

## MAKING YATRA SAFE

Ensuring a safe Amarnath Yatra has always remain a big challenge for the security forces and the governments sitting at helm since the time J&K is in grip of terrorism and this year also the people at helm are taking things very seriously to make the aforesaid Yatra incident free and convenient for the pilgrims who are supposed to visit J&K to pay obeisance at holy cave shrine of Baba Barfani. What is the reason for the satisfaction of hundreds of devotees visiting Amarnath Shrine is the fact that nearly 12,000 paramilitary troops and good number of Jammu and Kashmir Police personnel, with the help of drone cameras, will guard the forthcoming Yatra which is scheduled to begin on June 30 after a gap of two years. In this context, Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla has reviewed the security preparedness for the annual pilgrimage to the cave shrine located in south Kashmir at an altitude of 3,888 meters. Amarnath Yatra was deferred twice in the years 2020 and 2021 on account of coronavirus pandemic, while it was cut short in 2019 just before the abrogation of Article 370. This year the pilgrimage to South Kashmir has been seen as a big challenge for the government as presently the UT is in grip of terrorist activities with targeted killings becoming the headache for the security forces as in the last two days two innocents have been killed by the terrorists including one Kashmiri Pandit government employee, who was murdered in broad daylight. The government is claiming that more three lakh devotees are expected this year and every possible step is being taken to ensure security, safety and convenience of one and all visiting the UT of J&K for this arduous pilgrimage considered as one of the holiest among all in the country. The Yatra will culminate on August 11 but till that time the security edifice will be on tenterhooks and lethargy of no degree is allowed to those deputed on this sensitive security concerning duty. There is no doubt that like many years in the past the Yatra will pass on safely with devotees having pleasant Darshan of the Bhagwan Shiv amidst splendid beauty of nature in Kashmir.

## FULFILLING ASPIRATIONS

The administration of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir under the guidance of ruling dispensation led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has always tried to meet the aspirations of people without any discrimination by initiating every possible measure. In the passage of more than last two years, a number of proactive initiatives were taken by the Government to provide all those facilities to people of J&K of which they were deprived earlier due to presence of controversial articles 370 and 35A in the erstwhile state. This ongoing spree of the administration has not ended yet as even today each and every genuine demand of the masses is considered seriously and if found genuine, necessary steps are taken to fulfill the same at the earliest. In the recent past people have witnessed a number of significant decisions by the administration for ensuring their welfare besides providing them every possible facility of life at their doorsteps thereby proving that for the administration welfare of people is always on top priority and no step will be left unturned in ensuring the same. From the past few days a number of aspiring candidates of Jammu and Kashmir Combined Competitive Services were demanding a one-time age relaxation as the last two years were hit badly due to pandemic and other restrictions imposed to contain the spread of virus. This demand was also endorsed by several political parties and student bodies with a request to the Government for granting the relaxation at the earliest so that a large number of candidates, who were waiting for long to appear in the examination and preparing hard can get a chance to appear in the same. Understanding the genuineness of the demand, the administration of J&K has approved a one-time age relaxation in upper age-limit for all the aspiring candidates of JKCE. While conveying the decision of the administration, the LG Manoj Sinha said that the Government understands the aspirations of youth and accordingly a decision has been taken to grant relaxation in upper age limit. He further told that the present government is also trying to ensure conduct of the exams on regular basis unlike previous years when students used to wait for long to get a chance for appearing in JKCE. As far as the welfare of students in general and JKCE aspirants in particular is concerned, it is an appreciable decision taken at the right time.



OFF 'D' CUFF

### What Is Heritage Day India?

is a day to raise awareness of the preservation of history, diversity and vulnerability of World Heritage sites and monuments. One day a year means raising awareness of the importance of the diversity of cultural heritage and its preservation for future generations. The purpose of celebrating this day is to raise people's awareness of the conservation and importance of World Heritage sites and monuments and to engage them in heritage by providing information about such sites located around the world.

