

URBAN POLLUTION

Our mother earth is suffocating, and we're feeling powerless in the face of numerous challenges, with pollution chief among them. When harmful substances infiltrate our environment, tarnishing our natural resources, that's pollution. And sadly, we humans are mostly to blame. Our actions have plundered our natural riches and despoiled our habitats.

Urbanization stands out as a major culprit in human-caused pollution. As we built cities and embraced industrialization, pollution levels soared.

The grim truth of urbanization is that many once pristine landscapes-valleys, mountains, hill stations, and forests-now teem with pollution. As our needs ballooned, we ruthlessly exploited our earth. Trees fell, rivers and lakes turned toxic, and nature reserves fell prey to misuse.

Today, we find ourselves trapped in heavily polluted cities, where daily life is increasingly arduous. Urban pollution wreaks havoc on our health, yet often, we remain oblivious to its toll. It's high time we took action to rein in this pollution and craft a brighter future for generations to come.

And the Kissa Kursi Ka !

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The world is witnessing the largest electoral exercise of the biggest democracy of the world. This Tamasha is in fact the Kissa Kursi Ka as it is for electing the government of the people's choice. The election battle is nothing more than the kissa Kursi Ka as ultimately the election exercise is for gaining power by hook or crook as they say everything is fair in love war and politics .The election fight revolves round the power and thus is the fight for gaining power and the candidates use all the means at their disposal for winning the election and for being seated in the cozy chair .The big election tamasha is all for gaining access to the corridors of power and the candidates use their name, fame ,resources including money and muscle power to gain power and thus the elections in our democracy are for gaining power in the final analysis and nothing more than that .Candidates toil a lot and make use of legitimate and illegitimate means to reach to power and therefore the phrase elections being the Kissa Kursi ka fits appropriately to our elections .Therefore there is no harm in saying that the election rather this crucial general election is a Kissa kursi Ka. The only aim and objective of those participating in elections as candidates is to gain power by any means and be seated in the chair and this is the reason that the toil a lot to gain power .Have you ever wondered what the words 'Kissa Kursi Ka 'means in the realm of INDIA's parliamentary landscape ?Members of parliament -MP's ,the custodians of the world's largest democracy ,revel in a plethora of privileges, ,from substantial salaries to opulent perks ,including lavish accommodations and post -retirement benefits .Gujarat is in the middle of one such hullabaloo where a powerful minister despite a huge uproar will not give up his seat. Such is the opium of power intoxicating the MP's ,MLA's ,ministers .In the national capital Delhi the AAP chief and the chief minister Arvind Kejriwal is not giving up his loved chair despite of being jailed and such great attraction and love of power is there in the public representatives. The perks and privileges are associated with the chair and power ,that the holders of power do not want to distance from power despite facing serious charges and inspite of being jailed .The power opium is making the holders of power mad and they do not part with the power despite being implicated in scams .But what drives the aspiration for political power ,for the title of MP ,or public servant ? Perhaps it is the allure of substantial remuneration coupled with what seems like 'bare minimum 'expectations .Thus the huge salaries ,perks and privileges force the public representatives not to give up MP,MLA and ministership despite of being having strong cases of corruption against them .The lure and love for power is so strong that they are reluctant and indifferent to part with the power and they are leeches with the power that they did not part with the power come what may .The whole election battle and fight is for gaining access to power and it can safely be called kissa kursi ka .It is so strange and bad that our elections are reduced to bravls and fights for gaining power by any means and this has given a bad name to our democracy .The fact that after all the whole election exercise is for gaining power and thus it is no exaggeration to say that our elections are the kissa kursi ka and nothing beyond it .Affinity and attraction for power and pelf is so strong that the public representatives do not like to part with the power despite them being involved in malpractices ,corruption and scams with the result the system becomes ill and the people face all kinds of troubles and deprivation.

So what is needed is that the politicians and public representatives should not indulge in power politics instead use power to further the welfare of the people who have voted them to power otherwise it will bring chaos and confusion to the general public and they will lament for having cast vote in the favor of their representatives and it will bring ruin and distance the people from the democracy .

