

JJM FURTHERING WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

The Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), is not only a key initiative for providing safe and adequate drinking water to every rural household but also plays a significant role in empowering women across the country. The mission aims to ensure that functional household tap connections (FHTC) are provided to all rural households by 2024, with a focus on sustainability, community involvement, and equity.

One of the most profound impacts of JJM is its effect on women's empowerment in rural India. Traditionally, women in rural areas have been responsible for collecting water, a task that often involves walking long distances, sometimes for hours, to fetch water from distant sources like wells, rivers, or ponds. This often leaves women with limited time for other activities such as education, income generation, or rest. The Jal Jeevan Mission addresses this issue directly by facilitating tap water connections in homes, eliminating the need for women to travel long distances to collect water. As a result, women gain valuable time and energy, which can be redirected toward other important aspects of their lives.

The traditional task of fetching water is a physically demanding, time-consuming, and often hazardous activity, and it disproportionately falls on women and girls. According to estimates, approximately 60-70% of water collection responsibilities are borne by women and children. This practice not only consumes their time but also limits their access to education, economic opportunities, and personal well-being. With access to clean water at their doorstep, women are no longer subjected to these exhausting tasks. This shift enables them to use their time more productively, contributing to their own development and the well-being of their families.

Another significant way in which JJM contributes to women's empowerment is through the improvement of health. Women are the primary caregivers in households, and they are responsible for the health and hygiene of family members. By ensuring that households have access to clean and safe drinking water, JJM helps reduce waterborne diseases, which disproportionately affect women and children. By preventing illnesses like diarrhea, cholera, and dysentery, women can focus on caretaking roles, avoid the additional burden of caring for sick family members, and contribute to the overall health and productivity of their families. Additionally, reducing waterborne diseases means less time spent on medical expenses and recovery, further increasing the economic well-being of families.

The participation of women in the planning, implementation, and management of water supply systems is a cornerstone of JJM's approach.

■ SURJIT SINGH FLORA

Is it essential for all new drivers to learn how to change a flat tire?

Why not indeed? It is an essential aspect of driving. Discover how to change a tire, check the oil, and fill the windscreen washer reservoir...essential skills like these.

I saw a driving instructor showing a student how to change a flat tire on a street in Brampton. This question popped into my mind. Is this included in the syllabus, or was the teacher particularly diligent? When I started my driving lessons in 1992, they never taught me how to change a flat tire.

If not the instructor, the father might need to teach their children how to change a tire, oil, spark plugs, and perform basic maintenance on a vehicle long before they reach driving age.

Changing a tire represents an opportunity for self-sufficiency rather than merely a task imposed on an individual. No parent desires to see their young children stranded on the side of the road, reliant on a phone call or the goodwill of strangers, when they are fully capable of addressing the situation themselves.

It is not necessary to be a rocket scientist in order to change a tire, and since I spent my childhood seeing other people doing it, the process soon became a piece of cake for me. Tire replacement will be beyond the capabilities of the vast majority of the younger generation.

Also, tires that are worn unevenly can lead to significant damage to the vehicle. Driving a vehicle with worn-out tires poses a significant safety hazard and increases the likelihood of accidents. A legal limit exists for tire tread depth, below which driving is prohibited without replacement. Take a look at this.

Some preventative measures you can take include maintaining the correct tire pressure and rotating the tires every six months. This will ensure your tires remain in good condi-

The ignorant mind, with its infinite afflictions, passions, and evils, is rooted in the three poisons. Greed, anger, and delusion.

-Bodhidharma

How to change a tire should be included in driving lessons?

tion and will extend their lifespan as intended by the manufacturer.

Low mileage does not guarantee that tires will have a long lifespan. No. Tires can deteriorate when left in a lot for extended periods. Inspect the tread at least once every three months to ensure it wears evenly and does not become bald.

The quality of the ride is closely linked to the state of the tires.

Absolutely! Hats off to that instructor! That information would benefit both new candidates and current drivers who need insight into what others might not know.

