

Stress is the reason for crime and all other kinds of frustration. To relieve it will eliminate everything else.
-Maharishi Mahesh Yogi

THREAT TO ENVIRONMENT

Illegal felling of trees, often driven by greed and poor enforcement of environmental laws, has emerged as one of the gravest environmental threats facing our nation today. Forests, which serve as the lungs of the planet and safeguard against climate change, are increasingly under attack. Despite numerous regulations and public awareness campaigns, illegal logging continues unabated, depleting our green cover and compromising ecological balance. It is high time this issue was taken with the seriousness it demands.

From the Himalayan forests in Jammu & Kashmir to the dense tropical jungles in the Northeast and central India, illegal logging is rampant. Often carried out by organized timber mafias in connivance with corrupt officials, this criminal activity strips the forest of precious biodiversity, displaces wildlife, and makes the region more vulnerable to floods, soil erosion, and landslides. In urban areas, too, trees are being cut in the name of development or to make way for infrastructure projects, sometimes without proper clearances or environmental assessments.

Moreover, satellite images and ground reports indicate a consistent decline in forest cover across several states despite tall claims of afforestation. The Forest Survey of India (FSI) may report marginal increases in "green cover", but these often include plantations and parks, not natural forests, which are irreplaceable in terms of ecological services.

Illegal tree felling significantly contributes to climate change. Forests are natural carbon sinks; they absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen, maintaining atmospheric balance. Cutting them down releases the stored carbon back into the atmosphere, accelerating global warming. In fact, deforestation globally accounts for nearly 10-15% of carbon emissions-comparable to emissions from the entire transport sector.

Furthermore, forests are home to countless species of flora and fauna, many of which are endemic or endangered. Their destruction leads to habitat loss, pushing many species to the brink of extinction. The damage to biodiversity is not just a conservation issue but also a loss of potential medicinal resources, food, and cultural heritage.

For many indigenous and forest-dwelling communities, forests are their livelihood and way of life. Illegal felling not only robs them of resources but also causes social displacement and conflict. These communities are often not consulted when trees are felled, even though the Forest Rights Act, 2006, mandates their involvement in forest governance.

On the other hand, timber smuggling and illegal sales create a parallel economy that evades taxes and deprives the state of legitimate revenue. The losses are not only environmental but economic too.

One of the major reasons illegal felling thrives is the lack of stringent enforcement and accountability. Forest departments, often under-resourced and understaffed, are ill-equipped to monitor large forest tracts. In many cases, officials either turn a blind eye or are complicit in the crime. Court orders and environmental regulations are frequently flouted, and penalties are minimal compared to the profits generated by illegal logging.

There is also a glaring lack of coordination between various agencies-forest departments, police, environmental bodies, and local administrations. Forest protection should be a national priority, not left to fragmented departments with overlapping jurisdictions.

Tackling illegal felling requires a multi-pronged approach. Firstly, laws must be strictly enforced, and penalties for offenders must be significantly increased. Forest officers and local administrators must be held accountable for negligence or complicity.

Secondly, technology must be leveraged to monitor forests in real time. Satellite imaging, drones, and geographic information systems (GIS) can track changes in forest cover and alert authorities to suspicious activity. These tools must be made accessible and actionable at the local level.

Thirdly, communities must be empowered. Involving local populations in forest management, as envisaged under Joint Forest Management (JFM) programs, has shown success in many areas. Forest dwellers are natural guardians of these ecosystems and must be incentivized to protect them.

Moreover, transparency must be increased through open data on tree felling permissions, afforestation efforts, and penalties imposed. Public pressure and environmental activism must be supported rather than suppressed.