Politicians and public representatives should take power seriously and through it work for the interest of the people and shun the path of deprivation and instead work for the welfare of the general public and then and only then will the democracy thrive otherwise it will always be dubbed as the Kissa Kursi Ka and there will be few takers of our democracy .Democracy being the government of the people ,for the people and by the people should not degenerate into democracy off the people buy the people and far the people and the people will suffer badly .

The public representatives should play their positive role .and strengthen the democracy so that the public representatives will deliver to the best of their ability and the democracy will flourish and public good will be the index of vibrant democracy .

The elections should not only be the battle for power but its aim should be the service of the common citizenry so that people will be benefitted and it no more will be only the tale for power but be an agency of deliverance .Thus the narrow perception about our elections should be given a good bye and it should no longer be called the kissa kursi Ka and this will be the triumph of democracy .

The gaining of power should be for the sake of the people who voted for their representatives and should benefit the people .

The power and pelf ,name and fame should be for the benefit of the people and it should not be for tasting the power only as through it the democracy will degenerate into jungle law .Kissa Kursi Ka -Tale of Throne is a 1977 Indian Hindi -language political satire film directed by Amrit Nahata and depicts the evil of emergency .To conclude it can be said that Indian elections are in fact the kissa kursi ka and there is need to change this perception of our electoral democracy .

(The author is a columnist, social and KP activist).

The May Day and farm workers

DR PARVEEN KUMAR

Upton Sinclair's 'The Jungle' and Jack London's 'The Iron Heel' both had a thing in common. Both were the result of motivation the authors got from inhumane treatment workers used to get at their workplaces. Workers today enjoy full rights and cannot be discriminated on any basis.

Unfortunately the condition of workers was quiet different from the present day. Unlike today's eight hour working day, the working day in the past used to be as long as 10 to 16 hours. The working conditions were also very tough and unsafe.

Any shortening in the no. of hours was accompanied by the consequent cut in wages.

Death and injury were common at many work places. This was despite the fact that the workers all across the globe are active contributors to the income and development of their respective nations. They are no less than warriors leading from the front and working round the clock to ensure well being of all of us.

HISTORY OF MAY DAY: In the late nineteenth century, the working class was in constant struggle to have an eight hour working day. As early as the 1860's, working people agitated to shorten the workday without a cut in pay, but it wasn't until the late 1880's that organized labour was able to garner enough strength to declare the 8-hour workday.

This proclamation was without consent of employers, yet demanded by many of the working class. At this time, socialism was a new and attractive idea to working people, many of whom were drawn to its ideology of working class control over the production and distribution of all goods and services. Workers had seen first-hand that Capitalism benefited only their bosses, trading workers' lives for profit. Thousands of men, women and children were dying needlessly every year in the workplace, with life expectancy as low as their early twenties in some industries, and little hope but death of rising out of their destitution.

Beginning in the late 19th century, as the trade union and labour movements grew, a variety of days were chosen by trade unionists as a day to celebrate labour.

May 1 was chosen to be International Workers' Day to commemorate the 1886 Haymarket affair in Chicago. In that year beginning on May 1, there was a general strike for the eight-hour workday.

The 1904 Sixth Conference of the Second International, called on all Social Democratic Party organizations and trade unions of all countries to demonstrate energetically on the First of May for the legal establishment of the 8-hour day, for the class demands of the proletariat, and for universal peace. On May 1, 1886,

O N KOUL

International Workers Day ,also known as Labour Day in some countries and often referred to as May Day is a celebration of labourers and working classes that is promoted by the international labour movement and occurs every year on 1st May .

On this day we celebrate the workers and labourers and march for their rights against exploitation .It originated from eight -hour labour union movement .It is celebrated in countries like India ,China, Cuba among others and is a public holiday .This day originated as a union movement in the US around the 19th century .Labour Day is set to celebrate the hard work and achievements of the labor group .This is one day that is entirely devoted to the labor class .Many countries celebrate this day on different dates .However in maximum countries ,this day occurs and is celebrated on 1st May that happens to be international workers Day .

