

GOVT SECURITIES REGULATIONS

In a major development, the outstanding balance of '8.13 per cent GS 2022' is repayable at par on September 21, 2022. No interest will accrue thereon from the said date. In event of a holiday being declared on repayment day by any State Government under the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, the loan/s will be repaid by the paying offices in that State on the previous working day. As per sub-regulations 24(2) and 24(3) of Government Securities Regulations, 2007 payment of maturity, proceeds to the registered holder of Government Security held in the form of Subsidiary General Ledger or Constituent Subsidiary General Ledger account or Stock Certificate, shall be made by a pay order incorporating the relevant particulars of his bank account or by credit to the account of the holder in any bank having facility of receipt of funds through electronic means. For the purpose of making payment in respect of the securities, the original subscriber or the subsequent holders of such Government Securities, shall submit the relevant particulars of their bank account well in advance. However, in the absence of relevant particulars of bank account/mandate for receipt of funds through electronic means, to facilitate repayment of the Loan on the due date, holders may tender the securities, duly discharged, at the Public Debt Offices, Treasuries/Sub-Treasuries and branches of State Bank of India (at which they are encased / registered for payment of interest) 20 days in advance of the due date for repayment. Full details of the procedure for receiving the discharge value may be obtained from any of the aforesaid paying offices.



OFF 'D' CUFF

May all creatures everywhere be happy

From the most venomous cobras to harmless little water snakes, you find an entire array of snakes in India. Snakes play an important role in balancing the world's ecological system. Sanatan Dharma teaches us to see all creatures – snakes included – as part of the one Supreme Cosmic Power.

This is why we even have temples for snakes, where they are worshipped.

Snakes are predators. Their presence controls the population of rats and rodents, which can spread diseases and destroy crops. At the same time, snakes are also part of the food chain.

They are food for birds of prey, like eagles and herons. Thus, Nature ensures ecological balance in its own systematic way. All man has to do is stop obstructing this divine system.

It is in this context, we should strive to understand the ancient truth voiced by our sages: Vasudhaiva kutumbakam – the world is one big family.

A human body has many organs, each with its own specific role to play in maintaining the harmonious functioning of the whole. Just as all our individual organs are not separate from our body, similarly, all the sundry creatures in creation are not separate from the world.

The world is one organic body; each species of plant and animal is a part of that body.

From this perspective, where does man get the right to infringe upon the life of other creatures?

They have the same rights to life on earth as we humans do. In fact, it is only when we understand and respect this truth and behave in alignment with it that we become worthy of calling ourselves 'human'.

Once, when a sage was meditating, a king approached him to ask for water. Being in deep meditation, the sage didn't hear the king.

The king became angry and rested a dead snake around the sage's shoulders.

When the sage's son returned and saw this, he was enraged.

He cursed him, "Whoever did this will die in seven days from the bite of Takshak, the king of serpents."

After this curse bore fruit and the king died, his son decided to take revenge by conducting a sacrifice wherein all snakes of the world were to be offered into the fire.

But during the sacrifice, another sage told the king's son that what he was doing was wrong. The sage imparted spiritual wisdom to him. Happy to have received the gyan, the king's son asked the sage what he wanted in return.

The sage asked him to stop the sacrifice.

This day came to be celebrated as Nag Panchami. Such celebrations are a reminder to love all living creatures and to never destroy them out of hatred or in the name of taking revenge.

In olden days, every home would have a sacred grove with a small temple and pond.

Trees there would have medicinal qualities, and the breeze blowing through their leaves would rejuvenate the body and mind. Insects and reptiles populated these groves, and termites would make their mounds there.

Snakes made their home in holes underneath those termite mounds.

To dilute the toxicity of the snake's venom, people would make offerings of milk mixed with turmeric. On special days, snake-charmers were hired to lure snakes out with their pipe music. Snakes would then be bathed with milk.

This was said to curb the potency of their venom. In those days, people regarded all creatures with reverence and awe. It is love that eventually turns into worship.

Today, even when throwing food out, most people do not think of offering a ball of rice to the crow. Our forests are being destroyed, and our homes do not have any temples in their yards.

Snakes are being deprived of their natural habitats – termite mounds and wooded areas, as a result, they enter our living spaces. When we step on them, they bite us out of fear and pain. If we are careful, neither will we get bitten nor will we have to hurt and kill snakes.

