

## EARTHQUAKES- SUFFER A LOT

We suffer a lot due to earthquake in the earth. Our earth appears very beautiful due to the presence of different types of green trees, plants and animals in the earth. But due to earthquake, trees, plants, animals and everything gets destroyed in a moment. Big buildings, buildings, electric poles, temples, mosques, churches, government schools, government workplaces etc. all break and get destroyed due to earthquake vibrations.

Many areas are affected by earthquakes. Earth's weakest surface is at greater risk of earthquakes, because earthquakes occur quickly in weak underground. The land there is weak and cracked, where there is a high risk of volcanic eruption. Some natural disasters also occur along with earthquakes, such as strong storms, floods, all these are natural disasters.

When an earthquake occurs, we feel as if someone is shaking us. If an earthquake occurs with low intensity, some people do not even realize it and sometimes an earthquake occurs with a very strong shock, due to which the entire earth starts shaking. As soon as you feel the danger of an earthquake, sit on a strong table or chair to protect yourself.

There has been a lot of damage due to the earthquake in India recently. Just because of earthquake, people lose property and houses worth lakhs of rupees. An over 800-year-old monastery in Zanskar area developed cracks following a recent 5.5-magnitude earthquake.

## Unveiling Mars: Recent volcanic activity inspires exploration

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In the vast expanse of our solar system, Mars has long been regarded as a dormant, arid planet with a geological history confined to the distant past. However, a paradigm-shifting discovery has recently emerged, revealing signs of recent volcanic activity on the Martian surface. This groundbreaking revelation not only challenges our preconceived notions about the Red Planet but also hints at the possibility of ongoing volcanic activity beneath its crust. The implications of this discovery extend far beyond the realm of planetary geology, sparking a renewed interest in Mars exploration and reshaping our understanding of its dynamic nature.

The study, conducted by scientists utilizing ground-penetrating radar and satellite imagery, has provided compelling evidence of volcanic activity on Mars, defying expectations and forcing a reevaluation of our understanding of the planet's geological timeline. The revelation that some lava flows on the Martian surface may be as young as 1 million years old raises intriguing questions about the planet's recent geological past. This finding challenges the prevailing assumption of Mars as a geologically inert celestial body, encouraging scientists to explore the possibility of ongoing seismic activity beneath its surface.

The data collected by NASA's InSight lander, operational on Mars from 2018 to 2022, played a pivotal role in this discovery. The recorded multitude of quakes suggests that Mars is not as dormant as previously believed, unveiling a planet with a more complex and dynamic interior. The synergy between ground-penetrating radar, satellite imagery, and seismic data has opened a new frontier in our understanding of Mars' geological processes, inviting us to delve deeper into the mysteries of its planetary evolution.

One of the most striking aspects of this revelation is the temporal connection between Mars' recent volcanic activity and the era when dinosaurs roamed the Earth. The identified volcanic events on Mars correspond to a geological timescale that is recent and significant in the context of our planet's history. This parallel underscores the potential importance of Mars' geological events and their impact on the planet's overall evolution.

The discovery of recent volcanic activity on Mars challenges the prevailing narrative of a planet frozen in time, offering a tantalizing glimpse into its dynamic and evolving nature. The implications of this finding are far-reaching, not only for planetary scientists but for the broader scientific community and the future of space exploration.

Firstly, this revelation fuels the excitement surrounding Mars exploration. The prospect of recent volcanic activity implies that Mars is a geologically active planet, capable of undergoing significant changes over relatively short periods. This newfound dynamism elevates Mars as a prime target for future missions, prompting scientists and space agencies to reconsider and intensify their efforts to explore the planet's surface and subsurface.

The identification of young lava flows on Mars opens a treasure trove of opportunities for scientists to study the planet's geological history. By analyzing the composition of these recent volcanic deposits, researchers can gain insights into the planet's internal processes, its potential for sustaining life, and the factors that may have influenced its climatic conditions. Mars, once deemed a cold, desolate world, is now a dynamic subject of scientific inquiry, promising revelations that could reshape our understanding of the broader cosmos.

Moreover, the discovery of recent volcanic activity on Mars challenges our perception of habitability on other celestial bodies. The traditional view of a habitable planet often involves ongoing geological and atmospheric processes that create an environment conducive to life. Mars, with its recent volcanic activity, becomes a more intriguing candidate in the search for extraterrestrial life. The presence of geological activity suggests a level of planetary vitality that could have implications for the possibility of subsurface habitats or the existence of microbial life.

