

EMPOWERING PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTES

It is the endeavour of the ruling dispensation that it took a lot of proactive initiatives for putting in place a vibrant democratic system by empowering the Panchayati Raj Institutes (PRIs) at various levels. To strengthen Panchayati Raj System and thereby improve the rural areas of the country, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) is implementing Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) with the primary objective of strengthening Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) by way of capacity building and training of the elected representatives and the functionaries of the PRIs, providing infrastructural support like Gram Panchayat Bhawan and Computerisation. The efforts are also on for incentivization of Panchayats (IoP), a Central Components of RGSA scheme to encourage competitive spirit among PRIs under which, Awards including financial incentives are given to best performing Panchayats in recognition of their good work for improving delivery of services and public good. Moreover, Mission Mode Project on e-Panchayats, a Central component of RGSA scheme under which various e-governance projects are funded towards digitalization of Panchayats to bring in efficiency, accountability and transparency in the functioning of the PRIs for overall transformation of PRIs (No funds are released to States under the scheme). While giving a written reply in Lok Sabha, the Union Minister of State for Panchayati Raj, Kapil Moreshwar Patil informed that Article 243D of the Constitution of India provides for not less than one-third reservation for women in PRIs out of total number of seats to be filled by direct election and number of offices of chairpersons of Panchayats. As per the information available with the Ministry, 21 States namely, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Tripura, Uttarakhand and West Bengal, and 2 UTs namely 'UT of Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu' and 'UT of Lakshadweep' have made provision for 50% reservation for women in PRIs in their respective State Panchayati Raj Acts. In respect of remaining Part-IX States/UTs, Constitutional provision, as prescribed in Article 243D, applies.

Further, Government has been encouraging increased involvement of women in the functioning of Panchayats through active participation in the Gram Sabha meetings for preparation of Gram Panchayat Development Plans and various schemes being implemented by the Panchayats. This Ministry has also issued advisories to the States to facilitate holding of separate Ward Sabha and Mahila Sabha meetings prior to Gram Sabha meetings, enhancing the presence and participation of women in Gram Sabha and Panchayat meetings, allocation of Panchayat funds for women centric activities, combating the evil of women trafficking, female foeticide, child marriage etc.

YOUR COLUMN

Cancel road permits of vehicles involved in illegal transportation of animals

Dear Editor,

Through the columns of your esteemed daily, I would like to bring request the Principal Secretary Transport, Government of Jammu & Kashmir for cancelling route permits of all those vehicles involved in illegal transportation of animals. As a Senior Vice President of Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) Jammu, vide order no DMJ/Misc/22-23/2789-92, dated August 23, 2022 issued by District Magistrate, I am authorized on behalf of SPCA to file applications, petitions and appeals related to animal welfare for the effective implementation of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1960.

A lawyer is also empanelled to contest cases of animal abuse in the High court of J&K and Ladakh at Jammu and other subordinate courts in district Jammu. We have come across 130 FIRs in Jammu in 1 month in illegal and cruel bovine transport, in violation of the Transport of Animals Rules 1978, promulgated under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1960 (excluding cases in Akhnoor and R S Pura Courts). I am attaching the FIR numbers and details of vehicles involved in concerned police stations in which SPCA has intervened.

There are several trucks and other vehicles involved in the FIRs in different police stations in Jammu and Kashmir which are later released by the court on payment of a small bond or a few days maintenance cost of case property animals pending litigation.

This is hardly any deterrent to the persons accused of animal smuggling and they go on to their business of cattle smuggling jeopardizing welfare of animals and public safety.

The revenue they generate by such illegal businesses is used for illegal activities which put public safety at risk in J&K. Rule 97 of the Transport of Animals Rules 1978 require that in the event of contravention or noncompliance of the Rules during the transport of Animals, any permits or authorization issued for such transport shall be immediately canceled by the concerned authority.

