

## Embracing Sportsmanship

Sportsmanship, often described as the ethos of fair play, respect, and integrity in sports, is the cornerstone of athletic competition. It transcends the mere pursuit of victory and embodies the spirit of camaraderie, dignity, and mutual appreciation among athletes, coaches, and spectators alike. In an era marked by intense rivalries and cutthroat competitiveness, the significance of sportsmanship cannot be overstated. It serves as a guiding principle that fosters a culture of inclusivity, goodwill, and ethical conduct in the world of sports.

At its core, sportsmanship encapsulates the fundamental values of integrity and honesty. It is about adhering to the rules of the game and competing with integrity, regardless of the outcome. True sportsmanship is exemplified not only in victory but also in defeat, where athletes display grace, humility, and acceptance of the results. It is through these moments of triumph and adversity that the true character of athletes is revealed, and their commitment to sportsmanship is put to the test. Respect for opponents, teammates, officials, and the game itself is another cornerstone of sportsmanship. Athletes who demonstrate respect recognize the contributions and efforts of their adversaries, acknowledging that each participant is striving for excellence in their own right. Moreover, respect extends beyond the boundaries of the field or court; it encompasses cultural differences, diversity of perspectives, and the inherent dignity of all individuals involved in sports.

## Wonderful Winged visitors

**G L KHAJURIA**  
Aristotle, the world renowned Philosopher had more than two thousand years back had known how the Avian (Bird) migrate with seasonal changes but in fact it was in Mazzy, 1822 a day of bewilderment for ornithologist that during this period they observed that a stork with its neck pierced was caught in Mecklenburg, Germany. In fact this stork with arrow had come from Africa and established for the migration though the fact goes that there are references in Sanskrit, by the Greek Philosopher in the old testament and allied scriptures. In line with supporting fact, The German emperor Friedrich (1194-1250 AD) Observed South bound flights of bird crossing Mediterranean sea during winter.

The migration of birds is normally effected with the change of season and the birds have the record if flying over thousand of km and find the same locations where they had built their nests or habitats a year before. Why do birds migrate is a matter of mystery. After deep thought, it was established by the ornithologist that the migration triggered is to escape from cold, seek food and to choose new breeding grounds. And of all these birds, the most ones are those who don't feel eagerness of migration despite the impending cold or weather changes that take place.

Ornithologists establish that out of around 8-10 thousand species of birds those inhabit this planet, two third are migratory and strangest fact is that these fly too high mountainous regions like that of Himalayas or so. The Siberian crane is a regular migratory bird from Siberia to India flying long and hazardous routes.

After a great deal of studies ornithologist have established that American golden plover (pluriallis) flies from Aractic to South America covering a long stretch around 7000 kms or so. The Red-Throated humming bird barely 10 inches of size flies about 2500 Kms from Canada to Florida and the swallow (Hirundin) measuring about 10-15 cms migrates covering a distance around 7000 Kms from Europe to South Africa crossing over Atlantic. The Northern pintail duck (Anas acuta) and garany duck (Anas quequedula) which breeds in the Siberian tundra and taiga cover long long distances during their migration.

Similarly, the birds inhabiting in Delhi zoo also migrate long distances with the change of climate for food and finding new ground apart from 1200 species which are spectacular and inspiring. The Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary is a paradise of magnificent birds and same is with wildfowl refuge in Rajasthan which is barely 26 sq Kms in area and much of its area is marshy, besides the cover of woods. It is no denying the fact that the domesticated pigeon can obviously find its way home after having been shifted to unknown strange place or location. Similarly, it was experimented with wild manx shearwater, taken from its nest off the sea coast of UK and released in Boston USA. Surprisingly enough, the bird returned or navigated or to say avigated to its original habitat. The avigation of birds have been studied using advanced technology like radar, keeping the birds in planetarium, putting bands of light metal etc and the studies have shown miraculous results.

