

OPENNESS TO
CHANGE LAUDABLE

The central point of Delimitation Commission's J&K visit during which it met over 400 delegations from across UT is its openness towards accepting the suggestions and giving due weightage to the objections as well because this aspect is highly praiseworthy and good for the people of J&K. It is pertinent to mention that the Delimitation Commission assured the delegations who called on the Commission in Jammu as well as Srinagar that the commission shall consider their genuine suggestions/grievances sympathetically in accordance with the Delimitation Act giving an idea that the aforesaid panel is open to listen to public demand and aspirations. Earlier, the Commission decided to provide personal hearing to all these delegations, both in Jammu as well as Srinagar so that the public can directly interact with the members of the Commission and present their suggestions before them. To the satisfaction of all, the aforesaid panel gave opportunity to delegates for highlighting any additional points for the consideration of the Commission, which they have missed earlier or want to lay more stress on the same. The opportunity reportedly was well utilized by the people as hundreds of delegations appeared before the commission and this was not enough but what was discussed was also duly noted down by the commission for further necessary action. It is pertinent to mention that the Delimitation exercise has been carried out by the Commission in a record time of two years despite the prevalence of COVID-19 pandemic in the country. The Commission for the first time in the history of Jammu and Kashmir has proposed to reserve nine seats for the Scheduled Tribes and in addition to it, seven seats have been proposed to be reserved for Scheduled Castes. No one can raise any doubt on the accountability of the delimitation exercise as it was a fully democratic and transparent process carried out to benefit the people of Jammu and Kashmir by ensuring fair deal which allegedly was missing earlier. The Commission is headed by its Chairperson, Justice (Retd) Ranjana Prakash Desai with Chief Election Commissioner, Sushil Chandra and State Election Commissioner, K K Sharma as its members. The five members of Lok Sabha from J&K are its associate members.

HUNT DOWN KILLERS

It is good that police has ramped up its patrolling in the Valley looking into the grim situation as far as the security is concerned. It was a bit intriguing when the police said that it cannot provide security to every single person in Kashmir because the statement was disappointing because the common man has nowhere to go to save his life. It seems that the higher ups in the police have decided to really do some revolutionary work and that is the reason that now extra security is being provided in far off areas and remote villages. The government should ensure that statements like the one discussed earlier should not be repeated as the same can be taken as a weakness of the cops. It is so inspiring that the police have now come up with more zeal and energy to tackle this relatively new threat of terror attacks on civilians in Valley. Of course police and other security forces are at disposal of the government to ensure safety of the people therefore there is no reason to become sluggish and leave the soft targets on the mercy of God. Now, when the night patrolling has been stepped up by the police and other security agencies, it is likely that terrorists will go on back foot. This is the time to identify and eliminate all of them to get rid of this problem once and for all. Reportedly, security forces have provided security in far off villages to ensure safety and security of people as threat of terrorists attacks is looming large in the wake of terrorists feeling the heat of braced up security Bandobast. It is pertinent to mention that a Kashmir Pandit and six non-local labourers have been wounded in a series of recent attacks in South Kashmir's Pulwama and Shopian districts. The terror attacks are said to be in retaliation and out of frustration as security forces have killed 66 terrorists in the last four months. It is time to hunt down all the perpetrators of violence in Kashmir as the government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has envisaged peace and development for people and to realise that there is no scope for violence, death or destruction to exist.

Overcome
Boredom And
Invite Newness

seeing the movement of what is.

So what should be my discipline or practice to make life interesting and not be a victim of boredom?

Observe how your thoughts functions. Free your thoughts from memories.

Memory is good if you take it as a reference. But if memory does not allow you to see and goes on influencing you, then it only harms you.

You look at a friend and think, 'that's my nasty friend'. He might have been nasty to you last year, but you still hold him in your thought as he was in the past. Your friend might be a changed person now, but your thought will not allow you to see him freely.

Your discipline is to see him afresh and if he is still nasty, then your memory endorses the fresh perception.

Most of the time, if you see the here and now, life becomes interesting with all the new changes.

Won't such a freedom from thought make life interesting?

Put this into practice and you will see that we suffer from thought attack more than the actual situations in life. With this inner freedom, teach your body to do something new in the form of exercise or dance. Teach your body to have new movements, new actions, then it becomes challenging.

