

STOP RASH DRIVING

As authorities in Udhampur district have seized a bus after a video showing the vehicle being driven dangerously was widely circulated on social media, the need is felt to stop people from driving vehicles dangerously posing risk of life to fellow commuters and the one who has been indulging in rash driving. In this regard, the government should follow the trends which are in vogue in foreign countries where people have been provided with specific phone numbers where they can file complaints of cases of the aforementioned nature and quick action is guaranteed by the authorities. This can be allowed dynamically as people should be asked to contact the concerned cell phone or landline numbers giving details of rash driving or any other incident of flouting of traffic norms as this can save lives and also lessen the risk of accidents. In the present case of Udhampur, the concerned officials have taken the most appropriate decision of suspending the driving license of the aforesaid defaulter who was driving the bus recklessly. There are various ways which can be used to ensure that drivers do not drive their vehicles carelessly. There should be proper training and awareness about the basic rules of driving as without this knowledge the drivers cannot judge what is right and what is not on the roads. The drivers must be subjected to specific behavioural training such as being mindful of not driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs and steering clear of road rage, which is one of the major causes of accidents on roads. Besides, there should be proper monitoring of the traffic plying on roads by the concerned departments so that people do not dare to drive rashly and put the lives of people in danger. The best way to stop rash driving is simple and needs no special training as by simply following the traffic rules religiously one can guarantee that he or she is driving safely and there is no element called 'rash' while on road. People should make a habit of following the traffic rules as this helps them throughout their life to remain safe and insulated from fines and Challans.

RESTORE PEACE

It is quite disparaging that lives are being lost to terrorism and the security forces are finding it difficult to stop this bloodshed in the Valley. In another attack, a Railway Protection Force personnel was killed and another injured in the Kakapora area of south Kashmir's Pulwama district thus raising pressure on the government to mull and find a way out to end this vicious cycle of deaths and destruction in the Valley. Though, government has taken several steps to deter the terror mongers from indulging in such cowardice acts but still things seem to be inadequate as the terrorists have an upper hand as they targeting civilians, migrant labourers, security men and people of all hues at their free will and those responsible for the safety and security of the common man have no concrete plan to tackle this situation which is fast going out of control. Looking into the ensuing tourist season and the holy Amarnathji Yatra, the situation seems to be turning precarious as attacks on common man in the Valley is giving sleepless nights to those running the affairs of the UT of J&K and the security forces which themselves are being targeted number of times in recent past. In today's terror attack, the terrorists had indiscriminately fired upon 2 RPF personnel outside Railway Station Kakapora. In this terror crime incident, both the personnel received critical gunshot injuries and were immediately evacuated to hospital for the treatment to their injuries however; one among them succumbed to his injuries and attained martyrdom. This is really annoying that the terror mongers are playing with the lives of the people and the government is unable to contain the violence which has crippled the normal life in the Valley as uncertainty is ruling the roost with people living under constant fear. The government needs to take some extraordinary steps to end this kind of violence once and for all or else the situation may further aggravate in the coming time especially during the peak of tourist season. The government should act in the most stringent manner to contain terrorism in Valley as the country cannot afford loss of life and destruction of property anymore.

OFF 'D' CUFF
Why fight with life, learn to flow with it

When someone speaks unpleasant words, why is it that I dislike it so much? Why does it hurt me deeply and how can I bear it?

One of the Buddha's beautiful teachings is 'ta-thatha', which means total acceptance. The power of acceptance dissolves our hurt. We resist something and this resistance creates a conflict with what is.

When someone speaks unpleasant words, don't create a conflict in your mind. Accept that it is others' perception and others' perceptions need not be true. Learn to be at peace with what is and that is possible if you totally accept the other.

Acceptance is not endorsing his point of view but being at peace with others' point of view. If you accept his unpleasant words without condemning him, then an inner understanding opens with deep awareness.

If you condemn him, then your memories of unpleasantness add themselves to the present unpleasantness and your pain increases. The dissatisfaction of the past will create distaste towards the present, leading to distrust of the future.

