

EXCESS USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is playing a big role in our lives today. It has become an integral part of today's society. Detailed information is available to us at the press of a button. Social media is a very powerful medium and its impact is visible on every person. It is incredible to imagine life without social media today. However, it is also important to note some of the negative aspects that come with the use of social media. With the presence of so much content in a limited time and with maximum duration, it is possible that it may disrupt people's sustained attention and affect their mental health. Another problem with social media is that it disconnects from reality and can expose people to false and untrue information. Due to social media, the privacy of the common man is in danger: Cyber crimes are the biggest example of this. Such cases are seen in the news every day. If anything is done in excess, it proves harmful. There should be a balance in the use of social media in life. It is especially important for today's young generation to understand this. You are not defined by one like, comment. Social media is not your identity. There is no doubt that if social media is used wisely, it can prove to be a boon.

Navigating the green growth frontier

■ SHIVANSHU K. SRIVASTAVA

In the pursuit of a sustainable and environmentally conscious future, the recent collaboration between NITI Aayog, the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), and the Global Development Network (GDN) signifies a pivotal moment. Their call for regulatory measures on credit rating agencies and the restructuring of multilateral development banks (MDBs) is not just a policy suggestion; it's a beacon illuminating the path toward green and sustainable growth in developing nations.

The cornerstone of this initiative lies in recognizing the pressing need for a new policy toolkit and a fundamental restructuring of MDBs. The report, born out of deliberations during a G20 international conference in July, underlines the urgency to mobilize an estimated \$3 trillion over the next decade to finance green growth. It underscores the imperative for a comprehensive approach that involves both public and private finance, ensuring a holistic transformation in the way we perceive and pursue sustainable development.

At the heart of the matter is the call for regulatory measures on credit rating agencies. Historically, credit rating agencies have played a crucial role in shaping global financial markets. However, their evaluation criteria often fall short when it comes to assessing the environmental impact of projects and the long-term sustainability of investments. By advocating for regulatory oversight, the report acknowledges the need for a paradigm shift in how creditworthiness is determined, aligning it with broader environmental and social considerations.

This shift in perspective is not only necessary but timely. As we stand on the brink of an environmental crisis, the traditional metrics of success in financial markets must be redefined. The call for regulatory measures on credit rating agencies is not an attempt to stifle their autonomy but a step toward aligning financial evaluations with the broader goals of sustainable development. It is an acknowledgment that economic success cannot come at the cost of environmental degradation and social inequality.

Moreover, the emphasis on restructuring MDBs marks a bold step toward reshaping the financial landscape for green and sustainable growth. The report rightly points out that the current structure of MDBs might not be best suited to meet the challenges of the 21st century. The call for effective project implementation, joint financing, risk-sharing, and the recognition of sustainable infrastructure as an asset class reflects a nuanced understanding of the complexities involved in funding green initiatives.

The urgency of the situation cannot be overstated. The report's call for a comprehensive policy toolkit is a recognition that the traditional financial models might fall short in addressing the unique challenges posed by sustainable development. It advocates for a shift from isolated, project-based financing to a more collaborative and integrated approach that involves both public and private sectors. This aligns with the growing acknowledgment that sustainable development is not a burden but an opportunity for innovation, economic growth, and societal well-being.

One of the key aspects emphasized in the report is the mobilization of both public and private finance. The sheer scale of the required investment - \$3 trillion over the next decade - demands a concerted effort from all stakeholders. Public finance alone cannot bear the burden, and private investment must be harnessed effectively. This necessitates creating an environment that incentivizes private investors to actively participate in green initiatives while ensuring that their interests align with the broader goals of sustainability.

The restructuring of MDBs is not just about reshuffling organizational charts; it's about fundamentally altering the way funds are allocated, projects are implemented, and risks are shared. The call for recognizing sustainable infrastructure as an asset class is particularly noteworthy. It signals a departure from viewing sustainability as a mere checkbox in project evaluation to acknowledging it as a fundamental characteristic that adds value to investments. This shift is essential in attracting a broader base of investors who are increasingly conscious of the environmental impact of their portfolios.

Effective project implementation is another critical aspect highlighted in the report. It is not enough to secure funds; ensuring that these funds translate into tangible, sustainable outcomes is equally important. This calls for a robust governance framework, transparency in project execution, and accountability at every stage. The success of green initiatives hinges not just on the availability of funds but also on their efficient and effective utilization.

