

BOOSTING DEFENCE

India is treading fast in boosting its military capabilities especially after Prime Minister Narendra Modi took over the reins of the country in 2014. Among many developments which the country saw in recent times, the biggest is the strengthening of the frontline against the enemies of the country like fortifying LAC in eastern Ladakh and forcing Pakistan to silence its guns by rejuvenating the truce pact of 2003 signed between two countries. Besides, the country has given a free hand to the troopers to deal with terror coming from outside and from within for ensuring robust defence against Pakistan and China. Induction of Rafale jets from France was also a historic step in fortifying the defence line as this state of art fighter jet has helped India to take a big leap in the field of defence. There is no doubt that the Modi government has taken revolutionary steps in upgrading the country's defence and many gaps which used to haunt security forces along borders have been successfully plugged in leaving little scope for the enemies to breach the security edifice. Although, Pakistan acquiring drone technology from some nations has become a source of headache for the forces deployed near borders as arms smuggling, reccce and other illegal activities are being carried out by the flying objects but the government is already on toes and sooner than later this problem will also be resolved successfully. With all this going on successfully, the government is continuously improving its defence capabilities and in this context, India has successfully carried out a training launch of the Agni-4 intermediate-range ballistic missile from the APJ Abdul Kalam Island in Odisha. This launch and many others in the past have moved India to be the part of the pool of front running countries which are indigenously developing strong armoury to compete with their adversaries. The aforesaid test of Agni-4 reaffirms India's policy of having a credible minimum deterrence capability. The aforesaid test was part of routine user training launches carried out under the aegis of the Strategic Forces Command. Reportedly, the ministry said the launch validated all operational parameters as also the reliability of the system. These necessary measures will surely give the edge to the country in defence and it will continue to remain as one of the leaders in the region as far as defence capabilities are concerned.

ANOTHER CONSIGNMENT RECOVERED

Showing another example of alertness and swift action, the valiant personnel of security forces especially Border Security Force and Jammu and Kashmir Police have averted a major tragedy with recovery of 3 magnetic improvised explosive devices, smuggled into the Indian Territory from across the border with the help of a drone. As per the reports, after hearing some suspicious humming sound like that of a drone, on Monday night, the alert BSF personnel fired in the direction of sound, in Kanachak area near border. Soon after receiving the information, joint search operation was launched in the area to trace the drone or its pay load and after strenuous efforts, Police again witnessed a drone in Kantowala-Dayaran area of Kanachak in the Akhnoor sector, which was again targeted but after dropping the pay load, the flying machine managed to flee back into Pakistan Border. On search, the three IEDs with their timer set and packed inside Tiffin boxes were recovered, which were diffused successfully by Bomb Disposal Squad. As per a senior police officer, the attempts to smuggle such sticky bombs and IEDs with timer through, the Aerial route using drones are being made by the terrorists and ISI, as they want to target the ensuing Shri Amarnath Yatra. He further conveyed that as the intelligence agencies have already warned regarding usage of sticky bombs and IEDs for targeting Yatra vehicles, the security forces are maintaining an enhanced vigil over the same and the recovery along with the one made few days back near border are the result of the same. Seeking cooperation of people in tracing out and eliminating all the supporters of anti-national elements, he asked people to remain vigil and alert besides informing the nearby police post in case they notice any suspicious activity. Although, the terrorists are repeatedly trying to push in explosives and other weaponry into the border for halting the development process going on across J&K and disrupting the peaceful environment, still the people need not to worry as our valiant security personnel are standing like a rock and will never allow the enemy to succeed in its nefarious designs at any cost.

OFF 'D' CUFF

True Happiness Lies In The Elimination Of Ego

sense of joy and happiness.

This inner journey is the true journey.

Why do we find ourselves familiar with misery and alien to happiness?

Misery is the result of ego. Misery is safe for the ego. Ego can exist only in misery.

Ego is hell and misery is the material for hell. When understanding arises, the darkness of misery has to go. For understanding to happen, you need to put in effort ... but also proper and adequate effort. For misery to go, you need such effort. For a lazy person putting in effort is hell.

Misery can exist in an effortless state.

What is ego?

Ego is an arrogant self. A self that is addicted to its point of view. A self that is proud of its achievement. For any achievement, one should be grateful and not proud. If one is humble, one will see there are many factors to one's success.

To see many factors for your achievement gives a sense of humility and not vanity. Once there is humility, ego can't exist. In humbleness there is joy. True joy is the death of the ego. True joy is suicide to the ego. When you are egoistic you enjoy life in the form of pleasure and suddenly feel guilty. This guilt is also the result of ego.

