

HAVOC OF FOG

It is extremely cold across North India at this time. Because of which people are forced to remain confined to their homes. Also, people are resorting to bonfires to escape the morning and winter chill. Due to increasing cold, fog is also causing havoc. People are also facing problems due to fog.

The first fog is known as advection fog. This fog is often seen in the early morning in ponds, lakes and grasslands. Whereas, the second one is made from Radiation Fog. This fog is often seen on the ground or in valleys. Whereas the third fog is formed from Upslope Fog. According to the information, this type of fog is formed when air rises from a sloping place. It is mostly seen on Arctic lakes and ponds.

Fog also causes harm to humans. If you breathe fog for too long, your lungs may catch a cold. This happens because moist air goes inside the lungs. Fog can also cause cough, sneeze and cold. However, it affects only those who have low immunity. At the same time, sulfur dioxide increases in smog. Due to which, due to breathing, it enters the person's body and one has to face problems like breathing.

Modi connects but opposition disconnects

OMKAR DATTATRAY

Prime Minister Modi is sincerely trying to unite the various segments of the society, while the opposition leaders are only disuniting the already heterogeneous and a diverse society. All the unity by BJP and disunity of the diverse society is resorted by the congress and opposition and all of this unity and disunity moves are aimed to gain votes in our democracy, but the opposition including the congress is perusing the politics of division as well as deception and the people are the best judges to pronounce the result of the coming Lok Sabha polls. Prime minister Narendra Modi rightly accused congress of dividing the society for the benefit of one family and asserted that the BJP believes in spreading happiness and uniting the people. His remarks came against the backdrop exodus of north Indian workers from Gujarat, for which the saffron party has blamed congress. During an interaction with the BJP workers of five Lok Sabha constituencies via video conferencing, Modi also took a swipe at the opposition against its efforts to frame Mahagathbandhan against BJP, but there are fissures and disunity among the leaders of INDIA bloc. If the opposition wants sincerely to fight the BJP, it should follow and practice unity in the rank and file of the opposition bloc. The only photo sessions will do no good to the opposition INDIA bloc. However, there should be no factionalism, groupism in the opposition parties and instead the congress and other leaders of the opposition should put their efforts together to provide a united political front to take over the mighty and arrogant BJP and be a substitute to the ruling NDA. Those who are out on bail are forced to come together to find ways to save themselves. They have not assembled for the benefit of the masses, but for the sole purpose of removing Modi. Modi claimed it was not a matter of ego for his party to defeat others but an opportunity to serve the people. Modi said, "When you try and connect everything to elections, like unveiling the statue of Sir Chhotu Ram or Swachh Bharat Mission, it reduces the importance of the event," and added the BJP was doing social service and would continue to do so. Attacking congress, the PM alleged that opposition party believed in dividing the people for the sake of sole benefit of one family. "We are those who spread happiness to bring pleasure in everyone's life, while other divide the society for the benefit of one family. We believe in uniting and they prefer to divide the people. The power to unite is always greater than the power to divide." BJP always stayed in touch with the people and common man on the ground. The BJP is cadre based party. The workers feedback is important for the government and the party. That is why we are successful in extending the benefits of government schemes to the poor, exploited and deprived sections of the society. Modi said it was unfortunate that people who used to be in power earlier felt ashamed of the culture instead of taking pride in it. For decades after independence, it was believed that India was the country of snake charmers and rat catchers, and the worst was that the political outfit which ruled the country for decades promoted these ridiculous things. We must take pride in Indian culture and the congress is promoting the notion of India being a land of snake charmers and rat catchers. PM Modi has met the Kashmiri Muslim students in Delhi who were on the tour of India and said Kashmiri students are next to none and they have the capacity to excel in different areas of development and wished them all success. He believes in connecting with large sections of the society. Modi also met the Sikh community on the birth anniversary of Guru Tej Bhadur Singh and on the Bal Diwas and exhorted the younger generation to contribute to the development of the country. On this occasion, he praised the Sikh Sahibzadas and remembered the greatest sacrifice of Tej Bhadur for the sake of righteous cause and protection of the Hindus of Kashmir. He also decried the selfish and ulterior designs of some leaders of Tamil Nadu and south India for saying that the people of UP and Bihar only know and read Hindi and they work as labourers and perform only menial work of cleaning toilets and also calling them as ignorant and uneducated. Thus some opposition leaders try to divide the people of this country and pit one region against the other. Recently a leader of a opposition party has said that the people of Rajasthan, MP, Chhattisgarh who voted for the BJP as the Gou Mutur states and it shows how low the politicians of the opposition parties stand. All this results in dividing the society and furthering north vs. south divide and this is very harmful for the country's unity. Modi believes in inclusive politics and he denounces exclusivity and also stands for Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Priyas and Sabka vishwas and thus taking all the people together is the motive of Modi and the BJP. The congress and other opposition parties are doing caste politics and hence they advocate caste census in the country and this will further divide the heterogeneous and diverse society. Caste census will only further divide the society and what is needed is the common census and not a caste census. The issue of caste census has been raised by congress and other non-BJP parties only with the purpose and objective of gaining votes and therefore they advocate caste politics and promise it if elected to power. To conclude, it can be surely said that the BJP and Modi are only uniting the society while the congress and other opposition parties are dividing the society for the vote bank and appeasement politics.

