

STOP PLASTIC POLLUTION

Plastic pollution is harming our environment very fast. The disposal of waste generated from plastic materials is very difficult and it also contributes significantly to the pollution on the earth, due to which it has become a matter of global concern.

Due to the increasing use of plastic bags, utensils and furniture, there has been a significant increase in plastic waste, which has created a serious problem like plastic pollution. This is the time when we have to think seriously about this problem and start efforts to solve it.

Plastic is one of the most widely used materials for making boxes, bags, furniture and many other products because it is economical and can be molded into any shape. Due to the increasing use of plastic items, a serious problem like plastic pollution has arisen.

The waste generated from plastic is increasing day by day, because plastic is a non-biodegradable material so it does not decompose in water and land. It remains in the atmosphere for hundreds of years, due to which it causes land, water and air pollution.

Plastic bags and other products made of plastic break into small pieces and mix with soil and water sources, causing the problem of plastic pollution.

The waste generated from plastic gets mixed in water sources such as rivers, seas and oceans and affects them in a bad way.

This water is delivered to us for our use, it does not matter how much we filter it, it can never return to its original state and the use of this water also has a negative effect on our health.

A large amount of plastic waste is disposed of in landfills. Apart from this, small pieces of plastic fly from one place to another when blown by the wind and these pieces of plastic produce harmful chemicals which destroy the quality and fertility of the soil.

Plastic bags and other plastic waste that end up in rivers and seas. It is mistakenly eaten by sea creatures as their food, due to which they fall ill.

Plastic pollution is a serious concern worldwide. Due to the negligence done by us, it is increasing even more. This is the time when we need to take tough decisions to solve it.

This terrible problem can be overcome only by stopping the increasing use of plastic by us. Each one of us has to come forward to solve this problem. And to stop it, everyone have to make their valuable contribution.

KARMIC CONFIGURATION

■ MOHANJI

Q: I cannot find my husband and start a family. Why is it?

Mohanji: You are very lucky (chuckles) actually; I can give you a one-word answer: if you can't find your husband, it is probably karmic.

However, let us imagine this situation I tell you, don't take it seriously, I'm just trying to explain the situation in a bit of a comical way.

Imagine you had a husband who was beating you up and your only prayer to God was, "Please God, take this guy away from me," or "I don't need to have a husband anymore".

What happens next? That life is already determined because you have a husband who beats you. Your next life happens and your prayer is answered. It took a lifetime to get your prayer answered!

Thus, in this lifetime you don't have a husband. Now you are praying, "Oh, God, give me a husband!" So that guy is maybe still waiting to come to you (laughs) and continue with his journey - not your journey, his journey.

I'm joking, but understand there is always a reason for everything and the causes are usually the prayers or the deep desires of last life. It's usually the case.

A person, who was in extreme poverty, craves for money and in the next life they become rich. Because in that life it was not possible, as per the karmic configuration.

Repeal of anti-conversion law

■ K.V SEETHARAMAIAH

For a party that comes to power dislodging the earlier dispensation, priority is accorded to reverse the laws passed by the previous government. Assurance made in manifestos will take its own time to fulfill if at all the matter is taken in all seriousness.

Political vendetta gets first priority. Repeal of anti-conversion law and lessons dropped from school text books in Karnataka after Congress came to power are cases in point.

Repeal of anti-conversion law signifies that the present government in Karnataka is keen to ensure the reduction of Hindu population. Conversion racket gets fillip with the abolition of anti-conversion law. Conversion from one faith to another changes the very demographic character of the nation. Conversion through inducements and coercion gains momentum with the abolition of anti-conversion law.

The abolition of anti-conversion law must be challenged in the Karnataka.

If need be in the Supreme Court. Power and position are not permanent. Congress needs to realise that it has already started drawing flak from people for giving in one hand and taking it from the other.

The moment BJP comes to power, it may resort to revive anti-conversion law in the same name or in different name.

