

## POSHAN ABHIYAN

Poshan Abhiyan (erstwhile National Nutrition Mission) was launched in March 2018 to achieve improvement in nutritional status of children from 0-6 years, Adolescent Girls, Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers in a time bound manner and to achieve reduction in stunting and wasting in children (0-6 years) as well as reduction in anemia in women, children and adolescent girls.

The Abhiyaan has been rolled out in all the 36 States/UTs including the state of Tamil Nadu and Odisha. The key components of the Scheme include use of technology, convergence and behaviour change communication through Jan Andolan.

Another key plank of the Abhiyaan to enable the right kind of nourishment are the PoshanVatikas or Nutri-gardens that are being set up across the country to provide easy and affordable access to fruits, vegetables, medicinal plants and herbs.

Poshan Abhiyan has now been re-aligned as part of Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0, along with Anganwari services and revised Scheme for adolescent Girls. It seeks to strengthen nutritional content, delivery, outreach and outcomes with focus on developing practices that nurture health, wellness and immunity to disease and malnutrition.

It rests on the key pillars of Maternal Nutrition, Infant and Young Child Feeding Norms, Treatment of SAM/MAM and wellness through AYUSH. Under Poshan 2.0, focus is on diet diversity, food fortification, leveraging traditional systems of knowledge and popularizing use of millets.

Nutrition awareness strategies under Poshan 2.0 aim to develop sustainable health and well-being through regional meal plans to bridge dietary gaps. Further, greater emphasis is being given on the use of millets for preparation of Hot Cooked Meal and Take Home rations (not raw ration) at Anganwari centres for Pregnant Women, Laectating Mothers and Children below 6 years of age, as millets have high nutrient content which includes protein, essential fatty acid, dietary fibre, B-Vitamins, minerals such as calcium, iron, zinc, folic acid and other micro-nutrients thus helping to tackle anemia and other micro-nutrient deficiencies in women and children.

Further, under Mission Poshan 2.0, only fortified rice is being allocated to States/UTs. Steps have been taken to improve nutritional quality and testing in accredited labs, strengthen delivery and leverage technology under the 'Poshan Tracker', a robust IoT enabled platform to improve governance with regard to real time monitoring of provisioning of supplementary nutrition for prompt supervision and management of services.

Poshan Abhiyan is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme with the implementation of the scheme being done by States/UTs. To ensure that all Anganwari Centres are equipped with Smart phones and Growth Monitoring devices (GMDs) such as Infantometer, Stadiometer, Weighing Scale for Mother and Infant, the Ministry has released revised guidelines for technical specifications and replacement of GMDs by the States.

## Reasi- Treasure trove of lithium reserves

■ G L KHAJURIA

Jammu and Kashmir besides being a paradise on mother earth is as well bestowed with world renowned natural resources.

There is unambiguously endless list of such resources so far known and what more is in store, the future shall tell. Sapphire mines of Paddar, coal mines of Kalakote, limestone mines of Rajouri and Poonch, POP of lime, (though min) of Ramban are in conglomeration our state's mineral wealth.

This gives a unique identity of Jammu and Kashmir when compared with other states of India. And now of the latest on 9th February, an addition of 5.9 million tons of lithium reserves found for the first time in Reasi district of our country. As per GSI (Geological Survey India), Lithium is scarcely available in a few countries.

It is reactive with other metals and is found in crystalline form, not in metal form. To extract lithium is cumbersome water extensive project, Chile leads the world reserves with 9.2million tons followed by Australia with 5.7 million tons. 5.9 million tons of lithium at Reasi is a lot by any standard. Lithium has some unique qualities like highest metal with low density.

Smart-phones, Solar panels, irrespective of brand, phone has either a lithium-ion battery or lithium-polymer battery. In addition, electric vehicle that is manufactured today by any company has lithium battery.

In comparison to other types of batteries, such as lead-acid batteries, life span of lithium batteries is comparatively 10 times longer as well as the weight of the lithium batteries is concerned 50 per cent-60 per cent lighter with much higher efficiency.

As people move away from petrol and diesel vehicles, towards electric vehicles, as solar and wind energy is used more, replacing coal power plants.

Lithium reserves discovered in J&K, Reasi have been categorized as Inferred resources, it is not sure in respect of quantity and quality of lithium reserves as to whether it will be economically possible to mine it and impending the environmental impact.

The ESI (Economical Survey Of India) has put it into G3 category. It needs more research and studies to take it up

to the G2 or G1 categories.

Then only ministry of mines would be able to know exact tonnage of lithium present.

How much of it could be extracted and to reach that stage at least 5-7 years would be required. In 2021 Karnataka, when the government announced that they found 1600 tons of lithium that was in the inferred state too but this time in J&K's Reasi quantity of lithium is huge and it is significantly important.