On World Heritage Day, the world also wants to celebrate the efforts of all those involved in protected areas, such as architects, engineers, geographers, civil engineers, artists and archaeologists, who are involved in heritage conservation. Every year from November 19th to 25th, it celebrates the wonders of India's natural heritage and draws public attention to the conservation of national monuments.

International Day for Monuments and Sites, also known as World Heritage Day, is an international holiday celebrated around the world on 18 April each year and includes a variety of events including visits to monuments and sites, conferences, roundtables and newspapers articles.

**Swami Sukhabodhananda**

## Is it rehabilitation or annihilation of Kashmiri Pandits?

■ ER P L KHUSHU



Another brutal killing of a young Kashmiri Pandit Rahul Bhat working in the office of Tehsildar Chadoora in Budgam. He was shot dead inside the main office premises of the Tehsil Office at Chadoora, district Budgam, Kashmir on May 13-2022, in broad daylight, under the very nose of others working in that office, of course mostly Muslim employees. The lured terrorists barged into the Tehsil office Chadoora and shot from a close-range Rahul Bhat, working under Prime Minister's Rehabilitation Package (PMRP) as a clerk. What pathos. He was immediately referred to Srinagar hospital where doctors declared him dead. As per press information the slain body of Rahul Bhat reached Sheikhpura, Budgam migrant colony in evening. A pall of gloom descended on the other Kashmiri Pandits employees and their relatives with them, residing at Sheikhpura colony, constructed for migrant employees. The Police authorities of Kashmir, maintained that terrorists responsible for martyring Rahul Bhat have been identified as Aqib Sher Gojri, a new recruit, and Lateef Ahmad Rather, a recycled terrorist after he was released from jail. They said that they are from Lashkar-e-Toiba and barged into Tehsil office and shot Bhat from point blank range using pistol. It is certainly a welcome statement by the authorities of Kashmir Police, that they have nabbed the terrorists within hours of the sad incident. May, be it speaks volumes about the alertness of the security forces about the nabbing of the terrorists responsible for this sad terror attack. But alas it equally raises questions about such alertness of the security forces as such an alertness has been shown by the security forces, after the irreparable event of the murder of a young man. It raises enough of eye brows on the efficacy and promptness, as also laxity on the part of security forces to protect such KP Migrant employees, while working in all such hazardous and Jehadi atmospheres and circumstances. So is the case with the head of Tehsil office, where Rahul was working and his colleagues working with him around. They did nothing possible to save this young KP employee being their colleague, from this gruesome attack of the terrorists. Or was he a thorn in their foot as an outsider being a Kashmiri Pandit, as KPs have been driven out under force of gun by the pan-Islamic Fundamentalists almost 32 years back. It appears that Kashmiri Pandits are now becoming easy ducks to the Islamic Jehadi cult in Kashmir, which is now fully prevailing in Kashmir, in lieu of their so-called slogans of dignified rehabilitation back in Kashmir after the 32 years of their forced exile. Prime Minister's Rehabilitation Package (PMRP) for the KP's has become a death trap for Rahul Bhat, who was working just as a clerk under this rehabilitation scheme of the Prime Minister of India for the migrant Kashmiri Pandits. Another brutal killing of such a nature of a Kashmiri Pandit, namely Rakesh Pandita, President of Municipal Committee Tral, which was done by Jihadis at Tral Kashmir, on June 2, 2021, after another gruesome killing of Ajay Pandita, a Kashmiri Pandit and a Sarpanch at Larkipora, Anantnag, who was shot dead by unidentified terrorists at Lokbawan in Anantnag on June 8, 2020. A dormant question arises as to what is

the remedy to all such killings of Kashmiri Pandits. Another question comes to surface as to why Kashmiri Pandits are killed in the valley who somehow manage to either get a government job under certain central government rehabilitation packages for the KP's, or try to go back to the valley, presuming that the security scenario has improved a lot as per the often repeated statements of the government and that too from much higher levels like the ministry of home affairs government of India, when the situation is otherwise.

