


KEEP FINGERS CROSSED

Taking another step further towards holding much-awaited assembly elections in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, after the formal submission of the final report by the Delimitation Commission on May 5, 2022, the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Rajiv Kumar has conducted a maiden meeting with the concerned Election officials of the Union Territory of J&K to take stock of necessary preparations for the Assembly elections. It is really a matter of satisfaction for the masses of the Union Territory that fulfilling its commitment made with the people regarding holding of elections in J&K, the present government is step by step moving forward and is expected to reach its destination very soon. The meeting convened by the CEC with all the Deputy Commissioners of Jammu and Kashmir proved that the election commission has started the process for conducting the democratic exercise in J&K and necessary arrangements are being finalized in this regard. Pertinent to mention here that few days back, directives were already issued to the Deputy Commissioners of all the districts who also happen to be the District Electoral Officers (DEOs) to make necessary arrangements for rationalizations of booths besides submitting proposals regarding appointment of EROs and Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (AEROs). As per sources, as the summary reason of electoral rolls have not been done from the last 3 years in J&K, it is necessary to carry out the exercise before formal announcement of the elections. But as the Union Territory is all set to host the annual Amarnath Pilgrimage, after a gap of two years, 9 out of the 20 Deputy Commissioners of J&K are already busy with the preparations for ensuring smooth Yatra without any hindrance. Looking at this scenario, it seems that the necessary exercise, which will take a span of four to five months to get completed, will be started only after August 15 thereby paving way to hold Assembly elections in J&K as per the new arrangement finalized by the delimitation commission in its final order. Overall, the people should not worry and keep faith on the administration as it is busy in fulfilling the commitment made with the people in respect of assembly elections in J&K.

PEOPLE'S SUPPORT MUST

Reiterating the commitment of Government to eliminate terrorism permanently from the soil of Jammu and Kashmir for establishing peace and normalcy on permanent basis besides restoring the pristine glory of J&K and making it once again a favourite tourism hotspot across the globe, the LG Manoj Sinha was very much right in saying that whatever happening in the Valley is the result of neighbour's conspiracy to disturb the peaceful atmosphere and secular fabric of the nation, especially that of Jammu and Kashmir. It is a fact that despite getting exposed numerous times at international level for supporting the terrorism and other anti-national activities in J&K, Pakistan has never mended its ways and is still indulged in such anti-Indian activities without any break. Although, few years back when due to controversial articles 370 and 35A, and apathetic attitude of the rulers of that time, it was quite easy for Pakistan and terrorists to carry out their nefarious designs in J&K as there was no effective check in place, but soon after the formation of the Union Territory, the situation changed significantly in J&K as not only the terrorists but their supporters were dealt with iron hand by the Government. The stern attitude adopted by the security forces for neutralizing all active terrorists from the Valley, not only created a feeling of restlessness and frustration among them, due to which they carried out recent targeted attacks for creating a sense of fear and insecurity among masses. While speaking during the sidelines of a function, the LG has also claimed that recent attacks carried out by terrorists were meant just to provoke security forces so that they do something in desperation. Condemning the recent attacks, he said that the frustration among terrorists has raised to such a level that now these anti-national elements are even targeting women and girls which is really inhumane and barbaric. Urging masses to condemn such cowardice attacks by terrorists in strongest possible terms, the LG said that at present terror is being used as a tool against innocent people and administration and the menace will not be controlled until and unless condemned by the locals in unison as it is the only way to get rid of this scourge permanently.



OFF 'D' CUFF

Be Generous Aid, inspire and protect

Just like happiness, kindness and love, generosity breeds more generosity. It's difficult to say that there can ever be a selfless act of generosity because giving happiness to others is the best way to give happiness to yourself. But the key with practising generosity is to do so without expectation of anything in return, and this is the hard part. So even if you start small and give just a little, it is good if you can do so from the heart and with no selfish conditions attached. Of course, if somebody thanks you it is very nice, but if you don't get any thanks it doesn't matter; you just give anyway. Generosity isn't just about giving in a material way. If you can teach or inspire another person, that is an excellent practice of generosity. You can also give protection or care to someone, another act of generosity. Patience, tolerance, respect, laughter, appreciation, kindness and compassion are all wonderful gifts that we have to offer every day when we think about it. A good way to start is by dividing what you can give into two; giving half to others and the other half keep for yourself; you share. In this way, we gradually get back to a sense of pure motivation, with no strings attached or any need to tell

Development anchored in sustainability

■ HARDEEP S PURI

The World Economic Forum's Annual Meeting 2022 resonated with two themes that have assumed in disputable prominence in global discourse. One, the imperative of addressing the looming and real danger of climate change and the collective actions needed to move towards a sustainable path of development. Amid the ongoing global uncertainty around energy availability, the sustainability debate has snowballed into an even more urgent movement. Two, the growing consensus that India will play a central role in driving global growth. It was particularly noteworthy to see the forum reverberate with the India story, reinforcing Prime Minister Modi's pronouncement of 'when India grows, the world grows; when India reforms, the world transforms'.