Labor Day marks the day in 1894 that congress declared the first Monday in September .The roots of Labor Day grew out of violent clashes between labor and police during the Haymarket Riots in 1886 ,when thousands of workers in Chicago took to the streets to demand an eight -hour work day .

In fact Labor Day is meant to honour and celebrate workers and the importance of their contribution to the nation and society. The Haymarket Affair became an international symbol of the struggle for workers rights and May first was chosen to be International Workers Day .On this day ,socialist parties and trade unions called for workers to demonstrate for the eight-hour day and in favour of peaceful protest.

The celebrations were declared by an international federation of trade unions and socialist groups to commemorate the Haymarket Riot in Chicago .The riots are also known as Haymarket affair and the 1st May is celebrated in honor of these riots and for agitating against the exploitation against the labors and the day is celebrated every year to remember Haymarket riots .

In 1889 ,May first was designated May Day ,a day in support of the demands of workers and eight hour day of toil .Thus May1 is celebrated as a public holiday around the world to celebrate the contributions of the workers on the International Labour Day .

The day celebrates the struggles of workers around the

INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' DAY: MAY 1

more than 300,000 workers in 13,000 businesses across the United States walked off their jobs in the first May Day celebration in history.

In Chicago, the epicenter for the 8-hour day agitators, 40,000 went out on strike with the anarchists in the forefront of the public's eye.

With their fiery speeches and revolutionary ideology of direct action, anarchists and anarchism became respected and embraced by the working people and despised by the capitalists. More and more workers continued to walk off their jobs until the numbers swelled to nearly 100,000, yet peace prevailed.

It was not until two days later, May 3, 1886, that violence broke out at the McCormick Reaper Works between police and strikers. In 1887, Oregon was the first state of the United States to make it an official public holiday. By the time it became an official federal holiday in 1894, thirty US states officially celebrated Labour Day.

Thus by 1887 in North America, Labour Day was an established, official holiday but in September, not on 1 May.

In 1889, a meeting in Paris was held by the first congress of the Second International, following a proposal by Raymond Lavigne that called for international demonstrations on the 1890 anniversary of the Chicago protests.

May Day was formally recognized as an annual event at the International's second congress in 1891. May Day is an official holiday in 66 countries and unofficially celebrated in many more, but rarely is it recognized in this country where it began.

THEME OF THE DAY: This year the day is celebrated by the theme, 'Ensuring safety and health at workplace in a changing climate'.

In agriculture, climate change is already having serious impacts on the safety and health of workers in all regions of the world.

Workers are among those most exposed to climate change hazards yet frequently have no choice but to continue working, even if conditions are dangerous.

Global occupational safety and health (OSH) protections have struggled to keep up with the evolving risks from climate change, resulting in worker mortality and morbidity.

FARM WORKERS: The farming community is a class of agriculture workers that work in farms and is are not confined to a particular gender.

If we analyze the data, we see that in 2001, of the 100

cultivators in India 67.1 were male and 32.9 were female and within a decade in 2011 the male went up to 69.7 and female came down to 30.3. Similarly of 100 agricultural labourers in India in 2001, 53.7 were male and 46.3 were female and a decade later in 2011 the number was 57.3 for males and 42.7 for females.

The agriculture workers have been in the forefront in ensuring food and nutritional security to all of us. Despite all this, there are frequent reports of the agriculture workers being harassed by landlords and owing to the apathy from respective governments, some of them are leaving agriculture and some others are committing suicides.

All this comes as a shock to all of us. Agriculture is a dangerous occupation also. Let us take the case of United States where agriculture is also called the backbone of the country.

A few years ago, agriculture ranked eighth as one of the most dangerous occupations. Today agriculture ranks as fourth dangerous occupation. According to the U.S Bureau of Labour Statistic, fatalities and injuries among agricultural workers are on the rise.

Farm workers are 800 per cent more likely to dies on the job than in other industries.

The National Safety Council of the U.S reports that of the about 3.1 million peoples who work on America's 2.3 million farms and ranches, 1300 die each year and 120,000 are injured. This means for every 100,000 farmers.

