

I feel it is unnatural and immoral to try to teach science to children in a foreign language. They will know facts, but they will miss the spirit.

-C. V. Raman

## UNCONTROLLED CORRUPTION

It is quite intriguing that despite strict actions against the corrupt elements in the government departments, the corruption remains rampant with habitual offenders showing no restraint as if they are not in a mood to shun all this come what may. In this context, J&K saw another corrupt duo falling the in ACB net in Kashmir making it amply clear that the government should further tighten noose around those who are unmoved by the steps taken by the government so far as they not mending their ways and miss no chance to take bribes or illegal gratifications in other forms. In this context, Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB) has arrested a revenue official and a Chowkidar for demanding and accepting bribe from a complainant in Srinagar. It is pertinent to mention that the complainant has alleged that Asif Farooq Wani, Patwari, Halqa Brein Nishat, Srinagar and Chowkidar Nazir Ahmad Dar were demanding Rs 10,000 as bribe for issuance of Fardi Naqsha Intikhaab of land in favour of the complainant. After laying a successful trap, the aforesaid Chowkidar was caught red-handed while demanding and accepting a bribe amount of Rs 10,000 on behalf of aforementioned Patwari from the complainant. This case and several others of the same nature registered in J&K are testimony to the fact that the steps taken by the government to contain corruption in government offices are inadequate and therefore it becomes imperative to bring about more changes and put checks and balances to stop corruption in real sense. The conviction in corruption cases can also play a vital role as a deterrent because the same is seldom seen in corruption cases because the corrupt are resourceful enough in J&K and allegedly manipulate things to save their skin. The government should come up with certain steps to make sure that the ways and means for asking the undue favours get eliminated once and for all. Though various potent steps have been taken by the LG's administration in this direction, the quantum of the cases being registered against the corrupt shows that a lot more has to be done to end this menace once and for all.

## J&K ON TOP

Almost every sector of life suffered huge damages due to outbreak of COVID pandemic some two years back. It is a fact that understanding the gravity of the situation, the Government provided every possible support to the suffering sections, in every form so that they can emerge out of the losses but the quantum of damage suffered by the sectors is so big that even with the adequate support of the administration, the stakeholders are finding it hard to come again on track like in past. The daily-wage earners and small businessmen were hit mostly by the menace as due to the lockdown imposed as a precautionary to contain the contagious spread, their sources of livelihood vanished completely. Moreover, as these sections generally live from hand to mouth and don't have savings for the emergency, the situation took several families on the verge of starvation, making them dependent on NGOs or other social organizations even for their bread and butter. Looking at a miserable plight of these people, especially those working in unorganized sectors, the present Government launched a unique initiative with a name e-sharm wherein all the state and UT administration were asked to register all the unorganized workers on a dedicated platform to create a database of the same so that timely relief and succour is provided to them in time of emergency. This initiative was implemented in all the states with zeal and a number of people from unorganized sectors were registered on the e-sharm portal. The Union Territory administration also gave a serious approach to the step and even organized camps at various places of J&K so that more and more labourers can be registered on the portal. Further, print and news media was also used to spread awareness among people regarding the initiative so that all eligible persons can avail benefit of the same. It is only due to the strenuous efforts of UT administration that Jammu and Kashmir has been ranked on top among all the states and UTs in registration of unorganized workers. On the occasion of registration of 25 crore unorganized workers, the concerned ministry lauded the UT for covering a target of 82 percent by registering 31 lakh workers out of the total 38 lakh, which proves the dedication and proactive approach of J&K administration.



### The Dinosaur of Perfection

our body weight and image in our near and dear ones in the weather, in our office, and more often than not, we land up not finding perfection. Not because perfection is not there, for, as we mentioned, in existence, everything is perfect and as it should be, but we don't perceive it that way. In our minds, we have our own idea of what perfection should look like. We think a perfect weather should be like this, or that the traffic should be such as we drive to work, or our co-workers should behave in such and such a manner etc. Very soon, we find that very little in the outside world matches our mental image of perfection. This leads to anger, frustration, irritation, and eventually to unhappiness and discomfort. Had we not set out with a preset mental image of perfection,, and had decided to take life as it comes, we would have been happy with whatever we encountered. But that rarely happens.

