

5-G FOREST REFORM

The Ministry has issued Wood Based Industries (Establishment and Regulation) Guidelines, 2016 and amendment dated 11th September 2017 to decentralize the regulatory processes concerning the wood based industries for the development of the sector in the country.

To promote cultivation of bamboo in non-forest areas and to achieve the objective of increasing the income of farmers and green cover outside forest area, the Ministry has amended the Indian Forest Act, 1927 to exempt Bamboo grown in non-forest area from definition of tree, and thereby doing away with the requirement of felling/transit permit for its transport and economic use.

For seamless movement of timber, bamboo and other minor forest produce, the Ministry has also launched National Transit Pass System on pilot basis for issue of online transit permits. This system will help in monitoring and keeping records of movement of timber and issue of transit permits for inter-state and intra-state transportation of timber and bamboo and other minor forest produce from private lands/government/private depot.

The Ministry has developed web based Geographic Information Systems (GIS) applications PARIVESH portal (Pro-Active and Responsive facilitation by Interactive Virtuous and Environmental Single-window Hub), which is a single-window integrated forest and environmental management system for online submission and monitoring of the proposals submitted by the proponents for seeking Environment, Forest, Wildlife and Coastal Regulation Zone clearances from Central Government. It is a GIS based system and analytics platform that provides information to various stakeholders using Decision Support System functionality. Further, e-Green Watch portal of the Ministry is an advanced technology based platform designed to facilitate automation, streamlining and effective management of processes related to plantations and other forestry works taken up under CAMPA fund. Forest Survey of India (FSI) carries out analysis of geo-spatial data (polygons) of various plantations uploaded by the State Forest Departments on e-Green Watch portal for accuracy of location, area and year of plantation. Forest Survey of India has also developed Van Agni Geo-portal to provide user-friendly interactive viewing of the forest fire related data for continuous monitoring and tracking of large forest fires in near real-time basis. Van Agni Geo-portal serves as a single point source for the information related to forest fires in India.

OFF 'D' CUFF

Journeying into Freedom

Text: We are used to thinking of freedom as an event that we experience. Nations celebrate the day of their 'independence' from foreign rule; those wrongly accused, celebrate a conviction that has been overturned, teenagers 'coming of age' celebrate the dawn of their new-found freedom. While these are no doubt milestones we may lose sight of the fact that the milestone though important, is not the journey. Two survivors of the holocaust were celebrating their release at the end of World War II. One had a sense of gratitude and with it an uncommon sense of forgiveness. The other in a reaction, asked him how he could put behind him the atrocities, pain and suffering he had endured. The remembrance of them, in fact made him bitter even as he walked into freedom. Revenge and retribution were very much in his mind. The friend insightfully observed that though he was outwardly free, he was still in that prison. Celebrating freedom can often become a mere ritual.

Spiritual traditions have at their heart the concept of 'liberation'. Yet, ironically adherents of various religious hues use it as a pretext to enslave others. The enslavement takes various forms. Religion if not properly understood can become an obstacle on our journey to inner freedom. The word 'religion' itself derives from the Latin religare meaning 'to link'. It signifies the outward manifestation of an inner attitude, the expression of our being 'linked' to the divine which we have experienced deep at the centre of our being. Rituals, it would seem are an indispensable part of religion and are often identified with it. They serve a useful purpose as a pedagogical tool and are meant precisely to keep alive the initial experience from which they emerged. They are also a useful way of connecting to the original experience of the divine. The experience precedes the ritual. It is worth noting that the ritual is devoid of any meaning once it is separated from the experience. The genuine ritual is ever self-effacing. It is not magical. It is most effective when one learns to 'pay attention' to the reality that it signifies. It is the door to contemplation.

Our spiritual experiences grow deeper in proportion to our experience of being loved and being able to love in return. The progressive and in the end complete loss of self in the act of Self-giving enables us to connect with the divine for whom the whole of

Christopher Mendonca

You can't know your real mind as long as you deceive yourself.