About 25 die each year and equipments injure another 243 and five per cent of these injuries result in permanent disabilities. In agrarian economies, such things should usually not happen.

Farmers' who produce everything on this planet should be ensured with appropriate protection and safety. They should enjoy certain exclusive rights related to agriculture that must be upheld to give due recognition to them in their efforts to produce food for all of us.

This is also necessary to save them from the unnecessary harassment from different sources. Farming must be made more sustainable and remunerative by adopting practices which do not promote usage of external inputs, but use of local resources.

This day reminds us of our fundamental duty to protect the rights of the workers and our commitment to safeguard the interests of all such working class who are shaping the future of the nations ultimately benefitting the humanity globally.

We should also take a moment to appreciate workers contribution and strive towards a more equitable and just society.

(The author writes on agriculture and social issues).

Celebrating World Labour Day

world to create a workplace that recognizes the dignity of labor. It is also referred as the eight-hour day movement ,which was a struggle that demanded eight hours for work ,eight hours for recreation ,and eight hours for rest .Labour Day celebrations are associated with socialist political movements around the world that demand equity in the work place.

The first Labor Day was celebrated on May 1,1889 as the International Workers Day .The celebrations were declared by international federation of trade unions and socialist groups to commemorate the Haymarket Riot in Chicago .The riots are also called as the Haymarket Affair ,which happened in 1886.The riots started as a peaceful march that demanded an eight hour work day but later turned into a violent clash between the protesters and the police forces.

While May one is celebrated around the world to signify the achievements of workers ,in some countries ,it is celebrated on a different date ,often one that is linked with the labor movement in that particular country. For example Bangladesh celebrates April 24 as the labor safety day in memory of workers that died in Rana Plaza building collapse .It also celebrates May 1 as Labors Day .In most countries ,labor is synonymous with International Workers Day .In China ,May 1 is a statutory holiday .It is important not to confuse May Day with Mayday .

While former marks the celebration of the struggle of the working class around the world ,the latter refers to a distress call .Mayday is an emergency "procedure word " used by aviators ,mariners, firefighters ,and police forces .Historically ,May Day was celebrated as a rural festival to celebrate the return of spring in Europe .This was linked with agricultural rituals and was primarily celebrated by Greeks and the Romans .However ,in the 20th century ,large -scale May Day celebrations in that region declined in importance .

In dozens of the countries around the world ,however ,May Day has been recognized as a public holiday ,and it continues to be celebrated with picnics and parties while serving as the occasion for demonstrations and rallies in support of worker .

In Europe May 1 was historically associated with rural pagan festivals but the original meaning of the day was gradually replaced by the modern association with labor

movement Labor Day has its origins in labor union movement ,specifically the eight hour work day movement ,which advocated eight hours for work ,eight hours for recreation and eight hours for rest .

For most countries ,labor day is synonymous with ,or linked with, International workers Day which occurs on 1 May. The story of Labor Day began with the rise in industrialization .The industrialists exploited the labor class in those days and it continues even today .

They took lot of work from them but paid them very less .Labors were forced to work for 10-15 hours a day in very tough conditions.

In fact International workers Day ,also known as Labor Day in some countries and often referred as May Day is a celebration of laborers and the working class that is promoted by the international labor movement and occurs every year on 1 May .

As said at earlier traditionally ,1 May is the date of the European spring festival of May Day .In 1889 ,the Marxist international socialist congress met in Paris and established the second international as a successor to the earlier international workingmen's Association .They adopted a resolution for a "great international demonstration" in support of the working class for the eight hour day .

The first May was chosen by the American Federation of labor to commemorate a general strike in the united states ,which begun on 1st May 1886 and culminated in the Haymarket Affair four days later .The demonstrations subsequently became a yearly event .

In Jammu and Kashmir also May first is celebrated by the trade unions ,workers bodies, leftist unions ,Marxists and government employees in favor of the labors and for demanding justice for the labour class and demands freedom from exploitation and on this day big processions and demonstrations are held in favor of the working class and it is demanded that fair wages and good working conditions should be ensured for the workers .