Abolishing and bringing back the laws by the government headed by different political parties at different times make the mockery of ruling parties for their childish behaviour. Certainly anti-people laws must be undone.

Mass conversions can never be regarded as pro-people activity. Conversions are disturbing the peace and tranquility among people.

By rescinding the anti-conversion law, if Congress thinks that BJP has been given slap, it is sadly mistaken. If the time devoted to cheap politics is spared for developmental activities, the people are served better.

The lesson on Hedgewar and Savarkar has been dropped by Karnataka government. Patriots are hated and villains like Tippu Sultan who was responsible for massacre of innocent people are revered by Congress. This does not augur well. Lok Sabha election has been fast approaching.

If the Congress comes to power and plays the same game as it played in Karnataka, it is nothing but vindictive action much to the detrimental of nation's progress. In the feud between rival parties, the people are sufferers. Suffering people may swerve from right path. It is not good. If it happens so, it is "as is the king, so are the subjects".

Hill Agriculture: Challenges and Opportunities

■ DR. BANARSI LAL

Hilly areas are endowed with ample natural resources including soil, water, climatic condition, diversity, topography, rich natural flora etc. which are conducive for the cultivation of a wide range of crops. Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir is bestowed with natural beauty and located between 32.17 and 37.06 North latitude and 73.2 and 80.36 East longitude in the Himalayan region. The average temperatures of these two regions are 24.5 and 13.3 centigrade respectively. Hilly areas have huge potential in agricultural industry due to varied agro-climate and ecological conditions. Different types of commercially important crops can be grown in the J&K because of congenial atmosphere. In technology development, technology choice has a critical impact on many aspects of hilly areas development, especially the way we choose it, the way we design it, the way we deliver it to the masses. Technology is carefully chosen to enable the local people to imbibe knowledge appropriate to their needs and environment. Technology should upgrade the skills and capabilities, reduce drudgery, minimize fatigue, capable of easy assimilation, generate added value to the existing methods of operation, generate employment, low in capital investment, low in cost of production, be capable of replication and adoption and should blend harmoniously with existing eco-systems leading to tangible improvements in the living conditions and development of the people of hilly areas. There is a need to introduce appropriate technologies in the hilly areas particularly in disadvantaged groups. There is a need of institutional linkages and active partici-

pation of voluntary organisations, Science and Technology based institutions, Research and Development institutions, financial agencies and most importantly people who are the primary stakeholders. Success of these technologies lies on participatory systems with a systematically approach for effective dissemination of technology. There should be proper mechanism in development and transfer of effective technologies in the hilly areas. The requirement of technology is assessed by the Science and Technology based institutions and NGOs. These organisations then look for ideal technology option ensuring the availability of local resources and skills.

Technology is developed according to the in-house capability of the local people with the assistance of technical institutions. The technology is developed in such a way so that it is accepted by the people of hilly areas and which is best suited in their local conditions for a long-term sustainability. The people are trained for 2-3 years to handle the new technology and they are also trained in its maintenance and repair. The Science and Technology institutions and NGOs also helps in backward and forward linkages both for production as well as marketing for long-term sustainability. Looking into constraints and priority needs of the people of hilly areas, various thrust areas need special attention ensuring involvement of local community through network of developmental field groups in technological empowerment. Agriculture in hilly areas is the most important activity as it is directly related with the villager's sustenance. Agriculture in hilly areas is mostly rainfed, poor crop productivity, poor culti-

vation practices etc. Organic farming has immense potential in hilly areas. The litter fall in hilly areas can be utilised for compost making. This can highlight unproductive hilly areas contour as organic farm. Organic products produced in hilly areas can help the farmers to fetch better prices. In hilly areas off season vegetables can be grown which can fetch higher prices. Seed production and low cost nurseries units made in hilly areas can generate the income. The perishable products do not fetch better prices due to various market intricacies. The hilly areas agro-climate offers better potential for non-perishable products such as spices, pulses, oilseeds etc. Horticulture has lot of scope in hilly areas. Different varieties of fruit crops can be produced in hilly areas. But the fate of all such produce has been poor due to certain reasons such as: transportation facilities, storage facilities and processing facilities. Horticulture in hilly areas is largely ignored but it has immense potential. Hilly areas farmers need proper training for horticultural crops. There should be storage, processing and packaging facilities of fruit crops for commercial purpose.