Swami Sukhabodhananda

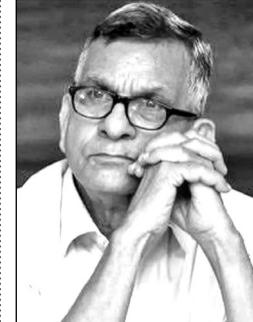
Unless India stands up to the world, no one will respect us. In this world, fear has no place. Only strength respects strength.

-APJ Abdul Kalam

EDITORIAL

Azad calls the Kashmiri bluff; says it's wrong to term mountainous Ramban-Doda-Kishtwar as Chenab Valley

■ PROF HARI OM



It's unbelievable. It's both surprising and praise-worthy. For, no one had ever expected that former J&K Chief Minister and Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha, Ghulam Nabi Azad, would call the Kashmiri bluff and the bluff of vested interests in the establishment and Jammu and Valley-based political outfits but he did spring a very pleasant surprise by proving everyone wrong. The case in point: he denounced as divisive all those who had been terming the Jammu province's highly mountainous Doda, Kishtwar and Ramban districts as 'Chenab Valley' since decades. He said without mincing words that Doda, Kishtwar and Ramban districts couldn't be termed as 'Chenab Valley' and that plains situated between Reasi and Akhnoor tehsils alone could be geographically termed as 'Chenab Valley'.

Ghulam Nabi Azad also tore into those who had been leaving no stone unturned to make everyone believe and understand that the Jammu's Poonch-Rajouri mountainous belt alone constituted the 'Pir Panjal region', which is the natural barrier between Jammu province and Kashmir Valley. He dismissed as divisive all those who had been terming Poonch-Rajouri belt 'Pir Panjal region'.

The whole point is that Ghulam Nabi Azad only vindicated this writer, who had been debunking the whole concept of 'Chenab Valley' or 'Pir Panjal Valley' and urging the powers-that-be in the state, media houses and political class to not use such fake terms as 'Chenab Valley' and 'Pir Panjal region' or 'Pir Panjal Valley' as these were coined decades ago by the votaries of the obnoxious Dixon Plan, Kathwari Formula and Greater Kashmir consisting of the whole of Kashmir Valley and Muslim-majority areas of Jammu province and the Trans-Himalayan Ladakh adjoining Kashmir; den of all anti-India intrigues and epicenter of terrorism since centuries.

It would be only appropriate to quote verbatim what Ghulam Nabi Azad said the other day while criticising Vivek Agnihotri's epoch-making 'The Kashmir Files', which actually

is not a film but a true story of woeful and heart-wrenching tales of the minuscule minority of Hindus in Kashmir. Such an approach will help put things in perspective and expose those who had been seeking to break Jammu province to achieve their sinister objective. What did Ghulam Nabi Azad actually say? Referring to the concept of 'Chenab Valley' as presumed by some people, Ghulam Nabi Azad said, "It is not only Ramban, Doda and Kishtwar but the area below Reasi up to Akhnoor and Khour is also part of 'Chenab Valley'. Rather it would be more appropriate to call Akhnoor area as Chenab Valley because ahead of Reasi it is totally hilly region and from Akhnoor it actually appears like Valley where irrigation facilities have also been created with the construction of Ranbir and Partap Canals. So, this entire area is 'Chenab Valley' and the attempts should be avoided to divide people on this count. Rajouri-Poonch belt has been termed as 'Pir Panjal' region and on this narrative, attempts were being made to create wedge among the people. We must shun such type of attempts to divide people for vested interests".

Indeed, Ghulam Nabi Azad exposed all the vested interests in J&K by saying what he said about the geography of Poonch, Rajouri, Doda, Kishtwar and Ramban districts, nay about the Jammu province. It needs to be underlined that the vested interests and protagonists of Greater Kashmir, including Sheikh Abdullah, Farooq Abdullah, Omar Abdullah and Muftis, including Mehbooba Mufti, had been seeking to create an impression since 1970s that Jammu province consisted of three distinct regions - 'Chenab Valley', 'Pir Panjal region/Valley' and 'plains of Jammu' and that the people of the plains of Jammu were squarely responsible for the 'neglect, under-development and backwardness' of these five districts, where Muslims were, and are, somewhat superior to Hindus in terms of numbers. Now that none other than the former J&K Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad has publicly denounced as divisive those who used to pit people of Poonch, Rajouri, Doda, Kishtwar and Ramban districts against the people of Jammu's Kathua, Samba, Jammu, Reasi and Udhampur districts and undermine the identity, personality and integrity of Jammu province to promote the cause of separatists in Kashmir; it's hoped that the J&K establishment, media houses and political class would now desist from presenting the geography of Jammu province in a wrong way. It would be

only geographically prudent to point out that Doda, Kishtwar, Ramban and Poonch districts and parts of Rajouri district are located in the same mountainous belt - the mighty Pir Panjal mountain.

