


SELF-RELIANCE IN MINING

It has been observed that due to restrictions on the mining activities, an acute dearth of minor minerals is being witnessed which is not only causing hardships for the people engaged in constructing their residential and commercial complexes but also hampering the ongoing developmental projects. Moreover, it has also resulted in unprecedented hike in prices, thereby making it hard for a common man to purchase the same. Recently, the Ministry of Mines has amended Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (MMDR Act, 1957) through the MMDR Amendment Act, 2021 with effect from March 28, 2021 with the objective of inter alia increasing mineral production and time bound operationalization of mines, increasing employment and investment in the mining sector, maintaining continuity in mining operations after change of lessee and increasing the pace of exploration and auction of mineral resources.

While giving reply to a query in Rajya Sabha, the Union Minister for Coal, Mines and Parliamentary Affairs, Pralhad Joshi informed that the reforms inter-alia include removal of distinction between captive and non-captive mines by mandating auction of mineral blocks without any end use restriction. Further, existing captive mines have been allowed to sell up to 50 per cent of the minerals produced after meeting the requirement of linked plants and on payment of additional amount to State Government, provision has been made for transfer of valid statutory clearances in relation to a mine which is expiring or terminated to the successful bidder of such mine in auction, restrictions on transfer of mineral concessions for non-auctioned mines have been removed, private exploration agencies which have been accredited are allowed to carry out exploration without prospecting licence upon their notification. These agencies have also been made eligible for obtaining funding under National Mineral Exploration Trust (NMET). It is expected that these reforms will help in achieving self-reliance in mineral needs of the country under Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.



OFF 'D' CUFF

Why do we fear death?

Doesn't the world live with the fear of death? What do we fear? We fear that one day, in a flash, at the moment of death, we will lose everything that we own. We fear that we will lose our money and wealth, our properties and assets, even our relationships and the people who are so very dear to us. Since we know that death is certain, a reality, and that one day, it is sure to knock at our door, most of us become paranoid when we think about death. Not only do we fear the loss of all that we own and all that is known, but we also fear the unknown that lies beyond death.

We imagine the suffering when the body is burnt and we dread the thought of it. We shiver at the thought of worms eating our body. When we see the fate of somebody who dies, we panic at the thought of death lurking around the corner for us. But what is the Truth about all this? Death is certain. Why should we cry that we will die? We should accept the fact that one day, we will go. This life is just a show. But because we do not Realize the Truth, we live with tears over the years, awaiting the dreadful moment of death. We fear that we will lose everything that is ours. But isn't this a myth? What is 'mine'? When we came, we brought nothing and when we go, we will take nothing. Then, why fear? In fact, as long as we live, we suffer. At death, there is no suffering. Then, why fear death again and again when in reality, death is the end of all the pain? Because of our ignorance, we fear death.

As long as we believe that we will die, and we

'Love despite hatred & resentment'

■ I D SONI

Love is by claim' the most interesting of all forms of human experience. Everyone wants to be happy, and yet there are only a few people who are able to experience this feeling and knew secret of true happiness. It is love; 'love in all its ramifications': Love between lover and beloved, children and parents, brother and sister; between neighbours and friends, between the teacher and the student, master and servant, man and God. Love is the repository of happiness, if only it is practiced without any ulterior motive. Shelley says, "All love is sweet given or returned". The Bible says the same thing in different words, that is, he who loves is twice blessed. It means he who makes the other man happy by loving, also feels happy himself for having loved.

Love fills a person with noble feelings: compassion, sacrifice, sympathy, understanding, welfare, tenderness, and sweetness. A mother's love for her offspring impels her to give up all for his sake. She is forever ready to suffer any discomfort or hardship in order to make her children comfortable and happy. Mother, in fact, stands as an embodiment of sacrifice and compassion. If there is love between neighbours, peace will reign in the neighbourhood. People will willingly and cheerfully come forward to help each other and share each other's joys and sorrows. Nobody will wish anyone ill and nobody will want to do any harm to anyone. Nobody will mind a little inconvenience caused by someone else in the neighbourhood. This will further strengthen the fellow-feeling and sense of Community. Such a neighbourhood shall invariably be a haven of happiness. Everything ideal has a natural basis, and every-thing natural has an ideal development. It was love's philosopher, Plato who said, "He whom love touches not, walks in darkness". Laplace, dying, rebuked the friends who tried to console him with the fame of his discoveries and his books; these, he told them sadly, were not the important things in life. "What then?" they asked. And the old scientist, fighting for one more breath, answered, "Love".

