

EXCELLING IN PMGSY

In its endeavour to provide a durable and all-weather road network to the people of the Union Territory, the Government has initiated a number of major projects which are presently going on at an expeditious pace in various parts of the Union Territory. After the bifurcation of the erstwhile state into two Union Territories to transform Jammu and Kashmir into a developed UT besides ensuring provision of all necessary facilities of life to its people at their doorstep, a need was felt for providing durable road connectivity in the Union Territory as there were several areas which even after more than seven decades after independence, were still without the basic road connectivity. Understanding the gravity of the situation, the Government put in place various necessary measures for strengthening the existing road network besides developing many new roads and highways for connecting various areas with other parts. This initiative of the administration is still going on with the same zeal and dedication, as the efforts of the UT administration has not only been recognized but also applauded by the central Government during the past 3 years. This year also, the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir has remained successfully in emerging the top 3 states/UTs at national level for construction of roads under the prestigious Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY). As per the reports, the Department of Public Works (R&B) constructed almost 3284 KM road length during the year 2021-22 thereby connecting almost 114 habitations in comparison to 3167 KM of road length connecting 119 habitations in year 2020-21 under the PMGSY. In this way, the department successfully enhanced its average of constructing 8.67 KM Road per day in 2020-21 to almost 8 KM per day in the recently concluded financial year. Not only the length but the administration of Union Territory has also surpassed several others in terms of quality of work as its quality indicators were registered far better than many other states and UTs and even the national level average. These statistics are enough to prove the dedication of the administration towards the people of J&K and shows that it will initiate every step to steer J&K towards growth and development.

■ DR J P SHARMA & DR VIVAK M ARYA

There's a way to do it better - find it, said Thomas Edison. Every year Earth Day is celebrated on April 22 and this year's theme is 'Invest In Our Planet'.

Earth is the only planet in our solar system where life exists. Many of human actions like deforestation, huge surge in automobiles, setting up of heavy industries & unscientific disposal of solid wastes had affected our planet.

Earth day is celebrated to create awareness among the public to set right the wrong doings and action of mankind. On 22nd April, 1970 millions of people took to streets to protest the negative impacts of 150 years of industrial development. It all started by the damage done by a 1969 massive oil spill in Santa Barbara, California.

Earth Day activities in 1990s gave a huge boost to recycling efforts worldwide and helped overlay the way for the 1992 United Nations Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. Unlike the first Earth Day in 1970, that 20th Anniversary was waged with stronger marketing tools, greater access to television and radio, and multi-million-dollar budgets.

"The world's leaders in Kyoto, Japan in late 1997, acknowledged the scientific fact that the leading cause of global warming is carbon emissions from fossil-fuel consumption, and that something must be done to address those rising emissions."

Earth Day is important because it reminds people to think about humanity's values, the threats the planet faces and ways to help protect the environment," said Susan Clayton, a professor of psychology and environmental studies at The College of Wooster in Ohio.

'Invest in our planet'

"Thinking about the history of environmental activism and the way individuals have worked together to change policy can make us more optimistic about the ability to make positive changes in the future. Each year United Nation, governments of different nations, state governments, institutes NGOs and activists create new projects, initiatives and campaigns to protect and restore the Earth.

There are two simple ways to celebrate Earth Day to make the world a little better," said Nathaniel Weston, an associate professor of environmental science at

University we all share to "think globally and act locally". The government demonstrates its ongoing support for the campaign by encouraging community members to develop a new mindset and to acquire the tools they need to teach younger generations about environment and natural conservation and the significance of building a sustainable future.

"Going Green" is a phrase that has become more common in recent times. Some believe that going green requires recycling when there is a recycling bin nearby, or even changing to more efficient

ethical option but also the lucrative one.

Without Earth we would not be here and it is amazing how things work to keep earth going. Like how bees pollinate our flowers and how squirrels plant acorns in the ground, growing more trees.