In hilly areas scarcity of fodder crops for animals is observed specially in off seasons. There is a need to produce high breeds of animals in hilly areas. Buffalo rearing, poultry farming and goat rearing have lot of scope in hilly areas. The special varieties of fodder crops should be introduced in hilly areas. Green cover in hilly areas is very important for the maintenance of environment. The green cover with appropriate bio-engineering plantation management is considered as need based. Water and energy are important

resources for the hilly areas ecosystem. In hilly areas large numbers of dams are in process in but the traditional water mills, huller, carding devices should also be taken into consideration for the up gradation. Strenuous efforts are needed to develop sustainable technologies for harnessing and conserving renewable energy like water lifting devices, solar lantern etc. Capacity building and technological empowerment are needed to mitigate the disaster management challenges for the people of hilly areas. Medicinal plants occurring in hilly areas have a great national and international importance. Growing awareness towards herbal therapy provides immense scope for developing herbal industries in hilly areas.

Health care of hilly areas people is an important area that needs to be taken care of. There is need of technology intervention in the area of rural sanitation. Tourism forms the basis for the economy of many hilly places. There should be linkage between the people of hilly areas and hill tourism. Agro-ecotourism tourism should be promoted in hilly areas. It is concluded that the bottom up approach for participatory technology development starting with the people and with the contribution of Science and Technology Institutions and close interface with voluntary organisations can provide sustainable models for technology development and transfer. Appropriate networking and linkages amongst people and institutions can change the lives of the people of hilly areas through technological empowerment and capacity building at the grassroots level.

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

Progressing J&K

98.10 pc families covered under PMJAY-SEHAT Scheme in J&K

Ambitious 'ABPMJAY-SEHAT' has proved a savior for an ailing 65 year old 'Anchal Das' of ward number 7, Kathua, when he got hassle free treatment in a most convenient way he would have never even dreamt of.

All his life, Das toiled hard to feed his family of 7 but things turned haywire when doctors advised him Ureter (PCNL) surgery. His world fell apart. Saving being luxury for him due to meagre monthly income of Rs 8,000, Das could save just a few hundred bucks a month.

Das was virtually broken on the mere thought of managing Rs 58, 000 for his surgery and subsequent treatment. But despair turned into hope with "ABPMJAY-SEHAT coming as a savior.

The health scheme came as life booster when I was treated in a hospital for free and with great care", says Das while expressing his deep gratitude to the J&K administration for this historic initiative.

For someone whose only means to earn a living is toiling hard in the fields of Kashmir, even a small injury would mean empty bellies back home.

Similarly, Abdul Razzaq Dar had five family members solely dependent on him for all their needs. For the last eight years, he had been going through tough time in performing his daily work due to his knee pain.

With a meagre annual income of Rs 50000, Dar could have hardly thought of a proper treatment and his condition was deteriorating with each passing day.

And this was the time when "Ayushman Bharat - Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana SEHAT" scheme came as a blessing for distressed Dar. Dar availed benefit of a government scheme for the first time in his whole life and was completely appreciable of government for this great help.

Finally, after eight long years of hurt and wait, Dar got his knee replaced in a private hospital under ABPMJAY-SEHAT scheme which was not less than some miracle for him.

Prime Minister, Narendara Modi, in his commitment towards developing India as a healthy nation, launched this ambitious Ayushman Bharat PMJAY scheme on 26th December, 2020.

In Jammu and Kashmir, the scheme was implemented through insurance mode with private Bajaj Allianz GIC as the implementing agency. This is for the first time that a public funded Health Insurance Scheme meant for the entire population is being implemented in the UT.

