

SURGE IN TOURISM

The Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) in India is renowned for its breathtaking natural beauty, rich cultural heritage, and diverse landscapes, attracting tourists from across the globe. Despite occasional disruptions due to geopolitical tensions and security concerns, J&K continues to be a popular destination for travelers seeking adventure, tranquility, and cultural experiences. J&K is blessed with stunning natural beauty, including majestic Himalayan mountains, pristine lakes, lush valleys, and meandering rivers. The picturesque landscapes of places like Srinagar, Gulmarg, Pahalgam, and Leh-Ladakh attract nature enthusiasts, adventure seekers, and honeymooners alike. The serene beauty of Dal Lake, the snow-capped peaks of Gulmarg, and the rugged terrain of Ladakh offer a myriad of experiences for tourists seeking solace in nature's embrace. J&K boasts a rich cultural heritage influenced by Hindu, Buddhist, and Islamic traditions. The region is home to iconic religious sites such as the Vaishno Devi Temple, Anarnath Cave Shrine, Shankaracharya Temple, and Hazratbal Shrine, which draw pilgrims and devotees throughout the year. Additionally, the vibrant festivals, traditional crafts, and folk music and dance performances offer tourists a glimpse into the region's cultural tapestry, fostering cross-cultural exchanges and appreciation. With its rugged terrain and diverse topography, J&K offers ample opportunities for adventure tourism activities such as trekking, mountaineering, skiing, paragliding, river rafting, and camping. The scenic trails of Kashmir's Great Lakes, the challenging routes of the Amarnath Yatra, and the adrenaline-pumping rapids of the Lidder River in Pahalgam attract adventure enthusiasts seeking thrill and excitement amidst nature's bounty. The tourism industry in J&K is supported by a robust infrastructure of hotels, guesthouses, resorts, houseboats, and tourist lodges catering to varying budgets and preferences. Additionally, the warm hospitality and friendly demeanor of the locals contribute to the overall experience of tourists, making them feel welcome and cherished during their stay in the region. The government of J&K, in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism, undertakes various initiatives and promotional campaigns to showcase the region's tourism potential and attract domestic and international tourists. These initiatives include organizing cultural festivals, adventure sports events, heritage walks, and marketing campaigns highlighting the region's unique attractions and offerings.

Despite its immense tourism potential, J&K faces challenges such as seasonal variations, and environmental conservation issues. However, with concerted efforts aimed at addressing these challenges, leveraging digital technologies for tourism promotion, and fostering sustainable tourism practices, J&K can capitalize on its natural and cultural assets to enhance the flow of tourists and stimulate economic growth and development in the region.

The flow of tourists in J&K is driven by its unparalleled natural beauty, cultural richness, adventure opportunities, hospitality, and government-led initiatives. J&K can emerge as a premier tourism destination, offering memorable experiences to travelers while contributing to the socio-economic well-being of its residents.

Human Wildlife Conflict and delicacy of Nature

■ G L KHAJURIA

The oldest part of the framework goes back to the very beginning of human civilization in India (4000-5000 years ago) when a unique ethic of animal welfare and protection evolved to protect life other than human. Chanakya exposed the need to protect elephant forests in the Arthashastra and Asoka forbade the killing of animals for sport. And these are two of the several interventions that contributed to the preservation of nature in ancient and medieval India. The post-independence era saw the birth of the Indian wild life protection act, 1972. A forward thinking law which is probably the single most important reason why we still have as much as we do today the active political support that wildlife conservation as a cause drew made the frame work of protection stronger.