All licensed drivers should undoubtedly possess the necessary knowledge to change a tire. This includes understanding essential safety measures prior to beginning the task, such as selecting a safe location away from traffic, ensuring the ground is level, fully engaging the handbrake, putting the car in gear, using wheel chocks when necessary, and positioning warning signs. They should be familiar with the operation of the jack, wheel brace, spare tire, and warning triangles, as well as how to properly store and retrieve these items. It is crucial to have knowledge of jacking points, ensure a solid base and upright jack, loosen the wheel nuts slightly before raising the vehicle, and verify stability while changing the tire. Drivers must also know the correct order for removing the nuts, how to store them securely, and where to place the damaged tire for safety. Checking the inner hub of the spare tire for cleanliness, employing techniques to lift the heavy spare, and fitting the nuts correctly (to prevent cross-threading) using fingers are all important steps. The proper sequence and amount of tightening with a wrench before lowering the vehicle, as well as final tightening checks for torque, are also vital. The final steps before gathering the warning sign are to visually inspect the spare tire's pressure, pack up the tools, and handle the flat tire.

Learning how to change a tire during a driv-

ing lesson could be beneficial for several reasons.

Practical Skills: Changing a tire is a basic car maintenance skill that helps drivers manage emergencies efficiently. It fosters independence and assurance while driving.

Safety Awareness: Teaching this skill enhances awareness of vehicle safety and the need for preparedness during breakdowns. It prompts drivers to routinely check their vehicle's condition.

Concentrate on Driving Abilities: A driving lesson mainly assesses driving skills. Some argue that practical maintenance skills, though important, should be part of the driving lessons scope.

Alternative Education: Drivers can learn tire-changing skills through various programs or resources, like driving schools or online tutorials. Including tire-changing in driving lessons could boost practical knowledge and safety.

Changing a tire on a car usually takes 30 minutes to an hour, depending on a few factors:

Experience Level: An experienced individual may finish the task in 15-30 minutes, whereas a beginner could take longer. Also depends on tools available. The right tools (jack, lug wrench, and spare tire) can make the process quicker. Rusted or stuck lug nuts may require extra time for removal.

Also, it's very impotent changing a tire in a safe, flat area is faster than on the roadside or in hazardous weather. It's wise to give yourself extra time if you're not familiar with the process. If you know what you're doing, it's easy. Ideally, teach and test principles verbally.

Owning and driving a car involves more than just starting it, shifting gears, moving, steering, accelerating, decelerating, and stopping. Just as anyone licensed to carry a gun must comprehend more than just loading, aiming, and pulling the trigger, so too does driving a vehicle. Vehicles, guns, and

their users need licenses for a reason.

Motor vehicles, similar to guns, can be deadly weapons. "Licensed" should signify thorough teaching and testing. It pertains to the handling, upkeep, storage, and secure operation. Not every driver needs to be a mechanic. Every motorist should know how to recognize when something is wrong and have an idea of how to fix it. They should also know when to call a mechanic.

Having a flat tire while driving may result in a number of major problems, including the following:

When you continue to drive on a flat tire, you run the risk of causing permanent damage to the tire, which will render it hard to fix.

Wheel damage may occur when the weight of the vehicle presses directly on the wheel rim, without the cushioning effect of the tire. This can cause the wheel rim to get damaged.

A flat tire may have a substantial impact on the vehicle's handling, which can result in a loss of control over the vehicle. This, in turn, contributes to an increased likelihood of being involved in an accident.

It is possible for a flat tire to increase the distance that must be travelled in order to bring the vehicle to a halt, which may make the situation more hazardous in the event of an emergency.

In the event that the tire is damaged or only partly inflated, there is a possibility that it could blow out while the vehicle is being driven. This can result in an abrupt loss of control of the vehicle.

Risks to Safety Driving on a flat tire may be dangerous not just for the driver but also for other people who are using the road.

If you have reason to believe that your tire is flat, it is recommended to pull over in a safe location and examine the tire. If necessary, you should replace or repair the tire before continuing to drive.

(The author is a veteran journalist and freelance writer based in Brampton)