The scheme primarily focuses on financial protection from catastrophic health expenditures, which is the pillar of Universal Health Coverage. It is delivered through both public and private healthcare providers for secondary and tertiary care health services. It provides a cover of Rs. 5 lakh per family per year. All Medical and surgical conditions are included with minimal exclusions. It covers both Pre and Post hospitalization expenses and all pre-existing conditions are

covered from day one.

This cashless treatment facility being provided by central government under ABPMJAY-SEHAT scheme after the abrogation of Article 370 for poor and needy families has substantially reduced their out-of-pocket expenditure as well as financial bankruptcy due to severe and prolonged illness, and expensive treatment.

With substantial health insurance coverage to populace of the Union Territory, J&K has bagged best performing Union Territory category for enrolment under Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY).

Under this scheme, more than 81.22 lakh persons (78.74%) have been registered making them eligible for free and quality treatment in empanelled hospitals of the country.

Nearly, 81.20 lakh persons have been issued golden cards. State Health Agency has also launched a citizen friendly facility for citizens to avail golden cards. The citizens can visit the website setu.pmjay.gov.in and register themselves and their families with details of ration cards issued by the Food and Supply Department and download their golden cards.

Earlier, SHA rolled out an ambitious door-to-door exercise to achieve 100 percent saturation under the Ayushman Bharat PMJAY SEHAT scheme.

AB-PMJAY SEHAT scheme has been like a ray of hope for poor families who couldn't afford health treatment at premier medical institutes of the country.

Significance of rendering Service towards Mankind

■ TARA CHAND BHAGAT

It must be the first and foremost rather moral duty of everyone's life rendering service towards mankind unconditionally from the core of one's heart is a significant step.

As service towards humanity gives more satisfaction than that of anything else one gets materially having lots of wealth, very big palatial farm houses, having the facilities leading princely life with all sorts of comforts and enjoyments of air-lift journeys. Such personal comforts don't carry any sense in one's life unless and until anyone renders any service towards mankind. As the spiritual personality Guru Nanak Dev ji had beautifully said in the following verse: "If anyone wants to be close to God, he must do service to others i.e. mankind." Every soul is a part and parcel of God. That means God is in everybody and everybody is in God. God is omnipresent.

Some very rich persons of Dev-Bhumi of this country; not all the rich, with affordability of somewhat amount of their spare money did have opened educational institutions for making the very poor educated alongwith all facilities such as meals, clothings, houses for their living have also been arranged with their donation, give them as much satisfaction as their own comforts of life do not. The more purposefully anybody does it, the more he will advance in the field of spirituality. "Never worry about numbers. Help one person at a time and always start with the person nearest you," had said Mother Teresa. She was the lover of mankind.

Swami Vivekananda once said, "The more you come out and do good to others, the more our heart will be purified and God will be in them." Some of the rich persons makes arrangements of free Langar for the devotees who pay a visit to the Holy Shrine of Amarnath Barfani Baba cave on the eve of Amarnath Yatra during the months of July and August to be held each year. What was their real motive to make such arrangements for devotees? In its real sense it is the serviceability towards humanity beings

visualising the very form or image of God. Same is the case of the devotees who pay a visit to the Holy Shrine of Shri Vaishno Mata throughout the year. Do you want God to be yours? Then you must first become His! The more you love Him, the more you will know Him. We identify ourselves with a biochemical mental organism.

By rendering service to the mankind we can quench the thirst of truth and real peace of mind can be found, real happiness can be derived from the serviceability towards mankind. Heart, mind, body become crystal clear consciousness of mind develops and darkness of fear runs away. Kingdom of silence appears to be there. One gets linked with it to be purified. Kingdom of silence purifies us. Silence also vitalizes us, gives us strength which you may spend in the service of others. Silence makes us strong.

Blessed is he that serves and desires not to be served! Blessed is he that truly loves and seeketh not love in return! Blessed is he that doeth good unto others and seeketh not that others do good unto him!