All things must die, but love alone eludes mortality. It overleaps tombs, and bridges the chasm of death with generation. How brief it seems in the bitterness of disillusion; and yet how perennial it is in the perspective of mankind - how in the end it saves a bit of us from decay, and enshrines our life anew in the youth and vigor of the child! Our wealth is weariness and our wisdom is a little light that chills; but love warms the heart with unspeakable solace, even more when it is given than when it is received. There have been saints who widened the horizon of their love and made it universal. They loved not only their parents, relatives and near and dear ones, but the whole mankind, even animals and birds. This universal love made them suffer on account of others. Jesus Christ, Gautam Buddha, Guru Nanak Dev, Kabir, Tukaram, and Ramprasad, shared the agony of others, felt sorry for the suffering humanity and worked for the welfare and happiness of all. Love is an attribute which turns a human being into a saint. Mother Teresa's love for humanity impelled her to serve and look-after suffering destitute, with care and compassion. She filled many hearts with happiness by her altruistic service of suffering humanity. If love could be adopted as the guiding principle, there would be no quarrels. There would be no sense of hatred between men and men. There would be no friction between parents and children, no bitterness between friends and no exploitation of man by man. History reveals that tyrants have invariably

been loveless men. They did not receive love in their childhood and adolescent years which hardened them into ruthless power-seekers. A large part of the crime is committed by people who have been treated badly either by their near and dear ones or by the society in which they live. A sense of hatred grows in their mind. One of the reasons for the younger folk turning aggressive and destructive is that either parents have been too busy in other ventures to give them the much needed love and care or some of them orphans, castaways, who were depressed of their parental love. Lack of love in a child's life can play havoc with his personality and mental make-up. It can either lead him towards self-destructive suicidal thoughts, or put him on a track of hatred and cruelty towards other human beings. Therefore, lack of love makes not only the life of that particular child bitter and hellish, but it also breeds further unhappiness when he, having grown up into a ruthless individual full of hatred for others. Love alone can alleviate many ills of the society and is undoubtedly the basis of happy life, because love begets love. Love conquers all things. Love casts out fear and frees us from bondage to it. Love casts out fear of disease or ill health. Love casts out fear of being alone. Love casts out fear of lack. Love casts out fear of failure. Love casts out fear of people as it is always harmonious and it is never over-powered by personality. Love casts out fear of change as one is blessed by change, enriched by change and made happier by change. Love casts out fear of fear as fear cannot stand in the face of love. Extended to international sphere, if the nations of the world practice this wonderful principle, there would be no world wars, no large-scale massacres, no hatred for humanity, and no widespread destruction.

Hatred is a fire. So long as fire burns within us, we cannot have joy of life. And as the Buddha said, "Hatred doesn't cease by hatred, hatred cease by love". When a thought of hatred comes to us, trample it under foot and breathe out a thought of love and good will. When Jesus was sacrificed, he prayed for his persecutors. There he stood on the cross: nail after nail was struck into his hands, his feet and his throat: Blood flowed out of his gentle, pure body, a body that had never caused harm to anyone. And on his lips was the prayer: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do". Rishi Dayanand had been poisoned by his cook, Jagannath. He had been bribed to kill his great master. On his death-bed, Rishi Dayanand called Jagannath and said to him, "Here is money for your ticket to Nepal. Escape, before my disciples find out what you have done, else they may tear your body into pieces". Such is the witness of all the great ones of humanity. They have met hatred with love and shown that the true joy of life is in loving. If we want to be truly happy, let us love one another and meet hatred with love and forgiveness.