The details of some of some vehicles along with FIR no and concerned police stations is given hereunder: FIRs 270/2022 Truck (JK18C-7694), 248/2022 (JK14H-6907), 06/2023 (JK02BD-9830) and 01/2023 (JK14H-4692) and 262/2022 (JK13D-9898) registered at Police Post Manwal; FIRs 02/2023 (JK02BT-6357), FIRs No 222/2022 (JK02AS-2772), 185/2022 (JK02CX-3758) and 05/2023 (JK06B-3087) registered at Police Station Jhajjar Kotli; FIR No 322/2022 (JK14A-6958) registered at Police Station Domana; FIR No 425/2022 (JK02CB-5411) registered at Police Station Nagrota; FIR No 118/2022 (JK03E-3951) registered at Police Station Bagh-e-Bahu; FIR No 296/2022 (Two Mahindra Bolero load carrier JK02CQ-2728 and JK02BL-0231) registered at Police Station Domana; FIR No 212/2022 registered under sections 188 of IPC, 11 of PCA Act, 50, 52, 54, 56 of Transport Rules (JK20A-4382) at Police Station Akhnoor and FIR No 0288, dated October 11, 2022 (JK03E-7185) registered at Police Post Chowki Choura, Akhnoor.

It is requested that immediate action should be taken by cancelling permits issued to above mentioned vehicles, in compliance with Transport of Animals Rules 1978, since the Concerned Authority granting permit to motor vehicles in the Transport Department of J&K.

Rumpy Madaan,
Senior Vice President SPCA, Jammu.

Festivals- basis of cultur & cultural unity

■ DR SATYAWAN SAURABH

India is a country of festivals. Festivals work to connect us socially and culturally. Our cultural and cultural unity is the basic foundation of India's integrity. On fasting days, we remember the deities, fast, donate and listen to stories, so that along with personal progress, the message of social harmony also reaches the society. The seeds of Indian culture are hidden in this only. Some such days come in our social life, due to which not only a person, or a family, but the whole society is happy and elated. If India is called a country of festivals, then it would be appropriate. There is a saying in the Bhojpuri language - 'Seven times nine festivals'.

Being agricultural, each season change has its use with laughter-joy and entertainment. The festival has been included on these occasions, which is appropriate. In the first category are the festivals, festivals, and fairs, which are cultural and whose purpose is to protect the basic elements and ideas of Indian culture. All the big festivals of Hindus come in this class, like the Holika festival, Deepawali, Basant, Shrawani, Sankranti, etc. Protecting culture is their soul. Those festivals come in the second category; they have been made in the holy memory of some great man. There is a law to remember the qualities, pastimes, pious character, and greatness of the great man whose memory these are. Festivals like Ramnavami, Krishnashtami, Bhishma-Panchami, Hanuman-Jayanti, Nag-Panchami, etc. can be kept in this category. That is, there is a festival here every day. The example of unity in diversity is seen on the occasion of this festival. These festi-

vals bring refreshing moments with happiness, joy, joy, and gaiety to the person in the everyday running, energy filled with confusion, becoming deserted. This applies not only to Hinduism but to various religions and sects. These festivals are based on the social beliefs, traditions, and past rituals of different people's communities. All festivals have their traditions and customs.

These festivals provide character and emotional strength to man by developing moral qualities like compassion, kindness, simplicity, hospitality, mutual love, goodwill, and charity in human life. The pride and identity of Indian culture, these festivals are very important from the social, religious, cultural, and spiritual points of view. Social festivals and inter-school cultural events provide wonderful opportunities to help build children's confidence and interpersonal skills.

Interpersonal skills include the ability to communicate and interact effectively with others and self-confidence is belief in oneself and one's abilities, both of which are essential to building positive relationships with others. In this article, we will look at some of the ways how these events help build children's confidence and interpersonal skills. Social festivals bring exposure to different cultures, languages, and traditions, which can broaden their horizons and help them, develop empathy and understanding toward others. Make new friends and contacts, which can help to feel more connected to the community and develop a sense of belonging.

These events are a great way to develop this as they bring a lot of people together and thus create a sense of unity and brotherhood. They teach us to be

more accepting, tolerant, and inclusive of people from different walks of life. Marketing has changed all the systems. Our festivals also did not remain untouched by this. Perhaps that's why major festivals are losing their color and it seems that we celebrate festivals only to fulfill formalities. No one has free time to inquire about the sorrows and pains of the people at these major festivals. Everyone is busy earning money. Dirty politics has also ruined the fun of festivals. We were slaves for hundreds of years. But our elders never let the color of these festivals fade.

