

## URGENT NEED

There is the urgent need to address environmental issues and highlights the critical importance of preserving the Earth for the well-being of all living organisms. It effectively conveys the message that saving the Earth should be a top priority, as it is the only planet capable of sustaining life as we know it.

The call for collective action and individual responsibility is clear, suggesting that small changes in behavior can have a significant impact on reducing environmental degradation. Additionally, your mention of the interconnectedness of human activities and their effects on other organisms underscores the importance of adopting sustainable practices.

Providing practical examples, like reducing the use of plastic bottles, helps to illustrate how simple actions can contribute to the larger goal of protecting the environment. Overall, your message effectively communicates the urgency of the situation and encourages people to take action to save the Earth.

## THE PINES OF JAMMU &amp; KASHMIR

■ GL KHAJURIA

The state of Jammu and Kashmir is a leocooned land-mass at the northernmost extremity of the plains of the Punjab which virtually touches the lower ridges of the hills and further spreads over a vast tract constituting thereby what is called as the region of outer hills. Varying in their heights something from 600 in to 1250 in above mean sea level (M.S.L.) are the rugged ones, which go parallel to one another, enveloping small narrow Valleys.

The Jammu region which begins from the boundaries adjoining Punjab and Himachal Pradesh across river Ravi - (Lakhanpur) stretches over the last reach of Indo-Pak border (Poonch) in the east-West encompassing Kandi belt of herbs, shrub and other broad leaved trees of immense importance and with the altitudinal gains the rich 'chirpines' blue pines' and their allied intermingle. From Jammu, uprising towards higher reaches of Udhampur, Kund, Patnitop on the one hand and Trikuta hills of Katra, Reasi to the north west are having the richest varieties of pines which give kaleidoscopic glimpse when viewed airily in their o ambience. Not only, that these pines are o s rene, scenic and splendour4i

are as well of tremendous importance in a variety of ways. The 'Pride' Chenab Valley, de facto, is a bountiful and predominantly the richest forest area in the entire state-The entire terrain is a rare combination of inner and outer hills of 'Shivaliks' ranging from 1,200 in to 3,600 in above mean sea level (MSL) and further there is consistent rise in elevation to what is most conveniently called the middle Himalayas... The narrow Valleys give way to the small rivulets which drain into pride Chenab1 the Tawi and to the deep gorges and other, emerald waters. The landscape and valleys with ever-flourishing vibrant, salubrious and shimmering pines largely intermingling with fast flowing nectar-clear waters over the millennia past. However, the chirpne part is briefed down as under:

'Chir Pine': All the pines' are belong to 'Gymnosperms' part of plant Kingdom having the .characteristics of cones-bearing and so is with chir pine This falls under confereefamily and lakes its start from lower elevation to higher ones (4,000 to 6,000 feet) from the MSL. The chir is long-leaved pine botanically spoken as 'Pinus roxburghii and is a large living tree with clear straight bole and thick bark as adense against forest fire. The leaves are in bundles of three needles obscurely triquetrous, light green cones are solitary or 3-5 togetherand the seeds are long, obliquely branched, compressed with a membranous wings which helps in their pollination as it is through wind.

Chir pines are spreaded over the outer hills of shivaliks ranging from Basohli - Billawar, Udhampur, Reasi , Kalidhar, Sudarbari , Rajouri, Nowshera and Poonch. The tree is of ample importance is so far as extraction of resin is concerned, apart from fulfilling the demands of keals in respect of timber, small wood and fuel. The resin extracted from the chirns finds its immense value after the segregation of resin and turpentine oil which is useful in many pharmaceuticals for the manufacture of multihued important medicines.

Chir pines are mostly prone to forest fires during summer spells more due to the gathering of the needles which rather cover the forest ground. The locals have their urge,, good grass and so these forests are engulfed by fire and spell the doom and large chunks of chir forests are subjected to forest hazards.,

An idea was mooted much earlier for collection of the dry needles which find its usefulness in the manufacture of cardboard as this practice is mostly prevalent in otherchir bearing states of UP etc. This Thai! Serve twin purpose first the forest fires shall be minimizedimprove local economy and boosting card-board manufacturing.. This is unambiguously, a workable solution in averting forest fires, apart from opening new avenues for the industrial uses.

Chir pines, as thus has great promise in afforestation programmes and is widely planted inits natural .habitat Many sites of its natural habitations are, however deficient in organic matter, water holding capacity, nutrimental availability, micro-fauna and are lacking in almost all over the chir bearing areas. So, it is pertinent to have necessary desirable physical and biological characteristics necessary for the plants growth and survival of our planted seedlings on such sites thus well suited to site.