If the frame work got its contours from the Indian populace and its elected representatives, it got its grain from the front line forest guards that protect wildlife through much of its range. More than 20,000 forest guards, foresters and range officers form the guardians of our wild, the van rakshak who toil day in day out to protect our wildlife. Though, like all government departments, this department too has been hit by corruption, the sloth and inefficiencies, it has remained on the who a hardworking and honest service that has protected wildlife from poachers, smugglers and sheer of neighboring villages. Finding the binding glue for the frame is provided by the innumerable men and women, tiger wallahs, herdsmen, elephant conservationist and amateur nature enthusiasts to formed the clubs, conservation trusts and charitable societies to ensure that the official frame work was buffered and enhanced. Because of all these varied networks and support structures and despite a billion people crowding out nature the country still has more the half of the world's wild tigers not with understanding the current crises 655 of the Asian elephants, 855 of the greater one-horned rhinos and 1005 of the Asian lion. India- the land of natural wonders and heavenly resources. India has about 2% of the total forest area of the world. However, the forests here are home to millions of flora and fauna. According to IUCN Red Book, out of 63837 species living in Indian forests, 19817 species are on the verge of extinction. In the present scenario where many species of flora and fauna are thriving for their existence, more number of threatened species is continuously getting added to the list. The situation is very tense. More than 10000 species are vulnerable, 5766 species are endangered and 3947 species are critically endangered. Here we are talking about the species and not the individual. The total population of endangered species is in the millions.

Most endangered species in India include Asiatic Lion, Bengal Tiger, Snow Leopard, Nilgiri Tahr, Kashmiri Red Stag, Black Buck, One-horned Rhinoceros, Malabar Mahogany, Mnesli, Red Sandalwood, Assam Catkin Yew, ebony, Hinkley Oak.

The main reason for such disastrous condition of plants and animals is the loss and destruction of habitat are over-hunting and over-harvesting; Excessive exploitation of resources; Introduction of invasive species; Deforestation; Human population growth; pollution; Industrialization; Urbanization; Climate Change and Global Warming; acid rain; and Nitrogen pollution.

Such a growth rate of species loss is not a good sign. Destroying the habitat of millions of flora and fauna is an inhumane act. Just think about being homeless for a while. The condition of wildlife is really pathetic. Our future generations will not be so lucky to see many of the species that we can easily see around us today. Natural resources are not just for our personal benefit. We should be morally bound and have a proper conscience about what we are doing. We are destroying the right to life of many species just because we are bound by our greed and false sense of superiority.

All this is causing the breakdown of the ecosystem. Rare herbs of medicinal value are becoming difficult to find, it is a matter of great shame for the medical field. Crop yields are decreasing because the higher the number of species in an ecosystem, the higher the crop yields. This also affects the economy of the country. Ecosystem chains are badly disturbed.

Appropriate measures should be adopted to reduce the speed of extinction loss. Various national parks, sanctuaries, conservation reserves, community reserves and wildlife reserves should be established. Appropriate environment should be created in the in-situ conservation sites. Deforestation and tree plantation programs should be campaigned. Let us work together to create a healthy environment where every species and every organism has the right to live and the right to habitat.

(The author is former Dy Conservator of Forest, J&K).

Depression: A Threat To Youngsters

■ AYAAN SAROORI

Depression is a clinical term used for the severe mood disorder in a person for a time period. It is about how a person behaves, thinks and handles the daily routine chores. A person who got mood disorder, disturbance in sleeping cycle or negative feelings are the common symptoms of depression. Nowadays, these feelings, disorders are mostly found in youngsters, seeking for job or any educational pressure.

Science defines this whole human phenomenon as a common but serious mood disorder. Depression is a product of various hardships, hurdles of life, division in relation or negative peer pressure. All these following problems cause depression in youngsters in recent years. We should discuss all these events causes depression [serious mood disorder] in young generation;

- Hardships of life: A person faces various kinds of problems in their daily life but when the passion for bearing those problems gets too much, a stage starts developing leading to the mood disorders, pressure of brain and lead to future patients of depression.

- Divisions in relationships: In the era of modern technology and social media, parents are cut off from their children and vice versa which leads them to lack affection towards parents, which creates a bound gap between children and parents. Use of social media has made it possible for children to develop distance with their parents through distractions and less communication. Social media has become rather important for us than family discussions, generally among youngsters.

- Academic or work related stress: Majority of students have pressure to excel in the academic assessments or in their careers can lead to pressure and over time restlessness.

