

EXCHANGING PLEASANTRIES ON EID

This really a matter of pride that despite sour relations with Pakistan, BSF Jawans never shirked to exchange sweets and pleasantries with the Rangers deployed along the border on festivals. This shows the magnanimity of Indian security forces as nowhere in the world such kind of warmth is seen making India the greatest among all nations. In this context, BSF exchanged sweets with Pak Rangers on the occasion of EID at various BOPs under Jammu Frontier in a very cordial atmosphere. It is pertinent to mention that the exchange of sweets was done all along the BoPs in Samba, Kathua, R S Pura, Akhnoor border. BSF Jammu offered the sweets to Pak Rangers and Rangers also reciprocated the BSF gesture by offering sweets to them. India is always on the forefront in creating a peaceful and congenial atmosphere on Border while dominating the border effectively. No doubt that such gestures help build a peaceful atmosphere and cordial relationships on the border between the border guarding forces of both the nations. There is no instance when the country has initiated a conflict with any of the nations of the world as was said by the Defence Minister Rajnath Singh few days earlier. The gesture shown by the BSF testifies that despite strained relations with Pakistan due to its anti-India stance, the border guarding force of the country never misses a chance to create an atmosphere of bonhomie and camaraderie because the idea of exchanging pleasantries and sweets always sprouts from the BSF side, no doubt the Pak Rangers do response positively in the matter. Through such gestures India showcases its rich traditions and a legacy of thousands of years which bats for even loving thy enemies. This great philosophy on which Indian culture relies is matchless and forms the basis for making India the greatest among all countries. Whether the relations with Pakistan are good or bad, the tradition of exchanging sweets is followed by the BSF unless there is a complication due to pounding of bombs, etc. Such virtues make India a great country indeed and therefore the upcoming leadership of the country should follow such traditions to keep the name of the country high at all times.

RESTRICTING MASS TRANSFERS

The administration, right from the day one of the formation of the Union Territory, has introduced several major reforms for bringing in a significant change in the work culture and official system, so that the people can be served in the best possible way. Besides making employees accountable for the making, several initiatives were also taken to ensure cent per cent transparency in the Government work, so that all directives are implemented effectively on ground level and benefits of the welfare schemes are percolated down to the deserving beneficiaries, without any diversion or hanky-panky. The initiatives taken by the administration have shown significant results as now even an ordinary man can approach the highest chair and raise his grievances, without any hesitation. A distinguished feature of the UT administration is that it simply not stops after implementing a decision or policy but after taking proper follow-ups, makes necessary corrections as per the needs and aspirations of people, so that the target for which any decision or plan has been formulated, can be met. Now, in another significant step in ensuring transparency in the working system, the Government has directed all its officials not to go for mass-transfers and remain stuck only to need-based postings with a single aim to improve efficiency and work performance. As per sources, as a step to stop conversion of transfers into an industry, thereby ensuring a check on the corrupt practices in place on name of transfers, the Government has directed all the administrative secretaries and other officers not to go for mass-transfers without any need. It was also directed that if an employee is working efficiently on a particular posting, he or she should not be transferred only on the basis that the employee has completed two years of posting, as his tenure can be extended further. This employee and people-friendly decision would go a long way in enhancing efficiency among officials besides putting an effective check on the corrupt malpractices, which were prevalent in some departments on the name of transfers. It is expected that this decision, along with several others in future, will enhance the efficiency and accountability of the entire working system of the Union territory, in a big way.

OFF 'D' CUFF

Science and Spirituality

inspiration to uncover scientific truths.

Secretly, in every heart, lies the desire to have proof that there is God and we are soul, a part of God. Why? Hidden within human beings is a desire to prove the existence of a force that brought us into creation. Few are satisfied with the theory that creation was a mere accident, a combustion of cosmic dust. Secretly, in every heart, lies the desire to have proof that there is God and we are soul, a part of God.

Science exists to uncover these deepest spiritual truths. On the other hand, those engaged in spirituality are trying to find the hidden cause behind what is scientific fact. They are interested in the scientific laws of nature, but wish to go behind the laws to find the divine law that brought everything into being. While scientists search through outer instrumentation, spiritual scientists search through the technique of meditation, using the instrumentation of their attention.

The Scientific Method to Find God

In the scientific method, we test a hypothesis and carefully make observations. Similarly, meditation helps us come in touch with a level of intuition and revelation that gives us the

Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj

It is the Higher Power which does everything, and the man is only a tool. If he accepts that position, he is free from troubles; otherwise, he courts them.