Swami Sukhabodhananda

I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which women have achieved.

-B R Ambedkar

EDITORIAL

Opinion leaders urge Modi to hive off Jammu from Kashmir & give it statehood, reject idea of statehood to Kashmir

■ PROF HARI OM



The 22 targeted killings (of Kashmiri Hindus, Jammu Dogras and non-J&K residents) in Kashmir after January 01, 2022 by Islamist terrorists have triggered a serious debate on the reform scheme introduced by the

Narendra Modi Government on August 5-6, 2019. On the eventful August 5-6, the Modi Government had read down seditious Article 370, abrogated discriminatory Article 35A and bifurcated erstwhile state of J&K into UT of J&K and UT of Ladakh. Some sophisticated and unbiased opinion leaders have suggested that the gruesome murders of innocents in Kashmir and the kind of leadership that we have in Kashmir 'should prompt a rethink on the government's post-article 370 policy of treating Jammu and Kashmir as one political unit' and 'the question of giving back statehood to Kashmir should be dismissed right away'. Two such opinion leaders are R Jagannathan and Tushar Gupta. It would be only desirable to quote verbatim some relevant portions from what they opined to put things in perspective and draw the attention of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah to their objective, rational and national suggestions calculating to defeating the violent jihad in Kashmir. First, R Jagannathan's suggestions: He, inter-alia, has said, "The mistake made at the time of J&K's bifurcation in 2019 was the excessive concern over pandering to Muslim sensitivities in the valley rather than the Hindus in Jammu. The truth is simple, as long as Jammu is treated as an appendage and second to Kashmiri interests, India's strongest backers in

J&K will lose out. Hindu interests are being short-changed in order to maintain a dubious narrative of secular Kashmir. The only remedy is another bifurcation, and early statehood for Jammu, with Kashmir being given its promised statehood only after violence abates. As long as Muslims in Kashmir are given the hope that they will continue to dominate undivided J&K by virtue of their demographic advantage - something that the current delimitation exercise, which gives Jammu six more seats against Kashmir's one does not fully address - they have no reason to adjust to new realities. Even though Jammu gets 43 seats against Kashmir's 47 post-delimitation, it is a fair bet that elements in Jammu will team up with the valley's majority to defeat Jammu's aspirations.

Not just this, Jagannathan has further opined, "The reality is that while Hindus have practically been eliminated from the valley, which is nearly 97 per cent Muslim, in Jammu the religious demography is 65 per cent Hindu, 31 per cent Muslim and 4 per cent Sikh. But there are thousands of Rohingya Muslims also staying in Jammu, and over time, if they have no chance of returning to Myanmar (Supreme Court stayed their deportation last year), they will grow roots there and impact even Jammu's Hindu-Sikh demography adversely at some point of time". The upshot of his whole formulation is, "The point is this: if we assume that Muslims will stay more loyal to religion than region (which is what led to partition in 1947), the Hindu majority in Jammu is simply not good enough as long as it remains a part of a single state called J&K. The way forward is thus clear. First, bifurcate Jammu & Kashmir and give the Pandits (read Kashmiri Hindu refugees) a permanent residence in Jammu. Those who choose to remain in the valley must be given full protection against targeted

killings. Second, Jammu must be given immediate statehood, and the valley told that statehood will follow once peace is restored. A carrot-and-stick approach to Kashmiri statehood is vital to send this message. A unified J&K is not going to work. J must be separated from K. This will allow the armed forces and special, well-armed and motivated Kashmiri policemen to hermetically seal the Valley, and finish their job as soon as possible".

As for Tushar Gupta, another expert on J&K affairs, he, like Jagannathan, has, among other things, said, "The question of giving back statehood to Kashmir should be dismissed right away, at least for another ten years. Kashmir, not Jammu, is not ready to be a state. The political class in Kashmir cannot be trusted to run the State affairs, not with their unapologetic stance towards terrorism and their perpetual inclination towards having a separate identity that is closer to Pakistan than India. Further, the decision to prolong the governor's rule in Kashmir should act as a deterrent for the political class, including three former chief ministers, that advocates an anti-India agenda. They either toe the national line or the Centre must reduce them to sorry figures in the bloodied pages of history. Even amongst the young majority population, the traditional political class is losing popularity. The government must capitalise on this sentiment".

