

## 'KAVACH'-Prevent Accidents

Safety is accorded the highest priority by Indian Railways and all possible steps, including development of indigenous equipments, are being undertaken on a continuous basis to prevent train accidents. Indian Railways has indigenously developed an automatic train protection system rechristened as 'Kavach' (Train Collision Avoidance System), to prevent accidents due to human error resulting in Signal Passing at danger and over-speeding.

Keeping in view the complexities involved in implementation, which require all Rolling Stock, way side stations and track to be equipped with 'Kavach', it has been decided to implement 'Kavach' in a phased manner.

So far, 'Kavach' has been deployed for 1,455 Route Kms on South Central Railway with 77 nos. of locomotives. Currently, 'Kavach' work is in progress on Delhi-Mumbai & Delhi - Howrah corridors (3000 route Kms).


Other benefits of 'Kavach' include controlling speed of trains by automatic application of brakes on approach of turnouts, repeating of signal aspects in cab, which is useful for higher speeds & foggy weathers, and auto whistling at level crossing gates.

At present 'Kavach' is being implemented on Indian Railways in a phased manner. Further, 'Kavach' does have export potential in future.

## FACIAL RECOGNITION TECHNOLOGY

The policies of the Government are aimed at ensuring an Open, Safe and Trusted and Accountable Internet for its users. With the expansion of the Internet, more and more Indians coming online, there is an increase in the facial recognition of biometric information, including information generated for purposes for facial recognition technology.

Section 43A of the Information Technology Act, 2000 provides that a body corporate which possesses or deals or handles any sensitive personal data or information in a computer resource owned or controlled or operated by it is liable to compensate an affected person for causing wrongful loss or wrongful gain to any person due to negligence in implementing and maintaining reasonable security practices and procedures. Government, in exercise of its powers under the said section, has prescribed the rules regarding sensitive personal data or information as well as the reasonable security practices and procedures to be complied with. As per these, sensitive personal data or information includes biometric information, and biometrics include technologies that measure and analyse facial patterns. The reasonable security practices and procedure include implementation of the international standard IS/ISO/IEC 27001 or Government-approved codes of best practices for data protection, and a comprehensive documented information security programme and information security policies that contain managerial, technical, operational and physical security control measures that are commensurate with the information assets being protected with the nature of business. Thus, law to regulate facial recognition technology and manage data related to such technology is in place. Further, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has prepared a draft Bill, titled the Digital Personal Data Protection Bill, 2022 and has invited feedback from the public as part of its public consultation exercise.



OFF 'D' CUFF

### The Confusion Called Conversion

In ancient history literature, we have come across conversions. For instance, when Brahmanism was propagated in India, there were many others, like Ashoka the Great and Mahavira, who promoted Buddhism and Jainism. Emperor Ashoka sent ambassadors to various parts of the country and foreign kingdoms and he himself undertook religious journeys to inspire others to take up Buddhism. After the advent of the Mughal emperors, Islam was propagated. During the 15th century, Sikhism also came into existence. Christianity in India traces back to the coming of St Thomas, the Apostle of Jesus, around 50 AD. Conversion was common in India since ancient times, some out of their own will and some out of obligation. In this modern age of science and technology, this has continued even today.

After independence, in 1954 the Indian Conversion (Regulation and Registration) Bill was passed and in 1960 the Backward Communities (Religious Protection) Bill was passed but both these Bills had to be scrapped. In Article 25 of the Indian Constitution, citizens of the country have the right or freedom to practice, profess and propagate their faith in a manner that does not disturb the public, the law, and order and does not affect anyone's health and morality adversely. Article 25 of the Indian Constitution is a basic human rights guarantee.

Any incidents of violence and vandalism against religious places or people deserve to be condemned wholeheartedly. At the same time, we must take a closer look at people who convert from one faith to another. To start with, let it be clear that these days there are no forced conversions anywhere in the world. India is no exception.

-Bishop Lalachan Abraham

## India's G20 Presidency: Addressing 4Ds of De-escalation, Development, Decarbonisation and Digitalisation

■ G KISHAN REDDY

In the fortnight since India assumed the G-20 presidency, the world has begun to witness the essence of Indian hospitality captured pithily in the saying Athithi Devo Bhava - the guest is akin to the divine. With a vision of a shared future, India looks to the year of G-20 Presidency as an opportunity. Currently, the world is facing unprecedented challenges with the after effects of a disruptive once-in-a-century global pandemic, global conflicts, an impending climate crisis and economic uncertainty. Over the last couple of years, much of the global energy has been focussed on protecting lives during the COVID-19 pandemic and preserving livelihoods in its aftermath. However, as several of these uncertainties continue to coexist, India's Presidency gives us an opportunity for the world to focus on the 4Ds of de-escalation of the conflicts, more digitalization to enable fast paced, equitable and inclusive growth and striving for an equitable framework of decarbonisation to fight the climate crisis.