These two themes dovetail perfectly when one considers that India is among the leading nations to have adopted large-scale sustainable development practices. India is building resilient and sustainable socio-economic infrastructure that is reducing our carbon footprint even as it is uplifting millions of citizens from poverty. Through tangible impact on the ground, Prime Minister has convinced the nation that ecological sustainability and economic progress can go hand-in-hand.

This approach is at variance with the traditional success stories of many Western and some Asian economic power houses which were propelled by carbon-intensive industries. For years, climate change geopolitics was predicated on developed economies bearing the lion's share of mitigation, and rightfully so, as they have been the largest emitters of greenhouse gases (GHG) historically. It was considered unfeasible to impose the same burden on developing economies. India has fundamentally altered that

understanding by pledging comprehensive targets while also meeting its socio-economic objectives. This transition from a follower to a leader has been eight years in the making. Nowhere is this truer than in the economics of energy. Despite the fact that our per capita energy demand increased by over 60 per cent in the last two decades, India's energy use and emissions have remained less than a third of the global average. According to the World Bank, India had per-capita emissions of 1.8 tonnes CO2 equivalent in 2018 -well below the global average of 4.5 tonnes. Owing to a rich civilization legacy that has promoted ecological harmony, we are acutely aware of our environmental responsibilities towards future generations even as we aim to reach high levels of economic growth. Much like steering a ship, transitioning towards de-carbonisation will take time and require calibrated, nuanced measures that ensure India's current developmental targets are not compromised even as we look towards a net-zero future.

Last year's COP-26 Summit in Glasgow provided an apt demonstration of why India will succeed on the vitals of sustainability. Prime Minister Modi stunned and inspired the world when he announced India's aggressive agenda against climate change through the Panchamrit Action Plan which envisages India becoming a net-zero emissions country by 2070. This is one of the shortest time spans proposed between peak emissions and net zero status by a developing economy - reiterating India's firm belief that the roadmap to prosperity lies in sustainability. The Prime Minister also committed that by the end of this decade, India will meet 50 percent of its energy requirements from renewable energy; installed capacity of non-fossil-fuel energy in India will stand at 500 GW; emissions intensity of the country's GDP will drop by 46-48 percent from 2005

levels; and that its carbon emissions will be lower by one billion tonnes. The Prime Minister has held environmental protection as an article of faith since his days as Chief Minister of Gujarat. It explains why he conceptualised 102-member International Solar Alliance (ISA) in 2015, and why India embarked upon an ambitious path of sustainable development through the Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) under Paris Agreement of COP-21 as well as the commitments at COP-26.I have no doubt that India will achieve these targets alongside economic imperatives. My optimism stems from the fact that I have had the good fortune of closely observing his vision in two vital components of India's sustainable growth paradigm: urban development and energy transition.

India's flagship urban programmes were launched almost a year before the SDGs were adopted globally. Even as we approximate towards the targets of SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), I am confident that the improved urban ecosystems will result in positive impact on other SDGs related to poverty, health, education, energy, and industry and innovation. Most of the housing developed under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Urban (PMAY) utilises sustainable and energy-efficient methods which incorporate advanced practices of land-use planning and green technologies. TERI has estimated that this will mitigate approximately 12 million metric tonnes (MMT) CO2 equivalent of GHG emissions. In 0Atral Mission for rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) mission, more than 49MMT of CO2 equivalent of GHG emissions are being reduced even as basic civic amenities are provided. Additionally, there has been an emphasis to transition towards public transport and mobility options - more than 12.65 MMT of GHG emis-

sions are expected to be reduced through the 773 Km of metro line that are already operational in 18 cities as well as a network of 1,006 Km which is under construction in 27 cities.

While India is optimising its energy consumption through targeted interventions in urban areas, it is also maximising its energy production efforts by working towards doubling the share of natural gas-which is much less polluting than fossil fuels-in our energy mix by 2024. India's aggressive policy of adoption of natural gas has led to GHG emissions mitigation of 566 MMT between 2014-15 and 2021-22. Aligned with this is the National Hydrogen Mission which will create an ecosystem for the production of Green Hydrogen. By 2030, India aims to produce 4 metric tonnes (MT) of Green Hydrogen annually and accrue more than Rs. 1 lakh crores of fossil fuel import savings. We have also increased ethanol blending in petrol from 0.67 per cent in 2012 to 10 per cent in 2022, and recently advanced the target of ramping it up to 20 per cent by 2025-26 instead of 2030. The Ujjwala scheme has become a global case study for access to clean energy. It has freed our rural women from the shackles of the fireplace and given an entirely new dimension to the concept of 'gender justice'. As we celebrate the World Environment Day today, it is worth taking pride in how far India has come in balancing economic growth, social equality and environmental sustainability. We have progressed from energy scarcity to energy justice, and are now moving towards energy security through collaborative and integrated action. In doing so, we are setting a new standard for the collective fight against climate change.