Blue Pines also called as 'Pinus Waliehiana' in botanical parlance and Wail is spoken locally a3 a large majestic tree having slate-colored smooth bark with leathery young stems 1 Like chirpiness. Its leaves are also in bundles each groove is having five needles which are slender eal, triquetrous, glaucous on the inner faces, cones are generally 2-3 together on peduncles Seed of- this-species are blackish,' void liite' and compressed and the trees catches heights from 6,000-10,000 ft from (MSL) sometimes intermingling with deodar and atplaces with chir pines etc. The woo is as good as that of deodar, which is pinkish-brown, moderately hard, resin-as are smaller than those of chlrines.,The sapwood yield resin far superior to chir pines and its leaves are used as a stuff for cushions and The bark of the tree is used as slate for roofing of temporary huts and its seeds are oftenly eaten by the local inhabitants.

Giant Himalayan Pine: This pine, unambiguously, occupy its unique placement in the Himalayan region-the most magnificent and majestic . Deodar botanically nomenclatures as Cedrus deodars a large tall gregarious tree, the largest and longest ever-lived tree in India renowned for its greatest beauty whose branches are horizontal having pyramidal crown;. The tree ranges a height from 7000-8500 ft from MSL and - intermingles amongst blue pines, spruce, firq and Moru oak. The tree is of ample importance in so' far as its timber value is concerned) which is prominently used in multi-Wide construction, The cedar oil extracted from its stumps finds multitudinous uses in our pharmaceuticals for the remedial measures of various hues,

Chilghoza Pines: This pine is spoken as Pinus:gerardiana in botanical parlance and is mostly confined in Padder valley of Kishtwar and thence in the higher reaches of Kashmir.

A cluster of such pines were spotted by the author whilst being on tour to Padder Valley in august last yearatopAtholi near Mata Jawalaji temple,. However, of course, the most important articles of food are well known throughout. Nor them part, of India as thilghoza which is basically the seed of this pine tree.

(The author is Former Dy. Conservator of Forest, J&K)

## MAHAVIRA: MIGHTY HERO OF THE MOTHER LAND

■ ID SONI

During the sixth century B.C. two princes of royal Blood, Gautam (543 B.C. to 523 B.C.) the founder of Buddhism and Vardhaman Mahavira (599 B.C. TO 527 B.C.) founder of Jainism spearheaded the reactionary movement in order to purge the society of its manifold evils like the animal sacrifices and expensive rituals.

Vardhaman Mahavira was the 24th Tirthankara or ford-finder. The first saint of this faith Was Rishabha deva and 23rd was Paravashanath (877 to 777 B.C.). Mahavira came of a royal family, son of Sidhartha, the chief of Lihhavi tribe and his mother was Trishla. He wasborn at Kundalgram near Vaisali in Bihar. He was married to Yasodha and had a daughter. At the age of thirty, he left his home after the death of his parents to find God. He wandered naked and homeless. People persecuted him and set dogs on him. He never sought medical aid. In winter he meditated in the shade and in summer, he seated himself in the scorching sun. He passed twelve years in severe penance and in the 13th year, at the age of 42, he attained the highest spiritual knowledge or kevalgyana under a sal tree near an old temple in the field belonging to a householder name semaga.

In his childhood he was named Vira. He was called Vardhamana. Later on, he was called Mahavira, "great hero". A story has it, that he was given that epithet when, playing with his friends one day he subdued with great dignity a big black snake by catch holding it and throwing it away. To us the story is a parable. For Mahavira has truly subdued the snake of passion. He was, indeed, a great hero. He conquered raga and dvesha. The central note of his life was Virya vitality. It was life of supreme shakti.

His predecessor Parsvanath had advocated four vows, (i) not to injure life, (ii) not to steal, (iii) not to tell a lie, (iv) not to possess any property and Mahavira added the, (v) vow of chastity. He believed that God is only, "the highest, the noblest and the fullest manifestation of all the powers which lie latent in the soul of man. According to him, it was all waste to recite mantras and perform the sacrifices. The three essentials, the three jewels or "Tri Ratna" he emphasised are (i) Right Faith-belief in Trithankars, (ii) Right knowledge-belief in salvation, (iii) Right conduct :-Belief in five vow cited above. By following the five vows, one travel anywhere to lead a virtuous life. These vows (i) non injury, (ii) truthfulness, (iii) non stealing, (iv) non attachment and (v) celibacy (Brahmcharya) are the essentials ingredients of an ideal character and conduct.

