

STOP CHILD LABOR

A child is generally considered to be an adult when he is eighteen years of age or older. Children below this age limit are not allowed to engage in any form of forced employment.

Child labor is seen as preventing children from experiencing a normal upbringing, receiving quality education, and hindering their physical and emotional development.

Although it is banned in some countries, yet it has not been successful in eliminating it completely.

In many unorganized small scale industries, children are given priority for employment, because their demand for money is very less as compared to others and they are also easy to handle.

Sometimes children's own families force them into child labor because they lack money or are unable to provide them facilities.

These children often grow up in poor, unhealthy conditions, with little access to school or medical care. These children are also forced to live in seclusion and are not allowed to play, socialize or make friends.

Such a toxic workplace is difficult for children and it often contributes to mental illnesses such as depression. These children often consume drugs and other intoxicants, which worsens their physical and mental health.

Employing children in a way that deprives them of the opportunity to enjoy a childhood, receive an education, or experience personal growth is known as child labor. If a person or organization is found involved in child labor, there is a provision for action against them under strict laws made for child labor, imprisonment and fine. Standards are set in many countries like India against child labor.

Although there are many rules to prevent child labor, still we need to implement them. Due to poverty children are forced to work and support their families.

I object to violence because when it appears to do good, the good is only temporary; the evil it does is permanent.

-Mahatma Gandhi

‘Rozgar Mela’ institutionalizes government recruitment based on merit and transparency

■ DR JITENDRA SINGH

Future historians will record that during the last 9 years as Prime Minister, while Shri Narendra Modi sought to institutionalise the government recruitment process by introducing the practice of holding regular Rozgar Melas and bringing in reforms like abolition of interviews to ensure transparency in recruitments, on the other hand he simultaneously awakened the nation to alternative means of employment outside government through his boost to the StartUp movement resulting in 300 times rise in the number of StartUps to nearly 1 lakh in this country, more than 100 Unicorns and India ranking 3rd in world's StartUp ecosystem.

At the sametime, PM Modi never misses a chance to remind the youngsters taking up a new vocation, inside or outside the government, about the critical role destined to be played by them in the Amritkal over the next 25 years in the run-up to India@100 in 2047.

Rozgar Mela is a step towards fulfillment of the commitment of Prime Minister Modi for employment generation in the country. The Rozgar Mela is expected to act as a catalyst in further employment generation and provide meaningful opportunities to the youth for their empowerment and participation in National Development directly.

Since its inauguration on 22nd October 2022, the Rozgar Mela has been organized in six tranches across the nation, resulting in the

distribution of over 4.25 lakh appointment letters to deserving candidates. The sixth tranche was organized on 13th June 2023 in 43 different locations nationwide.

The recruitment process for these positions is carried out through transparent and time-bound procedures conducted by esteemed recruitment agencies such as the Staff Selection Commission (SSC), Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), Railway Recruitment Boards (RRBs), and others.

The newly appointed candidates, representing the diverse talent pool from across the country, will join various government departments and positions, including Financial Services, Posts, School Education, Higher Education, Revenue, Atomic Energy, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, and Ministry of Railways.

To further enhance the skills of the government employees and to provide an ecosystem of training architecture where a public servant can upskill himself as per the requirements of his role, the Prime Minister had rolled out Mission Karmayogi initiative. This online platform offers numerous e-learning courses accessible on various devices, enabling flexible learning for the candidates. Already, more than 5 lakh karmayogis from different government departments have enrolled on the capacity building portal. Keeping in mind the needs and requirements of new recruits, Hon'ble Prime

Minister has recently launched KarmayogiPrarambh, an online module on igotkarmayogiportal where more than 400 e-learning courses have been made available for 'any where any device' learning format. The courses cover essential topics such as understanding motivation, prevention of sexual harassment, code of conduct for government employees, self-leadership, effective communication, stress management, as well as beginner courses on Microsoft Excel and Word. By empowering the workforce with these vital skills, the Government aims to enhance individual and organizational effectiveness, fostering a culture of excellence and innovation.

In addition to the successful Rozgar Mela and the KarmayogiPrarambh initiative, DoPT has undertaken several reforms to streamline and ensure transparency. Notable reforms include the discontinuation of interviews for Group C and Group D level posts, switchover to computer-based exams for improved efficiency and the introduction of self-attestation.