Such gruesome killings of the young and brilliant Kashmiri Pandits in Kashmir, have left the Kashmiri Pandit community across the country and outside the country in a deep shock. This new terror onslaught on a young community member reminds us all about the mass killings and mass exodus of the Kashmiri Pandits in 1990, due to the terrorism. This young Kashmiri Pandit martyr joins our other distinguished personalities who were martyred decades back in a similar manner. On 14 September 1989, Pandit Tika Lal Taploo, who was a prominent leader of KPs, was murdered by JKLF in Srinagar. Prominent lawyer Prem Nath Bhat was gunned down on December 27, 1989 in South Kashmir. Pt Neelkanth Ganjoo, an imminent judge who had sentenced Maqbul Bhat to death, was also shot dead, when other prominent Kashmiri Pandits of big repute were also killed brutally. Prominently several intelligence officers were assassinated, over the course of January. On 2nd February 1990, Satish Tikoo, a young Hindu Pandit social-worker was murdered near his own house in Habba Kadal. On February 13, 1990, Lassa Kaul, Station Director of Srinagar Doordarshan, was shot dead. This is only a small tale of KP's who were killed brutally, because of being Kashmiri Pandits. The worst carnages of genocide of Kashmiri Pandits occurred in March 1997, when terrorists dragged out seven Kashmiri Pandits from their houses in Sangrampora village and gunned them down. It was followed by killing about 23 Kashmiri Pandits, including women and children, in 1998, when they were shot in cold blood in Wandhama Village. Again, In March 2003, about 24 Kashmiri Pandits, including infants, brutally shot dead in Nadimarg Village.

What is happening? Where is the appropriate security apparatus for the protection of the life of the Kashmiri Pandit migrant employees serving in Kashmir, when they are prone to any terror attack, due to their nude exposure to service conditions of their employment circumstances? With their conditions of appointment in the government sector, a stern barrier has been kept that such migrant employees shall have to work in the valley only. In the event of their abstaining from such duties due to terror threats etc, they will be dismissed from their appointments. Such migrant employees cannot be transferred outside the Kashmir province under any circumstance, which is a virulent condition in their appointment in the valley.

These Kashmiri Pandit employees serving in the valley are living like slaves at the mercy of their own fates when the security cover provided to them is a general security cover, which is for names sake only.

Lieutenant Governor had recently said that administration is committed to the rehabilitation of internally displaced Kashmiri Pandits and is working in tandem with the Centre to take them back to Kashmir. "More than 6,000 jobs and 6,000 homes were to be given and built respectively for return of the displaced Pandits in

Kashmir. The target was fixed long ago by the government of India, but due to some reasons, we have not been able to fulfill them. However, we are committed to fulfill the promise and we hope to do so by June," he added.

Such statements from the highest power corridors are appreciable and encouraging for the KPs return to their original places of livings in Kashmir. But it looks like a joke as the government is unable to give security to a single Kashmiri Pandit employee, what can be the fate of thousands of them, under the present provisions of the security apparatus for Kashmir Pandit employees in Kashmir. It might amount to throwing pigeons to cats. These may be the statements only or the political purposes of the ruling party. It is a herculean task for the government to do it, in the light of the mass terrorist bases in Kashmir as is evident. Almost daily the security forces face one or the other encounter with the terrorists at different locations in the valley. The second big conspiracy behind such killings of KPs is that kill a Kashmiri Pandit, where ever you see him in the valley. At the same time, it is a brazen rejoinder to Kashmiri Pandits that if you return to Kashmir in any form or manner you will be killed. Presumably the ruling political dispensation in Delhi thinks that enough has changed in Jammu & Kashmir, with the abrogation of Article 370 and the like. The changes if any are on paper only. Probably the ground reality is the same, at least for the Kashmiri Pandits. The present ruling political dispensation in Delhi may be satisfied with such an action of theirs, as it was their election manifesto commitment to the nation. But how does it accord any solution to KP's displacement and their brutal killings, along with the loss of their home and hearths. Such brutal killings of KPs in Kashmir, deserves an impartial probe and action particularly at least through the agency of NIA. Proper security cover should have been provided immediately to the KP's who are still in Kashmir, for various compulsions? It would restore the confidence of the displaced Kashmiri Pandits scattered across India. It would exhibit that some concern is being shown for their safe return to valley, by the authorities in governance.

