> "As long as the shackles of wealth and property bind us, we will remain accursed forever and never attain the altar of humanity, which is life's ultimate goal. -Munshi Premchand"

EDITORIAL

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Advances in Artificial Intelligence (AI) will allow teachers to create personalized education plans based on the needs and interests of each student. These AI machines will be able to analyze a student's face and customize the curriculum according to his or her particular needs. Additionally, they will also understand how to provide a student when they need extra help and make their learning materials more accessible. The technology will also allow teachers to use AI tools to help students with disabilities or who speak another language. For example, a machine called a Presentation Translator will be able to provide subtitles for teachers and students during a presentation. This AI technology will revolutionize the way education is delivered and made available across the world. Advances in AI will enable teachers to deliver personalized education plans based on the needs and interests of students in the education system. These AI machines can customize studies based on a student's specific needs by analyzing their face. Additionally, they can help explain the related topic if more assistance is needed. The technology will also allow teachers to use AI tools to help students with disabilities or those who speak a second language.

It is generally said that the implementation of AI is leading to advancements in various fields. Along with this, with its use, common people are also getting the facilities of better and easier life. For this, it is necessary for people to understand this new technology and be capable of using it.

Become better people to have a better community

■ MAHADEEP SINGH JAMWAL

Today we are living in a materialistic world where the standard of living has risen but at the same time the standard of life is waning unabatedly. The erosion of moral values in our society has become a very disturbing phenomenon and because of degrading moral values, society today is marked by violence, greed, theft, drug addiction and crime whereas moral values inspire, motivate and engage people to discharge obligations or duties. A valuable quote from Bhagavad Gita, "It is better to live your own destiny imperfectly than to live and imitate somebody else's life with perfection." Moral values are normative systems that manage and regulate conduct in a society to promote peaceful and successful inter-subjectivity among persons who acknowledge one another as right-bearers. Moral values are a set of societal measuring standards that serve as guidelines for human behavior. The moral values refer to the ideals that guide our actions. Societies will not be able to thrive for long if these principles are not followed, that is to ensure fairness and harmony among individuals; to help us become better people to have a better community. With these moral codes, every offender will avoid performing the task of crime to some extent. It can be seen that the morality of a person will stop him from committing crimes to some extent and if every person makes some sort of moral code then their morality will surely stop them from committing a crime. This is a completely private practice in which the law has no role to play. Thus moral values are ambassadors in promoting a crime free society. Where moral values exist the society is crime free.