'Gottey Gae Gottey': Abdul Quddir Kundria's Dogri Poetry Collection emerges as a Voice of Conscience for Society

MOHD. YASEEN

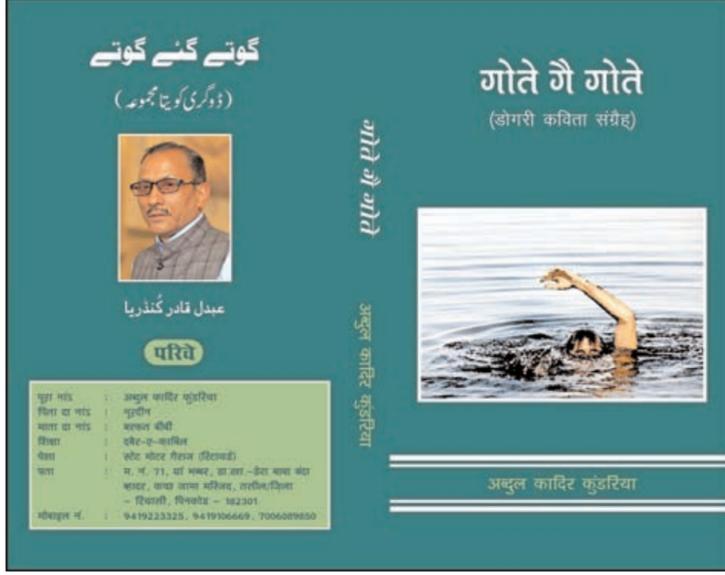
In a time when literature often finds itself overshadowed by fleeting digital distractions and commercial pursuits, a compelling poetic voice has emerged from the hills of Jammu and Kashmir, calling upon society to reflect, reform, and reconnect with its moral compass. Abdul Quddir Kundria, an eminent literary figure from Reasi, has released his latest Dogri poetry collection, Gottey Gae Gottey, which is being hailed not just as a literary achievement but also as a powerful instrument for social change.

Some days back, Kundria formally presented a copy of his book to Ms. Nidhi Malik, IAS, Deputy Commissioner of Reasi, in a ceremonial moment that reflected the union of literature and governance for public welfare. The book, which seamlessly weaves Dogri, Urdu, and Hindi poetry into a deeply evocative tapestry, was also handed over to several other prominent district officials including the Additional District Development Commissioner Sh. Sukhdev Singh Samyal, Additional Deputy Commissioner Sh. Rakesh Kumar, Assistant Commissioner Revenue Nittin Verma, Chief Medical Officer Dr. Mohd Ashraf Kohli, and Deputy CMO Dr. Mohd Yousaf Khan. Kundria's gesture was more than symbolic, it was a statement of his unwavering belief in the transformative power of literature.

Gottey Gae Gottey, translated loosely as "Entangled Upon Entangled," is not just a poetic compilation, it is a reflection of contemporary society's greatest battles: moral erosion, communal tensions, substance abuse, and the silent suffering of youth. Through his verses, Kundria exposes these wounds with the precision of a social surgeon, but he does not leave them bleeding. Instead, he offers the balm of introspection and the salve of hope.

What makes this work stand out is the poet's consistent and purposeful effort to not just write for the sake of art, but to write for the sake of people. The book has been distributed widely across educational institutions, government degree colleges and high schools in the districts of Jammu, Udhampur, and Reasi. This initiative reflects the poet's strong desire to awaken young minds and inspire them to engage with the pressing realities around them. A notable moment in this ongoing campaign was when Kundria also presented his book to Ms. Saloni Rai, IAS, the Deputy Commissioner of Udhampur. Praising his work, DC Rai recognized the poet's intent to influence the consciousness of the youth and encourage the values of communal harmony, empathy, and civic responsibility.

At the heart of Gottey Gae Gottey lies a commitment to truth. Each poem is an echo of real lives, real emotions, and real sufferings. Kundria's themes are not imagined, they are lived, observed, and drawn from his intimate relationship with the socio-cultural fabric of Jammu and Kashmir. One recurring motif in the collection is the crisis of drug addiction, particularly among the youth. With chilling metaphors and heartbreaking imagery, Kundria portrays the ruin of young lives and the devastation of families. Yet, he does not merely lament, he challenges the community to act. He questions the silence of institutions, the apathy of society, and the erosion of values that have enabled this crisis



to grow unchecked.