Nothing is to be rejected, everything has a proper place in this cosmos. May grace protect snakes and save them from being endangered. May we all also develop the right mentality to facilitate this. Let us remember the primary prayer of Sanatan Dharma: 'Lokah samastah sukhino bhavantu' – May all creatures everywhere be happy.

-Sri Mata Amritanandamayi Devi

■ ER P L KHUSHU



Unlike Hinduism, the word 'Hindutva' did not come into popular discourse until 1923. It was coined by V.D. Savarkar in his text. For him, 'Hindutva' was not the same as Hinduism.

Given this, it can be said that Hinduism and Hindutva are not the same, but they aren't contradictory either. What Hinduism does in the social lives of the people, Hindutva does so in the political life. It had nothing to do with the practices and beliefs of the religion, but was only concerned with the political domination of the Hindus, being the major partners of Indian population in number, which has shrunk, with the opportunist political parties ruling this country till 2014, by exploiting the vote bank emotions of the minorities, Muslims, Dalits and other back ward classis of this country with the policies of appeasements through the false slogans of pseudo secularism. Given this, it can be said that Hinduism and Hindutva are not the same, but they aren't contradictory either. What Hinduism does in the social lives of the people concerned, Hindutva does so in the political life. In keeping with the race doctrines of the times, Savarkar conceived Hindutva as an indefinable quality inherent in the Hindu 'race', which could not be identified directly with the specific tenets of Hinduism. Hindutva, he declared, is so varied and so rich, so powerful and so subtle, so elusive and yet so vivid that it defied such definition'. Savarkar asserted: 'Hinduism is only a derivative, a fraction, a part of Hindutva'. To him, the religion was therefore a subset of the political idea, rather than synonymous with it, something many of its proponents today would be surprised to hear. Savarkar, however, argued that: 'Failure to distinguish between Hindutva and Hinduism has given rise to much misunderstanding and mutual suspicion between some of those sister communities that have inherited this inestimable and common treasure of our Hindu civilization. It is enough to point out that Hindutva is not identical with what is vaguely indicated by the term Hinduism. By an 'ism' it is generally meant a theory or a code more or less based on spiritual or religious dogma or system. But when we attempt to investigate into the essential significance of Hindutva, we do not primarily and certainly not mainly concern ourselves with any particular theocratic or religious dogma or creed.' In the present day concept of multi religious living population in India, Hindutva', has to mean Indian- ness. Hindus, thus defined, constituted the Indian nation-a nation that had existed since antiquity, since Savarkar was explicitly rejecting the British view that India was just, in Churchill's notorious phrase, 'a geographical expression. No more a single country than the Equator.'

Savarkar's vision of Hindutva saw it as the animating principle of a 'Hindu Rashtra' (Hindu Nation) that extended across the entire Indian subcontinent, and was rooted in an undivided India ('Akhand Bharat') corresponding to the territorial aspirations of ancient dynasties like the Mauryas (320 BCE-180 BCE), who under Chandragupta and Ashoka had managed to knit most of the subcontinent under their territorial control.

In the words of a later RSS publication, Sri Gururji, the Man and his Mission, 'It became evident that Hindus were the nation in Bharat and that Hindutva was Rashtriyatva [nationalism]. It thus includes all the Indians of today who are living in India without any cast, color or religious bias. Then came the most significant development of a great consequence. Mohan Bhagwat, the RSS Chief, extended his outreach to the Muslims of the country. Speaking in an event 'Hindustani First' organized by Muslim Rashtriya Manch in Gaziabad UP, some time very recently, he said that those who indulge in lynching are against Hindutva. He said that there may be differences in worship and lifestyle but Hindu and Muslims are one, not different and our belief should be to live together to strengthen the nation. Mohan Bhagwat added that we live in democracy which does not permit dominance of one religion over the other, 'dominance has to be of Indians.' Indeed, a huge statement from a person who matters most in the current political scene of the country and is heard with respect, by all. While RSS Chief obliquely admonished those in the majority community who indulge in lynching, he told common Muslim not to get 'trapped in the cycle of fear that Islam is in danger.' Mohan Bhagwat referred to the Constitution many a time during his address to emphasize the point that the document nowhere talks about Hindus only. In his reference to Haldi Ghati battle of 1574, he was a telling a recalled history that while Mughuls were fighting Rajputs many Muslims were on side of Maharana Pratap and the Mughal army was led by a Rajput, Raja Man Singh. It is a remarkable that the RSS Chief has sought to downplay the religious divide and fore grounded national identity together with emphasis on rule of law. This is an acknowledgement of multiculturalism that defines idea of India. It has come at a time when nation is paying heavily for caste and creed division. We have to reduce the cost of social strife. More so, at a time when threat of deadly waves of corona are looming large on the horizon. Polarization does not pay, when dialogue is must for removing misgivings, he said. What is being observed today in the most of the sectors of governance across the country is that the cast and religion is being exploited to its grit, by the so-called politicians of the day, with short and binary visions? They are dividing the nation in the name of religion, east and creed. A new trend and