As said, Ghulam Nabi Azad sprung a pleasant surprise by defining the topography of Poonch, Rajouri, Doda, Kishtwar and Ramban districts in the manner it should have been. Surprise because the Ghulam Nabi Azad-led Congress, PDP, CPIM and PDF coalition government had committed many grave wrongs, jeopardised the paramount national interest, hurt even the genuine interests of the people of Jammu province, subverted the justice system and outraged religious sensitivities of the minority Hindus between November 2, 2005 and July 7, 2008. Leave aside the three roundtable conferences and working groups constituted to discuss the political status of J&K vis-à-vis India at the behest of the Congress-led coalition government in 2006. For example, the Congress-led coalition government applied the Wazir Commission Report in a wrong way (created four new districts in Kashmir; as against one as recommended by the Commission, and four in Jammu, as against three recommended by it; rejected bills on National Flag, Secularism, Socialism, equal representation to Jammu in the Assembly, citizenship rights to Hindu-Sikh refugees from Pakistan languishing in Jammu since 1947 and reduction of the life of the Assembly from six to five years; and passed bills on J&K Flag and Sharia etc. It all happened in 2007. And, in 2008, the Congress-led Government subverted the justice system to please the separatist and communal forces in the Valley, including Hurriyat leadership, and snatched from the Shri Amarnath Shrine Board that piece of land at Baltal which the Shrine Board had got as per the J&K High Court's direction for creating additional facilities for the Shri Amarnath pilgrims on a temporary basis. The Congress-led UPA Government at the Centre and the then J&K Governor N N Vohra all extended their unflinching support to the Ghulam Nabi Azad-led coalition government. It's a different story that the Amarnath Land Movement in Jammu brought down the Azad government on July 7, 2008. However, to recall all this is not to undermine what Ghulam Nabi Azad said about the so-called Chenab Valley and Pir Panjal region. He needs to be commended for what he said about the geography of the otherwise under-threat Jammu province.

Great Saint: Guru Nabha Dass

■ ER T R BHAGAT

Shri Guru Nabha Dass was a great Saint and thinker and author of Bhaktamal, the great sacred scripture. This great Guru wrote about many religious leaders from Satya Guru to Kali Yuga. On his birthday on the 8th of April 1537, millions of followers still remember him and celebrate his birthday with great fervour and gaiety. He was born at village Bhadrachalam in district Khammam, Telangana. His mother was Janaki Devi and his father was Ramdass, now known as Ramdass. They belonged to Mahasha, Doon, Durna community now known as Nabha-Dassia. Their professional work was to make baskets of cane and they were musicians. They were strong devotees of Lord Rama, because Rama's temple was situated at Bhadrachalam, now known as Rambhadrachalam. His parents initially had no children due to which villagers used to taunt them. They prayed for Lord Rama to bless them with a son, who should be learned, intellectual and a theologian. Then a son was born to them. He was first called Narayan Dass and was a devotee of Lord Rama. His parents died when he was five years old. He lived alone in the village and worshipped in the temple. He used to play on bank of the river with his friends and also change sand Ladoos into sweet Ladoos with blessings of God.

Once Saint Shri Agar Dass and Keel Dass were passing through near Ram Bhadrachalam hills. They saw Narayan Dass under a tree. They asked him, "Who are you? Why are you sitting

here?" Narayan told them, "I am made of five elements blessed by God". They were surprised to hear his spiritual reply. They asked him if he wanted to go to their temple. Keel Dass scattered water on his eyes, then he opened eyes and got a blessing. They brought him into the temple at Ghalta Dham at Jaipur. One day, Guru Agardas was not concentrated in Satsung because his one disciple (Hari Dass), who was a businessman was going through a ship and his ship was sinking beneath a cyclone. He prayed to save his ship. Narayana Dass was looking at his Guru who was not concentrating in the Satsung. He rapidly flapped the fan to save the ship. Narayana Dass said to his Guru, "your focus on Satsung freed the ship from cyclone". Guru opened his eyes and told him, "How did you understand my internal feeling? You are a great holy saint and now your name will be Nabha Dass, and from now you will not operate fan. You will write life history of holy saints who come on earth from Sat-Yuga to Kal-Yuga".