Another powerful theme is communal disharmony. In a region where religious diversity has long coexisted in delicate balance, Kundria's verses serve as both a cautionary tale and a hopeful prayer. He invokes the cultural unity of Dogras, Muslims, Sikhs, and other communities of the region, urging them to remember their shared history and to reject the seeds of division being sown by vested interests. His critique of moral decay in public and private life is equally sharp. In a poem that directly addresses the corruption in political and bureaucratic corridors, he writes with restrained anger and surgical insight. But he also explores personal domains, broken families, gender injustice, fading traditions, with tenderness and empathy, making his voice universally relevant.

Kundria's style is accessible yet profound. His poetic diction employs Dogri idioms and folk references, which give the verses a local flavor and deep-rooted authenticity. The intermingling of Urdu's lyrical elegance and Hindi's emotional directness adds further texture to the poetry. The result is a body of work that speaks to both the heart and the intellect. The title Gottey Gae Gottey itself is rich in metaphor. It captures the idea of human struggles as interwoven knots, cultural, social, personal, and political. These knots cannot be untangled without courage, patience, and honesty. And it is precisely this honesty that Kundria brings to his poetry.

His verse is rhythmic and resonant, often resembling traditional Dogri folk songs. This musicality makes the poems easily memorable and recitable, a feature that will serve particularly well in classrooms and public readings. His lines do not merely remain on the page, they take flight in the minds of readers, often lingering as questions or awakenings as realizations.

The response to the book has been overwhelmingly positive. Critics have called it a cultural milestone in Dogri literature. Educators have welcomed it as a meaningful tool for classroom

discussion and value-based education. Community leaders have described it as a mirror that reflects our shortcomings and a torch that lights the way forward. Speaking at the book presentation, Deputy Commissioner Nidhi Malik praised the poet's commitment to social reform. Kundria's voice is courageous and compassionate. He doesn't shy away from uncomfortable truths. His book is not only a literary gem but a valuable resource for social awakening, she said. She further emphasized that works like Gottey Gae Gottey deserve to be part of academic discourse, especially in regions grappling with youth-related challenges.

DC Udhampur Ms. Saloni Rai echoed this sentiment, expressing her admiration for the book's ability to stimulate societal dialogue. When literature speaks the language of the people and reflects their pain and aspirations, it becomes an agent of change. This book does just that, she remarked after receiving a personal copy from the author.

In continuation of his literary outreach, Abdul Quddir Kundria has also presented copies of Gottey Gae Gottey to several other key administrative and police officials across the region. These include SSP Reasi, Addl. SP Reasi, DSP HQ Reasi, SHO Reasi, CEO Reasi, SSP Udhampur, DIG Reasi-Udhampur Range, DIG Shiv Kumar Sharma of the Jammu-Sambathua Range, SHO Woman Wing Udhampur, PA to HQ SSP Udhampur, and Addl. SP Udhampur. Extending his efforts towards educational institutions, the book has also been shared with Government Degree College (GDC) Reasi, GDC Boys Udhampur, and GDC Women Parade, Jammu. Recently, the book was also presented to several prominent schools including Government High School (GHS) Sarwal, Government Girls High School (GGHS) Rehari, Government Boys High School (GBHS) Rehari, GHS Gandhinagar, GGHS Shastri Nagar, GHS Canal Road, and GHS Gol Market. In addition, Tehsildar Reasi

too received a copy of the book. Further extending his outreach to literary and cultural institutions, Kundria has also presented Gottey Gae Gottey to Adbi Kunj J&K, Anjuman Faroz J&K, and the Jammu & Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages. By doing so, Kundria reinforces his commitment to using literature as a bridge between governance, law enforcement, education, and the cultural community, with the ultimate goal of cultivating a more conscious, compassionate, and morally grounded society.

Abdul Quddir Kundria is not new to literary activism. For decades, he has been writing with a sense of purpose, addressing social taboos, reviving linguistic heritage, and promoting communal harmony. But with Gottey Gae Gottey, he has taken his mission to a new level. His outreach to government officials, educational institutions, and community leaders is a deliberate attempt to integrate literature into public consciousness. By placing his book in the hands of policymakers and educators, he hopes to bridge the gap between art and action.