The Modi Govt's commitment to the welfare of weaker sections is evident through initiatives like providing ex-servicemen with multiple opportunities to avail themselves of the benefits of reservation and ensuring the implementation of reservation provisions for Persons with Benchmark Disabilities.

While the government continues its

endeavors to provide employment opportunities in the public sector through the Rozgar Mela, it is also actively engaged in stimulating employment generation in the private sector. Initiatives such as the PM Gatishakti National Master Plan, expansion of national highways and airports, development of metro rail networks and waterways, promotion of startups, rural road connectivity, renewable energy capacity, and promotion of domestic manufacturing under the Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat campaigns, are significantly contributing to the creation of employment opportunities. PM Gatishakti National Master Plan has been formulated to expedite infrastructure projects, while the expansion of the national highway network and industrial corridors are expected to create numerous job prospects. The number of airports and metro rail networks has significantly increased, and waterways development, start-up growth, rural road connectivity, renewable energy capacity and digitization efforts have further bolstered employment opportunities.

PM Modi's commitment to harness the dividend of youth asset in contemporary India continues to reflect in each successive initiative undertaken by him.

(The writer is Minister of State for the Ministry of Science and Technology and Minister of State for Prime Minister's Office).

Fenugreek- Health Benefits and Uses

■ DR. BANARSI LAL

Fenugreek is commonly known as "Methi" and its botanical name is Trigonella foenumgraecum. It is a popular ingredient in many North and South Indian dishes and home remedies. Traditional herbal medicines are attracting more and more attention due to the increasing awareness on the hazardous side effects of the synthetic drugs. One of the prominent among them is fenugreek, which can be used as a spice as well as in ayurvedic medicine. Fenugreek has a light bitter taste with a pleasant flavour and is believed to be the antidote for a number of diseases and disorders such as diabetes, dysentery, labour pain, diarrhoea, dyspecia, tuberculosis, colic, flatulence, digestive disorders, gastric inflammation, painful menstruation, insufficient lactation, , libido in men, hernia, premature ejaculation, weight loss, anoreseia, poor appetite, back pain, bronchial complaints, gout, arthritis, ulcers, boils, eczema, various types of fever including malaria, sore throat, different kinds of skin diseases etc. It reduces serum cholesterol and triglycerides and increase hemoglobin content of blood. Besides, it also contains high quantities of iron and thus can be used for the treatment of anaemia.

Fenugreek seeds and leaves are rich in proteins and have less fat. Its biological as well as pharmacological actions are attributed to the varieties of its chemical constituents, including various steroids, aminoacids, n-compounds, polyphenolic substances, alkaloids, proteins, lipids and volatile constituents. Fenugreek is particularly rich in the steroidal sapogenin called diosgenin, which along with its epimers are the precursors of a number of steroids like some sex hormones and oral contraceptives. The content can be as high as 65mg percent to 75 mg percent depending upon the

varieties and ecological factors.

A number of sterols are present in all parts of the fenugreek plant. These include B-sitosterol and small amounts of cholesterol. Recently, six triterpenoids such as lupeol, 3L-norecycloartanol, betulin, betulinic acid, soyasaponin and soyasaponin methyl ester have been isolated and identified from the ethanolic extract of the seeds. These are also rich in flavonoids like quercetin along with luteolin, quercetin, vitexin, vitexin-7-O-glucoside, arabinoside of orientin, iso-orientin and vicenin-1 in substantial quantities.

All these and some more have been extracted and identified in the alcoholic extracts of the stems as well as the seeds. The anti-bacterial activities of fenugreek are said to be due to these flavanoids. These are also considered to have healthy effects on heart and have anti-cancer properties. Different varieties of fenugreek accumulate different phytoalexins in different quantities.

Those include pterocarpan and isoflavan (vestitol and sativan) derivatives. Besides, hydroxylated pterocarpan and traces of three pterocarpan precursors, namely, isoflavone, formononetin, flavanone liguiritigenin and chalcone isoliquiritigenin are also found along with those in a few varieties. All of these have active biological properties that cure several diseases and disorders and boost resistance against them.

