

CHANGE LEADERSHIP

The Congress debacle in five states in just concluded Assembly polls in which it lost Punjab also despite having a majority government in the state gives a strong reason to the party to consider change of guard to come out of morass as the existing leadership seems to be sodden as can be gauged by the performance of the party in last many years. The idea that the party leadership should pave way for others to save the sinking ship is not bad at all as senior leader of the party 'America' V Narayanan has suggested after the poor show of the Congress in Punjab, Goa, UP, Manipur and Uttarakhand. There is no doubt that the present set up of Congress is marred by basic organizational lacunae since the Gandhi Parivar is stubborn over many things which are obvious and need not to be shared again and again because everyone in the country knows about it and all other phases from which this age old party has passed since its formation on December 28, 1885. Without going into the history of the party, one thing which people steering the party should understand is that Rahul Gandhi has not delivered for the last 20 years and that the public has also not accepted him therefore it will be in the interest of the party to go for some kind of alternatives and giving some other responsibility to current leadership sitting at the helm because it is always advisable to opt for plan B if A is not working consistently for years together. Of course, Gandhi family's another stake, Priyanka Gandhi also remained non-starter as UP catastrophe is also pathetic and for sure Rahul's sister also could not make a mark because it is not easy to counter the juggernaut of Narendra Modi Brigade which right now is all powerful in all terms. The leadership of Congress is not appealing anymore and that is the reason behind its continuous failure in each and every political contest across the country. It is time for Congress to move on, not necessarily in its own interest but also in the interest of the nation because a strong opposition is good for democracy as it guarantees proper check and balance.

METICULOUS APPROACH

The administration of Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, working diligently on the directives of the present government, is leaving no stone unturned in transforming each and every promise made with J&K people by the Government into reality, as not only all ongoing projects are being carried out in the most transparent and efficient manner, but regular checks have also been ensured, at every level, right from the bottom-level official to senior bureaucrats. Above all, on the directives of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the LG himself keeps a constant check on the progress level of various ongoing works by convening review meetings at regular intervals besides issuing necessary directives to the officials, to ensure timely completion of the same without any hindrance. One will not hesitate to say that that level of efficiency and dedication of Government work, which is presently being witnessed across Union Territory, was never witnessed earlier during more than seven decades after independence of the country. Working to fulfill its commitment to ensure provision of every basic necessity of life at the doorsteps of people, even in rural and far-flung areas, the Government seems quite near its target as all important sectors in direct contact of people and responsible for ensuring availability of all essential supplies to people, like power, water, healthcare, education etc are witnessing a massive change with development of more and more edifice and other allied structures in every nook and corner of Union Territory. Further, Smart City Projects ongoing in both the capital cities of J&K will not only ensure provision of world-class facilities to the residents but would also go a long way in beautifying the twin cities, for attracting more and more tourists from outside states. Recently, Chief Secretary reviewed various ongoing projects in the City of Temples including multi-tier Panjirithi Car-parking, Bus Stand, Mubarak Mandi Heritage Project, beautification works at Raghunath Bazaar, Ropeway project etc. The officer directed the executing authorities for ensuring completion of all projects within the stipulated time frame so that the facilities are dedicated to the people at the earliest. Looking at such a painstaking approach of the administration, the day is not far when J&K will undergo a complete transformation, in a real sense.

OFF 'D' CUFF

Rethinking Economic Arrangements

Global arrangements that have degraded ecosystems have similarly impoverished local communities and individual lives. The destruction inherent in the endless creation and gratification of wants has been demonstrated beyond credible objection. Putting the world on more ecologically sustainable foundations requires a recasting of the global economic order. People and the planet will need to be valued as explicitly as profit has been.

As many current imbalances are driven by excess, the principle of moderation will need to find much fuller expression in global arrangements.

Patterns of life that have come to be associated with wealth—the devotion to convenience and luxury, for example, or high levels of consumption and waste—will need to be set aside. Concepts of sufficiency, simplicity, and contentment, which find little meaningful place in growth-driven paradigms, will have to be reclaimed and expanded.

Basic notions of progress, development, prosperity, and success will need to be recast in far more holistic terms.

