

## INCREASING ACCIDENTS

Road accidents have become very common nowadays. As more people are buying automobiles, the incidents of road accidents are increasing day by day. Besides, people have also become more careless now. Many people do not follow the traffic rules. Especially in big cities, there are various modes of transport.

Thus, road accidents are bound to happen. You pick up a newspaper and you will find at least one or two news items about road accidents daily. They cause loss of life as well as material. People need to be more careful when on the road, no matter what mode of transport you are on. Even the pedestrians are not safe due to the increase in these incidents. Every day people see the accident in the news, from relatives and even with their own eyes.

We need to stop road accidents to reduce the death rate. Every year thousands of people lose their lives in road accidents. Children should be taught about traffic rules from an early age. They should be taught the value of life and how they can safeguard it.

Apart from this, the government has to pass more stringent laws for those who disobey the traffic rules. People found guilty of breaking these laws, regardless of gender, should be fined heavily or face strict action.

Similarly, parents should set an example for little ones by not using phones while driving. Also, they should always wear their helmet and seatbelt to avoid the possibility of accident.

## The world of wonderful winged visitors

■ G.L KHAJURIA

Aristotle, the world renowned Philosopher had more than two thousand years back had known how the Avian (Bird) migrate with seasonal changes but in fact it was in Mazzy, 1822 a day of bewilderedness for ornithologist that during this period they observed that a stork with its neck pierced was caught in Mecklenburg, Germany. In fact this stork with arrow had come from Africa and established for the migration though the fact goes that there are references in Sanskrit, by the Greek Philosopher in the old testament and allied scriptures. In line with supporting fact, The German emperor Freidrich (1194-1250 AD) Observed South bound flights of bird crossing Mediterranean sea during winter.

The migration of birds is normally effected with the change of season and the birds have the record if flying over thousand of km and find the same locations where they had built their nests or habitats a year before. Why do birds migrate is a matter of mystery. After deep thought, it was established by the ornithologist that the migration triggered is to escape from cold, seek food and to choose new breeding grounds. And of all these birds, the most ones are those who don't feel eagerness of migration despite the impending cold or weather changes that take place.

Ornithologists establish that out of around 8-10 thousand species of birds those inhabit this planet, two third are migratory and strangest fact is that these fly too high mountainous regions like that of Himalayas or so. The Siberian crane is a regular migratory bird from Siberia to India flying long and hazardous routes.

After a great deal of studies ornithologist have established that American golden ploru (plurialis) flies from Aractic to South America covering a long stretch around 7000 kms or so. The Red -Throated humming bird barely 10 inches of size flies about 2500 Kms from Canada to Florida and the swallow (Hirund spp) measuring about 10-15 cms migrates covering a distance around 7000 Kms from Europe to South Africa crossing over Atlantic. The Northern pintail duck (Anas acuta) and garany duck (Anas quequedula) which breeds in the Siberian tundra and taiga cover long long distances during their migration.

Similarly, the birds inhabiting in Delhi zoo also migrate long distances with the change of climate for food and finding new ground apart from 1200 species which are spectacular and inspiring. The Bharat-pur bird sanctuary is a paradise of magnificent birds and same is with wildfowl refuge in Rajasthan which is barely 26 sq Kms in area and much of its area is marshy, besides the cover of woods. It is no denying the fact that the domesticated pigeon can obviously find its way home after having been shifted to unknown strange place or location. Similarly, it was experimented with wild Manx shearwater, taken from its nest off the sea coast of UK and released in Boston USA. Surprisingly enough, the bird returned or navigated or to say aviated to its original habitat. The aviation of birds have been studied using advanced technology like radar, keeping the birds in planetarium, putting bands of light metal etc and the studies have shown miraculous results.

Ornithologist have established that birds navigate not only with the help of sun but these also pursuit or take cue from the position of stars of night sky. The German biologist FA Schneider established that the bird navigate with the help of sun in 1996.

Stephen T Emin, professor at Cornell University conducted detail studies to ascertain as to how the bird could orient the visibility of stars correctly. In his experiment, he turned off the light in the planetarium where birds were kept. Emin and other observers found that the birds fluttered aimlessly revealing that they took the celestial bodies if sky is their guide.