Ornithologist have established that birds navigate not only with the help of sun but these also pursue or take cue from the position of stars of night sky. The German biologist PA Schneider established that the bird navigate with the help of sun in 1996.

Stephen T Emin, professor at cornell university conducted detail studies to ascertain as to how the bird could orient the visibility of stars correctly. In his experiment, he turned off the light in the planetarium where birds were kept. Emin and other observers found that the birds fluttered aimlessly revealing that they took the celestial bodies if sky is their guide.

The ornithologists are not in consonance with the outdated idea that the birds are guided by the Earth's magnetic field or that of gravitational field. In the experiment so conducted, the birds were put in a strong magnetic field with magnified plates attached to their wings and resultantly revealed insensitiveness to electromagnetic field or the result were inconclusive.

According to some researches, the birds, however can synthesize a magnetic compound capable of indicating the earth's magnetic field.

It is astonishing to note that the avians are capable of forecasting weather conditions and their changes. Studies on pigeons have shown astonishing result that these can see polarised light and ultraviolet light. The birds, in fact, can hear infrasound (noise in ultralow frequencies which carry vast varied distances). As a corollary, it has been attributed that birds do not live in sensory world as we human do.

The birds during the course of long distant migration are having very sharp and keen eyesight. Physiologically their body weight is low as the skeletal structure is hollow whereas the pectoral muscles are strong enough to take long flights. Besides, the respiratory system is well adopted to meet up their metabolic activities involved during their long that distance flights.

## What a tragedy?

**PROF HARI OM**  
What a tragedy? What an irony? Persecuted, tortured and hounded out Kashmiri Hindus are in a fix. They have been left with no other option but to vote for parties like NC, PDP, JKAP and People's Conference in the Srinagar, Baramulla and Anantnag-Rajouri parliamentary constituencies, which in collaboration with radical Islamists persecuted, tortured and expelled Hindus from Kashmir in January 1990 just because they were Hindus. The BJP has not fielded any candidate in these constituencies and, instead, reportedly decided to support separatist and anti-Sanatan JK Apni Party of Bukhari and PC of Sajad Lone. What an irony? Will Kashmiri Hindu refugees in their own motherland vote for their persecutors? Let's see.

## World Thalassaemia Day

DR K.K KOUL



World Thalassaemia Day is celebrated annually on the 8th of May, with the aim of commemorating Thalassaemia patients who died as a result of the disease & encouraging those who are still alive & struggling with it daily. The theme of the event this year is "Empowering Lives, Embracing Progress: Equitable and Accessible Thalassaemia Treatment for All." With an estimated 100 million (10 crore) people worldwide carrying genes responsible for Thalassaemia, and more than 300,000 Babies born annually with severe forms of the disease, International Thalassaemia Day is a powerful call to raise awareness about this condition & its impact while celebrating the solidarity of the resilient Thalassaemia community worldwide.

Panos Englezos, President and Founder of Thalassaemia International Federation (TIF) created this day in 1994 in the memory of his son George & other Thalassaemia patients who fought the disease bravely. Since then every year World Thalassaemia Day is celebrated on May 08.

George Hoyot Whipple, an American Pathologist (Noble Prize Winner) & W. L. Bradford (Prof. of Paediatrics) coined the term Thalassaemia in 1936 although first described by Thomas Benton Cooley, a Pediatrician in 1925 based on 5 cases of Italian & Greek descent & it was called Mediterranean anaemia / Cooley's Anemia. It was later confirmed that the cases which Dr. Thomas Cooley had described were of Thalassaemia Major.

Thalassaemia is derived from Thalassa (Greek) meaning Sea & emia (latin) meaning blood and was called as Sea Blood / Mediterranean Anaemia as initial cases belonged to areas around Mediterranean Sea. In Greek mythology, Thalassa was the primordial Goddess of the Sea.

