

STOP SUICIDES

It is really sad that people have started ending their lives due to day to day tensions and society as whole is watching all this as mute spectator but is unable to do anything to stop the same from happening. In this context, the Gujjar Nagar Bridge and old Tawi Bridge have become the notorious spots in the city as off and on people attempt suicide from these places as if these are the designated spots for taking this illegal step. It is an unfortunate story that on Monday a woman ended her life after jumping off from the Gujjar Nagar Bridge following the pursuit of a middle-aged auto driver who committed the same crime from the old Tawi Bridge near Dogra Chowk. Loss of two lives in two consecutive days is a big shock for the people of J&K and therefore the government should take some quick steps to stop people from taking this extreme step. There is no doubt that today people are leading a life full of tension and the pandemic corona and astronomical level of inflation has further complicated the life but ending life is no solution rather the people should struggle to get through in life. There is dire need that government must come up with counseling centres to educate people on the issue to minimize the cases of suicide. As far as 'designated' suicide spots are concerned the government especially police should depute number of cops on the aforesaid bridges to stop people from taking such steps. There is another viable solution that the government should cover the side walls of the bridge with iron mesh so that no one can jump off from these bridges and take the extreme step. People should be advised to go for meditation and other such remedies to remain contented so that they remain away from the negative thoughts of opting for suicides. This is imperative for saving families from tragedy as those who kill themselves leave their near and dear ones to lead a life full of misery and pain.

REGULAR AUDIT MEETINGS

To ensure transparency and accountability in the official system, the proper checks over the allotted funds, right from its disbursement to utilizations in various developmental works is very necessary, as the same make it sure that the funds allotted for a particular work or project have been spent on the same fully without any diversion or misappropriation. As far as the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir is concerned, the Government has bestowed responsibility of such checks over the Principal Accountant General (Audit), Jammu and Kashmir who conducts periodical inspections of various Government departments, to check their working, financial transactions, maintenance of accounts and other concerned records as per the rules. After these audits, the inspection reports with the findings during the check are handed over to the concerned head of the office for making necessary corrective measures besides informing the next higher authority regarding the same. Further, as per the rules the concerned head of the office is duty bound to initiate necessary corrective measures on the observations made in the inspection reports and after rectifying the highlighted defects and objections, has to forward the compliance to PAG. But, on scrutiny of the previous records, the Comptroller & Auditor General (CAG) has reported that a number of compliance reports in respect of various departments of J&K have not been submitted since long. It was further told that almost 927 inspection reports involving huge funds of Rs 2266 Cr are still outstanding while Action Taken Notes (ATNs) over 88 audit paragraphs have not been cleared for years altogether thereby raising serious doubts over the working of the departments during the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir. Taking a serious note of the situation, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has directed the J&K administration to ensure holding of regular meetings of the audit committees in order to keep a check on the work progress besides ensuring strict compliance of the directives, issued from time to time by the Government. These instructions of CAG will not only help in ending the dilly-dallying tactics among Government departments but will also help in realizing the vision of administration to put in place an honest and efficient working system free from the menace of corruption and other malpractices.



OFF 'D' CUFF

What makes the Tamil new year and vishu celebration complete?

Celebrations like Tamil New year and Vishu makes our life complete while our life is being pushed in our daily busy routine and schedules which will be ramping up our day.

Tamil new year 2022 date Puthandu is a day to celebrate the start of Tamil New Year 2022. This event is often referred to as Varshaphiriyal or Puthuvardha Pirappu. It takes place on the first day of Chithirai and is typically celebrated in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry.

On Puthandu, the Tamil diaspora celebrates the event with enthusiasm all around the world. The most compelling aspect is that this celebration occurs on the same date as what it is celebrated on by the Gregorian Calendar. On the day of Puthandu, people wish one another 'Puthandu Nalvazhthukal', which is 'Happy New Year' in Tamil.