approach is now in operation by a few ruler politicians, when they are slow poisoning some selective sections of the population of India, in the name of sops and freebies, at nations cost, thus dividing the people of India on economic cycles too, apart from causing a big gap amongst the various sections of people on east and religious factors. It is going to impede the growth of the nation and its people heavily. It is going to make some sections of the people of India, reclusive to work, with hermit habits of an easy go life. It is to set a dangerous trend amongst the society, thus resulting in a big drop in the country's GDP growth. Then who pays for such sops or freebies. It is the other section of the same society. He or she is taxed on two counts, the normal tax line of the country and the freebies component too. The development works, the growth and modernization of the surroundings around is a big dream for the forward looking sections of the society. One is helpless under the circumstances. It is certainly not the 'Indian-ness', in other words the 'Hindutva', the love for one's nation. Delhi is a practical example of this epidemic, when its political rulers have spread it to other parts of the country, when they are abuzz to take this epidemic to other already developed states of India like Gujarat. Punjab is already drugged with this opium. What is observed is that the mastermind politicians of such proposals of freebies, who do it to remain in power somehow, are bent to spread it through lies before the people of the nation. It is said that a lie spoken ten times is taken as a gospel truth. That is what is happening through these ambitious political leaders, who are mad after political power, forgetting the development of the country as a whole on the planks and designs of 'Hindutva'. What is the state of condition of Delhi presently in its ecology and get up, particularly when it is the capital of a big country. Is Delhi competent to be classified as a novel city to be claimed as a golden capital of the great India. Certainly not. Who has done it? The selfish politicians, by speaking lies about sops and freebies, risking and abating the development of Delhi as a comparable capital of India with any capital of any of the developed nations, across the world. These politicians are involved in various scandals and have the cheeks to contest the same, when their corrupt deeds are visible on the open radar. The liquor scam of the Delhi government is an open example in this regard. These hypocrite political leaders are not for nation, they are for political power and loot. It is here where 'Hindutva' is trampled and killed. Of late the nation observed that one of the veteran Chief Minister of a big state of India changed his color for power: He supposed to be a staunch follower of Jaiprakash Movement which was launched in India by the veteran socialist leader Sh. Jaiprakash Narayan to remove congress from power in 1975. He forgot the

national interest and joined hands back with the conglomerates of the corrupt politicians when one of its veteran leaders is still cooling his heels in jail for the last more than 7 years. This is where the national interest is forgotten. Thus 'Hindutva' is defeated to grow and club the Indian nation in its cover for making India prosperous. He has preferred cast over honesty. "Indian-Ness" which is 'Hindutva', is put in the cold storage. There are much more examples to cite, but the space does not permit here. What is the reverse of 'Hindutva', it is 'Pseudo-Secularism'. Pseudo secularism is the worst farm of communalism, where in one section of society gets jealous over the other community, resulting in communal clashes between various communities, both on the mental levels and the physical levels.

