

-Lal Bahadur Shastri



WATER SPORTS

▼ater sports enthusiasts in India have an array of thrilling destinations to choose from to satisfy their adventure cravings. Among these, Ladakh stands out with its unique offering of river rafting in the Indus and Zanskar Rivers. The experience of navigating Grade 3 and Grade 4 rapids in the Zanskar River is unparalleled, attracting adventure seekers from around the globe.

Moreover, India's enthusiasm for water sports is further highlighted by events like the 23rd All India Police Water Sports Championship, scheduled to take place from March 3rd to 8th, 2024, at the Sher-e-Kashmir International Conference Centre (SKICC) in Srinagar. This championship brings together participants from across the country to showcase their skills and compete in various water sports disci-

Overall, the growing popularity of water sports in India reflects the country's increasing appetite for adventure and provides enthusiasts with numerous opportunities to indulge in thrilling experiences.

The Ram Mandir journey: 1822-2024

■he 'Ram Janmabhoomi' movement for a temple at Ayodhya $^{ extsf{t}}$ has a timeline running over more than 200 years, with sev-. eral milestones and spilling of blood. Here is a brief history. BEFORE INDEPENDENCE:

In 1751, the Marathas appealed to the Nawab of Awadh, whom they had helped defeat Pathan forces in the doab region, to transfer control of Ayodhya, Kashi and Mathura to them, former Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)'s Member of Parliament in Rajya Sabha Shri Balbir Punj writes in his book 'Tryst With Ayodhya'. In 1756 too, when Nawab Shuja-ud-Daula soughttheir help against an imminent Afghan invasion, the Marathas requested that the three sites be transferred to them. However, the Nawab switched sides later, and the Maratha demand became irrelevant. Punj savs that in judicial records, the Ayodhya dispute dates back to 1822. A court official called Hafizullah made a submission to the Faizabad court in 1822 that a mosque built by Babur on the birthplace of Lord Ram stood in proximity to Sita Rasoi in Ayodhya. On July 28, 1855, there was a bloody clash between Hindus and Muslims at Hanuman Garhi temple near the Babri Masjid. The 2019 Supreme Court (SC) judgment on the Ayodhya title suit says, "It is said that up to that time the Hindus and Muhammadans alike used to worship in the mosque-temple. Since British Rule, a railing has been put up to prevent the disputes...." In 1855, Janmasthan Mahant Raghubar Das moved court to seek permission to build a temple at the Ram Chabutra, close to the Masjid but within the complex. The petition was dismissed on the grounds that historical justice could not be delivered after so long. **AFTER 1947:**

In July 1949, a petition was made to the Uttar Pradesh (UP) government that a temple should come up at the site. The government forwarded it to the district administration of Faizabad. City magistrate of Faizabad, Guru Dutt Singh, submitted a report in October 1949, saying the land belongs to the government and that people have faith in Ram Lalla and want a temple.

On August 14, 1949, the UP Hindu Mahasabha passed a resolution for the 'liberation' of Ram Janmabhoomi at Ayodhya, Krishna Janmabhoomi at Mathura and the Vishwanath temple at Kashi. On the night of December 22-23, 1949 the idol of Ram Lalla was supposedly placed in the mosque by Abhiram Das, born Abhinandan Mishra before he became an ascetic (according to the Liberhan Commission). Supporters of the Ram temple claimed the idol had appeared by itself. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru directed the UP government to get the idol removed. However, City Magistrate Guru Dutt Singh, termed the "firstKar Sewak" by Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) leader Ashok Singhal, did not allow Chief Minister Govind Ballabh Pant to enter Faizabad-Ayodhya and later resigned.

District Magistrate K. K. Nair also refused to remove the idol, citing law and order concerns. Congress leader and former UP minister Dau Dayal Khanna was the first politician to write to then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in May 1983 demanding the restoration of Ayodhya, Kashi and Mathura to the Hindus.

On April 7 and 8, 1984, at a Dharma Sansad in Delhi, the VHP in Delhi announced the launch of a movement for the 'liberation' of the holy sites at Ayodhya, Mathura, and Kashi.