As we contemplate the significance of Mars' recent geological events, it becomes evident that our understanding of planetary evolution is a dynamic and evolving field. The prevailing assumptions about celestial bodies, even those seemingly frozen in time, are subject to revision as new data emerges. The revelation of recent volcanic activity on Mars serves as a reminder of the need for humility in the face of the vast unknowns that characterize our exploration of the cosmos.

In conclusion, the discovery of recent volcanic activity on Mars represents a watershed moment in our understanding of the Red Planet. It challenges long-held assumptions, reignites scientific curiosity, and beckons humanity to explore the mysteries of our celestial neighbour with renewed vigour. Mars, once considered a geological relic, is now a dynamic and evolving world, inviting us to unravel its secrets and redefine our place in the cosmos. As we stand on the cusp of a new era in space exploration, the revelations from Mars beckon us to dream boldly and push the boundaries of our understanding, fostering a sense of wonder and discovery that has defined our exploration of the universe throughout history.

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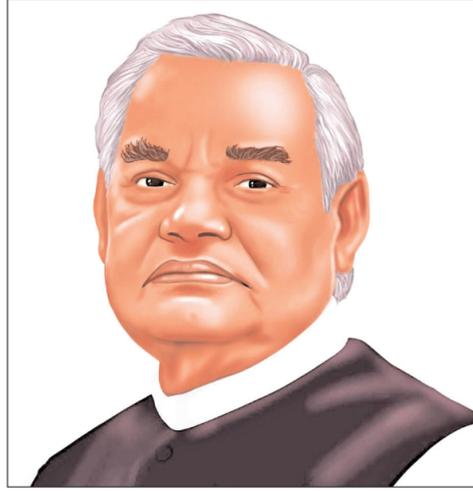
# Atal Bihari Vajpayee- The Poet, Patriot and Politician

M.R LALU

The greatness of values that a democracy upholds comes through a variety of inclusive processes and procedures. In a democratic framework, political parties normally act as a medium for conveying the ideals that they represent. Different parties enter the political arena with different ideological inclinations and their effective implementations within the framework of a democratic system give them greater acceptance and failing to which many such parties become extinct. Democracy in India is a perfect example for this mishmash of ideologies that come face to face and fights for relevance. Hundreds of such parties that entered into the fray of gaining relevance have disappeared leaving little ripple effect. India's democratic process also witnessed parties crossing more than a century and the Congress qualifies accolades for such a feat. The Congress is the oldest political party that came with a purpose, the purpose of uniting the nation against colonial aggression. Spanning from the Mahatma of India to Nehru to Indira Gandhi to Pranab Mukherjee, the range of leaders it produced for the welfare of the nation was absolutely appreciable.

Unlike the Congress, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) comes from a different genesis. Its journey was a struggle to gain importance as its ideological undertone was not easily assimilative. Great efforts were needed for the party to make an impact and its struggles sculptured great leaders with discipline. Atal Bihari Vajpayee was one among those stalwarts who brought the party to its distinctive stature of political recognition. One of the most charismatic leaders of the Jana Sangh from the days of Dr Shyama Prasad Mookerjee and Deendayal Upadhyaya, he watered its nationalistic ideals and helped it grow into its present version, the BJP. Vajpayee's clarity of vision and his profound poetic oratory separated him from the rest of the leaders. Prophetic were his insights and impressive were his perspectives. Since his first election to the parliament in 1957, he did not take much time to become the voice of the people through his excellent erudition.

Deendayal Upadhyaya's death in 1968 pushed an already known Vajpayee for his leadership qualities in his party to its forefront as its President. The days of emergency in 1975 came as a testing period for the Jan Sangh which by then had grown into its formidable reputation as a strong contender to oppose the wayward aggressiveness of the Indira era. Being jailed by Indira Gandhi during the dark days of emergency, Vajpayee had earned the reputation of being one among the rarest of leaders who the country would listen with conviction. Emergency proved the requirement of a stronger political consolidation. Multiple political ideologies melting into one amalgam of Janata Party seemed to create history by boldly withstanding the ruthless authoritarian



ways of the Indira Raj and Vajpayee remained instrumental in its formation. Independent India witnessed the first non-Congress prime minister Morarji Desai holding the chair under the new framework. Though the Jana Sangh dissolved into the Janata Party, its stalwarts Vajpayee and Advani remained ideologically rooted and personally disciplined and connected with their alma mater the RSS. Controversy on their 'dual-member issue' found them bagging an expulsion from the party and the historic journey of the present Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) began. Inaugurated in 1980, the party decided to contest the elections that came soon after the assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984. The BJP won only two seats but its tallest leader Vajpayee had to face his rout in Gwalior.