Joint financing and risk-sharing mechanisms are proposed as strategies to mitigate the challenges associated with funding large-scale green projects. By distributing risks across various stakeholders, the report envisions a more resilient and adaptable financial system that can withstand the uncertainties inherent in sustainable development. Joint financing not only diversifies the sources of funding but also fosters collaboration, bringing together the strengths of different entities to address complex challenges.

In conclusion, the collaborative effort of NITI Aayog, IDRC, and GDN, culminating in the report advocating for regulatory measures on credit rating agencies and reforms in MDBs, represents a significant stride toward a sustainable future. It is a call to arms, urging nations and financial institutions to reassess their priorities and align them with the imperatives of environmental conservation and social equity. As we stand at the crossroads of economic development and ecological preservation, the choices we make today will determine the legacy we leave for future generations. It is time for a financial revolution that transcends traditional boundaries, paving the way for a greener, more sustainable tomorrow.

(The writer, a poet and advocate, pursuing Master of Laws (LL.M.) from Banaras Hindu University).

Promoting Medicinal and Aromaitce Plants

■ GL KHAJURIA

Modern Medicine is a negation of health- "Ivan Illich"

Ever since the dawn of civilization, the man has remained wonderstruck viewing its surrounds, the flora and fauna, the natural bounties who alongside subsist with him. And at times, he wondered as to how these animals and plants are less disease free with vibrant, lush green and flora. This has left him with regenerating perceptions of all hues and years have rolled by and these mysteries till date remained as folded as ever before.

Undoubtedly, nature is a greater healer and its mysteries are so far hidden and folded. Unlike men, whom there is a team of doctors for treatment and then what about for those innocent and voiceless animals and birds. Surely, hunters and poachers are definitely there in the process!. And then why the nature should come to their rescue of human kind.

One also wonders at times or gets more curious to know how were the names given to the plants and how do we name them today is again a folded mystery. Presumably enough, the oldest names given must be having in the remote past some relevance when no language existed barring few broken words which off shoot-

ed, of course, the beginning of plants nomenclature, for they are as obscure as the record of earliest civilization. The first book dealing with plants was directly taken from early Greek or Latin manuscripts or more so ancient translations into those classical languages. The plant names are mostly Greek or Latin but of course, some seemed to be unaltered barbarous names used by not too civilized tribes of the time. However, the first attempt to scientifically nomenclaturise the plants was made by renowned/celebrated Greek, Philosopher 'Theophrastus' (370-287 B.C.) who was pupil of Aristotle. He had vide intellectual interests of various subjects which he wrote on biology where he described around 500 species of plants in his botanical treatise " on the study of plants: and " on the causes of plants", the main thrust being on the medicinal plants.

Later, Pliny the Elder(23-79 A.D.) described about 1000 species in his book "Historia Naturals" and at the same time a Military Physician 'Diesecaridas' described around 600 Mediterranean medicinal plants in his book entitled 'Materia Medica' in the early part of 16th century . Man's curiosity ever since remained in the run-

race in exploring more and more medicinal plants and many biologists of whom the few et al Morrison carolus, John Ray Linnaeus and Benthom and Hooker (1830-1884) remained in the lead.

Though it seems strange and intricate when one talks of botanical names, yet at the same time these occupy extremely interesting and instructive part in so far as modern 'Ayurveda System of Medicine' is concerned , apart from 'Unani' and siddha. This system of medicines have had an integral part when the modern allopathy had no longer surfaced and that's why this herbal system occupies a unique placement amongst the most proclaimed systems of medicines so much so that the 'World Health organization'(WHO) has fully recognized its values in its broader spectrum.

In India, where around 70% of population is below poverty line, 'herbal system' (Ayurveda) is perhaps the last hope. The system though having no side effects unlike other system of medicines. It is matter of utmost pride that India in general and the Himalayan states in particular are the richest source of medicinal and aromatic plants though human interferences in many a ways are diminishing the rich, vide, varied resources which warrants their due preservation and enhancement and that's why there is endless scope of Ayurvedic medicines abroad which fetches hefty dividends, besides providing undesirable side- effects:

Strange are the ways of nature that there exists a strong linkage between the herbs, shrubs climbers, plants and the trees with the variety of ailments as for example, Belladonna (meaning beautiful lady) was employed in Italy by ladies to give softness to their eyes and the same was for Potentilla-a panacea for all cures. There is a vide diversification of plants in times long past when they received their names because of medicinal properties real or supposed to assuage grief and so on the list goes endlessly..."

