

LIFELONG COMMITMENT

Drug abuse continues to be a pressing global issue with profound social, economic, and health implications. Across societies, the impact of drugs reaches far and wide, affecting individuals, families, and communities. Saying no to drugs is not merely a slogan but a critical stance that every individual must adopt to safeguard their well-being and that of those around them. Firstly, drugs pose significant health risks. Substance abuse can lead to severe physical and mental health disorders, ranging from addiction and dependency to irreversible damage to vital organs like the brain, heart, and liver. Moreover, drug use often leads to impaired judgment, increasing the likelihood of accidents, injuries, and risky behaviors that endanger both the user and others. Beyond health concerns, drug abuse destabilizes families and communities. It strains relationships, breaks down trust, and places undue financial burdens on households. The ripple effects extend to increased crime rates, strained healthcare systems, and decreased productivity in workplaces. In worst-case scenarios, communities plagued by drug abuse suffer from social unrest and violence, further deepening the cycle of despair. Education plays a pivotal role in combating drug abuse. Promoting awareness from an early age about the dangers of drugs equips individuals with the knowledge to make informed choices. Schools, families, and communities must collaborate to provide comprehensive education on the consequences of drug use, emphasizing positive alternatives and healthy coping mechanisms. Effective prevention strategies also involve fostering a supportive environment. Building strong social bonds, encouraging open communication, and providing avenues for recreational activities and personal growth can deter individuals from turning to drugs. Support networks, including peer groups, mentors, and counselors, play a crucial role in guiding individuals away from substance abuse and towards constructive lifestyles. Furthermore, tackling drug abuse requires a multi-faceted approach at both local and national levels. Governments must invest in healthcare services for addiction treatment and rehabilitation, ensuring accessible and affordable support for those struggling with substance use disorders. Law enforcement efforts should focus on disrupting drug trafficking networks while also implementing community-based initiatives that offer alternatives to incarceration for non-violent drug offenders.

Say No to Drug: Yes to Life

International day against Drug abuse and illicit trafficking, or World Drug days is marked on June 26 every year to strengthen action and cooperation in achieving world free of drug abuse. It also encourages people across the world to quit addiction and live a healthier life. The event began after the adoption of a resolution in December 1987 at the United Nations. The Day also honors Lin ZEXU who played key role in the demolition of opium trade in GUANDONG region of China. Drug abuse and illicit trafficking continue to pose a significant threat to individuals, families and communities across the world. Precious lives are being lost and world is losing their prime asset the youth due to this Menace. Together, the people across the World have to amplify their efforts to combat the global Drug problem, guided by the principles of science, compassion and solidarity. Through collective action & commitment to evidence based solution, we have to create a Drug free world where people live healthy lives. The day aims to raise awareness about the importance of treating people who use drugs with respect and empathy providing evidence based voluntary services for all; offering alternative to punishment prioritizing prevention and leading with compassion. The campaign also aims to combat stigma & discrimination against people who use drugs by promoting language and attitudes that are respectful & Non-judgmental. The theme for this year is "People first; STOP Stigma & Discrimination, Strengthen prevention" The world celebrates the day by organizing different events for people of different age groups especially youngsters to make them aware about the ill side effects of drug abuse and its addiction. On this day conversations should be initiated about drug addiction & abuse with younger sibling, kids & other relatives, other than talking about its side effects, people should create a favorable environment for victims of drug abuse. This will help them get rid of the stigma attached to it & encourage them to leave this habit.

Drug addiction is spreading fast among Indian youth. According to a survey by the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, India has more than 70 millions drug addicts. It is a serious health problem which not only destroys the health of the person involved but his entire family, the society and the nation. It promotes anti-social behaviors such as stealing crime & violence. It also affects the economic growth of a country by generating unaccounted money that is also used for Terror funding and anti-national activities. Therefore, it is also a serious threat to national security. India is located between two largest opium producing regions in the world, Golden triangle on the eastern side; Thailand, Myanmar, Vietnam & Laos. Golden crescent on the North Western side; Pakistan, Afghanistan & Iran. According to the Global burden of disease study, Illicit drugs are estimated to have killed nearly 7.5 lakh people world over in one year.