-Bodhidharma

EDITORIAL

Atal Bihari Vajpayee: The "Sarvamanya" leader

■ ER. PRABHAT KISHORE

"My poetry is a declaration of war, not an exordium to defeat. It is not the defeated soldier's drumbeat of despair, but the fighting warrior's will to win. It is not the dispirited voice of dejection but the stirring shout of victory".

Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the "Bhishma Pitamah" of Indian politics as described by ex-PM Manmohan Singh, made his poetry a messenger to spread his vision on various burning issues. The oratorical skill of Atalji in Lok Sabha impressed Nehru so much that he proclaimed him as the future PM of India. He was a multifaceted & versatile personality and made significant contributions to social, political, educational, literacy and journalism.

Born on 25th December 1924 in Gwalior (Madhya Pradesh), Atal was a great statesman who dedicated his life for the nationalist politics. He served as Prime Minister of India thrice, first for a term of 13 days in 1986, secondly for a period of 13 months from 1998 to 1999, and thirdly for a full term from 1999 to 2004.

In 1946, Atalji took over the responsibility of the first editor of the Hindi dainik "Rashtra Dharma" published from Lucknow. In 1950, he became the editor of "Dainik Sandesh". After the closure of "Sandesh" due to financial crisis, he became the editor of Dainik "Vir Arjun" and weekly "Panchjanya" published from Delhi. His editorials were so aspirational that readers used to first read the editorial and then any other news & views.

In 1951, he was engaged by RSS in strengthening of the newly formed Right wing political party "Jan Sangh". Later on he became the private secretary of Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee. In 1955, he contested the Lok Sabha bi-election unsuccessfully from

Lucknow, which fell vacant due to the resignation of Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit. In 1957, he was elected to the Lok Sabha from Balrampur (Uttar Pradesh). He served as member of Parliament for over five decades, being elected ten times to the Lok Sabha and two times to the Rajya Sabha.

After the demise of DeenDayal Upadhyay in 1968, he became the President of "Jan Sangh" and strengthen the Party's root at national level in co-operation with Balraj Madhok, Nanaji Deshmukh, Lal Krishna Advani & others. In 1977, the Jan Sangh was merged with the newly constituted "Janata Party". In 1980, Jan Sangh background cadres parted away from the Janata Party and formed a new political outfit Bharatiya Janata Party with Atalji as its first President.

When the Janata Party came to power in 1977, Atalji became the Foreign Minister. He created history by addressing the United Nations in Hindi. In the 1996 general election, the BJP emerged as the single largest party in the Lok Sabha and Atalji was sworn in as PM on the Westminster system; but he had to resign within 13 days as the BJP failed to muster the majority mark. In the 1998 Lok Sabha election, the BJP again became the single largest party and this time it formed National Democratic Alliance with 23 parties. Vajpayee took oath as the PM for second time, but due to withdrawal of support by the AIADMK, he resigned and the Lok Sabha was dissolved. In the 1999 Lok Sabha election, the BJP led NDA secured a comfortable majority with 303 seats out of 543 and Atalji became the PM for the third time. In 2004, the Lok Sabha was dissolved six months before the completion of its term and NDA was ousted from power in the general election.

During the tenure of Vajpayee's Prime Ministership, a large number of works with national and international character have been carried out. In 1988, India conducted five underground nuclear tests in Pokhran to weaponise its nuclear capability. In February 1999, the Delhi-Lahore bus service was inaugurated. In May 1999, Pakistani militants & Northern Light Infantry soldiers of Pakistan had taken control of the hilltop centered around Kargil. The Indian Army recaptured the areas through "Operation Vijay". Three new states Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand came up on the Indian map.

