

IGNORED RECEIVING CARE

Numerous people-friendly initiatives were taken by the Government to uplift socio-economic status of people, especially those belonging to downtrodden and destitute sections, which were ignore by the previous Governments for one reason or another. It is really appreciable that with dedicated working and strenuous efforts of the Government, the Government is taking full care of ignored sections and appreciable success has been achieved, thereby bringing a major transformation in several sectors. In this regard, Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Government of India, and National Fisheries Development Board along with the Department of Fisheries, Government of Karnataka, Government of Goa, Indian Coast Guard, Fishery Survey of India, and fishermen representatives observed Sagar Parikrama Phase-IV which started from Mormugao Port, Goa. Parshottam Rupala, Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying, and Dr L Murugan, Minister of State for Fisheries, AH and Dairying launched the Yatra. The Yatra, proceeding along the Uttar Kannada coast, reached Majali from Karwar Port, followed by journey towards coastal belt of Uttar Kannada of Karnataka State. Sagar Parikrama Phase IV covered a total of 10 locations of 3 major coastal districts namely, Majali, Karwar, Belambara, Manki, Murudeshwar, Alvekodi, Malpe, Uchhila, Mangalore before culminating at Mangalore Townhall, covering other areas such as Malpe Harbour, Uchhila Village & shall continue till Mangalore Townhall. Sagar Parikrama is a program reflecting the far-reaching policy strategy of the government leading to the direct interaction with fishers and fish farmers to understand the issues of coastal areas and problems related to fishermen. It was welcomed by fishermen and fish farmers and other stakeholders with an open heart, who are taking it as an instrument of development in fisheries sector. The community interaction program proceeded by interacting with fishermen, fish farmers, beneficiaries, coast guards regarding their livelihood, food security from fisheries. This interactive session helped fishermen to come out with the issues faced by them and it will help in fisheries development. Fishermen and fish farmer raised issues like those related to supply of Diesel and Kerosene for boats, subsidy, or engine boats for fishing related activities, required support for old fishermen who are not fishing and who need social security, support required for developing fisheries industrial zone in coastal areas of Karnataka etc. Further, beneficiaries requested for events like the Sagar Parikrama in the coming time, support required for availability of sea ambulance, issues related to non-availability of identity certificate for fishermen, fish farmers etc., Also, formation of inter-state coordination committee was discussed. Parshottam Rupala, Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying was very pleased that an interactive session helped fishermen, fish farmers to share their ground realities and experiences and to come out with issues being faced by them. He discussed that the issues will be worked upon for improvement in fisheries sector development and spoke in detail about eliminating the critical gaps in the value chain of fisheries through implementation of schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojna and KCC for beneficiaries, fish farmers & fishermen. Approximately, 4000 fishermen, fish farmers and other dignitaries participated in the meeting at Malpe, Harbour Program. During the event, certificates/sanctions related to Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada scheme, KCC & State Scheme were awarded to the progressive fishermen, especially coastal fishermen, fishers and fish farmers, young fishery entrepreneurs etc. Literature on PMMSY scheme, State schemes, e-shram, FIDE, KCC etc. was popularized through print media, electronic media, videos, digital campaign through jingles among fishers for wide publicity of schemes. The program was a great success, with more than 10,500 people physically attending the event from different places and the program was live streamed on various social media platforms such as YouTube, and Facebook which was watched by around 20,000 people. The journey of Sagar Parikrama focused on developing the sustainable balance between the utilization of marine fisheries resources for the food security of the nation and livelihoods of coastal fisher communities and the protection of marine ecosystems, to bridge the gaps of fisher communities, and their expectations, development of fishing villages, upgradation and creation of infrastructure such as fishing harbours & landing centers to ensure sustainable and responsible development through an ecosystem approach in coming phases.

■ G L KHAJURIA

Our revered Rig Veda echoes, "Give sight to our eyes, sight to our bodies so that we may see, may we see the world as a whole and may we see it in detail". Our country particularly, the greater snowy Himalaya is prominent for the abodes of Gods and Goddesses as a whole, apart from a land of temples, shrines, sanctum sanctorum and of course, a treasure trove of pilgrimages, varied ramification which occupy their unique and enchanting placement. Having their spiritual and prodigious reverence, people from India and abroad throng in huge number, pay obeisance and obtain blessings from the supreme Gods and deities.