There are over 14.09 lakh drug addicts in Jammu & Kashmir using different forms of drugs ranging from Alcohol to Cocaine to Hallucinogen, as per revelation of Union Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment. Jammu & Kashmir has witnessed a surge in drug abuse in the last few years & civil society groups, religious groups & political parties have also expressed concern over the growing drug abuse in the region & urged the authorities to take concrete & solid steps to prevent people from falling prey to drug abuse. The drug abuse in J&K is rampant with the main rehabilitation facility in J&K reporting 2660% increase in patients seeking treatment since 2016. Primarily heroin addiction. The number of people who require helps twice the national average. Addicts are rich and poor, employed & unemployed & overwhelming young. Few Kashmiries, who have suffered multiple relapses, reveal how easily Heroin is available & the toll it has taken on their lives in conflict-ridden region that is one of the world's most Militarized Zones.

Religious centres & educational institutions should assumes a new role by doubling up as counseling & testing centres to curb the fast spreading menace of drugs. With Arms & Terror infiltration becoming difficult, Pakistan has now resorted to peddling drugs to degenerate youth of J&K. The Govt is taking a sustained and coordinated action for arresting the problem of substances abuse among the youth . This include (i) Launching of Nasha Mukti Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA) in 272 most vulnerable districts under which a massive community outreach is being done with the help of about 8000 youth volunteers. The actions also include intensive preventive & interdiction efforts along known drug routes & strict surveillance and enforcement at import export points.

Campaigns, rallies, posters designing and many other programs should be conducted. People of different countries should celebrate the day together. As drug use is increasing, the day becomes more important. "Support don't punish" campaign be encouraged. Raise awareness & empower communities with tools & resources to implement evidence based prevention initiatives fostering resilience against drug abuse and prolong community led solutions. Provide youth with knowledge, skills and resources to become agents of change in their communities advocating drug prevention initiatives. Promote International cooperation among, government, organizations& implement evidence based strategies for combating drug trafficking & drug abuse becoming an organized crime globe over. Drugs are waste of time. They destroy our health, our memory, self respect & everything that goes along with self esteem. Don't let drugs steal your dreams. Life is a beautiful journey & don't let youngsters ruin it with drugs.

Break the habit & live a drug free life.

■ SURJIT SINGH FLORA

The world leaders must address heatwaves and the environment, Swedish teenager Greta Thunberg's speech on 'global warning' sparked environmentalists worldwide when Over 1,300 individuals tragically lost their lives during Hajj, with a significant number succumbing to the extreme temperatures they endured while walking. A news report from Cairo. Over 1,300 individuals tragically lost their lives during this year's Hajj pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia, as the faithful encountered scorching temperatures at the sacred Islamic sites in the desert kingdom. Saudi authorities made this somber announcement on Sunday. In 2018, 15-year-old Greta had no idea her words at the UN Climate Summit would spark a movement.

'Time' selected Greta as 'Person of the Year' for 2019 by posting her photo on the server. World leaders and billionaires want to be on time. Concerns about climate change drove the early rise in fame. At the UN Climate Action Summit in New York, Thunberg remarked, "You have taken my childhood and my ambitions with your meaningless words." She seemed hesitant. Early on, Greta's cries made her the world's largest environmental warrior. Throughout the speech, Greta faltered several times. She accused future generations of pollution. Her voice rumbled.

She is intense. It's unfortunate for her to witness the inactivity of so-called leaders. Young people shouldn't be upset, especially if their concerns are valid. What if people aren't willing to limit greenhouse gases, find better technology to mitigate the harm, or even reverse it? Our actions threaten our own extinction.

She berates the crowd for global warming: How dare you! Her speech is filled with questions. She claims she should not be discussing the topic since she was in school. Crying Greta blames her elders for dashing her hopes. She roars. Dare you cause this? His conscience-stirring message was praised again. The sleeping cloud within Greta burst. Sky lightning, like her eyes, fell on the spectators. When Greta was 8 years old, her teacher showed her a picture depicting ocean garbage. The second picture depicted hungry polar bears emerging from receding glaciers. Polar bears inhabit glaciers, unlike brown bears. Life atop ice layers. In quiet water, they hunt seals. Polar bears have disappeared due to global warming.