Thalassaemia Syndromes are a heterogeneous group of inherited anaemias characterized by defects in the synthesis of one or more of the globin chain subunits of the Hemoglobin (Hb) tetramer. The clinical syndromes associated with Thalassaemia arise from the combined consequences of inadequate Hb production and imbalanced accumulation of globin subunits. The former causes hypochromia & microcytosis; the latter leads to ineffective erythropoiesis (defective red blood cell precursors undergo cell death / apoptosis in bone



marrow) & haemolytic anaemia (premature destruction of RBCs). Clinical manifestation are diverse, ranging from asymptomatic hypochromia & microcytosis to profound anaemia which can be fatal in utero or in early childhood if untreated. This heterogeneity arises from the variable severities of the primary biosynthetic defects & combined modifying factors. Due to turmoil in the bone marrow (Hyperplastic Marrow) the marrow expands which stretch the bones. With this & along with other disease related issues lead to marked craniofacial & orofacial deformities, protrusion of abdomen, marked liver and splenic enlargement and other major problems. Palliative treatment of the severe forms by regular blood transfusion is eventually compromised by the concomitant problems of iron overload, alloimmunization & blood borne infections.

According to the Hb polypeptide chain whose synthesis is impaired, The Thalassaemias are called (alpha), (beta), (gamma), (delta), (delta-beta) or (epsilon), (gamma, delta-beta) Thalassaemias. From a clinical point of view the most relevant types are thalassaemias, resulting from the absent or decrease synthesis of one of the two types of polypeptide chains that form the normal adult human Hb molecule (HbA2). Alpha chains are encoded by globin gene clusters on chromosome 16 (two genes on each chromosome) & chains are encoded by globin gene cluster on chromosome 11 (one gene on each chromosome). Haem group (iron protoporphyrin IX) is same in all types of haemoglobins (HbA, HbF, HbA2 etc). HbA (Adult Hb) is present in RBCs & it transports oxygen from the lungs (alveoli) to all tissues and organs of the body and carries CO2 from the tissues back to lungs where it is exhaled. HbF (foetal Hb) is the predominant Hb of the baby during foetal life and its production automatically stops when the baby is born and instead HbA is produced which gradually becomes the predominant Hb by 6 months or in some cases by 9 months after the birth.

In Thalassaemia due to genetic defect, HbF production continues even after birth and HbA is not produced or is produced in small quantity only and the patients suffer from chronic anaemia with marked decrease in oxygen carrying capacity of the blood and tissues and organs do not get adequate oxygen and thus cannot develop and function normally. Thalassaemias are inherited as autosomal recessive disorders. If both the parents are carriers of the gene then there are 25% chances of baby being born as Thalassaemia Major (severe form of the disease), 50% carriers and 25% will be normal. Carrier persons remain asymptomatic and do not require any treatment but they should not marry a carrier but if already married or both the carrier persons want to marry then they should get genetic counseling before planning their family and should go for pre-natal diagnosis at 10-12 weeks of pregnancy. If the fetus is Thalassaemia Major then the couple has the option of medical termination of the pregnancy. So every boy and girl should undergo a blood test for HbA2 (HPLC) estimation and if it is between 3.5% to 9% then the person is Thalassaemia carrier and should utilize this information at the time of his / her marriage.

Transfusion dependence has recently become an essential factor in classifying various phenotypes of Thalassaemia. Transfusion dependent Thal. (TDT) are patients requiring lifelong regular blood transfusion therapy for survival such as patients with Thalassaemia Major or severe HbE/Thalassaemia. Non transfusion dependent (NTDT) patients do not require lifelong transfusion for survival such as Thalassaemia intermedia or mild-moderate HbE/Thal. patients. (Transfusion profile of patients in past 6 months - <6 RBC units denoting NTDT)