Moral values refer to a set of principles that guide an individual on how to evaluate right versus wrong. People generally apply moral values to just decisions, intentions and actions, but it also applies to define the personal character of a person. Moral values are something that teaches us good virtues like honesty, truthfulness, kindness, integrity, helpfulness, compassion, respectful, love, respect for others, hard work, co-operation, and forgiveness etc. The one who is noble in his deeds will always be followed and sets an example for the society. All men are not of the same nature because of the preponderance of the different traits in them. The moral degradation in our society has reached such a level that calls for concern. The degradation of moral values in our society today has become a phenomenon. There are many factors due to which the decline in moral values has been seen now-a-days. Future of a nation rests on the shoulders of youths. Youths are considered the driving force and power engine to the nation. At present there is a diminishing trend of moral values among our new generations. But nowadays youth are adversely diverted towards different immoral activities, therefore, it's everyone's duty to find out the solution of these crucial problems which depends on the hands of the young generations. When we refer to India as the Country of Youths, we notice Youth in India is getting increasingly inclined towards violence, social evils and lack of respect towards elders and teachers which can break down social harmony as well as national integration. We can think of this changing behavior in our youth affecting this degradation could be, influence of nuclear families and materialistic way of life, breakdown of parental control of children in the families, influence of peer groups, gender bias, attraction of change or modernization, influence of mass media, lacking of learning positive atmosphere at school, lacking of co-curricular activities based on moral values, dirty politics, desire of self-exhibition, lack of academic syllabus related to human values, blind following of western culture and many more. Over influence of mass media, print media, internet, T.V, websites, cinemas, plays an important role in having and shaping the personalities of the youth. Nowadays, we can observe these days that youths have lost their morality completely and the most contributing factor towards this declining morality is youth's inclination towards mobile phones and internet. Mobile/Internet addiction has grown among the youths of today. Many of them are not only neutralizing violence but often glorify it. There is so much violence and unwanted scenes in all these entertainment avenues and if a majority of the youth watches these, the impact of the same on the next generation cannot be positive. Influence of nuclear family and materialistic way of life is also another diminishing factor of moral values among the youths. Unhappy life, influence of entertainment means, undesirable films, obscene novels, heroism, desire to get rich soon etc. hasten moral degradation among youths. Our education system fails to impart moral and ethical values among the youths. Considering these factors and brainstorming against fighting these affecting factors is the earnest duty of every responsible citizen of the society. Here in Hinduism the Bhagavad Gita comes to our rescue as how to build character and guide us to be merciful, obedient, truthful, equitable, saintly, magnanimous, mild-mannered, clean, simple, charitable and peaceful. In Sikhism the Sikh Gurus taught Sat (truth), Daya (compassion), Santokh (contentment), Nimrata (humility), and Pyaar (love) as fundamental moral values and qualities and directed them to follow them. Likewise many virtues/good character traits/moral qualities such as kindness, charity, forgiveness, honesty, patience, justice, respecting parents and elders, keeping promises, and controlling one's anger, are commanded or encouraged in the Islam. Moral orientation of youths needs to be strengthened to build up a moral and harmonious society. Youths can be the agents of social change by accepting to live by moral codes and conduct.

NDA expanding versus INDI Alliance shrinking

■ OMKAR DATTATRAY

The two rival political alliances and arrangements of NDA and I.N.D.I.A are staunch opponents of each other. But the hard reality is that while NDA is broadening with each passing day while I.N.D.I A is contracting day by day and the later is shrinking which is against alliance dharma. The NDA is a grouping of 38 political parties and I.N.D.I.A is the Mahaghatbandhan of 26 political parties which has been formed recently in year 2023,while the NDA has been formed way back in May 1998 as a coalition to fight the general elections. The INDI Alliance has been formed with the objective to fight Modi's NDA and BJP and to defeat Modi's designs to again come to power at the centre at the third time in succession .But the difference between the two alliances is that while NDA is doing positive and developmental politics and INDI Alliance is doing only negative politics and one point agenda of INDI Alliance is only to counter Modi and anyhow to obstruct him from reaching again to power at the centre.

It seems Modi and his NDA has magnetic attraction and so political parties get attracted towards it and the INDI Alliance is shrinking with each passing day. The old friend Nitish Kumar with his JD(U) have again allied with NDA. Similarly Akali Dal is also coming close to NDA and is again aligning with it. In the same way Chandra Babu Naidu's Telugu Desam is coming to NDA fold before general elections.

Earlier JD(S) has aligned with NDA. Today RLD has aligned with NDA and it shows that new and new parties are aligning with NDA. Thus NDA is working on the doctrine of making alliances with more and more regional parties.

Thus NDA is expanding while INDI Alliance is shrinking day by day as the aligning partners are drifting away from the INDI Alliance and it is a matter of serious concern for this newly formed grouping .It is very unfortunate for INDI Alliance,that its co founder and architect Nitish Kumar with his JDU has parted ways with INDI Alliance and has jumped in the bandwagon of NDA which is no less than a shock wave for INDI Alliance.

It is very unfortunate for the INDI Alliance that the very same leader who has toiled a lot and burned mid night oil for the INDI Alliance has parted ways with INDI Alliance and has joined with the NDA his political rival.

The politics is very strange as Nitish Kumar had earlier declared that he would prefer to die than align with NDA and Home Minister Amit Shah has said umpteen times in past that the doors of NDA are permanently closed for Nitish Kumar and one wonders what has happened to such extreme standing and declaration of the rival groupings.