The BJP found its scope streaming brighter in the Ayodhya movement, a juncture that the party decided to involve with meticulous calculations. This was the churn that later got transformed into a storm. The party with its veteran leader L.K. Advani launched the Ram Rath Yatra in 1990. The movement was as predicted a great turning point for the party. But Vajpayee, with his luminous exuberance and moderate persona, remained passive on one of the most aggressive political movements that turned his party to bag prospects in abundance. He remained a passive witness while his close confederate Advani rode on the chariot from Somnath to Ayodhya, a long stretch of the land, proclaiming his party's commitment to Lord Ram. Though the movement gained greater acceptance for Advani in his party as a Hindu hard-

liner, Vajpayee was still known to have represented the moderate and soft face of its liberal side. Interestingly, the duo remained comrades for more than five decades and no disputes of any kind could dismantle their proximity. After the Rath Yatra and the successive demolition of the Babri structure in Ayodhya in 1992, Vajpayee was nominated as the BJP's Prime Ministerial candidate in 1996. Though the BJP formed the government at the centre, Vajpayee had to resign after 13 days as he failed to prove the majority in the parliament.

The communal violence in Gujarat attracted severe condemnation to the BJP government at the centre and the one that ran the state under Chief Minister Narendra Modi. Outcries for Modi's resignation were heard from all corners. There were leaders who felt that Modi should step down as the Chief Minister. This was one of the occasions that Vajpayee had to mentally distance from an obstinate Advani, who stood in complete support for Modi. Vajpayee is known to have advised the Chief Minister to follow 'Rajdharna' (protecting each one of his subjects). Vajpayee wanted Modi to at least offer his resignation. Had Advani been not in support of Modi, under severe pressure from within the party with Vajpayee pushing it harder, the Chief Minister would have resigned. But the party's National Executive in Goa decided to hear the whole episode of riots from Modi and his explanation was acceptable to the assembled members. Though Modi was ready to offer his resignation, the party insisted him not to do so. Had he resigned then, probably, the course of India's political scenario would have been different today. The BJP and its leadership were deeply hurt and cornered by the vitriolic propaganda of their opponents.

Vajpayee's patriotism was unchallengeable. This was evident in his beautiful poems as well. The Indian parliament frequently witnessed his excellent oratory in its incredible poetic resonance. In one of his excellent expressions he writes, "When have I desired that, after attaining freedom, I should enslave the world? I have all long taught only how to control one's own mind. How many atrocities have I committed in the name of Ram and Krishna? When did I commit carnages in home after home to convert others to Hinduism? Will someone tell me how many mosques did I break in Kabul? My resolve has been to conquer not territories, but the hearts of millions of human beings. My body is Hindu, my mind is Hindu, my life is Hindu, and the identity of every blood vessel is Hindu." This poetic expression stretches our nerves into the reality of atrocities that India faced and its cultural harmony that remained unfathomably content and compassionate on every aggression that the country received. Vajpayee was the rarest breed among statesmen who went beyond the conservative approach of exclusivist mindset and enmity in politics. In his third attempt he brought the best coalition government that ruled the country its full term.

## Jammu and Kashmir progressing by leaps and bounds

OMKAR DATTATRAY

It is neither hearsay nor an exaggeration that the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir is on the path of development and marching towards prosperity ever since the abrogation of Article 370 which was a big obstacle in the development of the UT. In fact it can be said that Jammu and Kashmir is progressing on leaps and bounds. After the abrogation of Article 370 and Article 35 A, on August 5, 2019, Jammu and Kashmir is witnessing unprecedented development and it is transforming into a peaceful and thriving society. The centre abrogated Article 370 on August 5, 2019, SOON after second term of the PM Modi led government began. The abrogation of Article 370 ushered into inclusive and all round development especially in tourism, agriculture and other sectors. In the fast few year's the government has developed new tourist destinations, heritage/cultural sites, and adventure treks/sites attracting tourist footfall in all seasons of the year. The UT government also developed the pilgrim tourist destinations and spots which is attracting a huge number of pilgrim tourists and this results in increasing the income of the local populace which is directly and indirectly associated with the tourist industry. This has also paved way for increasing the living standards of the people. More areas of tourism like amusement, water parks, adventure like water sports, rafting, rock climbing, snow parks are being explored to attract more and more tourists. Known for its tourism industry, Kashmir received a boom after the mega G20 countries meet on tourism which was held in May 22-24 this year.