Thalassaemia Major usually present after 6 months and by the age of 2 years most patients are diagnosed. Thal. intermedia present by 5-7 years or in some cases even later. Diagnosis is usually made on clinical findings and confirmed by various blood tests like CBC, PBF examination, HPLC (for quantitation of the Hb fractions). The molecular diagnosis is helpful in cases of uncertain diagnosis and for genetic counseling. Main treatment options are :- a) Regular safe NAT tested Leucodepleted (prestorage filtration), Packed Red Cells (IAT Cross matched) with extend RBC matching & maintaining pre-transfusion Hb level of 10gms/dl & post transfusion Hb below 14 to 15gms/dl. b) Appropriate iron chelation therapy

as advised to keep serum ferritin under 1000ng/ml c) MRI T2\* for liver and cardiac iron concentration d) Immunization as advised e) Regular follow-up with multi-specialty approach (Cardiology, Endocrinology, Hepatology, Orthopedics, Radiology, Dentist, Gynaecologist for girl patients & Psychologist) with strict compliance.

New Drugs : Drugs that target ineffective erythropoiesis and anaemia so that RBC lifespan is increased, transfusion requirement is reduced, iron overload is reduced & Hb levels also improve : a) Luspatercept (ACE-536) for patients of 18 years or older; 1mg/kg by s/c injection b) Mitapirat (AG-348) 100mg orally twice daily is currently being evaluated in phase two 3 trials in both NTDT & TDT patients. Agents targeting the hepcidin or ferroportin pathways have also been evaluated.

Bone Marrow / Haematopoietic stem cell transplant - It is a curative treatment but has significant risks. In India Thalassaemia free survival (TFS) for lucarelli class I & class II patients was 78% at CMC Vellore. Gene Therapy -- It works by putting functional copies of the abnormal gene into patients own blood stem cells. The RBCs are then able to make normal or near normal levels of Hb (FDA approved). Other types of gene therapy are being studied. JKTWS-J&K Thalassaemia Welfare Society is doing a great job for the last 28 years for the welfare of these patients. The President JKTWS Er. Sudhir Sethi who works day & night for these patient care activities is the main force behind the society. The activities include regular blood donation camps, medical camps in which internationally renowned hematologist from Delhi come and examine these patients. Society also addresses various issues of the patients by discussing with GMC Jammu and hospital authorities and also with the Government of J&K UT and these efforts have been successful in improving various facilities at day care centre in SMGS Hospital Jammu under overall supervision of Prof. Sanjeev Dinger of Paediatric Department. The Executive members of the society are equally involved in these activities and are committed to work for the welfare of these patients till there is a permanent cure for each and every patient. In Jammu 330 patients are registered with JKTWS. In Kashmir 27 patients are registered at GMC Srinagar under Paediatric Haematologist.

(The writer is Medical Advisor JKTWS & Former Prof. & Head Pathology Dept. GMC Jammu).

## Marching Towards the Goal of Aatmanirbhar Villages

DR BANARSI LAL

In India about two thirds of the total population and more than 70 per cent of the workforce reside in rural areas. Presently the concept of Aatmanirbhar Bharat has gained significant momentum in India. The aim of this campaign is to reduce dependency on foreign resources and increase the self-sufficiency in diverse sectors across the nation. Under this campaign, rural areas are promoted as the Aatmanirbhar villages, where agriculture and allied sectors play the significant role in the economic development of nation. We can achieve comprehensive and sustainable growth at the national level by making the villages as the self-reliant. Making villages as Aatmanirbhar will strengthen the rural economy in India. It will help to attain the self-sufficiency at the village level. The rural areas face the formidable economic challenges, poverty, unemployment and even inequality. Addressing these challenges is very important not only to fasten sustainable growth of the nation but also to reduce the rural migration towards the urban areas. The concept of Aatmanirbhar villages (self-reliant India) has an immense potential to create income and employment opportunities for the rural people. The rural economy depends mainly on agriculture and allied sectors for its growth and development. A self-reliant nation must be self-sufficient in terms of domestic food grain production and even in some other essential commodities. Making rural areas self-reliant can enhance food security through higher agricultural production and productivity, ensuring a constant supply of food grains and thus reducing dependence on external sources for essential commodities. Agriculture secures the nation in terms of food, fodder and other raw-material for industries and serves as the source of livelihood for majority of the rural population. In India, the proportion of the population depends directly or indirectly largely on agriculture for income and employment opportunities.