(The author is a columnist, social and KP activist)

Monkey Menace And Its Management

DR. BANARSI LAL

Monkeys are wreaking havoc in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Their burgeoning population and habitat shift from forests to towns has created a new level of man-animal conflict in this hilly UT. Monkeys damage the crops and leave farmers grappling with losses that have badly affected J&K economy thus affecting the livelihood of the farmers. Increasing human-animal conflicts are posing enormous threat to food insecurity for small resource poor hilly areas farmers living in and around traditional forest areas. Hilly areas farmers are mainly have five major problems viz. dwindling water resources and dry spells, invasion by exotic weeds like Lantana and Parthenium in pastures and grazing lands, Rhesus monkey menace and marketing issues due to difficult terrains that have affected the livelihood of farmers, leading to large scale migration and leaving families dependent on state-subsidised food rations. The worst sufferer of monkey menace are hilly states/UT viz. Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir and Uttarakhand. Nevertheless, other states like Rajasthan, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Bihar and Delhi are also struggling to contain assaults by monkeys. The menace has now reached epic proportions with estimated loss of more than 3000 crores in India, While, in Himachal Pradesh direct and indirect damage to farm produce is estimated to around Rs.1000 crore annually. In the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir about 250 villages in Jammu lose farm produce worth about Rs 33 crore every year because of attacks by wild monkeys. But it is strongly believed that exact estimates are much higher, around 300 - 500 crores and like Uttarakhand many village residents opt to sell their farmlands than grow crops in Reasi, Udhampur, Jammu, Samba, Kathua, Ramban, Rajouri, and Poonch districts. Besides damaging crops, over hundred people are bitten by monkeys every day and this results in huge expenditure on vaccines for the victims to avoid transmission of many other disease germs like the Herpes B virus10 due to such conflicts. Unlike other countries, the Indians have many religious and traditional beliefs about monkeys and their killing is not desired, but frequent conflicts have affected the traditional bond between man and monkey. The current methods of dealing with monkey menace are inefficient and only contributed to further accelerating the problem. Challenges remain to develop efficient management and conservation strategies to resolve the man-monkey conflicts. Behavioural ecologists find several issues with translocations of monkey as a solution, while sterilisation programmes did not meet expected results in Himachal Pradesh. A pilot project on oral contraceptives in a 20 square km area of the tree-lined institute, studying monkey behaviour and food habits is being attempted. Initial results have been found satisfactory and the scientists are confident that the contraceptive will keep the runaway monkey population down. Traditional and conventional ways are continued to remain crucial for the farmers in hilly region who are still practicing string to through stones (Gulali) and noise making methods like drum beating and firecrackers etc. to manage the monkey menace.

In an effort to find solution, we devised an innovative repelling sound device that mimic Baboon barking and validated the same in field situation under Jammu hills. The device was made out of simple metal paint container (1 liter capacity). The lid of container remained open while a small circular hole (0.5 cm dia) was drilled in the centre of its bottom to which a 1 meter long string made of shoe lace was tied through a knot inside (Plate-1). This string is frequently dipped in a water-based solution as and when required and pulled against the bottom every time to produce the sound by holding with one hand while rubbing along the rope with another hand. The performance of this device was compared with two most commonly used methods in three different locations of village Ramkote in Kathua District of J&K viz Upper Ramkote, Lower Ramkote and Bhool each comprising 500 m2 area prone to attack by monkeys. The sound effect and frequency for each meas-

ure was also recorded. Each measure was practiced for 5 minute duration followed by an interval of 30 minute. All observations were recorded at the peak hour of activity (11 AM -1 PM) independently from a roof top. The mean numbers of monkey entering the area after each interval of treatment were recorded. After obtaining the preliminary data we distributed ten numbers of such devices to farmers of nearby villages and recorded their response accordingly.

