

I have always believed in evolving a consensus before taking any major decision.

-Narendra Modi

Tiranga Rally: Celebrating National Pride

The "Har Ghar Tiranga" initiative is part of a broader effort to foster a deep sense of nationalism and unity among citizens. By encouraging the display of the national flag and organizing rallies, the campaign sought to reconnect people with the values of independence, sovereignty, and national pride. The event served as a reminder of the sacrifices made by those who fought for India's freedom and emphasized the importance of maintaining the integrity and unity of the nation.

The Tiranga Yatra events were held across different regions of Jammu & Kashmir, with participants carrying the national flag and chanting patriotic slogans like 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai' and 'Vande Mataram.' These rallies not only celebrated the spirit of independence but also engaged the community in meaningful discussions about national progress and unity.

The Tiranga Yatra events were more than mere processions; they represented a deep-seated commitment to national values and the promotion of social cohesion. By engaging people from diverse backgrounds and regions, the rallies aimed to strengthen the bond between citizens and the nation, fostering a collective identity rooted in pride and patriotism.

Tiranga rallies in Jammu and Kashmir have become a significant symbol of national unity and pride, reflecting the region's evolving political and social landscape. These rallies, characterized by large gatherings of people waving the Indian tricolor, have served as a powerful expression of patriotism and solidarity with the Indian state.

These rallies are organized by various political and social groups, including government bodies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and local communities. The rallies typically involve large crowds carrying the Indian National Flag, often accompanied by patriotic slogans and songs. They serve as a platform to reaffirm allegiance to the Indian Union and to promote national integration.

The Tiranga, or Tricolor flag of India, symbolizes the unity and diversity of the country. Its three stripes represent courage and sacrifice (saffron), peace and truth (white), and faith and chivalry (green), while the Ashoka Chakra in the center stands for the eternal wheel of law.

In the context of Jammu and Kashmir, these rallies are not just about waving the flag but are also a manifestation of a broader message: the desire for unity and a shared national identity.

The political implications of these rallies are significant. For the government, they are a way to demonstrate the integration of Jammu and Kashmir with the rest of India. The government views these rallies as a means to promote harmony.

From a social perspective, Tiranga rallies offer a space for ordinary citizens to express their views and emotions. For many, participating in these rallies is a way to show support for the changes implemented by the central government and to contribute to the nation's collective identity.

The rallies often feature a mix of local residents, students, and civil society groups, creating a diverse tapestry of voices and experiences.

Tiranga rallies in Jammu and Kashmir are more than just public demonstrations; they are emblematic of the complex interplay between national identity and regional aspirations. They reflect the ongoing efforts to foster unity and integration within a historically and culturally rich region.

While these rallies have their share of challenges, they continue to be a significant aspect of Jammu and Kashmir's evolving narrative, symbolizing both the aspirations and the tensions that characterize this unique part of India.

Alarming Rise in Drug Menace: A Call to Action

ER. SAJAD RESHI

The picturesque valleys of Jammu & Kashmir, long known for their natural beauty, are now grappling with an alarming rise in drug abuse and trafficking. This growing menace is not only eroding the social fabric of the region but also threatening the well-being of its youth. The situation has reached a critical point, demanding immediate and coordinated action from all segments of society.

The Urgency of the Situation: The escalation in drug-related activities has been swift and severe. Recent reports indicate a significant increase in the availability and use of narcotics across various districts. The easy access to drugs, coupled with the growing influence of drug cartels, is devastating communities, particularly targeting vulnerable populations like the youth. This surge in drug abuse is not just a health issue; it is a societal crisis. It leads to an increase in crime, domestic violence, and other social problems. The future of an entire generation is at stake, and if left unchecked, the repercussions could be catastrophic for the region.