In December 1986, Faizabad district judge ordered the opening of the locks of the Babri Masjid and permitted Hindus to offer prayers therein. The judge later claimed in his book, Voice of Conscience that a black monkey sat on the roof of the courtroom when the hearing was on. When he delivered the judgment and went home, he saw the "same monkey" in his lawn, and saluted him, "treating him to be some Divine Power"

In mid-February 1986, the All-India Muslim Personal Board met in Delhi and urged political parties to support their demand for the handing over of the Babri Masiid to Muslims. On February 3. 1986, Hasim Ansari, one of the litigants who had field a writ petition on behalf of the Sunni Waqf Board on December 18, 1961 seeking possession of the Babri Masjid, moved the Allahabad High Court (HC). The court said that until further orders by it, the nature of the property shall not change. On February 6, 1986, the Babri Masjid Action Committee was formed in Lucknow. On July 10, 1989, the Allahabad HC decided to consolidate all suits related to the matter. In July 1989, first time the BJP under the leadership of Lal Krishna Advani plunged into the movement, passing its Himachal Pradesh's Palampur resolution that said the Ram Janmabhoomi should be handed over to the Hindus through a negotiated settlement or legislation. In September 1989, the VHP announced it would take consecrated bricks (Ram Shila) from all over the country and perform a Shilanyas (foundation-laying) for a Ram temple at Ayodhya on October 10, 1989. The Congress government permitted it. Rajiv Gandhi launched his 1989 Lok Sabha campaign from Ayodhya. The foundation-laying ceremony was held on November 9, 1989, and Kameshwar Chaupal, a Dalit, laid the first Ram Shila. On September 25, 1990, then BJP president Lal Krishna Advani started a Rath Yatra from Somnath to Ayodhya. There were riots in many parts of India, killing about 600 people. The police fired on Kar Sewaks in Ayodhya on October 30 and November 2. Mulayam Singh Yadav was Chief Minister of UP.

On December 6, 1992, huge number of Kar Sewaks, VHP leaders, Rashtriva Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) leaders, and BJP leaders demolished the Babri Masjid. On January 7, 1993, Parliament passed the Acquisition of Certain Area at Ayodhya Act, through which the government acquired 67.03 acres of the disputed Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid land. It also asked the SC to determine whether there was a temple at the site before the Babri Masjid. The Justice Liberhan Commission report was submitted on June 30, 2009. It said the events of December 1992 were neither spontaneous nor unplanned. In April 2017, a special Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) court framed criminal charges against Lal Krishna Advani, Murli Manohar Joshi, Uma Bharti, and others. On September 30, 2020, the court acquitted all 32 accused on grounds of inconclusive evidence. In 2010, a special bench of the Allahabad High Court divided the disputed land in a 2:1 ratio, with two-third of the land was given to the Sunni Central Waqf Board. The verdict was challenged in the Supreme Court by both Hindu and Muslim litigants. On November 9, 2019, a fiveiudge bench of the Supreme Court awarded the entire disputed land to the Hindu petitioners.

The 'Shilanyas' and the 'Inauguration' of the Ram temple was done by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on August 5, 2020, and January 22, 2024 respectively in Ayodhya.

'Changing Mindsets: Let's make ear and hearing care a reality for all'

rold Hearing Day has been observed every year on the 3rd of March since 2007. This year, the theme is to lay focus on overcoming the various challenges posed by misperceptions of society and stigmatising mindsets through information-sharing and awareness-raising, which is targeted at public and healthcare providers.

"Hearing loss has often been referred to as an invisible disability, not just because of lack of visible symptoms, but because it has long been stigmatised and ignored by policymakers."

BURDEN OF HEARING LOSS: According to data provided by WHO:

"Over 80% of hearing care remains unmet globally.

"Unaddressed hearing loss poses nearly US 980 billion dollars each year, which is incurred due to the impact of hearing without rehabilitation access, including social exclusion and productivity

"Nearly 2.5 billion people are projected to have some degree of hearing loss by 2050, and hearing rehabilitation will be required for at least 700 million.

"Unsafe listening practices risk permanent, avoidable hearing loss in over 1 billion young adults.