You dislike someone's unpleasant words because you have a map of how others should behave and are addicted to that expectation. If others' behaviour does not fit into your expectations, you start disliking it.

Let us learn to practice acceptance at all levels. Let us accept our body as it is. Out of acceptance, improve the quality of the body. Accept the sur-

Swami Sukhabodhananda

Whatever we put our attention on will grow stronger in our life.

-Maharishi Mahesh Yogi

EDITORIAL

The unsung victims of Pakistani atrocities '1947 Displaced Families from PoJK'

■ DAYA SAGAR

Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, the then Prime Minister of J&K, did feel and understand the plight and conditions of the people who were forced to flee from the areas of Jammu & Kashmir occupied by invaders / forces aided and abetted by Pakistan in October 1947/ thereafter (areas like that of Mirpur fell on 25 November 1947 even after / more than one month of the day- 26th Oct 1947-Maharaja Hari Singh acceded with India) and named them as Displaced Persons (DPs) from Pakistan Occupied Areas of J&K (POJK DPs) vide order No. 1476-C of 1950 dated 16.12.1950 issued under his (Sheikh's) own signatures. While those who had left Jammu & Kashmir and had gone to new born Dominion of Pakistan (West Punjab) on their own were termed as migrants in the same order. Surely they were called displaced persons since they had been displaced by raiders and had not left their hearths in view of their having anticipated some temporary adverse social conditions like the subjects of J&K who migrated to Pakistan.

Many innocent subjects of J&K were mercilessly killed by invaders and many were killed even while resisting the invaders like a large number of families had finally left Mirpur even on 25th November 1947.

A large population had been displaced from the areas of the then princely Indian State of J&K that were occupied by Pakistan after the 22nd Oct 1947 regular attack before the Maharaja of State offered to accede to India dominion on 26th Oct 1947 and even after 26th October since by then Pakistani army/ associates had already taken control of some areas with the state forces having been totally eliminated/ in a way deactivated. The process of deployment of Indian troops could be initiated by GOI only on 27th October 1947 under very odd operating conditions like rough & primitive surface road transport facilities for moving troops / tanks from Jammu to Srinagar to Leh / other areas and with very less aircrafts available for carrying troops / materials. Still a reasonably large area had been retrieved from occupation of Pakistani raiders in Jammu region and Ladakh Region even in late 1948 by the India forces making exemplary sacrifices//

extreme sacrifices (in case I am not wrong the first 5 PVC decorated soldiers had fought against Pakistani intrusions along J&K and all the 'greats' were non J&K subjects i.e. Maj Som Nath Sharma from HP Battle of Budgam 3 Nov 1947 posthumously, Naile Jadu Nath Singh UP Naushera 6 Feb 1948 posthumously, 2nd Lieutenant Rama Raghoba Rane Karnataka Naushera/Rajouri 8 April 1948 , Company Hawaldar, Peru Singh Jhunjumra Rajasthan 17 July 1948 Tithwal-Kupwara posthumously, Lance Naik Karam Singh Barnala Punjab 3 Oct 1948 Tithwal).

Many families had left their hearths even without any 'change over' clothing, many could not carry even the property documents, some members of many families could join other members after months of reaching to safer areas, many displaced persons /families had seen their near ones killed / tortured/ raped before their eyes, many young girls/ women were even killed by their own men folk to save their honour, many woman committed 'suicide' by jumping into rivers / open wells to save their honour. Those who could manage to save their life moved to safer areas of J&K or managed to reach other Indian states.

The families who came from POJK areas after 1947- Pakistan attack on 'princely' state of J&K to peace areas were not treated as refugees by India since they had moved to safer areas in their own country and hence were not given claims by Government of India for any properties / assets left behind. As per Sixty Second report dated 11-04-1980 of the Committee on Petitions of Rajya Sabha headed by Bipin Das (MP) J&K Government had proposed to GOI for compensating them in any form for the assets left behind in POJK as more than 3 decades had already passed by then but that was not agreed to by GOI maintaining that they will surely get back their land.