No nation may hope to achieve hreatness without the inspiration which comes of honouring its heroes. Heroworship is the true foundation of national prosperity. Mahavira is one of the greatestheros of Aryavarta. His

continues to shine among the immortals of history.

Poor is India, in material wealth. Yet rich is India, in human resources. What may not her millions do if they but will-to-do? And how many has not India produced, age after age, men great in power of the spirit? They have sacrificed India's soil: they have made India rich in the wealth of spirit. Mahavira was the true superman of the spirit in India. He was not a superman of egoism and violence, but superman of purity, Tapasya and love.

Ahimsa is the most important doctrine of Jainism. His non injury in word, thought and deed beings. Some monks and nuns walk about barefooted and tie a piece of cloth round their mouth so that they may notinhale the tiny insect in the air. They even strain water before drinking. They believe that all things, animate and (men, animals, plants, wind, and fire) have souls and no injury should be done to them. The Jian scriptures are called 'Angas' and were written by Umasvati or Umasvami.

Jainism teaches us that every human is responsible for his or actions and all livings have an eternal soul (Jiva). It insists that we live, act and think respectfully and honour the spiritual nature of all life. God is infinite knowledge (Anant Gyan), per caption (Anant Darshan), Consciousness (Anant Chetna) and happiness (Anant Sukh).

As fire does not put out fire, so evil does not put out evil", was the note sounded by the great Rishi of Russia, Tolstoy. And the Tolstoy's doctrine is traced to the teaching of Jesus: resist not evil". Yet over five centuries before Jesus, the teaching of ahimsa was taught and practised by two Indian.

Sages and Rishis, Gautama Buddha and Mahavira. The Jain worship Mahavira as Bhagawan, the lord, the blessed one. Jainism does not believe an omnipotent supreme being or creator but in an external universe governed by natural laws and the interplay of its attributes (gunas) of matter (dravyas). How beautiful the life of Mahavira! He goes from place to place to preach his doctrine and many mock at him: he is silent. At meetings they disturb him, insult him: he is silent. A band of men beat him in the forest as he sits in meditation: he is silent. A disciple of his deserts him and goes about spreading evil reports against him: he is silent. He becomes a Mahavira, a great victor, a superman and a 'Mighty Hero' of the motherland, because he develops santi-shakti, the power of peace. His life influenced profoundly his flowers. They carried his message far and wide. It is said that pyrrho, the Greek thinker, studied philosophy at the feetofGymnosophists: and as the name suggests, the Gymnosophists were Jain Yogis.

Modern India, too, needs heroes. Money or mere knowledge can do little. Our piteous need, today, is men who, casting out fear from their hearts, would serve this

ancient land. The heroism of Mahavira was reflected in his life and his teaching. It was a life of singular self-conquest: and his teaching as a Mighty hero was bold one: "Regard all creatures as thyself and harm no one!" In these words we have the double doctrine of ahimsa, positive and negative. The positive refers to the vision of unity: see thyself in all. The negative grows out of it: Harm no one. To see the self in all is to refrain from injury to anyone. Harmlessness grows out of the vision of the one in all.

According to mighty Hero-Mahavira, all life is sacred. So tear no leaf from the tree, crush no flower, harm no insect. Is it a foolish sentiment to treat insects, animals and birds with kindness? There was a time when it was thought foolish to treat "coloured" men as human beings! An Englishman in South Africa said the negro had no soul. The life and message of Mahavira emphasised three ideas. (1) Brahmacharya which means, literally, walking with God.Brahmachariya is purity, is self-restraint (2) Anekanlavada or syadvada. Mahavira taught that no one view of the universe could express the truth in its fullness: for Truth is Ananta (endless). We suffered much in recentyears from strife and hate in the name of "Creed".Creeds have created divisions and quarrels. Let a new conception of the spiritual life create a new unity, a new national life. For truth is infinite. And religion was meant not to create discords and conflicts, but to teach humility and love. (Ahimsa). And ahimsa, Mahavira taught, is anything but in action or cowardice. Ahimsa is something very positive. Indeed, it is something more even than virtue. It is a Shakti, an energy. It is the energy of peace, the will-to-peace in a warring world. Mahavira mentally asked to refrain 18 activities-violence, untruth, Theft, unchaste behaviour, Possessiveness, Anger, Arrogance, Greed, Deceit, Attachment, Hatred Arguing, Accusation, Gossip, Criticism, Prejudice and dislikes- Malice, Wrong belief.