It is amazing to see how nature is working for all of us. Earth Day is a day to appreciate these things and how they are done.

By encouraging and empowering all people through Earth Day awareness campaign to make their homes, workplaces and lifestyles reflect a sustainable, efficient and environmentally friendly nation we can ensure the coming generation a healthy, wealthy and safe earth to live in.

Our own UT is situated in Himalayan range which is bearing the impact of climate change. Recent past had depicted that if we don't practice climate resilient activities we can pay a heavy price for that. Floods, avalanches, droughts are already increasing their foot prints in our state. SKAUST-J has developed many climate smart agricultural modules. These modules through demonstrations are laid at farmer's field in different districts through different KVKs for generating awareness.

Leaf color chart (LCC) a climate smart agriculture tools is very popular among farming community. LCC can save 25 to 30 kg of urea per hecter in coarse variety of Paddy and 6 kg of urea in Basmati.

Excessive use of urea is responsible for soil and water pollution. Methane and nitrous oxide emission from paddy also damages the ozone layer. "The goal of life is to make your heartbeat match the beat of the universe, to match your nature with Nature." - Joseph Campbell. Let's protect and conserve our earth.

(The authors are Vice Chancellor, SKAUST-J and Scientist, SKAUST-J).

WORLD EARTH DAY-APRIL 22

Villanova University.

"The first is to promote understanding of important environmental issues so that more people are aware of the critical actions we need to take to protect our environment.

The second is to commit our self to service on or around Earth Day - plant some trees, clean up a stream or help your local community garden."

Earth Day had reached into its current status as the largest observance in the world, celebrated by more than a billion people every year, and a day of action that changes human behavior and provokes policy changes.

Today, the fight for a clean and green environment continues with increasing urgency, as the ravages of climate change become more evident every day. It marks our commitment to protecting our environment the generations to come.

Earth day gives a tremendous opportunity to help promote a sustainable environment and remind the personal responsibility

light bulbs when it is affordable. There are many other ways we can contribute to our environment, and these are some of the simplest- not to mention, the cheapest- ways to start out. Raising awareness is the first step to a greener world and it's our choice whether to take action or not.

The government is taking initiatives to raise awareness through campaign among the community to help protect the environment but without the support of the public and the effective participation of all society members, the campaign will not achieve all its objectives.

When it comes to climate change, money talks.

Through regulations, incentives, and public/private partnerships, governments hold the keys to transform and build the green economy. Similar to the industrial and information revolutions, governments must incentivize their citizens, businesses, and institutions to build a resilient future.

Ultimately, governments will empower green business practices as not only the

ENCOURAGE BLOOD DONATION

Until the scientists find out ways and means to produce synthetic blood voluntary blood donation is the only source of supply of blood although there are people who give blood in lieu of money. For those having the slightest idea of healthcare edifice must know that blood transfusion is an indispensable component of health care as it helps in saving millions of lives every year, allows increasingly complex medical and surgical interventions and drastically improves the life expectancy and quality of life of patients with a variety of acute and chronic conditions. The COVID-19 pandemic has the normal course of voluntary blood donation although there are still good number of people who continue to do this noble cause without any fear of contracting infection corona, etc. Patients who require blood transfusion as part of their clinical management have the right to expect that sufficient blood will be available to meet their needs but to fulfill this desire voluntary blood donation is the only way as this is the main source of stocks of blood units in the blood banks established in almost all the healthcare facilities these days. It is tragic that due to dearth of blood in hospitals and other healthcare facilities many patients still die or suffer unnecessarily because they do not have access to safe blood transfusion. The timely availability of safe blood and blood products is essential in all health facilities in which transfusion is performed but there is a widespread shortfall between blood requirements and blood supplies especially after the pandemic coronavirus as people who earlier readily go for blood donation have stopped this practice thus giving a tough time to blood banks to cater to the needs of the people suffering from various diseases and in some of the emergency cases like accidents or operations. As voluntary blood donation is a noble cause and without this the demand of blood cannot be satiated therefore people should revisit their decision to donate blood as this is very important for the entire humanity and a selfish approach in this case can lead to dangerous repercussions.