The phenlic compounds present in fenugreek are cholorogenic, scopoletin, caffeic and p-coumaric acids in its root, shoot and pod, while its leaf and stem contain scopletin and lignan ?schisandrin. Similarly, hymecromone (4-methyl-7-acetoxycoumarin) has been isolated from a whole plant extract and the stems are found to have hymecromone, phenolic compounds like (E)-3-(4-hydroxyphenyl)-2- propenoic acid or p-

coumaric acid and trigoforin (3, 4, 7- trimethyl-coumarin). They ensure not only healthy heart and boost immunity against several infective diseases but also have strong anti-rheumatic and anti-tumour properties. More than 50 volatile components have been detected in fenugreek, out of which 40 have been identified. These include n-alcenes, sesquiterpenes and other oxygenated compounds like n-hexenol, camphor, 2-heptanone, n-heptanone, aniline, phenol, heptanoic acid, undecane, dodecane, decanoic acid, thymol, 2-hexylfuran, tridecane etc. All these have various medicinal properties and serve as raw materials for the synthesis of several medicines.

The aroma of fenugreek seed is due to compounds like ?nonalactone and 5-methyl - ? - caprolactone and have strong olfactory properties. Besides, some other compounds belonging to n-lactane family also contribute to its aroma. A number of free aminoacids are present in fenugreek seed but hydroxyl isoleucine constitutes 80% of those. One of its isomers, 4-hydroxy isoleucin (2-amino-4-hydroxy-3-methyl pentanoic acid) is an insulin stimulant. Thus, fenugreek has been found to be useful for diabetic patients. It is an anti-diabetic and hypo cholesterolaemic activities and have also been linked to the saponin and high fibre content of it, which selectively reduce the low density lipids and very low density lipids fractions of total cholesterol and increase the high density lipid fraction in type-II diabetic individuals. In a recently conducted experiment, oral administration of fenugreek seed powder (5% of the diet) has been found to have marked effects on glycolytic, gluconeogenic and NADP - linked lipogenic enzymes in alloxan induced wistar rats. In diabetics, the activities of the glycolytic enzymes are significantly lower in the liver and higher in the kidney, while on the otherhand,

the activities of gluconeogenic and lipogenic enzymes are higher and lower respectively in those organs. However, treatment with fenugreek seed powder reportedly can bring the activities of all these enzymes back to normal and can control blood sugar level within 21 days. Therefore, it has established the therapeutic role of fenugreek in type I diabetes, by normalizing the activities of glucose and lipid metabolizing enzymes.

According to recent researchers, the scientific studies conducted to establish the health promoting effectiveness of the herb are still inadequate. On the other hand, its chemical composition suggests that it may have a number of potential side effects such as, diarrhoea, gas, bloating, indigestion, heart burn and allergy, if taken in larger quantity. Besides, it contains compounds that make blood "thin", which may enhance proneness to internal bleeding as do some drugs like aspirin or warfarin. Similarly, it may also increase the risk of hypoglycemia, when taken in combination with diabetes medicines. Besides, there is also the possibility that it may interact with certain drugs, an aspect which has not been studied properly. As fenugreek is traditionally used to stimulate labour, it should induce uterine contraction causing preterm labour and miscarriages, if taken earlier in pregnancy. Thus, pregnant ladies must be cautious while taking it as an antidote for any diseases. The researchers also point out that the medicinal dose and long term effects of fenugreek are yet to be established to clear it for use in modern medicines. Thus, more scientific research on the medicinal uses of the fenugreek should be conducted.

(The writer is Sr. Scientist & Head of KVK, Reasi SKUAST-J).

Captivating Chinta Valley

■ G.L KHAJURIA

The Chinta Valley in Bhadarwah is located about 200 kms away from Jammu having an altitude around 3000 mts from mean sea level (MSL). It is kaleidoscopically a picturesque spot perched amidst the surrounding hills to north east of Bhadarwah town itself. The serene and scenic beauty of Bhadarwah and its surroundings are equalizing the valley of Kashmir, a paradise on earth. Bhadarwah as well is nomenclasurised aschhota Kashmir in so far as its beauty, climate and culture is concerned.