The people who came from Pakistan sponsored/ tribal invaded areas of Mirpur, Muzaffarabad, Kotli, Bhimber, Sudhniat, Poonch- Rawakote, Deva Battala etc mostly took shelter in other safe areas in Jammu region or went to Punjab / Delhi / MP/UP/ Bombay etc. As per some narration from the

POJK DPs imagine the extent of pennilessness, agony and helplessness of the DPs in early days that some parents even got the age of a 4 year infant entered as 6 years or more just to get Rs.10//pm as ration money per head which was discontinued after a couple of years.

Government of India laid down in policy that these families will be resettled back in their native villages / towns/ cities in POJK after pushing out the occupier (Pakistan). Not only that in the J&K Constitution where under the state Legislative Assembly was to have 100 single member territorial Constituencies but as per Section-48 it was also laid down that notwithstanding anything contained in Section 47(1) until the area of the State under the occupation of Pakistan ceases to be, so occupied and the people residing in that area elect their representatives twenty-five seats in the Legislative Assembly shall remain vacant (later through a constitutional amendment in 1975 the number of seats for POJK was reduced to 24).

Most of the displaced families had not been able to carry even minimum needed utilities with them and a very large number of families had lost atleast one of their relatives to the Pakistani invaders. No doubt some occasional assistances have been extended at uniform rates to some families but no regular and meaningful support has been extended to them proportionate to the losses suffered by them in 1947 in terms of physical assets/loss of near ones/mental agony and some people reason that for their having temporarily settled outside Kashmir valley, the governments too having remained dominated with legislators/ministers/ superior bureaucrats from areas other than Jammu region of J&K and governments in Delhi too seeing J&K in 'Kashmir' only.

It is already nearing 75 years that 1947 POJK DP families are still looking for their return but that has not been possible so far even after 28 years of Indian Parliament on 22-02-1994 having passed a resolution demanding that Pakistan must vacate the illegally occupied areas (ofcourse the demand had to be got executed by the Governments that held reigns

after 22 Feb 1994).

Almost all the 1947 times -displaced families from POJK had arrived / settled outside Kashmir valley and they are found still struggling for adequate socio- economic support since very less concern had been expressed for them in the Legislature/Parliament. They have not been given claims for the properties left behind in 1947 Pakistan occupied areas for which government of India has been expressing helplessness quoting technical reasons. But it is already 7 decades and left behind wealth descriptions and records may become 'invisible' in case the return is delayed for another decade.

It is not only that the POJK DPs have not been given the claims for their properties/ assets left behind in POJK , even no any document / orders of Government are there for providing any meaningful special economic support to these families worth their honourable rehabilitation or for socio economic support in the shape of reservations in educational institutions / government services or like. Imagine in case a family had left back in POJK property worth Rs.1000 in 1947 and in case that money was kept in bank in 1947 it would have become worth Rs.4000= (Rs.3993 even with 10% per annum interest if not 12% interest & quarterly compounding (if not monthly compounding) and Rs.10.24 Lakh in 2017. Similarly in case the interest rate is taken as 12% then in 1965 the amount would have been Rs.8000 and just in 2013 the amount would have become R.20,56,000.

The way the affairs had remained in confusions and in political complexities even internally after 1947 the areas of occupied by Pakistan and even the families displaced from there have remained under very less focus of the Indian leadership from the point of view of vacation of areas / rehabilitation of the displaced families and instead more focus has remained on political rivalries for local governance.

To be continued

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Mein Tumhein Free Bijli Doonga..!