Moreover, he continues to visit schools and colleges to interact with students, conducting poetry readings and discussions around the issues raised in the book. These sessions often turn into open conversations about drugs, discrimination, and identity, offering students a safe space to express themselves and learn. In a recent gathering at a higher secondary school in Udhampur, a student remarked, we read so many books in class, but this is the first book that talks about what we are going through. It feels like someone is finally listening.

At a time when regional languages face the threat of decline, Kundria's use of Dogri is both a cultural assertion and a defiant act of preservation. He believes that the soul of a community resides in its language, and losing Dogri would mean severing ties with a rich heritage. Through Gottey Gae Gottey, he brings Dogri back into the literary spotlight, encouraging new writers and readers to embrace the language with pride. In doing so, he not only revives interest in Dogri literature but also reaffirms its relevance in addressing modern-day challenges.

The book stands as proof that regional literature need not be parochial. When rooted deeply, it can rise tall and touch universal themes. As Kundria proves, the local is not the opposite of the global, it is its foundation.

Gottey Gae Gottey is not just a poetry collection, it is a moral compass, a cultural document, and a heartfelt appeal for change. In every stanza, Abdul Quddir Kundria urges readers to look inward, speak truth, and act justly. His work reminds us that literature is not meant to merely entertain or decorate, it is meant to shake us, wake us, and lead us toward light. In a world overwhelmed by noise and superficiality, his quiet yet firm voice offers clarity. In an age of division, his words become bridges. And in a time of despair, his poems become hope.

Through this literary offering, Kundria has given society more than just a book, he has given it a mirror, a map, and a mission.

(The writer is the son of Abdul Quddir Kundria and a National Scholarship and Fellowship Holder from the Ministry of Culture, Government of India)

India-UK CETA: Agriculture & Processed Food Products

Q1: What are the benefits to the stakeholders of the Agricultural and the Processed Food Products sector, under the India-UK CETA?

Reply: Under the India-UK FTA, the UK Government has committed to completely eliminate tariffs benefits on certain APEDA Scheduled Products originating from India and imported into the UK. The APEDA Scheduled Products in respect of which the UK Government has committed to completely eliminate tariffs are provided in APPENDIX 2A-b of the India - UK FTA.

In the absence of the India-UK FTA, imports of these APEDA Scheduled Products into the UK that originate from India, will be subject to the Most-Favoured Nation (MFN) rate of basic customs duty ("BCD") as applied by the UK Government. In the absence of the India-UK FTA, this will put imports of such APEDA Scheduled Products originating in India at a competitive disadvantage vis-a-vis other countries which have an FTA with the UK or are accorded tariff benefits under some other scheme such as the Developing Countries Trading Scheme of the UK Government.

The expected key benefits on account of the CETA are:

► Boost in Export Volumes: With the elimination of tariffs on over 95% of Indian agricultural and processed food tariff lines, exports of APEDA-promoted products such as fresh fruits, vegetables, spices, pulses, and value-added foods are expected to grow by 30-50% by 2030, translating to an additional USD 1-1.5 billion in export value.

► Enhanced Competitiveness for Agri SMEs: Indian small and medium enterprises (SMEs) involved in food processing, packaging, and value-added agri-products (e.g. mango pulp, pickles, sauces, biscuits) can now compete on price with duty-free suppliers like Vietnam and Peru. This strengthens their presence in UK retail chains, food service markets, and ethnic segments.

► Regional Employment and Scale Gains: Key agri-export clusters in Maharashtra, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and Punjab will

benefit from increased demand. This will create rural employment opportunities across FPOs, packhouses, food processing units, and logistics, supporting inclusive economic development.

► Competitive Edge vs Global Suppliers: Indian exporters now enjoy a tariff advantage over major competitors such as China, Brazil, and Egypt who still face UK duties on products like honey, grapes, and processed foods. This can help double India's share of the UK agri-import market in certain segments (e.g. grapes, sauces, bakery).

