> *Every child comes with the message that God is not yet discouraged of man.*
> —Rabindranath Tagore

EDITORIAL

ELECTION PREPARATIONS

In Jammu and Kashmir, election preparations involve several steps to ensure a smooth and fair electoral process. The State Election Commission plays a pivotal role in organizing these elections, overseeing the preparation of electoral rolls, which involves updating and verifying voter lists to include eligible citizens and remove inaccuracies.

Logistics are a major focus, including the setup of polling stations, which must be accessible and adequately staffed. Election officials undergo extensive training to handle various aspects of the voting process and to manage any issues that may arise on election day.

Additionally, public awareness campaigns are crucial. Voter education initiatives aim to inform citizens about the voting process, the importance of their participation, and how to address any grievances.

Finally, monitoring and transparency are emphasized through the appointment of observers and the implementation of measures to prevent and address electoral malpractices. These comprehensive preparations are vital to upholding democratic values and ensuring that elections in Jammu and Kashmir are conducted fairly and efficiently.

Role of 'LOP' in Parliamentary Democracy

■ **OMKAR DATTATRAY**

The role ,importance and significance of a leader of opposition cannot be exaggerate in a parliamentary democracy and more so in the largest democracy of the world. The place and role of the leader of opposition is very great and his place ,status ,prestige is no less than a union minister and LOC enjoys all the perks ,emoluments and privileges of a union minister and he as important as the centre minister but enjoys more importance than a centre minister .In fact opposition parties are as important as the treasury benches in a democracy if not more than the ruling parties .The LOP in a democracy should play a big part in the functioning of a parliamentary democracy and he should realize and acknowledge his role which is enviable and play his pivotal and strategic part for the successful working of democracy. But opposition should play its positive and constructive role in parliamentary democracy and a democracy cannot function smoothly without the positive and constructive role of the opposition .Good! Rahul Gandhi ,Congress leader has got the place of the Leader of opposition after a long gap of 10 years and he should play his role well for the successful governance of the country in a functional and vibrant democracy .Rahul Gandhi as the leader of opposition should assume his role and fulfill his responsibilities in a parliamentary democracy without which democracy cannot be successful .Thus Rahul Gandhi as the LOP should play his inning well so that the government is kept on its toes but he should not obstruct the governance of the country and should also not be an obstacle for the smooth function of the highest temple of democracy which in fact parliament in a democracy is .Therefore Rahul Gandhi as the LOP should assume his pivotal responsibility and contribute towards the successful working of the parliament and in no way should obstruct the smooth working of the parliament .The Congress ,the largest opposition party won 44 & 52 seats in the 543 member House after the general elections of 2014 & 2019 respectively .The Congress party has in 2024 Lok Sabha elections almost doubled its 2019 tally to 99 seats .Rae Bareli MP Rahul Gandhi has become Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha ,a position that lay vacant for 10 years because no party had numbers equaling a tenth of the strength of the House ,which has been by practice a requirement to lay claim to the post .The oppositions main role is to question the government of the day and hold them accountable to the public .This also helps to fix the mistakes of the ruling party .The main duty of the leader of opposition is to serve as the voice of the opposition in the House .The Leader of the Opposition -LOP in India is a prominent political figure who heads the largest opposition party in either the Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha ,the two houses of the Indian parliament .The LOP's role is defined in under the salaries and allowances of Leader of Opposition in Parliament Act,1977.The leader of the Opposition is typically the leader of the largest political party in opposition to the government party in respective house [Lok Sabha or Raj Sabha}.The designation is recognized by the chairman of the Raj Sabha or the Speaker of the Lok Sabha as applicable .The leader of opposition plays a crucial role in the parliamentary system .Their responsibilities include providing practical criticism and scrutiny of the ruling party's policies and actions .Being ready to take over as an alternative government in case of the governments fall .Participating in key appointments ,such as the selection of the Central Vigilance Commissioner -CVC and Vigilance Commissioner .The LOP is a vital part of India's parliamentary democracy ,providing a voice for the opposition and ensuring checks and balances in the legislative process. They contribute to policy formulation ,bring accountability and help maintain transparency in government institutions .The controversy in recent years has arisen from debates over whether the largest party in opposition qualifies for the post of Leader of Opposition if it does not have at least 10% of the total seats in the Lok Sabha .This debate emerged from the practice started in the 1950's ,when the speaker categorized parties as parties and groups based on whether they had 10% of the house's strength or less .In India's precedence ,the Leader of Opposition -LoP in both the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha is accorded a status equivalent to that of a Cabinet Minister .This recognition highlights the significance of the LoP's role in parliamentary democracy and ensures that they are given due respect and privileges. The Leader of Opposition -LoP in India is a prominent political figure who heads the official Opposition party or coalition in either the Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha ,the two houses in the Indian parliament. The Leader of the Opposition plays a vital role in the Indian parliamentary system .Their responsibilities include providing practical criticism and scrutiny of the ruling party's policies ,leading the opposition in debates ,being ready to take over as an alternative government in case of the government's fall and participating in selection of key appointments such as CVC,VC etc. .Rahul Gandhi is the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha for next five years .He now has some crucial responsibilities to perform to safeguard the rights of minorities and ensure accountability of the government .With great power comes great responsibility .A slew of roles and responsibilities awaits Congress MP Rahul Gandhi who took over as the Leader of Opposition -LoP in the 18th Lok sabha. It was during the Parliament Session that Gandhi debuted as the Leader of the Opposition -the post equivalent to the rank of cabinet minister .One of the major roles of the Leader of Opposition is to effectively question the government's policies .The role of the Leader of Opposition is ,in fact ,very challenging as he has to ensure accountability of the government to the legislature and to the public and present alternatives to government proposals/policies .His proactive role in facilitating smooth functioning of the business of the House is as important as that of the government .Rahul Gandhi should understand that the Leader of the Opposition is a shadow Prime Minister with a 'shadow Cabinet'-prepared to take up the responsibility of framing a government if his party secures a majority at an election or if the present government resigns or is defeated .The LoP to carefully measure his words and actions and act with as much responsibility as is expected of the prime minister on matters of national interest. Rahul Gandhi should now function as a serious leader as he is the LoP in Lok Sabha and in coming days he has to prove his mettle and keep the government on its toes but not obstruct the working of the parliament ,but facilitate the smooth working of the Lok Sabha and cooperate with the treasury benches on matters of national importance. In fact the position and role of the LoP is one of envious and he performs very crucial role in our parliamentary democracy.

