

RESTORE GREEN GOLD WEALTH

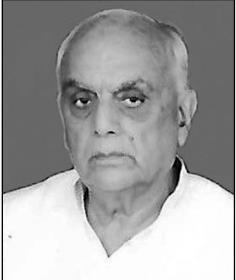
Albeit in comparison to other cities in the country Jammu is still laden with green gold as there are many ridges in and around the city serene but the loss of greenery which this city has witnessed in the last over 3 decades is colossal. To replenish this loss, there is dire need that every soul living in the city should find places for planting saplings and also ensure fostering of the same as grime (dust) on leaves of plants and stationery objects these days speaks volumes about Jammu losing its sheen due to uncontrolled cutting of trees. Every time there is a gap between spells of rain the dirt on leaves warn the people to do something to make Jammu breathe and just do it fast. Those who are in their second innings or the third one can tell very well that a few decades back Jammu was considerably green and a clean city as there were big trees standing in every nook and corner of the city and in every house. Just take a few examples, the main road from Satwari to Bikram Chowk used to pass between green tunnel as on both sides there were dense cover of Eucalyptus trees and at Satwari, Last Morh, Main Stop, Convent School, Green Belt Park upto Bikram Chowk old trees of Shesham (Indian Rosewood) used to lined up and their shadow was the best for passersby. Similarly, Bus Stand area, Shalamar Road, Gandhi Nagar Hospital Road and so many other places were green due to big trees like Peeples, Shahtoot, Mango, Neem, etc. There used to be two spots on BC Road (near Shakuntala Complex) where cool breeze from nearby ridge used to hit bikers during peak summer months telling people that trees have power to even counter the wrath of Sun God. But unfortunately no one was interested in decoding this signal sent by nature and today Jammu has turned into a concrete jungle with construction activity going on unabatedly. If people will not plant in abundance, the days are not far when people will have to carry oxygen cylinders along with them and place air purifiers in their houses as the environment is deteriorating very fast. The panacea for this is excessive planting of trees which grow really big as initiatives like green towers below the flyover can do nothing to stop the ill-effects of deforestation that took place here in last over 30 years.

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OFF 'D' CUFF

Forgiveness paves the way to stillness

When faced with painful events caused by others, we have a choice. Most give in to anger, hatred, and revenge, and it causes further suffering. Anger and hatred add more fuel to our mind. If we are to maintain a calm mind, we need to cultivate forgiveness. Forgiveness involves forgetting what the person has done to us so we can move on with our life with a clear mind and heart. When we do not forgive someone, thoughts of anger, bitterness, and revenge rankle in our own minds and hearts, and we are the ones who suffer. When we are filled with anger and hatred, we cannot concentrate at work. Our productivity and efficiency may drop because we are unable to keep our mind on our work. Instead of paying attention to our job, we are thinking about who has hurt us, how they have hurt us, why they have hurt us, and how we can hurt them back. This cycle of angry thoughts ruminates in our mind, and we cannot focus on our work. Thus, we may make costly mistakes. Sometimes the mistakes can cost others their lives. We know that drivers, pilots, train conductors, or bus drivers can be in such a rage that they cause an accident in which others are hurt or killed. A doctor or pharmacist whose mind is not on their work can cause harm to patients. To avoid disastrous consequences, it is much better to forgive. Medical researchers are finding another benefit to forgiveness. It has a positive effect on our brain. There is increasing scientific evidence of how anger causes stress-related ailments. Brain scans and medical tests show that exposure to the body's own cortisol and stress hormones can cause a build-up in the brain's blood vessels and nervous system that may cause a stroke, damage to parts of the brain. If we know that anger can cause irreparable damage to our brain, then we may want to consider learning the art



