

NOD TO YATRA

Finally, the J&K Administration has given nod to holy Yatra of Cave Shrine of Baba Amarnath amidst Himalayas in Kashmir Division of Union Territory of J&K. The Yatra to world famous abode of Lord Shiva is a rewarding experience for the staunch devotees of the greatest of the Hindu Gods. Though, this year the Yatra is proposed to be undertaken in a restricted manner with permission to only 500 pilgrims per day from Jammu to the 3,880-metre-high holy cave shrine. However, taking things in right perspective the Chief Secretary of J&K has made it clear that Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for testing of persons entering the Union Territory would also be applicable to the intending Amarnath pilgrims with no exception or omission. As asserted by the administration, the restrictions imposed on the holy Yatra this year are only to ensure that no lapse or lethargy is allowed as far as precautions with regard to pandemic coronavirus are concerned. The way the COVID outbreak is posing a risk to people across the country with today's number of cases touching 23,000-mark and toll nearing 19,000, it is quite imperative that strict adherence to norms is ensured while allowing any congregation of people be it a religious pilgrimage, social function or political activity and government's move to restrict Yatra this year as far as number of the Yatriss is concerned, is a prudent decision and should be followed in letter and spirit to nullify the impact of corona, which has otherwise spread its tentacles across the length and breadth of the country. Another aspect which the local administration has taken care of this time ahead of Yatra which is likely to commence in the last week of this month for about 15 days is ensuring complete set up for providing medical facilities to pilgrims along with provision of medicines and other facilities in wake of COVID-19 challenge besides special arrangement to handle the bodies of those who succumb during the Yatra. It is thus clear that the Yatra this year will be a challenging task with so many difficulties confronting the organisers including dearth of labourers, medical staff and preoccupation of several officials of administration due to coronavirus. However, looking into the proactive and synergised approach of the J&K UT Administration in dealing crises of all hues since its inception, one can say with confidence that the ensuing Yatra will be conducted smoothly without anything going haywire or casting trouble to any of the stakeholders.

INDIA'S BACKBONE

There is not an iota of doubt in the fact that what Jawans are to people of India as far as their security and safety is concerned, the Kissans (farmers) are also no less in the way that they act as Annadatta for the nation providing food and health security at all times. The significance of both these sections of the Indian society was well understood by the second prime minister of the India Lal Bahadur Shastri, who from the podium at Ramliha Maidan in New Delhi gave the slogan of Jai Jawan Jai Kissan in 1965 as on one hand India was attacked by rogue nation Pakistan and on the other the country faced acute dearth of food grains during those times. Akin to the situation then, the country is facing somewhat similar situation right now with multi-front aggression by the adversaries along her borders and manifold increase in hardships for farmers due to COVID-19 pandemic inviting government's special focus to strengthen farming sector which along with Indian army is considered as the backbone of the nation. What is satisfying is the fact that akin to Lal Bahadur Shastri, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has also enthused jawans and officers of the army to defend the nation from its enemies and cheered the farmers for their credence in stabilising the economy especially during COVID times. The role of farmers in making India self reliant as desired by PM Modi is of prime importance and taking this fact into account the prime minister on Saturday pitched for need to promote start-ups and agri-entrepreneurs to ensure innovation and use of technology in farming and allied sectors. He has rightly exhorted that traditional knowledge of Indian communities should be coupled with technology to bolster farmers' position and in turn economy of the country, which traditionally relied on agriculture and formed basis for India's bold face during times of world recession on many of the earlier occasions.

OFF 'D' CUFF

Yoga is not merely a set of physical exercises; it is also a process of witnessing, becoming watchful, with more awareness. During this pandemic period, health experts are advising people to practise yoga at home to offset the growing level of anxiety. There are also predictions of rise in post-traumatic stress, after the world is declared coronavirus-free. Some people living alone might be feeling a forced sense of solitude. We have to look at it differently.

This period of quarantine and isolation is not exactly loneliness. In the Yoga Sutras, Patanjali gave a term, Kaivalya, to denote the state of ultimate aloneness. When we sit down in the morning to start the first step of yoga - Atha Yoganushasnam, bringing discipline to mind and body - that moment creates a powerful energy field wherein for the first time, we meet our true Self.

For some, this meeting could be painful, because it shows us a mirror that can reflect our inner state. However, due to a natural tendency, we have been avoiding looking into this mirror, because we love to live in a crowd, just to avoid the feeling of emptiness that exists in all of us.