Amongst a few to be named are Bawa Amar Nath, Mata Vaishno Devi, Khir Bhawani, Mahalak, Shmi, Durga Mata, Mata Kali (Bahu Fort), Airwan (Kathua), Mani Mahesh (HP). Gupt Ganga (Bhadarwah), Pingla Mata (Ramnagar), Mansa Devi, Badarkali, Vasuki Nag (Kailash Kund), Sukrala Mata (Billawar), Mata Bala Sundri on the hill top between Billawar and Kathua, Ashta-d-Bhuja, Sickle Mountain (Kishtwar), Jawala, Sudhmahadev, Mantalai (Chenani), Om Parvat (Great Himalaya), Kalkaji, Surinsar, Mansar, Mounгри, Utterbehani. Though the list remains unending insofar as such religious spots of all religions are concerned. It is, unambiguously, no denying the fact that 'Purmandal' occupies its own placement, prominence and as far as its provenience is concerned, it equates in status with that of Kashi in Utter Pradesh (UP). Purmandal is a small village barely

Healthy forests must for people's wellbeing

■ ROSHAN JAGGI

In 2012, United Nation decided to celebrate March 21, every year as 'International Day of Forests'. The day highlights the importance of Forests and need to protect them for sustaining human life on planet Earth. Theme of this years' International Day of Forests is 'Forests and Health'. Life on earth planet is sustained by ecological balance and forests play critical role in maintaining this balance. Efforts are made on these days to drive home the message at local, national and international level that one of the effective ways to protect our planet earth is by ensuring the conservation of forests and their sustainable use.

Changing lifestyles and role of healthy forests: It is well known that forests give priceless ecological, economic, social and health benefits. Forests really care for human health. They clean water, purify air, capture atmospheric carbon to combat climate change issues, provide food and lifesaving medicines. Above all they improve our wellbeing.

Forests are known as stress busters and enhance one's capacity to focus attention. Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity. Health in broader sense refers to the wellbeing of community, which in turn depends on the wellbeing of environment (WHO). Countries like India face a significant transition in lifestyle of its population due to growing urbanisation and rising aspirations of young population (about 50 per cent of India's population is below 25 years of age). 35 per cent of India's population lives in cities which is likely to grow to more than 43 per cent by 2035 due to fast urbanisation. People living in urban centres face consequences of stressed environment, in the form of inadequate green spaces, lack of physical activity, high level of pollution which makes life-style of residents prone to chronic stress.

The changing lifestyle is considered as one of the primary causative factors for non- communicable diseases (NCDs) like cardiovascular and chronic respiratory diseases, diabetes, cancer and mental disorders. National Health Policy - 2017 red flags the issue of rapidly increasing burden of NCDs in India as a serious hazard for public health which may result in deceleration of economic growth and ultimately impeding our ambitious journey of becoming a developed nation by 2047, if adequate remedial measures are not taken. Similar trend has been witnessed in many other countries of Asia & Africa where changing lifestyle related disorders are telling upon the productivity of younger age groups.

Research demonstrates that living near green settings and visits to forests produce positive changes in human physiology, improves mood, strengthens the human

immune system and promotes both physical and mental health. Attractive green environments enhance one's motivation for physical exercise.

Thus, improving the health of natural forests, creating more green spaces near habitations in Urban and peri-urban areas would help enhance the flow of ecosystem services which ultimately results in improved health outcomes. It gets manifested in the form of reduced expenditure on public health and enhanced productivity of citizens. Forests are considered healthy when they have the ability to meet all expectations that people have from them. Therefore, focus of forest managers should be to study thresh holds and tipping points at which our forests are unable to recover from biotic interference and pressures. Forests in most of the regions of world have been subjected to tremendous stress mainly because of increased anthropogenic activities like:

- Deforestation and degradation through extension of agriculture and other non-forest based land use.
- Fragmentation by way of developmental activities.
- Forest fires and several other natural factors.