-Ramana Maharshi

EDITORIAL

Conservation of Green Gold-Forest

■ MOOL RAJ

Forest conservation is the practice of planting and maintaining forested areas for the benefit and sustainability of future generations. The conservation of forest also stands & aims at a quick shift in the composition of trees species and age distribution. Forest conservation involves the upkeep of the natural resources within a forest that are beneficial to both humans and the environment. Forests are vital for human life because they provide a diverse range of resources: they store carbon & act as carbon sink, produce oxygen which is vital for existence of life on the earth, so they are rightly called as earth lung, help in regulating hydrological cycle, planetary climate, purify water, provide wild life habitat (50% of the earth's biodiversity occurs in forests), reduce global warming, absorb toxic gases & noise, reduce pollution, conserve soil, mitigate natural hazards such as floods & landslides & so on. But now-a-days, forest cover is depleting rapidly due to many reasons such as an expansion of agriculture, timber plantation, other land uses like pulp and paper plantations, urbanization, construction of roads, industries, constitutes the biggest and severest threat to the forest causing serious environmental damage. Thus, there is need of public awareness.

This article offers various strategies for the conservation of forest & awareness to people, which plays a vital role for maintaining a proper balance of environment. So, we must get involved in this national task.

Some of the steps we can take to conserve our forest resources are as follows:

Regulated and Planned Cutting of Trees: One of the main reasons of deforestation is commercial felling of trees. According to an estimate, about 1,600 million cubic metres of wood have been used for various purposes in the world. Although trees are considered as perennial resource, when exploited on a very large scale, their revival cannot be possible. Therefore, cutting should be regulated by adopting methods like Clear cutting, Selective cutting, and Shelter wood cutting.

The clear cutting method is useful for those areas where the same types of trees are available over a large area. In that case, trees of same age group can be cut down in a selected

area and then marked for replantation. In selective cutting only mature trees are selected for cutting.

This process is to be followed in rotation. Sheker wood cutting is where first of all useless trees are cut down followed by medium and best quality timber trees. The time gap between these cuttings is helpful in re-growth of trees. In regulated cutting only one-tenth of the forest area is selected for use and rotational system is always followed for their protection. The forest can be managed in such a way that a timber crop may be harvested indefinitely year after year without being depleted. This technique is called the 'sustained yield' method adopted by many countries.

Control over Forest Fire: Destruction or loss of forest by fire is fairly common; because trees are highly exposed to fire and once started it becomes difficult to control. Sometimes, the fire starts by natural process, i.e., by lightning or by friction between trees during speedy winds, while in most cases it is also by man either intentionally or unintentionally.

According to an estimate, during the period from 1940 to 1950, in the US alone, fires consumed an average of 21.5 million acres of timber yearly and as many as 1,175,664 cases of forest fires occurred during 1955 to 1964 period. In US forests fire is very common and a main cause of the loss of forest. Throughout the world forest fire is common and in most cases they were begun by man. As John D. Guthrie, former fire inspector of US Forest Service has written: "To stage a forest fire you need only few things a forest, the right atmospheric conditions, and a spark either from a lightning bolt or a match in the hands of a fool or a knave. The formula is simple the larger the forest, the drier the air, the bigger the fool, the bigger the fire you will have."

In order to save forests from fire, it is necessary to adopt latest techniques of fire fighting. Some of the fire suppression techniques are to develop three meter wide fire lanes around the periphery of the fire, back fires, arrangement of water spray, fire retardant chemicals should be sprayed from back tank and if possible by helicopters. There must be trained staff of fire fighters to control the fire. Reforestation and Afforestation: The sus-

tained yield concept dictates that whenever timber is removed, either by block cutting or by selective cutting, the denuded area must be reforested. This may be done by natural or artificial methods. Similarly, any forested land, which has been destroyed by fire or mining activities, should be reforested. In rugged terrain aerial seeding is the method of choice. Besides all this, fresh afforestation programmes should be started. New plantations will not only increase the forest cover but also help in making up the eco-balance. For afforestation, selection of trees should be done according to local geographical conditions and care must be taken during initial growth of the trees.

Check over Forest Clearance for Agricultural and Habitation Purposes: Most of the present-day agricultural land was once forested and then cleared for the use of agriculture. But now it has reached the stage where further clearance will be dangerous for the entire ecosystem. There are tribals in some parts of Asia, Africa and South America, where shifting cultivation is still a part of their system of land procurement.

According to an estimate, about 40 million sq km of land is used for this purpose by 200 million tribals of the world. For the conservation of forests, this should be checked and an alternative method should be devised. Similarly, for the development of villages, towns and cities, forest lands have been cleared and this process continues to this day causing loss of forest cover. This also should be checked and green belts around cities be developed.