■ NUTAN RESUTRA

Our greatest Freedom Fighter Netaji Subhash Chander Bose could never ever had imagined that his blood -boiling slogan 'Tum Mujhey Khoon Do, Mein Tumhain Azadi Doonga' would become something like this, 'Tum Mujhey Vote Do, Main Tumhein Free Bijli Doonga' and this is what seems to be happening exactly in our country. Starting from the Union Capital State Delhi when an unknown political party, a common man or Aam Aadmi Party rode the chariot of victory with promise of free electricity, and that too not once but twice, people were shocked, encouraged and changed their thinking towards idea of free Bijli. This slogan routed stalwarts and brought to throne the Aam Aadmi Party with an unprecedented majority; with a skeleton of opposition seen in the Punjab Assembly elections recently.

Punjab victory has given a shot in the arm for this party in other States also and ours being the one too when some well-known names in politics joined it. Even Himachal Pradesh where elections are due soon has suddenly announced free electricity up to 150 units to all consumers; perhaps being scared of the onslaught of the AAP on free electricity front. But was it only the promise of free electricity that gave such a massive victory to the said Party? Were there no other factors, say in-fighting, non-deliverance, hollow slogans, etc. etc. that resulted in such a massive victory? Well; I leave this question to political pundits to answer and shall concentrate on the aspect of free electricity. The inherent question is, Is electricity provided free by a State to its residents indeed free? Of course not; free electricity is just not free as envisaged by consumers in general. I have been a student of Economics and have studied that there is something called Opportunity Cost. This concept says that nothing in this world comes free. Everything is available at the cost of something else.

Even if you are sitting at a friend's house, just chatting and enjoying a cup of tea, you are doing it at the cost of not being at work

or for that matter not being at home or at any other place and not doing something else. This is what opportunity cost is which plainly and clearly emphasizes that nothing comes free and there is price to be paid for everything! So, who pays for the free electricity being supplied to the consumers? Of course, none other than the consumers themselves; if not in the form of electricity bill, then in some other form of excise, taxes etc. Simple as that. Now what is practically happening? As we have seen when Himachal government announced free units of electricity, the Deputy Chief Minister of Delhi shouted horse-throat that the BJP government had copied and are using their idea! From my own experience I do not think Himachal people really need free electricity since the tariff there is already low and no one minds paying it and also using it lavishly. But then the ghost of drifting away of vote bank is haunting one and all; that is the basic reason of all political parties harping upon the lyric of free electricity.

A serious question: Can a government really give free electricity, and I do say emphatically, Yes. And my statement considers opportunity cost also. What Delhi, Punjab or Himachal govern-

ments announced is in fact a serious dent to the economic development and its well-being. This would ultimately lead to a debt trap that is being faced by Sri Lanka today and is staring at Nepal and Pakistan tomorrow. Every right-thinking politician has to avoid this economic emergency that is the worst form of a country's condition. What Punjab Government should have done is called upon people to resort to the use of maximum solar energy! We are really blessed by Mother Nature that we can harness this energy to such an extent that we do not need to look to other expensive, perishable resources. Let all citizens of, let us say Punjab itself, be motivated to install solar panels to generate electricity. Instead of giving free electricity and creating unbearable burden on both exchequer and consumers, let they be given a one-time hefty subsidy on the panels and related instruments. They can generate electricity and in fact contribute to the national grid also thus becoming producers instead of consumers. And why Punjab only, why not free electricity in all States, again, in the form of heavy subsidy on Solar Panels.

This will have an all-round impact; politically as well as economically. This model of giving lollipop not only suits the Opposition but also the Ruling Parties who can easily gain credibility by actually installing panels as they have a control on State resources. The ruling parties can also add feathers in their caps by declaring that they have been able to provide much needed relief to the common man, the Aam Aadmi, and have the feel of good governance too which is the desire of every Party. This is the proverbial case to have the cake and eat it too. Economically, it is going to create wonders. Not to talk of saving trillions on imports, this would open flood-gates; and I really mean flood-gates in employment opportunities for the young generation by starting allied services related to Solar Panels, Solar lights, Solar Geysers, Solar toys, just to name a few. And there would be umpteen products in the market that would function on solar energy. For, they would find a ready market just as we have mobile repair shops at every nook and corner these days. Similarly, the government can also announce free Petrol and diesel by again resorting to maximum use of battery-operated vehicles. Give subsidy not on other items but on these related products. Even today we find our local mechanics have started converting traditional cars into battery operated cars at just one third of their market price. Why should the government at the Centre not resort to giving all out support to these vehicle related products and result in savings on the one hand and generation of jobs on the other? We cannot be in an economically safe zone if we go in for freebies and such other lollipops. Economists have started ringing alarm bells. The thing to be seen is: When will the Political think tanks start realizing real situation and start on positive notes rather than distributing free electricity, free bus travel, free ration, etc. Let us try to usher in a really better future not for one State or one area, but for all. Let us give a better, brighter tomorrow to generations to come rather than pushing them in an unfathomable debt trap; just because Tum Mujhey Vote Do, Main Tumhein Bijli Doonga!