(The author is a columnist, social and KP activist)

Teacher - A role model of the society

■ **MOHAMMAD HANIEF**

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world. - Nelson Mandela

Teachers play a very important role in a student's life. As a teacher, one must bring out the best in students and inspire them to strive for greatness. Students are considered as the future of the nation and humankind, and a teacher is believed to be a credible guide for their advancement. Not only do they guide students in academics or extracurricular activities, but teachers are also responsible for shaping a child's future, making him/her a better human being. A teacher imparts knowledge, good values, tradition, modern-day challenges and ways to resolve them within students. A good teacher is an asset to the students.

It used to be simple before. A teacher was seen as a lecturer or someone who delivered knowledge and conducted tests. A teacher was perceived as someone who had answers to every question possible, a gatekeeper of all the resources and information too. A decade ago, teachers were responsible for delivering information.

But that was all before the introduction of the internet or digital media. Information is now easy to access. The ocean of data is before us with just a few keystrokes away.

A teacher's presence in a student's life can boost their morale and guide them to be more valuable in life. Now to perform this task perfectly, a teacher must possess certain qualities like he/she should be impartial and must treat all the students equally.Must be an embodiment of patience. Since the pace and speed of learning are different from one student to other, it is very important to understand students, their skills, talent, memory and treats them individually to guide them towards the best and a teacher must have problem-solving skills to help students overcome their challenges.

Education has changed a lot in recent times. It's more interactive now with the intrusion of digital media. The new-age of technology like artificial intelligence, augmented reality are opening a new dimension in education.