- Negative peer pressure: It is a mechanism like a force which touches everyone in terms of certain behavior, attitudes or actions. In my view it is in the hands of society how they want to see a youngster in future time, because it works when peer pressure influences individuals to engage in behaviors or adopting addictive substances. Generally, all these things happens when a youngster in doing something new. At the same time, if anyone criticize his steps or way of working, it becomes time mark of depression because of societal pressure.

- Hormonal change and genetics :As depression is mood swings but in utmost manner similarly hormonal fluctuation during puberty can contribute to mood swings and feelings of depression in teenagers. Genetics is also a

point of concern for youngsters, if there is any family history of depression or health disorder related to the brain can increase the risk of depression in young people. We should remember that family history related to mental illness contributes by increasing the risk of mental depression in the young person.

These are some reasons for depression in youngsters in recent times.

Some symptoms of depression in youngsters:

- Loss of interest in activities once enjoyed.
- Disturbance in sleep cycle -less sleep or over sleeping.
- Loss of appetite or loss of energy.
- Adoption of isolation or anger.
- Lack of independency or less concentration.

Practical Steps And Medical Strategies To Navigate Depression;

- Open communication: is important for the person who is under depression, because by encouraging open discussions about feelings and thoughts help to reduce stigma. Whereas, social connections and regular interactions with friends, family are very important for depressed youngsters.

- Organized Routine Work: helps the youngster suffering from depression in setting routine chores in an arranged manner and gives a sense of normalcy regarding his work. While family should encourage setting small steps to create a sense of accomplishment.

- Healthy Lifestyle: is important for all people but in event time the sleeping cycle has affected, more dependency on technology leads to less movement and exercise. A healthy lifestyle includes a balanced diet, adequate sleep and routine exercise which is more important for youngsters experiencing depression. A balanced diet provides nourishment and supports brain health of the person suffering from the same, while adequate sleep provides calmness and regular exercise improves mood and overall well being. Also, we should encourage participation in hobbies and activities that brings joy and self satisfaction to the patient. So, a healthy lifestyle, sufficient sleep, regular exercise helps a depressed person in speedy recovery and betterment in mood.

- Professional Counseling and Medication: professional counseling such as cognitive behavioral therapy [CBT] and Interpersonal therapy [IPT] both are common forms of therapies focused on censoring negative thought patterns and behavior improving interpersonal communica-

■ VIJAY GARG

There are numerous paths within the Medical field that offer promising opportunities for those who may not have cleared NEET or are seeking alternatives to MBBS/BDS. Read this blog to discover the Best Medical Courses After 12th without NEET and ensure an incredible path to your healthcare goals.

Your aspirations for a medical career are far from over, even without NEET. There's a wealth of outstanding medical courses available that don't require this entrance exam.

Why is the NEET exam not required for certain Medical Courses?

Although the NEET is a mandatory admission requirement to UG & PG Medical Degrees, several courses don't require it. Let's talk about some circumstances when NEET isn't required:

- When certain colleges don't mandate the NEET exam for admission
- Admission to some courses relies on merit and involves counselling sessions

To pursue a potential opportunity in the medical field, pupils must carefully consider their long-term goals. Let's explore the Best Medical Courses After 12th Without NEET for students aspiring to study in the medical field:

Best Medical courses after 12th without NEET

Bachelor of Homeopathic Medicine and Surgery (BHMS)

The BHMS Degree can lead toward an intriguing pathway by familiarising students with Homeopathy principles. This course thoroughly blends traditional medicine knowledge with Homeopathic healing. Throughout its duration, pupils can delve into multiple Homeopathic remedies and effective patient care analysis.

Pharmacy

A Bachelor's in Pharmacy delves into the world of pharmaceutical expertise. To provide a strong foundation in the area, this degree covers Pharmacology, Pharmaceutical Chemistry, and more. Pursuing this course allows pupils to promote public health and research about dispensing medications.

Bachelor of Ayurvedic Medicine and Surgery (BAMS)

As a co-ordinated degree, BAMS blends Ayurvedic traditions with contemporary medical knowledge. Essentially, this course marks a compelling alternative to NEET. Its curriculum comprises subjects like Physiology, Anatomy, Pharmacology, Pathology, and so on.