J Krishnamurthi once gave a magic mantra to his disciples when he said " I don't mind anything that happens". A mantra comprising of just these words, but loaded with so much wisdom and maturity. Krishnamurthi was only trying to convey that we should go with the flow, accept life and people and situations as they are, and not really have any strong resistance or negativity to whatever happens.

P V Vaidyanathan

## Educating Girl Child- Have we done enough?

■ M R LALU

During the pandemic and the subsequent lockdown, Ajuraj, a government school teacher from one of the remotest villages in Kerala had a new plan to teach his students. Ajuraj and his team of teachers decided to take teaching-learning to the houses of the students. A group of students from the neighbouring areas were called to one house and classes and experiments were conducted there itself. The same pattern of teaching was repeated for another cluster of students in a different house. Ajuraj and his team carried teaching learning-materials including lab items for experiment with them. Walking the entire stretch of the hilly terrain on foot multiple times, he and his team continued their teaching-mission for months until normalcy returned. Students of his school, especially girls were instrumental in this new innovative initiative to successfully take place. Lack of internet connectivity prompted him to take up this rare enterprise. I quoted this initiative here to explain the possibility in which education can take place when encountered with towering challenges. If a girl is educated, the whole family is educated. It should make meaning beyond mere clich  . There are multiple reasons to which female literacy still stumbles on and collapses without achieving the desired outcome in our country. We are yet to make credible and praiseworthy achievements. Interventions from social, political, regional and religious areas frequently affect the smooth schooling of girls. Typical family situations also adversely affect the girls' learning. An honest analysis of the situation in India reveals that the potentiality of a large number of girls is still untapped. Forced to remain between the walls of the houses behind the curtains, most of them are susceptible to various exploitations. Government's initiative to bring a law in order to raise the minimum age of marriage from 18 to 21 was repulsive to some and a welcome move for many. Compared to literate women, illiterates are vulnerable to exploitations in places such as markets, homes and workplaces. Being scary and forced to be submissive to the patriarchy, most of them are devoid of a happy life. Basic literacy skills would help them sort out anomalies to a

great extent, enabling them to stand on their own feet. Unfortunately, still a large section of the society in India holds the view that to have a male child is a blissful option than to have a female. Reports revealing the statistics on the number of girls away from formal schooling do not give us happy goose-bumps.

Efforts to teach our girls should take place at a faster pace, determinant to set greater goals and move in the direction of achieving them. Usually, prone to mistreatments from multiple corners, despite societies across the country making progress with greater resilience, illiteracy holds those who are devoid of the light of knowledge from the mainstream. We know the fact that mere literacy is not education. Education holds the capability to obliterate all kinds of infirmities in societies. A progressive ambience in every society gradually envisages this ability to correct and conceptualize better options to push its entire system to an articulate stature. Proximity to what we call an accuracy with respect to the achievement is far from reality in a multilateral entity such as India. The existing systems, with all their criticality need to be put for comprehensible exposition and reformations. Gender equality, as stressed by the constitution of the nation remains largely lopsided, unable to consolidate the aptitudes of both genders with an egalitarian outlook. Various reports suggest that India is home to millions of 'out of school' children, with girls constituting the maximum. When the country is making multiple leaps in the field of education, indigenizing its systems to what the National Education Policy professes, the share of its women literacy is still a mere 65 percent today. The effort to bring in the Right to Education Act (RTE) was a landmark move in the country. But ten years down the line the situation has not progressed much for the girls. The Right to Education has revolutionized the momentum, bringing glitches to the surface, ponderously attending issues and meeting the challenges, acknowledging the necessities of the schools. There is no denying the fact that India has made a noticeable leap in the direction of achieving a certain level of progress in the area of female education. State and central governments' push in this direction can probably overturn breaking bottlenecks to possibilities.