The Role of Society and Community Leaders: In this challenging scenario, the role of society, especially colony heads and community leaders, becomes crucial. It is imperative that these leaders maintain close and continuous communication with the police and other concerned authorities. By doing so, they can help identify and monitor suspicious activities in their neighbourhood, making it harder for drug suppliers to operate. Community leaders must also engage in awareness campaigns to educate people about the dangers of drug abuse. By fostering a strong community spirit and a sense of collective responsibility, they can encourage residents to report any drug-related activities to the authorities without fear of reprisal.

Collaboration with Law Enforcement: The police and law enforcement agencies are on the frontlines of this battle against the drug menace. However, they cannot fight this war alone. They need the active support and cooperation of the public to effectively combat drug trafficking and bring suppliers to justice. Regular meetings between community leaders and the police can help in sharing valuable information, coordinating actions, and strategizing the best ways to tackle the problem. Such collaborations can also lead to the establishment of more robust surveillance systems, ensuring that every corner of the community is under watchful eyes.

A Collective Effort for a Safer Future: The fight against the drug menace in Jammu & Kashmir is a collective one. It requires the involvement of every citizen, every community, and every institution. By working together, we can create a safer, healthier environment for our children and future generations. Let us all take a stand today. Let us ensure that no drug supplier goes unpunished, and no community falls prey to this menace. Together, we can protect our society and secure a brighter future for all.

(The writer is Senior Political Leader)

"Pakistan's J&K misadventure" Proactive policies are ultimate solution

DR VARINDER SHARMA

Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai in his statement made in the ongoing monsoon session of the Parliament has said that a total of 28 people, including civilians and security personnel, were killed in 11 terror-initiated incidents and 24 encounters or counter-terror operations up to July 21 this year. Its an open secret that proxy war by incorrigible Pakistan is creating this unrest in the Union Territory (UT) of Jammu and Kashmir especially in wake of abrogation of Article 370 and enemy nation having been isolated on international forums.

However, recent attacks in the Reasi, Doda and Kathua districts of Jammu that left nine civilians and a CRPF personnel dead, besides leaving 49 others, including seven security personnel injured was worrisome especially when situation in this part of the region was quite normal since past two decades. Now when the militancy is on its last leg and government is focussing on economic aspects including mining lithium in district Reasi or ensuring peaceful pilgrimages, Pakistan is again trying to escalate violence only to stay relevant.

Taking cognisance of the matter, the union government has ordered deployment of additional troops. In addition to 3000 army and 2000 Border Security Force (BSF) personnel in various parts of Jammu, the union government has now decided reinforce security grid by two additional battalions of Assam Rifles in the region to strengthen counter-militancy operations against the foreign terrorists who have gone hiding in upper reaches of different districts of Jammu region.

These troops will well be defending borders and flushing out terrorists from out of our territory. In the given situation, besides reinforcement, what's needed is a proactive approach to finish this residual menace of militancy by going on full throttle on the enemy. Although we believe in no first attack policy yet such stray incidents need to be considered as an act of war especially when about fifty foreign terrorists are believed to be hiding in

the forests of Doda, Udhampur, Poonch, Rajouri, Reasi and Kathua districts.

A few days ago, former Jammu Kashmir Director General of Police (DGP) Dr SP Vaid too had disclosed that a large number of Pakistan Army SSG commandos were preparing to cross over to this side of border and a few have even managed to infiltrate. "This is going to be a long haul, and we need to be prepared for anything", he had said adding that their number is in hundreds and intend to engage 15 and 16 corps of Indian Army fully in the coveted war.

"It's an act of war and we have to remain alert. We can't tolerate this," Vaid had said adding that efforts are on to disrupt the ground situation in Jammu and Kashmir: SP Vaid even named one Adil Rehmani as GoC, SSG Commandoes Pakistan Army who according to him had been organising the infiltrators in Jammu and Kashmir. "There is one Lieutenant Colonel Shahid Saleem who has already reportedly infiltrated in Jammu and Kashmir. He has activated all the sleeper cells. Two more battalions are ready to sneak into this part of Jammu and Kashmir," Vaid claimed.