In rural India agriculture has an immense potential to generate a plethora of income and employment opportunities. It also creates jobs in the fields like agribusiness, food processing etc. Even the urban areas businesses such as food processing industries, milk processing, medicines industries etc. depend on the rural areas. Agricultural sector is helpful to empower the local rural communities and plays a significant role in stemming the tide of rural to-urban migration which increases the urban overcrowding and unemployment ultimately helps a more balanced and sustainable socio-economic

system. Self-reliance in rural areas serves as a catalyst for eco-friendly practices. Rural people can adopt eco-friendly and sustainable practices for water, energy and waste management, thus can make a significant contribution to environmental protection. Farmers can adopt natural and organic farming practices to produce the safe and healthy food. It will help to maintain soil health, human health and environment health.

Self-reliant villages will give a boost to the local industries and small agri-businesses in villages and can lead to the promotion of diverse ventures such as small-scale manufacturing, artisanal crafts, agro-processing units etc. in the rural areas. This approach bolsters rural self-sufficiency and also helps in the sustainability and ecological responsibility. Women in rural areas play significant role in agriculture and allied sectors as they play their critical role in crops production right from sowing to post-harvest management. The farm women empowerment is essential for attaining self-sufficiency at the village level and for comprehensive socio-economic national development. SHGs formation among the farm women can really help in the rural women empowerment. Through SHGs women can generate income and employment and develop entrepreneurial skills. There is need to promote gender equality and women's access to education, health, land and credit so they can participate in farming and decision-making process. It will help in the overall development of rural areas.

In order to make villages' self-reliant, investments in infrastructure, including roads, electricity, health, irrigation, sanitation and storage facilities are the basic requirements. These improvements not only enhance the overall quality of life in rural areas but also attract business and investment to these areas. Better infrastructure connects the villages to the market, thus making it easier for the farmers to sell their farm produce and access resources. The adoption of latest technologies in agriculture has the potential to significantly boost the crop production and productivity.

There is need to equip the farmers with the necessary tools and machineries to embrace cutting-edge farming practices. There is need to promote the precision agriculture, data-driven decision-making and the use of innovative farm machineries. Presently, India has not only achieved self-sufficiency in food grains but has also emerged as a prominent net exporter of agricultural products, occupying 7th position in the world. This significant transformation began to gain momentum

after 1970-71, but it experienced a substantial boost with effect from 1994-95. The Indian Government has launched numerous schemes and programmes to improve the socio-economic status of rural communities. The main thrust has been on increasing the crops production, productivity, reducing cost of cultivation and diversifying towards high-value agriculture crops by introducing supply chain reforms, a streamlined and rational tax system, transparent and concise legal frameworks, a skilled and capable workforce and a robust financial system. Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan was announced by the Government of India with the objective to promote local products. The mission is synergised with the 'Make in India' initiative, which is designed to encourage manufacturing in India including the highly promising agricultural sector.

Several schemes and programmes have been initiated by the Government of India to make villages self-reliant through agricultural development and promoting rural entrepreneurship.

These programmes provide an excellent opportunity to the rural people to come forward at the forefront and actively participate in the process of Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan. There is need to attract unemployed educated youth into agribusiness and agri-preneurship and special impetus on creating scientific temper and fostering innovative spirit among the rural youth is required. An appropriate policy coupled with a suitable strategy to strengthen the rural non-farm sector deserves to be at the top priority. There is need to adopt a comprehensive strategy for strengthening rural infrastructure, supporting local entrepreneurs, establishing agro-based and cottage industries, ensuring easy access to finance, focusing on education and skill development, and promoting sustainable natural resource management. There is need to expand digital literacy, encouraging rural community participation, facilitating financial inclusion and improving access to markets are very important for self-reliance India. Government, NGOs, the private sector and local communities can play their significant role to achieve the desired goals. In order to achieve the goal of Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan there is need to create the flourishing rural communities that make substantial contributions to the overall economic growth of the nation.