The second most important aspect of human existence is service that invokes unabated desire to serve humanity with pure consciousness to achieve the target in a selfless manner. All the human beings are dependable on natural forces and his surroundings influence for his survival and longevity which is in the spiritual domains purely depend upon Karmic cycles in one's life. In reality, one's life is as uncertain as a drop of water on a lotus leaf. We the human beings are just like toys of clay in the hands of Nature's play of forces. During this uncertain period of life, We are fallen prey to diseases, sorrows and arrogance. So we are left with a little time to serve the mankind which is must for all of us to be survived for doing the service of others. The invaluable time allotted to all of us equally must never be wasted in indulging in the perishable impermanent enjoyments of the world, rather we should always get ready to doing the

service of others. This is the right way to be happy in one's life.

Yet another example by doing service to the mankind, a man becomes a saint when he reaches the climax of his virtues, selfless good and noble deeds, great values and ideals, acts of benefaction and philanthropy, simple living and high thinking, noble thoughts and deeds, plain and clean ideology so as to become a living example of preaching and guidance for the service of humankind in the shape of amity and communal harmony, love and affection, fraternity and brotherhood, fellow-feeling and sympathy, sublimity and tolerance, true sacrifice and dedication and above all his devotion to the Almighty, the omnipresent and omniscient and omnipotent, the creator of the whole universe.

Such kind of service irrespective of caste, creed, colour, high and low and elderly people who are worth worshipping is always commendable and appreciable whosoever does such service towards humanity.

Last but not least one of the greatest advantages to be doing service towards mankind is one feels stressed-free, tension-free and full satisfaction of peace of mind, real state of happiness of mind, and never becomes revengeful and vindictive one and also commands great respect in the hearts of human beings even animals start loving that one who does such a service towards all. Last of all he gets the same fruits out of which one gets through reverberation. Reverberation is a word that echoes, throws or reflects sound, heat and light upon one who does service to the mankind.

Rendering service to anyone unconditionally irrespective of caste, creed, colour, religion, rich or poor or oldies is unique one and significant steps to be taken towards such service is called the noblest service to mankind. In other words we can say that service towards mankind is service itself to the Almighty God. No one makes one poor and one is poor because of one's Karmic actions done in one's past Yuni.

Human service which is seeming to be absent to serve the oldies from the modern society as it has not to be so because everyone has to be passed during such evening period in one's life of which I am evidently going to tell you. As you sow, so shall you reap is a very healthy maxim to open eyes and ears of everybody to serve their parents as they like to be served by their children in turn in old age. But alas! in youth, one remains engaged in pleasure pursuits, when evening of life comes, and one gets inflicted with multiple ailments, feels totally abandoned by kith and kins for whom one had been sweating hard. Here one weeps in solitude and repents deeply. Death never comes by desire and thus, the tail of the old age becomes an unending tale of life. Putting up with oldies is generally unpleasant, staying near a cremation ground is preferred than to be with old parents. Lack of spiritual and moral training have made our children immoral and law-abiding citizens.

Crisis of character is the gravest problem. Inspiring moral values in children is the only panacea for eradication of ills in the so-called modern society. Where have the son like Shrivana Kumara gone who had joyfully carried his blind old parents on his shoulders to pilgrimage to fulfill their desire. Old age homes prove beyond doubt how ill-treated oldies seek shelter in such homes to pass evening of their life. It is tragedy of the time that even educated Children fail to discharge their moral and social duties. Extreme materialism and centredness makes one greedy and debars one from being a good human being. Until the virtues of kindness, honesty, love and dedication are not woven by true education, the purpose of attaining even high qualification, miserably fails, so need for cultivation and inculcation of moral and ethical values, can't be over-emphasized. Cultivating personal humility helps dissolve conflicts and miseries in life and it goes to oldies also. Such service to be rendered with your old parents during the evening period never goes unrewarded and such service always pleases to even God.

