


NATION-BUILDING

The youth of any country are its most dynamic, energetic, and creative segment of society. They embody the potential to bring about transformative changes and play a crucial role in shaping the future of the nation. Greater involvement of youth in nation-building is not only desirable but also essential for sustainable progress. Their fresh ideas, innovative thinking, and enthusiasm can drive social, economic, and political development, ensuring that a nation keeps pace with global advancements.

Youth involvement in nation-building begins with education and awareness. An informed and educated youth understands the social, political, and economic challenges facing their country. They can then contribute meaningfully through constructive dialogue, innovative solutions, and active participation in social initiatives. By encouraging young people to engage in volunteering, community service, and social welfare projects, nations can harness their energy to address pressing issues like poverty, illiteracy, environmental degradation, and public health.

Political engagement is another vital avenue for youth contribution. By participating in political processes, joining youth wings of political parties, or engaging in policy-making initiatives, young people can influence decisions that directly impact the nation's future. Encouraging youth leadership ensures a continuous infusion of fresh perspectives in governance, making policies more inclusive and responsive to the needs of all citizens. When the youth take an active role in governance, it strengthens democracy and fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility toward national development. Economic development is equally dependent on the active involvement of young people. Entrepreneurs, innovators, and skilled professionals from the youth segment can drive technological advancements, create employment opportunities, and boost the country's productivity. Governments and institutions should provide platforms, training, and resources to support young entrepreneurs and innovators. This not only stimulates economic growth but also reduces unemployment and promotes self-reliance among the youth. Social development also benefits immensely from youth participation. Young people can champion social causes, promote cultural preservation, and raise awareness about important issues like gender equality, environmental conservation, and human rights. Their active engagement fosters a more equitable and compassionate society, where citizens collectively work toward common goals. The involvement of youth in nation-building is indispensable for creating a prosperous, progressive, and resilient nation. By providing opportunities, guidance, and encouragement, societies can empower young people to contribute effectively across political, social, and economic spheres. Investing in youth is, in essence, investing in the future of the nation.

YOUR COLUMN



Dear Editor,
I want to brought in your notice that four bridges among road towards Chhanni Himmat Housing Colony blocked by Traffic Department which lead to inconvenience to general public. For smooth flow of traffic need to deploy more traffic police man but Traffic Department blocked four bridges and a road towards Chhanni Housing Colony which not a solution of problem.
So, kindly order to concerned Traffic Department to open all blocked bridges / road at Trikuta Nagar in the interest of general public
Mohd Sadiq Poswal, Trikuta Nagar

■ DR. BANARSI LAL

Every year 5th of December is observed as the World Soil Day across the globe to create awareness on the importance of soil quality for human well-being, food security and healthy ecosystem by addressing the challenges in soil health management by encouraging the various organisations, communities and individuals across the globe. The theme of 2025 World Soil Day is "Healthy soils for healthy cities".The theme promotes the fundamental role of urban soil. Its objective is to focus on the role of soils in cities and the challenges posed by soil sealing and urbanisation.Urban soils provide essential ecosystem services and they support food production,filter water,store carbon,regulate temperatures and sustain biodiversity.This day invites policymakers,scientists,city leaders,civil society and citizens to reimagine urban spaces through their soils ensuring that people and nature can thrive together in healthy green cities.On this day awareness is created on the importance of maintaining the healthy ecosystems and human well-being by addressing the growing challenges in soil management, increasing soil awareness and encouraging to improve soil health.Beneath asphalt,buildings and streets lies soil that if permeable and vegetated,helps absorb rainwater ,regulate temperature,store carbon and improve air quality.When soil is cemented with cement,it loses these functions making cities more vulnerable to flooding,overheating and pollution in urban areas. This day aims to create awareness on the sustainable soil health management and is celebrated across the globe to generate and communicate healthy soil knowledge for the farmers so that the quality and safe food can be produced for the human beings. This day aims to connect people with soils and raise awareness on the critical importance in our lives. The International Union of Soil Sciences in 2002 adopted a resolution proposing the 5th of December as World Soil Day to celebrate the importance of soil, a critical component of the natural system and as a vital contributor to the human well-being. It was firstly celebrated on December 5, 2012, which corresponds with the birthday of Thai King Bhumibol Adulyadej, who officially sanctioned the event.