The valley is bounded by the ends of spurs from the ridges of forests specked by cultivable land at their different levels. The bottom of this Valley is flat and at certain points sloppy. The terraced lands are thickly studded with small and big villages covered by grand black deodars, kail, Chir, fur and spruce at higher altitude. And still at higher elevation are vast carpet-like meadows covered with green grass and multi-hued, multi-colored flowers, herbs, shrubs of mutimedical uses. Literally speaking, Chinta Valley has an ancient name Chintan,

a Sanskrit word meaning self-introspection but with rolling wheel of time the word Chintan depraved into Chinta. The enchanting Valley of Chinta falls around 18 to 20 kms away from the Bhadarwah town itself. From Bhadarwah, the road passes through various villages shrouded by thickly coniferous forests areas. The valley depicts multihued social and cultural heritage akin to neighboring Himachal Pradesh, UP and other Himalayan states of India. The higher elevation abounds in multihued hills having specks of tourists spots viz suvardhar, rowdal, fukklandhar, loirudhar with grassy meadows and towering pine trees which give pleasant whiffs and hum in gentle breeze far too distant apart. And a head about 5 kms to 8 kms on foot, the spot gives panoramic view of varied venues of solace and marry making all around the Chinta Valley and down below Bhadarwah town as if one is airily viewing the enchanting scenario far away of what we see Chita Valley. Towards the east of Chinta valley is another Charming and enchanting Valley by name Jai surrounded by thick and dark Deodars, Kail and chir forests which of

course are connected by Kacha and pacea inter-linkages facilitating varied avenues for picnies, riding, climbing and fishing in small rivulets of Jai. Climacterically Speaking, the valley is temperate particularly during summer thus providing a comfortable and pleasant resting place for the tourists and other visitors like. Economically, the area is congenitally sound despite the fact that agriculture is the main stay of the people. The local are also involved in government and other jobs owing to high literacy. The locals are most hospital, peace loving and of jovial nature, always espousing religious cause, tolerance and fraternity insofar as religious faith is concerned, the Naga cult is the prominent creed and features of the vicinity. One of the most prominent pilgrimage is to Kailash(Kaplash) kund and abode of Vasukai Nag raja which begins every year in the month of Bhadaron August on 12th day of krishanapaksh.

The yatra starts from Vasukai Nag temple ghata just at the entrance of Bhadarwah town. The pilgrimage takes the same traditional route which was taken by

shriVasukai Nag ji to reach KailashKund at the time when Garudji wanted to kill Vasukhi Nag ji. Instead of having a fight with garudji, shreeVasukhi Nag ji ran away to avoid fight in order to obey the promise he had made to his mother Vanita as both Gaud Ji and Vasukhi Nag ji were the sons of great saint Maharishi Kashyap. Kailash in Bhadarwah is also called kablas. It is a big lake situated at a height arrounding 15k feet from (Mean Seal Level)msl. The lake is beautiful, pure having crystal clear water which is icy cold. The lake is surrounding by high mountains and glaciers. It is most attractive and enthralling spot which had been the abode of Lord Shiva who provided shelter to Vasukhi Nag ji when he was being chased by Garudji. Lord Shiva after handing over KailashKund to VasukuiJiproceeded Manimahesh in HP. There are two other holy shrines atop Chinta Jai. Sheshnag (Sabarnag) at sabardhar and other Tara Bhuja at Roshira at a distance of 3 kms to 5 kms and are located midst of forests of Chinta Valley.It is believed that both the scared shines are oldest in Bharawah. There are multihued

sared spots vizgupt Ganga adjoining Neeru rivulet where there is a temple of Lord Shive with huge Shiv lingam and parnali of water keeps of soothing Shivlingam since the existence of this temple. The Shivlingam is reported to have been brought from Macheater, Neeru Nala.

To propitiate the local diets, lot of farsand festivals are celebrated in the month August and September when it is a slack in Bhadarwah to prominent colorful dances/ Melasare most prominent. Dhaku dance and pattMela are most revertially celebrated in Bharadarwah Valley. Now that the government has proclaimed a Tourists development Authority of bhadarwah and with the passage of time, this shall boost the tourist potential of the area for multihued development activities to attract and enchant tourists from India and abroad to have a charming glimpse of beauty, cultural heritage and above all the serene, scenic beauty of the area and its surrounds apart from invigorating local economy- the clarion call of the day.

(The author is former Conservator of Forests J&K).

J&K became Centre of Religious & spiritual Consciousness Again!