It has proved the old quote that in politics everything is fair and there are strange bed fellows in politics. INDI Alliance has been formed for unseating Modi and defeat his ruling party's electoral juggernaut. The acronym ,which stands for Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance ,comprises India's previously fractured opposition parties that are aiming to keep Modi governments increasingly powerful sway at bay.

At stake, the alliance says ,is the future of India's multiparty democracy and secular foundations that critics say have seen assaults from Modi's Hindu nationalist BJP.

There is infighting, groupism and factionalism in INDI Alliance and with each passing day partners are leaving and deserting it and joining NDA and thus when INDI Alliance itself is unstable as fissures have erupted it and so how can it fight the mighty NDA at the end of the day.

Partners are deserting INDI Alliance and not only this but are also joining NDA fold for greener pastures and thus has the arc hectic of INDI Alliance deserted it within few months of its formation and joined NDA and it gave a strong jerk to INDI Alliance and it is now clear that this combination of opposition parties will find it difficult to fight the NDA in the upcoming Lok Sabha polls.

The different partners of the INDI Alliance combination want to project their leaders as the prime ministerial candidates and as such there are as many prime ministerial faces as the number of allies and thus there is complete lack of unity in the opposition bloc and therefore it cannot fight the NDA at the time of general elections.

There are certain indications that in coming days some other partners will desert INDI Alliance and jump to NDA club and this will expose the fragility of INDI Alliance opposition bloc and if it happens, it will led the opposition alliance to be on the ventilator and it will spread doom for opposition parties.

For keeping together the partners of INDI Alliance bloc should learn and be ready to sacrifice for the cause of unity in the rank and file of the opposition alliance and then and only than it can dent the image of DNA in the general elections, otherwise not.

INDI Alliance bloc should learn lesions from NDA and forge unity to fight the NDA at the hastings . Otherwise this INDI Alliance experiment is bound to fail as it cannot defeat NDA in Lok Sabha elections.

Therefore what is needed most in INDI Alliance is that there should be no clicks and no crakes in the opposition bloc but all the partners should learn the doctrine of accommodative politics and be ready to sacrifice for the unity of INDI Alliance and then and then only it can fight the NDA in general elections. But as of now ,nothing is so visible in INDI Alliance bloc as the dissidence and mutual infighting and in this way it cannot fight NDA in upcoming elections.

Thus instead of parting ways with INDI Alliance, the alliance partners should work together so that it can defeat NDA in the elections which are coming nearer. So instead of deserting the INDI Alliance fold, the alliance should try to admit more and more regional parties in its fold so that it can defeat NDA in the general elections. Normally ,chief ministers resign to fight another day.

However, Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar, leader of Janta Dal united or JDU is different. He has resigned four times in the last decade ,only to be sworn into same job within hours. In yet another flip-flop ,he rejoined NDA. Not for nothing is Paltu Ram (Mr Somersault). The latest turnaround is the result of compulsions, both of his old adversary and new found love, the ruling BJP and of his thwarted ambition.

In short the JDU chief Nitish Kumar has parted ways with the INDI Alliance and has joined NDA and it has made it clear that Nitish Kumar's deserting INDI Alliance will make no difference to it and it will fight the upcoming general polls with redoubled effort.

The INDI Alliance should encourage new entrants in the INDI Alliance fold and this will be the test of its relevance to fight the general elections and only then it will be able to dent the image of NDA and BJP .At present all that can we say is that the NDA is expanding and INDI Alliance is shrinking /contracting.