Nabha Dass left for a religious journey throughout India. He went first to Rambhadrachalam to take the blessing from his parent's temple and the temple of Lord Rama. He returned to Dhanpurdham, Pandoridham, Damtalidham. Then he went to Kullu Manali where his grand Guru Shri Krishna Pyahari Dass had a lodge, situated in deep forest. King Shri Jagat Singh and his wife were there and the queen was suffering from skin disease. She had no relief from doctors. The queen believed in saints, but the king did not. Grand guru Shri Krishna heard their problem. His Guru told

Nabha Dass to take her near the sacred spring and take three dips in sacred spring. After this, her skin disease was cured. Both king and queen were happy and fell on the feet of the saints. They said, "You are great holy saints, we want to present you a gift". Krishna Pyahari Dass said replied, "You may have to celebrate ten days festival on Dusshera at Kullu in respect of Lord Rama." From that day Kulu Dusshera began to venerate both saints.

Nabha Dass came to Punjab through Pathankot, Gurdaspur, Jammu where his community lived. One day King Raja Maan Singh went to forest to hunt with 10,000 Sainiks. They were exhausted. They saw a saint lodge and marched there. The King went in to take a blessing from saints. Agardas told Nabha Dass to give him Prasad of banana. When Nabha Dass give him a banana, Raja Maan Singh said, "First parasd should be given to my Sainiks and then to me." Nabha Dass called the Sainiks and gave them all bananas. The king was surprised that he was able to give ten-ten bananas to soldiers, while only 10 bananas were in the basket. The King was again surprised to see this miracle. He fell down on his feet for seeking blessings and gave 1600 acres of land in donation for Dham and made a gate named Agardass, Nabha Dass. The gate is still situated at Revasha Dham. Guru Nabha Dass died in 1643. He is venerated because his sacrifice was for the whole people. His other notable works are Ramashayam, Astayam and Ramcharitarkepad in Braja.

(The author is a retired Chief Engineer R&B and Vice President BJP J&K).

Transforming J&K
Govt creating massive school edu-infra along with quality human resources

4,200 works of SED under execution in J&K, construction of 59 KGBVs, 23 Girls hostels completed

Government of Jammu and Kashmir has introduced major changes in the education sector with path-breaking decisions to ensure quality, equity, accessibility, accountability and affordability in the system. The department of School Education has achieved landmark strides so far by effectively implementing all schemes and projects envisaging a notable improvement in the existing curriculum besides embarking upon various innovative new projects and works. Project Director Samagra Shiksha, Deep Raj said that infrastructural edifice in schools of the UT has witnessed tremendous up-gradation and improvement according to the official figures, around 1164 construction works under Samagra Shiksha comprising of School Buildings, Addl. Accommodation, Toilets, Boundary Walls, and Teacher's Quarters have been completed with a financial implication of around Rs 95 crore, besides other construction works under UT/District CAPEX budget and JKIDFC. To provide quality education along with monetarily support to the girls of weaker sections of society, 59 Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) residential schools and 23 Girls Hostels at a cost of Rs. 130 Crore were completed in the last financial year. Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha e-inaugurated 40 projects of the School Education Department (SED) last year. The Central and Jammu & Kashmir governments have launched a multitude of game-changing schemes aimed at enhancing the living standards of the tribal populace with emphasis on their economic and educational empowerment. Strengthening the role of tribal communities in economic development and decision making are the key targets of the government which are being materialized in a phased manner". To bring a major revolution in the infrastructure up-gradation of school education, more than 4200 Projects are under execution in the UT of J&K. Project Director Samagra Shiksha, Deep Raj said that Schools with high enrolment shall be developed as Smart/Model Schools in the coming years, which shall be saturated with all the basic facilities. "There shall be no gap in the Infrastructure and Sports facilities. Moreover the Teachers shall be imparted special training to enhance their academic Standard," he said. Jammu & Kashmir Government has launched an ambitious initiative of providing Water, sanitation, and electricity in all 23,112 government schools. This was one of the basic requirements of the schools which was being carried out at a snail's pace by successive Governments. The ministry of Jal Shakti had launched a 100-day campaign on October 2, 2020, based on the vision and under the direction of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to ensure potable water supply in all schools and Anganwadi centres across the country. "the union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir fulfilled the Prime Minister's vision by providing safe water in all these institutions within the campaign period, so that the children will have access to potable piped water for drinking, hand washing and for use in toilets," an official said. The Union Home Minister, Amit Shah took to Twitter to share the development, "Under leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, J&K is becoming synonymous with peace and prosperity. I congratulate Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Gajendra Singh Shekhawat for ensuring a timely supply of pure drinking water from the tap to all schools and Anganwadi centres in J&K". Meanwhile, 4500 Eco Clubs have been created for eco-friendly activities in schools including organizing tree plantation programmes, awareness programmes such as quiz, essay, painting competitions, rallies, Nukkad Natak etc. regarding various environmental issues and creating awareness about the re-use of waste material & preparation of products out of waste. To channelise the energy of youth, hone their personality, and prepare them for future challenges, youth clubs are being formed in every panchayat of UT. Youth clubs with at least 5 Members are being established, who shall be provided incentives under various schemes for making iconic Panchayats, as per needs and requirements of Panchayat, an official said.