The Vajpayee government introduced several new schemes in the infrastructure and educational sectors. National Highway Development Project (NHDP) and Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) have been planned & implemented. In the first phase of NHDP, 5846 KM long Golden Quadrilateral (Swarnim Chaturbhuj) for connecting four Metro cities namely Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai & Mumbai with 4/6 lane expressway has been built. In the second phase of NHDP, 4000 KM long North-South Corridor connecting Srinagar to Kanyakumari and 3300 KM long East-West Corridor connecting Porbandar to Silchar has been constructed. PMGSY is the infrastructure plan to provide good all-weather road connectivity to unconnected villages. In the railway sector seven new zones namely East Central Railway (Hajipur), East Coast Railway (Bhubaneshwar), North Central Railway (Prayagraj), North Western Railway (Jaipur), South East Central Railway (Bilaspur), South Western Railway (Hubli), and West Central Railway (Jabalpur) were created for smooth operation. In 2001-02, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) programme

was launched for universalization of elementary education in a time-bound manner.

Atalji was a great educationist & poet. In 1942, as an Inter student he gained name & fame by chanting his famous poem "Hindu Tan Man Hindu Jiwan, Rag Rag Hindu Mera Parichay" in his own style at Kali Charan College Lucknow. He contributed to the literary world with his creative writings, of which some memorable ones are "Mrityu Hatya", "Amar Balidan", "Kaidi Kaviraj Kundalani", "Amar Aaghair", "Rajnitiki Rapti Rahen", "Bindu Bindu Viehar", "Secularavd", "Meri Sansadiya Yatra", "Suvasit Pushpa", "Sankalp Kal", "Shakti se Shanti", "Na Daityamna Palayanam", "Nayee Chunauti Naya Aswas" and "Meri Ekyawan Kavitaen".

Atalji was honoured as "Sarva Shreshtha Samsad" on 17th August 1994. He was awarded the Padma Vibhushan on 25th January 1992 and the "Bharat Ratna", India's highest civilian honour, on 25th January 2014. In 2015, the Bangladesh Government honoured him with "Friends of Bangladesh Liberation War Award".

Atalji had the knack of building great friendships across political divide. He was a thinker, editor, poet, fearless writer and nationalist who used to inspire people. He breathed his last on 16th August 2018 after year long illness. Atalji will always be memorable for the Indian masses as he has enlightened the path of Indian politics for nearly half decade through his merit, constructive leadership, nationalist vision, strong willpower, political proficiency and popularity.

(The Author is a technocrat and educationist).

Ways to erase poverty and unemployment from India

■ SUNAINA MALIK

It would not be erroneous to dub poverty, a curse for 1.4 billion people of India in particular and infinite number of people of world in general. As per written records, even in 21st Century nearly 67% of India is poor. Though our Govt. swings from one party's lap to other's in every five years but poor remains poor. A poor starts his life with incealable dreams and aspirations of soothe and sumptuousness and sleeps in the lap of death along with those unfilled dreams under his closed eyes. Today, we are living in a state of imbalance, where a rich is having all the doors of progress, opulence and capital open and a poor does not have an access to a solitary way of earning. Irony over is, all over Govt. policies merely embellish the flower and leaves of a tree for its augmentation, leaving its roots under nourished. Can any body envisage the growth of that tree? The answer is big no. So, there is a dire need to bring radical changes in Govt. policies. Following are the steps to be taken for complete eradication of poverty from India.

Fixed Property Law: The first and foremost step to be taken in the way of eradication of seed of poverty from India, is the drafting of a strong Fixed property law. Under this law, every Indian should be liable to make fixed amount of money and asset during his or her life time. This law would debar all the resourceful and corrupt person to accommodate as much money and property for him or herself. Thus, this would open innumerable ways for poor to raise their standard of living.

Maintenance of Peace: As a matter of fact, the turbulence between India and Pakistan is pushing both the countries from poor to poorer. The money which they would have utilized for the betterment of their deprived people. That money is engulfed by terrorism. Both the countries have to realize that, this parasite of terrorism is eating away their economy. Both these countries would never appear on the map of developed countries, unless they will decipher this dilemma. Moreover, if our people keep on starving. There will be no need to slay them with bullets and atomic bombs. They would automatically die out of hunger.