It is no surprise the precision with which these attacks are taking place, its nothing short of an act of war and India needs to respond proactively. We have better intelligence network and once these unhealthy developments of any such group of trained infiltrators roaming around on this side of the fence is confirmed, the security agencies must go ahead with full throttle and eliminate them all. Simultaneously, time has come when India is now required to choose a right time and place of our own choice to teach Pakistan - a failed and rouge state one final lesson. When an enemy nation is out there to target civilians, buses and soldiers in series a retaliation with full military might become a must.

This final assault will not only keep the hiding militants under check but also stop more terrorists from entering into jungles to take shelter in natural hideouts. This will also stop locals, if any, from being a support to these terrorists without which they can't survive. We also need to disman-

tle this network wherein locals are continuing to support or give shelter to terrorists or even aiding their operations in any manner.

Security forces, as said, are also in the process of setting up camps in vulnerable areas other than the forests to keep vigil on any kind of movement of the terrorists but I believe this is the only time when Pakistan is weak in terms of finances, on political front and isolated across the globe and there can't be any other better time than this to strike the terror network operating from its soil.

Going into the history of India and prevailing situation across the globe, its established that whenever Pakistan has tried to do any misadventure into India, it has faced a humiliating defeat. Besides skirmishes on the borders and a proxy war, Pakistan has also entered into four wars with India but face humiliating defeats. This establishes that, with more military might which we have gathered over a period of time this time its going to be more tough for Pakistan to sustain for longer in the battlefield.

In 1947, fearing that the Maharaja of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir might accede to India, Pakistan sent tribal Islamic forces into the region, occupying parts of the princely state. This pressure led the Maharaja to sign the Instrument of Accession, formally aligning the state with India to secure Indian military assistance. This was followed by the establishment of a ceasefire and the creation of the Line of Control (LoC).

In 1965, Pakistan again attempted to infiltrate Jammu and Kashmir to incite an insurgency against Indian rule. India responded with a full-scale military assault on West Pakistan. This seventeen-day war included the largest tank battle since World War II and ended with a ceasefire, formalized by the Tashkent Declaration.

Undeterred, Pakistan engaged in another conflict with India in 1971. The war culminated in Lieutenant-General A. A. K. Niazi of Pakistan's Eastern Command signing the instrument of surrender in Dhaka, in the presence of India's Lt. Gen. Jagjit Singh Aurora. This conflict led to

the creation of Bangladesh and the surrender of over 90,000 Pakistani troops, marking a humiliating defeat for Pakistan.

In 1999, Pakistani troops infiltrated across the LoC, occupying Indian territory primarily in the Kargil district. After two months of conflict, Indian forces had reclaimed most of the occupied ridges. Facing potential international isolation, Pakistan's already fragile economy suffered further damage, and the morale of Pakistani forces plummeted as many units of the Northern Light Infantry incurred heavy casualties. Pakistan refused to accept the bodies of many officers. Nawaz Sharif later revealed that over 4,000 Pakistani troops were killed in the operation, and Pakistan ultimately lost the conflict.

In addition to the aforementioned wars, India and Pakistan have experienced numerous skirmishes over the years, some approaching the brink of all-out war while others remained limited in scope. For instance, in 1955, both nations engaged in warlike posturing, but a full-scale conflict was averted.

Recently, India's bold actions, such as abrogating Article 370, ending stone-pelting incidents, eradicating the hartal culture, targeting separatists, and securing borders, have significantly weakened militant activities. There is now an opportunity to dismantle the entire terror ecosystem through a proactive approach.

The government has already seized and attached properties of terrorists and their associates, banned anti-national organizations, launched preventive operations, and initiated investigations to uncover the mechanisms supporting terrorism. Additionally, a multi-pronged strategy to prevent infiltration, enhance the counter-insurgency grid, and modernize and strengthen security equipment has been implemented. These measures need to be complemented by a decisive final assault, the timing and location of which should be determined by military strategy in the coming days, months, or even years.