YOUR COLUMN
Climate crisis & health

Dear Editor,

Climate change affects the social and environmental determinants of health - clean air, safe drinking water, sufficient food and secure shelter. Between 2030 and 2050, climate change is expected to cause approximately 2,50,000 additional deaths per year, from malnutrition, malaria, diarrhoea and heat stress. The direct damage costs to health (i.e. excluding costs in health-determining sectors such as agriculture and water and sanitation), is estimated to be between USD 2.4 billion/year by 2030. Areas with weak health infrastructure - mostly in developing countries - will be the least able to cope without assistance to prepare and respond. Reducing emissions of greenhouse gases through better transport, food and energy-use choices can result in improved health, particularly through reduced air pollution. Climate change is the single biggest health threat facing humanity, and health professionals worldwide are already responding to the health harms caused by this unfolding crisis. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has concluded that to avert catastrophic health impacts and prevent millions of climate change-related deaths, the world must limit temperature rise to 1.5°C. Past emissions have already made a certain level of global temperature rise and other changes to the climate inevitable. Global heating of even 1.5°C is not considered safe, however; every additional tenth of a degree of warming will take a serious toll on people's lives and health. While no one is safe from these risks, the people whose health is being harmed first and worst by the climate crisis are the people who contribute least to its causes, and who are least able to protect themselves and their families against it - people in low-income and disadvantaged countries and communities. The climate crisis threatens to undo the last fifty years of progress in development, global health, and poverty reduction, and to further widen existing health inequalities between and within populations. It severely jeopardizes the realization of universal health coverage (UHC) in various ways - including by com-

pounding the existing burden of disease and by exacerbating existing barriers to accessing health services, often at the times when they are most needed. Over 930 million people - around 12% of the world's population - spend at least 10% of their household budget to pay for health care. With the poorest people largely uninsured, health shocks and stresses already currently push around 100 million people into poverty every year, with the impacts of climate change worsening this trend.

Climate change is already impacting health in a myriad of ways, including by leading to death and illness from increasingly frequent extreme weather events, such as heat-waves, storms and floods, the disruption of food systems, increases in zoonoses and food-, water- and vector-borne diseases, and mental health issues. Furthermore, climate change is undermining many of the social determinants for good health, such as livelihoods, equality and access to health care and social support structures. These climate-sensitive health risks are disproportionately felt by the most vulnerable and disadvantaged, including women, children, ethnic minorities, poor communities, migrants or displaced persons, older populations, and those with underlying health conditions.

An overview of climate-sensitive health risks, their exposure pathways and vulnerability factors. Climate change impacts health both directly and indirectly, and is strongly mediated by environmental, social and public health determinants. Although it is unequivocal that climate change affects human health, it remains challenging to accurately estimate the scale and impact of many climate-sensitive health risks. However, scientific advances progressively allow us to attribute an increase in morbidity and mortality to human-induced warming, and more accurately determine the risks and scale of these health threats. In the short- to medium-term, the health impacts of climate change will be determined mainly by the vulnerability of populations, their resilience to the current rate of climate change and the extent and pace of adaptation. In the longer-term, the effects will increasingly depend on the extent to which transformational action is taken now to reduce emissions and avoid the breaching of dangerous temperature thresholds and potential irreversible tipping points.

Vijay Garg.