Efforts to increase India's forest and tree cover: India is world's 2nd most populous country and soon going to get to top leaving behind China. Heavy burden of human population coupled with ambitious agenda of fast economic development poses a serious challenge to sustainably manage the forests and tree cover for ensuring environmental security of our citizens.

The challenge becomes humongous in view of our international commitments in the form of modified INDCs after CoP26 at Glasgow and implementation of the 17 SDGs. India needs to adopt the low carbon production systems to reduce its C- intensity in order to reach the goal of net- zero by 2070 as announced by our Prime Minister.

But good news is that efforts of Central and State Governments have been yielding good results. ISFRs (India State of Forest Reports by FSI) of last one decade revealed that there is consistent & progressive increase in forest and tree cover in the country. Both central & state Governments have initiated series of programmes in this regard like:

- Green India mission aims at improving the quality of existing forests and increasing forest and tree cover by afforestation activities on forest and non-forest areas.
- Compensatory afforestation and promoting regeneration in natural forests to make good the loss of forests on account of developmental activities.
- Nagar- Van Yojna to increase green spaces and overallgreenery in and around the cities and to provide better environment and improve quality of life of residents of these urban canter's.
- Mission Life aiming at behavioural change of citizens

Power of true love: Content & forms

Love is a complex and multi-faceted emotion that can be difficult to define, but generally refers to feelings of strong affection and attachment towards another person. It is often characterized by feelings of warmth, tenderness, and caring, as well as a desire to be close to and take care of the other person. Love can take many forms, including romantic love between partners, familial love between family members, and platonic love between friends. Love can also be selfless, where the well-being of the loved one takes precedence over one's own needs and desires, or it can be selfish, where the love is based on one's own needs and desires. The nature of love can also vary greatly depending on the individuals involved and the specific relationship. Some relationships may be characterized by intense passion and desire, while others may be more based on companionship and mutual support. In any case, love is a powerful force that can greatly influence and shape our lives. It can bring us happiness and fulfillment, but can also cause pain and heartache when things don't work out.

Initiation of love: The origin of love is a complex and multi-faceted subject that has been the subject of philosophical, psychological, and scientific inquiry for centuries. There is no single answer to the question of the origin of love, as the nature and expression of love can vary greatly depending on the individuals involved, the context in which it occurs, and cultural and societal norms and values.

From a biological perspective, some scientists believe that the origins of love can be traced back to the evolution of species and the need for survival and reproduction.

For example, romantic love is thought to have evolved as a way to help humans form strong bonds and partnerships that increase the chances of survival and reproduction. From a psychological perspective, love is believed to be a complex mixture of emotions, desires, and behaviors that are shaped by early childhood experiences and relationships, as well as cultural and societal norms and values.

From a philosophical perspective, love is often considered to be a fundamental aspect of the human experience and a central aspect of many religious and spiritual traditions. It is sometimes seen as a divine force that brings people together and helps them to transcend their individual limitations and experience a sense of connection and unity with others. Love, social life and prospect: Love plays a significant role in social relationships and can greatly impact the way people interact with one another. Love can serve as a strong bond between individuals, bringing people together and creating strong connections and relationships. In romantic relationships, love can create a deep sense of intimacy and commitment between partners, fostering a sense of trust and understanding. Love can also play a role in the formation of families, as the bond between parents and children is often rooted in love and affection. In friendships, love can lead to strong, supportive relationships that provide emotional and social support. Platonic love between friends can be just as important and meaningful as romantic love and can provide a sense of belonging and companionship. In the broader social context, love can also play a role in shaping societal norms and values, as people tend to model their relationships and behavior after those around them who they admire and love. Love can also serve as a motivator for social change, as people who are driven by love for others may work to create a more just and equitable society. Overall, love is a fundamental aspect of social relationships and has the power to bring people together, shape societal norms and values, and create strong, meaningful connections between individuals. It has also potential for long-lasting happiness and fulfillment.