Alaskan, Canadian, Russian, Norwegian,

■ OMKAR DATTATRAY

It is very unfortunate and disturbing that the people of some areas of national capital Delhi are encountering and facing worst water crisis which is unprecedented .The bitter fact that the people of national capital Delhi are reeling under deep water crisis in these days of scorching heat of summer and amidst intensive heat wave .Drinking water is the basic and indispensable need of the people and without adequate water we cannot live and pass our lives. So water is the necessary requirement for the people .The fact that people of Delhi are facing the acute drinking water crisis is the reflection on the sad state of affairs that the people of the national capital are under the acute and deep water crisis and one can imagine the scarcity of water in the rural areas of India .People of Delhi have to wait for hours in scorching and unbearable heat to get a bucket of drinking water and it has been seen that some households are getting water with great difficulty .The people of Delhi are facing inconvenience and hardship in the absence of adequate water .Water crisis is a human problem and it needs to be tackled as such .But alas! Water crisis of Delhi is being politicized and it is very sad. The political parties without any exception are busy in politicizing this human issue and are trying to get political scores .Be it, BJP ,Congress or even the AAP all are doing cheap and petty politics over the water crisis .Instead of helping the government in mitigating the drinking water crisis ,the political parties and their leaders are contributing and augmenting the water crisis and thus all are busy playing negative and anti people role. .The AAP which is in power in Delhi has promised free drinking water to the people of Delhi ,but it has miserably failed to provide drinking water to Delhites at cheap rates or free water .The water crisis in Delhi is a cause of serious concern to the people ,but unfortunately the political parties instead of providing a helping hand to Delhi government to lessen the water crisis are busy in playing dirty politics for political gains without hav-

ing and Greenlandic polar bears are disappearing. They number 25-30 thousand, estimates say. Not addressing global warming might lead to sea bear extinctions.

In May 2008, they were considered endangered, and a few years later, their situation worsened.

Global warming affected Greta when she was a doll. The suffering of the polar bear was eating away at Greta. Because of her fragile heart, the sensitive girl stayed mute for two to three years.

There are 24 annual global warming conferences. For environmental reasons, this fairy began waiting on the Swedish House steps with a flag every Friday instead of going to school. As schoolchildren joined her, the caravan grew. She urged opera singer Malena Ackerman and actor Svante Thunberg to avoid flying. When the 'Fridays for the Future' campaign was successful, she received invitations to environmental conferences.

At COP-25 in Madrid, Spain, he argued for slow implementation of the Paris Agreement. She warned that if not addressed, global warming would be unachievable by 2030. She said one doesn't wait for the fire truck when their home catches fire. Deforestation and harmful gases are causing the 'global village' to erupt. A volcano may explode at any time. If she lived at the school, Greta Thunberg would have to study centuries-old material. She presented a world-unknown lesson on the Swedish House steps. President Donald Trump argued with her granddaughter's cousin over the environment. Trump surprised the world by leaving the Paris Agreement. After China, America emits the most carbon, which causes global warming. Many developed and developing nations swore to eliminate toxic and greenhouse emissions under the Paris Agreement.

President Joe Biden's election offers optimism for the Paris Agreement. If wealthy nations, notably America, China, and Europe, don't act now, it will be too late. Due to catastrophic flooding, deaths in Makkah-Madinah and the Kaaba have sparked worldwide concern. Greta is remembered because of it. The Earth will become a desert if the average temperature rises 1.5 °C. If not, the mountains and gorgeous valleys will bake like an oven. Summers would be scorching and winters chilly if the monsoon pattern kept changing.

This year's heatwaves are global. A tem-

perature above 36 degrees in Chicago, USA, beat the 1957 record. Delhi residents wait drip-by-drop water.

The hajj is an essential obligation in Islam that every Muslim who is able must fulfill at least once in their lifetime. The Saudi officials reported that the participation this year was consistent with last year, with 1.8 million pilgrims taking part, out of which 1.6 million came from abroad.

Over the past few years, the rituals have taken place primarily outdoors, coinciding with the scorching Saudi summer. Temperatures in Mecca this year reached a scorching 51.8C (125.2F).

Numerous water battles occur. Gulf nations suffer. It was 52 degrees Celsius in Makkah. The Hajj pilgrims spotted Chafal, Tapash, and Hummus on their route. However, environmentalists have noticed the high number of Makkah-Madinah fatalities.