Today in this economic age everything has changed. It was said that no one is small on the day of the festival. No one else is bigger. All equal But now the display of colors has remained and the meeting is just a formality. Even on the day of the festival, we are not able to fully connect with our loved ones and society.

Due to this the taste of sweets has become astringent. We talk about removing the darkness of the whole earth, but we are unable to remove even the darkness within ourselves. This ritual performed by us on festivals probably indicates that along with our older generations, our festivals also left. Our festivals are the living form of our sensibilities and traditions, which every member of society likes to celebrate or say, to celebrate again and again, every year. Innumerable concerns about our civilization and culture are hidden in these beliefs, traditions, and ideas.

The thought of our festivity, which fills our lives with unique colors of life, gives rise to a new flow of enthusiasm and enthusiasm in the mind. Our minds and life both are festive. Our festivity binds

the family and society in one thread. Teaches to live united and gives gift of participation and mutual coordination. Our festivals, which add colors to our lives, social festivals provide a unique platform to collaborate, meet and socialize with peers, showcase our talents, and the ability to teach and learn about different cultures and traditions. Is.

These skills are an essential part of our lives and are often at the core of almost all aspects of our lives. Therefore, as far as their relevance is concerned in the present times, on the days of fasting and festivals, we remember the said deity, fast, donate and listen to stories, which show the message of social harmony along with personal progress.

The seeds of Indian culture are hidden in it. Festivals have an immense contribution to the development of Indian culture. Fasting, festivals, festivals, fairs, etc. have their special importance in Indian culture. Most of the festivals of Hindus are celebrated because, in the form of Hindu sages, plans have been made to make life juicy and beautiful. Every festival, festival, fast, festival, fair etc. have a secret significance. Indian culture is associated with each. They have been determined by keeping a specific idea or purpose in front. Special emphasis has been laid on the need for a value education for the re-establishment of values.

Value education has become the need of the hour today. So it needs to be implemented as soon as possible. In the present digital era, people are forgetting their civilization and culture. Because of this, the importance of fasting and festivals increases.

(The author is a Research scholar, poet and freelance journalist).

Historical importance of forests

■ G L KHAJURIA

Nature has endowed the Indian sub-continent with luxuriant and plentiful forest wealth. The vast and varied climatic and geological conditions bore forests of different types and intensities ranging from dry thorny forests to wet evergreens. The coniferous forests of hilly region and the deciduous types along foot hills conglomerates many valuable species which serve for the use of construction of houses, bridges and score of other purposes. The original inhabitants of the country had great reverence for forests and a grove of trees around temples were of ample importance of these trees were considered as sacred as our Gods and Goddesses. And cutting or removal of any of such tree was considered a sin. Under some compelling conditions of a tree was removed, five to ten saplings were planted out to absolve oneself of the sin so committed.

As such, the forests played a prominent part in the cultural and spiritual development of our generations. The Rishis and the Munis in search of salvation and attainment of wisdom had their Ashramas in the sylvan surroundings of these forests. The Ramayana and the Mahabharata give an attractive description of forests like Dandakaranya and Nandavan. The wildlife consisting of a variety of mammals, birds and reptiles also received due attention for their protection and conservation.

When Lord Rama told Laxman to fetch firewood for cooking by his consort Sitaji, He advised him to remove only dead-dried branches of tree. He forbade him not to cut green branches. Even our Gods and Goddess were much conscious of forest whereas we human are always have become lusty and are hell bent to go to any extent to fill our ladder by injury to the vibrant lush-green trees. It is dismaying, painful and ironical too. When we chop-down those trees more for our greed than our need, Lord Buddha preached, 'The forest is a peculiar organism of unlimited and benevolence which sustains us by all means. It offers shade even to the axe-man who falls it.' Around 2000 BC, there is evidence of a flourishing Dravidian civilization existing in consonance with the forests that were then in such abundance. The early Aryans were pastoral people interacted in the pursuance of agriculture but they also cleared forests only in the areas where they actually settled down, establishing habitations and institutions in the beautiful surroundings of the forests. The records of Chinese