(The author is Union Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs; and Petroleum & Natural Gas).

Consider WFH for PM package employees

■ OMKAR DATTATRAY

BJP government of centre and the LG government of UT seems reluctant to accept the genuine demand of their relocation from Kashmir valley and both the governments have made it clear that package and other Hindu employees posted across Kashmir will not be relocated/transferred to Jammu. The government says that adequate security will be provided to these employees and they will be transferred to safer locations within Kashmir and the process of transferring these employees to the headquarters has been started and it is in process. But it is not going to address the security concerns of the package employees and other Jammu employees who are demanding their transfer temporarily to Jammu division but the government is in no mood to accept the genuine demand of relocation to Jammu and other states of India of the package employees and the transfer to the home districts of the Jammu employees working across the Kashmir: A WFH medium should be framed to address the genuine security concerns of the package employees and the Jammu employees posted across Kashmir valley. The government had allowed its employees and then corporate sector also had allowed the employees work from home during the coronavirus for about two years and still some employees of the private companies are working from home. Taking a cue from it the Jammu and Kashmir UT should consider the genuine demand of the package and other Jammu employees of WFH -work from home during the time when targeted killings are taking place. There is fear and panic among the package employees and they reel under fear psychosis and want their relocation outside the Kashmir but the government has said that it is not going to accept this demand of the package employees. So the UT government of LG should consider the viable option of WFH to tide over the uncertainty and crises. In the prevailing conditions and circumstances there is genuine need to allow the package employees to work from home. The government should be pragmatic and should not be rigid and should not make the issue of the security concerns of the package employees as a matter of ego and so the government should come down from its ego and consider the good option of allowing the package employees to work from home till the situation normalizes in Kashmir: This is the best way to address the genuine concerns of the package employees. Thus without wasting time energy the UT government should consider and accept the option of working from home till the situation normalizes in Kashmir: The centre and the UT government should allow the package employees to work from home so that the genuine security concerns are addressed and the employees are not exposed to risk of target killings. Therefore the best and only practical option in the context of the targeted killings of the package employees and Jammu employees who are posted across Kashmir is that they be allowed to work from home till the situation normalises in Kashmir: UT Government should allow the package and other Jammu based employees who are working in Kashmir to work from home. In secretariat off line work is shifted to on line work and the same is happening at the divisional level. The concept of electronic work is under practice at the secretariat level and divisional level also and therefore there is enough scope for the novel practice of WFH. Therefore the insensitive government should consider and accept the only and best option of work from home for the package and other Jammu based employees working in Kashmir: So it is necessary to operationalize the scheme of work from home for the package employees till the time the situation normalizes in Kashmir: In the meantime time government and its different security agencies should work in coordination and tandem to tackle the targeted killings of the package employees and other minority community members including Jammu based employees who are working across the valley. The operation all out and other new techniques should be employed to crush militancy and defeat those militants who resort to the targeted killings to scare minorities so that