Movement in this direction will require economic arrangements to be disciplined according to values

Bahai Faith

If we can really understand the problem, the answer will come out of it, because the answer is not separate from the problem.

Jiddu Krishnamurti

EDITORIAL

Bhadarwah's Nadiya propels her dreams on UMEED cart

Nadiya Farooq, a girl from Bhadarwah of Doda district, was honored on this year's International Women's day by JKRLM, as a successful entrepreneur. Nadiya might not have amassed fortunes yet but she has definitely ventured into something many of the city youth hesitate to take chance into. It was back in 2014, when Nadiya realized that struggling for gaining a government job is not prudent. She said that, earlier, she also felt tizzy about the chances of success her enterprise was going to meet but her mentoring organization, JKRLM, popularly called UMEED helped her here to get past this anxiety.

Nadiya said that when she was approached by the resource persons of UMEED initially she was not sure of joining it for the purpose of making her career. She only went for counseling sessions as others were going as well. She said, "But these sessions were turning point for me". It was after listening to these counselors of UMEED that she saw a ray of hope in entrepreneurship. She added that it is the confidence enthused by UMEED that sets her boat of vocation to sail. Nadiya didn't aim for something ordinary. She wanted the wheel of her fortune to excel in detergent soap business. Nadiya had her unit of soap making set up in Bhadarwah after her successful handholding and training by her mentoring organization, JKRLM not only provided her necessary assistance for start-up but also provided her the requisite training in creating the product she proudly sells under the brand name 'CENTWIN'.

The girl said that her venture is a female enterprise adding that she craftily does much of the work herself along with half a dozen of her female workers. She added



that the business is fully owned and run by these half a dozen females except for transportation of raw material and the finished product which is being done by a couple of male coworkers hired by them. Nadiya arranges ingredients for her detergent soaps herself. She said that the sodium bicarbonates, sulphates and other combinations used as raw materials for her CENTWIN are to be fetched from outside J&K. She added that despite high transportation costs of raw material reaching Bhadarwah, her soaps are good in quality and inexpensive than other brands. She said that her reach is not yet far off as she delivers her product in the vicinity only. She mentioned, "We are able to sell some 5,000-6,000 bars a month and these are enough to fetch us an income of Rs 25,000-30,000 to be distributed among us".

Nadiya claimed that her unit is still in infancy and they have a lot to achieve say-

ing that proper branding, packaging and marketing can work wonders for her product. She said that it is only a word of mouth and our individual efforts in our town that have produced these results. "Adequate mechanization and other logistics can produce totally different results", she asserted. Nadiya also lamented that lack of round the clock power supply is also playing as spoil sport. She said that in order to expand and reach out to other markets both mechanization of all the processes along with a dedicated power supply are prerequisite. She admitted that lot more needs to be done before making CENTWIN-a household name in J&K. She said that she is hopeful and determinant to achieve the goal in future adding that she was quite hopeful of all support from JKRLM (UMEED) in realizing her dreams. She was optimistic that she would surely come up with flying colours with the wings provided by UMEED.