Q. Which Indian agri-products will benefit the most under the CETA?

Some of the key winners included:

- Fresh grapes (8% tariff removed)
- Fresh onions (4.5% tariff removed)
- Natural honey (16% tariff removed)
- Bananas (16% tariff + £95/tonne duty removed)
- Sweet biscuits (4.50% removed)
- Bakery products (cakes, biscuits)
- Food preparations (~5% removed),
- Nuts and seed mixtures (3.60% removed)

Q. What will be the impact of the India-UK FTA on India's marine exports?

The India-UK FTA is poised to significantly boost India's marine exports by eliminating existing UK tariffs, which currently range between 4.2% and 8.5% on key products like shrimp. With the removal of these tariffs, Indian exporters will enjoy duty-free access to the UK market, improving their price competitiveness and market reach. This is expected to unlock strong growth opportunities for a range of marine products, particularly shrimp, tuna, fish, fishmeal, and aquafeeds.

Q. What will be the Impact of India-UK Comprehensive Economic & Trade Agreement (CETA) on India's exports of Food preparation products to UK?

► Tariff Removal: The 4.5% tariff on Indian food preparations has been eliminated under the FTA, aligning India's access with other zero-duty suppliers like EU nations.

► Simplified Trade Procedures: The FTA introduces harmonized standards, faster customs clearance, and reduced

regulatory compliance costs, which will further streamline export processes.

► Export Growth Potential: Given India's competitive pricing and rising export to the UK, food preparations exports from India to the UK are projected to grow 18-20% CAGR in the next five years.

► Opportunities for SMEs and New Entrants: The duty-free access opens new opportunities for small and mid-sized Indian food preparation manufacturers to penetrate the UK market through retail, e-commerce, and ethnic food channels.

Q. What will be the impact of whisky imports from the UK on Indian manufacturers?

The India-UK FTA significantly reduces import duties on whisky from 150% to 75%-which is expected to benefit Indian liquor manufacturers, particularly those who import bulk whisky for blending. With lower input costs, domestic distillers will be able to improve their export margins and enhance competitiveness in overseas markets, especially in regions like Africa and the Middle East. The FTA is likely to support Indian manufacturers rather than threaten them, by encouraging value addition and premium product development within the country. Moreover, increased access to high-quality bulk whisky from the UK is expected to raise the overall standard of Indian-produced blends, leading to better quality offerings for both domestic and international consumers.

Q. What will be the impact of the India-UK FTA on Indian instant coffee exports?

Under the India-UK FTA, the previous 3.1% import duty on instant coffee has been eliminated, granting Indian coffee exporters duty-free access to the UK market. This move is expected to significantly enhance the price competitiveness of Indian instant coffee, making it more attractive to UK importers and retailers. The tariff elimination is likely to lead to increased export volumes, improved market penetration, and better realisation for Indian coffee producers, especially those linked to

southern coffee-growing regions.

Q 11. Are Indian Farmers insulated from risk of import surges or price undercutting account of CETA?

Reply: In line with India's commitment to safeguarding its agricultural sector; no tariff concession or market access has been granted for key crops grown domestically, particularly those that are sensitive in terms of food security and farmer livelihoods.

► Products such as wheat, rice, maize, jawar, bajra, nuts (cashew, almond, walnut), millets, and pulses-staples for Indian farmers and consumers-have been kept out of the FTA's liberalization schedule.

► Sensitive products other than staples have also been protected through no tariff concession such as:

- edible oils e.g., soybean oil, palm oil, mustard oil, groundnut oil.
- Oil seeds: soyabean, groundnut, mustard.
- certain fruits: apple, pomegranate, pear, peach, plum, guava, lichi, mango, grapes.
- Nuts: almonds, cashew nuts, dates.
- Vegetables: tomato fresh/chilled, onions, garlic, cauliflower, cabbage, radish, peas, beans, pumpkin, bitter melon, bottle gourd, lady finger, potatoes, mixtures of vegetable,
- Pulses: yellow peas, kabuli chana, bengal gram, chick peas, urad, moong, kidney beans (rajmah), lentils (masur), pigeon peas (tur),
- Cut flowers: orchids, lilies, roses
- Spices: Cardamom, pepper long, black pepper (garbled/ungarbled), saffron stigma, turmeric (fresh/dried)

This ensures no risk of import surges or price undercutting for these essential crops.