pilgrims (600 BC) refer to dense Indian forests even in the North-West regions where much depletion of forests has occurred now. Records relating to Alexander's invasion (327 BC) mention existence of dense forests. Babur, the first Mughal emperor to real Indian in early sixteenth century is reported to have shot in these forests indicating existence of dense forests and wildlife in that period. The abundance of forests created an impression that resources were inexhaustible and thus there was no organized effort to conserve and maintain the forests. Casual instructions appear to have been issued by different ruler from time to time to regulate fallings and earn maximum revenue.

During the reign of Chandra Gupta Murya (300 BC), a superintendent of forests was appointed to look after the forests. The protection of wildlife was also a part of his duty. Sometimes specified species of timber value were proclaimed by local rulers as 'Royal Trees' felling of which was prohibited without permission otherwise the forests were open to all and the public obtained their requirement without restrictions. The Muslim rulers did not have much special interest in the conservation and organized management of forests.

Their main interest in forests was for hunting. Areas with good wildlife were declared as "Royal hunting reserves" and thus received some protection. But increase in population and need for extension for agriculture continued to make incursions on forest land and its produce. The increasing demands of land for expanding agriculture and demand of timber for Navy and other constructional purposes made considerable inroads on forests and forest wealth so much so that it was felt that the forests may not to continue to meet the demands for timber unless some concrete steps were taken for their conservation and maintenance.

In 1855, Lord Dalhousie, the Governor General issued a memorandum to the Government of India outlining policy of conservancy for the whole country. By that time, it was clearly recognized by the administration that if the forest were to be conserved, proper scientific management was necessary. In 1856, Lord Dalhousie appointed District Brandis to take charge of the forest and after 22 years in 1878, the Government honoured Brandish with the title of companion Indian empire and he served a knight commandership in 1880 in recognition of the meritorious service he rendered during the period of 19 years.

Brandis was truly the founder of Indian forestry and

it was always befitting to commemorate his achievements. As soon as Brandis was appointed as Inspector General of Forests Cleghorn was appointed to assist him.

They were responsible for methodical system of Management of forests in all states. A separate forest enactment as introduced that time. Moreover, with the passage of time, the demand of forest officer increased for the better control and Management of forest. While Forest Research Institute (FRI) came into existence in 1906, the status of forest school was raised to that of college. A separate two years course was started in 1912 at Dehradun to train science graduates for the provincial forest services of states. The cadre of these officers formed a link between Indian forest services and forest rangers. It was, however stopped in 1928. The forest research institute is located in a spacious campus called the New Forest. It has fine buildings and vast field research areas. It provides facilities for research in forestry and has received worldwide recognition. The institute is associated with professional training for the forest officers both in the superior as well as the junior levels. The trainings included trainings included within the college as well as outside in the field on forest management and other allied fields. The college impact training to the forest officers on such pattern which make them physically and mentally fit which makes them adequately stout in the administrative and executive activities.

With the passage of time, the Indian forest college was re-incarnated and named Indira Gandhi Forest College, Dehra Dun. A short administrative course is imparted at Lal Bahadur Shastri College on Public Administration at Dalhousie.

The Forest Research institute is overall looked by the Director of F.R.I. and colleges. The forest colleges are both for Indian Forest Officers and Forest Ranges officers under the overall control of the Principals. The FRI and colleges are of global fame where trainees from all Indian states including foreign countries are imparted trainings.

With the passage of time, the Indian states opened rangers training college in their respective states. After a detailed imparting two years course, the trainees are awarded degrees to serve in their respective states.

(The author is former Deputy Conservator of Forests, J&K).