Yoga is the bridge that connects chaos to nothingness. It is that seed in us that can help cultivate tremendous awareness; turning us into a brilliant flame of individuality.

To become pure, gold has to pass through fire. Yoga is that fire which prepares us for bodily strength and absolute

Yoga is inner communion

consciousness. It is a total methodology, a science to transform the chaos within into a blissful state of perfect being. In Patanjali's words, the first step is to create total order within, like a crystallised centre. Yoga postures are just tools for centring of the mind-body mechanism. Through postures, Patanjali says, one can remove chaos and bring in harmony.

Secondly, yoga is not a therapy. It is a discipline to bring about a balanced state of health. Yoga transforms our goal-oriented, result-oriented mindset, so that we live in here and now, in this very moment.

Yoga postures are a great tool for training the inner being, so that the body follows our intentions. For example, in a posture, our body may start shivering and shaking. It is the body signalling us to stop. But this also gives us an opportunity. If we can continue to remain in that posture, the mind, which is informing us about the shivering, will fall in line. It happens simply because the body and mind are not two separate things but one.

If we are able to tell the body to remain in that particular posture, the mind too will follow silently. According to Patanjali, it is because the body and mind are in total synchronicity and the centring has happened. So, we should do our 'asanas' while reminding ourselves that this process is a path that will lead us to the state of Kaivalya. Yoga, therefore, guides us to the peak of consciousness and to the ultimate state of health.

Remembering Pandit Amar Nath Vaishnavi—A real Karmayogi

■ RAJINDER PREMI

Some are born with God given extra ordinary abilities, creative acumen and talent, who by virtue of such sublime qualities give the world new direction. These people look and behave as ordinary citizens, but their intellect and sensibilities make them towering, to carve out a niche for themselves and make an everlasting impact, thus leave behind a great legacy: Lalla Ji, as we called him out of our love & respect, was one such legendary soul.

Amar Nath Vaishnavi was born in August 1925. As a child in his school days, he had developed social, political commitment which grew with the passing years. He had the inborn qualities of a prune Hindu heart and remained for his full life a devout Hindu.

Lalla was interested in community-affairs from his infancy days, as a conscious Kashmiri Pandit and became to be un-challenged leader of Kashmiri Pandits and became the President of All State Kashmiri Pandit Conference (ASKPC). He was not only popular within his own community, but was also respected by the majority community of Muslims in Kashmir as well as Dogras of Jammu & Ladakhis also.

Vaishnavi was appointed as a teacher in the State Education Department and was posted outside the Valley for most of service career.

Lalla Ji had his early education at Jammu, in Ranbir School, where it is said that Pandit Vaid Vaishnav Dutt was his classmate. His Father's transfer took Vaishnavi back to Srinagar, where he joined and worked in Bhagat Singh movement. It is said that many of his friends, Bal Ji Zutshi, Dina Nath Nadim, Jagan Nath Kaul and even his elder brother Ram Nath Vaishnavi were already connected with Bhagat Singh movement.

Vaishnavi was much influenced by the Arya Samaj movement also, as he worked in DAV School Rainawari and later in Pathankot. He got connected with the Jan Sangh and RSS also. He worked actively as a Pracharak and was made Incharge of the 'Shakhaas' of the RSS. Vaishnavi had also participated very actively, against the permit system and it was the Jammu Praja Parishad which launched an agitation against it, which also attracted Dr. Syama Prasad Mukherji to the state, who finally laid-down his life for ending the permit Raj in J&K. State Police arrested Late

Vaishnavi, under preventive detention Act & was charged besides other things for supplying arms to the agitators, from Pathankot.

It is said that after Supreme Court judgment in 1955 Vaishnavi was ordered to be released, by the Chief Justice Bench. Vaishnavi organized Janamashtami Procession in Handwara, a neighbouring town of the Indo-Pak border, a complaint was lodged and he was transferred.

During Parnishori Agitation in 1967, the Hindu Action Committee led by S N Fotedar was formed. Some known KPs including Pt. Vaishnavi became a part of this committee. This Kashmiri Pandit Agitation, the only successful agitation of KPs so far saw a fortnight curfew. It also saw lathi charges, police firing, police repression, deaths of so many agitators and it attracted nationwide attention. Then Home Minister Y B Chavan visited the valley aftermath of the agitation.

Post migration Pt. Vaishnavi had been an inspiration for the younger generation. He took control of the displaced affairs of the exiled community into his hands at Jammu and worked closely with KP Sabha Jammu, which resulted into the setting up of tented accommodation, Relief-organization, adjusting displaced people in schools or other Govt. buildings. He cherished dream of continuing Publication of daily 'Martand' a voice of KPs of Kashmir.