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

Impacts of Governance on Environmental Policy: Ways Forward

■ DR. RAJKUMAR SINGH

Environmental policy and governance encompass the laws, regulations, and practices aimed at managing human impacts on the environment to ensure sustainability and protect natural resources for future generations. These policies and governance structures can operate at various levels, including local, regional, national, and international.a. Regulation and Legislation: Governments often enact laws and regulations to protect the environment, which can include emissions standards, water quality guidelines, and wildlife conservation laws. These regulations are enforced through various agencies and are designed to prevent environmental degradation. b. Sustainable Development: A core principle of environmental policy is sustainable development, which seeks to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This involves integrating economic growth with environmental stewardship. c. International Agreements: Many environmental challenges, such as climate change and biodiversity loss, are global issues that require international cooperation. International agreements, such as the Paris Agreement on climate change, set out commitments for countries to reduce their carbon emissions and take other actions to mitigate environmental impacts. d. Public Participation and Transparency: Effective environmental governance often involves engaging with stakeholders, including the public, businesses, and non-governmental organizations. e. Innovation and Technology: Policy can encourage the development and adoption of environmentally friendly technologies, such as renewable energy sources and pollution control technologies. Incentives, such as tax credits or grants, can support innovation in these areas. f. Environmental Justice: This aspect emphasizes the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. It aims to ensure that no group bears a disproportionate share of negative environmental consequences. g. Adaptation and Resilience: As environmental changes occur, policies must also focus on adapting to these changes and building resilience in communities, economies, and ecosystems. This can involve measures such as improving infrastructure to withstand extreme weather events or shifting agricultural practices in response to changing climate conditions.

Importance of governance

Governance plays a crucial role in the formulation, implementation, and enforcement of environmental policy. Effective governance is essential for addressing complex environmental issues, ensuring sustainable development, and promoting equitable outcomes.

The governance is important in environmental policy on account of: a. Policy Development and Implementation: Governance structures are responsible for developing and implementing environmental policies and regulations. This involves setting environmental standards, defining permissible levels of pollution, and establishing conservation areas.

Effective governance ensures that policies are based on sound science, stakeholder input, and a thorough understanding of the environmental, economic, and social implications. b. Coordination and Integration: Environmental issues often cut across multiple sectors, such as agriculture, energy, transportation, and urban development. Good governance enables the integration and coordination of policies across these sectors to ensure a holistic approach to environmental management and to avoid policy conflicts. c. Resource Allocation: Governance determines the allocation of financial, human, and technical resources for environmental protection and management.

Effective governance ensures that resources are allocated efficiently and equitably to address the most pressing environmental issues and to support sustainable development goals. d. Enforcement and Compliance: Governance mechanisms are essential for enforcing environmental laws and regulations.

This includes monitoring environmental quality, inspecting facilities, and ensuring compliance with environmental standards.

Effective governance provides the legal and institutional framework necessary to hold violators accountable and to ensure that environmental laws are effectively enforced. e. Public Participation and Transparency: Good governance involves the participation of various stakeholders, including the public, in environmental decision-making processes. This ensures that policies reflect the values, needs, and knowledge of the community and enhances the legitimacy and acceptability of environmental policies. Transparency in decision-making processes and access to environmental information are also key aspects of good governance. f. Adaptation and Flexibility: Environmental conditions and scientific understanding are constantly evolving. Effective governance allows for the adaptation of policies in response to new information, changing environmental conditions, and societal needs. This includes mechanisms for policy review, revision, and innovation in environmental management. g. Conflict Resolution: Environmental policies can lead to conflicts between different interest groups, such as between economic development and conservation goals or between different user groups of natural resources. Governance provides the framework for resolving such conflicts through negotiation, mediation, and legal mechanisms. h.International Cooperation: Many environmental issues, such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and transboundary pollution, require international cooperation. Governance structures enable countries to negotiate, ratify, and implement international environmental agreements and to collaborate on global environmental challenges.

Thus, without effective governance, efforts to address environmental challenges and achieve sustainable development are likely to be inefficient, ineffective, and inequitable.

Effects of environment

The environment can significantly impact governance in various ways, shaping policy decisions, influencing political stability, and affecting social and economic development: a. Resource Management and Conflict: The availability and distribution of natural resources, such as water, minerals, and arable land, can lead to conflicts and necessitate effective governance mechanisms to manage these resources sustainably.