Check on Population: Even a layman can understand that it is hard to satisfy the appetite of a family of ten members with two pieces of bread but even then there is swift rise in India's popula-

tion. It shows that it is thorny to change the mind set of people by mere counseling. So, there is an awful need of a strong Population control law. As, we cannot fill air inside a defected balloon in the similar way, no policy can eradicate poverty from India unless and until there is a control in India's population.

Glorification of Farming: Self-sufficiency in farming is the only way to hoist the living standard every poor Indians. But sorry to say we lop away from farming. We feel honor to become L.A.S, I.P.S but no one feel honor to become boozing farmer. There is a dire need to amend the mind set. If we become an L.A.S or I.P.S then we would earn for our self only but if we become a flourishing farmer then we can nosh millions of ravenous mouth. So there is dire need that media should glorify farming and farmers and Govt. should invest as much funds as it can on farmers and farming industry.

Revolutionizing farming sector would be like watering of roots of the tree of progress and opulence. After this tree of progress would bloom by its own self.

Giving of Zakat or Dan: According to a survey conducted, if everyone would give Zakat/Dan as prescribed by their religious texts then no one would die of starvation or remain meager on the back of this planet.

In the end, I would like to say that we come on land for a specific period of time. It is every one's right to enjoy lavishness in life. So, our Govt. and people should join hands in giving the poor their part of contentment and bliss by adopting above cited suggestions.

'Live-In -Relation' - Society do not recognize

■ MAHADEEP SINGH JAMWAL

Relationships are one of the most valuable commitments of human life. To live and stay happy, we need to get connected with the people around us. To love and to be loved is the best feeling in the world. The feeling of this love and the connection between two people is what we call a relationship. All relationships which we have or make in life are crucial. Right from the family relationship, friendship, acquaintances, and romantic relationship, live in relationship, every relationship is important at one or the other point of life. India is different from other nations because of its rich cultural traditions, moral and social values. The modern trend of 'Live-in-relationship' has never been welcomed in our country although we find that concept of live-in existed long time ago, when it was called 'Maitri Kra' that was a contract between two sex that they will live together as a friend and will look after each other. As we have aligned to western culture and by adopting alien culture and traditions, we are parting away from our ethics and values. Modern generation increasingly embracing western culture that has sparked the rapid emergence of a new living style christened as "Live-in-relationship". This type of relation is unrestricted by obligations and responsibilities and is just an easy walk in and easy walk out relationship. This outsider culture in India has begun mushrooming across the length and

breadth of the urban areas. But how far the Indian society has accepted it is a million dollar question. The thinking of society heads in a direction that whether welcoming the concept of live-in-relation will directly or indirectly invite premarital sexual relationships? That is considered as sin in Indian society. Although the SC (Badri Prasad Vs Dy. Director of Consolidation in 1978) held live-in relationships in India are legal but subject to caveats like age of marriage, consent and soundness of mind. The apex court has held that a 'Living-in-relation' comes within the ambit of right to live, enshrined under the Article 21 of the Constitution of India and that such acts are permissible. We have to recognize that there cannot be relationships unless there is commitment, unless there is loyalty, unless there is love, patience, persistence. I am of the firm opinion that the courts should be the last resort to be approached for social issues otherwise the sane society should resolve social issues acceptable to the whole society as such decisions of the sane society offer for the understanding of society and culture. Whereas Court verdicts are acceptable to one party and the other party is under obligation to accept it. Except that new norms depend upon the prominence of their belief rather than any law. India is different from other nations because of its rich cultural traditions.

We are tuned to accept marriage-based relationships and marriage is acceptable

sacramental in India. But now the winds from western have encouraged the youngsters to embrace the culture of live-in-relation without caring about the world around them and assuming them to be the most intelligent and visionary class as decision makers in the society by breaking all morals and values that have existed since the coming of life on the planet. Live-in-relation is referred to as an arrangement whereby two people not coupled with marriage rituals live together and mostly young ones in emotionally and/or sexually intimate relations and these are not stable unions. Such relations mostly have witnessed horrendous outcomes, some for references recently remaining in spotlight are: The grisly murder of the 26-year-old, Shraddha Walker in Delhi, who was mutilated by her live-in partner Aftab Poonawala. The suicide by Actress Tunisha Sharma reportedly abetted by her 'Living-in-relation' partner Shijan Khan. These incidents are happening with all those girls who are well educated and think they have the ability to make the right decisions for them. The glamorous life has snatched away the established traditions in Indian culture and by adopting new relationship styles, we are not heading towards a satisfied life but a life that is creating ditches for a smooth and satisfying future. We have to understand that in India due to our very old civilization, morals as also folk ways have withstood the test of times. Our ethos