When two people are compatible and share common values and goals, their relationship has a higher likelihood of lasting. It contains possibility of growth and self-discovery: Love can provide an opportunity for growth and self-discovery, as individuals learn about themselves and each other, and work to build a strong and meaningful relationship. The likelihood of challenges and difficulties: Love is not always easy, and relationships are often accompanied by challenges and difficulties. These can include differences in opinions and values, changes in life circumstances, and the ups and downs of emotional connection. The possibility of heartbreak: Love can also result in heart-break, especially in cases where relationships end or are not reciprocated.

This can lead to feelings of sadness, disappointment, and emotional pain. The potential for growth and resilience: Despite the challenges and difficulties, love has the potential to make individuals stronger and more resilient. It can help people to grow and develop, and to develop coping skills and emotional intelligence that can serve them well throughout their lives.

and leveraging the environment friendly legacy of India, to promote sustainable lifestyles and sustainable patterns of consumption to address the climate change.

- Focus on conservation of Wildlife and wetlands. The 5.03 per cent of geographical area has now been brought under intensive PAN mechanism. India has established world's largest network of 75 Ramsar sites to lay focus on aquatic ecosystems.

Scenario of Jammu & Kashmir: In union territory of J&K forest and tree cover is about 55 per cent of the geographical area which is much higher than the national average (about 25 per cent). However National Forest Policy 1988 stipulates that Himalayan states need to have minimum of 2/3rd of geographical area under Forest &tree cover. Alive to its mandate and responsibility, Department of Forests, Ecology & Environment of J&K has been making concerted efforts involving all stakeholders viz local communities with active involvement of PRIs and various other sections of civil society to scale up activities of afforestation and biodiversity conservation both on forest and non-forest areas adopting landscape approach, leveraging best practices and technological innovations, and by centre-staging the involvement of local people though joint forest management approach. There is a special focus on improving existing water bodies and creating network of more such structures to improve water regime by effective rain water harvesting. The livestock population in J&K is almost at par with human population and national Livestock census 2019 reveals that J&K faces about 50 per cent fodder deficiency viz-a-viz actual demand. To address the issue department is laying focus to augment fodder production both grass as well as leaf fodder to contain the problem of stray grazing. Excessive grazing has remained one of the main drivers of forest degradation.

Department's initiatives like Green J&K Drive, Har Gaon Haryali, Paed Lagao Beti Ke Naam, Van se Jal, Jal se Jeevan, Fodder augmentation programme etc have been successful to a large extent by upscaling outcomes & establishing a connect and feeling of ownership with common people through the active engagement of Gram Panchayats and other sections of civil society.

Our economic development road-map has to be compatible with growing aspirations of people especially of educated & aspirational youth. The political executives, policy planners, forest managers, and grass root level community leaders need to critically balance the future strategies and action plans so that we achieve our national developmental goals without compromising our commitments towards global environmental wellbeing.

(The author is a senior IFS officer working with J&K State Forest Department and views expressed in this article are personal).

Purmandal- Chotta Kashi of Duggar

30 Km from Jammu to its South-East. There are twin routes to the sanctum sanctorum; one from Sidhra Kunjwani bye-pass road and the other from NH-1 from Kaluchak through Birpur-Uttarbehni through various twists and turns en route to the last tourist temple of Purmandal.

The prominence of the temples of Purmandal is a testimony of the Valley of Kashmir which in other words round is the fountainhead of 'Shaivism' of which the first building of the temple was, de fact, ascribed to the ruler of time by name Raja Vent Dutt. In other words round, he has been as well named as 'Vinanayaditya' or 'Avantivarman' who ruled those times some eleven and a quarter hundreds years back i.e., (855 to 883 A.D.)

Situated alongside river 'Devak', it further meanders down and join Utterbehani another tirth-sthan and thence downwards flows near Vijaypur, situated alongside a small town on Jammu Pathankote road and the bridge over the river is probably the longest one in the entire state of Jammu and Kashmir. It is commonly believed that most of Shiv-Lingams have spiritually originated in the close vicinity of Purmandal alongside 'Devak' proximity and is further reported that "Shiva and Mata Paravati are those of Indreshwar, Bhuteshwar, Gyaneshwar, Kadeshwar and Bikeshwar. The sanctum sanction is of ample importance as a prominent tirthsthan around the years, preferably during 'Shivratri' and Chaitra Chaudish' like that of Airwan in Kathua district. The place is having its prominence that saint Kabir and Ustad Bismillah Khan had been over this pious

and sacred spots.