Of the few, the most important' Ayurvedic herbs, shrubs, climbers, plants and the trees are briefed down below viz-a-viz their medicinal uses:

Picorhiza kurroa: locally spoken as 'Kour' is perennial herb found in Himalayas (2500-4500) is the best herb for liver ailments, roots however, contain glycoside. Liv-52, Livosin and heptaguards are the Ayurvedic drugs prepared from this.

Valeriana Wallichina (Mushakbala) is predominantly the most important medicinal plant, apart from its uses in perfumery/dhoop.

Whithania Somnifera (Ashwagandha) (L) Dunsal (1725) : belongs to F. Solaceaceae, finds its usefulness to rejuvenate therapy, excessive emancipation, bronchial asthma, insomnia and cardiac disorders.

Tuxus bacatta : A very important conifer species mostly confined to Himalaya region (Tangmarg belt). A life saving drug is manufactured out of bark and leaves of plants for the treatment cancer patients.

Macrotomia bentham: belonging to the F. Boragiecae habitats Gurez" - Kalmir valley reaching an altitudes upto 1200 ft. It finds its usefulness in cardiac ailments, apart from fevers and throat troubles.

Chrysanthimum cinerifolium also called Pyrethrum is belonging to composite F. (Sun Flower) is injurious to warm-blooded and toxic insects and is mostly used as insecticides and flits.

Apart from the most prominent medicinal/aromatic plants, also include, Hibiscus esculentas, Acaasia Arabica, Achyranthes aspera, Adhatoda vasica, Agave Americana(sisal), Aloe Vera, Aloe Vulgaris, Rauwalfia' Serpetina(cobra plant), Datura, Stramonium, viola odorata, Digitalis purpurea, cannabis sativa, Aegle marmelas(Bel), Various Artemisias, Vitex negundu(Bana), Cassa fistula (Golden Shower), Flacourtia romonchhi, indigoferas, Mallotus philippinenisis, Phylntus emblica, Benninghausinia albi-floria(pisumar Buti) - an insecticide so on and so forth.

Though the fact goes that this vide, varied medicinal/aromatic, herbs of plant kingdom are sprawling world over in general but fact still remains that our tropical, sub Himalayan and the Himalayan region are bountiful of the vast resources which remain hidden and folded all over the globe. Our 'Regional Research Laboratories" and others pharmaceutical in the arena should pick up the thread in exploring this vast potential which forms the very fundamental source of our " Indian System of Medicines" do,de facto, stand the test of the day. And these herbs, shrubs and other medicinal/aromatic plants are fastly depleting, obviously for two reasons.

First, that modern man wants quick relief which only allopathic system of medicines can provide too rapidly, but going by the side-effects, the results are alarmingly astonishing . Herbal treatments though go slow, but the results are success-oriented with zero side-effects and that is why Hippocrates, the father of Ayurvedic system of Medicines depended on nature for cures. And alongside in not promoting and

developing these plants will resultantly vanish this vast treasure-house of medicinal kingdom. It is no doubt a fact that the Ministry of forests and environment, Govt , of India has opened all avenues in almost all states and a separate wing by the name and claim as "Minor forest produce: to exaggerate and promote these medicinal/aromatic plants but here too lot of efforts coupled with and supported by funding is the call of the hour. India, of course, should feel proud that our world renowned Pharmaceuticals et al. Himalayan drug stores, Dabur, Chark etc. are rendering yeoman's services and their export potential is far exceedingly catching momentum and their medicinal outflow world over is fetching hefty dividends. Yet the task is not over and we have to make every possible attempt to grow and enhance the equilibrium of the vast, varied treasure to its proximity and hence then we can be proud of our achievements.

Secondly, none can deny the fact that with ongoing onslaught of dwindling and decimation of forest cover together with diminishing voiceless wildlife, the medicinal and aromatic plant kingdom is still at greater risk. This being because of the fact that word minor (minor forest produce MFP) is so minor that its inescapability is too easy to be carried away by the greedy and over-needy men. As such, all out efforts and surveillance need to be actively initiated by all and one as per the laid down rules in the "Constitution of India" enunciated in general and the forest Deptt has to play an optimum role in curbing the menace of smuggling of Kuth, Discoria and its ilk which are under the process of being smuggled out. In the past many decades, credit, de facto goes in favor of Forest Deptt. When Optimum number of cases has been taken into cognizance and action followed thereto rapidly. Public awareness and awakening is of paramount need of the hour as it is after all public property and such a tempo will have to be continued in achieving successful results forever and ever.