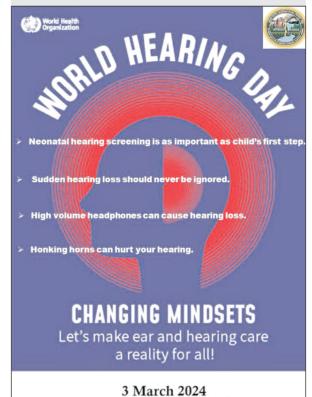
"In India, hearing impairment ranges between $1.59~\mathrm{and}~8.8~\mathrm{per}$ 1000 births and ranges between 7 to 49.18 per 1000 births in 'at risk' neonates. In children, hearing loss prevalence ranges between 6.6 and 16.47%.

Disabling hearing loss is defined as hearing loss of more than 40 decibels in the better hearing ear in adults and greater than 30 decibels in the better hearing ear in children.

Profound hearing impairment, including deafness, is a hearing loss of 81 decibels or more. CAUSES:

Various causes of hearing loss and deafness include genetic factors (hereditary and non-hereditary hearing loss), infections before birth (rubella, cytomegalovirus), oxygen deficiency at birth, hyperbilirubinemia, low birth weight, chronic ear infections, smoking, fixation of the bones of hearing which is known as otosclerosis, age-related sensorineural deafness, sudden sensorineur-

WORLD HEARING DAY



al deafness, trauma to ear or head, loud sounds, ototoxic medi-

cines, nutritional deficiencies.

PUBLIC AWARENESS STRATEGIES

"We should not insert objects into our ear canals or try cleaning our ears using earbuds.

"We should never use ear drops without a doctor's prescription. "We should always consult an ENT doctor for any episode of ear bleed or earache.

"should always consult an ENT doctor for ear discharge and take only medications prescribed by the doctor (to avoid ototoxic-

"All cases of decreased hearing or ear block should be reported immediately to the ENT doctor and should get hearing tests done

"Any hearing complaints in children should not taken lightly, as any negligence can affect speech and learning.

"In case of sudden development of hearing loss, one should report immediately to the ENT doctor; any delay in reporting and treatment can lead to permanent hearing loss.

"Immunisation against rubella, measles, mumps and meningi-

"Occupational hearing conservation programmes for developing and implementing regulations for control of noise. REHABILITATION:

Improving access to affordable, cost-effective, high-quality, assistive hearing technologies and products, including:

Hearing aids, cochlear implants, implantable hearing devices and other assistive devices are part of universal health coverage.

Under the ADIP scheme (Assistance to disabled persons for purchase/fitting of Aids and Appliances), cochlear implant surgery for children under five years of age is done free of cost. The cost of operation is around Rs. 6 lakh, borne by the government.

Rehabilitative measures should also include therapies to enhance perceptive skills and develop communication and linguistic abilities like learning sign language vocational training.

World Health Organization, World Hearing Day 2024

(The writers Dr Darwin Kaushal, Dr Amardeep Singh, Dr Akriti Mahajan, Dr Pooja Rani, Dr Shivane Thakur are from Department of ENT, AHMS Jammu).

PM Surya Ghar Muft BijleeYojana

A Game changer scheme that will save Rs 15 thousand per household How you can apply for and get subsidy under the Roof Top Solar Scheme

What is PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijlee Yojana about?

PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijlee Yojana is a Central Scheme that aims to provide free electricity to one crore households in India, who opt to install roof top solar electricity unit. The households will be able to get 300 units of electricity free every month. It is an ambitious scheme approved by the Union Cabinet on February 29th, with an outlay of Rs.75,021 crore.

How does PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijlee Yojana work?

The scheme provides for a subsidy of 60% of the solar unit cost for systems up to 2 kW capacity and 40 percent of additional system cost for systems between 2 to 3 kW capacity. The subsidy has been capped at 3 kW capacity.

At current benchmark prices, this will mean Rs 30,000 subsidy for 1 kW system, Rs 60,000 for 2 kW systems and Rs 78,000 for 3 kW systems or higher.

Who are eligible to apply for the Scheme? 1. The applicant must be an Indian citizen.

2. Must own a house with a roof that is suitable for installing solar panels.

3. The household must have a valid electricity connection. 4. The household must not have availed of any other subsidy for

How to apply for PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana?

First, the interested consumer has to register on the national portal www.pmsuryaghar.gov.in. This has to be done by selecting the state and the electricity distribution company. The National Portal will assist the households by providing relevant information such as appropriate system sizes, benefits calculator, vendor rating etc. The consumers can choose the vendor and the make of the Roof Top Solar unit they wish to get installed.