But if we go by quantity Bolivia has highest lithium reserves with 21 million tons with inferred state so at this point in time, it is difficult to say lithium we have found would be minable.

On the other hand, china stands one of producer of lithium-ion batteries and at least 75 per cent of world wide.

As per International energy agency china controls 58 per cent of the lithium processing globally followed by Chile and Argentina with 29 per cent and 10 per cent respectively.

Interestingly enough, China has not discovered many lithium reserves but as far as processing is concerned China is global leader. It is quite obvious that there is a huge environmental cost of lithium mining, similarly in respect of mining for other resources, it produces water, soil and air pollution, lots of water is wasted under this process. According to the estimate, to produce 1 ton of lithium 2.2 million liters of water is required.

India it can create the chances of incidents like Joshimath irrespective of air and soil pollution. It is correct that lithium is being used in manufacturing electric vehicles, batteries which reduces carbon emissions.

But the fact goes that same amount of carbon emission is produced at once during mining as it needs to be balanced. In countries likes Bolivia, people have been protesting the adverse environmental impact.

Lets consider, if the 5.9 million tons of inferred reserves become proven pure reserves and it will be profitable to mine them for us by considering the environmental impact on the state of Jammu and Kashmir as well as for the country.

Provocatively, if we go by this analogy, the situation would be similar to that of the Gulf countries which hit bonanza when they found oil reserves.

There are positive examples, Apart from Gulf countries where oil was discovered in Norway, Australia and the countries like Botswana and Rwanda, which developed a lot, but at the same time, where as there are opposite examples too. Countries for them their natural resources become the evil eye. Such as Congo, Bolivia and Netherlands.

The Case of Netherland is famous for its name Dutch Disease.

It can be known as the resource curse. A disease that is seen in countries that have an abundance of natural resources. It might seen that country should become rich due to the natural resources, but unfortunately it doesn't happen, In 1977, the economist magazine coined the phrase 'The Dutch Disease'.

Actually, in 1959, large gas reserves were discovered in the Netherlands. They began exporting natural gas, it helped the country's economy. But after 10 years later, the unemployment rate increased up to 5.1 per cent which was earlier 1 per cent. The private sector investment decreased.

This can be seen in two ways. First, when the amount of natural resources in the country is more and natural resources are imported to other countries, it tantamount to inflow of foreign investment.

If the exporting country of natural resources are highly attractive to foreign entities to invest, this leads to an appreciation of the currency's value. Strengthening of currency can be considered a good thing, if the value of our country's currency increases, then people who are exporting other products will suffer.

Another effect of Dutch disease would be on the labor market. When a country discovers oil or lithium, they will need labor for mining activities, thus creating jobs in that area. People from other sectors will shift to this sector have a detrimental effect on other areas. It will also affect the long term development of the country.

If we look at the example of Gulf countries. They easily escaped the Dutch disease.

Because there were no other fields. Indeed, the Gulf countries would have no economy if oil reserves had not been discovered.

The value of their currency was able to appreciate independently without any effect on other regions.

Because these countries were not exporting anything else. Another example is of developed countries like Australia and Norway.

There are abundant resources to be found there. These countries skillfully diversified among other regions to avoid Dutch disease.

Talking about Norway in particular, this country was lucky because their government spent on the education of its citizens. Spent on building good infrastructure, providing citizens with a high quality of life, they did this before the discovery of oil.

Dubai has become a tourism hub, 95 per cent of Dubai's GDP is not oil based, rather it is non-oil. Only 30 per cent of the UAE's GDP depends on oil and gas. If you look at developing countries, one of the positive examples is Botswana in Africa, which has successfully avoided the Dutch disease.

But negative examples would be countries like Congo and Zimbabwe where natural resources have proved anathema due to corruption and mismanagement. Cobalt is another important metal used in the manufacture of lithium-ion batteries. 74 per cent of the global cobalt supply is produced in Congo. With such a large amount of valuable resources in a country, the Congo could have become extremely prosperous.

But today Congo is at the bottom of almost all lists. Until 2015, many mines in the Congo were controlled by warlords. They used to run the mining mafia. Even today mining is done by children. Child labor is rampant throughout the country.

Mining destroyed the country's environment. And the economy didn't benefit at all. Overall, the lesson here is pretty clear. Even if we find a treasure of natural resources, we should not depend on that treasure. We need to use the resource to help the citizens and to diversify the country's economy.

The government should be wary of things like corruption and mismanagement, because if there is corruption with natural resources. This will prove harmful for the country.

(The author is former Deputy Conservator of Forests).

## 'Hate speech' damaging secular fabric of society

■ DR SATYAWAN SAURABH

Communal agents often use hate speech to polarize people in the name of religion for electoral gains. Due to communal hate speeches, India has witnessed several riots.