Let the workers of the world unite on this day and press for meeting their genuine demands including the eight hour working day .May the workers celebrate May first with the resolve to press for their demands by holding demonstrations and protests.

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Chenab -The limitless that flows through the sub-continent

G L KHAJURIA

Literally speaking, Chenab acronymises a Persian derivation,Cheen means china and aab means water,annotating thereby China's water. But with the revolving wheel of time, the learned school of thought negated it and attributed that the origin of Chenab is from 'Tandi- a small village or hamlet in Himachal Pradesh (HP)adjoining our state. Even in Sanskrit texts, Chenab river finds its mention as a nectar-clear water having its origin from higher reaches of Himachal Pradesh.

According to our great epics, the Mahabharatand theHarivanshaPurana, there is mention of the origin of these two mighty rivers- Chandra and Bhaga from higher reaches amidst the Himalayan region of Himachal Pradesh.

And after traversing through longer distances ultimately confluence at Atholi, little below padder (Kishtwar) around 306 kmsserpentiney is named as chandrabhaga, Chandra literally means Moon and BhagaCannotates Luck or virtue. The Chenab or Chandrabhaga as well occupies a very significant place in our revered Rigveda, wherein it has been mentioned as 'Askini'.

Apart from, the Greeks have made a mention about Chenab river in more than many ways. Askesines and Chandrabhaga as Sandropagosviz the man eater or Alexandrapagas as the devour of Alexander the great, who attempted to cross this mighty river and had to suffer disastrously.

The NeelmatPurana, a historical tratise of Kashmir mentions about Chenab or chandrabhaga most prominently. Poster, a well - renowned traveller in 1783 A.Dextensively Journeyed through Kashmir and named this mighty river as chanan. And Vigne, another traveller- cum-explorer in 1783 AD, extensively travelled the vale of Kashmir and recorded in his travel-oguethechenab's water from Moon.

And very rightly has as such 'Jean Naudou' a French traveller-cum-authorhascommented about Chenab as a beautiful, echanting river having the biggest vibrant, lush green forest in its back drop and explains further regarding the location together with other affiliations as such: 'To the east and the south-east, Kashmir is in communication with upper valley of chandrabhagaand at the foot of frontier ridge which separates the basin of vastas- ta' the Jhellum.Kashavata used to constute an independent principality mentioned one single time in Rajatrangni (Kalhana) but many times in the modern chronicles.

Downstream, Bhadaravakasa was attached to champapura, while more to the south and west campa, vallapura was an independent state where Biksaera were taking refuge, and of whom, a princess was forming a part of harem of Sussala, mentioned many times by Kalhana.

The river Chenab or chandrabhaga after confluencing at Atholi sweeps down surpentiney taking turns and twists on sharp bends sometimes too narrow and deep and at places oftenlywith broader width all along its

under lying bed -rocks of sub-Himalayan , pre-cambrian region relativelyunchangeable in its entire route.

The river,of course,accumulates various rivulets,Nallahson its either side of the catchments- thereby enhancing its quantitative flow like fiery flames. The river as such forms a narrow gorge cut out of hard rock filled up with perpetual flow of water and is locked up in the rock forming a dam-like shape. And a megaDulHasti project generating huge power potential is the first of the formation in the history of the Charming Chenab.

And still down below , the river has been dammed at Bagliharhydroelectric power project near Batote.

The damming of these two hydro- electric projects have provided an ample scope of power generation. But at the same time has indeed lost its natural beauty, it enchanting tones and charming white foaming watery upheavelsforever and ever.

The mighty and majestic Chenab or Chandrabhaga is having a nectar-like crystal water with very fast flow spanning its either bank, debouches from hills down and travels hundreds of thousand kilometres in the land-locked mountainousterrain and the plains down below.

The river as such emerges out at Aknhoorafter passing throughSalal andSawalakotpower project and the river flows to Pakistan inter-mingling Tawi, Ravi, Satluj, Beas and other rivers, rivulets and streams. The river as such confluences other mega rivers, en route, with gushing flow and finally drains down intoArabian sea.

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