One of the Joy-killers is hatred. Another is resentment. So long as we have feelings of resentment within us, we do not, cannot get joy of life. Our daily life is full of little irritations which cause resentment: this is what keeps us away from the true joy of life. We are told to love our enemies, but we can do only when we know God. He who truly knows God knows perfect love and by that perfect experience fear, resentment and hatred are cast out of the heart. Four hundred years before Christ was born, Hippocrates, first great savant of medicine, declared that hatred, resentment and fear are like poisons in the blood. As psychosomatic medicine now teaches, such poisons can produce ulcers and

arthritis and even more terrifying ills. To be safe, we need the courage to love. Greatest of the French kings, Henry-IV threw food over the walls of Paris every night during his long siege of the city. When at last he conquered them, the people pelted him with flowers of welcome, knowing he had never hated them and that they need not fear him. Once free of bitterness, our strength is as the strength of ten, because then the heart is pure. In great matters or small, hate is a painful and bitter experience. If we are wise, we will make haste to forgive, and get rid of the pain the resentment and the bitterness before we get sick from them. And, throughout eternity, we should follow, I forgive you, you forgive me. That is the beginning of true freedom when we are liberated from ourselves. This is the path laid down by God for us. To fight one's enemies is no ways to succeed in life. Only by avoiding conflict can one consolidate one's strength.

Moreover, the education we provide to the students in Schools, Colleges and Universities should not be only a means for obtaining a certificate that can fetch them a job. Its real aim is to make young men/women conscious or aware. Making people aware is the first step in the path of creating a peaceful and cordial atmosphere. The journey of a person always starts from this point, just as a farmer cultivates a seed which later transforms into a tree, an educational institution should make a person tolerant, selfless, characterized, self-reliant and intellectually capable so that he can complete his evolutionary journey in a successful manner. A person who is aware is able to develop a correct opinion about himself and others. He can view the problems of life against the background of the eternal cosmic plan. An aware person alone is a sensitive human being in the true sense. He is able to evaluate and determine which of his opinions are prejudicial and which are not. Whenever any situation arises, he recognizes what action would be a reaction and what other action would be a positive response. He distinguishes right from wrong. Separating the false, he recognizes the truth. He does not have any hate or resentment for others. The following quote from Sir Thomas Carlyle, a well-known British Writer, is very helpful in making us understand the meaning of being truly sensitive towards others - it is to have a loving heart which is the key to gaining knowledge. He said, "A loving heart is the beginning of all knowledge". The above saying is extremely meaningful but its meaningfulness cannot be properly understood unless we add to it, "Loving, despite there being a cause for hatred and resentment". For in this world the factors of hatred and resentment are always present. No one can love other human beings without demonstrating that they are broad minded enough to love people despite experiencing their hatred, resentment and ill-will.

To develop a heart within us, which may love despite hatred and resentment amounts to taking ourselves to the height of morality. This high morality is the only ground on which the plant of knowledge grows and develops into a lush green tree. If someone conspires against us, we should render the conspiracy ineffective through wisdom and silent positive action. To fight our enemies is no way to succeed in life. Only by avoiding conflict can we consolidate our strength. Only then, will we be able to overcome our foes. We can achieve success in this world of God by pursuing the policy of non-confrontation, love and conciliation and avoiding confrontation, hatred and resentment. Some people go to extremes in their opposition to others by turn-