It is now a full-fledged ethnic cleansing of the Pandits from the valley? Is someone in the governance particularly the ministry of home affairs observing it? What is the remedy? Do they want to retain Kashmir at the cost of the cleansing of KPs from Kashmir? The writing is on the wall. Let the government of the day meet this challenge with resolute might and force. KPs are the aboriginal residents of Kashmir.

They will go back to Kashmir at all costs. Government of India has to keep it in mind that no solution will be perpetual for Jammu & Kashmir unless the Kashmiri Pandits do not get their due which is a 'Home Land' for them within Kashmir, their motherland, with full security. It is their fundamental right and fundamental demand. At the same time, it is the fundamental and a constitutional responsibility of the government to ensure it as early as possible. Does it need further consensus? Why so. There can be no other alternative about it. If it is not done immediately the so-called sloganeering of rehabilitation of Kashmiri Pandits back in Kashmir may result in annihilation of KPs.

(The author is a Chartered Consultant Civil Engineer, who loves his Motherland the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir).

## Doubling J&K's power generation capacity in 3 years

To make Jammu and Kashmir power surplus in the next four years, Power Development Department is working earnestly towards doubling electricity generation capacity in the Union Territory in three years. J&K government has initiated a large scale capacity augmentation programme to address the current power deficit in the UT. Earlier, Jammu and Kashmir was able to harness only 3,500 MW of electricity in the last 70 years but the power generation capacity in the Union Territory is all set to be doubled in the next three years and trebled in seven years.

The J&K administration has launched various initiatives to strengthen and improve power infrastructure in the UT which had remained dilapidated for the last several decades. Aggregate Technical and Commercial losses are being minimized to make power a self-sustaining, fast-growing sector of J&K. No serious efforts were made in the past so many years towards exploiting the power generation potential here. Speaking after inauguration of 42 Transmission and Distribution projects executed by Jammu and Kashmir Power Development Department (JKPDD) worth Rs 357 crore in Anantnag, Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, said the Transmission and Distribution projects worth Rs 2,000 crore are being completed and an additional amount of Rs 6000 crore has been allocated by the central government to strengthen the Sub-Transmission and Distribution network across the UT. This will help the administration to bridge

the basic infrastructural gap between cities and villages, LG added.

LG said that the aim of his administration is to provide quality electricity to all citizens and business houses and these augmented facilities will realize this purpose. Since August 2019, Sinha said, 3806 MVA has been added to the total capacity as compared to 8394 MVA capacity achieved in seven decades. LG expressed gratitude to Prime Minister and Union Power Minister for their continuous support in strengthening the power sector in J&K. The upcoming Rs 12,922 crore power projects for the UT will increase the total availability of electricity in the system, especially for the household, industries and agriculture sector. J&K's power infrastructure, which remained dilapidated for the last several decades, is being transformed at a fast pace. We are firm in our resolve of a practical, pragmatic and viable solution to strengthen power infrastructure in every area, a senior official of Power Department said.

"To address the current power deficit and meet the needs of our expanding economy, the government is upgrading transmission and distribution infrastructure that will also enable generation of productive employment opportunities for youth," he added. Notably, Ratle Hydroelectric Power Corporation Limited (RHPCL) and Megha Engineering & Infrastructure Limited (MEIL) recently inked a contract agreement for the turnkey execution of 850 MW Ratle HEP. This ambitious Power Project will

provide massive direct and indirect employment opportunities to the local population.