### Developmental Story

## Pahalgam youth tread on path of development



Pahalgam, known globally for its scenic beauty, lush green meadows and gushing white water of Lidder, is making news due to various youth centric development projects taking off. Most of the recent developments have been planned focusing on engagement of youth, enhancing their skills and providing meaningful self-employment opportunities. The district administration, through various government schemes, has focused on socio economic development of Pahalgam aimed to engage youth in various economic activities so that the capital inflow due to tourism is infused towards local prosperity. The plan of development has focused on skill development of youth, so that they can leverage their skills for generating and engaging in meaningful employment. Parallel focus has been on development of infrastructure for efficient service delivery and use of ICT technology to provide doorstep delivery of services.

Pahalgam Homestays, the first of its kind initiative in UT of JK, under the Crown of Incredible India project, is collaboration between Govt. and OYO groups to capitalize on Pahalgam's tourist potential and ensure youth participation so that the local economy can reap benefits

of the initiative.

Under the initiative, young aspiring entrepreneurs are encouraged to convert a room or two in their houses into tourist accommodation in order to provide hospitality to the tourists visiting and staying in their homes during their stay in Pahalgam. For this purpose, the OYO, India's best on-line hotel booking site will connect the homeowner with the tourists, who want to experience the life and culture of Pahalgam in its purest form. More than 15 such homeowners already live on the online platform and several others are showing interest and eagerness in participating in the initiative particularly in town areas. The initiative not only will promote rural tourism but also generate new opportunities and hopes for the youth willing to associate themselves with this viable economic activity.

The need is that youth should fully understand the purpose and the benefits of the scheme, introduced by the Government for them and come forward and engage themselves in this viable economic activity. This will improve their economic plight thereby generating new hopes for their coming generations. Let us start with good hope.

Self-Employment Schemes: Several

awareness camps were held to encourage youth to take up self-employment opportunities being provided by the Government. The Deputy Commissioner Anantnag personally interacted with various stakeholders including aspiring youth, banks and concerned departments to remove the bottlenecks hampering the sanction and disbursement of loan cases. 45 persons have been provided financial assistance under PMEGP for setting up walnut processing, shuttering units, chain stitching units, service centers, etc. Similarly, 11 cases have been sanctioned under the Munkin scheme providing financial assistance to youth for purchase of commercial vehicles.

Tehsil Youth Library: A tehsil youth library is being constructed at a cost of Rs 1.93 crore by R&B Department at Pahalgam. Once the library is functional, books and reading material related to competitive exams will be made available and accessible to the youth willing to take part in local as well as national level job related or professional course competitions. For the time being, Tehsildar Pahalgam hosts a group of 300 students in an online mode and counsels them about various competitive exams.

palaces of Basohli, purchase pasmina shawls and visit Basohli Chiterkala museum. But it is a matter of sheer carelessness and highhanded attitude of Basohli Bani Development Authority, responsible for boosting tourism at Bani and Basohli, which has turned its back towards its duties and responsibility. There is not a single representative of the tourism department at Basohli to welcome tourists and even provide them a bottle of water. There is no provision for tourists to sit during the scorching heat of the summer and chilling cold of winters. The tourists spend their days in houses of the natives. The newly betrothed couples, who come to shoot for their pre-weddings are often compelled to change their dresses, as per demand of shot but there is no provision of motor-boat riding, provision of stay at Purthu beach. Either, monuments are grown with bushes where nobody can go and see them. The water sport complex has not seen the light of the day while the one at Srinagar has become operational since 2020, when both were sanctioned in the same order. Despite tall claims of the government there is nothing visible on the ground which testifies the truth of the UT government. It is because of the fact that entire inclination of the UT government is focused on the promotion of Kashmir tourism only.

Shiv Kumar Padha, Basohli.