Scarcity of resources can lead to disputes between communities, regions, or even nations, requiring governance structures that can mediate and resolve such conflicts. b. Disaster Response and Resilience: Environmental events like natural disasters and challenge governance structures to respond effectively to emergencies, protect citizens, and rebuild infrastructure. The frequency and intensity of such events, possibly exacerbated by climate change, test the resilience and adaptability of governance systems. c. Economic Impact and Policy Prioritization: Environmental conditions can heavily influence a region's economy, particularly in areas heavily reliant on agriculture, fishing, or tourism. This can shape governance priorities, with governments needing to balance economic development with environmental protection to ensure long-term sustainability. d. Public Health: Environmental quality directly impacts public health. Issues like air and water pollution can lead to widespread health crises, putting pressure on governance systems to enforce environmental regulations and invest in healthcare infrastructure and services. e. Social Equity and Environmental Justice: Environmental degradation often disproportionately affects marginalized and vulnerable populations, raising issues of social equity and environmental justice. Governance systems are challenged to address these disparities and ensure that policies do not exacerbate social inequalities. f. Global Governance and International Relations: Global environmental challenges like climate change and biodiversity loss require international cooperation, affecting governance at the international level.

This can lead to the formation of international agreements and institutions that set environmental standards and practices, influencing national governance policies and priorities. g. Adaptive Governance: Environmental changes and uncertainties demand flexible and adaptive governance structures capable of evolving in response to new information and changing conditions.

This can involve integrating scientific research into policy-making, fostering collaborative governance approaches, and encouraging community participation in environmental decision-making. In nutshell, the environment profoundly influences governance by dictating policy priorities, shaping economic and social development strategies, and requiring adaptive and resilient governance structures to address complex and interconnected environmental challenges.

(The author is a youth motivator).

YOUR COLUMN
UCC in Uttarakhand

Dear Editor,

Uniform Civil Code (UCC) Bill has been passed in Uttarakhand Assembly. Said to be first legislation in the country since independence, common laws are framed in relation to marriage, divorce, inheritance and adoption. The tribal community has been exempted from the purview of the law. This defies the logic that all are equal in the eyes of law for whatever reasons. The Bill also seeks to the registration of live-in relationship. Registration of live-in relationship legalises all the relationship that a marriage inherits. The Supreme Court has held that a living relationship comes within the ambit of Article 21 of the Constitution of India. With this ruling, the live-in relationship is not illegal. In fact live-in relationship is a western culture, not Indian culture. With the legal sanctity accorded to live-in relationship, in due course of time, the concept of marriage is likely to be either forgotten or totally given up. Live-in relationship is borne out of love only. It would not be surprising if arranged live-in relationship also comes into force on the line of arranged marriage. Import of western culture is burying Indian culture. Since the live-in relationship has been termed as not illegal or unlawful, all the laws applicable in the case of legal weddings apply in the case of live-in relationships also. The Bill defines norms for the grounds of divorce. Divorce not in accordance with the UCC is liable to attract a fine of Rs. 50,000 and imprisonment upto 3 years. Divorce petition by woman is considered if the husband is already having a spouse. Man can also seek divorce if the wife is found to be having relationship with another man. It is good that both men and women are entitled to alimony. But the law of the land is crystal clear that a man is liable to maintain his wife and as such even in the case of divorce, the man is liable to pay the alimony to the divorced wife. If both men and women should be entitled for alimony, the alimony has to be made payable by the person due to whose fault the live-in relationship strains and breaks up. If this aspect is considered, the law that a man is bound to maintain his ex-wife relegates into insignificance. If a widow or widower remarries, they lose the right of inheritance of the assets belonging to the former spouse. It is natural. If the married persons do not need each other, there is no reason for them to inherit the assets of each other. While maintaining that the opposition parties are not against the Bill, Yashpal Arya leader of opposition in the Uttarakhand Assembly wants enough time to study the Bill. The UCC must come at the level of centre. One law, one nation must be in place. If the central law on UCC comes into force, the UCC laws in states should be superseded.

K.V. Seetharamaiah