Similarly, the Mission Youth programme of J&K government empowers youth as an important stakeholder in Participatory Good Governance. Under the programme, 4,239 Youth Clubs have been constituted on Mission Mode across J&K to mark International Youth Day 2021. These youth clubs are engaging volunteers, who will get an opportunity to work through real challenges and make meaningful changes in society.

J&K Government had taken a firm step towards making the Youth a partner in governance process and UT's development with creation of these 4239 Youth Clubs under Mission Youth in a record time. To give sufficient representation to women in these clubs, more than 8000 women are part of these clubs. It is pertinent to mention that J&K government has also helped 6000 young women to become entrepreneurs who were selected at the Panchayat level.

Meanwhile, Mission Director, Jammu & Kashmir Rural Livelihood Mission (JKRLM), Dr Syed Sehrish Asgar, received prestigious SKOCH award for her outstanding contribution towards economic development of rural women under the programme SAATH. In recognition of the achievements of the JKRLM under the programme SAATH, the SKOCH Foundation has conferred the prestigious SKOCH Award upon JKRLM. While interacting with beneficiaries from J&K under the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) Pragati and Saksham scholarship schemes through virtual mode, LG Sinha said, "Collective efforts are yielding favourable results. During Kashmir University's convocation, there were 94 gold medalists in 2021, of which, 77 per cent, which is 66 were girls. Similarly, during the convocation of the Islamic University of Science and Technology, the majority of gold medalists were women, which is a clear sign of women empowerment." LG Sinha stressed on proper implementation of policies and the need to focus on skill training and re-skilling of women so that they have an equal share in future economic opportunities.

YOUR COLUMN

Fire Services Week & ground reality

Dear Editor,

It is a matter of pleasure for all that Jammu and Kashmir Fire & Emergency Services Department is observing 'Fire Services Week' from April 14 to April 20, 2022 with the theme 'Learn Fire Safety, Increase Productivity'. In this context I have got some reservations. India is a land of slogans which are not more than the percepts written on the walls. It is universal reality that the Fire and Floods do not discriminate between the metros and the villages; they take everything in their spate which comes in their way. Leaving capital cities, district head quarters and the constituencies with influential and powerful representations in the UT, 95 percent of the rural population is deprived of the fire fighting facilities even after more than seven decades of independence. As a result of accidental fires the population living in the rural

areas and hilly terrains has to bear heavy losses in terms of human lives, live stock and the property which they possess. The hey roofed hamlets with their inmates are burnt alive, the standing crops are destroyed without the fire fighting services in their area. It is strange that the entire 170 Km stretch from Udhampur to Basohli and 200 Km from Lakhanpur to Chattar Gala do not have even one fire-fighting center enroute. In the event of sudden break-out of the fires many Nomads lose their home and hearth along with their cattle which are charred in the fire. It has become a practice to include one fire brigade vehicle and Ambulance (with the facility of Blood transfusion) along with motoreade of ministers and VIPs. It seems as if the lives of the VIPs are more precious than a common man who falls prey to these accidental fires every year. The life amenities are human right of every citizen and depriving them in any case tantamount to the infringement of their fundamental rights and of Directive principles of state policy.

Shiv Kumar Padha,
Basohli.