And with this, the writer adds over here as such: Trees, herbs, shrubs, bushes and climbers through all their parts like leaves, flowers, fruits, shade, roots, bark, smell, juice, ash and buds get engrossed into service of others and for their benefits. They can even sacrifice their lives, how blessed are the lives of these trees. (Srimad Bhagavata Mahapurna)

(The writer is Former Deputy Conservator of Forest J&K).

Encounter with Death

■ PROF. SALEEM AYAZ RATHER

The word death is derived from the old English word "deth." It was used in the middle ages to describe dying but now it is mostly used to refer to being dead or not alive. Death is a state of being that is characterized by the irreversible cessation of all biological functions that sustain a living organism. It can be caused by injury, disease, accidents, or any other cause. The act of dying leads to death. From biological point of view death is a positive part of life but still no one wants to die. At the same time we cannot avoid it as it can come at any time irrespective of cast, creed, colour or age. Whatever the case may be we have to go one day as we are under the control of a Supreme Power and we do not know when we will be called back. Moreover, this is a natural phenomenon that in order to keep balance in the universe we have to die. As per Darwin's theory of evolution "there is limited food to eat and limited space to live". We make big plans but this is HIS discretion whether those plans will get green signal or not. A man who was suffering from a serious disease was told by the doctor that surgery is the only option for its treatment and it involves a lot of risk with 50% survival chances. The

patient asked the doctor if there is any other hospital where the survival rate is more but the doctor told the patient that no hospital in the world can provide you better treatment than this as the procedure is same everywhere. The patient sought some time from the doctor to think over it. Finally, the patient decided to go for surgery and asked his family members that I am going to start my encounter with death two days later, you should not worry at all and if I still have some days in my life then no one can kill me. Ultimately, surgery was performed and it took seven hours to complete the entire procedure. The patient went into comma and after about five months the patient started responding to the treatment and finally recovered.

Another encounter was witnessed by famous fashion designer and writer Crisda Rodriguez who had never thought that a time will come, at the age of 40, when she will have to say goodbye to this world leaving behind the luxurious life. She was diagnosed with cancer and was admitted in a reputed hospital for treatment. Though the doctors in the hospital provided her the best possible treatment, she lost the battle of life. Before her death she wrote that she has expensive cars for travelling anywhere but

in hospital she has to travel in a wheel chair. Her house is full of all the costly goods like branded clothing, shoes and valuables but her body is wrapped in a small sheet of cloth provided by the hospital. She has enough money in the bank but of no use. She used to go from one five star hotel to another but now she is spending time in travelling from one diagnostic lab to another. She has expensive jewelry to decorate her hair but now she doesn't have hair on her head. Although there are many food items in her house but her diet comprises of two tablets a day and a few drops of salt at night. None of the valuables could give her relief.

Irfan khan was an Indian actor who worked in Indian cinema as well as in British and American films and was widely regarded as one of the finest actor in the world. His carrier spanned over 30 years and earned numerous awards. In March 2018, he revealed via twitter that he had been diagnosed with neuroendocrine cancer. He went to UK for its treatment and remained there for a year and then returned to India in feb. 2019. Khan was admitted in Mumbai's Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani hospital on 28th Of April 2020 where he started receiving treatment for colon infection caused by the disease. During his stay

in London he had occupied a house which was close to famous Lord's Cricket Ground. From there, Irfan used to see the picture of world renowned cricketer sir Vivian Richards who was known as the King of cricket due to his excellent batting skill. Vivian Richard's picture got him into thinking that there is a time when we are young and full of energy and actively visible and then we reach a stage where mere pictures remain as sign of our existence. Irfan khan tried his best to get services of the doctors of some reputed hospital but could not succeed in the battle against death. After battling with neuroendocrine cancer for almost two years, khan passed away on 29th of April 2020 at the age of 53. Irfan remembered his mother before his last breath. His mother Sayeeda Begum aged 93 had died just four days prior in Jaipur.

The inevitability of death is a universal aspect of human experience. Life is too short. Enjoy every second, every minute and, every hour of it. Who knows what will happen tomorrow. The angel can knock the door at any time and then we won't be able to avoid his orders.