Electricity playing 'Hide & Seek' with people

■ OMKAR DATTATRAY

Summers come and electricity goes haywire and it is seldom possible to operate electricity gadgets that provide some relief to people from scorching heat. Even for necessities of life like water consumers feel pain because of the irregular supply of the power and the people fail to get adequate water for drinking, bathing and performing other functions which are totally dependent on water and water is dependent on the electricity as the water motors function only with electricity. The need and importance of electricity is very great in hot summers and it is indispensable for the lives of the people and its irregularity and absence gives pain to the consumers. This summer the unscheduled cuts in electricity have begun in April and perhaps it is the first time that electricity is playing hide and seek in the month of April and putting the public to great inconvenience and sufferings and people fear that the absence of regular electricity will make the life of people miserable in the coming months of the summer when mercury rises further and it becomes very difficult to pass life with irregular and unscheduled electricity. There should be uninterrupted supply of electricity in the summer season but it is the fact that the power supply is most erratic in the months of severe heat and it becomes very difficult for the people to spend life in the absence of regular electricity when the mercury goes up in summer season. The consumers feel the pain of inadequate power supply and they are forced to tolerate the sufferings in the absence of the regular electricity. The fact is that the consumers by and large pay the electricity tariff in time at higher rates but they are not provided the adequate supply of power by Power Development Department and hereby creating troubles for consumers of Jammu province in trouble as they have to bear the scorching heat in absence of the regular electricity. Sadly this year the erratic supply of electricity and unscheduled power cuts began earlier in the April month which otherwise used to remained good so far as the position of electricity and rising of temperatures is concerned. These unscheduled and the scheduled power cuts put consumers to great trouble as they have to bear and tolerate the heat of summer in Jammu without the regular power supply for many hours of the day and night. The poor and hapless consumers have to bear the brunt of irregular and erratic power supply in the summer in Jammu province and their protests for regular power supply fell flat on the ears of the power development department. The government has declared Jammu and Srinagar as smart cities with all the modern facilities and the work on making Jammu and Srinagar as smart cities has begun but Jammu is reeling under the electricity shortage and people are suffering a lot in the absence of regular electricity. The people are facing untold sufferings in the absence of the regular electricity in the beginning of this summer month of April which otherwise used to be having somewhat adequate electricity and the problem of irregular and erratic power supply was in the earlier years experienced in the month of May which is one of the hottest months. The people fear that if the position of electricity remains such as

it is today in the beginning of the hot summer month of April, one could better imagine the worst power position in the summer months ahead. Government has still to complete the smart metering and thus in the absence of smart metering the consumers have to bear the brunt of the irregular and unscheduled power supply in the summer season and because of the inadequate and irregular power supply the consumers are facing untold sufferings and hardships and there seems no one to free the people from the woes of inadequate and erratic electricity and thus they have to face the sufferings and hardships due to the irregular power supply. Notwithstanding the tall claims of the government of providing 24 x 7 electricity to consumers the ground situation and position of electricity is far from this as the consumers are facing the difficulties and hardships because of the irregular and erratic power supply and the claims of the government are punctured and the plight of the consumers is going bad from worse because of the inadequate electricity supply. On one hand the consumers are paying the electricity bills in time and on the other side their woes are compounded due to the inadequate and interrupted power supply and the burden of the non availability of electricity 24x 7 has made the life of Jammuites very difficult as they have to live without adequate electricity in the scorching heat of summer. The government should on a war footing take required steps to provide adequate electric supply to the consumers in the summer months so that the people are relieved from the trouble of scant electricity. But as of now there seems little hope of improving the power scenario because there is shortage of electricity and the people have to face scheduled, unscheduled, erratic and interrupted power supply and there seems no way out from the crises of the electricity in the coming summer if the present inadequate and erratic power supply is any indication. The government is failing to harness the hydro electric power potential of Jammu and Kashmir and the result is this that the people of the Union territory have to face the erratic power supply in the summer months. The government spends huge amounts of finance on the production of the hydroelectric power and uses the water sources for producing of the required electricity but in spite of all this the position of the power scenario is worsening day by day and putting the consumers to trouble because the people have to spend many hours of the summer days and nights without the required electricity. The plight of the people is very bad because of the power woes in the summer months as the problem of electricity gets compounded in the summer and the government is not in a position to mitigate the power woes of the consumers. The hapless consumers have to bear the brunt of the inadequacy and erratic power supply in the summer season when the demand of the power increases manifold. The people suffer unimaginable sufferings and hardships due to the inadequate power supply and also because of the erratic power supply which has become a norm and routine in the summers in Jammu and this is of grave and great concern to the consumers who are made to suffer because