Can a consumer avail of loan facility to finance the solar unit?



Yes. Households will be able to access collateral-free low-interest loan products of around 7% at present for installation of residential RTS systems up to 3 kW. The interest rate has been pegged at 0.5% above the prevailing Repo Rate decided by the Reserve Bank of India from time to time. In the event of Repo Rate, which is 6.5% at present, getting reduced to say 5.5%, the effective interest rate for consumer will become 6% instead of the current 7%.

What is the step by step procedure for availing of subsidy?

"Register on the portal with the following "Select your State & Electricity Distribution Company

"Enter your Electricity Consumer Number, Mobile Number &

Step 2

"Login with Consumer Number & Mobile Number "Apply for the Rooftop Solar as per the form

"Once you get the feasibility approval, get the plant installed by any of the registered vendors Step 4

"Once installation is completed, submit the plant details and

"Commissioning certificate will be generated from the portal,

after installation of net meter and inspection by DISCOM. "Once you get the commissioning report. Submit the bank account details and a cancelled cheque through the portal. You

will receive your subsidy in your bank account within 30 days. Why should a household opt for the Roof Top Solar Scheme? Simple economics. The households will be able to save electricity bills as well as earn additional income through sale of surplus

power to DISCOMs. PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijlee Yojana promises an assured saving of approximately Rs 15,000 in a year for a household consuming upto 300 units a month, by installing Roof Top Solar

unit of 3 kW capacity. Such a household, by generating its own electricity will save on electricity bill approximately Rs 1,800 - Rs Even after deducting the EMI of Rs 610 on the loan availed for financing the solar unit, the saving would be around Rs 1,265

per month or approximately Rs 15,000 in a year. The savings for the households not availing of loan will be even higher. Furthermore, by opting for renewable energy, it is an opportunity to contribute towards a greener planet.

Challenge and Response in life

■ SHONIMA MALHOTRA

ast day I was discussing a topic with my students related to 'Theories of Social Change'. When I started discussing Arnold Toynbee's Cyclical theory of social change, I came across the concept of 'Challenge and Response' where Toynbee has discussed that each civilization faces challenges - either environmental or from internal and external enemies and the fate of the civilization depends on the nature of its response to those challenges. While elaborating it to my students, I felt related to this concept and I realized how this concept could be applied to our lives on day to day basis.

Challenge is the situation of being confronted with something that demands physical, mental, emotional efforts in order to be faced and completed successfully. Challenges are an inevitable part of everyone's life. Nobody's life is devoid of challenges, whether big or small. I feel the moment a being is born it starts facing different set of challenges - physical, psychological, emotional, environmental at different stages of our lives. Every creature encounters its own set of challenges in their respective environments. The responses to challenges vary significantly between human beings and other living beings primarily due to complexity of human cognition and social structures. While other living beings demonstrate remarkable adaptations and survival strategies, human responses to challenges are often characterized by a unique combination of cognitive, social and technological factors, contributing to a wide range of diverse and dynamic solutions.

In the journey of human life, challenges vary across different milestones of life, reflecting the evolving nature of personal and societal expectations. Meeting basic needs for nutrition, sleep and care, forming secure attachments with caregivers, developing motor and sensory skills are the challenges at infancy phase of life; childhood phase comes with the challenges of navigating social relationships and peer interactions, learning and adapting to formal education, discovering personal interests and hobbies; adolescence involves developing a sense of identity and self esteem, coping with hormonal changes and emotional fluctuations, making decisions about education and future careers; middle adulthood demands balancing career and family responsibilities, coping with aging parents and potential care giving duties, reflecting on life choices and goals; and late adulthood has its own hassle of coping with health challenges and potential loss of loved ones, adjusting to retirement and changes in lifestyle, finding purpose and maintain social connections.

Not only at different milestones, but I feel we face challenges on day to day basis. To mention a few, getting up in the morning in intense cold, driving safe amidst such chronic traffic. dealing maturely with people of different nature etc.