But there is a large role that the teacher has to play here.They are no more seen as the only keeper of information. Information is already shared and students have chewed them, digested them.

Teachers can gear up to help students to understand knowledge and concepts outside the textbook. More the teachers interact with the students with viable, real-life examples, incidents, etc. students will have a better understanding and more awareness of the subject. With real-life examples, they can apply their lessons to many subjects. The teacher has to be a consistent guide to help the student in graduating from one lesson to another.

Have you ever heard about "Problem of plenty"? Today's students face that while choosing a career.There are so many options available and for an inexperienced student that it becomes really difficult to steer their career in the right direction.

A teacher is a big help here. They have undergone similar experiences and they certainly know what will work best and what not. Students need to be guided to pick the best career that suits their talent, skill and give them the best platform to expose themselves without any inhibition.

Due to the lack of career counselling, we are finding a lot of poor performances across the education sector in India. It's not due to scarcity of skill or talent. The reason is deep-rooted and it goes straight to the lack of vision, experience, and smartness in choosing the right career.

The teacher can certainly save them from making the wrong decision. Choosing the right career is just the first step. A teacher has to play the role even beyond that. Students across the world face multiple challenges while choosing a career for themselves. A teacher has to stand by their students to help them overcome these challenges. Here, the primary job is to be empathetic with the students. Show care and nurture students, pay extra attention, be their best pals, show confidence to build the best relationship and extract the best out of them. A teacher must enhance civilization while giving people the right tools to make informed decisions. They are here to bestow the power of "problem-solving skills" to the students. They are here to build up a bunch of "creative", "Independent", "Informed", "Incisive" and "Innovative" individuals who can contribute to the society and build a better place for the next generation. This is a huge responsibility and a teacher has to guide the students and raise them as the leader. Leadership is the most important trait for modern-day human beings. Leaders make connections and make everyone a part of their mission, a virtue and a quality that demands a special appreciation.

Leadership involves initiative, and in the connected world, nothing happens till we step up and begin, until we start driving without a clear map. There are this confusion and chaos and the leader helps us to guide through them towards the goal. Teachers have to play this decisive role to leave a deep impact on the lives of students and to make them the next leader. There is a lot more to a teacher than just a human being standing in a classroom to lecture students on how to find the square root of a number or sharpen an axe. What the world needs is someone to persuade the coming generation in a positive way to push or encourage students or create a space where they want to learn better for themselves. That's the new role of a teacher. Students aren't consumers of facts. They are active creators of knowledge. Schools aren't just brick-and-mortar structures - - they're centers of lifelong learning. And, most important, teaching is recognized as one of the most challenging and respected career choices, absolutely vital to the social, cultural, and economic health of our nation. Today, the seeds of such a dramatic transformation in education are being planted. Prompted by massive revolutions in knowledge, information technology, and public demand for better learning, schools nationwide are slowly but surely restructuring themselves.

Beyond Doctors, Engineers exploring careers in pure science

■ **VIJAY GARG**

When it comes to choosing a professional degree for a secure career, in India many people still prefer taking up a doctor or engineering course over studying pure science. However, did you know about the many career options one can have after studying pure sciences? In this article, Venkat Koushik Pulla, who is a trained scientist and works as a Senior Manager Commercial Marketing at Merck, tells us more about the perks and challenges of being a scientist, and more. Excerpts: As a trained scientist, what are the career options in pure science that you think people should know about?

There are many aspects to explore in pure science, and it's all about discovering your interests. These days, having a multidisciplinary skill set is critical for career advancement. Existing skills and technologies are becoming obsolete, so constant upgrading is essential no matter your field. With AI taking over monotonous tasks, creativity and unique perspectives are key to standing out.

Career options in pure science include:

Research Scientist: This is perhaps one of the most obvious choice for pure science graduates. Research scientists work in labs across academia, government research institutions, and private industries such as pharmaceuticals, biotechnology, and materials science. They conduct experiments, analyze data, and contribute to scientific discoveries.