(The writer is Sr. Scientist & Head of KVK, Reasi Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology, Jammu).

## ULLAS - Nav Bharat Saksharta Karyakram; A Drive to Educate All

MEENA THAKUR

ULLAS - Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram is a centrally sponsored scheme launched by Department of School Education & Literacy, Ministry of Education, Government of India on 1st April, 2022 to cover all the aspects of Education For All (Previously termed as Adult Education) aligned with NEP 2020. The scheme is targeted at all non-literates of age 15 years and above and has five major components which are necessary for a citizen of the 21st century: Foundational Literacy and Numeracy; Critical Life Skills; Basic Education; Vocational Skills Development; and Continuing Education.

As per the recommendations of the National Education policy 2020 the Government of India have launched centrally sponsored scheme called New Indian literacy program popularly known as ULLAS (Understanding of lifelong learning for all society) for the period of five years from 2022-2027. It is a transformative step towards promoting basic literacy and essential life skills in India. The prime objective of this mission is the empowerment of all adults above the age of 15 years, who, by one or another reason have failed to seek the education and to enable them to contribute for the growth and development of the nation.

The objective of this scheme is not only to impart FLN (foundational literacy and Numeracy) but to also cover other components which are necessary for a citizen of 21st century including digital literacy Financial literacy, commercial skills, health care Education, family welfare, vocational skill development with view towards obtaining local employment.

ULLAS Process is completed in following steps:

**Survey and Registration:** The local government school/aided school, registered under UDISE, will help in identifying the surveyors in a given mapped area and the surveyor will be responsible to carry door-to-door searches to identify the learners and Volunteers. **Identification of Learners and Volunteers:** A learner is a non-literate who will be enrolled in this program to receive education. The Volunteer will be an educated citizen who will help to train the learners.

**Tagging of Learners with Volunteers:** This process will help identify and connect a VT with the respective learner to provide literacy.

**Learning & Certification:** The learners will login into the system they can access all study material, appear for the test to gauge their progress and apply for the certification after the completion of the program. Once the learners clear the test will be rewarded with certification

This scheme is being implemented through volunteerism, promoting social responsibility and a sense of duty or kartavyabodh. The learners are encouraged to access the content in regional languages of Education for all on Diksha portal as well as on ULLAS mobile app CNCL (Cell for National Centre for literacy) has developed teaching learning materials for Neo literates such as primer, work sheets and Assessment item's as well as critical life skills as exemplar in print and non print mode.

ULLAS continues to act as a beacon light for illuminating the path to education and personal growth. The curriculum has been

designed keeping in mind the socio-cultural and economic context of the learner. To me, this scheme is much more than a literacy program; it is a movement, a drive or a mission to enlighten and empowered the non-literate citizens of India. It is believed that literacy is fundamental human rights and in 2009 Indian parliament passed the right to education act in which under article 21 A Right to education was declared as fundamental right for the children between the age group of 6 to 14 year; now it was mandatory to have same provisions for the education of all those non-literate who are above the age of 15 and above.

ULLAS is the program through which the learners who embark in this journey not only learn to read and write but also make a significant difference in their lives. Although this program is ment for all non-literate but priority has been given to girls, women SC/ST/OBC/Minorities, divyangjans, workers labours. The Jammu & Kashmir UT with a literacy rate of 67.16 % is far behind of the national literacy rate (72.98%) and under such circumstances it needs special attention of the all concerned to achieve the cherished desire of 100% literacy by working hard for the implementation of ULLAS program.

Likewise, State Council of Education Research Training (SCERT) Jammu aims to achieve 100 percent literacy rate in districts with lower levels through the establishment of ULLAS centers for education purposes. SCERT is working on it and there should be Education for all to address the challenges faced by under privileged district. I would like to say "Padega Bharat Tabhi Bhadega Bharat".