Q. What are the rules of Origin for Agri & Processed Food products in the India - UK FTA?

Reply: The product-specific rules of origin of the various APEDA Scheduled Products which are eligible for tariff benefits under the India-UK FTA are prescribed in ANNEX 3A (Product Specific Rules of Origin) of the India-UK FTA, which is available at: [tent/uploads/2025/07/03A-Product-Specific-Rules-of-Origin.pdf](https://www.commerce.gov.in/wp-con-</p></div>
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A broad outline for the Product Specific Rules (PSRs) for various broad categories are given below:

a. Raw agricultural products: The rules are fairly stringent, largely being wholly obtained (WO). Wholly obtained or produced entirely in one or both of the Parties. Please see Article 3.3 of the India-UK FTA for specific provisions applicable for different product categories.

b. Processed food: Rules ensure adequate processing while providing flexibility to use limited quantity of non-originating materials.

Q. Under the India-UK FTA, a Certificate of Origin under the India-UK FTA has to be issued by the Issuing Authority. Who is the Issuing Authority for APEDA Scheduled Products under the India-UK FTA?

Reply: The Issuing Authority for each FTA is identified by the Directorate General of Foreign Trade ("DGFT") under Appendix 2B - List of Agencies Authorized to issue Certificate of Origin [Preferential] to the Handbook of Procedures, 2023. Appendix 2B is amended by the DGFT from time to time to identify the concerned Issuing Authority for various products under the relevant FTA. It is expected that Appendix 2B will be updated by the DGFT at the appropriate time to identify the Issuing Authority for APEDA Scheduled Products under the India-UK FTA.

Q. The India-UK FTA was signed on 24th July 2025. As an exporter of APEDA Scheduled Products, are exports of APEDA Scheduled immediately eligible for tariff benefits under India-UK FTA upon import into the UK?

Reply: No, APEDA Scheduled Products are not immediately eligible for tariff benefits under the India-UK FTA. The Governments of India and the UK only signed the FTA on 24 July 2025. The benefits available to exporters of APEDA-Scheduled Products under the India-UK FTA will become effective only upon 'entry

into force' of the India-UK FTA. As per Article 30.6 of the India-UK FTA, it enters into force under the following circumstances: a. 60 days after the date on which India and the UK exchange written notifications confirming that they have completed their respective domestic legal requirements necessary for the entry into force; or b. on such other date as India and the UK may agree. Exporters are advised to keep a track of news updates from the Government of India on official sources such as the Press Information Bureau to ascertain when the FTA will come into force.

Q. Where can I get the authentic text of the India-UK FTA and the tariff commitments given by the UK Government under the India-UK FTA?

Reply: The full text of the various chapters of the India-UK FTA is available at <https://www.commerce.gov.in/international-trade/trade-agreements/india-united-kingdom-comprehensive-economic-and-trade-agreement/>

The tariff commitments given by the UK Government under the India-UK FTA are available at <https://www.commerce.gov.in/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/02A-b-UK-Schedule-of-Commitment-For-Goods.pdf>

Q. In respect of goods for which the UK Government has not given any tariff commitments under the India-UK FTA, what will be the rate of customs duty on import of goods from India? Where can I get details of the same?

Reply: In respect of such goods for which the UK Government has not given any tariff commitments under the India-UK FTA, the Most-Favoured Nation (MFN) rate of basic customs duty as applied by the UK Government will be applicable. These rates are prescribed by the UK Government in the UK Global Tariff. Exporters may visit the UK Government's website at <https://www.trade-tariff.service.gov.uk/find-commodity> to ascertain the MFN rate of different goods upon import into the UK.