Now that Greta has the world's attention, we must listen. Instead of mocking her as Trump attacked the disabled, realize that she spoke out of care and honesty. And now we must respond in a similar way. I am genuinely concerned about the future of our lonely planet.

Extreme heat does not only affect your body badly but can be fatal. It damages our body drastically and contributes to the poor health of some organs. Here are some points mentioned below to know the side effects of extreme heat in a better understanding. Causes cardiovascular and respiratory disorders. Heatstroke, Faster dehydration, Mild or severe headache, Fatigue, Dizziness, Faintness, Muscle Cramps.

Experience the scorching heatwaves that are sweeping the globe, leaving a trail of devastation in their wake. From the detrimental impact on human health to the dire consequences for our delicate environment, these extreme temperatures are wreaking havoc like never before. Experience the power of nature's elements. In the realm of human existence, the scorching heat can unleash a series of challenges that test our resilience. Prepare yourself for the possibility of heat exhaustion, heat stroke, and the relentless pursuit of hydration. Embrace the heat, but do so with caution. Introducing the formidable foe known as heat exhaustion! This condition, brought on by extended encounters with scorching temperatures, unleashes a barrage of symptoms that will leave you drenched in

Acute water crisis in Delhi needs immediate resolution

judiciously in order not to face the kind of water crisis. The Delhi Jal Board is responsible for the Production and Distribution of potable water after treating raw water from various sources like river Yamuna ,Bhakhra Storage ,Upper Ganga Canal & Groundwater and also provides treatment and disposal of waste water. About 70% of Delhi's water supply comes from the Yamuna which is highly susceptible to pollution from industries ,municipal sewers and agriculture fields laced with fertilizers and pesticides .Nearly 57 million people depend on the Yamuna's waters ,and the river accounts for more than 70% of Delhi's water supply .Yamuna is called as the lifeline of Delhi .Haryana further contended that Delhi's current water scarcity was primarily due to the city's mismanagement ,highlighting its failure to reduce distribution losses, control water theft ,and regulate per capita water usage ,which exceeds the national urban average .Amid Delhi's ongoing water crisis ,the Haryana government informed the SC that Himachal Pradesh had not released any excess water intended for Delhi .Earlier this month the top court had directed HP to release 137 cusecs of excess water to Haryana ,with prior notice ,to ensure its delivery to Delhi .However ,the Haryana government contended that HP claimed to have released this amount of unused Yamuna water to the Tejewala (Hathni Kund Barrage) ,it did so without providing details on their actual water usage in June.AAP -led Delhi government had filed a plea seeking direction to Haryana to release surplus water provided by Himachal Pradesh to mitigate water crisis in the national capital .Delhi Government should solve the current water crisis on priority bases so that people are saved from misery ,inconvenience ,hardship and troubles because of acute drinking water crisis. The political parties of congress and BJP should avoid blame game for water scarcity in Delhi and instead help the Delhi government to tide over the acute water crisis to give some relief to the people of Delhi in this scorching heat and warm season when northern India includ-

ing Delhi is under the grip of intense heat wave and because of this also the water crisis worsens and puts people to untold suffering .Delhi must implement sustainable policy and governance reforms with technological interventions ,infrastructure development and alternate water conservation methods .At the same time ,the people should also take it as a collective responsibility and inculcate responsible water consumption behaviors .The reality is ,that Delhi ,the second-most populous city after Tokyo in the world, with 33.8 million people ,is once again grappling with an extreme water shortage .Amidst scorching weather ,with temperature around 50 degree C ,the Delhi government has turned to SC for immediate intervention to resolve its escalating water crisis .It has sought directives for the state of Haryana to release additional water to alleviate the crisis and provide relief to millions of Delhities .Delhi largely depends on its neighboring states of Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand ,Punjab ,Haryana and UP to meet around 90% of its drinking water demand .

