER SINGH JASROTHIA

Some years back, it was believed that the accidents which are on the increase will be reduced especially on the national highways roads and other roads connecting the main road.

During the period 2002-03, when project for Broadway of Four Lane National Highway was undertaken during the regime of Hon'ble Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Bajpayee, it was believed that there would be decrease in the accidents but the position remained otherwise. The facts remained still there increase in accidents especially with two-wheelers or four-wheelers, there is no improvement accidents

A motorcyclist or the scooterist or plying the car, do not adhere to the rules and regulations of the transport department. The transport department especially the traffic is also not sincere towards the accident taking place.

The driver do not care for the vehicle coming from the opposite side rather he is in hurry to reach his destination and accident is caused. Some vehicles including the buses when overtake the other vehicles, occasionally

the accidents do occur resulting thereof loss of precious lives and many a times.

Despite directions issued by the Ministry of Road and Communication for making reforms on the road, from time to time, the orders have not been adhered to resultant thereto accidents have always been on the increase. If we take the numbers alone in 2012, a total of 2214 accidents took place only on the National Highway wherein 498 lost their lives, such a high rate of accident. In 2013, a total of 2161 accidents took place wherein 432 lost their life, the data is increasing day by day.

Similarly there has been mishap on the dilapidated roads when the vehicles slipped, thereby killing so many people traveling there-to. If we take the survey of road construction in the NDA regime during the year 2000, unprecedented growth was made in the construction of road and nearly 10 to 15 percentage of expenditure was incurred on the roads. Under the Prime Minister Rural Development, between 2002 to 2005, nearly 6300 kms national highway roads were constructed. But the construction work thereafter remained in the slow profile. Central Government did not

pay much heed towards the project of construction thereafter, as a result of which many accidents took place time and again

That now the work of Express Highway i.e Delhi Katra Express High way is in progress and it is not known as to how much time it will take for the completion of the work. Due to traffic jam, there is great problem beign faced by the public/ drivers to ply their respective vehicle

Question in the present day scenario, is not as to who is responsible for the mess, chaos, lawlessness and causes of the accident but as to what measures can be taken and the rules framed therein so that the accidents could be averted and mitigated.

The traffic police, meant to control the accidents, can to a great extent, decrease the accident by imposing strict traffic rules and regulations, if they are sincere in performance of their duty but it is sorry state of affairs that those deployed on the roads and traffic congestion areas, many a times, refuses to take action on the obvious reasons best known to them creating troubles among the masses.

Some year past IGP (Traffic) Basant Rath when

he was deployed in Jammu, he was doing the job to the entire satisfaction of the department and public in general. His work was being appreciated by every persons except some unlawful elements i.e younger youth who are driving the vehicles without helmets, they should be aware that bearing of helmet is for their safety, are not adhering to the rules and regulations of the traffic i.e. parking of the vehicles at the places meant for this purpose and if everyone adhere to the traffic rules, the accidents can be reduced to a larger extent.

That similar steps should be taken by at present IGP traffic by framing certain rules and imposing restrictions on the vehicles/ drivers plying the vehicles

The measures which can be taken to stop the accidents as under:

- i) Certain rules should be made for plying of the vehicles i.e two wheelers or four-wheelers.
- ii) Those plying the two wheelers should restrict their speed; bearing of helmets should be made mandatory and compulsory, as has been the rules in the big cities i.e. Chandigarh & Delhi wherein any body found without helmet is challaned/fined.

iii) Benefits of bearing of helmets should be given wide publicity through media.

iv) Many accidents usually occur on the curb or crossing, hence the vehicles plied by the persons should take note of it and decrease the speed of the vehicles.

v) Accidents also occur when one vehicle is overtaken by the other vehicle coming behind, especially on the national highway.

vi) Those plying the matadors and buses should be strictly penalized which are found over-loaded.

vii) Those incharge of traffic usually leave the defaulting vehicles simply by making challan and imposing fine on them but these defaulters repeat the mistakes and break the traffic rules, hence some stringent rules should be made.

viii) Government in power in consultation with the transport authority should make certain rules for plying the vehicles especially on the national highway and those areas, which are highly populated areas.

It is hoped that a good thing would prevail over every body of society for making stop over the accidents.

(The writer is President of CBSE School, Kathua)

Blindspots of social media: Reviewing ageist design and online discourses

JASLEEN MANN

Virtual spaces have been targeted towards young people and teenagers, with only a few older adults active on social media. These platforms provided a certain kind of (filial) space to exchange messages, send "forwarded" messages, like their children's pictures, share recipes, and stay connected through WhatsApp calling, and FB messenger. A Pew Research Center study suggests that the consumption of YouTube videos and TikToks, i.e., mainly video content, has surged for the age group of fifty-five years plus (2022). Many thought of social media as emancipatory and equal for all- a place where older adults were heard and respected (as in our Indian culture). This "utopian" social order imagined in the context of these platforms created a certain kind of user-who is "westernized", young, and able-bodied person. Marketing, distribution, design, and discourses on "new" apps, and software have made them inaccessible and exclusionary for older people. Applying a social construction approach to the discourse reveals that while aging is a biological process, it is often given derogatory connotations like "sagging", "useless", and "wasted" bodies. Ageism is a form of categorization and discrimination. For feminist theorist, Judith Butler; ageism is the "systematic stereotyping of and discrimination against people because they are old, just as racism and sexism accomplish this with skin color and gender" (1969, p 243). No surprise older women start facing such discrimination early, as traditionally, their worth is linked to their looks. Media and socio-cultural contexts reaffirm the notion that women's bodies are the objects of the male gaze, specifically the "gaze of youth". Age stereotyping and moral policing of old celebrity actors (e.g., "Look at what Auntie is wearing at this age?") are common on these platforms. An example of this stereotyping was the trending meme "Boomer

Remover" on various social media platforms. The nihilistic catchphrase used by millennials celebrated the connection between the pandemic and the death of baby boomers, or those aged between 55 and 75. Explanations given ranged from millennial indifference, progressive pushback in the face of environmental and social crises, and entitlement to the extreme nature of internet humor: Though the rhetoric was later, rightfully, condemned as ageist, mean, rude, and wrong. Proliferation and consumption of such harmful content and stigma have been linked to a reduced sense of self-efficacy; increased risk of depression, and effects that overload both the immune and cardiovascular system, for older adults. The political and economic aspects of these platforms enable further social vacuuming and online invisibilization of aging bodies. Only a handful of initiatives address these discriminatory discourses. Some research shows that older people, commonly women, use blogs as an avenue to garner greater visibility online, sharing strategies on how to navigate exclusion and challenge negative age stereotypes. These small steps may dismantle the beliefs that older adults are inherently "dumb" in using technology or are merely passive users. Encouraging them to share their stories online may embolden a more active role in age-based advocacy.

Further, attempts to include older adults in the process of designing social media platforms and digital technologies in general should be bolstered. Perhaps, building intergenerational solidarity and undoing echo chambers that alienate them through re-thinking design, is the way forward. Surely, we value our older generations' experiences and opinions, and as an Indian millennial, I think we can do better than these memes. Social media as an ever-changing space should then mean, undoing the ageism embedded in its platform logic.