However, challenges in themselves do not have the inbuilt capacity to influence our lives. They only provide the much needed initial push. They only act as a triggering influence. It

is indeed the way we get triggered that becomes a decisive factor regarding the impact of these challenges. The challenges can make us or mar us. They can transform us into a positive and stronger human being or can act negatively upon us. It is the nature of our response to the challenges that determines the course, direction and quality of our lives. Everyone deals with adversity differently. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to overcoming them. What works for one person might not work for another. Our responses are subject to our personality, experiences and nature of challenge itself. Accordingly we adopt either positive or negative approach in

People with a positive mindset and positive approach towards life are liable to embrace them with resilience and adaptability, and consider them as road towards their self improvement. Since they resolve to reach the goal, they leverage the necessary strengths and resources to navigate them with a sense of purpose and confidence. As a result the impact of the obstacles and troubles in their path goes down. Acknowledging that learning is a component of human life journey and it comes through challenges and solving them, these people take challenges as an opportunity to undergo new experiences and lessons those results in their limitless personal growth by unfolding their capacities, potential, hidden talents, strengths they never knew they had on one hand, and helping them know their shortcomings and weaknesses on the other hand. So, for them such hardships not only pave the way to develop new skills and perspectives but also help them to work upon and overcome their drawbacks there by developing a deeper understanding of themselves and the world.

Talking about other angle, those with a negative approach and mindset find facing challenges and difficulties too hard. Whether it is a talent or career they want to pursue, learning a new skill, or something as trivial as losing weight, these people tend to back out as they perceive it beyond their ability. Instead of thinking outside their comfort zones and encouraging the exploration of new ideas and solutions, they look at them as insuperable problems. They espouse a defeatist attitude and keep dwelling on problems without seeking solutions. Their negative responses include avoidance, procrastination and self doubt. Such individuals tend to focus on perceived limitations, engage in self sabotaging behaviours or resist change. This mindset can create a cycle of negativity, hindering adaptability to handle adversity in various aspects of life and making it difficult to overcome hurdles thereby affecting

I feel that failing to push forward; one misses many favourable and auspicious opportunities. I quote two personal experiences to highlight how our approach towards challenge can influence our lives. Right from XIth class, I wanted to pursue a career in psychology. At that time, it was news in the paper that three departments of post graduation would be introduced within next four-five years in the University of Jammu. Department of Psychology was one of the departments. So I was dead sure that by the time I will complete my graduation, Psychology as a course will get introduced in the University of Jammu. But somehow that did not happen. Knowing my keen interest in the subject, my parents asked me to pursue post graduation in Psychology from some other University outside Jammu. Now to go out to some other place away from my parents and home was a challenge for me and I could not muster the strength to face that challenge. I could not make up my mind to go out and hence had to forgo my dream. Had I accepted this challenge and gathered the courage to go out, I could have fulfilled my dream. Not able to pursue P.G. in Psychology, I chose sociology as a subject for post graduation. I had not studied that subject at the graduation level. Moreover mine was the first batch of P.G. in the University. So again it was a new challenge before me. But. I didn't give up. No doubt I had to face hurdles but my sincere hard work and the support of my teachers, parents and classmates made the journey possible for me. It was because of my attitude that I could complete my masters in the subject and today I am appointed as Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology. It is quite evident from these examples that it is primarily our way of reacting towards the situations that determines the out-

Through this article I want to emphatically hint at the fact that the connection to victory is more a matter of our perception than physical strength. If our heart loses in any situation then our loss is fixed. But if we are determined to win, then our triumph is fixed. Everything revolves around our perspective of looking at things. I strongly feel, instead of creating hue and cry and getting broken down by the challenges and difficulties; stress and strains of life, we should develop techniques as practicing meditation, deep breathing and mindfulness; seeking support from family, friends; seeking guidance from others who have experienced similar transitions; adopting healthy lifestyle choices including regular exercise, proper nutrition, and sufficient sleep and practicing self care to manage mental health effectively; time management skills; positive affirmations, cognitive restructuring; creative outlets such as art, writing or music; developing emotional intelligence and strength possibly through therapy or support groups to cope with them. Our motto in life should be 'Ruk jana nahi tu kahin haar ke, kanton pe chalke milagae saaye bahar ke.' Regardless of the outcome of any challenge or struggle, don't be afraid to start over again- for this time. you are not starting from scratch but with experience.

(The writer is Assistant Professor of

Sociology GDC Sidhra).