Bachelor of Siddha Medicine and Surgery (BSMS)

Siddha Medicine enormously originates in the ancient Tamil culture. Moreover, it is a distinguished alternative healing system that emphasises holistic well-being. Like the BAMS Degree, it spans across fields like Physiology, Toxicology, Anatomy, etc. Selecting this course can help pupils significantly contribute toward healthcare sectors.

Psychology

A B.Sc. Degree in Psychology concentrates on the study of the mind. It further caters to social development, human behaviour, mental illness, emotions, and related areas. Essentially, such degrees can prepare students for both the public and private sector jobs.

Bachelor of Naturopathy and Yogic Sciences (BNYS)

As the name suggests, Naturopathy and Yogic Sciences tackle natural healing

methods. It primarily merges ancient healing traditions with modern medical knowledge. The course mostly includes Yoga Therapy, Nutrition, Acupuncture, and Lifestyle Management.

Bachelor of Unani Medicine and Surgery (BUMS)

The Greek Philosophy enriches the Unani Medicine, which balances bodily humours for holistic well-being. Its extensive curriculum comprises Pharmacology, Physiology, Surgery and Unani Pharmacotherapy.

Physiotherapy

Bachelors in Physiotherapy specifically trains professionals to provide with therapeutic and preventive services. This course instructs on preventive and therapeutic ways to treat disabilities. This degree curriculum includes practical training besides the academic knowledge.

Bachelor of Veterinary Science and Animal Husbandry (B.V.Sc. & A.H.)

The B.V.Sc. & A.H. Degree is specifically made for those who care for animals. This course focuses on Animal Health, Disease Prevention, and Welfare. In addition, it paves the pathway to Research, Animal Care, and Public Health.

Paramedical Courses

This course paves an exciting roadway for healthcare-passionate individuals. Essentially, it equips students with specialised skills in diagnostics, patient care, and therapeutics. This Medical Course curriculum includes Radiology, Physiotherapy, Medical laboratory technology, and more.

Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) Courses

Bachelor's degrees in Science open up a variety of pathways into specialised scientific fields. These courses lay a solid groundwork in scientific principles, setting the stage for a successful career in medicine by encompassing a broad range of scientific disciplines. Let's delve into some of the most sought-after B.Sc. courses:

a) Respiratory care technology: This B.Sc. Course includes process of analysing, treating and carrying out diagnostic checks. Its curriculum is also curated in accordance with the industry standards.

b) Blood Transfusion technology: It is a part of the Paramedical And Health Sciences. This technical-based course comprises blood-testing and transfusion methods.

c) Cardiovascular technologies: Through this course, pupils will become familiar with stent implants, cardiac pacemakers, and so on. It can primarily teach you about diagnosing and monitoring heart and circulatory-related diseases.

d) Operation Theatre and anaesthesia technologies: This course teaches about controlling patients' records and notice each operation details. Additionally, it talks about strategies of disinfecting surgical equipment.

e) Nuclear medicine and radiotherapy technologies: Such specialised courses deal in disease diagnosis with the assistance of radioactive materials. Professionals can save patients from investigative surgery's trauma through this education.

f) Emergency and critical care technologies: Within this course, pupils can learn about intensive care's equipment. Its course curriculum includes Echocardiography, Electrocardiogram (ECG), etc.

g) Endoscopy & gastrointestinal imaging technologies: This study plan is related to various techniques of capturing body parts'

images. Such diversified study plans comprise advance imaging, and healthcare management.

h) Perfusion technology: A B.Sc. in Perfusion Technology talks about the study of Pathology, Physiology. In addition, its curriculum imparts knowledge on hearts or lungs support system's creation.

i) Radiology & imaging technology: It marks an ideal course for pupils interested in Medical lab technology. This primarily covers Radiography and methods of taking internal body parts' images.