they decide to leave Kashmir and take refuge in Jammu and other places outside the UT. The sinister aim of the militants is to create fear and panic so that the minorities are forced to migrate to safer places in Jammu and outside the union territory. In such a scenario when there is fear psychosis among the pandit package employees and Jammu employees working in Kashmir, the government should embark on the best option of allowing work from home to tide over the crisis.. When the soft targets are being attacked and killed in broad day light by the crusaders of so called Jihad the government should consider and accept the option of work from home for the package employees so that their real concerns are addressed by the powers. In plain terms it means that the package employees should be asked to perform work from home so that on one hand the work will not hamper and on the other hand the lives of the package employees are not risked to targeted killings. So when the government and the private sector as well allowed work from home during the period of covid-19, then what is the inhibition in allowing the WFH to the package employees and therefore the WFH is the only and the best option available in the prevailing circumstances and so the government should embark on the path of giving freedom to the package employees so that they work from home till the time normalcy returns in Kashmir. The government should not remain hands tight but take on the monster of terrorism so that those resorting to targeted killings are brought to book so that such heinous crimes will not take place in future. The work from home popularly called WFH should be enforced and allowed so that the package employees are allowed to perform work from home so that they are not exposed to the bullets of the gun tottering marauders. The work from home is a novel practice and it was followed during the pandemic of coronavirus and now this practice should be considered and accepted and the package employees should be allowed to perform work from home so that on one side the work will suffer and on the other hand and more important one the lives of the package employees are not made sacrificial goats by the powers. Therefore the package employees should be allowed to work from home so that their security concerns are addressed and the work will also not suffer. So the only and the best option is to the allow the package employees and other Jammu employees who are posted across Kashmir to work from home temporarily till the time the situation in Kashmir will become normal. The government should work sincerely to bring normalcy in the valley and for this efforts should be made to crush targeted killings by the militants so that an environment of peace and tranquility will become possible so that at an appropriate time the package employees and other minority employees are asked to perform work in Kashmir but till normalcy is restored, the package employees and other Hindu employees from Jammu working in Kashmir should be allowed to work from home so that their precious lives are saved and the work also will also not suffer. Therefore the powers should focus on the work from home procedure and allow the package employees to work from home so that they are not exposed to the bullets of the militants and the work will also not suffer. The work from home is the best alternative in the precarious conditions when the targeted killings are executed by the enemies of the humanity and to save the package employees from the militants threats and attacks they should be allowed to work from home till the normalcy is restored.. Thus to give a befitting response to the militants the operation all out and other operations should be used and at the same time the package employees should be allowed to work from home. So WFH is the best and only alternative in these trying circumstances and so it should be embraced and the package employees should be allowed work from home till the time situation normalises in Kashmir: We can conclude the write up by saying Jan Hey toh Jahan Hai or in other words Jan Bi Te Jahan Bi and it will materialize by allowing the package employees to work from home.

(The author is a columnist and social activist).

YOUR COLUMN

Old age not a burden

Dear Editor,

Old age is evening of life. This is a phase that everyone has to go through at some point or the other. It is said that in old age a person starts behaving like a child, but in today's context this does not seem to be true. In today's era, children have started growing up prematurely; their understanding gets wings very soon. However, old people seem to be lagging behind due to not keeping pace with the times. There are many elders, whose struggle not only made them strong, but also made them capable of coping with situations by being well educated. With such self-respecting and active people, when physical problems begin to come in the way of aging due to age-related problems, then dependence breaks. They start going into depression. Depression is a serious problem of old age. Many physicians accept this. Actually, sociality is an essential aspect, without which life is not possible. Reading, writing, participation in social organizations or constant communication with peers gives you new energy and vitality. Loneliness disappears. The happiness and sorrow that you cannot share at home; you can lighten your mind by sharing it with your friends. Today life is surrendering in front of commercial and economic challenges. As a result, no one

has time to listen to the elders of the house, understand their plight. They can mobilize facilities, hire assistants, but cannot devote time. In such a situation, the elderly person is deprived of the emotional and mental relief that he needs. Physical disability does not allow him to move anywhere. He begins to feel that there is a burden on others. A self-respecting person never likes this; he likes the path of struggle. Pray and not run away. The thinking of our society is also not very encouraging about the elderly. We marginalize them for life. Japan is the country of the oldest people; the government there provides facilities for them accordingly. We don't even have ramps in many places to take them on a wheelchair. It is difficult even for the elderly to get a lower seat in the train. The Railway Department may pat its back by saving fifteen hundred crores by discontinuing the concession to senior citizens in the fare, but it will not be called sensitive attitude. There are long queues in hospitals and often proper seating arrangements are not available. Elders who maintain some hobby or hobby in life, their age-related struggles also get reduced. Mental state has a great influence on physical ability. There are many active writers in my city who have been active successfully in their eighth and ninth decade of life. He kept getting new energy among the creators and colleagues; he kept going to seminars and events. Firaq is the lion of Gorakhpuri - For the sake of life, take care of any disease / Life does not go on with the help of only health. The role of

creative hobby in life is important. She not only keeps you away from unnecessary worries and troubles, but also keeps you free from the hassle of spending time in old age. The attitude of the people of the house should also be sympathetic and positive in this stage. Unfortunately, due to economic challenges, our families are changing from joint to nuclear families these days. There is also a shortage of volunteers and medical personnel to serve the elderly in the country. In such a situation, cutting loneliness becomes a problem. Camouflage thoughts and negativity start to take over. If some time is given to dialogue and any of your hobbies, then you can get rid of this disease. But for this, one has to leave loneliness and increase the scope of sociality. Today the communication revolution has provided many avenues of communication; it is also a ray of hope for such lonely elderly people, from where they will get the touch of fresh air of the world. The seniors in our household are a treasure trove of experience. Let us not neglect them, but bring them out of the darkness of despair. Take advantage of their experiences, light your future path with the power of their vision and thoughts, because the struggle and life experience they have is priceless, it is going to be lost. It is our need and duty to preserve it. After all, any society is known by gratitude, not by ingratitude or professionalism.

Vijay Garg.