

BATTERY WASTE MANAGEMENT RULES

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India has published the Battery Waste Management Rules, 2022 on 24th August, 2022 to ensure environmentally sound management of waste batteries. Notification of these rules is a transformative step towards implementation of the announcement made by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in his address to the Nation on Independence Day on 15th August, 2021 to promote Circular Economy in full earnest. New rules will replace Batteries (Management and Handling) Rules, 2001. The rules cover all types of batteries, viz. Electric Vehicle batteries, portable batteries, automotive batteries and industrial batteries.

The rules function based on the concept of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) where the producers (including importers) of batteries are responsible for collection and recycling/refurbishment of waste batteries and use of recovered materials from wastes into new batteries. EPR mandates that all waste batteries to be collected and sent for recycling/refurbishment, and its prohibits disposal in landfills and incineration. To meet the EPR obligations, producers may engage themselves or authorise any other entity for collection, recycling or refurbishment of waste batteries. The rules will enable setting up a mechanism and centralized online portal for exchange of EPR certificates between producers and recyclers/refurbishers to fulfil the obligations of producers. The rules promote setting up of new industries and entrepreneurship in collection and recycling/refurbishment of waste batteries.

Mandating the minimum percentage of recovery of materials from waste batteries under the rules will bring new technologies and investment in recycling and refurbishment industry and create new business opportunities. Prescribing the use of certain amount of recycled materials in making of new batteries will reduce the dependency on new raw materials and save natural resources. Online registration & reporting, auditing, and committee for monitoring the implementation of rules and to take measures required for removal of difficulties are salient features of rules for ensuring effective implementation and compliance. On the principle of Polluter Pays Principle, environmental compensation will be imposed for non-fulfilment of Extended Producer Responsibility targets, responsibilities and obligations set out in the rules. The funds collected under environmental compensation shall be utilised in collection and refurbishing or recycling of uncollected and non-recycled waste batteries.

OFF 'D' CUFF

Don't react to differences, seek internal unity

The starting point of the origin of human beings and the culminating point of their movement is the same. It is the natural law for any entity to originate from and merge in the same source. The fundamental stuff of all humans is the Macrocosmic Consciousness. All are children of the Supreme Immortality, all are equal. Therefore, there should not be any discrimination.

In the external world, however, we notice numerous conflicts among human beings. So, can we truly say that there is no difference between people? Where is the unity which creates a common bond among human beings? To get the proper answer, one has to go deep into human psychology because true unity lies in the realm of the human mind.

The 'extroversial' mind of human beings, due to inherent samskaras, becomes obsessed with and influenced by the external environment. A person influenced by the imposed samskaras of society may start hating another person, but this hostility is something external.

Internally, all human beings feel a deep attraction for others. This attraction is the natural wont of living beings. Had there been no balancing force among the objects created by the Macrocosmic Mind, then the entire cosmological structure would have shattered into pieces. The cosmological balance is maintained due to this attraction amongst the different objects and entities.

From atoms and molecules to human beings with developed consciousness, all entities feel attraction for one another. He keeps all the finite entities bound to Him by His inscrutable Cosmic Love. All entities drift in the vast divine flow as the minute manifestations of the Supreme Lord.

Shrii Anandamurtiji

There is not enough funding for basic sciences in India. We have to invest in a big way, and I am pushing that idea. -A. P. J. Abdul Kalam

EDITORIAL

Non-dynast at helm, can Congress reinvent?

undoubtedly weakened the party and the family. Despite rumours doing the rounds on Ashok Gehlot's possible candidature as the next party president, his denial (if he does so) would stonewall his party's ambitions of revival and give it a jerk of horror and uncertainty of hope as to who would rescue the second largest national party from its predicament. In this perception battle, what seems to be sinking deeper is a realization that anybody, for that matter, being elected as the party chief would struggle to give the lost glory of the party back. Amid severe confusion and ambiguity, the party cadre has no choice but to look up to the trio of the Gandhi family and wait for its response. The bleak fortune of the Congress party is thickening on a daily basis in a Modi dominated political scenario. With its arrogance and blind opposition to Modi, the Congress and its leadership had lost all battles that it probably forgot to learn lessons from. Mostly the party leadership chooses to shoot irresponsible and insensible rants on a government that takes every serious attempt to woo the people of the country. The Prime Minister is talented enough to emotionally grab the attention of the electorate. He knows how to capture minds and change the mood of the nation. The lackadaisicalness of the Congress from venturing into a possible revamp of the party tearing off the tattered influence of the family is the main problem that the party is entangled in. Interestingly, the Congress could not override the image of being a corrupt party that the BJP and Modi could successfully march a narrative with. And the grand old party proved to be conceding to the narratives that the BJP intelligently set against it. The BJP and its smart leadership have been investing their time and intelligence to systematically highlight the Congress from the days of Nehru. Surprisingly, the Prime Minister voiced against corruption and nepotism from the ramparts of the Red Fort. The Congress could not even speculate Modi's adventure though it termed his demeanour as "shameless stoop by the Prime Minister". The BJP with Modi and Shah at the steering seat has managed to turn the tables against the Congress, engraving a narrative that the Congress is a minority supporter and anti-