■ ANCHAL SRIVASTAVA

Jammu and Kashmir is emerging as the spiritual capital for all the religious devotees. Recently, Tirupati Balaji Temple of Lord Venkateshwar has been open for devotees in Jammu. Maa Sharda temple and a gurdwara were inaugurated in Tettwal, Kupwara close to the Line of Control (LoC) in March. Kheer Bhawani Mela was well organised in May. Vaishno Devi attracts devotees from all over the country throughout the year. More than three and half lakhs people went Amarnath Yatra in 2022 and there is expected to visit more than five lakh people in 2023. The action plan has been prepared for carrying out the restoration, revival, preservation and maintenance of Architecture and Heritage of religious places and heritage sites in Srinagar district such as Khan Kahi eMoula of Mir Syed Ali Hamdani (RA), Shiv Temple at Vicharanag Nowshera Srinagar, Khankaah eNaqashband Sahib (RA), Bhairav Mandir Chattabal, Zeashta Devi at Zeathiyar etc. There are also plans of reviving the Martand Sun Temple of Anantnag as a pilgrimage in the near future. These are examples of the amalgamation of nature and spiritual experience.

Jammu and Kashmir has always been the flagbearer of culture and civilization. Throughout history, it has been home to various spiritual traditions, including Buddhism, Hinduism, and

Sufism. The presence of ancient monasteries, temples, and Sufi shrines further adds to the spiritual richness of the region. These diverse spiritual practices and the associated teachings promoted inner growth, peace, and enlightenment. Although it was gravely affected by the foreign invaders, after the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A, J&K seems to have returned to its older glorious traditions and cultural practices.

J&K has the potential to emerge as a significant hub of spiritual consciousness in the world. The region is renowned for its breathtaking natural beauty, serene landscapes, and peaceful environment, which provide an ideal setting for spiritual practices and exploration. It is said that those who will be planning to visit Vaishno Devi Shrine, Amarnath Yatra, Sharda Temple, Kheer Bhawani Temple etc. must visit Tirupati Balaji Temple.

Along with the temples, the conservation of Hajratbal Shrine and other Sufi Ziarats is also in progress in the Valley of Kashmir. Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman, while presenting the first budget of J&K Union territory in the Parliament, announced the government's intentions to develop the Sufi pilgrimage circuit. Within this proposed Sufi circuit, there are significant spiritual destinations awaiting pilgrims. One of the most prominent sites of this circuit is the Hazratbal Shrine, located en route to Sonamarg from Srinagar. This shrine holds a relic asso-

ciated with Prophet Muhammad, making it a site of deep reverence and devotion. Another notable destination along the circuit is Aishnuqam, situated on the way to Pahalgam in the Anantnag district. This sacred location carries spiritual significance and serves as a place of solace and introspection for seekers.

Lastly, the shrine of Nund Rishi in Chrar-e-Sharief, situated on the way to Yusnarg, is another important site for spiritual seekers, known for its association with the revered Sufi saint. This initiative aligns with the vision of Jammu and Kashmir emerging as a prominent spiritual hub. By highlighting and preserving these spiritual sites, the government aims to attract individuals from around the world who seek the blessings of Sufi saints and aspire for spiritual healing. This will be recognizing the immense potential of religious tourism.

Apart from religious centres, Jammu and Kashmir is also the attraction of Yoga. Five decades ago, Yoga guru Dhirendra Brahmachari built a yoga ashram at Mantalai in the Udhampur district. He was the yoga guru of the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Now, the revival of the ashram initiated by Dr Jitendra Singh, State Minister of the Prime Minister Office and planning is to make this country's biggest International Yoga Centre. By providing infrastructure and resources to support spiritual seek-

ers, it will attract people in search of introspection, meditation, and self-realization.

The land of J&K is full of opportunities but it is also full of care. It is important to be cautious that the development of UT as a hub of spiritual consciousness should be approached with sensitivity and respect for the region's cultural and religious diversity. With people being heterogeneous in ethos, language, religion and culture balancing tourism and development with the preservation of the region's natural beauty and spiritual heritage is crucial to ensure sustainable growth and harmony.

By continuing to nurture its spiritual heritage, promoting interfaith dialogue, investing in infrastructure, and preserving the environment, the region can attract seekers, foster spiritual growth, and contribute to the global spiritual community. Additionally, leveraging technology can play a significant role in spreading the message of spiritual consciousness from J&K to the rest of the world. Online platforms, social media, and digital content can be utilized to share teachings, practices, and the experiences of spiritual practitioners in the region. This can create a virtual bridge, allowing people across the globe to connect with the spiritual essence of J&K.

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