The ornithologists are not in consonance with the outdated idea that the birds are guided by the Earth's magnetic field or that of gravitational field. In the experiment so conducted, the birds were put in a strong magnetic field with magnified plates attached to their wings and resultantly revealed insensitiveness to electromagnetic field or the result were inconclusive.

According to some researches, the birds, however can synthesize a magnetic compound capable of indicating the earth's magnetic field.

It is astonishing to note that the avians are capable of forecasting weather conditions and their changes. Studies on pigeons have shown astonishing result that these can see polarized light and ultraviolet light. The birds, in fact , can hear infrasound (noise in ultralow frequencies which carry vast varied distances). As a corollary, it has been attributed that birds do not live in sensory world as we human do. The birds during the course of long distant migration are having very sharp and keen eyesight. Physiologically their body weight is low as the skeletal structure is hollow whereas the pectoral muscles are strong enough to take long flights. Besides, the respiratory system is well adopted to meet up their metabolic activities involved during their long in that distance flights.

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

The water in a vessel is sparkling; the water in the sea is dark.

The small truth has words which are clear; the great truth has

great silence.

-Rabindranath Tagore

## Writing New India's Growth Story with Logistics Efficiency

■ SUMITA DAWRA

India is at a take-off point today. The logistical bottlenecks are falling by the wayside as the country's global logistics rating zooms past its competitors.

India's global positioning in manufacturing and trade is strongly related to reforms for improving infrastructure and EXIM logistics. Recognising infrastructure as a critical growth engine for the economy, reforms such as the Prime Minister's Gati Shakti National Master Plan (NMP) and the National Logistics Policy have focussed on improving logistics infrastructure and logistics services for goods and passenger movement. And in a very short time, these reforms are showing results.

The World Bank, in its report for 2023 on Logistics Performance Index (LPI) has acknowledged India's progress in the direction of improved logistics efficiency. World Bank's report shares the LPI across 139 nations, and has placed India at 38th position, a jump of six places over our rank in 2018.

LPI is 'a survey-based quantification of qualitative perceptions' across six broad parameters that consider Customs, Infrastructure, International Shipments, Logistics competence and quality of logistics services, Timeliness, Tracking and Tracing.

The World Bank gives India's example as an emerging economy that has invested in infrastructure and technologies since 2015, connecting the ports on both eastern and western coast of the country to economic centres in the hinterland. Such investments, apart from other factors, is why India's dwell time for containers at ports leapfrogged that of many developed nations. Between May to October 2022, India's dwell time was at a low of 3 days, while it was 4 days for UAE and S Africa, 7 for US and 10 for Germany.

The report upholds India as a good case study of a country that has brought in supply chain visibility through use of a digitization platform, namely, the National Logistics Data Bank Services Ltd (NLDBSL). The report explains how Logistics Data Bank (LDB)

tracks and traces the movement of EXIM containers in India, through use of RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) tags, thereby making it possible for consignees to undertake 'end-to-end tracking of their supply chain.' Such a cargo tracing mechanism, introduced initially on the western coast of the country in 2016, and today covering all major ports and private ports, is credited with improved dwell time of containers at the Indian Ports. To quote from the World Bank's report, "With the introduction of cargo tracking, dwell time in the eastern port of Visakhapatnam fell from 32.4 days in 2015 to 5.3 days in 2019."

Recognising the critical role of the logistics sector in the country's future, Government of India had launched Logistics Databank Project (LDB) as a digital system for tracking supply chains. The NLDBSL is run as a SPV (special purpose vehicle) between National Industrial Corridor Development Corporation (NICDC) and the Japanese Company, Nippon Electric Company (NEC), Limited. LDB integrates digital information available with various agencies across the supply chain to provide detailed real time information on EXIM container movement. The platform handles 100% of India's EXIM container volume, with the information available for consignees to access through a single portal, with a mobile app as well. Thereby, LDB provides visibility and enables big data analytics related to India's containerized EXIM Logistics.