De-escalation and Diplomacy  
Prime Minister Modi's statement "Today's era must not be of war", in his meeting with his Russian counterpart on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit in September resonated across the globe. This also formed the basis of the joint declaration of the G-20 on the Russia-Ukraine conflict. The G-20 provides an opportunity to continue to espouse de-escalation of global conflicts.

Multi-alignment and the promotion of rule-based multilateralism has been the very essence of India's foreign and economic policy. India is a part of several multilateral fora, and

in each of these has played a constructive role in making the world a safer and more secure place. It has also been able to voice the concerns of the developing nations and ensure that their interests are protected. With the G-20 presidency, India has the opportunity to act as a bridge between the large powerful nations where it belongs and the smaller, developing nations that trust her.

Digitalisation and last mile delivery  
Between 2005 and 2021, India has been able to pull 415 million people from multidimensional poverty. Over the last 8 years, we have seen an acceleration in poverty alleviation through the use of technology and digitalisation in particular. In 2014, India embarked on a government led drive where close to 500 million bank accounts were opened for the poor and underprivileged, including 260 million women, who were outside the banking system. With the use of India's Digital Identity system - Aadhar, and a Unified Payment Interface (UPI), interventions and welfare transfers have been targeted at an individual level. In the 1980s a former Prime Minister remarked how only 15% (15 paise of 1 rupee) would reach the end beneficiary. In 2020, while the world was in the middle of a global pandemic, India was able to secure the livelihood of the poorest by making critical targeted cash transfers.

Today India's world class Digital public infrastructure of identity systems and real time payment systems, available at population scale, is a model for the rest of the world. Even during the COVID-19 crisis, the vaccine platform, COWIN, helped India scale its vaccination efforts and seamlessly administer more than 2 billion doses. The developed and devel-

oping world can emulate these systems and India would be sharing its experience and learnings with the rest of the world.

Development and Decarbonisation  
As the Indian economy grows and Indians become more affluent, India's energy needs would also rise. In 2015, at the COP-21 summit in Paris, India committed to 40% of its power generation originating from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030. This target was achieved in November 2021 - a decade earlier. India by example has shown the world that the pursuit of a development agenda and protecting the environment can go hand-in-hand without being at odds with each other.

India has played a key role in promoting multilateral initiatives such as the International Solar Alliance (ISA). Prime Minister Narendra Modi has often spoken about tackling climate change through climate justice - an equitable framework with differentiated responsibilities where the developed world leads in climate finance and technology transition. India has the credibility to continue this dialogue into the G-20 and ensure that these differentiated responsibilities are adhered to.

A shared future of joint prosperity  
India has shared her ideas and knowledge freely across the world's geographical and cultural divides. The theme for India's Presidency of the G-20 "One Earth, One Family, One Future" is inspired from the Sanskrit phrase in the Maha Upanishad VasudhaivaKutumbakam - the world is one family. The theme not only resonates with our ancient philosophy but also sets the course for a joint call for responsibility, action and prosperity. Across India's 20,000 languages and

diverse cultures, the idea of a shared global future and an intertwined world order is a common theme. KaniyanPongunranar, the famous Tamizh poet in the 6th century BCE wrote, "All the places on earth are our town and all the people are our relatives, all are evolved from common ancestors".

These philosophies have not just been handed over from generation to generation but have also been embodied in our national consciousness. It now regularly reflects on how India engages with the world. In times of crisis and in the middle of a vicious global pandemic, India supplied COVID-19 related medical and other assistance to over 150 countries. Through the Vaccine Maitri Programme, India has provided approximately 75 million doses of COVID vaccine to 94 countries and 2 UN entities. In the midst of the hostilities between Russia and Ukraine, the Indian Government not only evacuated 22,500 Indian students by operating more than 90 flights but also rescued more than 150 foreign nationals from approximately 20 countries.

As India assumes the G20 presidency the very goals that it has set herself for the next 25 years as a part of Amrit Kaaleen form the basis of a shared global future with joint prosperity. An action-oriented and development-oriented presidency striving for a rule-based global order promoting international peace, and advocating for just and equitable growth in a sustainable, holistic and inclusive manner. This is very much in the art of the possible.

(The author is the Union Minister of Culture, Tourism and Development of North-eastern Region in the Government of India).