Healthy soils are the foundation of life on Earth.Soil provides living space for the living organisms as well as the ecosystem services which are essential for the water regulation, biodiversity conservation, carbon sequestration etc. Presently the soil is under tremendous pressure due to increase in population at an alarming rate and higher demand for food. Problems like deforestation, bad agricultural practices and soil pollution have degraded soil. It has been observed that around 33 per cent of global soils are degraded.Soil is the basis of food, fuel, feed, fiber production, for services of ecosystems and human well-being. It is the greatest reservoir of biodiversity. It is the critical component of the natural system and as a vital contributor to the human commonwealth through its contribution to food, water and energy



security and as a mitigator of biodiversity loss and climate change. It is the top layer of the earth which is familiar to everybody. It is a finite natural resource. It is non-renewable in nature. Although soil plays an essential role in human livelihood but there is worldwide degradation in soil due its inappropriate management practices, population pressure and inadequate governance over this essential resource. The nutritional value of the food we eat is directly associated with the soil health. Soil high in organic carbon content enables better rainfall infiltration and retention and provides greater resilience to drought. Soil helps in food production, biodiversity and energy maintenance. Soils are vulnerable to carbon loss through degradation but regenerative land management practices can build and restore soil health. Soil is constituted of organic remains, clay and rock particles found on the earth's surface. Soil health is being deteriorated by the unhealthy agricultural practices, deforestation and pollution. There is urgent need to create awareness among the farmers on soil health and technical and scientific advice should be provided to them. A healthy soil is a living ecosystem in which the dead organic matter forms the base of a food web consisting of microscopic and larger organisms.

Soils supply nutrients and water which are vital for plants and are home to organisms that interact with plants. Healthy soils are needed to produce the healthy food and zero hunger. Healthy soil is the key to sustaining life and the adoption of sustainable land management practices are becoming more and more important. It is estimated that natural processes take more than 500 years to form 2 centimeters of topsoil. Soil stores around 10 per cent of the worlds carbon dioxide emissions. Microbial activities controls and manipulates the chemistry of the soil. Living organisms in the soil control water infiltration, mineral density and nutrient cycling. Fungi and bacteria help to break

down organic matter in the soil and earthworms digest organic matter, recycle nutrients and make the soil surface richer. In a handful of fertile soil, there are more individual organisms than the total number of human beings that have ever existed on the earth. Although soil plays an essential role for the human livelihoods but there is worldwide increase in the degradation of soil resources due to inappropriate management practices, population pressure driving unsustainable intensification and inadequate governance over this essential resource. Increase in the soil carbon builds a precious reservoir and helps to offset greenhouse gas emissions. Soil improves our resilience to floods and droughts. It also contributes in the fertility of the soil, the foundation for all land-based natural and agricultural ecosystems which provide a major part of the world's food supply, natural resources and biodiversity.

More than 10 million people have abandoned their homelands because of environmental issues including drought, soil erosion, desertification and deforestation. Majority of the known antibiotics originated from soil bacteria including penicillin. Soil pollution affects food security by reducing the crop yield and food quality. Soil holds three times as much carbon as the atmosphere and can help us to meet the challenges of a changing climate. About 815 million people are food insecure and 2 billion people are nutritionally insecure but we can mitigate this through soil. About 95 per cent of our food comes from soil and about 33 per cent of our soils are already degraded. Soil acts as the filter for many contaminants but its buffering capacity is finite. If the latter exceeds then contaminants can seep into the environment and enter in the food chain. The government has initiated a number of developmental schemes and programmes which have the potential to immensely benefit the farming community by strengthening the roots of agricul-