Monkeys are the second largest population in primates, after humans. The deforestation has led to destruction of natural habitat. As a result, monkeys turn to villages and cities in search of food and shelter. Experts say the reason the population of monkeys has multiplied after their natural habitat was destroyed is because of their ability to adapt to new habitats. Human settlements provide monkeys easy access to food. As a result, the time they spent in the wild finding food is now being spent in procreation. There is a population explosion. Monkeys start stealing from humans. The onslaught by humans makes them more aggressive, increasing human monkey conflicts. According to the Primate Research Centre, Jodhpur; which is one of the three Union government run institutes on primates, more than 1,000 cases of monkey bites are reported every day in Indian cities. Almost all cities with high monkey population have abundant stories of monkeys "encroaching and destroying" property and "robbing" people. Besides dozens of incidents of minor injuries, three cases of monkey attacks in the recent past have been alarming, including one about a month back in Annambad, Lucknow in which a 27 year old man died. In large Institute like SGPGIMS with huge reserve forest area, the monkeys have been encroaching into the patient care areas in search of food. Patients and attendants also feed monkeys due to the religious beliefs. This has led monkeys to settle in the hospital area due to easy availability of food. The problems created by monkeys were faced by institute like AIIMS also. In 2014, Monkeys damaged emergency oxygen storage tank in AIIMS causing panic. The Hospital administration at SGPGIMS has taken many steps to control the rampage by monkeys. In spite of all the steps taken, an incident of monkey menace has taken place in the Institute which has been studied with objectives to identify the underlying cause and impact in regards to loss of bed days or financial loss.

There is need to try to emulate the Himachal Pradesh's sterilization drive in J&K also and for that purpose special budget needs to be sanctioned by the state Government. The government should also issue a notice that levies a fine on people feeding monkeys at roads, pilgrims and tourists sites. Feeding to the monkeys leads to abandon their natural habitat and they migrate towards villages and towns and create lot of problems to the people. Feeding, baiting and luring of monkeys are the offences under the Wildlife Protection Act. According to the experts the act of feeding makes them believe that humans are inferior to them. Combinations of strategies are needed to control the monkey menace in J&K. Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Reasi is promoting the ginger, turmeric, marigold, lemon grass, vetiver grass and geranium grasses in the district which are not affected by the monkeys and farmers can generate extra income and employment by commercially growing these crops. Also there is need to restore the forests so that monkeys remain confined in those areas.

The following measures are taken in crop protection from monkeys and wild animals:

1. Manually guarding the fields: To protect the crops, farmers deploy labours during day and night or if fields are small, farmers on their own protect the crops. Farmers use crackers, gun fires for scaring away the monkeys/ wild animals. Cost of labour is very high due to shortage of labour. Deployment of labour to guard field crops from monkey menace do not always guarantee 100% protection of crops due to human limitations of functioning in difficult terrain & adverse weather and night hours.
2. Crop diversification :To avoid crop damage from monkey

menace and wild animals, many farmers have changed their cropping pattern from traditional crops which are generally consumed by monkeys to newer crops like aloe vera, ginger, garlic, turmeric, marigold, medicinal and aromatic plants, which are not consumed / damaged by monkeys. Value addition in floriculture and lemongrass are opening new avenues of income and employment for the farmers of hilly areas. of

3. Sterilising monkey to control population: HP Forest Department is undertaking sterilization of monkeys in Shimla, Hamirpur, Kangra and Unadistricts to control the monkey population. Till December 2013, a total of 77,280 monkeys were sterilised. H.P. Forest Department is leading the innovative programme of monkey sterilization to control the ever increasing population of monkeys. Four Monkey Sterilization Centres (MSCs) located at Tutikandi (Shimla), Sastar (Hamirpur), Gopalpur (Kangra) and Boul (Una) are operative in the State. The sterilization in males is done through thermocautericoagulative vasectomy and in females through endoscopic thermocauterytubectomy. The impact of monkey sterilization programme in stabilizing the monkey population is visible in many pockets of the State. The full impact of sterilization on monkey population shall be discernible in future when sterilization of considerable monkey population shall be achieved.