Protection of Forests: The existing forests should be protected. Apart from commercial cutting, unorganised grazing is also one of the reasons. There are several forest diseases resulting from parasitic fungi, rusts, mistletoes, viruses and nematodes which cause the destruction of trees. The forests should be protected either by use of chemical spray, antibiotics or by development of disease resistant strains of trees.

Proper Utilisation of Forest and Forest Products: Generally, trees are cut for logs and the rest, including stump, limbs, branches and foliage, etc., is left out as worthless debris. Further waste occurs at the saw mills.

There is thus need to utilise this waste material. Today, several uses have been developed and products like waterproof glues, varnish etc., can be obtained. Similarly, forests can be used or developed as tourist centres. By using them as tourist centres the country can earn substantial foreign exchange. This practice has been adopted by many countries, both developed and developing. The concepts of 'national park' and 'game sanctuary' have now become popular and every country has developed its unique forest area as a 'national park'. In India alone, there are as many as 92 national parks and game sanctuaries. This is a good method of forest conservation.

Role of Government in Forest Conservation: Although the government of every country is very particular about conservation of its forest resources and has several rules and laws for the protection of forests but, they are not implemented in an effective manner. Both national and provincial governments can take some steps in this direction, such as: Pass acts for the conservation of forests; Survey of the forest resources; categorization of forest areas and proper delimitation of reserved forest areas; Find out the areas where reforestation can be done; Regulate the commercial use of forest products; Protect forest from fire, mining and other natural calamities; Develop national parks; Encourage forests developmental activities like social forestry, agro-forestry, etc., and Prepare master plans, both for long-term and short-term period, etc.

Forest Management: Management of forest resources is the key to all conservation efforts. In forest management, the following aspects should be taken into consideration: Survey of forest, Categorisation of forest, Economic use of forest, Administrative setting for forest management, Training programmes for persons engaged in forest conservation activities, Use of forest land as tourist centers, Social and agro-forestry, Development of new techniques for the conservation of forests, Research for efficient use and conservation of forest, and Policy decisions and their proper implementation. In brief, conservation of forest resources can be done by cooperative efforts of the government, non-government organizations and the public through a proper management system.

Victimology in India: Need for victim oriented laws

■ VINAYAK SONKAR

The creation of laws and regulations in a society is critical for promoting peace and harmony and protecting individuals from becoming victims of crime. The word "victim" is broad enough to include the immediate kin or dependents of the direct victims of the crime, as well as others who have been harmed or injured while supporting victims in distress or preventing victimization. Human rights are prevalent in all societies and have been recognized on a global scale. Individuals in India have fundamental rights guaranteed by the country's constitution, which has its roots in human rights. Law and order are established in a country to promote peace and harmony, to punish offenders, and to protect innocent people from becoming prey to criminals. However, there is no society in which crime does not occur, as a result of which the law must be continually updated and enhanced to meet the nation's new eventualities. The goal of any procedural legislation and the criminal justice system is to promote the goals of justice and guarantee that the accused receives a complete and fair trial in accordance with natural justice.

For many decades, the criminal justice systems have ignored and failed to recognize the significance of victims in an offense. Prior to the introduction of the world's official criminal justice system, victims of crime received more desirable justice since criminals were always required to recompense or make payments in accordance to the amount of harm or injury caused to the victims. It was a "Golden Age" for the victims, with harsh penalties and substantial compensation enforced even on chopping down particular plants and animals, which was deemed a dreadful offense. However, with the advancement of the 'state' and the responsibility to maintain peace, harmony, and stability, as well as to protect citizens from the onslaught of crime, a major paradigm shift emerged in which victims began to be the forgotten person and justice was gradually meant to exhibit the guilt of the accused and punish the offender if the guilt was proven, because the accused is presumed to be innocent until proven guilty. The subject of victimology was founded by Benjamin Mendelsohn and Hans Von Hentig, who emigrated to America from Germany in 1940. Victimology is a science that focuses on the "victim of an offense" and tries to get a thorough knowledge of the victim-offender connection, victim's role in crime causation, and so on, in other words, it is the study of crime from the victim's perspective. Various monuments and acts were created throughout

India at the same time to meet the needs of the victims.