And just like Jagannathan, Tushar Gupta, too, has urged Modi Government to separate Jammu from Kashmir and grant Jammu full state status. What actually has he suggested? He has suggested, "It is high time that the identity of Jammu is separated from Kashmir. Since 1947, Jammu has been the distant second priority for policymakers in the centre. Going forward, the political, economic, infrastructural, social, and cultural agenda for Jammu must be distinct from

Kashmir. With its own state assembly, the Hindu majority must be allowed to formulate new laws pertaining to land ownership, domicile, etc. to begin with". Tushar Gupta has taken on those who senselessly oppose further reorganisation of J&K on the ground that such a division will only help Pakistan achieve its age-old objective: Merger of Kashmir with Pakistan. "The one argument against statehood for Jammu is that it will reduce Kashmiri a union territory, to a border state with a constant threat of radicalisation from Pakistan. However, as the events of the last 70 years indicate, extremism in Kashmir is independent of the constitutional stature of Jammu," Tushar Gupta has said. Earlier, the Praja Parishad leader Balraj Madhok, the founder of Jana Sangh, Syama Prasad Mookerjee, who laid down his life in Kashmir on June 23, 1953 for the national cause, and the Congress veteran and former President of India, R Venkataraman, had also suggested that Jammu and Ladakh be separated from Kashmir as the aspirations and needs of the J&K's three regions were conflicting and mutually exclusive. Not only, Madhok, Mookerjee and Venkataraman, CPI General Secretary and former Union Home Minister Inderjit Gupta had also told the Lok Sabha that "trifurcation of J&K could also be a solution". It is hoped that PM Modi and HM Shah would consider the well-meaning and result-oriented suggestions as given very recently by Jagannathan and Tushar and as put forth by Madhok, Mookerjee and Venkataraman decades ago as far as reorganisation of J&K is concerned. A patient and wise consideration of these suggestions will help the Modi Government in three ways, it will secure and strengthen Jammu; limit the area of jihad to small Kashmir Valley and help the army, central paramilitary forces and police in Kashmir deal with jihad in Kashmir in a more effective manner.

Impose complete ban on use of loudspeakers

■ RAVINDER JALALI

Loudspeaker crackdown issues are buzzing all over the Nation with different dimensions giving to it from religious to political to social but the fact of the matter is that it should be treated as Social and Social issue only. In several states loudspeakers have been removed from religious places and in some states like Maharashtra loudspeakers have been removed partially and in some it have not been removed and some people demanding total ban on the use of loudspeakers. Sound is essential to our daily lives, but noise is not. Noise is generally used as an unwanted sound or sound which produces unpleasant effects and discomfort on the ears. Sound becomes unwanted when it either interferes with normal activities such as sleeping, conversation, or disrupts or diminishes one's quality of life. To control noise level in public places from various sources, inter alia, industrial activity, construction activity, generator sets, loud speakers, public address system, music systems, vehicular horns, and other mechanical devices.

Noise Pollution (Regulation and Control) Rules, 2000 has been enacted by the GOI in exercise of its powers conferred under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. Rule 5 restricts the use of loud speakers/public address system and sound producing equipments. A written permission is necessary for using such equipment. Religious places are considered as silent zones, wherein the maximum permissible sound is 50 dB (A) Leq during day time and 40 dB (A) Leq during night. The above restriction applies to all institutions around 100 meters. A loudspeaker which is capable of sound producing for communication within a hall will alone be possible. The practice of installing loudspeaker to produce noise outside the said premises within 100 meters may amount to violation. In the light of above, it is not understood why the Government of J&K is not taking a call on the imposition of complete ban on the use of loudspeakers irrespective of any religion or faith, instead of partial ban or to be restricted to some decibels before it will become a political and religious issue. The State Government has been empowered to grant permission to use loudspeaker or during any cultural or religious festive occasion of limited duration. But such relaxation is not necessary. I think

there is no need of such relaxation and needs complete ban of loud speakers irrespective of any religion, caste or bar. Why we cannot have a blanket ban on use of loudspeakers. For ordinary citizens, it does not make any sense in decibel limitations. It just becomes a statutory warning as in case of cigarettes and does not prevent people from consuming tobacco. The Noise Law is blatantly violated by many including under the guise of religious festivals. SC has held that no religion prescribed that prayers should not be performed by distributing the peace of others nor does it preach that they should be through voice-amplifiers or beating of drums. In the name of religion nobody can be permitted to add to noise pollution or violate noise pollution norms. Even if there be religious practice to use voice amplifiers, it should not adversely affect rights of others including that of being nor disturbed in their activities.