'Prince of Martyrs'- Shaheed Bhagat Singh

■ PRIYANKA SAURABH

Bhagat Singh had said in court, "Revolution need not necessarily involve bloody struggle, nor does it have any place for personal vendetta. It is not a cult of bombs and pistols. By revolution we mean the present order of things, which is based on blatant injustice, it has to be changed." Bhagat fully accepted Marxism and the class view of the society- "The peasants must free themselves not only from the foreign yoke but also from the yoke of landlords and capitalists." He also said, "The struggle in India will continue as long as a handful of exploiters continue to exploit the labor of the common people to further their interests."

Bhagat Singh, a distinguished revolutionary, thinker, voracious reader, and one of the most educated political leaders of the time, was an intellectual. Despite fighting violently against the British, he continued to indulge his passion for reading and writing. He studied to arm himself with arguments in favor of his creed of patriotism and to enable himself to counter the arguments offered by the opposition. He was revered by the youth, hated the British Raj, and was opposed to none other than Mahatma Gandhi, like other revolutionaries he dreamed of freedom for the motherland. As much as they were involved in violence against the government, they used their discretion and

used non-violence and fasting as a tool to break the hegemony of British power. He always advocated for human dignity and rights transcending the communal divide. A real breakthrough was achieved by Bhagat Singh and his comrades in terms of revolutionary ideology, forms of revolutionary struggle, and the goals of the revolution. The Hindustan Republican Association Manifesto (1925) declared that it stood for the abolition of all systems which made possible the exploitation of man by man. Its founding council had decided to propagate social revolutionary and communist principles. The HRA also decided to start workers' and peasants' organizations and work for an organized and armed revolution. Emphasizing the role of ideas in the making of revolution, Bhagat Singh declared that the sword of revolution gets sharpened on the hone of ideas. This environment of wide reading and deep thinking permeated the ranks of the HSRA leadership. Bhagat Singh had turned to Marxism and was convinced that a successful revolution could only be achieved through popular broad-based mass movements. That is why Bhagat Singh helped establish the Punjab Naujawan Bharat Sabha in 1926 as an open wing of the revolutionaries. The Sabha was to do open political work among the youth, farmers, and workers. Bhagat Singh and Sukhdev also organized the Lahore Students'

Union for open, legal work among students. The patient intellectual and political work appealed to the very slow pace and Congress style of politics that the revolutionaries sought to transcend. Effective acquisition of new ideology is a long and historical process whereas the quick change in the way of thinking was the need of the hour. These young intellectuals faced the classic dilemma of how to mobilize and recruit people. Here, he decided to opt for propaganda by deed, i.e. through personal heroic action and using the courts as a platform for revolutionary propaganda. Revolution no longer equated to militancy and violence. Its aim was national liberation-the overthrow of imperialism but beyond that achieving a new socialist order ending the "exploitation of man by man". As Bhagat Singh said in court, "Revolution does not necessarily involve bloody struggle, nor does it have any place for personal vendetta. It is not a cult of bombs and pistols. By revolution we mean the present order of things, which is based on blatant injustice, has to be changed. Bhagat fully accepted Marxism and the class view of society- 'The peasants must free themselves not only from the foreign yoke but also from the yoke of landlords and capitalists.' He also said, "The struggle in India will continue so long as a handful of exploiters continue to exploit the labor of the common people to further their inter-

ests. It matters little that these exploiters are British capitalists, British and Indian capitalists in alliance, or purely Indian." He defined socialism scientifically as the abolition of capitalism and class supremacy. Bhagat was thoroughly and consciously secular - by Bhagat for Punjab Naujawan Bharat Sabha Two of the six rules formulated were that its members would have nothing to do with communal bodies and that they would propagate a general spirit of tolerance among people professing religion. A matter of personal belief, Bhagat Singh urged people to He also saw the importance of breaking free from the mental shackles of religion and superstition - "To be a revolutionary, one needs immense moral strength, but also requires critical and independent thinking". Bhagat Singh and his comrades made a lasting contribution to the national freedom movement. His deep patriotism, courage and determination, and spirit of sacrifice stirred the Indian people. He helped spread nationalist consciousness in the country. At an early age, he realized the larger goals of life rather than being bound to fulfill personal goals. He transformed the revolution into a socialist movement. He was a great innovator in two fields of politics and raised serious issues and dangers of communalism.

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