Data Scientist: With the rise of big data and analytics, there's a growing demand for data scientists who can apply statistical analysis and computational techniques to interpret complex data sets. Pure science graduates often have strong analytical skills and a solid foundation in mathematics and statistics, making them well-suited for this role.

Science Communication: Scientists who can effectively communicate research findings are employed as scientific writers by pharma companies. They bridge the gap between scientific research and the public through writing, journalism, and multimedia. . Science journalists play a vital role in bridging the gap between scientific research and the general public, informing and educating audiences about important discoveries and developments.

Patent Examiner: Patent examiners assess whether inventions meet the requirements for patentability and play a key role in shaping innovation. A background in pure science provides the necessary technical expertise for this profession.

Techno-commercial Roles: Trained scientists are very important for life science organizations to promote, demonstrate technical products. Who else could be better to position the products in a right way - as they would have used similar products during their research days. They have the advantage of meeting different scientists and understand their challenges, and support them to give suitable solutions.

Science Education and Outreach: Pure science graduates can pursue careers as science educators in schools, museums, and educational institutions, inspiring and mentoring future scientists.

Clinical Research Associate (CRA): In the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries, CRAs oversee clinical trials to ensure compliance with protocols and regulatory requirements. A background in pure science provides the foundational knowledge necessary to understand the scientific principles underlying clinical research.

Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC) Specialist QA/QC specialists ensure that products, processes, and systems meet quality standards and regulatory requirements. In industries such as pharmaceuticals and biotechnology, they play a crucial role in maintaining product quality and safety.

Entrepreneurship and Innovation: Many pure science graduates have entrepreneurial aspirations and the ability to innovate. The government supports their aspirations with initial seed grants, allowing them to start their own companies, develop new technologies, or collaborate with industry partners.

It's important to emphasize that studying pure science not only opens doors to these specific career paths but also equips individuals with critical thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills that are highly valued across various industries. As the world continues to advance technologically and scientifically, the demand for skilled pure science graduates will only continue to grow, making it a promising and rewarding career choice.

2. What are the challenges of becoming a scientist?

Becoming a scientist is a rewarding pursuit but also comes with several challenges that people aspiring to be scientists should be aware of:

Education and Training

Becoming a scientist typically involves obtaining higher education degrees, such as a bachelor's, master's, and often a PhD. This requires dedication, perseverance, and a strong academic foundation.

Competitive Environment

Scientific research is highly competitive, with challenges in securing funding, grants, and research positions due to limited resources and a high number of qualified applicants.

Time and Patience

Scientific research often requires long hours of experimentation, data analysis, and writing. Progress can be slow, with breakthroughs taking years or even decades to achieve.

Funding and Resources

Conducting research requires funding for equipment, materials, and sometimes personnel. Securing adequate funding can be a constant challenge, particularly for early-career researchers.

Publishing and Peer Review

Publishing research in reputable scientific journals is essential for career advancement and recognition. The peer review process can be rigorous and sometimes subjective, requiring persistence and resilience.

Balancing Innovation and Reproducibility

Striking a balance between pursuing innovative research and ensuring reproducibility of results is crucial. Maintaining scientific integrity and rigor is essential but can be challenging in a competitive environment.

Career Instability

Career paths in science can be less predictable compared to other professions. Short-term contracts, postdoctoral positions, and the need to relocate for research opportunities are common, leading to uncertainty and instability.

Work-Life Balance

The demanding nature of scientific research can impact work-life balance. Long hours, deadlines, and the pressure to publish can lead to stress and burnout if not managed effectively.

Despite these challenges, a career in science offers the opportunity to make significant contributions to knowledge, innovation, and societal progress. Overcoming these challenges requires resilience, passion for discovery, and a commitment to the scientific process.

Being a trained scientist, you work as a Commercial Marketing Manager. Please elaborate your job profile.

As a Commercial Marketing Manager at Merck, my job revolves around promoting and commercializing scientific innovations and products. Here are some key roles and responsibilities:

Product Positioning and Branding:

Developing strategies to position our products effectively in the market. Creating compelling messaging and branding initiatives that resonate with our target audience.