History and Significance of Tamil New Year According to Hindu mythology, Lord Brahma is believed to have started creating the universe on April 14th marking Puthandu. In Tamil culture, it's believed that a new year offers hope & aspirations. It is a time when they are happy to show their happiness and console themselves with a large family feast. The occasion is marked by attending temples, dressed

Natural path to realization-Sahaj Marg

■ ARUN JANDIAL

Sahaj Marg (now heartfulness) is a simple path of realization founded as Shri Ram Chandra Mission by Sh. Ram Chandra of Shahjahanpur (UP) in memory of his Guide Snarth Guru Ram Chandra of Fatehgah (UP) in 1945. Ram Chandra was born on 1st May 1899. He refined the method of Yogic transmission Pranahuti rediscovered by his guru and framed 10 maxims stating the principles of Sahaj Marg. The system has 3 important components i.e. Morning meditation, cleaning and prayer: Heartfulness is celebrating 123rd birth anniversary of it's founding President which has now spread to more than 150 countries and is being followed by millions of practitioners. Heartfulness Institute has its world Head Quarter at Kanha Shanti Vanam Hyderabad and is presently headed by Kamlesh D Patel lovingly called as Daaji. The abhyasis are suggested to be plain and simple to be identical with Nature. It also advises the members to know all people as brethren and treat them as such and not to be revengeful for the (supposedly) wrongs done by others but to take them with gratitude as heavenly gifts.

Realisation is knowing the truth of existence at the experiential level by connecting to the source, the Ultimate Reality. It is self-knowledge, understanding our Self, our real nature, our conditioning, the functioning of our mind, our suffering, their causation and removal. Wherefrom have we come? What bars our advancement? What is the real goal of human life? How realisation can be attained? What is the role of Master in realisation? We shall discuss these issues in the forthcoming paragraphs. Realised Masters in all ages and all parts of the world have tried to find an answer to these perennial questions and shared their experiences through their discourses and works. Those who were benefitted by these teachings became their followers and thus religion came into existence. With the passage of time a majority of these followers stopped practising the essence of these teachings and thus failed to experience the truth which these realised Masters had discovered and merely remained believers and many of them turned

into fanatics, little knowing what the founders of the great religions of the world had discovered. Only rituals and customs were followed and religious heads who succeeded them enjoyed enormous power in the name of religion. Forgetting the application of teachings and practice of universal human values - Love, compassion, contentment, peace, truth, non-violence, honesty, mutual respect, tolerance, understanding peaceful coexistence, as preached and practised by these founders, these ignorant followers started looking down upon other religions and thus hatred and violence against other religious groups started which even led to many battles and wars in the world in the name of religion. Sahaj Marg says where religion ends spirituality begins and where spirituality ends reality begins. The role of the religion was to build character and teach moral values whereas spirituality pertained to expansion of consciousness. Religion could have been a stepping stone to spirituality had it not been used to exploit the masses with fear and greed as its instruments. The sincere seeker of truth will have to apply the teachings of the Master in letter and spirit to directly experience the efficacy of these teachings in discovering the truth and realise self at the experiential level.

We all know most of the people, the world over in general and India in particular believe in Spirit and God (Atma and Parmatma) but how many of those who believe and can deliver impressive lectures on them have actually experienced these subtle elements. Here the believers and non-believers fall in the same category. Both spirit and God are not material things, hence realization can't be handed over by one person who has it to another as with the material things. Each one has to earn for himself. Those who are genuinely interested, are sincere and serious will have to investigate as per the guidelines of their Masters. It is said each one gets teacher which he deserves as per his stage of development. That is why we have different teachers at different level of schooling. What we call knowledge is actually the information about various subjects and different topics as provided by researchers and presented in our academic curriculum as per syllabi of different classes.

Zero tolerance to corruption

■ OMKAR DATTATRAY

India is presently facing problem of corruption as our politico administrative system and public institutions are suffering from the canker. The corruption in the public life is a very serious matter and it concerns all of us. The corruption is eating the vitals of the administrative machinery and our politico social system like a termite and there is urgent need to address this problem to save our institutions from the adverse effects of corruption. It is so sad that the corruption has been institutionalized and there is no sector of the country where the canker of corruption has not raised its ugly head. We need to attack the monster of corruption with all force at our command and free the public and private institutions from the danger of corruption. It is so good that the NDA government headed by the BJP has declared the policy of zero tolerance to corruption and it should be seen how the zero tolerance to corruption is implemented on the ground. The policy of zero tolerance to corruption should not remain merely a pious declaration and in that case there is no use and purpose of the policy of zero tolerance to corruption. The corruption is number one enemy of our democracy and country and it should be fought on a war footing to free our institutions and public offices from the menace of corruption. Since the BJP government has declared corruption as the number one enemy of the country and has declared that corruption in the public life will not be tolerated and so it is a matter of some satisfaction but it is to be seen as to how will the BJP government fight the war with the hydra headed giant of corruption and free the country and society from corruption. The corruption is universal in nature and in India the corruption is seen from top to bottom of the administrative hierarchy and no segment of the public life is free from the curse and bane of corruption. Some attribute the wholesale corruption to democracy and take it as the bane of the democracy. The corruption has no place in our politico administrative and public system and as such it is the bounden duty of all of us to contribute our might in the fight against the corruption. Corruption is seen everywhere in our public and private institutions and the problem of corruption needs to be addressed on a war scale to free our social and public system from the corruption. The transparency and good governance are the aims of the government of the day and therefore the war against the corruption has got top most priority in the scheming of the government. Our institutions are falling prey to the demon of corruption and this need to be freed from the virus of corruption so that our institutions are saved from the infection of corruption. It is a recognized fact that no work is got done anywhere with-