ing aggressive. But in this world that God has made, our opponents, too, have the freedom to act, just like we do. The best way to respond to others is to clear our own way ahead by exercising patience, love and wisdom instead of becoming agitated by others and reacting angrily with hatred. When we display positive behaviour in the midst of negative experience, we become eligible for God's special gift. When we display this kind of positive approach, it is no ordinary matter. It leads us to the creation of a new sort of character within us, a character that is imbued with a desire for the well-being of our oppressors, that remains firmly established in positivity despite negative experiences of hate and resentment, and that leaves all our affairs to God. In this way our heart is filled with spirituality. When we attain spirituality, our state becomes like a lamp lit all of a sudden. We undergo spiritual experiences. Our heart becomes an ocean of spiritual waves. There remains no hatred, no abhorrence, no animosity, no resentment and no grudge in our heart and world becomes as beautiful as paradise to us being in love for all creatures. Everyone has some experience of love - a beautiful feeling that warms our heart and makes us happy, content, and at total peace. That one moment when we feel most alive, when we feel more than ourselves, more than the body and the mind, what is that, but love. In general we feel happy when we receive something - things, gifts, honours and titles. But in love, 'giving' makes us supremely happy, perhaps even more than receiving. Love makes the journey easy; it helps us bear burdens and accept challenges of life with a smile. Love is spoonful of sugar that makes the medicine go down. We can kindle our inner light by walking up love within our hearts. The true light of life is love. If we want to kindle the light, we must wake up love: Love for all, love not only to good people, or the so called good, but love for all, love for the sinless, love for the sinner, love for everyone. Divine love is a fire and it is a fire that will kindle fire. By reading books, reading scriptures, or listening to lectures, we will get as far as the thresh hold. But it is only through contact with the lovers of God and their grace that we can enter the kingdom of love. We can also get it through prayer. Constant prayer is also a means. Simple prayer such as, "I need Thee Lord! I need Thee more and more, I need nothing else." Then the third method of growing in Divine Love is of unselfish service, utterly unselfish. When we serve in that spirit, we will grow in Divine love. When will we truthfully be able to say that love is our religion? Today, even scientists believe that the greatest force in the world is love. Other than love there is nothing greater. Let us learn to harness it. Love is the greatest, though the most unused force in the world. These are the words of a great scientist. Let us bear witness to this great ideal in our daily life. Our saints, dervishes and sages have repeatedly given us this one message: grow in Love - Love for God and love for one another. Nothing else matters. If we really want to build our lives in love, the first step is - let us talk to one another sweetly. Saint Kabir often gave this teaching to his devotees: speak sweetly, walk humbly and serve all, then God Himself will be with us. We don't have to make an effort to go to Him. God Himself will follow us. This can be possible only when we should love, despite hatred and resentment. Let us, therefore, give the gift of the heart, the gift of love, because it is not what we give that counts, it is the attitude, it is the spirit with which we give that counts.

(The author is a retired teacher from J&K School Education Department).

PROGRESSING J&K

Govt keen to make Kashmir willow bat a world-class product

J&K Government is keen towards promotion of cricket bat industry of Kashmir enabling the Kashmir willow cricket bat to become a world class product. In order to revive Kashmir's cricket bat manufacturing and other wood-based industry, a team of Union Ministry of Medium, Small and Micro Enterprises officials had also visited valley to find ways for extending support. In this direction Common Facility Centre, Sethar was established at an estimated cost of Rs 4.61 crore with plant and machinery installed by PPDC, Meerut incurring an expenditure of Rs 2.46 crore.

The objective of this CFC is to facilitate seasoning of willow clefts and provide all facilities to the Cricket Bat Unit holders under one roof. This will enable the unit holders to use modern techniques in production of world class cricket bats. There are 7 villages - Bijbehara,

Charsoo, Hallamullaha, Sangam, Pujteng, Mirzapor and Sethar - in South Kashmir where cricket bats are manufactured, providing bread and butter to hundreds of villagers. Moreover Sethar Sangam in Anantnag has been notified as an industrial cluster for cricket bat manufacturing. Meanwhile, the Govt has also given registration certificates to bat manufacturing unit owners of Anantnag and Pulwama, which would enable them to avail all benefits from the government, aimed at strengthening the industry.

A team of officials from Meerut-based Process-cum-Product Development Centre (PPDC) also visited the valley to explore ways for hand-holding of MSMEs in wood-based industry'. The team visited cricket bat cluster in Sethar village at Sangam area of Anantnag district to assess how the bat industry there could be revived. This cluster has been earlier funded by the Union MSME Ministry

and now they are keen to provide an impetus to the cluster. Pertinent to mention here that Kashmir willow is famous for its quality across the world and has gained huge attention from the cricketers.

A study on sports goods titled 'Indian Sports Goods Industry: Strategies for Tapping the Export Potential' conducted by the Export-Import Bank of India (EXIM BANK) says that Kashmir willow bat is one such product, which holds significance as it is made from some of the best quality wood (willow) in the world.

