

REPULSIVE ACTION

Although with the passing time, the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir is tightening noose over the unwanted activities of the terrorists and their masters sitting across the border and various necessary measures are already in place in this regard but it is really a cause of worry and great concern for the administration and security forces that the terrorists are repeatedly carrying out attacks on the personnel of security forces and other soft including the members of minority communities and others belonging to outside states but staying in the Valley for earring their livelihood. Although the Government has issued stern instructions to the security forces and other concerned for intensifying the anti-insurgency operations to ensure elimination of the menace of terrorism for establishing peace on permanent basis across the Union Territory but it has been witnessed that despite all such initiatives, the anti-national elements are still active on ground level and carrying out their nefarious designs without any break. There is no doubt that a significant decline is there in the number of terror incidents and casualties across J&K in comparison to earlier years but it is also a harsh fact that still several innocent people are felling prey to the menace of terrorism on almost every single day. In order to establish their presence on the ground level and to infuse a sense of insecurity and fear among the people especially the members of minority communities working across the Valley under the PM employment package, the terrorists have recently changed their modus operandi and instead of carrying out massive attack over people, they are now preferring the targeted killings as in recent few days a number of Government employees have been shot dead by the terrorists. The security forces are also not behind and trying hard to eliminate all such terror preparators by carrying out intensive drive against active terrorists and their supporters, who are responsible for the killings of the innocent people but the need of the hour is to put in place some out of the box initiatives for keeping an effective check over the anti-national activities of the terrorists so that the peace can be established permanently and the Union territory of J&K, which few years back was a disturbed state, can restore its pristine glory and once again become a active hotspot for tourists across the globe.

Disseminating immorality and immodesty on social media

■ ABID HUSSAIN RATHER

It is the basic essentiality of a civilized, cultured, peaceful and an educated society that its each and every member should stay away from social evils and contrarily moral values should get the highest priority to flourish within the society. History is witness to the fact when the people of a society lack moral values, different social evils start strengthening their roots there which ultimately lead to the downfall of that society. When a society starts misusing the blessings of nature, its people get indulged in various indecent activities which finally results in the destruction of that society. We are people of the modern era where science and technology has transformed and revolutionized each and every facet of our lives and made our existence comfortable. Nature has bestowed us with countless blessings through science and technology which have eased our adversities and difficulties. There are both positive as well as negative aspects associated with the usage of these scientific blessings. When we use these blessings in a positive way they make our life comfy cozy and open up new vistas of progress and prosperity for us but when the same blessings are utilised wrongly they turn into malediction and foster many social evils in the society. Then these social evils ultimately lead a society towards destruction. The idea of morality and modesty slowly fades away from such societies and its people particularly youngsters get involved in various social evils. Ironically, people of such societies feel proud of their social evils as these evils become customs and rituals of such societies with changed nomenclatures and the people involved in such evil activities are honoured, encouraged and awarded as such people are presumed and envisaged as the role models in the society. Alas ! Such societies remain inebriated with their excessive inclination towards social evils which keeps them nescient and incognizant of their immediate downfall. Famous English historian Arnold J.

Toynbee after analysing the rise and fall of human civilizations in his classic 12-volume book 'A Study of History' has rightly concluded that civilizations die from suicide, not by murder. It is pertinent to mention here that progress and prosperity of a society depends on its youth who are the precious assets of a society and can lead it to different heights of development. But when the youth of a society get engulfed in wrong, immoral and immodest activities, then destruction and devastation is the ultimate fate of such societies. Nowadays social media has gained much fame and has become inseparable part of our lives. Almost each and every individual of our society irrespective of his age, sex, gender or profession is involved with social media. When used positively, Social media can be much useful and beneficial as we have seen in last two and half years of COVID-19 pandemic. It has been much helpful to students, government institutions and other business entrepreneurs during the times of lockdown. But we shouldn't forget that social media can be much dangerous and it can become the worst tool for spreading immodesty and immorality when used for negative, notorious and disgraceful means. When we have a look at the other parts of globe, we see people getting much benefited by social media. They are using it to disseminate knowledge and useful information. They are using social media especially YouTube as a powerful tool to teach and learn different skills and crafts. People in other parts of the world remain updated about current affairs of the world through social media. But when we look at our valley, we feel ashamed and disappointed. Instead of making social media as a useful tool, our social media influencers are using it to disseminate immorality and immodesty besides making fun of simple, innocent and mentally and physically disabled people. They are highlighting, pinpointing and publicizing the shortcomings, flaws, faults and imperfections of others on social media in the name of roast-