out greasing the palms of the corrupt and dishonest officials and this is a serious matter and demands our attention. The dishonesty and moral degradation has infected our system and all our institutions are invaded by the demon of corruption due to the dishonesty. Therefore if we have to succeed in our fight against the corruption, we should attack dishonesty and moral perversion to defeat corruption. The corruption was at its low after the freedom of the country and there was negligible corruption during the decades following the freedom but in nineties it reached to its nadir and today corruption is a mass scale phenomenon and is tearing our public system and threatening our existence. The corruption has crept into our administrative and political ladder and it has become cancerous and needs early surgery to save our public and administrative system from corruption. The corruption has assumed enormous proportions and has invaded our politico social and administrative system and it needs to be fought sincerely to save the society from falling apart. The corruption stands today institutionalized and its presence is felt from top to bottom of the administration structure and it is not so easy to win war against the menace of corruption. The fight against the corruption needs strong will power and determination and we are fortunate enough that at the present time we have the Prime Minister Narendra Modi who is a strong willed chief executive of the country and he has declared war against the corruption. But government only will not succeed in fight against the corruption, it needs the contribution and support of the responsible citizens and then only then we will succeed in our fight against the corruption. It is a matter of satisfaction that Modi government has declared war and zero tolerance to corruption and therefore we should provide a helping hand to the government in its fight against the corruption. Not that there are no laws against the corruption in force in the country, but what is needed is to implement the anti-corruption laws strictly to ensure corruption free public life. However there is urgent need to enact stringent anti corruption laws to tackle the problem of corruption. Thus there is need to enforce the stringent anti corruption laws to fight the menace of corruption and free the society from the clutches of corruption. The corruption has spread to a large scale and there is nexus between the corrupt officials and the politicians and it is a serious matter and therefore corruption has to be fought with strong will and determination. While the corrupt officers need to be Challenged and punished to enforce corruption free environment in public offices and private institutions, the honest officers and officials need to be given monetary and non monetary incen-

tives like promotions, awards, citations and certificates and other encouragements to ensure corruption is kept at bay. Therefore there is need to rein in the corrupt officers and officials and also to encourage the honest ones so that the corrupt ones are punished and the honest officers are rewarded. In this way we will be in a position to enforce discipline in the public institutions and also to fight the corruption. Thus the government should practice two pronged strategy to fight the menace of corruption. One one hand government should enforce discipline and punish the corrupt officers and on the other hand the honest officers and officials should be encouraged to work with selflessness and honestly so that the corruption is shown the door. There is need to award the honest officers on the eve of the national festivals so that they will continue to work with honesty and dedication. Thus the honest officials should be awarded with prizes and certificates on independence day and on the eve of republic day so that the honest officers are encouraged to work with honesty so that others will emulate their conduct and behavior and the corrupt need to be given stringent punishment so that others will not dare to indulge into dishonest and male practices and such punishments will work as a deterrent to corruption. The fact is that the corruption is today not on a small scale but has become a mass activity encompassing all fields of our public life and our administrative setup is fed up with the problem of corruption and it needs immediate attention. We have to purge the public life and institutions from the bane of corruption. The seam after seam has invaded our political and administrative system one outnumbering the other in severity and magnitude and these seams have become a common affair and have tarnished our image in the international community. In some cases ministers and other higher-ups are found involved into corruption and scams and some are facing the punishments as well and it is a good sign that the highest in the political hierarchy are facing the punishments and some are jailed like former chief minister of Bihar Lalu Prasad Yadav. This will in fact serve as a deterrent to indulge in corruption. Anyway the declaration of zero tolerance to corruption by BJP government is a matter of some satisfaction and all the responsible citizens should contribute their might in the fight against corruption so that the country will succeed in the fight against the corruption and can get rid from the bane of corruption at the earliest. Therefore all of us should actively help the government in its fight against corruption and then only will we succeed in fighting the corruption from the public life and politics.