Modi predicts emphatic win in 2024 elections

■ OKMAR DATTATRAY

Though nothing definite and specific can be said about outcome of the general elections which are far away, but the Prime Minister and Chief Strategist of BJP is predicting emphatic victory for BJP in 2024. Modi and the top leaders of the BJP are euphoric about the outcome of the general elections which are due far away in 2024. It is on the basis of the spectacular performance in the assembly elections of the four states which went to polls recently. The BJP performed extremely well in these elections and got victory defeating its rival SP. The BJP is about to form governments in the four states of Utter Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Goa and last but not the least in Tripura. Since the BJP won elections in the politically significant state of UP two times in succession and defied the notion of anti incumbency playing its part. It was Modi-Yogi factor and the magic of Modi which played its part and role in winning the assembly elections not only in UP but in other three states too by defeating its rival SP and inconsequential congress. Thus, it is on basis of the significant victory of the BJP in these state assembly elections and more because of the UP elections that Modi predicts the emphatic win for the formidable and mighty BJP in the general elections in 2024. All though it seems premature to predict the outcome of the general elections of 2024 but if the election result of the four states is any indication, it may be most likely that the BJP will get victory in the elections in 2024. Since BJP got a decisive win in the assembly elections, except in Punjab, which was the mainstay of the once grand old party of congress and where it got a drubbing at hands of AAP, which made the history outside its home turf of Delhi. The BJP has a little presence in Punjab as it got mere two seats there and it was as expected and it did not surprise the BJP and the political Pandits. Thus baring Punjab, BJP turned the applecart in its favor four states including the politically most significant state of UP and this is enough to forecast the win of the jubilant BJP in general elections slanting in 2024. It is the accepted fact and the political experience as well that the political party which wins the elections in UP has ninety nine percent chances of winning the general elections. In the instant case of the thumping win of BJP in the UP elections, it will have a great bearing and ramifications for the general elections of 2024. Thus Modi and BJP is certain that BJP will repeat its win in 2024 elections and bounce back to power by defeating its rivals and the faction ridden congress and the SP and form the next government at national level. Therefore the election results of UP are the basis upon which Modi is so positive and thus forecasts the win of the BJP in 2024 elections. With great emphasis Modi has said that the BJP has won the semifinals and it will win the finals in 2024 because UP election is the semifinal for the general elections of 2024 which is the final and Modi is sure and positive about the win of BJP in 2024 elections. Since it is a fact and the experience also shows that the political party which wins the assembly elections of UP goes to repeat the success story in 2024 general elections and Modi and other leaders of the saffron party dead sure that the BJP

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single political party had come to them for mitigating their grief, sufferings and trauma. KP community has always been largely ignored community in J&K and it is also equally true that the government has always turned a complete blind eye over this ill-fated community sufferings.

Even after 31 years and after removal of laws that greatly contributed to this genocide, India has no solution to bring them back because it has lacked the courage to face the reality of Islamist fundamentalism and the courage to dismantle terror infrastructure. Now the director Vivek Agnihotri surely deserves Kudos and accolades by producing such a movie which could be an eye-opener for rest of the world. Beyond praising director Vivek Ranjan Agnihotri's vision to tell a tale about suffering of Kashmiri Pandits, the filled cinema halls across the world have showered the picture with a standing ovation and a thunderous round of applause, a testament to film's artistic merit. The audience's reaction during the screening reflected the same emotions, with members unable to stop complimenting the film's thought-provoking plot and outstanding performances by the star ensemble. All this boils down to the fact that this film is a heart wrenching story and everyone should watch it.

Vivek Koul,
Gole Gujral, Jammu.

Cling on to faith

■ MOHANJI

Darkness that envelopes occasionally for a period of time is caused out of illusion. Mind gets deluded at times because of overwhelming emotions. Mind even entertains delusions to stay alive. This is why nurturing objectivity at all times is extremely essential. When mind gets deluded, it starts to see the shadow instead of the form that created the shadow. It starts to believe that the shadow is real and feels that the form is absent or insignificant. It forgets the form, which is the true reality and connects to the shadow instead. This delusion is usually accented by concepts acquired from the past, repetitive habits, manifested impressions as well as wrong understandings saved by the mind over time.

So, whenever dark patches of delusion falls into your mind, choose to be with light. Faith helps in such conditions. The darkness may attempt to delude even the faith. But, stay on and stay fast. Through the rope of faith, raise yourself to higher levels of awareness. Do not leave the rope ever. Just cling on. You may not realize. You may not know this, but it is true that this drama of mind, this soap opera has been repeated over and over again over life times. This is what all the wise men who ever walked the earth told us, warned us and taught us. One single truth was they repeating over time, that we are eternal beings temporarily deluded because of the wrong identifications on earth. We are liberated, here and now. The only shift we need is this awareness. Do whatever it takes to achieve that.

Transforming J&K PMGSY: Boon for all-weather resistant road connectivity in rural areas

In a area with enhanced connectivity and sturdy roads and other amenities often reap the benefits of improved healthcare facilities, employment opportunities, good education and a better quality of life. The Government of India, with an objective to streamline rural road connectivity a highly essential requisite for rural development, launched Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY). The motto was to provide access to better socio-economic conditions, enhance the agricultural income besides raising living standards of rural India. The scheme was aimed at to eliminate lack of accessibility and connectivity through construction of solid, all-weather resistant roads that allow for easy movement of vehicles and goods. Under this scheme, the Government of India is striving to establish high and uniform technical and management standards in rural roads network by facilitating policy development and planning from micro level. The primary objective of PMGSY is to provide connectivity by way of an all weather resistant roads with all necessary arrangements and cross-drainage structures to make unconnected habitations in rural areas with a population of 500 persons and above (2001 census) connected throughout the year.