of the inadequate power supply and also because of the scheduled and unscheduled electric supply in the hot season. The government is making efforts to electrify all villages and remotest areas and is about to make the country and this UT of Jammu and Kashmir to get hundred percent electricity. Thus on one side the government is embarking on to make the country cent percent electrify but on the other side it fails to provide the required and adequate electric supply to the already electrified places even the cities and towns. The consumers and the general public is made to suffer due to the bad policies of the government so far as the provision of the adequate and uninterrupted electric supply is concerned. The provision and the declaration of providing 24x7 electricity is a mirage and is utopian as there seems no way to attain the uninterrupted and hassle free power supply especially in the summer season when mercury touches very high. During the summers the people should be provided hassle free and uninterrupted electricity so that they live with ease. But this is not so because there is shortage of the electricity and the people are forced to spend the days and nights with erratic and scheduled and unscheduled power supply and this reflects on the sad plight of the consumers. The power woes are huge and these get compounded during hot and long summers and the poor consumers are left with no choice but to bear the brunt of inadequate and erratic power supply. Every year the government is laying foundations of the hydroelectric projects but without any fruitful results. Jammu and Kashmir cannot be made an electric surplus UT without the sincere efforts of the government. However, time and again the government is saying that Jammu and Kashmir can become an electricity producing and supplying UT. It can produce and supply power to other states as well but it seems to be a mere dream. The Prime Minister Narendra Modi is going to lay the foundation stone of 850 MW Ratle Hydroelectric Project on river Chenab through the joint venture of NHPC and JKHDPC at an estimated cost of rupees 5281 crore on April 24 and with the completion of this project it is hoped to make Jammu and Kashmir can become an electricity surplus and it can supply power to other states. The consumers should also co-operate with the government and use the electricity very judiciously and should not use electric gadgets at the peak hours and should not indulge in electric theft. The people are thinking to give a chance of political power to AAP of Arvind Kejriwal so that they will get free electricity up to at least 300 units and our political masters of the present should be prepared for this political change. The government is also mulling to privatize the power production and distribution but one wonders if this will make any difference to the power position? Anyway it can be concluded that the electricity is playing hide and seek in these days of hot summers in Jammu division and the PDD should take necessary steps to alleviate the sufferings of the people due to inadequate and erratic power supply. However is the government listening is this question?

(The author is a Columnist and Social Activist).