(The author is a retired Education Officer and Columnist).

Is 'Rules-Based Order' similar for every country?

■ ANKUSH KUMAR

Recently, matter of 'Rules-Based Order' has become very significant. Many countries repeatedly use this term often at different occasions. In a recent event (Raisina Dialogue, 2022, New Delhi), our External Affairs Minister mentioned the term 'Rules-Based Order' while responding to the questions, which became a matter of debate. However, the language of 'Rule-Based Order' in the Indian foreign policy is a new and significant change. Somehow, it is a departure from Nehruvian ideas of 'strategic autonomy' and 'non-alignment', and adopting the language of 'Rules-based Order' makes India more assertive. From the Liberal Perspective, global stability is based on the international rules, more considerable international trade and the mounting of democracies in the several numbers pushed towards a 'rules-based order'. It is improved by commercial peace and democracies. On the other hand, Realists believe that the world order endorsed by an uneven but practical balance between powerful nation-states, such as Russian, China and US and nuclear weapons plays a role of deterrence and effective mollifying equaliser. The signs of embracing the language of the 'Rules-Based Order' by the present Union government came in January 2015 during the visit of Barrack Obama as a Guest of Honour on Republic Day. After that, the 'India-US Delhi Declaration of Friendship' commenced with commitment to extend and uphold 'just, open, sustainable and inclusive rule-based order'. After that, the Union government gave similar kinds of pledges on various occasions. Similarly, in 2015, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Japanese counterpart Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, declared their commitment to the India-Pacific region and pledged for 'unwavering commitment to realising a peaceful, open, equitable, stable and rule-based order in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond.' During the 'Quad' (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue) meeting in November 2017, Prime Minister Modi emphasised the necessity of a 'free, open, prosperous and inclusive Indo-Pacific'. From these examples, one thing is clear; India shares consensus on core elements, but on the other hand, India embraces a distinct vision of 'Rule-based Order' from its Quad counterparts. The fundamental difference between India and its counterparts is not only based on 'free and open' but precisely on 'inclusive' and 'equitable' 'Rule-based Order'. India's 'Rule-based Order' vision lays the foundation of flexibility in terms of principles and approach instead of vagueness. In 2018, at the Shangri-La Dialogue again, Prime Minister Modi stressed for 'democratic and rules-based order'. He argued that 'engagement in the Indo-Pacific Region ... will be inclusive.' In the recent event at the Raisina Dialogue (2022), the Union Foreign Minister Jaishankar again raised the issue of 'Rules-based Order' and countered the European pressure to criticise and oppose Russian actions in Ukraine. He highlights the attitude of the Western power toward Afghanistan and the challenges faced by Asia regarding 'Rules-Based Order'. While responding to the questions posed by Norway's foreign minister Anniken Huitfeldt and Luxembourg, Foreign Minister Jean Asselborn; S Jaishankar replied that European power for almost a decade had not responded to the challenges posed in Asia regarding the 'Rules-based Order'. Further, he added that the West must 'remember what happened in Afghanistan less than a year ago, where an entire civil society was thrown under the bus by the world. When the rules-based order was under challenge in Asia, the advice we got from Europe is do more trade. At least we are not giving you that advice. 'In terms of Afghanistan, please show me which part of the rules-based order justified what the world did there,' he added. The firm assertion and befitting reply of Jaishankar exposed the dual standards of the West on 'Rules-based Order' criteria. He explicitly shows the juxtapose stand of the West on the principles of 'Rules-Based Order' when it comes to Asia and India. Jaishankar's response reflects India's 'Rules-based Order' vision based on equity and inclusiveness. From the response of Jaishankar, we can argue that India made it clear; that particular 'Rules-based Order' driven by agenda will not follow blindly by India or on the terms and conditions of other countries. It reminds us that Prime Minister Modi once said in 'Shangri-La Dialogue' that India would do its highest to maintain 'sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as equality of all nations, irrespective of size and strength.' The above chronology of India's statements on 'Rules-based order' evidently shows that India's version (on Rules-based order) is based on sovereign equality and inclusion of all stakeholders without the dual standard (which means separate parameters for the West and separate for Asia). India's emphasis on free, open but equitable and inclusive 'Rules-Based Order' gives a new version to the world.

(The author is a PhD Senior Research Fellow, Centre for Political Studies, JNU).