Hindu. This seems to have helped the BJP garner great support from the fence-sitters in electoral politics that abundantly chose to vote for the saffron party. The tag that the BJP tied on the reputation of the Congress as a Muslim party did stay with it for long and the gimmicks that its young dynast had to plunge into by proclaiming his Brahmin identity was a proof of its confusion. The temples that he knelt down and the vermilion on his forehead could not change the perception that the saffron brigade could successfully build against the Gandhi family and its party. Can the Congress be easily written off from the saffron dominated political spectrum of India? I think the Congress would still remain relevant though it is out of power. Its legacy spanning from Gandhi to Nehru to Patel and the role it had in the freedom movement would be enough for the Indian voters to think twice before they decide to discard the party forever. Aam Aadmi Party, with its sanctified anti corruption movement is not blessed with a legacy of freedom movement that the Congress is. Modi's war on corruption seems to have widespread reverberation among the electorate and his pursuit in this direction has unquestionably crippled the means and methods of corruption to a large extent. The attention that he could vociferously grab in his Independence Day speech decreeing his uncompromising war against corruption was in the interest of the nation and to him corruption is an outcome of the Dynasty Raj in various parts of the country. Whereas, Congress is all set to launch its 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' on September 7. The party's newborn aspiration to revamp its essence and presence through a yatra across the country is all set to be the kind of one that the BJP during the days of L K Advani launched. For Rahul Gandhi, in his own words the Yatra is like a 'Tapasya'. But the pertinent question most of its sympathisers are tired of asking is how long it will take for the Congress to once again make its presence felt. The yatra for 150 days covering a 3500 km long road route is destined to become the longest of such movements. Will it be a square one exercise for the Congress with the Gandhi family behind a proxy president?

Hemant Soren holding office of 'profit'

OMKAR DATTATRAY

The Jharkhand Chief Minister and leader of JMM may have to quit and leave the chief ministers post after he has been held guilty by the election commission in a case of office of profit case. The all powerful election commission has written to governor of Jharkhand to take action against the chief minister Hemant Soren and expel him from the membership of the lower house. The net effect of all this will be the ouster of Hemant Soren from the coveted post of Chief Minister. The JMM government of Hemant Soren may fail and there is possibility that Hemant may anoint his wife to be the chief minister. It seems that Hemans's case is a clear case of the office of profit and thus he will be shown door at time. The public servants and the representatives of the government are not allowed to indulge in the office of profit and Hemant may have to resign and quite office any time now. Some years earlier in the year 2006 Sonia Gandhi was removed from the membership of the Lok Sabha for holding the office of profit and similarly Jay Bachchan was also shown the door by removing her from the membership of the upper house of the parliament. Hemant Soren besides being the chief minister is also holding the charge of the mining ministry and he has been contracting the business of the mining which amounts to using and indulging in the office of profit. Thus the chief minister of Jharkhand is holding the office of profit besides being the chief minister of the state of Jharkhand and so he will have to face the music and leave the post of chief minister in a clear case of the office of profit. No public servant can hold the office of profit besides being the chief minister or a minister. So very soon Hemant may have to leave the office and make room for either a new incumbent for the post of chief minister or alternatively he will have to tender his resignation and make room for the mid-term election with each other.

Without proximity there cannot be any friction. A serious difference of opinion today may be changed into friendship tomorrow.

Thus, instead of reacting to apparent differences, one should seek internal unity. The various differences which split society must be removed in the interest of collective welfare. In order to do that, one must look for the common link, the points of affinity, in the multifarious lifestyles and diverse expressions of life.

Our policy should be: 'Aspects of unity should be encouraged and aspects of disunity should be discouraged.' If this principle is strictly followed, there will be an increase in human unity and a corresponding decrease in the degree of disunity.

That is why for permanent unity, a spiritual outlook is necessary.

This supreme treasure teaches human beings that Param Purush is the Supreme Father, Param Prakriti – the Supreme Operative Principle – is their Supreme Mother, and the entire universe is their homeland. The reason is that this cosmic ideology is based on the absolute truth, which is not confined to time, space and person. Only then will our society become one and indivisible. Only then will it be worthy of being called a 'human society'.