Maha Kumb Going Digital

■ OMKAR DATTATRAY

Kumb, Ardhha Kumb and Maha Kumb has a special significance in Sanatan Dharma.It has been going on since centuries and the Maha Kumb 2025 will be clean and green. The Maha Kumb this year will go digital and it is the novel initiative of the UT government of Yogi Adatyanath.Prayagraj is expected to host Maha Kumb Mela which will be participated by about 40 crore people. 2025 Prayagraj Maha Kumb will begin on January 13 and will last to February 26.It is the world's largest gathering as people from India and other parts of the globe visit Prayagraj for participation in Maha Kumb and will take holy dip at the confluence of Rivers Ganga,Yammuna and mystical Sarswati. The Uttar Pradesh government is rolling out a digitalization plan.AI technology ,mobile apps,Chatbots ,a digital lost and found centre and even Google navigation will guide the millions gathered for the Maha Kumbh. UP government lays out 'Digital Kumbh'experience for the visitors.Initiative will involve AI-Powered cameras,Google-assisted navigation & a chatbot ,digital lost and found centre to be set up.To tackle a concern among people that has been long associated with the Kumbh Mela -that of getting lost during one of the largest religious gatherings ,expected to be attended by around 40 crore people in January 2025 in Prayagraj.The primary goal of digitizing is to help the largest number of the people participating in this years Maha Kumbh Mela so that they feel ease at the Prayagraj.Kumbh Mela

2025 for the first time The Rigveda speaks of a divine event called the "Sagar Manthan"or churning of cosmic ocean ,which is considered the genesis of the Maha Kumbh Mela.Legend has it that during this cosmic churning a pot-Kumbh containing the elixir {Amrita"} appeared.The Maha Kumbh Mela ,is a timeless tapestry of faith and fervor ,unfolds like a sacred epic ,weaving together the threads of history,spirituality and cultural heritage.This grand pilgrimage held cyclically at four sacred riverbanks of the Ganges ,Yamuna,and Sarsawati ,Haridwar along the Ganges,Nashik on Godavari ,and Ujjain on the Shipra-is not merely a contemporary spectacle but a tradition steeped in profound historical significance.As we embark on a journey through time,we unravel the layers of history that have shaped the sanctity and prominence of the Kumbh Mela.The roots of the Maha Kumbh Mela can be traced back to ancient Hindu scriptures and mythological narratives.The ancient references to a similar pilgrimage are found in the Rigveda ,one of the oldest sacred texts of Hinduism.The Rigveda speaks of a divine event called the "Sagar Manthan"or churning of the cosmic ocean ,which is considered as the genesis of the Maha Kumbh.Legend has it that during the cosmic churning a pot -kumbh emerged .The celestial struggle for possession ofthis divine nectar ensued,leading to a celestial battle that spanned twelve divine days ,equivalent to twelve human years.Drops of nectar fell on four locations on earth ,marking the sites where the Kumbh Mela is cele-

brated today.The Kumbh mela finds its first historical references during the Maurya and Gupta periods ,approximately from the 4th century BCE to 6th century CE.During this period ,the great Indian emperor Ashoka is said to have played a pivotal role in the establishment & promotion of Buddhism. .Historical records suggest that the Maha Kumbh Mela in its nascent form attracted pilgrims from various corners of the Indian sub-continent.In the contemporary era ,the Kumbh Mela has transformed into a global phenomenon ,drawing not only millions of domestic pilgrims but also attracting international attention.The UNESCO recognition of the Kumbh Mela as an intangible cultural heritage of humanity in 2017 further underscored its historical and cultural significance.The Kumbh Mela today is a manifestation of India's rich cultural and religious heritage.It serves as a testament to the resilience of ancient traditions in the face of modernity.The historical evolution of the Maha Kumbh Mela from ancient scriptures to the present day ,reflects its ability to adapt and thrive ,preserving its sanctity and spiritual essence.The main objectives of digitalization of Maha Kumbh are to improve security,increase visibility,monitor activities ,and ensure efficient service delivery.The UP government has introduced a digital plan to help people navigate the Kumb Mela 2025 with ease.This initiative ,supported by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and chief minister UP Yogi Adityanath ,aims to provide a modern digital experience for both attendees and those

unable to visit in person.The chief minister has also launched a new website and app, offering detailed information on key areas such as ghats,akharas,religious sites,and travel options to enhance the overall experience.In an interview with the Times of India,Kumbh Mela Adhikari Vijay Kiran Anand stated,"Work is being done for the chatbot .Through this,devotees will easily reach the camp where they want to go.They will not have to wander anywhere."For the first time ,advanced technologies like artificial intelligence will be implemented during the Maha Kumbh.The Prayagraj Mela authority will also be able to track services provided at the event,including the Ganga Aarti Puja,through online platforms.For added convenience ,3D images of all camps will be uploaded to the official website,offering visitors a clear view of facilities and accommodation.To ensure security and cleanliness during the Maha Kumb2025,100AI cameras will be installed at the mela.These cameras will monitor activities and alert the police to any issue.Scanners will also be installed in all toilets to track their cleanliness and maintenance in real time.During chief minister Yogi Adityanath's visit to Prayagraj ,an agreement was signed between the UP government and Google.This partnership will enable Google to offer an online view of the entire tent city.Visitors will also be able to access detailed information about attractions such as laser shows,water sports,and more through the official website.For the first time,cutting -edge