■ ER P L KHUSHU

What was constantly being demanded by the forcibly displaced Kashmiri Pandits from the valley for instituting a high level probe about the mass killings and exodus of the Pandits from the valley, under a well-knit design of the pan Islamist elements working in Kashmir, fuelled and fanned by Pakistan and abetted by some of the political leaders of Kashmir for their vote-bank politics, now bears enough credence, with the scintillating disclosure by a prominent political leader of Jammu just a day or so back in a big public gathering. This prominent and a credible political leader is reported to have made a sensational disclosure that highest authority in the UPA had intervened to get the Kashmiri Hindu Shrines and Religious Places (Management and Regulation) Bill stalled. Devender Singh Rana, former legislator and a political leader of enough credence has reportedly further said there was nothing uncomfortable in the legislation except preservation of the valuable religious treasure of Kashmiri Pandits in the Valley. As per press reports, "I say it on record that sustained efforts were made to stall the passage of the Bill", Rana said while paying tribute to Pandit Prem Nath Bhat on Chetna Divas organised by Pandit Prem Nath Bhat Memorial Trust. Rana said the machinations against the Kashmiri Pandits did not end up with their horrible exodus at the gun-point but it continued thereafter too with slogans like 'honorable and safe return' becoming a fashion statement for all those donning the mantle of governance. They did nothing except delivering emotive slogans without any substance, he added. He, however, lauded the resilience and assimilative character of the brave community which weathered all storms with fortitude. He described the forced exodus of the entire ethnic community from their homes and hearths as one of the major tragedies of the twentieth century and sought Truth & Reconciliation Commission under a retired Supreme Court Judge to find out the circumstance leading to commission of human rights violation of such a magnitude. "Ethnic cleansing of aborigines from their land of ancestors is unheard," Rana observed, saying it is a matter of concern for people to become refugees in their own country. Rana wondered why the pain of lakhs of displaced people has not evoked the conscience of the self-styled champions of human rights for over three decades, saying silence of convenience by activists and self proclaimed liberals explodes their duplicity and double standards. He even questioned the selective silence of the UNHRC which remains at tenterhooks on each and every issue. He also took on the people, attributing the exodus to, what they say, conspiracy hatched by a former Governor, asking why Pandit Prem Nath Bhat was martyred on this day in 1989 when Jagnohan was not in the scene at all. He said such allegations unfortunately provide shield to Pakistan and her lackeys who perpetrated the exodus under a well-knit strategy rolled out by General Zia-ul-Haq in his notorious and infamous Operation Topac. Subjecting Kashmiri Pandits to accusations is like sprinkling salt to their wounds, he observed, lamenting this should not have happened to the civilized community whose contribution to intellectual and educational emancipation to societies and generations has been immense.

Entire Kashmiri Pandit community is highly thankful to him for his bold exposures about the mischievous designs of the ruling clan of that time, both at the centre as also at the state level, which prominently include some of the so called tall leaders of some prominent political party's of Kashmir who are now beating their breasts about the abrogation of the Articles

■ OMKAR DATTATRAY

The incidents of mob lynching and mob violence are unacceptable and shameful and our heads hang in shame on such happenings. It is against the humanity and as such is against man and God and this should not happen in the civilized society. The dastardly act of mob lynching and mob violence are alien to our society but unfortunately in present world the unfortunate acts of mob lynching take place and it is a matter of shame for all of us. The fact is that the mob lynching has no place in our society and as such these inhuman acts should not happen. It is very disturbing that the mob violence and mob lynching takes place in different places of the country. In present times, the incidents of mob lynching are happening in Indian society and such inhuman acts are cowardly and are deplorable and condemnable. No amount of condemnation is big for such happenings of mob lynching. It is in the fitness of things to mention here that the mob violence and mob lynching cannot be justified on any ground and so mob violence should not be allowed to take place. There is increase in the inhuman act of mob lynching and mob violence with the each passing day and it is a very serious matter and sincere efforts should be made to

YOUR COLUMN

Say Yes to life, No to drugs

Dear Editor, With great admiration and belief in columns of your esteemed daily newspaper, I seek to bring to your kind notice about the growing menace of drugs addiction and resultant health problems among youth of our country in general and particularly in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir. The most common substances of abuse include nicotine, medical opioids, cannabis, prescription medications, alcohol, inhalants and cocaine. The problem of drugs abuse not only affects physical, mental and social health of the individual but it disturbs and burdens entire family. It also poses threat to family happiness and creates individual, family, economic and social disorganisation. In UT of Jammu and Kashmir political turmoil, armed con-

370, 35 A and the like, shedding crocodile tears for people of Kashmir, trying their best to retrieve back their decades old dynastic hold to rule Jammu and Kashmir by proxy. It is hoped such a cry about the distress and dilemma being faced by the KPs after their mass forced exodus and killings will arise from other prominent political leaders of Jammu in particular and from the rest of India in general. Such a hair rising revelations by Rana has evoked enough of confidence in Kashmiri Pandits, feeling that some saner voices are there to plead their cause and thus applying a soothing balm to their bleeding wounds of mass killings and subsequent exodus from Kashmir.