ture. On 19th February, 2015 the Prime Minister of India launched the nationwide Soil Health Card Scheme from Suratgarh, Rajasthan. Soil Health Card Scheme is a national movement across the country. Under this scheme the soil sample is taken by the experts from the farmer's field and tested in a soil health laboratory. Then the soil health card is issued to the farmers regarding the ingredients and deficiencies in the soil. On the basis of the results of the soils of respective farmer field, he can add the plants nutrients in the soil accordingly. This scheme may not only maintain the health of the soil but will also reduce the cost of cultivation. This will also help to identify the best crop suited in the respective field. Soil conservation programmes are organised by the Government and also Non-Governmental agencies in our country. Major objective of soil conservation is to keep everything in the soil in its place. It manages the soil erosion and process of sedimentation. Soil fertility needs to be restored in order to allow a satisfactory and early return on the capital and labour invested. Most of the soil conservation programmes emphasize on soil degradation than on the top-down approach in recommending and disseminating practices. Soil conservation programmes that aim to reduce soil degradation problems need long-term bottom-up approach. There is urgent need to promote the practices for maintaining the healthy soils. Healthy soils are the solutions of our many problems.We need to make efforts to build greener,more resilient and healthier cities.De-sealing,green roofs,urban vegetation and agriculture and sustainable urban planning can turn soil into opportunities to strengthen climate action,improve public health and minimize disaster risks and foster greener risks.

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Military Hospital Satwari- An oasis of medical care for soldiers

■ SQUADRON LEADER ANIL SEHGAL

Not many proud Dogras, if any, know it. Dhanwantari Mahey, the only Dogra freedom fighter sent to the dreaded Kala Pani, was born in the military hospital, Satwari, Jammu (in its erstwhile avatar), on 7 March 1902, to Colonel Durga Dutt Mahey, a doctor employed in the then Maharaja's army.

Considering the condition of civil medical care in Jammu (not optimal) let us have an overview on the epic and span, and greatly professional, military hospitals.

For this purpose, I met and interacted with Brigadier Faiz Ahmad, the commandant who has since shifted to Command Hospital, Pune. He a renowned neuro physician of the armed forces, who heads this military hospital in Jammu cantonment for the past two years. The present incumbent at Jammu is Brigadier Shalin Trivedi, a reputed anaesthesiologist.

'Military hospital' is a generic term we use for hospitals maintained by the army, navy and the air force. Beside the ever increasing plethora of corporate hospitals, these are some of the cleanest medical care centres run with professional excellence, discipline and utmost care; quite unlike most of the hospitals run by civilian authorities in the country. The 166 Military Hospital at Jammu is clean, very clean and professionally well managed.

Gods have been more than kind to me; I was never hospitalized as a student, right up to the time I selected a career. Thereafter, I was treated at the military hospitals whenever a need arose.

So my dear readers can understand how my first and only visit to the Jammu medical college hospital shocked me no end. It was devastating to see suffering masses running from post to pillar seeking medical help, the understaffed system, harassed and overworked doctors, uncleanness prevailing all around. Shocking and pathetic!

In contrast, a chance visit to the military hospital Jammu is like visiting an oasis in the desert of medical care in the Dogrland. Neat and clean, spick and span, located in the quiet wilderness of the city outskirts - this medical centre is efficiently run under the baton of Brigadier Faiz MH Ahmad, the commandant.

Let us get a perspective on the Jammu MH by bringing in another MH, a famous one from Mumbai.

I live in Mumbai and have the privilege to



visit I N H S Asvini (Indian Naval Hospital Ship Asvini), a military hospital maintained by the Indian Navy. The oldest Command Hospital of the Indian Navy, INHS Asvini derives its name from the Vedic deities Asvins or Asvin Kumaras, who were proficient in the knowledge of health, medicine, and science. The acronym INHS stands for Indian Naval Hospital Ship and is prefixed to all military hospitals maintained by the Indian Navy.

The revered Hindu scripture Rig Veda depicts the Asvins as guardian deities who tend to the ailments of people by ensuring their safety, further coming to aid in time of need.