III. The Solution:

While number of alternatives are practiced by farmers and government to protect the crops from damage by monkeys and wild animals, none of these assure 100% success in crop protection. A new technique of power fencing is seen as ultimate solution. The solar powered fence electrifies the fence with pulsating current and these pulses are the "shock" felt by an animal that touches an electrified fence. Unlike a conventional fence, an electric fence is a psychological barrier such that animals learn to respect the fence. Any periphery can be solar fenced, though the cost differs with respect to the area to be fenced.

IV. The Solar Power Fencing Technology:

The fence is like barbed wire fencing with multiple strands of plain wires and metal/cement/wooden posts to hold the strands in position. The wires carry high voltage current. The Solar Power Fence gives a sharp, short but a non-lethal shock to the intruder and creates psychological fear, against any tampering. The alarm incorporated in the system gets activated and alert the inmates of the protected area. Human and Animal safety

The electric shock is completely safe and non-lethal for human and animals. The animal/ human touching the fence will keep himself away from the fence. As current is pulsating (not live) and passing at every 1 to 1.2 second and only for an milli-second (1000th of second) of time, the animal gets enough time to get away from the fence. Monkey Repellent

Monkeys can be expelled by the direct simulation on their central nerves, through the sonic/ultrasonic wave. The sonic/ultrasonic wave attacks the auditory and nervous system of pests causing pain and discomfort. The only high-powered ultrasonic monkey repeller with special "Multiplex Modulated Sweeping Ultrasonic Sounds" available in India. These high intensity ultrasonic sound waves (10-65 KHz) are out of the range of hearing of humans and most household pets, except pests. These nerve-crushing sounds directly penetrate their brain and nervous systems and make them uneasy and act abnormally such as frantic jumping, stampeding which result in the voluntary repulsion against ultrasonic wave areas and monkeys find it impossible to stay in such radiated areas. The monkey repeller device can get rid of monkey menace and nuisance effectively. Ultrasonic wave causes great pain and discomfort to monkeys but does no harm to humans.

(The writer is Sr. Scientist & Head of KVK, Reasi SKUAST-J).

Human life - A very Precious Gift

MOHAMMAD HANIEF

Life is a precious gift. It is the sum of one's work, journey, dreams, joys, sorrows, successes, and battles for change. Life is more of a journey than a destination. It must be lived peacefully and happily. Seeking the meaning and purpose of life is the biggest search in the life of a human being, and the questions about the meaning of human life are age-old. Life, however, still has some attractive elements, offering one a ray of hope and positivity, each passing day.

We have individuals, families, relatives, and friends who make our lives unique, worth living, and make us feel that our lives are special. Our lives are challenging, but those challenges are what make it worth living.

God has given us the most precious gift; it is life. It is up to us how to use it. It depends on us, or it depends on our behavior. Therefore, this is a very relevant topic to be discussed in schools, universities, workplaces or public places. We are of course worried that our young people are now wasting their lives and time-consuming reckless behavior. Every day, we should thank God for giving us this life and another day to achieve our goals. No one is like you and will never be there, so cherish your uniqueness.

What surprises me is that I often hear people blaming God for what they don't have and cursing their liveliness, but they do not know that their lives are valuable if they work hard to make it worthwhile. The value of life comes from such thinking. Only through the love of family and friends can life become better. We also make our lives more beautiful and fulfilling by completing our responsibilities in our family, work, community and the whole world.

Human life is truly a very precious gift. Each moment of human life carries us an



opportunity, to act to develop and express our virtues. Every moment unlocks the path to us to receive blessings. This is the truth that life gives us both positive and negative situations. What is really important is how we react.

Life is nothing but a journey with lessons, hardships, heartache and special moments. It will ultimately lead us to our destination, our purpose in life. The road will not always be a plane; in fact, throughout our travels, we will face many challenges.

These challenges will always test our courage, strengths, weaknesses, and faith. Along our way, we may encounter obstacles that will come between the paths and we are destined to take.

In order to be on the right path, we must overcome these obstacles. Sometimes these obstacles are really blessings in disguise, only we don't understand that at the time. The secret of life is best known to those who are not attached to anything deeply so much.

Therefore, they remain out of touch with worries and shifting fortunes of their lives. They are the people who do not measure their lives in terms of materialis-

tic possessions, but by measuring their lives in terms of people they cannot live without.