### Transforming J&K

## LG's administration institutionalising Good Governance initiatives in UT

Good Governance is one of the most important factors in eradicating poverty and promoting development across the world through a more transparent, responsive and accountable dispensation in place. Keeping pace with its commitment of extending good governance to people of Jammu and Kashmir, the Lieutenant Governor's administration has institutionalized a slew of good governance initiatives in the Union Territory. LG administration has adopted a mantra of zero tolerance against corruption, nepotism and discrimination against minorities in J&K so that voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard and given due recognition. In India, some remarkable steps were initiated by the government for ensuring good governance in all parts of the country. A multitude of good governance reforms have been initiated in J&K by the Modi Government like Prevention of Corruption Act, Abolition of Interviews for Group C and D posts besides more than 800 Central Laws have been made applicable to J&K after it got the status of Union Territory. The long pending cadre review, establishment of CAT benches, Extension of RTI Act, CPGRAMS and conduct of common eligibility test through the National Recruitment Agency at every district headquarter in the UT besides other similar pro-people measures. In a significant move, through Mission Karmayogi, capacity building of 2000 civil servants in collaboration between National Centre of Good Governance (NCGG) and IMPARD is being undertaken. Remarkably, in a first of its kind initiative, this year around 60 senior officers of JKAS were deputed to LIBSNAA, National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG), Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG), Gol for capacity building. Likewise, the Aspirational District Program has been fruitful in improving the governance in India's under-developed districts. Under the statesmanship of Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, India adopted the "Minimum Government Maximum Governance" paradigm which is being cited and commended all over the world with civil servants from across the world visiting India to pursue internships. In J&K, Lieutenant Governor's administration is institutionalizing several good governance initiatives. J&K has become the first Union Territory in India to implement the District Good Governance Index (DGGI). It is likely to be adopted pan India by DARPG as a replication of the best governance practices. The development of DGGI as a tool to assess the status of governance in the UT of J&K is a path breaking initiative taken up by DARPG as a follow up to declaration of 'Beltar Nizami-Hukumat Kashmir Aelamia' adopted recently by J&K in collaboration with DARPG. Under DGGI, emphasis is being given on incorporating more indicators especially with regard to District Plan and Execution of Works, Self-Employment, Human Resources Development, Sports, etc., keeping in view priorities of the government thus making it a benchmark and a litmus test for effective public service delivery and good governance. Moreover, with the adoption of e-office, a simplified, responsive, effective and transparent paperless working culture in most of the government offices of Jammu and Kashmir has been established. The e-Office is aiding government departments to enhance the public service delivery by eliminating the delay of files in offices.

To bring efficiency in work of officers of J&K administration, the GAD also introduced Smart Performance Appraisal Report Recording Online Window (SPARROW) system to write and track Annual Performance Reports (APRs) of the officers. The UT government has also launched the Electronic Vigilance Clearance System that furnishes vigilance clearance through electronic/online mode in favour of all the government employees as and when they require it during their service career. With a vision to establish citizen-friendly and corruption free governance, the JKGAD also launched 'Satark Nagrik App' through which any ordinary citizen can lodge complaints with the Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB) online. Keeping its commitment of institutionalising corruption-free administration, the JKGAD launched an online portal for e-filing of property returns (PRS-Portal). The new portal facilitates access and monitoring of the property details of all the employees besides facilitating the employees in obtaining timely vigilance clearances. Also, governance has been handed over to elected representatives in Panchayats after more than 13 years. Thus it can be convincingly said that J&K is coming out of the dark shadows of the past and taking leaps into bright possibilities of the future. In another remarkable initiative of Good Governance, LG's Mulaqaat Program was launched to facilitate public/complainants who have filed grievances on JKIGRAMS to directly communicate with Lieutenant Governor. It has been successful as almost 100 per cent grievances raised through this platform have been redressed. Notably, the present administration of J&K is mainly focusing on 'On-The-Spot' grievance redressal, instantaneous delivery of goods and services to the masses and 'On-The-Ground' speedy execution of People-Centric projects, which is being observed through the exceptional development works and projects that are currently going on across the Union territory.