Vaishnavi's unflinching integrity and his love for his community can't be forgotten by the exiled community. His untiring services to the whole humanity will always be remembered by all, as he had devoted his entire life for human cause, for which he remained a lifelong activist.

Since I joined the arena of Social Service, after we landed in Delhi in May 1990, after we were forced to flee from our homeland, Kashmir, in the backdrop of martyrdom of my illustrious father & beloved younger brother: I became the first Kashmiri displaced to be associated with Kashmiri Samiti Delhi (KSD), where I was appointed as chief-co-ordinator in 1991 and subsequently became the Secretary of KSD in 1992, when it was headed by Chaman Lal Gadoo as President. During these 2 years of my stay in KSD we were coordinating with our Jammu biradari through Vaishnavi only.

My contact & rapport with Lalla Ji developed more frequently thick, when BJP constituted a

Kashmiri cell in Delhi State Unit at 14, Pandit Pant Marg, under the chairmanship of C L Gadoo and I was made as founder General Secretary of "J&K Sangam", when late Kidar Nath Sahni was President Delhi Pradesh BJP.

Late A N Vaishnavi would come to attend our meetings, seminars and symposia directly from Jammu and would discuss all matters of migrant relief, rehabilitation & welfare measures.

After our 3 years of stay in JK Sangam, I was advised by J N Kaul (Papa Ji) who came calling at my Lodhi-Road residence, on one hot humid morning of August month, desired me to assist him in All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS), of which he was recently then elected its President. He said we have watched you during your stay in KSD and recently in JK Sangam and I have been personally much impressed with your untiring services for the exiled community.

I vividly remember AIKS, under J N Kaul, visiting 1st time various migrant camps of Jammu, Nagrota, Udhampur and Batal Bali, so there would be a close interaction with Vaishnavi. I started understanding more about this leader.

Vaishnavi was a part of the delegation of the Kashmiri Pandits which was invited by the standing committee of Parliament Ministry of Home Affairs, to hear us in Parliament-annexe about our hardships, difficulties and problems being faced by the exiled community outside their homeland. The delegation was led by M K Kaw President, AIKS. A joint community representation was made by Late Kaw himself which was unanimously prepared by all of us earlier. Vaishnavi was very happy on our conduct and approach during the whole exercise.

When the standing committee prepared its report and submitted to Government of India, its recommendation, I took a copy of these recommendations to Jammu for Vaishnavi. On seeing this copy he was much, impressed by my concern and respect for him.

National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) was hearing us during the petition of genocide during the year 1993-1999 and during some hearings Vaishnavi was also present on my request. He was much impressed by my documentation work and arguments, after which he came to my Lodhi Road residence to give me a pat for all this.

Guru Purnima: Relevance of Guru in one's life

■ PURAN SHARMA

This happens to be widely famous and popular maxim, a kind of a moral saying amongst the common folks of Duggar Land elucidating a significant message that the entity of Guru, a teacher, a guide, a counsellor is indispensable for salvation from not only the constantly ongoing cycle of birth and death passing through arduous process of transposition into 84 millions of living species which is painful beyond imagination and exceedingly tormenting for the mortal man, but also for successfully handling his worldly pursuits and multifarious activities, domestic chores, managing multiple relationships and the related duties. The prominent adage also mentions Shah Bina Pat Nei" meaning thereby that Shah, the wealthiest person in the village, locality, city or in the society as a whole and his monetary possessions are enough and to spare to fulfil the barest minimum needs of the poor and downtrodden in times of adversity.

Pat signifies esteem, prestige, reverence, honour and credibility in the estimation of the society. At times any odd member of the society may come across an extremely difficult situation on account of some natural calamity or prolonged terminal disease which shoves him into debt from toe to head and the hapless person is all poised to lose his self pride and the prestige in the estimation of the society. Then in those unsavoury circumstances wherein his general reputation and prestige is at stake or Pat is on the brink of extinction, Shah comes forward to save his honour. This time when I made up my mind to pen this write up on eve of Guru Purnima, a great cultural festival of ancient India, this adage just struck my mind and I thought it appropriate to reduce it to writing as prelude to the principal topic of Guru Purnima which falls on July 5, 2020. At this point of time although it is observed as localized event wherein people worship and honour their individual Gurus by offering donations in cash and kind by visiting their Ashrams yet the festival of Guru Purnima enjoys a special place and status in the National life of our country which need be

specifically highlighted on this occasion for understanding its national significance.