ing, which is morally and religiously prohibited, thereby murdering the moral values and virtues in our society. They are feeding our youngsters with the doses of insanity and absurdity by uploading the insane videos of mentally challenged people on social media. Few social media handlers are wasting the time of our young generation by uploading the futile videos of their daily personal activities (vlogging) thereby publicizing and mocking their own personal family secrets to common masses. One wonders what kind of message they are trying to give the society through their daily vlogs and it is really ironic to notice our youngsters wasting their precious time in watching such useless videos which divert them from their main goals and encouraging such so-called social media influencers. It is the biggest tragedy of our society that we mishandle, misuse and torture mentally unsound people by uploading their videos on social media and make them viral. We use such people as a source of enjoyment and recreation for ourselves and when we irritate and torture such people beyond limits they too cross the limits of madness and blaspheme our religious sentiments or commit some serious and irreparable mistakes. Then we start hating them and speak ill about them. But I believe those supposedly educated and civilised individuals who provoke and aggravate these mentally challenged people to commit such serious mistakes are the real culprits and much more mentally retarded than these mentally challenged people and such people should be strictly punished. These notorious and ignominious people make fun of these simple and innocent people by inviting them as special guests at various functions and take their funny and meaningless interviews which they later upload on social media for their personal interests. They tease and torture them whenever they find a chance by clicking their photos or taking their videos and later on

making them viral on social media. These ignorant and uncivilized people are unaware about the fact that people who can't differentiate between good and bad and whose knowledge and intellect doesn't make them capable of distinguishing between right and wrong are not worth to be called as human beings and such people fall below the level of animals. I am of the opinion that people who upload these insane, indecent and futile videos on social media are not solely responsible for disseminating immorality and immodesty on social media but all those people of our society are equally responsible in this heinous and iniquitous act who watch, like or share such videos or encourage these people in one way or other to upload such videos. People who watch and share these iniquitous videos on social media unknowingly become a media for spreading immodesty and immorality in our society. Let's not forget the fact that if we will stop watching or advertising these videos by sharing them on social media and when we will stop encouraging these people for these heinous crimes, they will automatically stop uploading these insane and iniquitous videos on social media. Every individual in our society should always keep in mind that our every single act on social media is watched and recorded by our Lord. We have to be answerable before our Lord on the day of judgement for what we have uploaded, watched, liked or shared on social media and we will be solely responsible for our deeds. So we should always avoid and prohibit from spreading misinformation, immodesty, immortality, iniquity and indecency on social media and it is our moral and religious duty to immediately report all such content on social media which leads to dissemination of immorality and immodesty in our society. Let our deeds shouldn't degrade and humiliate us before our Lord on the day of judgement. (The author can be reached at rather1294@gmail.com).