In 1989, terrorists in Kashmir killed around 8 Kashmiri Pandits between the months of September to December; after which thousands of Kashmiri Pandits were forced to leave the place. Kashmiri Pandits get reminded of their Kashmir which was known as 'Paradise on Earth', full of Sufi cult and an abode of tolerance and unparalleled brotherhood. This all broke in one night, the night of 19th January-1990. This paradise of the Pandits became a death trap for them due to the spurt of terrorism backed by Islamic fundamentalism sponsored across the border; when each one of them were caught unawares for no fault of theirs. The dark night of January 19, 1990, shivering with cold, is remembered by all of them, as it was the worst nightmare for the Kashmiri Pandits living in the valley. Screaming from loud speakers and crowded streets was a message for KPs living in Kashmir; which said, 'Ralive Tsalvi, Neti-Galiv'. (It meant that either convert to Islam or leave Kashmir and in alternative face death). Even after about 31 years, Kashmiri Pandits shiver remembering the night which forced them into exodus and a life of exile within their own country. Jehadi cum communal speeches from mosques were put on loud speakers meant for 'Azan & Nimaz', which would say 'Yeti-Bani Pakistan, Bhatov Bhegeer the Bhatenen-San', meaning there in that Kashmir will become a Pakistan without male Kashmiri Pandits, but including womenfolk of Kashmiri Pandits. The prominent prey in this regard among Kashmiri Pandits were the persons of immense repute, writers, community elders, legal luminaries, press and media personalities, government officers/officials who were on prominent positions in the state administration or were known prominently. The spurt in terrorism had actually given birth in 1989 itself, which was taken very lightly by Pandits of the valley, presuming that the brother hood and compassion between the majority community and Pandits had never received any serious jolt in the past, but it was a myth. On September 14, 1989 Pandit Tika Lal Taploo, who was a lawyer and a prominent leader of KPs, was murdered by the JKLF in Srinagar. Prominent lawyer-Prem Nath Bhat was gunned down on 27th December-1989 in South Kashmir. Soon after Taploo's death, Pt Nilkanth Ganjoo, an imminent judge who had sentenced Maqbool Bhat to death, was shot dead. On 29 April 1990, Sarwanand Kaul Premi, a veteran Kashmiri poet was gruesomely murdered. His young son was also killed gruesomely. Several intelligence operatives were assassinated, over the course of January. On 2nd February 1990, Satish Tikoo, a young Hindu Pandit social-worker was murdered near his own house in Habba Kadal. On 13 February 1990, Lassa Kaul, Station Director of Srinagar Doordarshan, was shot dead. This is only a small tale of KPs who were killed brutally, because of being Kashmiri Pandits. In March 1997, terrorists drag out seven Kashmiri Pandits from their houses in Sangrampora village and gunned them down. In January 1998, about 23 Kashmiri Pandits, including women and children were shot dead in cold blood in Wandhama Village. In March 2003, about 24 Kashmiri Pandits, including infants, brutally shot dead in Nadimarg Village. More than 4, 00,000 Kashmiri

Pandits left the Valley and took refuge in Jammu and elsewhere, leaving their entire properties and belongings in the valley to the mercy of terrorists and Jehadis. One can understand the agony of this exodus along with travesty of having lost everything in life, like one's property, one's belongings, agricultural lands and orchards, commercial establishments, means to earn a living honorably and above all our own culture which was unique for all of us and was very much dear to us. More than 1,500 KPs were killed by terrorists when most of them after being maimed and tortured in most inhumane ways. About 145 Hindu shrines and temples were burnt down by the terrorists in Kashmir. This is only a small summary about the whole story of exodus. There are other horrifying tales too, which cannot be mentioned here because of the paucity of space. Whenever any government move for the rehabilitation of KPs, became public, Muslim leadership across the political divide in Kashmir valley rejected the return of KPs to any kind of secured settlements in the valley. To quote one prominent political leader about the rehabilitation of Kashmiri Pandits back in the valley, it was, on July 2016 that this political leader said that they (Kashmiri Pandits) cannot return to their original homes in the current atmosphere. This political leader likened their home coming to 'throwing pigeons among cats'. This speaks enough about the communal passion and kinetic gritty of ismic mind of such a leader about the members of other community, particularly the Kashmiri Pandits. Should these political leaders recommending talks with Pakistan be reminded of the fact that more than six lakh Kashmiri Pandit families were reduced to devastation and thousand killed, when they were made to flee from Kashmir resulting in their mass exodus from Kashmir due to pan-Islamic terrorism fanned and abetted by Pakistan in Kashmir. Have they any sense of realization about this disaster of their fellow brothers the Kashmiri Pandits. They should stop giving such sermons of talking to Pakistan which is nothing but rubbing salt on the bleeding wounds of the displaced Kashmiri Pandits. Left to these political leaders of Valley, they may have to seek approval from Pakistan for the rehabilitation of Kashmiri Pandits back to valley.