Turning focus on Guru Purnima we find that Purnima of aashad Maas as per Bhartiya calendar which occurs on 5th July this year is observed as Guru Purnima or Vyas Purnima. It epitomizes the holy tradition of Guru Shishya (Teacher- Student) relationship which dates back to the early Vedic period. Guru was considered to be the guide and philosopher for the whole of the society. His words were final. Even the chakravarti kings had no authority to ignore and disobey their advice. In the ancient times and the vedic period the Gurus, Rishis, Monks were living a secluded life in the forests as ascetics fully engrossed in the patriotic work of national and societal development, however, in the month of Aashad i.e June-July every year it is a period of persistent rains which is obviously not favourable and conducive to have a smooth life in the dense forests in their make shift hermitages, therefore, they meticulously planned to earmark and utilize this period of constant rains for moving out of their Ashrams and walk down to the common folks for interaction and understanding the complications and intricacies of their lives and provide them spiritual guidance and blessings at their door step. Certainly the common folks were immensely benefitted not only in their family life but also in their social, national and spiritual life.

The sages and Gurus were making the best use of this opportunity to have interaction with the countrymen, Rural folks, peasants, women folks and the growing progeny through house to house contact, organizing religious ceremonies such as conducting Shodas sanskars (16 cultural values) for general benefit of the masses:-

1.Garvadhan 2. Punsvan 3. Seemantonayan, these three sanskars are performed prior to delivery of the child followed by 13 sanskars are post-natal and solemnized after birth of the child such as 4.Jaatakaram 5. Naamkaram 6. Nishkraman 7. Amprashan 8. Choul. 9. Karanbedh 10. Vidyardambh 11.Upnayan 12.Vedarambh 13. Keshant 14. Samavartan 15. Vivah and 16. Anteshthi together with emphasis on inculcating basic cultural values to lay foundation of an

enlightened society. In fact it was a natural system of establishing rules, norms and conventions for guidance and strict adherence by the society to lead purposeful life. Similarly these Gurus assiduously founded a perfect and phenomenal Gurukul system of education for all segments of society irrespective of their economic status. It was a widely acclaimed and a highly productive system of education. Every child poor or rich had to proceed to a Gurukul for receiving comprehensive education in all faculties for holistic development of his personality including various types of weaponry and warfare techniques for self defence and protecting the Nation as well from the external invasions.

Having a glance through the historical accounts of ancient India we stumble over startling but very encouraging facts which fully confirm the existence of Gurukul Parampara in our country since the dawn of civilization. All our Gods had a Guru namely Brihaspati, Bhagwan Ram Chander had the blessings of a Guru namely Guru Vashisth and Guru Vishvamittar: Chhattarpati Shiva had a Guru famously known as Samarth Guru Ram Dass. In the modern Indian history we find that Guru or a Teacher at primary or middle level transformed the life of great APJ Abdul Kalam and the author of our constitution DR. Bhim Rao Ambedkar. In view of this I conclude the article on Guru Purnima with a genuine feeling of bliss and conviction that yearly celebration of Guru Purnima indicates high degree of deference and reverence for the Guru or Teacher across the national spectrum. It is still relevant and efficacious to facilitate sweeping reforms in the present system of education. We need to launch a nationwide hunt for talented and committed teachers and there is no dearth of this treasure in our country. There is a burning need to connect the system of imparting education in the country to our cultural roots. Guru Purnima can be instrumental in strengthening the student- teacher relationship which can further restore the dignity and pride of our Gurukul pattern of education. It will equally give a fillip to overall National development and progress as well.

Shamshaan Ghat for resolving a long pending demand of 1947 refugees from POJK.

Pt Chaman Lal Sharma, Bhour Camp (Jammu).

Adjust newly promoted lecturers

Dear Editor, The Department of School Education has recently issued promotion asking promotes to submit various documents for verification, in order to make way for their placement and adjustment orders. It is worthwhile to mention that almost six months have elapsed after issuance of promotion orders from Masters to incharge Lecturers in Mathematics. Documents were verified and deadlines were exhausted but these lecturers have not been adjusted in Higher Secondary Schools till date. One fails to understand what hurdles do our bureaucrats face in the present age of e-governance The students are in waiting, the institutions with vacant positions are in waiting and the lecturers continue to visit the Directorate of School Education, only to return empty handed and to plan for the next visit. Will the concerned Advisor take initiative to dispose of the hurdles, adjust the lecturers and allow the students to seek education from these new incumbents.