OFF 'D' CUFF HANDLE WITH CARE

Everyone talks about fatigue or about feeling stressed out due to the heightened pace of our daily life. We blame our lifestyle, education, circumstances, everything and everyone, except ourselves. What causes stress and how can we take responsibility for our emotional state? Stress is an emotion that we experience with the change in the status quo of life. When we experience change, the fear of the unknown gives rise to feelings and thoughts of helplessness, uncertainty and of not feeling in control. This sense of inadequacy causes our emotions to stretch and to project externally onto any object or person so that we feel safe. I spent my life accumulating identifications as a mother, spouse, coach, friend and more to feel secure. Since the last few years after my transformation, I have experienced that 'less is more'. Slowing down and anchoring my emotions internally with my inner voice has enabled me to shed my multiple sense of identifications and prompted me to accept my true Self as a manifestation of Nature. This has reduced my responsibility and involvement from managing multiple relationships to only managing one. Today, my inner voice is my guide to managing all my relationships. We need to think about how we can develop a relationship with our inner Self. Our cluttered thoughts reduce our ability to listen to our inner voice. Life is transient and therefore, the less we identify with it and to our external attachments, the more space we create internally to be aware of our inner voice and to be ready to act in accordance with that voice. When my children were young and would have an emotional meltdown, I would give them some timeout to calm themselves. Over the years, I have realised that adults, too, have to take out time to give our agitated emotions time to tide over. Life happens moment-to-moment and a regular habit of awareness and reflection builds a moment of mental pause that prevents us from hurtling around and getting injured repeatedly. We can use our breath or a mantra or any other technique that resonates with our emotions to cultivate a pause between our flow of cluttered thoughts. This helps to curb the impulse to react and instead helps to develop patience to access our vocabulary and respond effectively. Gradually, our emotions get anchored to our inner voice and flow masterfully. We are so busy playing out the responsibilities of our different roles that we forget to pause and reflect to listen to our inner voice. The temptation for instant sense gratification in a material world challenges our ability to discipline our emotions. Both denial and obsession are two extremes. The world has been created for our enjoyment, but we have to develop a sense of balance to enjoy it. The way too much rain results in floods and too little rain causes drought, similarly, when we stay aware and alert while enjoying the world and discipline our consumption of the earth's resources, we can experience and enjoy the world to its fullest. During Vipassana meditation, I realised that although I was intellectually aware of the laws of nature, there were some laws that I was not in sync with. Worrying and reacting to some of these laws had become a sort of addiction, like an automatic switch that would get turned on as soon as something occurred. Committing to give up some of these habits has been an intense exercise of withdrawing internally and developing faith in the inner voice. Certainly, anxiety does creep in occasionally. But when it does, I patiently remind myself of the law of transience in nature. It is in that moment of pause or silence that I am able to access the knowledge and discover solutions that are empowering. We are surrounded by abundance from birth. Nature provides us with all the ingredients to fulfil our basic necessities and grants us with several skills to earn our livelihoods. The only effort required by us is 'to nurture' those gifts. If we direct our efforts to nurture our relationship with our inner Self, nature will automatically help us along. Ashu Khanna

Blithe disregard of morality

■ RAJESH PATHAK

Philippines is one of the places where Europe had its earliest footholds in Asia. In 1565 Spain occupied it, and those governed it were mostly Christian missionaries and churchmen. It is remembered as 'Missionary-empire' in the annals of history therefore. Oppression; heavy taxation and, obviously, forced conversion to Christianity was prominent feature of the regime under Spaniards. Many Chinese kept coming here mostly for the trade. But now they too were forced to adopt Christianity. But when they refused to yield, massacres of them were organized. (P-556, 'Glimpses Of World History' - Jawaharlal Nehru) For which it had been notorious over the world in history that Christian missionaries are blithely engaged in its ways of work in India even today. And in how many ways? nobody could know that with the mind of a simple man! The country has no lack of such people who have converted into Christianity and still bear Hindu sounding names. Such people are called as crypto-Christians. Ex-Chief Ministers duo, late Ajit Jogi and YS Rajshekhara Reddy, were said to be two of them. The modus-operandi of the crypto-Christians might put many into utter surprise, the instances of which could be seen elsewhere. Last days when Rajysabha elections were there what Rajdeep Sardesai commented is notable- 'To know difference in style of functioning between BJP and Cong just look at their Rajya Sabha lists: BJP rewards many with strong local connect in their home state; Cong accommodates many who don't even belong to a state. One is a sharp 'political' list; the other 'loyalist' adjustment.' Among the ones enjoying close affiliation with Gandhi family, why Sardesai had to comment so needs no explanation. The visible pain and impatience in him are reflected out of deep desire to see the political wisdom somehow dawn upon the Congress, and the day come when entire world may get to be witness of the downfall of BJP! KR Narayan has been proudly mentioned as first 'Dalit' President of India, whereas his grave lies in Christian cemetery! Notably, having been suffered with the social-discrimination, the schedule caste (SC) community are given the benefits of reservation in the Article -341. But in the provision made by Babasahab Ambedkar those who have adopted