Kashmiri Pandits are highly obliged and thankful to Jammu and its people who accommodated them with warmth in Jammu, in that hour of their devastation, where they could find a first place of solace to exist and live. Even as on day most of the displaced KP's are now living in Jammu and its surroundings with the passionate coverage of Jammu people. Now, the biggest task before the present government is to constitute a Commission of Enquiry for the mass genocide and exodus of the Kashmiri Pandits from the valley as suggested by Sh. Devender Rana, as also to find the circumstances under which the passing of the Kashmiri Hindu Shrines and Religious Places (Management and Regulation) Bill was scuttled and confined to stale records. If it could be done in the case of mass killings of our Sikh brothers during Sikh riots in 1984, why not for our genocide, mass killings and exodus. A judgment by the Delhi High Court in awarding life sentence for the riots of 1984, to one of the prominent political leaders of congress party after thirty years, should open a new chapter for the present government to constitute a commission of enquiry about genocide and exodus of Kashmiri Pandits in 1990-1991. The culprits of the mass killings of Sikhs are now cooling their heels in jails as per punishments given to them by the judicial courts.

(The author is a Chartered Consultant Civil Engineer, who has fascination for his Motherland-the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir).

Mob lynching is unacceptable

name to our democracy. Mob lynching is not a utopian act but it happens in our volatile society and the efforts should be made to put an end to mob violence in the interest of the country. Thus for the flourishing of our secular and plural democracy the mob violence and the mob lynching should be halted and such savage and inhuman acts should not be allowed to take place in the country. There is urgent need to halt the savage acts of mob lynching for the good of the society and the country. In this connection it is important to identify those involved in the acts of mob lynching and arrest them and prosecute them as well as award them severe punishment quickly so that the fear of the law will loom large and no one dares to indulge in mob lynching any more. Therefore before the mob lynching will devour more innocent lives, the powers should take concrete steps to arrest the growing trend of mob lynching so that our country will be freed from the problem of mob lynching. There is urgent need to create the fear of law in the minds of the people so that they will desist from indulging in the mob violence and lynching otherwise the innocent people will continue to fall prey to the demon of mob lynching. In brief, it can be said that mob lynching should not be resorted to in the country under any pretext and it is unacceptable in the present day modern society.

(The author is a retired Education Officer and Columnist).

flict, violence, terrorism, physiological distress, unfavourable environmental conditions and rapid socio-economic problem like poor individual and infra-structural development, mass unemployment, corruption, poverty, underdevelopment etc. have leading a rising number of drugs addictions. The use of tobacco, Charas, Ganja, cocaine, heroin, opiates, cannabis and inhabitants substance has been growing rapidly among the adolescents of Jammu and Kashmir. The use of these illicit drugs pose a big threat to humanity by deteriorating adolescents mentally and physically, damaging family relationships, spoiling potentiality, dreams, degrading social and moral values and becoming a hindrance in shaping their career as well as progress and development. The menace of the drugs abuse is critical because drugs use at its core is a health issue. Unless we reduce demand for illicit drugs we can never fully tackle cultivation production or trafficking. Government has a responsibility to counteract both drugs trafficking and drugs abuse, but

communities can also make a major contribution. Families, schools, civil society and religious organisation can also do their part to rid their communities of drugs. Business can help provide legitimate livelihoods. The media can raise awareness about the possible dangers of narcotic. We can reinforce our commitment to the basic principles of health and human rights, stress responsibility, a balance approach to reducing supply and demand and universal access to prevention, treatment and support. This will foster communities free of drugs related crime and violence free individual free of drugs dependence who can contribute to our common future and a safer world for all. Last, but not the least, it is high time to save our generation from drugs abuse and if we do not take concrete steps now then after some years, the young generation of Jammu and Kashmir will be destroyed. Police taking action against drugs abuse is not enough as we, as a society, have to act responsibly.

Mool Raj.