The crucial meeting caught the attention of international community and media highlighting India's efforts for the restoration of stability and normalcy in Kashmir. The removal of Article 370 and 35A certainly

helped in stabilizing the economy and protecting it from militant and separatist groups, thus allowing the region to draw in more investments. Jammu and Kashmir received 1.88 crore tourists in 2022 and it reached up to two crore mark as per official data.

Special attention to the youth has been given who deviated from their aims and objectives in life due to the influence of militancy.

About 2.3 lakh young boys and girls were employed in 51004 units established under various self-employment schemes -SEES up to January 2023. Around 70000, youth have been provided with livelihood generation means, directly or indirectly, by taking various initiatives under Mission Youth (Mumkin, Tejaswani and Parvaz). 78 new job oriented trades have been introduced including heritage crops.

In Kashmir, boys and girls are more interested in sports and games activities in all weather. According to J-K administration, more than 50000, young boys and girls have been engaged in sports and recreational activities. In 5000 youth clubs constituted in J and K one lakh active youth members are enlisted. Over 55 lakh youth participated in different sports activities in year 2022-23. The public in general and the youth in particular, felt a sigh of relief when the government recently decided not to issue Indian passports to those indulging in subversive and anti-national activities including stone pelting. In this regard the criminal investigation department issued an order on July 31, 2023.

Beside, LG Manoj Shina expressed satisfaction with regions transformation into a peaceful, thriving and developing society. LG said 'Today every citizen of Jammu and Kashmir is living in peace.' He pointed out the end of street protests, the closure of educational institutions for extended periods

, stone pelting, and separatist tendencies that plagued the region in the past. The erstwhile state is now witnessing a more harmonious and united community, with people confidently engaging in various activities without fear and unrest. LG particularly emphasized the newfound freedom enjoyed by the youth. "Youth have got wings to fly on their choicest routes." "Gone are the bad days when young people had to rush home after sunset. Now the vibrant streets of Jammu and Kashmir see youths strolling around, with some even strumming their guitars or spending quality time on the picturesque riverfronts. The abrogation of Article 370 which resulted into the formation of the two union territories -Ladakh and Jammu and Kashmir -has been a turning point in the region's history. The move not only brought peace and stability but it also paved way for the greater employment opportunities and economic development in the UT. Under Mission Youth, the J&K administration has collaborated with Mumbai Stock Exchange, providing a plethora of avenues for young talent to shine in various fields. Ample platform has been provided to youth to showcase their talent and excel in various field. Meanwhile Union Minister Jatindra Singh said that the union territory will play a crucial role in Amrit Kaal. He said, "In third term of PM Modi's government Jammu and Kashmir will play a crucial role in Amrit Kaal." He further said that the decision of abrogating Article 370, during the beginning of Modi's second term, gave an outlet to the aspirations of J-K youth. The August 5, 2019 momentous decision also marked a drastic decline in terror activities and nepotism in the valley.

There was a considerable decline in both recruitment of locals into militancy and killing of the terrorists in 2023 compared to previous year's is another outcome of the

abrogation of Article 370. The restoration of peace and development in the UT is an important feather in the cap of the centre government as the peace and development activities kept momentum after the abrogation of Article 370. It is the most significant achievement of the scrapping of Article 370. While 124 civilians were killed at the hands of police and security forces during protests and stone pelting, not a single such incident was reported in the last four year's. Encouraged and assured by the safe environment in J&K, investment projects worth nearly Rs 25 thousand crore are under execution in the UT while proposals to the tune of over Rs 80 thousand crore are under process. Since independence, J&K had received private investment to the tune of Rs 14000 crore only. However after the abrogation of article 370 and introduction of new Industrial Development Scheme, the UT has received investment proposals worth Rs 81122 crore in the last two years. Nearly 18,000 Kanals of land as against a total 39022 kanals sought for setting up key units has already been allotted across both Jammu and Kashmir divisions. With an increasing footfall of domestic and foreign visitors, tourism in J&K is scaling new heights, making the UT one of the top tourist destinations of the country. There are no takers for strike calls imposed by separatists and militants in Kashmir anymore as the common man has started to reap the dividends of peace and development. In short one can say that due to the abrogation of Article 370, there has been an all round development which is visible on the ground and it will not be an exaggeration to say that the Jammu and Kashmir has progressed by leaps and bounds after the abrogation of Article 370.