The range and anonymity of social media platforms make them vulnerable to abuse. Fake news on online platforms gives rise to increasing incidents of rumor-mongering and hate speech.

In 2020, the conviction rate in hate speech cases was 20.4 per cent. Due to this, it is known that cases are registered but punishment is not given, due to which the feeling of fear does not flourish inside the people, and in this way, social harmony and the fabric of the society are being played with.

Hate speech refers to offensive speech targeting a group, or an individual, based on inherent characteristics such as caste, religion, or gender, which may threaten social peace.

According to the National Crime Records Bureau, there has been a six-fold increase in hate speech crimes between 2014 and 2020 in the country.

The Supreme Court has repeatedly reiterated that there is no scope for naming hate crimes. In a secular country like India, religion is the primary duty of the state to protect its citizens from such crimes.

A single statement becomes hate speech for someone and freedom of speech for someone.

The right to freedom of expression remains entangled in this confusion. Many laws related to freedom of speech exist in our country and there is a ban on statements that disturb unity and peace. Both the use and misuse of these laws continue to be discussed.

Disseminating any such thing, act, or sentiment, whether spoken, written, or through visual means, which is likely to incite violence, hurt religious sentiments, or cause enmity between any group or community on grounds of religion, race, place of birth or language Yes, it comes under hate speech.

Amidst the noise of tolerance and intolerance, this matter becomes more important because at the root of the problem is whether the public and the leaders can tolerate someone's point or not. Can violence

erupt if someone's words are not tolerated, that's why it is necessary to control the statements by punishing them through law. Or everyone has the freedom to speak their mind, in this sense, there should be no restriction of the law.

Unfair practices in society generate discriminatory institutions, structures, and norms, which validate and perpetuate unequal social relations.

This leads some people to consider others as inferior and less worthy of respect. Communal agents often use hate speech to polarize people in the name of religion for electoral gains.

Due to communal hate speeches, India has witnessed several riots. The range and anonymity of social media platforms make them vulnerable to abuse. Fake news on online platforms gives rise to increasing incidents of rumor-mongering and hate speech.

Victims rarely report incidents to the authorities for fear of reprisal or not being taken seriously. Even when cases are reported, the purpose is defeated due to a lack of timely action by the authorities. In India, sections 153 and 505 of the Indian

Penal Code are the main provisions that deal with hate speech and expressions that seek to punish 'hate speech'.

The absence of a separate law to deal with hate speech has led to the misuse of existing loopholes. In 2017, the committee submitted a report recommending stricter laws to curb online hate speech.

Each state should have a state cybercrime coordinator, who should be an officer not below the rank of Inspector General of Police. Are.

There should be a District Cyber Crime Cell in each district. It proposed imprisonment of up to two years with a fine of ₹5,000. Implementation of the Law Commission's recommendations: The Law Commission in its 267th report made new provisions under section 505 of the IPC on 'prohibiting incitement to hatred and fear, alarm or violence in certain cases under section 153(B) of the IPC. Suggested amendments to the Indian Penal Code by adding provisions.

It is a better way to solve the problem of hate speech through dialogue, mediation, and arbitration. The education system in India can help foster tolerance, compas-

sion, and respect for others.

People should be made aware of diversity, the importance of a pluralistic society, and its contribution to the unity of India.

The emergence of social media has created multiple platforms for the creation, packaging, and dissemination of hate speech. The Supreme Court has also expressed concern regarding hate speech on TV debates.

Therefore steps should be taken to regulate these mediums. Hate speech threatens two core principles of democracy - the guarantee of equal dignity for all and the overall public good.

There is a need to raise public awareness of the dangers posed by hate speech, the adoption of a code of conduct by the media, self-regulation by private and public institutions, and the importance of respecting pluralism. In 2020, the conviction rate in hate speech cases was 20.4 per cent.

Due to this, it is known that cases are registered but punishment is not given, due to which the feeling of fear does not flourish inside the people and in this way social harmony and the fabric of the society are being played with.

## Ravi- Known as Iravati in Vedas

■ SHIV KUMAR PADHA

The younger generation often questions about the river Ravi, its importance and significance for the population living along its banks, because the few rivers which we have been left with are in no way worth calling rivers as majority of them have either been converted into the mines for illegal extraction of sand and bajri by the mafia or have been stinking due to the flow of the affluent from the factories and the city drainages.

Unlike other rivers, Ravi has been a perennial source of crystal clear, pollution free water which was considered as nectar for the populations living along its banks. The river Ravi originates from the Himalayas in the Multhan tehsil of Kangra district of Himachal Pardesh, India.

It flows north westerly course and is a perennial river. It is the smallest among the five rivers of Punjab. It flows through Barabhangal, Bara Bansu, and Chamba districts. Its two tributaries, the Budhil and Nain or Dhona join 64 Km downstream from its source.