Hira Lal Bhat, Durga Nagar, Jammu.

Imran fiddles when Balochistan burns

■ R.K. SINHA

Imran Khan does not look beyond himself. It is more than clear in the light of a few developments in Balochistan. There is an open rebellion against Pakistan in that province which is the largest in terms of area. But he seems to be least concerned. An organization called Balochistan Liberation Army wants to separate Balochistan from Pakistan by all means, fair or foul. For this, the organization is now treading a violent path.

The Balochistan Liberation Army has already claimed responsibility for the attack in the stock exchange building of Pakistan's financial capital Karachi. But Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan has falsely claimed in Pak Parliament that India was behind the attack in Karachi. He had made this claim the very next day without verifying facts. He had not felt any need to present any evidence in this connection. At least ten people were killed in the attack. The attackers hurled grenades there.

Imran Khan has gone so far as to say that Pakistan was not involve in Mumbai attack in 2008 in which over 166 civilians were killed. According to him, it was engineered by the Indian government itself. It is a total lie. The Mumbai attack was made more than 10 years ago but Pakistan has not yet punished the perpetrators of that crime. Cases against the accused of the attack are still pending in Pakistan.

If no one from Pakistan was involved why were cases filed in the first place. He should be also asked who was Ajmal Kasab. He had himself admitted that he hailed from Pakistan. His trial was conducted in India and he has been already hanged.

Imran Khan, it is more than clear now, has not realised the gravity of the situation in Balochistan. Besides finding out why there is rebellion, he has to find out why the Liberation Army has targeted Punjabis. Of course, violence of any kind for any reason cannot be considered right.

It is well known that most Pakistanis hate Punjab and Punjabis. Everyone believes that Punjab province of Pakistan is cared more by Imran Khan as he is a Punjabi. He has contested from Mianwali in Punjab. Sometime back, gunmen had boarded passengers from a bus and killed more than a dozen people in that province.

The gunmen used to stop the buses plying between Karachi and Gwadar, check the identity cards of the passengers and then used to brutalise Punjabi Muslims. The non-Punjabis were left unharmed. Punjabis are still being attacked and killed. There is no end yet. It has been also established that the Punjabis are being killed by the Balochistan Liberation Army. They are also being abducted. Balochistan is considered to be the most backward state of Pakistan. No development has taken place there. Incidentally, some gas deposits have been found there.

At present, the Government of Pakistan is not paying much attention to the anti-Punjabi movement in Balochistan because it believes that with the Chinese help the movement can be crushed. A 790 Km long Gwadar Port is being built with the help of China there. Pakistan also believes that the creation of the Port will change the destiny of the country. But the people of Balochistan do not think so.

They believe that only Punjabis will benefit from that. Their interests will be mainly served. They also think that the resources of the area are being utilised only by one group. Whatever may be the reason for their hatred, it is a fact that Balochistan wanted to be out of Pakistan and be a part of India. The proposal was not acceptable to Jawaharlal Nehru. It has remained a part of Pakistan because of the army which has often committed excesses and kept people virtually quiet. Tanks and fighters planes have been also used at times.

There are four states in Pakistan: Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Apart from these, Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan are also controlled by Pakistan. The Army is most powerful in that country. Women have often accused it of committing rape and killing men.

It is also noteworthy that nobody from Balochistan and Sindh want to join the terrorist outfits. The army commits atrocities on them also because of this reason. Youngmen from Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are mainly in terrorists organisations. Hafiz Saeed and Masood Azhar are Punjabis and their centers are located in Punjab province only.

Children need special attention during lockdown

Dear Editor, It's regretful that most of the children are misusing their time during this nationwide lockdown. Almost they are wasting their time in mobile and internet. Neither they are helping their parents in household works nor focusing on their study. Mobile, became a necessary part of today's life. Everybody feels difficulty to live without it. But misusing it is very much intruding. It has been seen that children follow their parents especially their mothers. And it's reality also that most of women are involved in mobile nowadays. They try to compete their works as soon as possible and start using mobile. If luckily one's husband is somehow cool minded, she does nothing and get involves in the web world every time. The children also get involved in the web world because they copy their parents. Nowadays children copy their parents rather listening them. So in such a scenario, parents should be more careful about their children. They should think before doing something that their children will copy them. If they take to reading every time and leave using mobile unnecessarily, then it would be better for their children. They should make their children busy in reading and writing besides sparing some time to play with them and focus on physical exercise.

Shahin Ahmed, Mumbai.