Since it went live in July 2016, LDB has tracked 60 million EXIM containers. With a combination of technologies related to RFID, IoT (Internet of Things) and Big Data Analytics for tracking and tracing 100% of India's containerized EXIM cargo, LDB has integrated with major Indian ports, the busiest toll plazas, about 400 Container Freight Stations (CFS)/Inland Container Depots (ICDs) and Empty yards at Ports, with special economic zones, and even the integrated check posts on Nepal and Bangladesh borders. Almost 3000 RFID readers have been installed by the SPV at all major routes on roads and rail, including Dedicated Freight

Corridors, in order to capture the RFID data.

With the data fetched and integrated by LDB, various analytics are done, including calculation of port dwell time for containers, congestion analysis of transit movement of freight, speed analysis of container movement, performance benchmarking, transit time analysis (from Port to CFS or vice-versa), etc. This analysis is reported on a monthly, quarterly, and annual basis and shared with all concerned line Ministries, Port authorities, terminal operators, custom agencies, and other stakeholders.

Regular analytics is in turn used by concerned agencies to identify pain points and areas requiring improvement. An analysis of data from LDB in last few years also shows improvement in container handling performance, evacuation of road bound containers, container speed on major highways, besides in container evacuation performance of the ICDs and CFSs. Container speed on major highways, such as on Delhi-Mumbai route and the one connecting to Mundra Port, has also improved in comparison to 2018.

Today, LDB has not only extended its services up to the Nepal and Bangladesh borders to ensure efficient cross-border trade, it also uses the maritime tracking system to track India's EXIM containers till the international port of first call. Further, the possibility of leveraging our FTAs to integrate with similar international systems is part of our next steps so as to ensure that Export containers reach end destination in the most efficient manner, giving a boost to our trade performance.

This is just the start of a long journey in the fast lane. India's use of innovative digital technologies for improvement of the logistics ecosystem, will further boost our speed, and, as an icing on the cake, our global logistics rankings, within the next few years. This speed will surely help lead us to our cherished goal of becoming a developed nation by 2047.

(The writer is IAS, Spl Secretary to Govt of India (Logistics, M/o Commerce & Industry); &CEO & MD of NICDC).

## Doobti Delhi Ka Zemadar Koun ?

■ OMKAR DATTATRAY

It is very sad and unfortunate that the national capital is drowning in the floods and incessant monsoon rains .It is ironical that much unneeded politics is being played by the various political parties over the flooding of Delhi which is very bad and there should be no politicking over the Delhi which has submerged in flood waters and is in fact drowning .The million dollar question is who is responsible for the drowning of Delhi .Much petty and dirty politics is being played by both AAP and BJP .

AAP is holding BJP responsible for the current floods and submerging of Delhi by the flood waters .There is blame game on between AAP and BJP and one political party holding the other parties negligence and carelessness responsible for the Delhi floods which have wrecked it .There is need for a dispassionate ,unbiased and impartial probe and investigation on those party or parties which are responsible for the sorry state of floods in Delhi .But the fact should not be overlooked that floods is a natural calamity and no human has any control over the floods and then how can any political party be held responsible for the Delhi floods but still all those political parties and powers should be exposed for their carelessness and not keeping the contingency plan ready beforehand to meet the threat and woes of the flood .At the first place it is the Delhi government of AAP headed by Kejriwal which has miserably failed to give relief to Delhiites and also failed to rescue them.AAP and its leaders are only shifting the responsibility of combating the floods on BJP as it has failed to lessen the incidence of flood in Delhi with the result that Delhi is drowning .Delhi cabinet minister Saurabh Bharadwaj alleged that floods in city were caused by the BJP led centre and Haryana government willfully releasing water towards the national capital .Addressing a press conference ,Bharadwaj said it has not rained in Delhi in the last 3-4 days ,yet still the water level in Yamuna reached 208.66 meters ."The water from Hathnikund Barrage is released from three canals -Western Canal ,Eastern

Canal ,and Yamuna. As part of a conspiracy ,between July 9and 13,water was released from Yamuna canal only towards Delhi.