Kashmiri Pandits genocide in 1990 is one of the worst examples in this regard when theirs is a displaced community from their homes and hearths and are living in exile in their own country as refugees. Their tales of doom and turmoil due to their forced displacements are now becoming histories of the past, as there is no one who is sincerely bothered to listen to their tales of destruction and devastation. Probably they are now getting added to the age old historical events and pages, when Kashmiri Pandits have been massacred, forced to get converted, or flee from Kashmir during certain tyrannical Islamic rules. Is it the pseudo secularism of congress and other pseudo secular political parties of Jammu and Kashmir, which is responsible for our present condition of being refugees in our own country? Where is 'Hindutva' about them? Do not they belong to the big race of the Hindus of this great 'Bharat'. It is now very much unfortunate for them to seek refuge under this cover of Hinduism as the enormous and enough drum beating of the pseudo secular credentials of the nations commitment to the Constitution has failed to protect them from their extinction from the mini map of Kashmir and the bigger map of the great India. RSS having made enough clarity about the concept and definition of 'Hindutva', should fearlessly carry it forward to make India and its people to adopt it for the overall prosperity of this nation and its people which includes all sections of people irrespective of cast, religion, color and creed. It has to be fore told to that entire 'Hindutva' means Indian-Ness' and not 'Hinduism'. Congress party, which is now on its last legs and other regional or national political parties are working mostly on east and region based politics, for their vote bank politics. Such political parties will exploit it to their benefits using it perversely for their vote bank goals.

(The author is a Chartered Consultant Civil Engineer, passionately attached and devoted to his motherland - Jammu & Kashmir).

Biodiversity & human well-being

■ DR BANARSI LAL

We all are observing the environmental issues across the globe. We should contemplate on growing environmental issues and protect the nature. Nature significantly impacts our lives. Nature has many benefits from the food we eat, to the air we breathe, the water we drink etc. Despite so many benefits, the nature is being mistreated. Biodiversity plays a significant role in survival of the life on the mother Earth. Biodiversity provides us food, water and various other resources as well as services such as recycling of nutrients, climate control, pollination and flood mitigation. There is need to spread the awareness and message among the people to save the environment and planet Earth. We have 7 continents on planet Earth. Every human being has only one dream which is to live better, to eat better and to consume better. But majority of them never care for the environment and planet Earth. Presently human population is more than 7 billion on the Earth but we have only one planet to live and survive. We have limited food, limited place and limited shelters. If we keep on using natural resources as we are doing every day, a day will come when our own grand children shall be forced to live homeless with full of hunger. So it's better to consume the natural resources judiciously and responsibility. We should stop the wastage of natural resources and use them according to our need not on our greed. Each of us knows the importance of nature. It consists of all the living beings on the earth, which are mutually interdependent on each other. But due to the excessive pollution caused by human beings, many species are becoming extinct and the global climate is also changing rapidly. The global warming is inversely affecting our health and also going to give a long term effect on our future generations. We know that millions of people on the Earth depend on forest for their livelihood. Every living being is dependent on plants and trees. Only the plants and trees can make our food. But, we people are degrading the forests rapidly. Every year, pollinators like bees help three-fourth of the world's flowering plants and reproduce about 35 per cent of the world's food. Flash floods, cyclones, land sliding etc. are creating havoc and wash away many trees and infrastructure. Recent flash floods, bushfires, global COVID-19 pandemic, locusts attack in India and Africa etc. indicate that human health is closely dependent with the

environmental health. The current environmental crisis indicates that we must rethink for our relationship with the natural ecosystem. There is dire need to think on biodiversity. Ultimately human health depends on the ecosystem products and services. Loss of biodiversity directly impacts the human health. Changes in the ecosystem services affects our livelihoods, rural migration and cause conflicts among the human beings. Loss of biodiversity may limit the research for the potential treatments of many diseases. Human actions such as deforestations, intensified agriculture, encroachments on wildlife habitats, global warming has pushed the nature beyond its limit. If we continue our activities in the same speed then we can face the severe implications in future for our coming generations.

Modern technologies have made our lives comfortable but affecting the environmental health. When we destroy the nature, we destroy the system that supports us. Presently about one million species are facing extinction. There is urgent need to re-examine our relationship with nature. Although we are having numerous technological advancements but still we are completely dependent on healthy ecosystem for our food, clothes, shelter, health, water, medicines, fuel, energy etc. We have the challenges, opportunities and solutions. There is need to conserve the biodiversity for the benefits of life on the Earth. We can celebrate the environment protection programmes by using the digital media campaigns, webinars, seminars, workshops, conferences etc. Nature acts as the solution of our many solutions. Nature is closely associated with the climate change, food security and health. Biodiversity is badly affected due to our short-sighted activities including infrastructure development, chemical farming, deforestation, mining etc. All these activities have degraded the ecosystem. There is urgent need to work together for the resilient and sustainable global economy. The exploitation of renewable and non-renewable energy resources and rapid increase in the urbanization are severely affecting the biodiversity. Sustainable development is the only way to mitigate the needs of our present and future generations. It also ensures the health of the planet Earth. It has been observed that around 25 per cent of all animals and plants species are threatened with extinction. We should create more awareness on preserving the endangered habitats. Biodiversity is an integral part of sustainable