technologies ,including chatbots,Google navigation,and artificial intelligence AI ,will be used during the Maha Kumbh .Through internet platforms,the Prayagraj Mela authorities will also be able to monitor services offered throughout the event ,such as the Ganga Aarti Puja.All camps will have 3D photo posted to the official website for visitors convenience ,providing a clear glimpse of the amenities and lodging.One hundred artificial intelligence cameras will be set up in the mela to guarantee cleanliness and security during the Maha Kumbh 2025.These cameras will monitor the situation and notify the police of any problems.Additionally ,scanners will be fitted in every toilet to monitor upkeep and cleanliness in real time.Maha Kumbh 2025 will give UP chance to showcase its tourism potential.The starte tourism department will set up a Digital Kumbh Museum to showcase the cultural heritage of India and offer insight into the mythological and historical significance of the Kumbh.To leverage its religious and spiritual tourism potential ,the UP government is pitching for global branding of Maha Kumbh Mela 2025,one of the world's largest congregations of pilgrims."Maha Kumbh 2025 will represent India and UP before domestic and international tourists.It is therefore imperative that visitors carry back a bouquet of pleasant memories of their stay.Therefore we are going all out in our preparations."Although Kumbh is essentially a and the religious event,it has a major socioeconomic footprint and the state is going

to promote maha kumbh to harness its religious,spiritual,and cultural tourism potential for job creation ,socioeconomic growth and cultivating a positive image for UP,which is aspiring to become India's first one trillion dollar economy.To host an enormous congregation of devotees ,a gargantuan 4,000-hectare tent city is being set up in Prayagraj.It will be illuminated with 67,000 streetlights,and comprise 2,000 tents and 25,000 public accommodations for different categories of tourists.About 23,000 CCTV cameras and AI -based surveillance will complement the security paraphernalia of the tent city at the bank of Sangam,the confluence of Ganga,Yamuna and mythical Saraswati in Prayagraj.The state budget for Kumbh has jumped 78% from Rs 4,200 crore in Kumbh Mela 2019 to Rs 7,500 crore for Maha Kumbh 2025.Main religious ritual is a holy dip in the waters at the Sangam - the confluence of the three sacred rivers.Prayagraj is considered as the holiest of the holy pilgrimages in Hinduism and a holy dip there is believed to give salvation to devotees.In short the Maha Kumbh Mela has been digitized and let us pass on our cultural ,spiritual and religious legacy to the future generations and keep ourselves aware of our rich cultural and religious roots.Kumbh Mela in fact symbolizes the spiritual,cultural and religious legacy of India.

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

Entrepreneurship Beyond Definition

Businesses should not exploit labour or decrease the quality of life by any means. They necessarily need to be problem solver to create social values

■ SAJJAD BAZAZ

Have you noticed that entrepreneurship, business ownership and startup ventures are the most talked solutions to address unemployment issues? Actually, these have assumed significance after the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 that imbalanced the centuries old socio-economic landscape. People on mass scale either lost their jobs or saw their income facing drastic cuts, adversely affecting their livelihoods and domestic budgets. While helping themselves out of the crisis, we witnessed the boom of entrepreneurship, small businesses and the culture of startups as the pandemic shattered the established world-order in a single stroke, affecting all walks of human life be it economic, health, social or mental well-being.

In fact, the crisis on the whole put a host of challenges to entrepreneurs, businesses and startups (old as well as new ones) as they were left with no option but to align their ventures in line with the changed (and continues to change) business scenario to remain afloat. Pertinently, entrepreneurship is important to the Indian economy as they contribute significantly to the country's GDP.

Let's have a look at the culture of entrepreneurship, small businesses and

startups being promoted in Kashmir. Here entrepreneurship has been given a different meaning. Ironically, simple selling of bread, butter, potatoes, tomatoes etc is called entrepreneurship in Kashmir. In fact, every second person you meet claims to be an entrepreneur, business owner or a startup.