and values are, therefore, different from western societies, wherein the practice of a couple in a relationship has been tolerated or accepted for long. In India, the country that is recognized as the land of 'Rishis (Sage) & Munies (Monks)', we have to live within a given social system that survives due to a system of bonds and attached restrictions or responsibilities. No one should be above society and should not take judicial views as their guiding force to deviate from social, cultural and traditional ethos and values. Law and society have been working hand-in-hand for the betterment of the individual. Law has been playing a vital role in the changing of society through its rules and regulations. Metropolitan cities of our country have grasped such relations but are continuously under the scanner of sane society that feels such relations as unwanted and unacceptable. India is formed with traditions and customs which are foundation pillars and I am of the opinion, a country of cultural traditions cannot afford to fall into western ways. The laws are not very clear on live-in-relation at the global level: the countries are hesitant to recognize it. Concluding, although the live-in-relation is legal in the eyes of law, there are more complex grey areas that remain unresolved such as: even if it is permitted, living of unmarried couples together is frowned upon in Indian society. Indian society does not readily accept this type of relationship and is seen as unethical in Indian culture.

YOUR COLUMN
Caste or religion is no indicator for one's economical status?

Sir,
The nation has been watching a tug of war between different religions and castes since independence for their enlistment in the schedules meant for grant of reservations in matters of employment, promotion and other benefits as enshrined in the constitution of the country. The politicians had never spared any occasion for keeping this flame burning in order to bate their political cates over with an exclusive purpose of making vote bank unmindful of its consequences on the democratic and secular set up, tranquility and integration of the country at all. It is pity that some castes, sub castes and religions which are financially and socially sound are in futile race with their counterparts in other castes and religions who really deserve such benefits from these provisions. Without being biased, there are, no doubt, people who have harvested more

they deserved from these provisions since independence and have never cared for those, belonging to their own castes and religion, who have been deprived of these benefits due to their poverty, ignorance, lack of opportunities as well as access to governments and bureaucracy of the country. The opportunist and influential people from these sections availed the benefits after the independence and went on climbing the constitutional stair step after step and never looked behind. In the present political scenario in the country every faction is striving hard to send candidates from their respective regions, religions, and castes to state assemblies and parliament with the hope that they might bring about magical change in their fate and destiny. Perhaps they forget that it is Indian democracy which has given Presidents, Prime Ministers, and chief ministers to the nation from all regions, castes and religions but the expected change still remained a wild goose chase even after seven decades of independence.

It is an admitted fact that poverty and misery do not discriminate between castes and communities rather they treat all alike. In reality a rich person always

prefers to make and strengthen his friendship with his counterparts in other castes and communities by neglecting his own fellow brethren. We often find people from all castes and communities working as house pets, and engaged in the job of porters, scavenging, cleaning utensils, and doing all those jobs which are considered as inferior (every right job is dignified) in the eyes of economically sound people. In this context one is compelled to say 'a bearer knows where his shoe pinches'. Truly speaking, there are only two castes and two religions i.e. rich and poor in this material age. It is therefore futile to quarrel with each other for petty benefits; rather collective efforts should be made for changing the fate of those who are poor, sick, deprived, illiterate and leading miserable life in the dingy and unhygienic environment.

The time has come when all those persons irrespec-

tive of their castes and communities should come forward and voluntarily sacrifice their personal interests and make room for others from their own castes and communities because they have got no right to grab benefits by exploitation any more.

Shiv Kumar Padha, a social activist from Basohli.