The fear of death always threatens our lives. Every person has to face death sooner or later, but that doesn't mean that it should discourage us from living life to the fullest or achieving our goals. A person is wise only when he/she is ready to meet destiny when it comes, but until that time enjoys every bit of it. It is a sense of readiness. It is a journey in everyone's life wherein we have to cross the bridge of death to be able to wake up to a life eternal.

Every snapshot of human life provides us with an opportunity to act to build and connect. Every second opens the way for us to receive presents. The truth is that life presents us with both positive and negative situations. What is extremely important is the way we respond to it. No one, like you, is born into the universe, and no one will ever be, so honor your freedom. With lessons, struggles, heartache, and special moments, life is nothing but a journey. In the end, it will get us to our destination, our meaning in life. The road isn't always going to be a

plane; in fact, we're going to face many challenges along our journeys.

Our bravery, talents, vulnerabilities, and confidence will always be checked by these challenges. We may meet obstacles along our way that will come between the paths, and we are doomed to take them. We must overcome these barriers to be on the right path. Perhaps these barriers are simply gifts in disguise, but at the moment we don't understand that. The secret of life is better understood by those who are not so intensely attached to something. The best way to cherish life is with our family and friends. Our family was the first set of people who were present since the beginning of our journey and nourished us.

Our friends are the people who chose us, out of several others, to care for and enjoy moments with. It is ultimately the affection we give and the affection we receive from our loved ones that make life beautiful and joyous. I'll say, eventually, that we can make life worthwhile. That life can be made beautiful with the help of our family and friends. By discharging our duties in our families, at work, community and the world at large, life can be more beautiful and purposeful.

Life is the gift of God in the form of trust that we will make it meaningful in whatever we can. We are all unique individuals. Many times, I come across people accusing God of things that they don't have. They always cursing their lives, but, do they realize that this life itself is precious and if we make it worth living and work hard towards positivity.

Lastly on the concluding note it is important that we should make life worthwhile. It should be with the love of our family and friends that life can be made beautiful. Life can be more beautiful and purposeful by discharging our duties in our family, at work, society and the world at large.

YOUR COLUMN

EVM HAS BEEN MADE SCAPEGOAT FOR DEFEAT OF CONGRESS

Dear Editor;

Sam Pitroda has come out with apprehension that BJP may win 400 seats in the 2024 general elections if EVMs are not "fixed". Elections in five states are over out of which Congress could wrest Telangana from BRS. Three states went to the kitty of BJP and one state to ZPM. In May 2023, Congress won in Karnataka. There was absolutely no complaint against EVM when Congress emerged victorious in Karnataka and Telangana. Problems in EVM are discovered only when BJP wins. The Election Commission has rubished the allegation that EVM had been rigged in favour of BJP.

First to suspect over the functioning of EVM was Mayawati. Subsequently, more and more parties started to endorse the views of Mayawati. The EC is unmoved by the allegations. If Congress is really unhappy with the EVM, it should have refused to accept the 2023 victory in Karnataka and Telangana and 2018 victory in Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan and wherever it has emerged victorious since the EVM was introduced in place of ballot. If ballot system is brought back, many invalid votes occur. Invalid votes lose the value of the voter's vote. If the Congress really feels that the EVM is advantageous to BJP only, it could have promised in the 2019 manifesto that the EVM would be replaced by the ballot system. When it did not promise to bring back the ballot system in the 2019 election, it is obvious that the dishonesty is manifest in its opinion against EVM. In 2019, Sam Pitroda had said "hna to hua. So, what if riots had taken

place". This was in response to the 1984 Sikh riots. Pitroda is the trusted advisor of Congress. He would do well if he advises Congress to give up the power in Karnataka and Telangana since the victory in these two states was obtained through EVM. Jairam Ramesh has no trust in Pitroda. He believes that Pitroda does not speak for party. Jai Ram Ramesh's view has been neither endorsed nor set aside by the Congress party high command. Senior Congress leader Digvijay Singh has echoed the view of Sam Pitroda after Congress suffered defeat in three Hindu heartlands. Both Sam Pitroda and Digvijay Singh must remember that Congress had suffered severe jolt even when the ballot system was in place. There is a saying "a bad workman always quarrels with tools". If the Congress has suffered defeat, it is the decision of the majority of voters. Not the EVM.

K.V. Seetharamaiah