Islam or Christianity are no longer considered as Dalit, and thus made deprived of the benefits of reservation. How then KR Narayan had been held as 'Dalit' is highly surprising. YSR Reddy's father adopted Christianity. Later when YSR's daughter Sharmila wanted to wed with Brahmin youth, Anil Kumar, living in America, she could do that only when he had embraced Christianity. And then he grew in prominence as a Christian preacher 'Brother Anil'. As YSR became Chief Minister it is said that the evangelization events held by Anil Kumar drew the people in droves. Voices, too, were raised against such events making the people forsaking Hinduism by deception. But nothing happened as Sonia Gandhi's UPA government was there at the centre. Now the new CM of the state, Jagan Reddy, is taking forward the legacy of his father, YSR. The brother of her staunch Christian mother, Stubbareddy was made the President of Hindus' Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam Trust' by none other than Jagan Reddy. He even wished too far to divert the property of Devasthanam for other dubious purposes. Thanks to the protests made by Hindu organizations that he thought it wise to back-track.

PROGRESSING J&K

Smart Cities Project will promote eco-balance in Jammu, Srinagar cities, enhance quality of life, living standards of citizens

Under the Smart Cities Project, open spaces - parks, playgrounds, and recreational spaces are being preserved and developed in order to enhance the quality of life of citizens, reduce the urban heat effects in areas and generally promote eco-balance in Jammu and Srinagar cities. Smart City Mission was launched by Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) GoI by which 100 cities were to be selected for Urban renewal and retrofitting with the objective to promote cities that provide core infrastructure, give a decent quality of life to their citizens and apply smart solutions to improve services and infrastructure. Speaking at an event recently, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha asked the Jammu and Srinagar Municipal Corporations to develop Smart Cities as Climate Smart Cities and run a year long campaign "City with Nature" with public participation to prevent water, air and plastic pollution. He further advised all the government departments to achieve the goals of bringing an end to the use of single-use plastic, and strengthening of Waste Management

System. The Smart Cities project will enable some flexibility in land use and building by-laws to adapt to change. It will help to develop walk-able localities - reduce congestion, air pollution and resource depletion, boost local economy, promote interactions and ensure security. Under the mission, the road network is created or refurbished not only for vehicles and public transport, but also for pedestrians and cyclists, and necessary administrative services are offered within walking or cycling distance. Working on the mission, the idea of Jammu Smart City Project and the objective of the Special Purpose Vehicle, Jammu Smart City Limited, is to transform the city into a city "of the people, for the people and by the people"; a city, people take pride in calling their own; a city people own and take responsibility of; a city which is an epitome of good, sustainable and healthy living and a city where "happiness quotient" is high. In Jammu city, under the Smart City mission, a cumulative capacity of 12.28MW Grid-connected solar rooftop plants will be installed on government buildings at a

Project Cost of Rs 53.10 Cr and the Jammu and Kashmir Energy Development Agency (JAKEDA) would be the executing agency for the project. This will significantly help in improving the public service delivery mechanism. Similarly, under Srinagar Smart City Limited (SSCL); Special Purpose Vehicle created under Smart City Mission envisions transforming Srinagar into an eco-friendly, resilient and socio-economically vibrant city that celebrates its natural and cultural heritage creating harmony and opportunities for all. SRINAGAR SMART CITY aspires to leverage its Natural & Cultural heritage/ tourism, through innovative and inclusive solutions, enhance the quality of life for its citizens. Remarkably, under the project, the comprehensive development would be witnessed in Smart Cities under the national project. It will promote mixed land use in area-based developments-planning for 'unplanned areas' containing a range of compatible activities and land uses close to one another, in order to make land use more efficient.