## 'Thank You' a magic word for 'Human Bonding'

■ MAHADEEP SINGH JAMWAL

When we refer to human bonding, it is the process of development of a close interpersonal relationship and expressing gratitude acts as a catalyst to build greater connection and bond between two people. If we have to take up a fact finding expedition across the universe, to find out a single word to communicate gratitude, we stop at the word 'Thank You' and this dialect frequently flows out from our voices regardless of our boundaries, cultures, traditions, religions and beliefs. It is used all over the planet to express sincere gratitude for the things around us for which we are indebted, and for the people in our life. It is pronounced as 'Xieie' in China, 'Thank You' in English, 'Dhanyavaad' in Hindustani, 'Gracias' in Spanish, 'Spaseeba' in Russian, 'Shukraan' in Arabic, and 'Je vous Remercie' in French.

In India it is expressed and pronounced as "Thank-You" in English "Dhanyavaad" in Hindi and Odia, "Shukria" in Urdu, "Dhanwaad" in Punjabi, "Abhari Ahe" in Marathi, "Dhanyavada" in Kannada, "Dhonnobad" in Bengali, "Dhan Yavadalu" in Telugu, 'Meharbani' or 'Ehsan' in Sindhi, 'Dhanyvadu' in Konkani, 'Tanvad' in Dogri, 'Shukriya' in Kashmiri, 'Thu-chi che' in Ladakhi and so on. This word is very versatile and can be used in most situations where you want to thank someone.

The word 'Thank-You' if traced on search engines, we find that it was derived from the old English word 'Pancian' (meaning to give thanks) which in turn was derived from the Proto-German term "thankjoan", which also spawned the middle German term "Danken" (meaning to thank).

The English term "Thank You" is shortened from the phrase "I thank you". According to Merriam-Webster, the first known use of "thanks" occurred before the 12th century, but people did not share gratitude in the same way back then. The original way of expressing gratitude to someone else was "I will remember what you have done for me".

Though the language of 'thank you' accelerates hundreds of good old days, the approach of responsiveness has always been a piece of civilized communication. A single word of 'Thank-You' makes the people around you a little warmer and happier. The evidence that virtually every language today demonstrates the idea of thanking someone is incredible, and goes to show how human communication can survive across different cultures and times. When we're indebted for the things around us, and the people in our soul, 'thank you' will comfortably flow out, and the perks of doing so are impressive.

The use of "Please" and "Thank You" are essential for good manners that are a code of conduct or rules, based on common sense, courtesy and usage prevalent in western culture and occupying the space in Indian culture also. It generates explicit social bonds with friends, family, and colleagues, along with strangers also. The word "Thank you" is more than just recognizing, appreciating and showing gratitude and can go pretty far in personal relationships. The humble 'thank you' is one of the major weapons essential to stemming the tide of everyday rudeness. Saying thank you is everyday etiquette and a simple courtesy that takes just a moment. It costs nothing, not even effort.

What the person to whom we express our gratitude by simply saying 'Thank You' it effects the thanked in various ways as he feels higher levels of self worth, triggers greater toward others desire to help 'Thanker', triggers helpful behaviors, and feel more socially valued and all these transformations are worth rewarding to the person using Thank You as words of gratitude.

What we have to admit that with the Indian society inclining towards western culture, the majority population of India uses this magic word in English i.e. 'Thank-You'. Most of the population has inculcated this word in English for pronunciation, even in their kids to demonstrate themselves as a family of manners. We have to admit that even we're not against using

it on a day-to-day basis with our kids. Beyond consciousness that at such a blooming maturity of our kids they are being taught the most important words that will forever be used by them in their everyday glossary not only to show appreciation and a form of being polite but as a decent way of life in mannerism.

Here we have to enrich our existing awareness of many days, dates, and months that are celebrated and associated with many events and occasions, with addition of the knowledge regarding less known about the most cherished "Thank-You", that is observed as annual celebration day in the month of January on 11th of every year as international 'Thank-You day'. January is not only the start of a new year, but it's also recognized as national thank you month. The word 'thank you' is considered as most essential to show gratitude from the bottom of the heart to those who made our life better and happier during the whole year and its importance has been recognized by establishing 'International Thank-You Day'.

Concluding with the suggestion, make it a habit to tell people to express your appreciation, sincerely and without the expectation of anything in return just by saying 'Thank You'. Truly appreciate those around you, and you'll soon find many others around you. Truly appreciate life, and you'll find that you have more of it. Once you get in the habit of using 'Thank You', you won't have to keep remembering to use it. Gratitude is one of these rules. We acknowledge our relationship with the person we say "Thank You". It's a simple sign of respect. Small courtesies create a powerful response in others-especially a simple thank you. A little gratitude (Thank You) can go a long way. Saying thank you is more than good manners. It is good spirituality. The words of Meister Eckhart, a German Theologian, philosopher and mystic deserve mention here about incredible human communication, thank you, "If the only prayer you ever say in your entire life is, 'Thank You', it will be enough".