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Buddha Amarnath-A mesmerizing Spiritual Yatra

O.N KOUL

Whole of India is the land of spirituality and Jammu and Kashmir is no exception. J&K is the land of shrines, temples, mosques and because of this it is the shining example of communal harmony and religious unity. Again Jammu and Kashmir is the abode of gods and goddesses. One such place of great spiritual importance is Buddha Amarnath.

Buddha Amarnath is the abode of Lord Shiva. Dedicated to Lord Shiva, the Buddha Amarnath Temple in Raipur village in Mandi Tehsil of Poonch district is one of the oldest shrines of Jammu region and attracts a huge rush of devotees during the Yatra which concludes with the arrival of Charri Mubarak (holy mace) at the shrine of Dashmami Akhara Poonch.

Buddha Amarnath pilgrimage is a 10 day Yatra in the mountainous district of Poonch in Jammu and Kashmir. The first batch of pilgrims left Jammu base camp of Bhagwati Nagar for its onward journey to the Himalayan shrine in Poonch early morning of Wednesday 7th of August. Ten day long Buddha Amarnath Yatra begins in Jammu amid tight security. Jammu Divisional commissioner Rakesh Kumar & ADGP Jammu Anand Jain flagged off first batch of 651 Yatris for Buddha Amarnath Yatra. This Yatra will conclude on 19 August Jammu. The Bhoomi Pujan was performed in a traditional way on Tuesday. A Bhajan Sandhya was also organized by Sanskar Bharti, Bajrang Dal national convener Neeraj Doneria said that the first batch includes 1200 Yatris.

Buddha Amarnath Temple, dedicated to Hindu deity Shiva is one of the oldest shrines of Jammu

region. The river Pulsata flows by the temple and is considered to be sacred where pilgrims take bath before paying obeisance to Lord Shiva in the temple. A mythological legend is associated with the river and it has been named after Rishi Pulsata, grandfather of Ravana. Shilvinga of this temple unlike Amarnath cave is not natural but formed and made up of white stone. Buddha Amarnath shrine is older than the historical cave shrine of Amarnathji in Kashmir. This ancient temple is popularly known for Raksha Bandhan Mela and Charri Mubarak Yatra in which every year thousands of devotees from across India participate. High level security measures have been put in place in Rajouri and Poonch to ensure a peaceful and incident free Yatra and all the boarding and lodging arrangements have been made by the administration.

Amid tight security arrangements, the 10 day Buddha Amarnath pilgrimage in the mountainous district of Poonch in Jammu and Kashmir begun on Wednesday with flagging off the first batch from Jammu.

The first batch of pilgrims left from Jammu base camp at Bhagwati Nagar for its onward journey to Himalayan shrine in Poonch early morning. This pilgrimage is of ten days duration and is an example of communal harmony. The people of different faiths take part and assist in Yatra and the Yatra season seems to be mini India and thus it is the shining example of unity in diversity and we should protect and uphold this doctrine and practical philosophy and let whole India emulate the communal harmony of example exhibited by Buddha Amarnath Yatra.

The people all over India take part in this Yatra

and pay obeisance and take blessings from Lord Shiva to whom this Yatra is dedicated. Buddha Amarnath ji Yatra has great importance for the people especially for Hindus who have great faith in the Lord Shiva. Those people who for some reason cannot visit Amarnathji cave in Kashmir, travel poonch for Buddha Amarnath Yatra as it is less difficult so far as the terrain and mountains are concerned. With each passing year the number of Yatris swell and it is so good. But the Jammu Kashmir government should develop, advertise this pilgrim spot so that yatris in big numbers will travel to this place and undertake the mountainous yatra.