Located in Navy Nagar, Colaba, INHS Asvini was commissioned into the Indian Navy on 18 September 1951. Even though it has only been 71 years since its establishment, the facility has a remarkable background of over 250 years of history.

In comparison, the MH at Jammu, under the leadership of Brigadier Shaleen Trivedi, is much smaller in size, but scores high on scales of care and dedication of the personnel posted here.

To give you an example, Lt Col Mohammed

Abbas Jafri dies not close his OPD until he has seen the last patient waiting ; his orthopaedic OPD invariably runs far beyond the official closing time of 1400 hours ; sometime up till 1600 hrs and beyond.

And this makes me wonder, at least on basic professional conduct (that does not need money!!) : can the civil hospitals not learn from the conduct and experience of these doctors of the armed forces ?

Featuring among the 112 Military Hospitals, 12 Air Force Hospitals and 10 Naval Hospitals in India, the 166 MH acts as a referral hospital for the patients of Poonch, Rajouri, Akhnoor and Samba in Jammu province. It provides cover as a garrison hospital for the troops and families of Army, Air Force & GREF located in and around Jammu and Nagrota.

The staffing and management of any MH is provided by the Army Medical Corps (AMC), which is the apex body of the military medical care services in India. Its history makes for a fascinating reading, tracing to the formation of the East India Company in 1600.

It is a subject matter of history how, with the passage of time, this trading company

(East India) acquired control of large chunks of the Indian subcontinent and became a political power.

It is interesting to realise that at one time, the Company grew so big that it became the largest corporation of the world and even maintained her own armed forces of nearly 2,60,000 soldiers. It was almost twice the number of soldiers in the British Army !

This necessitated recruitment of civilian medical surgeons on contractual basis. In less than two decades, this contractual recruitment that began in 1745, later became a regular part of the armies of the Company, in 1764.

This is how the Bengal Presidency Medical Service was formed on the first of January 1764. It was followed by a similar medical service for Madras in 1767 and for Bombay in 1779. These three medical services were combined into the Indian Medical Services (IMS) in Apr 1886 under a Surgeon General to the Government of India. This formation was civilian in nature.

Until 1939, the IMS continued to provide medical services to the troops, in collaboration with IMD (Indian Medical Department)

and auxiliary formations like Army Bearer Corps and Army Hospital Corps.

With the breakout of the second world war, it became imperative to have a homogenous medical service for the armed forces. On 3 April 1943, a composite Indian Army Medical Corps (IAMC) was formed, which later, on 26 January 1950, was rechristened as Army Medical Corps (AMC).

The 500 bedded medical care facility at Jammu is equipped with the state of the art medical equipment. The OPD services are automated in terms of generation and maintenance of patients' records.

Computerised medical stores, laboratory and dispensary services too are available for lakhs of serving and retired soldiers in Jammu province, especially from Kathua-Jammu-Rajauri & Poonch areas.

Usually with an occupancy of above 250 patients, the hospital provides services in medicine, surgery, orthopedics, eye, ENT and psychology. A modern pathology and microbiology set up is available with complete radiology services incl CT & MRI facilities.

The gynaecology and obstetrics department of this MH is the busiest obstetric centre in armed forces, clocking more than 1600 deliveries in 2024. The overall OPD footfall is approx 1200 patients daily.

During the recent Op Sindoor the work of the hospital has been defining and admired far and wide. It rendered care of the highest level, especially to the BSF casualties, for which the hospital received the first ever Unit Commendation from the director general of the Border Security Force.

Following the hospital motto of polite behaviour, skillful treatment, Brig Trivedi and his team of dedicated professionals has strives hard to provide better facilities to the large population of veterans in the region, during the past two years of his command.

The local civil administration should chip in and provide uninterrupted electricity and better travel services to the large number of veterans (mostly senior citizens) who travel from far flung areas catered by this military establishment. Keeping the soldiers healthy is the duty of the civil administration as well. This will bring additional dividends in the form of safety to the long borders of the country and better deterrent to the enemy.