Under Article 21 of the Constitution, the citizens have a right of a decent environment and they have a right to live peacefully, right to sleep at night and to have a right to leisure which are all necessary ingredients of the right to life guaranteed under Article 21. The area comprising not less than 100 meters around hospitals, Educational Institutions, Courts, Religious Places or any other which is declared as such by the competent authority. After all religious places are to bring peace and tranquility within human beings but reverse is happening. People enter religious places and come out aggravated and hostile. They intrude the private spaces of people and cause discomfort. They have a complete disregard for sick, studying and sleeping. They do not pray. They actually perform and this performance comes at the cost of common sense, decency and civic rights. Who gave them the right to disturb others; can we ask this simple question with all seriousness and humility. Why should my prayers, my way of getting closer to God, my obligations towards my religion and my proclivity to say hymns loudly, be a source of vexation for someone else. Is religion oblivious to decency, common sense and human comfort? Actually they are not praying but committing sin and will definitely be punished in any court of law, including the Almighty. In the name of religion this practice of disturbing people must stop, and for that these people need to be confronted at all

levels. It is good that some of our religious scholars have openly talked about these things. We have people that still resort to this practice of using loudspeakers, and releasing loads of noise into the atmosphere. They bring disgrace to the whole institution of prayer, besides causing inconvenience to the people in the vicinity. And if you decently ask them to switch off the loudspeakers they swiftly call it an act of irreverence and sacrilege. They make it such an emotive affair that one doesn't want to argue with them any further; least of all at a public space. But does that mean we should tolerate it forever; when it brings disgrace and disrupt to a religion and as a community. Decency is a universal value. Common sense is another such value. Similarly, being mindful of others should be a cardinal teaching for every religion. All the three are violated by these people and shockingly they do it in the name of religion. Can this be the way to please God and seek his fellowship? Our civil society groups, media, religious organisations and persons who are respected for their knowledge and integrity, are duty bound to rid us from this discomfort. They have a duty to salvage their faiths from the label of being an irritant in the public space. All must come forward to ensure that decency and common sense are restored to our religious practices and appeal the Government for banning the use of loudspeakers and also should prevail their respective religious leaders to voluntary impose ban on the use of loudspeakers before the issue is being taken over by law breakers and those who are hell bent upon to disturb the peace and tranquility in our societies as well as our Nation. These people have no regard for the sick, students and those who are sleeping. I take this opportunity to appeal all other religions/communities not to use the loudspeakers totally as to respect the decency, comfort of others, as no religion is unmindful to decency, common sense and human comfort. Service to mankind is service to God and by using loud speakers at high pitch is only causing disservice to society and how a disservice to sick, student and sleeping can be service to God, as all these people are also his men. After all the silence is the best sound and does not need any instrument but one need to move within?

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Revolutionizing Healthcare in J&K
228 Jan Aushadhi Kendras providing quality, affordable medicare to people at doorsteps

With dedication of 108 Jan Aushadhi Kendras to people of Jammu and Kashmir by Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, the UT now has 228 Kendras functional with high standard and quality medicines, surgical equipments and other requisite services available at affordable prices. Such developments in the healthcare world of J&K has tremendously helped the ailing here in availing the best medicare within the UT that too in a total hassle free and transparent manner. The people here now are completely satisfied and happy with the qualitative and quantitative improvement in healthcare utilities at their doorsteps which has also reduced their out of pocket expenditure on this account.

An official of health department said that the initiative will popularize generic medicines among the masses and dispel prevalent notion that low priced generic medicines are of inferior quality or are less effective. On May 9, 2011, the first store was opened at Red Cross Building Exchange Road Srinagar after Jan Aushadhi scheme was launched in the year 2010.

The Jan Aushadhi outlets known as Jan Aushadhi Kendras are becoming popular for providing generic medicines at affordable rates with quality and efficiency at par with branded medicine.

According to official data, 11 centers have been set-up in Jammu, 2 in Doda, 9 in Pooh, 5 in Rajouri, 3 in Ramban, 6 in Reasi, 10 in Samba, 4 in Kathua and 2 in Udhampur districts of Jammu region. Similarly, 8 such centers have been set up in Srinagar, 6 in Pulwama, 6 in Ganderbal, 5 in Bandipora, 10 in Kupwara, 6 in Anantnag, 1 in Shopian, 4 in Kulgam, 5 in Baramulla and 6 in Budgam districts of Kashmir region.