In Jammu and Kashmir, PMGSY programme has proved to be a boon towards expanding all weather resistant roads in rural pockets of the Union Territory. The scheme, here, was launched in 2001-02 with an aim to provide all weather connectivity to unconnected habitations in rural areas with a population of more than 250 as per 2001 Census. The Union Ministry of Rural Development Department had sanctioned 3,347 schemes under PMGSY-I to be executed in 12 phases envisaging construction of a length of 18,432.79 Km with a cost of Rs 1,19,646.76 crore to provide connectivity to 2,148 eligible habitations. Under PMGSY-II, 107 schemes had been sanctioned with a length of 704.55 Km worth Rs 790.49 crore.

As on date, 2113 schemes having length of 13,233.36 Km have been completed with an expenditure of Rs 7,864.60 crore. Out of 2148 eligible habitations, 1943 have been connected, so far. During current year, against the target of 3,500 Km, 2,400 Km have been achieved as on date with an expenditure of Rs 1,380 crore thereby completing 280 schemes and connecting 105 eligible habitations. Under road sector, construction and up gradation of roads has been taken up and funds for acquisition of land and shifting of utilities required for road widening have also been provisioned under the scheme. During 2020-21, Rs 270 crores had been allocated for 737 road projects for construction of 582 Km of road length.

Bridges form an important component of road connectivity under PMGSY that ensure accessibility and reduce time of travel. Given the topography of UT and the nature of rivers and streams zigzagging its landscape, demand for construction of new bridges is huge.

In 2008, a special bridge program had been launched by the department in which construction of new bridges was taken up. During 2020-21, 78 bridges had been under execution with an estimated cost of Rs 327 crores. An additional amount of Rs 60 crores have also been allocated during 2020-21. Also, maintenance of roads is equally important as construction of new roads. Due to the normal wear and tear and tough weather conditions, macadamization coats of the roads deteriorate and need maintenance after a few years. Under Capex budget, a scheme called 'Cities & Towns' has been introduced where under funds are being allocated for providing renewal macadam coats to the city and town roads besides major district roads of the UT. During 2020-21, an amount of Rs 400 crores had been allocated under the programme under which 1,650 Km of road length was planned to be macadamized.

In a significant achievement, Udhampur district of Jammu and Kashmir has bagged top position at the national level for successfully implementing Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) for the year 2020-21. The district has received top position for constructing roads of 560.49 km in 2020-21. Besides, four more districts of UT of J&K have featured in the list of PMGSY top performing 30 districts of the country. These included Rajouri (420.25 Km), Doda (335.71 Km), Kathua (297.79 Km) and Reasi (223.23 Km). Jammu and Kashmir Government has performed remarkably in last few years in implementation of PMGSY making development of rural areas as one of its prime objectives.

For J&K administration, road connectivity is not only a key component of Rural Development by providing access to economic and social services but generating increased agricultural incomes and productive employment opportunities is also part of their implementation strategy.

YOUR COLUMN

The Kashmir Files: A Remarkable Film

Dear Editor,

Over the years, we have seen Bollywood and its love for real-life instances and the way filmmakers have presented the true stories/events have always attracted a large percentage of the audience. Now, Anupam Kher starrer drama 'The Kashmir Files' is gaining a lot of attention ever since the trailer of the movie was launched. 'The Kashmir Files' has managed to elinch the number one spot, which is undoubtedly a respectable achievement. Film maker Vivek Agnihotri has done a remarkable job by showing real face of Kashmiri Hindu genocide, which otherwise India has failed to do for 31 years. The Kashmir Files is the most contentious film of the year because this movie clearly and precisely demonstrates how the half million Kashmiri Hindus were ethnically cleansed of Kashmiri Valley by marauding Islamic gangs. KPs are now refugees in their own homeland. So rightly this movie has portrayed the real pain which Kashmiri Pandits suffered during 1990s and the sad story is that not even a