The agreement is a historic move and will go a long way to realize the goal of making J&K self-sufficient in power sector. The new power generation projects like Ratle, Pakal Dul, Kiru and others will bridge a major gap in the UT's electricity requirements. J&K is on its way to become Power Surplus from Power Deficit through better use of resources, vision and planning. The government is working hard to find permanent solutions to all those problems which are hindering the progress in energy sector besides upgrading and improving the power infrastructure to ensure energy security for people.

Appreciably, J&K fares better than many States and UTs in terms of power supply to industries. The UT administration was able to achieve capacity augmentation of up to 231.5 MVA till December 2021 but it has been increased to 601.5 MVA in last three months which has strengthened the power system in the industrial areas of Jammu, Samba and Ghatti. The government is planning to invest Rs 12,000 crore for capacity augmentation and upgrading the transmission and distribution systems in J&K to remove all supply constraints and strengthen electrification assets, an official said. "Electricity will be delivered through underground wires in the capital cities of Jammu and Srinagar," he added. It is pertinent to mention that Rs 5000 crore investment in system strengthening has yielded impressive outcomes in power distribution.

### YOUR COLUMN

#### Transfer industry in Forests Deptt

Dear Editor,

Through the columns of your esteemed daily, I would like to highlight the plight of Foresters working in J&K Forests Department, who are suffering a lot due to apathy of the authorities. Recently, in a transfer order list issued by CF East Circle, a number of senior Foresters serving the department for last more than 12 to 14 years and having 'KFC' training, were ignored in sheer violation of laws and to give undue benefits to some blue-eyed persons, as some junior most Forest Guardians, who has joined department in 2014 & 2016, were deputed to prime blocks which are falls under Khair Zone

**Sanjay Sharma, Lower Gadigarh.**

## Family-a compass that guides us

■ VINOD CHANDRASHEKHAR DIXIT

May 15 is celebrated as International Day of Families. Observed by the United Nations across the world, the day is commemorated to highlight the important affairs central to welfare of families, such as health, education, gender equality, rights for children, and social inclusion among others. Family is our foundation. It is through family that we learn our first interactions with the world. It teaches us how to love and be loved, how to offer and receive support and how to respect others while earning their respect. It provides the framework for our views of the world. The socially acceptable version of family is the people who are biologically related to you.

Family offers us a sense of security by showing that we have someone in our lives with whom we can share our worries, and so on. It also requires liability and mutual respect. It not only raises awareness about difficulties affecting families around the world, but it also serves as a reminder of the importance of family in society. Many of us wouldn't be where we are now if we did not have good families. Family is one of the most significant aspects of our presence. Family is a synonym for trust, comfort, love, care, happiness and belonging. Family is the relationship that we share from the moment we are born into this world. People that take care of us and help us grow are what we call family, and they become lifelines for us to live.

A family is made strong through a number of factors. The most important one is of course love. Most importantly, the things one learns from their family brings them closer. For instance, we learn how to deal with the world through our family first. Families teach us better communication. When we spend time with our families and love each other and communicate openly, we create a better future for ourselves. When we stay connected with our families, we learn to connect better with the world. People develop a value system inside their family structure in addition to life lessons. In today's world, the socialization function of the family has gained maximum focus as parents are more alert to the socialization function of their children. A family teaches the child normative behavior and introduces him to social norms, folkways, and mores. It is observed that with changing times and with the onset of modern education, families have significantly become smaller in size. The age-old concept of joint families has become almost extinct. The need for individual opinion has caused the break-up of joint families.

Smaller families have a more compact economic program as most of the time, both the man and a woman works to increase the family income. Without a family we end up navigating the calms, the storms and the choppy waters of life all alone. Whether we love them or hate them, families are a very essential part of our lives. They play crucial roles in teaching us how to deal with the world. Without a family, an individual's identity isn't ever complete. One thing is clear that the importance of the family lies in its unconditional support for its members, be it a joint or a nuclear family.