Shrii Anandamurtiji

Technical advancements in medical education

VIJAY GARG

Healthcare education has been the forerunner in adapting innovative technologies because medical education and healthcare management have been intricately intertwined in the teaching-learning methodologies of the students. The advent of cutting-edge technologies in 21st century accelerated the process of evolution of both hardware and software, leading to faster adoption of the same in medical education and the healthcare system. Earlier, healthcare education was limited to the government sector. But this increased the demand-supply gap, and the availability of doctors was scarce. This led to the setting up of more medical schools in India, while a majority of private hospitals were set up. The main teaching material in a healthcare campus is a patient. By and large, the patients admitted to government medical institutes have been undergoing free treatment, as the state bears the expenses for the same. Such a population has always been cooperative in assisting in teaching-learning sessions. With the advent of private medical schools, this equation has changed. Often, the patients would refuse to be a part of the teaching-learning environment since they are paying for their treatment. Moreover, in highly literate States, the patients would not be forthcoming in such circumstances. Medical education has rapidly travelled from blackboard and patients to smart classes and virtual patients. Technological transformation in medical education has transformed primary health care to state-of-the-art quaternary care, in the form of robotics. This has been possible due to the rapid evolution of medical education technologies by raising the gold standards of medical curriculum through mapping, blue printing, evolving specific learning objectives, application of teaching learning, assessment through virtual patients and other high-fidelity technologies which rapidly accelerated during the global pandemic. New technologies are imbibed into the healthcare system to benefit the patients. This includes patenting better drug delivery modes, nanotechnology/genetic studies, biotechnological advancements,

YOUR COLUMN

PM Package employees need healing touch

Dear Editor:

Kashmiri Pandit Package employees - the victims of genocide and the aborigines of Kashmir are being disregarded and discriminated by the ruling centre government. The issues, woes and miseries of the Package employees are being overlooked by the LG administration and very unfortunately the repressive government is now suppressing the voices of these hapless employees. Keeping in view the present precarious situation in Kashmir, these patriotic package employees are rightly demanding their relocation outside the valley. Since the martyrdom of Rahul Bhat, the package employees are on roads and are peacefully protesting for the last 106 days in support of their relocation demand as they feel apprehensive about their safety and security. But the BJP centre government is not paying any sort of heed towards the sad plight of these employees, which is indeed very sorry state of affairs. It is the

height of injustice that the government is labeling PM package employees as the second class citizens of the country and thus these nationalist migrant package employees have become now the 'Prisoners of War'. It seems like that the LG administration and centre government is treating these employees as if they are the 'Children of a Lesser God'. However, the BJP centre government's narrative of normaley in Kashmir has completely fallen flat as the overall security apparatus in Kashmir is worsening day by day. The spate of targeted and selective killings of religious minorities has triggered a wave of fear and insecurity among KPs in general and package employees in particular. All this boils down to the fact that the working conditions for PM package employees is not conducive in the valley. Therefore, the centre government should come out of their ego and prestige problem and immediate directions be given to the J&K UT administration for relocation/attachment of all PM package employees to Relief Commissioners Migrant Office Jammu till normaley limp back to Kashmir.

Vivek Koul,
Jammu

PROGRESSING J&K

NITI Aayog to establish 500 ATLs across J&K to nurture innovative mind-set among students

To nurture the innovative mind-set among high school students across the length and breadth of J&K, Atal Innovation Mission and NITI Aayog is establishing more than 500 Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs) here under Atal Innovation Mission (AIM). ATL is the flagship initiative of AIM launched by Government of India, to nurture an innovative mindset amongst high school students across the length and breadth of India. Government of India is working on a five-year vision document for AIM to create and promote a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship across the length and breadth of the country. ATL is a workspace where young minds can give shape to their ideas through hands-on do-it-yourself mode and learn innovation skills. The objectives of the AIM are to create and promote an ecosystem of innovation and entrepreneurship across the country via interventions at school, university, research institutions, MSME and industry levels.

The programmes of AIM cover 34 states and Union Territories with the goal of leveraging India's demographic dividend by inspiring greater participation in the innovation ecosystem. Recently AIM Team led by Mission Director, Dr Chintan Vaishnav inspected the Atal Tinkering Labs in J&K during which creative students displayed their innovative models and briefed about challenges they faced while working on these innovations. On the occasion, the MD said that Atal team has created over 10k Tinkering Labs all over India and hundreds of these have been also established in J&K schools. He said that AIM is establishing more than 500 labs in J&K schools in the next few years to promote innovative and creative mind-set among J&K students. "We want to take this creative and innovative movement to all schools and provide these creative minds a platform to perform and showcase their talent," he added.

He said that aim is to encourage young minds in the field, and challenge students to become producers of products themselves instead of consumers. Government has directed School Education Department to promote scientific temper among the students in areas such as machine learning and artificial intelligence by proactively engaging them in various experiments and scientific activities.

They have also been asked to fix timelines for setting up the laboratories and to emphasise on nomination of trainers or champions to run the labs against suitable incentives.