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## Urban Farming: Challenges and Opportunities

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Urban farming is the practice of cultivating, processing and distributing of food in and around the urban areas. Unlike traditional farming, which predominantly occurs in rural areas, urban farming takes advantage of available spaces in cities, such as balconies, rooftops, community gardens and vacant lands. It is an innovative approach to address the challenges posed by urbanization, limited land availability and need for sustainable food production. It involves small scale agricultural operations. It is not a new concept. As human population progressed, agriculture was confined in the rural areas while urban population engaged itself in the trading activities. Natural disasters and acts of man such as war encouraged urban population to explore for the urban farming due to the disruption of food supply chain from the rural areas. This was happened in World War I and World War II when the city dwellers were encouraged to grow the food in their open spaces and reduced pressure on rural population. In recent times, former US First Lady, Mrs. Michelle Obama promoted the concept of kitchen garden. This garden has been located in the premises of White House. It was having a beehive and 55

varieties of fruits and vegetables. In present era, urban farming can ensure food security to the urban dwellers. It can cut down the carbon emission by saving the fuel which otherwise is used in the transportation of food items from rural to urban areas. Urban agriculture can reduce the poverty and health issues in the urban areas.

In 1950 the total population of world was 2.6 billion with 800 million in urban centres and 1.8 billion in rural areas. After 100 years e.i. by 2050 we expect 9.2 billion inhabitants with 6.3 billion living in urban areas and only 2.9 billion remaining in the countryside. There is dire need to concentrate on urban environment and food security for the growing population especially in urban areas. Urban agriculture is coming in limelight in the recent years. This has been felt because of (1) Physical and psychological in- and outdoor relaxation for urban people (2) For improving the urban areas environment and (3) For food, income security and provide the fresh vegetables round the year for urban dwellers. According to the United Nations by 2050 more than two-third of population will live in the cities. Urban farming can play a significant role in proving the food to this population. In recent decades urbanization

has increased rapidly and this has caused malnutrition in urban areas. There is dire need to pay attention on the food security especially for the urban dwellers. In urban areas there is pressure on the land due to population, construction of buildings, roads etc. But still there remains enough area where the fruits and vegetables can be grown. Moreover, people can grow fruits and vegetables on their roofs. In Singapore 90 per cent of the food is imported and vertical and now-a-days roof top gardening has become very popular. Roof top vegetables gardens provide the fresh organic vegetables. They also ensure a better living environment with cooler indoor temperature and fresh oxygen.

Urban farming plays significant role in ensuring food security in India's urban areas. Urban farming has the potential for transforming our cities into greener, healthier and more self-sufficient spaces. By the urban agriculture, the unused land in the urban areas can be used effectively. Urban farming can improve the food security and nutrition for the urban dwellers. It lowers climate change impacts and also lowers stress. Urban dwellers are also showing keen interest in roof top vegetables gardening. One can use compost and vermicompost

to prepare the fertile soil for the roof top vegetables garden. The soil is filled in the pots or grow bags to sow the seeds or seedlings of vegetables. After sowing the seeds the pots are covered with the plants leaves. The leaves act as the mulching material and help in conserving the moisture in the soil. Avoid over watering to the plants as it can rotten the seeds or seedlings. It is very easy to control the insect-pests and diseases in the roof top kitchen gardens. We can use organic inputs such as neem oil, neem cake, fermented butter milk, cow urine, panchgavya etc. in the roof top kitchen garden. Local food can be protected through roof top vegetables gardening. There is need to speed up the urban vegetables production so that fresh nutritious vegetables can be provided to the urban people. There is need of proper policy for urban agriculture so that it can be done in a scientific and systematic way. There should be proper management for the wastewater collection and its treatment in the urban areas. Urban farming connects us with nature and promotes sustainable living and foster a sense of community.

(The writer is Sr. Scientist and Head of KVK, Reasi).