Buddha Amarnath yatra and temple is very old and in fact older than the cave of Amarnathji of Kashmir Himalayas. While in the south Kashmir district of Anantnag which has the distinction of having a big cave in the Himalayas where the natural shiv Lingha of ice is the attraction and thus there is natural ling which differentiates Amarnathji Kashmir and Buddha Amarnath in Jammu. Buddha Amarnathji is not a natural shrine but it is an old shiva temple in the mountains of Poonch which is visited by a large number of devotees every year in the month of Shravan particularly on the Shravan Purnimashi that coincides with Raksha Bandhan. This year that is in 2024, Shravan Purnima that is also called Raksha Bandhan falls on 19th August. The government should encourage people to participate in Buddha Amarnath Yatra so that it will attract large number of devotees every year so that it will become a place of great public attention and people in large numbers will visit and undertake this spiritual journey so that it will gain prominence

like the Amaranth cave shrine of Kashmir Himalayas. Thus the UT government through its tourism department should pay great attention to this religious tourist spot so that it will gain much and required popularity so that it will be visited by large number of people yearly in the month of Shravan and otherwise also in other months of the year as well. Government needs to construct huts through the yatra route for the facility of yatris and also make adequate arrangements for the pilgrims so that Buddha Amarnathji shrine will become a famous spiritual tourism destination in India and abroad. The Jammu and Kashmir government should spend big amount of money for the development of this shrine and encourage people to join this pilgrimage in big numbers so that it will become a place of great prominence and devotees in large numbers will visit this shrine and this pilgrimage will become world famous like Amarnath cave situated in Himalays of south Kashmir. In short Buddha Amarnath shrine is gaining popularity and the people in large numbers are visiting this shrine every year. But there is great need to encourage people across India to take part in this Yatra and pay obeisance to Lord Shiva who is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient. May Lord Shiva bring peace and prosperity to Jammu and Kashmir and may Buddha Amarnath ji shrine become a place of inter religious harmony and communal amity and people of Poonch deserve praise for participating in the yatra and facilitating in it. May this shrine devoted to Lord Shiva remove all darkness and bring light to us all so that it may become the harbinger of change, peace and prosperity.

Women Shakti Mission: Social and Psychological Dimensions

DR. RAJKUMAR SINGH

Mission Shakti is a flagship initiative by the Government of India aimed at empowering women across various dimensions - social, economic, and legal. The mission integrates various programs and schemes for women's safety, security, and empowerment under one umbrella. An overview of the key aspects include: a. Components of Mission Shakti: Sambal: Focuses on the safety and security of women, including measures like strengthening helplines, improving infrastructure in police stations, and providing legal aid. Samarthyaa: Centres on the empowerment of women, addressing issues such as education, employment, and financial independence. b. Initiatives under Mission Shakti: One Stop Centres (OSCs): Provide support to women affected by violence. These centres offer legal, medical, and counselling services. Women Helpline (181): A 24-hour helpline to support women in distress. Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP): Aims to address the declining child sex ratio and promote the education of girls. Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY): A maternity benefit program for pregnant and lactating women. c. Objectives: Safety and Security: Protect women from all forms of violence. Empowerment: Ensure equal opportunities for women in education, employment, and leadership roles. Legal Rights: Strengthen the enforcement of laws related to women's rights and create awareness about legal protections. d. Impact: Mission Shakti has been instrumental in creating a safer environment for women and has empowered them economically and socially. The integrated approach has ensured that various government schemes and initiatives work in tandem to address the multifaceted challenges women face. e. Recent Developments: The mission is continuously evolving with new programs and initiatives being introduced to address emerging challenges related to women's empowerment. Mission Shakti is a comprehensive approach to ensuring that women in