development. It is the foundation for our food and health and plays a key catalyst to transforming food systems and improving human health. A wide range of events are organized globally to increase the understanding of the important role of biodiversity for our present and future generations. The biodiversity we observe today is the outcome of over 3.5 billion years of evolutionary history, shaped by the natural processes. Biodiversity is the foundation for the life and for the essential services provided by ecosystems. It plays the significant role in transforming our food system system and thus improves the human health. It underpins peoples' livelihoods and sustainable development in all realms of socio-economical activity, including agriculture, forestry, fisheries, tourism etc. Biodiversity is a global asset. Biodiversity forms the web of life of which we are an integral part and upon which we are fully dependent. Biological diversity is the natural biotic capital of the earth which affects all of us.

Human beings derive the supply of food, medicines, energy and many industrial products from biological resources. The environmental crisis is an existential threat. Pandemics are related to the environmental crisis, helping to nurture and host novel germs. There is dire need to contemplate over the environmental issues from air pollution to toxic dumps to pesticides to loss of biodiversity. There are enormous challenges but there are also vast opportunities on environmental action. Environmental protection is considered as the biggest challenge for the mankind. India is one of the richest nations in the world in terms of biological diversity. India has relatively large number of frogs, salamanders and their kith and kins. Brazil is the most biologically diverse nation in the world. India stands 10th in terms of biological diversity. Some parts of the country are very rich due to a variety of natural causes in biological diversity and some are less. The Loss of biodiversity across the globe has increased alarmingly and many wildlife and plant species are on the verge of extinction. Strenuous efforts are needed to protect the biodiversity. We all need to understand that biodiversity is the foundation for our life and ultimately it ensures our livelihoods and sustainable development. We need to protect the environment by growing the more plants, by shunning the use of plastics, using the alternate sources of energy and changing our modern lifestyles.

(The author is Head, KVK Reasi SKUAST-J).

YOUR COLUMN Celebrate eco-friendly Ganesh Chaturthi

Dear Editor,

Festivals in India are generally celebrated with all the frills, and the same is true for Ganesh Chaturthi. Right from handpicking flowers and decking up puja rooms and Pandals, to making Modaks filled with coconut and jaggery, people tend to immerse themselves in a host of activities. However, often, during the course of the celebration, we don't realise the extent of harm we might be causing to the environment. Many of Ganesha idols that are sold in the market are made of plastic, thermocol, POP, and other

non-biodegradable materials, which when immersed in water bodies have a detrimental effect on both the plant and animal life. Even the rangoli colours available in the market which are used for decorative purposes, are made up of hazardous substances like mica, acids, and glass powders. Since these colours cannot be decomposed biologically, they tend to degrade the surrounding spaces. It might not sound very significant, but even the plastic used to pack or give away the prasad, adds to the existing pollution in the environment. For decoration, use only fresh flowers, diyas and electric bulbs. Avoid the usage of shiny ribbons, thermocol, plastic beads, etc, as they all end up as reject waste. For puja, use only fresh flowers, fruits, coconut, mango leaves, tulsi, grass, betel nut leaves.

Avoid purchasing betel nut, Haldi-Kumkum or other puja items in packets, as they typically cannot be recycled. Instead, buy the whole betel nut or buy Haldi-Kumkum in a box. Also do use a reusable bag when shopping. Immersion of Ganesha idols in lakes, tanks, rivers, and other water bodies is not good for the environment and marine life. Many-a-times, the idol does not dissolve entirely and leaves several pollutants behind. Hence, symbolic immersion at the comfort of your home is a better option. Any huge bucket or a pit can be used for this. Hence, this time around, let's look at some ways in which we can celebrate Ganesh Chaturthi with all the pomp and ceremony, but without harming the planet.

Jubel D'Cruz.