These Kendras have been established within the government health care institutions in tertiary care hospitals in Jammu and Srinagar, District Hospitals, Sub District Hospitals and Primary Health Care Centres which also covered far flung areas like Arnas, Darni (Reasi), Sedow (Shopian) Tandgir, Kalarose and Sogam (Kupwara) to make available affordable and quality medicines available to people. Procurement of Janaushadhi products is being executed through e-tender portal (CPPP) of Government of India while following SAP based inventory management. Besides, the administration has put in place an effective mechanism of blacklisting and debarring of vendors, suppliers and manufacturers for failure in supply and penalty for late delivery. As per quality of medicines is concerned, two tier quality assurance is being maintained by procuring medicines only from WHO-GMP certified companies and testing through laboratories accredited by NABL. Meanwhile, the scheme is doing justice to its tagline 'Janaushadhi-Seva Bhi, Rozgar Bhi' by providing medicines to common citizens of the country at a price cheaper by 50 per cent to 90 per cent of average market price, at the same time providing self employment with sustainable and regular earnings to unemployed youth. Also, affordable sanitary napkins are being made available in these stores to improve the menstrual hygiene management. The central government is contemplating to increase number of Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Kendras to 10,000 across the country by March 2024. As on October 10, 2021, the number of Janaushadhi Kendras has increased to 8,366 covering 736 districts in the country. The product basket of PMBJP comprises of 1,451 drugs and 240 surgical instruments. Medicines available under Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) are priced around 50 per cent to 90 per cent less than that of branded medicines.

Taalash survey: A unique initiative from Education Department

■ SHYAM SUDAN

Recently Education Department of J&K UT with the collaboration of Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan has launched a very unique and historical programme of 'Taalash'.

Basically Taalash is a survey based programme for out of school and dropout children. As we know due to impact of COVID 19 lot of children have left their schooling due to one or other reasons. In J&K as we know in government schools there is great percentage of those children who are not capable to get private education.

No doubt government schools are providing every basic necessity to these children. There are lot of schemes and programs in government schools which are designed for these children. There is provision of mid day meal program which is a mega nourishment scheme all over the country for government school children. Side wise government is giving lot of scholarship and other benefit like free uniforms, books and other basic materials to the children of government school. It doesn't mean that government school are designed only for down trodden and poor section of our society. These facilities are provided to every student who is reading in government school. Despite having all the facilities in schools in recent years we have seen that the custom of dropout and left out children are continuously increasing. But are the reasons and factors

behind this trend, it is a debatable point. Many students left their schooling in mid way. No doubt it is serious concern for all of us. At one side we are giving priority to universalization of education and right to education to every child. On the other hand our children are leaving their study in their mid way. At present we are in need of smart and technically equipped manpower in the country. Because at present we are in the great transitional phase of our development. Recently we have launched the new education policy 2020, and we have set lot of goals and objective for our education. However dropout of children from school is not a new issue but in this digital age we can't expect such things. As we know an uneducated and half learned person always create problems for his family as well for his society. Such kind of persons put an extra burden on family as well as on the dwelling country. Taalash survey is designed to locate and identify the numbers of such children who are dropout out or out of schools. In our region many students especially girl students faces the problem of dropout due to family pressure, economic conditions and social taboos. Many boys are also facing such kind of obstacles in their study. Through this survey we can recognize the actual reality behind this matter. The aim of the education department is to bring back such children in schools and give benefits of right to education to these children.

With the collaboration of all and with proper guidance and counseling activities we can achieve our target. But for this firstly there is need of proper survey of these children. Taalash survey in which millions of teachers are engaged at present is the first and foremost step in this direction. This is purely an online or digital survey through a specially designed app (Taalash App). Here the role of teachers are very pivotal because on the basis of this survey the education department further design their strategy for these children. And undoubtedly teachers are giving their best in this direction. However it is a very hectic program and in this scorching heat condition it is very difficult for teachers to visit door to door for this programme. But teachers are giving their services on a missionary mode for this survey programme. The time of the survey is also very appropriate at present because there is summer vacation in all the schools. Mostly children are at their homes and they can give better response to the surveyors. It is needed for parents also to give the authentic and factual information for this survey. However it is mentioned in the circular that PRIs will provide assistance for this survey. It is duty of all stakeholders of society to come forward and support the surveyors for completion of this Taalash survey. Our children are the real assets of our society. We can't expect a civilized society until there is contribution of all in it.