These states should view the current water crisis as a human problem and thus provide required water to Delhi to mitigate the present water crisis .In the thick of the political blame game ,it is distressing to see visuals of women, children and young men risking their lives ,desperately chasing after water tankers for a bucket of water .What is more concerning is the disparity in water supply between affluent neighborhoods and slums where the underprivileged bear the brunt of the water scarcity .Instead of protests and demonstrations by the BJP and congress. These parties should cooperate with the government of Delhi to address and mitigate the extreme water crisis in Delhi and give some relief to Delhites immediately and may sanity prevail upon AAP government and the opposition BJP and Congress to find an early solution of the water scarcity in Delhi.

(The author is a columnist, social and KP activist).

YOUR COLUMN

PRO-TEM SPEAKER ROW

Dear Editor

Pro-tem Speaker's appointment has kicked up controversy. Nothing passes off peacefully without much noise and fuss in the political circles. The appointment of Pro-tem Speaker flares up as 3 opposition MPs may refuse to join panel assisting Bhartruhari Mahtab for administering oath to the newly elected members of Lok Sabha. Not to join the panel of chairpersons to assist pro-tem speaker Bhartruhari Mahtab in administering the oath are Suresh Kodikunnil, Thalikkotai Rajuthevar Balu and Sudip Bandyopadhyay. Mahtab has been appointed the Pro-tem Speaker by the President Droupadi Murmu on June 20 under Article 95(1) of the Constitution till the election of a Speaker. She has also appointed Congress MP Suresh Kodikunnil, DMK MP Thalikkottai Rajuthevar Baalu, TMC MP Sudip Bandyopadhyay and BJP MPs Radha Mohan Singh and Gaggan Singh Kulaste to assist the Pro-tem Speaker to administer the oath for the newly elected members to the 18th Lok Sabha. Refusal to accept Mahtab by the Opposition parties is the beginning of the 'non-cooperation movement' with the centre. Congress leader Jairam

Ramesh's objection is that by convention the MP who has served the maximum terms is appointed pro-tem Speaker for the first two days to administer oath to the newly elected members and this practice has been flouted by the Modi government. The senior most MPs in the 18th Lok Sabha are Kodikunnil Suresh (Congress) and Virendra Kumar (BJP) now serving 8th term. Since Virendra Kumar is the Union Minister, Jairam Ramesh wants Suresh appointed the Pro-tem Speaker. Perhaps Ramesh would not have made mention of Virendra Kumar for serving 8th term if he had not been appointed the Union Minister obviating competition with Suresh. Ramesh wants to send a message to the centre that appointment of Suresh is Hobson's choice of centre. Dismissing the claim of Ramesh, Union Minister Kiren Rijiju has pointed out that Suresh was not a member from 1998 and 2004. Congress has started playing caste card stating that Suresh was denied the post since he belonged to dalit community. Congress leader K.C. Vengopal has described the overlooking of Suresh's claim to the Pro-tem Speaker post as an attempt at "destroying parliamentary norms". Congress leadership needs to be reminded that seniority principle was flouted in 2004. If Congress had been really serious, it could have named Jagjivan Ram or H.N. Bahuguna as the Prime Minister to succeed Lal Bahadur Shastri after his untimely death. But Indra Gandhi was opted to head the government as Prime Minister. Even after the assassination

of Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi was appointed the Prime Minister. Pranab Mukherjee's attempt to take over as PM was foiled. Were there no capable dalit stalwarts to appoint as Prime Minister following the death of Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi? Responding to the charge that Suresh was not appointed Pro-tem Speaker because he is dalit, Kiren Rijiju said that he was the first tribal to occupy the post of Parliamentary Affairs Minister. Charity must begin at home. BJP under Vajpayee made a Muslim the President of India and BJP under Modi made a tribal the President of India. After all, the post of Pro-tem Speaker lasts till a regular Speaker is elected. Why so much of hue and cry for making Mahtab the Pro-tem Speaker? I.N.D.I.A. bloc is well within its rights and limits to make Suresh the Leader of the Opposition Party. Agreeably, earlier Speaker was used to be from the ruling party and the Deputy Speaker from the opposition party. That norm has been jettisoned because ruling parties and opposition parties do not respect each other. The ruling parties and opposition parties trade baseless charges and counter charges. The opposition parties give vent to their anger and frustration over their defeat in the election. The practice of making introspections after the defeat or for the reduced number of vote and seat share even in the victory has been pushed under carpet. The controversy surrounding a temporary post is ridiculous.

K.V. Seetharamaiah