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Advantages of pursuing Medical Courses without NEET

Besides knowing Which Medical Course is Best Without NEET, you must know their benefits as well. Let's explore some of them in the following points:

a) Diverse career options: Earning medical courses that don't require NEET widens your career possibilities. It introduces you to a path better aligned with your professional goals.

b) Flexible entry requirements: Alternative Medical courses have more flexible entry criteria. This can mostly benefit students who didn't score well in the NEET. Additionally, they can help pupils seeking unconventional routes.

c) Specialised training: Courses without NEET usually offer training in certain healthcare fields. This can better develop your expertise in your chosen area. Specialised training can also help you excel in the healthcare profession.

High-salary career options in medicine without NEET

Some of the best Medical Courses Without NEET guarantee decent career choices. Let's look at the following points for a detailed overview of some of those choices:

1) Clinical research

As a branch of Healthcare Sciences, it determines the safety and effectiveness of medicines. This employment field also requires dealing with medical devices, diagnostic products, diagnosis and treatment methods.

2) Food technology/Food Science

This professional pathway requires individuals to deal with the study of physical, biological, and chemical food make-up. As a high-paying position, it includes the selection, preservation, processing, packaging, distribution and use of safe food.

3) Pharmacy

The Pharmaceutical sector is an excellent option for exploring immense jobs in the medical industry. A pharmacy career is indeed one of the best Medical Careers in today's context.

4) Life sciences

Students can gain in-depth knowledge in Botany, Biology, and Physiology, and the list goes on with Life Sciences. Earning this after the 12th can guarantee an in-demand and perfect career match.

5) Nursing

Non-MBBS holders looking for Medical Careers can opt for nursing profession. This career option includes working in general ward as well as the operation theatre. Herein, professionals look after patients suffering from physical and mental illness.

6) Medical laboratory technology

The Medical laboratory technology careers deal with prevention, diagnosis and clinical laboratory tests. In this field, professionals need to analyse human tissues

and other specimens via lab equipment.

7) Cardiac care technology

The cardiac technology career aligns with the diagnosis and treatment of cardiac, and peripheral vascular conditions. This sector demands experts preparing patients for open-heart surgery and pacemakers' implementation.

8) Nutritionist

Pupils searching for a Medical course without NEET can opt for a nutritionist career. These professionals can effectively help individuals concerned about weight management, stress and panic.

9) Dialysis technology

Dialysis technology careers require students to deal with the treatment of kidney diseases. This career option holds a great potential and guarantees a higher earning potential.

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Job profiles in Medical without NEET

Studying Medical courses that don't require the NEET can help you explore multiple professions. Let's explore some of those professions in the following points:

a) Occupational therapist: These professionals assist people to overcome physical or mental illness. Their duties include working with clients in clinical settings, NGOs, and schools. People of all ages can consult them to lead a better and fulfilling life.

b) Microbiologist: Their study areas include different materials found in soil, water, food, plants, etc. Microbiologists work in laboratories, food industries, agriculture sectors, and distilleries. They can opt for government jobs, or work as Safety Officers for relevant departments.

c) Biomedical Engineer: These experts interact medicine with technology to understand the disease causes' and find solutions. Moreover, Biomedical Engineers can join research laboratories or collaborate with Scientists and Doctors. They hold expertise in building bioinformatics, robust medical technology, and so on.

d) Biotechnologist: These experts synthesise the knowledge of Biology and technology to invent products and processes. Their duties entail working in research fields such as Pharma, Agriculture, Genomics, Chemistry, etc.

e) Respiratory Therapist: They provide with life-saving care to patients suffering from breathing issues and trauma. In addition, their patients range from diverse age groups. Their work areas include acute care hospitals, emergency care, ICUs, newborn units, etc.

f) Psychologist: This career demands professionals to help people cope with life and mental health issues. Essentially, they utilise therapeutic methods, tests and psychoanalysis. Appropriate medicine suggestions to enhance patient's quality of life also fall under their duties.

Conclusion

Pursuing a career in the medical field doesn't always require clearing the NEET exam. A variety of enriching medical courses await after the 12th grade, independent of NEET. These courses provide a spectrum of prospects for those dedicated to healthcare. Selecting the Best Medical Courses After 12th Without NEET, tailored to your passions and abilities, marks the start of your fulfilling medical career journey.

(The writer is Retired Principal and Educational columnist).