The sanction sanctorum of Purmandal bears relevance to 'Kashi' Devsthan in UP. where centuries old temple of Mighty 'Vishwanath' till date exists but historically it is known that 'Raja Vishwa Chand' usurped him and confined him to 'Manika Ghat' after having some tribal confrontation and as such King 'Vishwanath' relinquished the kingdom and confined himself to 'Manika Ghat' in late stages of his life. Here at 'Purmandal' multi-Shiva Lingams have originated spiritually called in local parlance as 'Aap Shambo' lingam which as per legends describe that a famous King namely Veni Dutt as mentioned earlier ruled in those ancient times in between eight to the close of Ninth Century had also visited Purmandal as it was a part of his Kingdom.

But, whatsoever legends are affiliated to this sacred spot, the fact remains that it was hoary past. The spot is of utmost prominence and Shakti in the Northern part of India where devotees in lakh assemble over here to have holy Darshan, pay obeisance and obtain blessing. Even great Guru Nanak had visited the spot.

The Village Purmandal is populated on either side of 'Devika River' which with revolving wheel of time many more temples were constructed during Maharaja's regime. But with the exploding population and heavy biotic pressure, the areas surrounding the spot have turned barren despite the fact that the Government Department of all hues have put in all out efforts to rehabilitate and bring back to its pristine grandeur and glory but all in vain.

Even the historically old religious structures which form an important part of our national heritage stand neglected and are decertifying impending dooms day. Apart from historic temples, there are old Sarais and Havellis having the same status. During Maharaja's regime (Dogra rulers), it was earmarked to construct a cluster of sequential temples from 'Utterbehani' to Purmandal where the remnant material (Iron Girders and their allies) stand spanning the two sacred spots, and after Dogra rulers all remained silent. Here the Govt. needs to take up the matter to save and invigorate this sacred spot of our national heritage. Restoration of dilapidated temples, Havelis, Sarais to its pristine grandeur is the call of the hour and glory as devotees/ tourists from far and wide areas come here for holy Darshan, pay obeisance and obtain blessing. The area is just like that of 'Kashi' (U.P) and as such dead bodies of locality around are cremated and one need not to visit 'Haridwar' for immersion of ashes and as per local parlance, are sure a place in heaven (Gati locally spoken). Miraculous are the ways of God that the remains of ashes are nowhere visible and disappear in the sandy 'Devak'.

The holy river needs to be rehabilitated by ensuring ecological balance by way of massive afforestation work on the barren hill-tops, catchments areas and here the Forest, Horticulture, Sericulture and other sister departments have to pick up the thread sincerely for this pious cause and its monitoring be ensured by accountability commission.

The works executed over couple of years

back are nowhere in sight and lakhs of rupees went to drain. Classic clean lines campaign shall have to be launched by one and all to make 'Devak' neat, clean and green, imposition of fine on those who litter at sacred spot and its surroundings. It is imperative and this shall have to be ensured by constituting a committee to assist 'Dharmarth Trust Deptt', apart from planting multihued flowering plants, climbers and creepers on either side of the river, particularly those best suited to site. Water conservation, construction of ponds, tanks, boalis and other water bodies /Ghats are warranted to be constructed. During my last visit to 'Purmandal', I observed that a man from Punjab with this associates had engaged labourers for the construction of a bathing Ghats most keenly.

Apathetic attitude of our people and Govt deserves to be blamed for act of negligence. When the outsider from Punjab is devotedly on this pious job what hinders we people and the Govt? It is rather a matter of shame. Conclusively, therefore, imperfect and unawareness in our grey matter need to be revived to enhance the beauty of our old religious heritage and bring back to its pristine grandeur and glory by one and all so that our coming generations may not abuse us for utter act of negligence which our earlier rulers / ancestors have bestowed upon us. And lastly I add here the last line, 'How senseless seems to me the man who has seen his neighbour ill, old and dead, and yet remains happy and is not shaken by fear'.

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