"Satya is unchangeable that which has no distortion that is beyond distinctions of time, space and person that which pervades the universe in all in its constancy". Human life progresses from childhood to adolescence, to youth, to old age. Humanlife or its receptacle the body is not Satya or Truth. One of the remarkable sayings of this "Mighty Hero"- Mahavira is, "you are your own friend".Yes ; and you are your own enemy. Be your friend! Do not be your enemies! We all are in search of happiness and peace. If we really want to be happy and to live peaceful life than make other happy and create peaceful atmosphere. He who blesses other is blessed, and he who injures other is injured, said Mighty Hero. Let us, therefore, adhere to the doctrine of Mahavira in our everydaylife, and rekindle once again the light of love in the world.

## Earth and earthquake: Cause and Possibilities

■ DR. BANARSI LAL

Pulses are the important crops as they contain a variety of nutrients and are ideal and affordable source of proteins for large sections of the population. India is self-sufficient in food grain production and over the years pulses and oilseeds production have also increased but still there is need to increase their production. Pulses production is a source of income and proteins for the various sections of society. The pulses production has increased from 163.20 lakh tones in 2015-16 to 275.04 lakh tones in 2022-23 and oilseeds from 252.50 lakh tones to 409.97 lakh tones during the same period. Import of pulses has declined from 58 lakh tones in 2025-16 to 24.96 lakh tones in 2022-23. India still needs to increase the pulses and oilseeds production to mitigate the domestic demand of burgeoning population. In order to increase the income of the farmers the pulses and oilseeds production play the significant role. More farmers need to be convinced for the commercial cultivation of these two important crops. Oilseeds and pulses continue to flummox the policymakers, farmers and consumers. India is self-sufficient in food grain production despite burgeoning population and various climatic stresses. But the country is still needs to increase the pulses and oilseeds production. The gap between demand and supply often leads to skyrocketing of prices in domestic market in pulses and oils which is a cause of major concern for general public and the government alike. The government has developed the new strategies for achieving self-sufficiency in pulses and oilseeds.

Protein malnutrition in India can be eradicated by regular and adequate supply of pulses to the poor people. There is need an effective strategy to increase production, productivity, area and processing techniques for oilseeds and pulses to mitigate the demand of increasing population. The Indian Council of agricultural Research (ICAR) has made the strenuous efforts to increase the production of oilseeds and pulses by involving its research and extension mechanism across the country. Government of India has also supported 'International Year of Pulses - 2016' a call given by United Nations by organizing various activities and events among the farmers with the objective to promote pulses cultivation

across the country.

India is the largest producer and consumer of pulses in the world. In India pulses are grown in an area of around 28 million hectares of land with productivity of about 885 kg/hectare which is less than the global average. In order to mitigate the projected demand of pulses, productivity must be enhanced to a level of 1200 kg per hectare and additional area need to be brought under pulses across the nation. More efforts are needed to drastically reduce the post harvest losses of pulses. There are various bottlenecks to achieve the target of pulses production. Around 92 per cent of the area under pulses is rainfed where pulses cultivation mostly depends on monsoon rains.

Drought and heat stress conditions may reduce pulses crop yields up to 50 per cent, especially in arid and semi-arid regions. Pod borers, aphids, cutworms, white fly, powdery mildew, blights, wilts are the major insect-pests and diseases affecting many pulses. Generally, pulses are treated as secondary crops. Availability of quality seed of improved varieties is one of the major inputs in increasing productivity of pulses. The government has launched many new initiatives and strengthened various programmes to increase the production of pulses across the nation. Government of India is operating a National Food Security Mission (NFSM) to maintain sustainable food security in the country which provides support to pulses, cereals, millets and selected commercial crops. Previously the NFSM was operative only in limited states but now the present government has extended its benefits to all the states and districts across the country. This will benefit north-eastern states and hilly states/UT like Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Utrakhand. These states/UT have huge potential for cultivation of pulses. The support provided by NFSM is helpful to boost pulses production in these areas and across the country.