For the past few years, we have observed a shift in the attitude of our youth, especially educated youth, as most of them are looking beyond government jobs to carve out a living for themselves. I could feel a spark in our youth force not only to get self employed but also to generate employment for others. During the course of time we have observed many youth establishing their business ventures here and there in the region and projecting their activities as entrepreneurship. For example, running a franchise of an established brand or selling fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) or consumer packaged goods (CPG) is called entrepreneurship here.

Basically, doing a business just for profits alone and entrepreneurship are two different concepts. Entrepreneurship is not only limited to starting a business to earn profits. A good business model embedded with social responsibility, ability to swallow financial risk, creativity, time management, be ready for anything attitude,

ability to be flexible, think out of box, resilience after failure, stress management and the ability to think strategically are some of the qualities which makes an entrepreneur. Acting like a commissioning and forwarding agent is not entrepreneurship.

General rules apart, socially responsible entrepreneurship carries a huge value at our place. Besides making profits, entrepreneurship should equally pursue solutions to our plenty of social problems. It should change the way we live and work. In addition to creating wealth from entrepreneurial ventures, there should also be creation of jobs and the conditions for a prosperous society. This way our entrepreneurs in true sense can turn out to be our national assets which then need to be cultivated, motivated and remunerated to the greatest possible extent.

In short, our young brigade of 'entrepreneurs' need to stick to the basic concept of entrepreneurship to act as change agents to create social value. And in all circumstances, the entrepreneurs have to be problem solvers. In the words of Sonam Wangechuk, an internationally renowned innovator from Ladakh,"Entrepreneurs are not those who just make money and more money. Entrepreneurs are problem solvers. If you are not problem solvers, you are not

entrepreneurs". He went on to add, "If you're making money, and even problem-solving, you're not a good entrepreneur. You have to be helping others come up with you. Then you are true entrepreneurs".

Last, but not the least. One more important contribution expected from the entrepreneurs would be to address climate change. Since entrepreneurship development has always been a thrust area at our place, it would be in the fitness of things to see 'green concept' embedded in their business models. For example, let it be mandatory for entrepreneurs here to base their projects on the use of alternative renewable energy resources like solar energy.

Since availability of power is crucial to the sustainable growth of entrepreneurship culture, harnessing solar energy would not only help to fight the power crisis, but will also give impetus to the concept of 'green entrepreneurship'. This small step will go a long way to protect our environment from impurities.

Notably, green industry business is pitched as a cornerstone among the possible measures that can help to reverse the damage caused to the ecosystem. In this set-up, the businesses have to operate by using sustainable materials to produce products and minimize strain on natural resources. For example, busi-

nesses making minimum possible use of water & energy and using raw materials in renewable and eco-friendly ways form part of green industry business.

So, all this sums up for promoting a green economy. However, the process of transition to a green economy depends on an all-new mindset as well as the ability of skilled human resources who can work for various sectors. A green economy means sustainable development with environmental protection measures in place.

Here a statement from an expert is worth quoting: "A green economy is thought to be based on three pillars - People, Profits and Planet. An economy needs to have healthy communities and thereby a healthy workforce. Businesses that are part of the green economy need to commit themselves to providing products and services which are ethical. It should also be made sure that the businesses do not exploit labour or decrease the quality of life by any means."

In short, there is a dire need to make better use of natural resources, using green technologies. As said by Bill Gates: "We somehow must get to zero greenhouse gas emissions to avoid climate disaster while maintaining digital momentum and closing the digital divide". Remarkably,a World

Economic Forum study shows that investing in nature-positive models - industry actions that add value to ecosystems and biodiversity - could add up to \$10.1 trillion in annual business value and create 395 million jobs by 2030.

So, it makes sense for businesses to rethink their business strategies leveraging green technology to drastically reduce the impact of humans on the environment, lessen resource usage and simultaneously incorporate renewable resources. Respecting the natural resources and reversing the damage caused to the ecosystem by our actions is a guarantee to a healthy future.

To conclude, the final message to our entrepreneurs is that they seriously need to be problem solvers not only to build fortunes for themselves, but also help the societies and communities to get scaled up on the socio-economic front. They also need to protect and promote a clean environment in their region by embedding green concepts in their entrepreneurship, business and startup ventures. A Chinese proverb is worth quoting: The frog does not drink up the pond in which it lives.

(The author a veteran journalist & columnist)