There was no water released through the Western and Eastern canal ,"he claimed .Similar charges were made by him and Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal even as the city government butted heads with Lieutenant Governor V.K.Saxena over broken regulator that allegedly caused inundation on the Vikas Marg. Meanwhile Delhi C M has deputed ministers for 6 flood -affected districts to ensure proper facilities at relief camps .Delhi minister and AAP leader Saurabh Bhardwaj writes to LG demanding action against three bureaucrats for not following the instructions of two ministers to call NDRF and Army Engineers Regiment at night to repair WHO Building regulator. "Officers ignored the directions causing flood situation in VIP areas of Delhi including the supreme court of India .Flooding could have been avoided if the directions of ministers had been followed and Army/NDRF was called on the preceding night .

This was a conspiracy against Supreme Court. "writes Bhardwaj in his letter .Congress calls off Maun Satyagrah in Delhi ,Haryana ,Punjab and HP. .However Delhi government is working on war footing .We have started Flood Relief Kitchen at party headquarters ,says Delhi minister Gopal Rai .The BJP alleged that inaction and corruption of the AAP government was responsible for the flood in Delhi and asked CM Arvind Kejriwal to apologize to the people for failing to handle the situation .Addressing a press conference ,BJP spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia and party MP Parvesh Sahib Singh Verma alleged that the flood was caused by lack of desalting of the Yamuna in the Last eight years of the Kejriwal government .This is thus obvious that there is blame game between AAP and BJP about the responsibility of Delhi floods which is very disturbing.

The reality is the Yamuna river in Delhi experienced an unprecedented rise ,reaching an alarming height of 208.48 meters on Thursday morning .This dra-

matic surge resulted in the flooding of nearby streets ,public facilities ,and private infrastructure ,leading to significant difficulties for residents residing in close proximity to the river .The water level at the old railway bridge on Wednesday night surpassed the 208 meter threshold ,reaching a staggering height of.208.48 meters at 8am on Thursday .The central water commission acknowledging the severity of the situation ,has classified it as an extreme situation and predicts further rise in water level .According to Manu Bhatnagar ,principal director of the National Heritage Division at the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage ,the principal cause behind the raging Yamuna river in Delhi can be attributed to occurrence of intense rainfall within a relatively short period. "The same amount of water falling over a longer period of time would not lead to such a situation as it allows time to the water to pass through .Even a lesser amount of precipitation can result in a higher level downstream if it falls in a shorter period of time. "he explained .A senior official of CWC said,' 'We noticed that the water released from the Hathnikund barrage took less time to reach Delhi compared to previous years.

The main reason could be encroachment situation .Earlier ,the water would have had more space to flow .Now it passes through a constricted cross section' 'The water from the barrage at Yamunanagar in Haryana ,around 180 Km from the national capital takes around two to three days to reach Delhi. Country representative of the International Union for Conservation of Nature ,Yeshveer Bhatnagar, attributed the record water level in the Yamuna to intense rainfall in the entire upper catchment area. He said ,"Encroachment of the floodplains may have an incremental effect. "Bhim Singh Rawat ,associate coordinator of the South Asia Network on Dams ,Rivers ,people (SANDRP)said that a major factor contributing to the unprecedented rise in the water level of the Yamuna river is the elevated river bed caused by substantial silt accumulation .More than

20 bridges within the 22 km river stretch from Wazirabad to Okhla obstruct the flow ,leading to the deposition of silt in the river bed and formation of numerous mid-stream sandbars .The location of these sandbars include beneath the Signature Bridge ,between the ITO barrage and Yamunabank ,between ISBT Kashmiri Gate and the old Kashmiri Gate and the old Railway Bridge and the Geeta colony Bridge .The Energy Resource Institute has identified multiple factors contributing to the alarming increase in flood incidents within the city of Delhi.