YOUR COLUMN Education for sustainable development

Dear editor, Development is usually stunted only to economic welfare of people but it is a comprehensive term and includes the social well of the concerned people along with their economic progress. In other words, big dams, tall and concrete buildings, macadamized roads, magnificent plazas and fashionable clothes are not the only indicators of a developed nation but the term development includes other social aspects also along with these economic indicators. Indian noble laureate Amartya Sen in his book 'Development as Freedom' gives indication to the fact that freedom of expression, freedom of thought and freedom of choice are essential for the development of a nation. So, the material resources of a nation are not the only indicators of its development but we must consider whether the people have freedom of expression, freedom of thought and freedom of choice. Education and development are two interrelated and inseparable terms. Education system of a country is closely linked to its level of development. The sustainable development of a country in which both economic and social aspects are included is linked to such an education system in which both natural sciences and social sciences along with humanities are taught and are given equal preference. The dream of sustainable development can't be fulfilled by giving importance only to natural sciences or social sciences. When we talk about the development of a nation, it does not mean accidental or momentary development, which doesn't last for a long period of time or which will be at the cost of our future generation rather we mean sustainable development. According to the World Commission on Environment and Development, sustainable development is defined as the devel-

opment that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. As such the presumption of sustainable development is impossible without an educated society. It is education which familiarizes us with different concepts and ideologies which pave way for sustainable development. It makes an individual creative and useful and enables him to find the creative solutions for the challenges faced by mankind in the present times. A question strikes our mind that what kind of education it should be which could be helpful in achieving the goal of sustainable development. It is obvious that just increasing the percentage of literacy rate can't fulfill this dream. Rather a good and high standard of education system can play a critical role in the economic and social development of a nation. When we have an overview of the education system in our schools and colleges, we find that it has not risen above the level of transferring information. Famous educationist Paulo Freire has termed such type of education as the 'Banking Concept of Education' where the students become silent listeners in the classrooms. The teacher transfers the information to students and they store it safe in their minds to recall it in the examination hall to get good grades. Such type of teaching learning process doesn't develop the cognitive, creative and observational capabilities of students rather it makes them robots without critical thinking and creative potentialities. The comprehensive concept of education includes the accretion and modification of knowledge, proficiency and attitude. The main aim of education which connects it with development is that it should embolden and nourish the critical thinking and creative potentialities and amenabilities of the students but unfortunately such type of education system is hardly found in our society. Education should make students' mind efficient enough to comprehend the learned knowledge and apply it in solving the new problems and challenges faced

by mankind. It should help them to raise their voice against the outdated rituals and traditional taboos of the society. We need to ponder upon all those processes which can mutually bring changes in our education system to make it better and concatenate it with sustainable development. It includes proper allotment of funds to educational sector; improvement of basic infrastructure, versatility in curriculum in accordance with the needs of modern society, modern teaching techniques and many more. All these processes are essential for improving the standard of our education. Along with all these things a teacher has a pivotal role in improving the education system of our society, so teachers should be provided with modern teaching trainings and techniques. If our society covets for an efficient community of teachers, they should be provided with the opportunities of economic benefits, social recognition and reputation and professional promotions. Teacher education is must for the professional development of teachers. Teacher training institutions should be provided with sophisticated and modern teaching aids and instruments to train teachers for the revival of traditional education system of our society. It is need of the hour to revive and reconstruct the teacher training system to make teachers proficient for teaching process. Interdisciplinary approach should be adopted to utilize other subjects for learning and understanding some critical issues and concept. A close and interdependent link should be established between theoretical and practical aspects of learning instead of focusing on theoretical part only. A teacher should use both formal as well as informal methods of teaching to bring innovation in himself and to attain mastery in the field of teaching. Only a proficient and skillful teacher can provide comprehensive education to its students which can vouchsafe a society for a holistic and sustainable development. Mool Raj.