Edible oils occupy a unique place in Indian society, culture, dietary patterns and economy of the nation. According to 'VISION - 2015 document of ICAR - Indian Institute of Oilseeds Research, Hyderabad, India is one of the largest vegetables oil economies in the world next to USA, China, Brazil and Argentina. Due to diverse

## YOUR COLUMN

## Orissa High Court on dismissal after retirement

DEAR EDITOR,

It is not unusual that the retirement, or dismissal of an employee after the departmental enquiry is held for allegation of misconduct, is governed by the service conditions of the respective departments or organizations. Service conditions vary from organizations to organizations. An employee joins a department or organization upon signing the agreement to abide by the service conditions stipulated in the rule book. When an employee is dismissed from service as a major penalty for misconduct, he forfeits his past service. With this, he is disentitled for terminal benefits like DCRG, Earned Leave encashment etc. If the date of retirement on superannuation arrives even before the on-going enquiry is concluded, and if that employee is under suspension, he will be reinstated on the last day of his service and dismissed if it is decided to do so. It is left to the discretion of the competent authorities to take such action as may be necessary based on the findings of the enquiry officer. Not necessarily it should be dismissal. The action is taken taking into consideration the quantum of crime committed during his service. In other words, the punishment will be commensurate with the misconduct of the employee. The Orissa High Court judgment is in line with the conditions that an employee facing departmental enquiry instituted during his service if found guilty can be dismissed even after retirement if the disciplinary authority contemplates to impose major penalty of dismissal. Employee in government departments under suspension is reinstated on the day he is to retire if his date of superannuation approaches before the enquiry proceeding are concluded and then he is relieved of his duties pending conclusion of enquiry proceedings.

The quantum of punishment is decided based on the gravity of the crime committed as found during the enquiry. Departmental enquiry cannot be instituted against a retired employee if the event has occurred four years prior to the date of issue of charge sheet as per Section 214 (2) (b) (ii) of KCSR as observed by the Karnataka High Court. It is right from the justice point of view not to let off the hook a retired employee who had indulged in embezzlement of cash or fudging of accounts or stealing anything from storeyard. Four years time is quite reasonable to subject an employee for enquiry for his misconduct during the time while he was in service. If the retirement is the excuse to ignore the misconduct of an employee during the time he was in service, then a large number of employees in verge of retirement may resort to unethical practices and try to gain pecuniary benefits through unfair means. Because in several cases, the fraud comes to light only after one or two years. Unfortunately, of late the employees facing disciplinary action for misconduct are on rise. In some cases, innocent employees caught in the web of fraudsters face departmental enquiries and face disciplinary action for no fault of own. Sometimes, innocent employees face disciplinary action for "obeying" the oral orders of officers unable to say 'no'. While the onus of proving innocence rests with the employees involved in departmental enquiry, the enquiry officers should also apply their mind to find out the innocence of the employees who have meekly followed the oral instructions of their official superiors.

K.V. Seetharamaiah

## Manage vehicular traffic on the Jammu Kathua highway.

DEAR EDITOR,

The journey on the said rout has been becoming more hazardous and tiresome day by day ever since the damage of the bridge over rever Tarnah and the simultaneous con-

struction work taking place along the entire route. The normal journey from Kathua to Jammu by the bus or by the personal conveyance takes hardly two or one and half hours respectively. But it is often experienced that due to bumper to bumper jam of the vehicles on the highway it takes minimum four hours to complete 70 Kms. Journey even in the personal conveyance.

Due to frequent turns and diversions after every two Kms. on the highway and owing to the absence of the traffic police meant for regulating and managing the traffic results in the traffic jam on the entire route with the result the vehicular traffic is compelled to creep with snail's pace on the road. Many times the vehicles collide with each other causing great loss to the vehicles involved and the inmates. It is very sad rather disgusting in spite of the big army of the traffic police deployed along the route for the purpose of managing and regulating the traffic no such traffic constable is seen on the duty except a few loitering along the road away from the jam busy in chatting on the mobiles with their back towards the jam. For the last two three days regular journey on the forty five Kms.

Stretch from Vijaypur to Kathua, I found only four traffic constables and two officers fishing in the troubled waters on the highway without caring for discharging their assigned duty. It is amazing how the pilots of the motorcade of some VIP, bureaucrat or ministers managed a free passage to the speeding motorcade while the stranded vehicles along with the perspiring passengers on board left to suffer.

It is, therefore, requested to direct the traffic police to keep a vigil on the traffic and resolve the traffic jamming for hours together on the road. The higher officers of the traffic department should take the cognizance of dereliction of the duties by the erring officials and bring them to the books , as they, traffic police, is meant for the facilities of the public and not the public for them. The matter being serious and urgent needs immediate attention.

By: Shiv Kumar Padha