India have the resources, support, and opportunities they need to lead safe, dignified, and empowered lives. **Kinds and impacts:** Mission Shakti is a comprehensive initiative by the Government of India that focuses on empowering women through various kinds of programs and schemes. The mission has different components that address the multifaceted challenges faced by women, aiming to improve their social, economic, and legal status. **Kinds of Mission Shakti:** a. Sambal (Safety and Security): One Stop Centres (OSCs): Provide integrated support and assistance to women affected by violence. These centres offer legal, medical, and counselling services. Women Helpline (181): A 24-hour national helpline to support women in distress, providing them with immediate assistance. Emergency Response Support System (ERSS): A pan-India emergency helpline (112) that integrates with police, fire, and ambulance services to provide immediate assistance to women. Mahila Police Volunteers (MPVs): Women volunteers who act as a bridge between the police and the community to report incidents of violence and harassment against women. b. Samarthyaa (Empowerment): National Creche Scheme: Provides day-care facilities for children of working mothers, enabling women to pursue employment. Self-Help Groups (SHGs): Promote women's entrepreneurship and financial independence by providing access to credit and training. Mahila Shakti Kendra (MSK): Aimed at empowering rural women through community participation and skill development programs. c. Legal and Policy Support: Nari Adalat: A platform for women to resolve disputes through alternative dispute resolution mechanisms. Gender Budgeting: Integrating gender perspectives into the budgeting process to ensure resources are allocated to programs that benefit women. Awareness Campaigns: Various initiatives to educate women about their rights and legal protections. Impacts of the Mission include: a. Enhanced Safety and Security: The establish-

ment of OSCs and the women's helpline has provided immediate relief and support to women facing violence, making it easier for them to seek help and justice. ERSS has made emergency response more efficient, ensuring quick assistance for women in distress. b. Economic Empowerment: Through Self-Help Groups and skill development initiatives, women have gained access to financial resources, enabling them to start businesses and become economically independent. The National Creche Scheme has supported working mothers by providing quality childcare, allowing them to pursue employment without worrying about their children's well-being. c. Legal Awareness and Rights Protection: Awareness campaigns and initiatives like Nari Adalat have empowered women to assert their rights and seek legal recourse in cases of injustice. Gender Budgeting has ensured that government resources are allocated in a way that benefits women, promoting gender equality in various sectors. Thus, the Mission Shakti has made significant strides in creating an environment where women feel safer, more empowered, and more aware of their rights. **Psychological Factors:** The psychology behind the Mission Shakti initiative is deeply rooted in the concepts of empowerment, safety, and agency, aiming to shift both individual and collective mindsets towards gender equality. It seeks to address the psychological barriers that women face due to societal norms, systemic discrimination, and internalized oppression. An overview of the concept include: a. Empowerment: Sense of Control: Mission Shakti aims to instil a sense of control in women over their lives, encouraging them to make decisions independently. This can lead to improved self-esteem and confidence, reducing feelings of helplessness. Self-Efficacy: Through skill development, financial independence, and education initiatives, women are given the tools to believe in their ability to achieve their goals. Higher self-efficacy is linked to better mental health and resilience. b. Breaking the Cycle of

Learned Helplessness: Learned Helplessness: Many women, due to prolonged exposure to gender-based discrimination and violence, may develop a sense of learned helplessness, where they feel incapable of changing their situation. Mission Shakti provides resources and support systems, like One Stop Centres and helplines, to help women break out of this cycle and regain their agency. Support Systems: The psychological impact of having access to a robust support system cannot be overstated. Knowing that there are resources and people who will help can reduce anxiety, depression, and feelings of isolation. c. Social and Community Psychology: Collective Empowerment: Mission Shakti doesn't just focus on individual women but also on collective empowerment, such as through Self-Help Groups (SHGs). This collective approach builds solidarity among women, fostering a sense of community, shared purpose, and mutual support. Community Engagement: Programs like Mahila Shakti Kendras involve the community in the process of empowering women, which helps to create an environment where women's rights and contributions are respected and valued. d. Reducing Gender-Based Violence: Psychological Impact of Violence: Gender-based violence has severe psychological effects, including PTSD, anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem. By addressing this through safety and legal initiatives, Mission Shakti aims to reduce the prevalence of violence and provide support to those who have been affected, helping them to heal and rebuild their lives. Trauma-Informed Care: Services provided under Mission Shakti, such as those in One Stop Centres, are often designed to be trauma-informed, meaning they consider the psychological impact of trauma and aim to provide care that helps to mitigate its effects. In short, it is designed to address both the external and internal barriers to women's empowerment.

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