Transforming J&K COVID fails to dampen J&K growth trajectory, figures among top four states/UTs in GDP growth Achieves highest growth rate in GST Collections

Jammu and Kashmir figures among the top four states/ Union Territories in the country in Gross Domestic State Product growth and achieved one of the highest growth rate in GST collections despite COVID pandemic slowdown. The J&K Government realised the revenue collection of Rs 15217.17 crores in the year 2021-22 which is a 25.70 per cent growth rate as compared to Rs 12105.95 cr (17.02 per cent growth rate) in 2020-21, Rs 10345.46 cr in 2019-20 (8.18 per cent) and Rs 9562.80 cr in 2018-19. The revenue has been realized from SGST/IGST/Compensation, Stamps, MST and Excise Collections across J&K. The economy of other states witnessed a prolonged and severe impact of the COVID-19 pandemic; GST collections of many States across India went down while Jammu and Kashmir recorded 26 percent increase in the collections as compared to last year. A senior officer of Finance Department said that hike in collections has happened because of a series of financial reforms introduced to bring fiscal discipline in the Union Territory. It was a result of these reforms the Union Territory was granted Rs 1.12 lakh crore worth budget for 2022-23 financial year as compared to Rs 1.8 lakh crore in the last fiscal year of 2021-22. Reflecting the financial discipline, the official data says that in 2018-19, Rs 67,000 crore was spent on the execution of 9229 developmental works while in 2020-21, 21943 projects were completed by spending Rs 63,000 crore only. The work done was more than double while the cost incurred was Rs 4000 crore less. In financial year 2021-22, there has been 30 percent less expenditure as compared to earlier while works completed were five times more, statistics of Finance department reveal. Jammu and Kashmir administration has attracted investments worth Rs 33,000 crore in the industries and service sector in the last year, which is double the investment of Rs 15,000 crore made since 1947. The administration is expecting a possible investment of Rs 75,000 crore by the end of the calendar year 2022, which officials said is five times the investment that happened in the region in the last 75 years. Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said that Jammu and Kashmir has witnessed financial transparency after major changes were brought in. He added that even when the entire country including the Union Territory was hit by a pandemic and Goods and Services Tax (GST) of many States recorded a decline, it went up by 26 percent in J&K. "From many better States across the country, Jammu and Kashmir has shown extraordinary financial transparency," Sinha said. Additional Chief Secretary, Finance Department, Atal Dulloo said the impressive tax revenue generated during 2021-22 indicates revival and recovery of the business and trade activities in the Union Territory. He said proper tax planning, effective monitoring and efficient implementation of the tax statutes with initiatives aimed at bringing transparency and accountability in the system contributed towards scaling up the momentum of revenue collection in J&K. Dulloo said that finance department has played a pivotal role in bringing the economy on the right track after the pandemic. "The treasury management was also remarkable in the previous financial year, and all the verified bills of contractors have been cleared and paid in a timely manner", he said Meanwhile, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha hailed the Jammu and Kashmir Budget for the financial year 2022-23 and said that it will go to meet the needs and aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. He also added that the main goal of the Budget for 2022-23 is the economic development of every region in the Union Territory. "Budget for 2022-2023 is going to meet the needs and aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. This is a development-oriented budget and economic development of every region is the main goal of this Budget. This Budget is going to bring a change in J&K at a polemic pace", Sinha remarked.

OFF 'D' CUFF Why conflicts arise?

A majority of people possess multiple personalities, each constantly fighting for dominance. This fight for supremacy results in inner conflict that sometimes may turn to be a painful experience. It also may leave a person in a state of physical and mental exhaustion. Such inner conflict may disturb even the calmest of hearts. And the most important thing here to understand is that such a situation is something people have unfortunately created themselves by using multiple thoughts and emotions. The Impact of Inner Conflict The constant inner conflict hinders the ability to make correct decision. Their own thoughts override what they think is morally right. This inner struggle leads to negative emotions like anger, fear, isolation, uncertainty, etc. Such disturbances make people indecisive: To help a needy or not when someone is facing a trouble; which dress to pick white or yellow; to visit the temple or not; to wake up in the morning or not for meditation, and many other indecisions. Some people face moral conflicts as well that arise when their personal values are put to the test. For example, a person always wants to be truthful. Yet, sometimes he may have to tell a lie for the good of someone. Further, the urge to satisfy various desires is also a cause

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