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Lack of Maturity

■ K.V. SEETHARAMAIAH

The suspended TMC MP Kalyan Banerjee mimicking the Vice President and Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankar and the Senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi filming it bear testimony to their lack of maturity in the public life. Dhankar has come from a humble background and from farming sector belonging to jat community. The behaviour of Banerjee and Gandhi would elate only their followers. Not all. The scant regard the two leaders have for the constitutional post is manifest and highly unbecoming of their status. People have not failed to notice how badly Banerjee was looking when he was mimicking. Neither Dhankar nor the post of Vice President and the Chairman of Rajya Sabha can be denigrated with their immature behaviour. Rather, they have shown

ceased to the people that they lack mature mindedness. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has expressed anguish over the V-P insult. Dhankar has asserted that no insults would change his path. Modi says that he is being insulted by the opposition parties for the last 20 years. In politics bouquets and brickbats are common. But the post of President and Vice President is above politics. Due respect must be given to the post. There are people to pity Rahul and he is pitied for his immaturity. After the Prime Minister, President Draupadi Murmu has said that V-P has been humiliated in Parliament complex. She has expressed dismay at the sight of the TMC MP mimicking the V-P. She has exhorted the MPs to adhere to norms. If the MP has mimicked V-P because he is also one of the suspended MPs, his suspension is not revoked.

Moreover, Banerjee is Lok Sabha Member. He has been suspended by the Lok Sabha Speaker. Dhankar has nothing to do with his suspension. It is the abominable behaviour of the MPs with placards inside the Parliament House landed them into such a sorry pass. Modi had repeatedly told that the security breach requires a thorough probe, not the discussion. The suspension of 142 Members of the House has provoked them to say that the democracy has been murdered. If the suspension amounts to murder of democracy, the democracy was already murdered in 1989 when 63 Members were suspended. Democracy has been mocked by the opposition parties. The Constitution of India allows democratic expression of views. Democratic rights can be used but not misused. Those who do not have culture to behave better are disgrace to

the democracy. Ultimately, Banerjee had to eat a humble pie by pleading that he did not intend to hurt the V-P. He has made a vain bid to cover-up his misbehaviour with the plea that mimickry is a "type of art". If he had performed mimickry as a stage artist in a stage, nobody would have been offended. But he has used the stairs of Parliament to make fun of Dhankar in retaliation against the suspension of MPs. An advocate has reportedly filed a complaint against Banerjee for mimicry of Vice President. There is little to expect that he would be punished from the police complaint. The courts may not take cognisance of his behaviour to punish him because he has not caused bodily harm to anybody nor has he abused anybody. Condemnation of his behaviour from all right thinking persons is the only panacea to bring him back to sense.

YOUR COLUMN

Liberation of Goa, a historic event

Dear Editor,
Goa's Liberation Day which was observed on December 19 has its importance in the history of Goa. This was the day when Goa got her freedom from the dominant rule of the Portuguese with the help of the Indian armed forces and the navy.

The Liberation of Goa was rather a historic event. The fight for Goa's freedom was dual -- inside Goa and outside Goa -- which was performed by the Indian Government. Towards the

end of 1961, after various unsuccessful talks, the Indian government deployed armed forces. But there were a few issues, as it was assumed that the Portuguese have supersonic interceptors. The dearth of the power of their air force also became a fright. Consequently, the Indian Air Force was advised to offer reinforced support to the ground force.

Lastly, in the words of the late Prime Minister Pt Jawaharlal Nehru, the army conquered Goa on December 17, 1961.

On December 17, 1961, more than 30,000 Indian ground troops with the help of the Indian Air Force and the army, conquered the 3,000-member ill-prepared Portuguese navy. There was a few more armed act following that. The rest of the Portuguese colonies of Daman and Diu were even over-

powered. The complete buildup of the Portuguese colonies shaped the Union territory of Goa, Daman, and Diu. The total army operation - 'Operation Vijay' was performed almost without any violence. Finally, the Portuguese Governor General Vassallo da Silva freed Goa on 18 December. After three days of the operations, on December 19, 1961, Goa, at last, became a part of India.

The day is observed with so many celebrations in Goa. The festivity showcases a torchlight parade that is conducted from three diverse places in Goa. The three parades eventually gather at the Azad Maidan. At this location, the members of the parade pay their honour to the freedom fighters.

Jubel D'Cruz