## Most unhappy customers is a greatest source of learning

■ VINOD CHANDRASHEKHAR DIXIT

Our country celebrates National Consumer Rights Day on 24th December every year to spread awareness about consumer rights and responsibilities. Consumer rights are now an integral part of our lives like a consumerist way of life. On this day in the year 1986, India's Consumer Protection Act came into effect. So, the day is observed to make people aware of their rights as consumers to avoid getting exploited. As a consumer, one should know how market products are constantly under-weight, of inferior quality and do not prescribe to quality standards specified by quality-control agencies. Today the consumer choice is influenced by mass advertising and other promotional devices which make people want things which neither they really need nor they can afford.

Consumers not only do not get value for their money but also often have to suffer losses and inconvenience due to market

manipulations. The Consumer protection law applies to the goods and services we buy every day, from grocery items and whitegoods, to vehicle repairs and hair-dressing services.

Consumers are legally entitled to a refund, repair, replacement or repeat service if there is a problem with any goods or services they buy. In our country, buyers have a very weak bargaining power and cannot assert their right being heard. Consequently, manufacturers and traders are tempted to follow diverse practices which turn out to be unfair to consumers.

Consumers therefore have an important role to play in persuading food companies and butchers to make the changes that are needed to stop the global public health threat for prudent use of antibiotics and protect the drugs for the future.

Mahatma Gandhi said that "A customer is the most important visitor on our premises. He is not dependent on us. We are dependent on him. He is not an interrup-

tion in our work - he is the purpose of it. We are not doing him a favour by serving him. He is doing us a favour by giving us the opportunity to serve him."

India is one of the few countries in the world, which has exclusive courts for consumer redressal and is known for the rapid development of its consumers' movement. World Consumer Rights Day (WCRD) is a fantastic annual celebration that unites consumers around the world. In fact the original Consumer Protection Act, 1986, was meant to ensure that the consumers themselves argue their cases in a friendly atmosphere but the experience has been different. One must remember that businesses can't refuse to help, nor simply refer consumers to the manufacturer.

There are many businesses do, as a matter of goodwill, give refunds and exchanges even when legally they don't have to, so consumers should make a habit of checking a store's refund policy before purchasing.

## GOOD GOVERNANCE JK With Jan Bhagidari, E-Unnat portals, citizens of J&K partners in development

Jammu and Kashmir Government has made Jan Bhagidhari as main mantra towards making the dispensation more responsive, accountable and transparent besides ensuring rapid growth and development across the Union Territory.

The J&K administration is earnestly working from last two years to make the entire governance structure transparent and accessible to the public in a hassle free manner.

To ensure social audit of development projects by the people, the Finance Department recently directed all the Drawing and Disbursing Officers (DDOs) to immediately update details of works in rural and urban areas on its Janbhagidari (empowerment) e-portal.

It also asked all Deputy Commissioners and Accounts Officers to update these details in respect of works taken under District Capex including that of DDC, BDC and PRI grants.

Empowerment/Janbhagidari drive is a web-based initiative to bring transparency in the execution of works

by enabling citizens to overview works or projects being implemented in their areas and become a partner in the process of development has been launched by the J&K government.

It is a one stop interactive and user-friendly digital platform. It provides detailed insights to people into nature, status as well as number of developmental works that are being executed in their areas. Works can be searched with respect to their location in each block or municipality, villages and district.

The idea is to make the entire project planning and implementation process open to the general public who will be ultimate beneficiaries of the projects.

The information available on this one-stop platform can be accessed through [www.janbhagidari.jk.gov.in](http://www.janbhagidari.jk.gov.in) and can be utilized by the people for social audit and timely feedback or suggestions or registering their complaints for improving expenditure outcomes in spirit of togetherness.

Similarly J&K Government is empowering the citi-

zens of J&K particularly youngsters to avail government services at the click of a button on e-portal which can be accessed by logging into [eunnat.jk.gov.in](http://eunnat.jk.gov.in).

Marking a remarkable achievement in the digital journey of Jammu and Kashmir, e-Unnat provides a window to the government to get feedback from citizens on any subject related to service delivery, its quality for further improvement.

The platform is integrated with Rapid Assessment System (RAS) that gives users an opportunity to give their feedback about their experience of using the service.

Further the platform has been fully integrated with the national portal 'Meri Pehchan' for more fruitful access and availability. It has also been synchronised with Digi Locker, UMANG app, SMS/e-Payment gateway for the overall comfort and ease of the users. It will usher in freedom from running to government offices and will provide strength to the dream of making JK fully digital.