The Victim-centered rights and safeguards can be found in a wide range of criminal justice systems. In the United States, the Crime Victims' Rights Act grants victims certain rights and safeguards. These include the right to be protected from the accused, the right to participate in the escape or release of the accused, the right to be treated fairly and with respect, and so on. The Victims Bill of Protections Act, 2015, establishes legislative rights for victims in Canada. Various legal decisions in India have prepared the ground for the emergence of this idea. Victimology was inspired by the liberal interpretation of the Indian constitution's fundamental rights. Human rights have an impact on these essential rights. In the case of Rattan Singh v. State of Punjab, Krishna Iyer J. noted, "In truth, victim restitution is still the vanishing point of our criminal law." This is the system's shortcoming, which the lawmakers must address." In Sakshi v. Union of India, the Supreme Court ruled that proceedings be held in private, particularly where the victim is a minor or a rape victim, to safeguard their honor and dignity. In another case, Nirmal Singh Kahlon v. State of Punjab, the Supreme Court held that the right to a fair investigation and trial extends to both the accused and the victim, and that such a right to a victim is guaranteed by Article 21 of the Indian Constitution. It established that victims have an equal right to a fair investigation. In the case of a sexual offense, the court with power to give compensation may also award interim compensation. Hussainara Khatoon & Ors v. Home Secretary, Official of Bihar acknowledged victimization as a result of state power abuse. The case felt the need to address and correct such significant violations of basic human rights, which directly breached the fundamental right to live with dignity guaranteed by Article 21 of the Constitution.

It is abundantly obvious that legislations, court rulings, and revisions to the Cr.P.C. have altered the scope of India's criminal justice system. Despite the fact that the system, along with the judges, has played a critical part in the growth of victim's rights in our nation, victims are not given the weightage and importance they need. Several rulings of both High Courts and the Supreme Court over the last two decades have saved victims of not only classic crimes, but also of victimization implanted by the state's own instruments.

In the recent infamous case of Nirbhaya gang rape, the prisoners

JUBILANT J&K From Misgovernance to Good Governance; J&K emerging as new model DGGI model of J&K being adopted by DARPG across country for administrative transformation

Jammu and Kashmir became the first UT/State across the country to devise a comprehensive District Good Governance Index (DGGI).

As per the Good Governance Index (GGI) 2021, J&K is making tremendous strides and is leading on different fronts of the index. In GGI 2021, J&K has registered an overall increase of 3.7 percentage points over GGI 2019.

According to official data, J&K has performed significantly in various sectors like Commerce and Industry, Agriculture and Allied sectors, public infrastructure and utilities, Judiciary and Public Safety, among others.

The J&K model of DGGI is now being adopted by Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG), GoI, to help other 35 states and UTs to develop their DGGI.

The framework of the index was finalised with the technical support from the Center for Good Governance (CGG) of Hyderabad.

Union Minister, Jitendra Singh recently said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is keen that we should replicate in Jammu and Kashmir, the same best practices of governance which are followed in other states and UTs of the country.

For a long time, as a result of certain constitutional and administrative constraints, many central rules were not applicable in Jammu and Kashmir, but in the last over three years, there has been a fast-track attempt to change the work culture and to follow the mantra of Maximum Governance, Minimum Government, he added.

Good Governance Index at the district level, will enable each of the 20 districts of Jammu and Kashmir to rise to the level of some of the best administered districts of the country with time-bound disposal of office files and other matters, increased transparency, increased accountability and increased citizen participation.

An official said that next step would be to carry forward these good governance practices down to the Tehsil and block levels.

The DGGI framework has 58 indicators drawn from different aspects of development and district administration, distributed in an all-encompassing 10 sectors such as agriculture and allied sector, commerce and industry, human resource development, public health, public infrastructure and utilities, economic governance, welfare and development, public safety and judiciary and citizen centric governance, he added.

These indicators were finalised after a series of consultations with district officials of Jammu and Kashmir, academia, subject specialists, among others, he said.

While there will be a comprehensive rank of districts based on composite 10 sectors, the DGGI also offer a window on indicator-wise performance of the districts.

Government of India and Jammu and Kashmir administration has initiated this exercise for measuring the status of governance in the districts based on selected indicators and parameters to implement SMART Governance and assess the status of governance of various interventions taken by DARPG.

Government of Jammu and Kashmir currently has approved 10 development sectors, 58 indicators and 116 data sets. The data from each of the district was collated and weightage was accorded to each indicator keeping in view National and UT specific priorities. After application of statistical model, DGGI was formulated and districts were ranked and a composite ranking was assigned to the districts.

Pertinently, the CGG, Hyderabad and DARPG, Government of India, provided financial and technical support in preparing the DGGI. Besides, the J&K IMPARD with active collaboration of Department of Planning and Statistics, played a pivotal role in coordination and analysis for developing the DGGI.

The development of DGGI as a tool to assess the status of Governance in the UT of J&K is a path breaking initiative taken by DARPG which transpired as a follow-up to adoption of 'Behtar Nizami-Hukumat Kashmir Aelamia' resolution at two-day Regional Conference on 'Replication of Good Governance Practices in Union Territory of J&K held in the month of July 2021.