The Budhil river rises from the Lahul range of hills and has its source in the Mani Mahesh Kailash peak and the Manimahesh lake.

It flows through the ancient capital of Barmohar in HP. The second tributary, Nai river, rises from the Kali Devi pass. Another tributary that joins Ravi river, just below Barmohar, the old capital of Chamba, is the Seul river from the north direction. One more major tributary that joins the Ravi River near Basohli (J&K) is the Seva.

This river was also exploited for its forest resources by the then Raja of Chamba. The valley is also formed by another major tributary that joins the Seul river, the Baira Nallaha.

According to ancient history traced to Vedas, the Ravi river was known as 'Iravati', Ravi was known as 'Purushani' or Iravati to Indians in Vedic times.

Part of the Battle of the ten kings was fought on a river, which according to Yaksa (Nirukta) refers to the Iravati River (Ravi).

The main Ravi river flows through the base of Dalhousie hill, after Chamba town. It flows into the south west, near Dalhousie and then it cuts a gorge in the Dhauladhar range, before entering thePunjab plain near Madhopur and Pathankot.

It then flows along the Indo-Pak border for 80 Km before entering Pakistan. The total length of the river is about 725 Km. As the river flows past Lahore in Pakistan for 26 Km after Amritsar, it is called the river of Lahore.

Many civilizations of the world started, developed and became extinct on the banks of the rivers. As the river lidar is to Kashmir Ravi is Basohli.

River Ravi has been a life line for the people because of its religious, recreational and transportive importance.

Owing to the religious and vedic importance, Vishwasthali (Basohli) was known as Lagu (Chhoti) Kashi where the people living near it immersed the mortal remains of their kin in the sacred waters of river Ravi.

The banks of Ravi used to echo with the daily chanting of the Ved Mantras and Rechas from Sam Ved loudly and rhythmically, by the Brahmins, during morning and evening hours. Like the Swarg Ashram in Rishikesh (Haridwar) ,the entire bank of river Ravi from Mahakali temple to the Bedtan had number of temples which remained alive with the crowd of devotees during the day time.

Basohli town is situated on a hard rock with an altitude of 500 mt above the river bed.

Prior to the ponding of RSD, every part of the town was linked with the different ghats of the river at Khratan, Mahakali and Bedtan, by a Dhaki (Astair like path made by pitching the stones).

There was a cluster of small and medium sized temples built along the entire length of the Dhakis linking the town with the river.

Towards Khratan Bank, there were total seven temples including the temple of Sheetla Mata, where people from all the communities paid their obeisance. Before ponding of the lake there was a temple of Lord Shiva housed in a giant sized cave carved out from a hard rock on theKhratan bank.

Apart from the Shiv Ling, there was a full sized portrait of Raja Bhoopat Pal chiseled on one of the rocky wall of the cave.

Similarly, there were ancient Temples of goddess MahaKali and Neel Kanth at Mahakali and Bedtan ghats. Every morning the natives used to visit the nearest banks of Ravi to have a dip in its holy water, and return with a pail of water to offer waters to the idols in the temples along the Dhakis.

In the middle of every Dhaki there was a one special stone, bearing the sketch of a Naag Devta, where the devotee offered water and the flowers on their return from the river.

The beach like Khratan Ghat, being wide and charming was considered as an ideal spot for the picnics during the weekends and the evenings of summers.

There was a big groove of the mango trees which provided shelter for the visiting groups.

The water of the river was too cold to drink in one go. Since, there were no refrigerators at that time, the pic-

nic parties used to take their drinks, fruits like melons, mangoes, etc. in their bags and immerse them in the river water for making them cool.

The youth and even the elderly group enjoyed swimming and rafting on timbers while others enjoy sitting on big stones along river bank with their legs dipped in the ice cold water.

According to the legend, the idol of Mata Mahakali installed in the temple was prepared by Raja Bhog Pal, who in order to please the goddess, took an oath to carve the statue of idol on the rock.

The devotees of the Mahakali used to visit the temple during morning and evening hours. Whereas, the Dhaki leading to the Bedtan Ghat always remained alive day and night by the movement of the natives going for taking a dip in the fresh spring waters.

The movement of the people and the carriage of the goods of daily use were carried out with the help of Boats, Skin inflated floating device Drayeen and the trolley called Ghrooru.

The wooden slippers worth corers of rupees were transported from the remote forests up to Lakanpur through the river every year which provided employment to hundreds of the natives.

It was the moral duty rather obligatory on the part of Punjab government to have completed the videography of the places, temples, monuments, caves and the rarely available water springs before the ponding of the RSD started. Altering or destroying the cultural heritage of any race, ethnic group is a heinous crime punishable under IPC. The UT government should persuade upon the Punjab government to do vido the divers so that these videos can serve as the documentary proof for their existence in future.

(The author is a social activist from Basohli).