These include the uneven distribution of rainfall ,uncontrolled urbanization and encroachment upon natural drainage channels and urban lakes .Of particular concern is the unchecked filling od urban water bodies,which has become a widespread problem. The proliferation of illegal colonies throughout the city without adherence to the proper planning measures has resulted in the narrowing of the natural drainage systems .This poses a significant threat to the overall well-being of the city and serves as an open invitation to urban flooding as warned by The Energy Resource Institute .In fact from the above it is crystal clear that there are many causes for the current flooding and submerging of Delhi .The political parties should abstain from doing politics on the flooding in Delhi and instead cooperate with the Delhi government to mitigate the effects of flood on the people of Delhi otherwise the people of Delhi and country will teach a lesson to these parties in the general elections which are only ten months away from today .The answer to the question who is responsible to Delhi flooding is that the floods of the city is because of the interplay of many factors and the release of Yamuna water from Hatnikund barrage is definitely one of these factors and as such there should be no politicking on the issue of flooding in Delhi and instead all the political parties should cooperate with the government to lessen the sad impact of the floods in Delhi and such avoid playing the blame game.

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

## YOUR COLUMN

### Basohli Markets give deserted look

Dear Editor,

The Basohli town and hundreds of the villages in the proximity having borne the brunt of the migration due to the ponding of RSD reservoir has not recovered from the shock of destruction due to the mass scale migration even after the construction of Atal Setu in 2015. The natives expected that the business and the employment of youth will revisit Basohli once again. But their expectations were belied by the inactive and discriminatory attitude of the UT Government.

It was expected that the commissioning of the Atal Setu will rejuvenate the business of the area and open new avenues of employment for the idle youth but all proved a dream as a result the business of Basohli is gradually fading day by day. There are plenty of resources for enhancing the trade of Basohli by boosting the tourism of Basohli and its surroundings, by utilizing the Atal Setu for the interstate trade and vehicular traffic, by creating new avenues for skill trainings to the youth.

Instead of accelerating and promoting the business of Basohli markets the markets of Punjab and Himachal Pradesh has been in competitions for grabbing the Basohli market. All the articles from the kitchen to the daily use are being imported from Pathankot and Himachal Pradesh leaving the Basohli market to destroy at its own.

There is a restricted movement on the bridge with the result, Basohli a treasure house of trade and hub of tourism has been reduced to a fish market. The shop keepers are feeling difficulty in making both ends meet of their family. The market gives deserted look even during the peak hours of the day.

The UT government is requested to help revive the business of Basohli by allowing trade between Punjab Himachal and Basohli Bhaderwah and Doda. Boosting the tourism and establishing industrial estate, establishing some prestigious educational institutes concerning to medical, engineering and other career making faculties and introducing the programs as envisaged in many developmental schemes of PM for the youth and the small shop keepers. It is a high time for the govt. to act and save the culturally and tourism point of view rich town from starvation and unemployment on the humanitarian grounds.

Shiv Kumar Padha.

### Criminal cases against law makers

Dear Editor,

It has been reported that 44 per cent MLAs across India have criminal cases and criminal antecedents. This has been revealed in a recent analysis conducted by the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) and the National Election Watch (NEW). The ADR says that 1136 MLAs or 28 per cent have serious criminal cases against them. The data is said to have been extracted from the affidavit filed by the MLAs prior to contesting their most recent elections. Criminal cases in courts and police stations cannot be the basis to bar the candidates from contesting the elections because

all cases may not be genuine. Politically motivated cases filed against rivals form major part of the cases registered.

'A person is innocent till he is proved guilty' is the view that comes in favour of the candidates with criminal antecedents to file nominations to contest the elections. Gujarat High Court has observed that Rahul Gandhi has 10 criminal cases. Criminality is not alien to most of the politicians.

Law makers should not be law breakers. Politicians pretend to be 'servants' of people on the eve of elections. They become 'masters' soon after they come to power. While there is no constitutional bar on the candidates with criminal cases from contesting the elections, the parties fielding the candidates have to issue tickets to the candidates who are free from controversies and who do not have criminal cases against them. That would be a baby step in cleansing the politics. Above all, the role of courts in adjudicating the criminal cases at the earliest possible time is of paramount importance.

Exponential growth of criminal cases in courts may see a time when there will be no one among politicians who is free from criminal cases. Ultimately criminals rule the roost. Special courts have to be set up to try expeditiously the politicians with criminal cases intending to contest the elections to keep the political field less polluted.

There is imperative need to cleanse the political system with the judiciary evincing more interest in the expeditious disposal of criminal cases. If delayed delivery of justice is denial of justice, it is boon to those who are on wrong side.

K.V. Seetharamaiah.