The government is creating awareness and provides handholding amongst the bat makers with regard to GI tagging through field officers. The Directorate of Industries and Commerce has taken up the issue of granting Logo and GI tagging with the Director, Craft Development Institute (CDI), Srinagar.

Presently there are more than 400 cricket bat manufacturing units generating employment to about 8000 people directly, said an official. It was also revealed that Under the World Bank-funded Jhelum Tawi Flood Recovery Project (JTFRP), Faculty of Forestry SKUAST Kashmir has been engaged for the identification and propagation of the best quality willow (Salix Alba var-caerulea) being used for the manufacture of cricket bat.

In SKUAST Kashmir, superior quality willow saplings were distributed for the manufacture of cricket bats among the beneficiaries associated with Sethar cricket bat cluster. He added that it is expected that with the use of superior willow the quality of cricket bats being manufactured in the Valley would be comparable to those manufactured in the rest of the World thereby increasing their demand exponentially.

YOUR COLUMN

Money- really surprising

Dear Editor,

Some people can never spend even after collecting a lot of money. People's behavior regarding money is sometimes surprising. People, whose childhood is spent in deprivation, remain poor at heart even after being rich at times. Even after buying new utensils, they keep working with old ones. New clothes are kept for a special occasion until they become out of fashion. Even after installing AC in house, they do not run it for fear of spending more electricity. In many homes, cars are just parked and only a two-wheeler is used for day to day work. Many people of middle class consider it their great achievement to buy something expensive at a low price. They become happy that how cheaply they have got the thing which others get after spending so much money. Even after collecting

a lot of money, some people are never able to spend and eventually leave this world leaving it for use of their progeny. Only three movements of money are possible, to spend it, to give it to someone known, or to give it to someone else. Nor should it be left somewhere to perish. There is a beautiful verse in the Ishavasya Upanishad to show path to the miserly people, 'Ishavasyamidam Sarvam Yakehinchha Jagatyam Jagat. Ten Tyakten Bhunjitha Ma Gridhaah Kasayasvidhanam,' which means that all movable and immovable property of the world is manifestation of God. It can be used only by spending it, by sacrificing it. Believing that this money is mine is an folly in itself, so it is not right to have any kind of greed for it. But the matter of money is so strange that those who give it out of emotion, they give their lives to help their children, many of them have to suffer neglect and humiliation in their old age. The feeling of insecurity also sometimes makes older people miserly. It is also seen that those who bargain at ten places to save Rs 5 in purchase of vegetables, spend so much money on wed-

ding invitations of their children and daughters. While selling newspaper waste, such people have to be weighed heavily all the time. The fear of leaving keeps haunting. Every porter, laborer or heartend finds them a swindler. When one hears of big scams, it seems that there is no connection between his personal need and his earning for the scammer who once bled his face with dishonest money. It takes the form of a pit that can never be filled. The behavior of people in relation to money nowadays is often dictated by the market. Our lavish and lavish receptions, expensive musical evenings became an essential part of every middle-class wedding. It is the glory of the market that a person who has just started earning money, if there is no TV, fridge or any two wheeler in his house, then he falls in his own eyes. To get him out of this situation, many banks take his hand and put him in a position to repay the loan installments for many years to come. As the economic condition becomes a little better, he also finds cars and houses necessary for social prestige. For coaching your children for admission in any

reputed institution Parents often send to certain cities, arrange huge donations or foreign education. People spend a lot of money only for their name and social prestige. The most illogical and craziest misuse of money is in wartime. The money which is used for construction and survival in peace time is used for destruction and violence by the warring nations and no one finds anything wrong in it. The attraction of money has increased in our time to such an extent that most of the people have everything for it. Religion, morality, honesty, self-respect etc get ready to sell. But some such rare people can be seen even today, who are not ready to deal with these things at any cost. They still believe in the biblical statement that it is not as difficult for a camel to pass through a needle as it is for a rich man to enter the kingdom of the God. When we think about such people who give importance to simplicity and non-possession, the picture of Mahatma Gandhi emerges in front of us even in present time.

Vijay Garg.