Marketing Campaigns:

Planning and executing marketing campaigns across various channels such as digital marketing and conferences. Visiting customers to understand their needs and market trends. Collaborating with creative teams to develop promotional materials and run events.

Data Analysis:

Analyzing data to assess the effectiveness of marketing campaigns. Identifying workflow gaps and developing targeted campaigns.

Sales Support:

Working closely with the sales team to provide effective tools, materials, and training to support their efforts in driving sales.

Customer Engagement:

Building relationships with key opinion leaders through webinars, roadshows, and conferences.

Market Development:

Identifying new market opportunities and potential applications for existing products. Developing strategies to expand our market presence and drive growth.

Overall, my role bridges the gap between scientific innovation and commercial success, ensuring that our products meet customer needs and achieve business objectives.

(The writer is Retired Principal and Educational columnist)

System of Divorce in Society: Tradition, Causes and Prospects

■ **DR. RAJKUMAR SINGH**

Divorce is the legal dissolution of a marriage by a court or other competent authority. It is the process through which married individuals legally terminate their marital relationship, addressing various issues such as property division, child custody, alimony, and other related matters. The outcome of a divorce is a legal end to the marriage, allowing the former spouses to live separately and remarry if they choose. The other implications include legal, financial and emotional: a.Legal Process: Grounds for Divorce: These can vary by jurisdiction but commonly include irreconcilable differences, adultery, abandonment, or cruelty.Filing for Divorce: One spouse (the petitioner) files a divorce petition, and the other spouse (the respondent) is served with divorce papers. Settlement: Many divorces are settled out of court through negotiation or mediation, covering issues like property division, child custody, and alimony.Court Proceedings: If an agreement isn't reached, the case may go to trial, where a judge will make the final decisions. b. Financial Implications: Property Division: Assets and debts acquired during the marriage are divided. This can be complex, involving property, bank accounts, investments, and retirement funds.Alimony: Also known as spousal support, alimony is a payment from one spouse to another to provide financial support after divorce.Child Support: If children are involved, the non-custodial parent may be required to pay child support to assist with the child's expenses. c. Emotional and Psychological Aspects: Emotional Impact: Divorce can be emotionally taxing for both spouses and any children involved. It may involve grief, anger, relief, or a mix of emotions. Counselling: Seeking therapy or counselling can be beneficial for all parties to process emotions and adjust to the changes. d. Child Custody and Visitation: Custody Arrangements: Custody can be joint (shared between both parents) or sole (one parent has primary custody). Decisions are made based on the best interests of the child.Visitation Rights: The non-custodial parent typically has visitation rights, which are outlined in the divorce agreement. However, laws and procedures for divorce can vary significantly by country, state, or region.

History of divorce: The concept of divorce has a long and varied history, evolving significantly across different cultures and legal systems: a. Ancient Civilizations: Mesopotamia: Evidence of divorce dates back to ancient Mesopotamia, where marriage contracts often included provisions for divorce. The Code of Hammurabi, around 1754 BCE, included laws about divorce.Ancient Egypt: Divorce was also possible in ancient Egypt, where marital contracts could be dissolved relatively easily.Ancient Greece and Rome: In ancient Greece, divorce was permitted but not common, and it was usually initiated by the husband. In Rome, both men and women had the right to divorce, and the process became more formalized over time. b.Religious Contexts: Judaism: The Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) includes provisions for divorce. In Jewish law, a man could divorce his wife by giving her a "get" (a written document).

Christianity: Early Christianity was generally opposed to divorce, following the teachings of Jesus that marriage was indissoluble. However, the Eastern Orthodox Church later allowed divorce under certain circumstances.Islam: Islamic law permits divorce (talaq) but encourages reconciliation. A man can initiate divorce, but women can also seek divorce under certain conditions. c. Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Catholic Church: During the Middle Ages, the Catholic Church's influence meant that divorce was generally not permitted, although annulments (declaring the marriage invalid) were sometimes granted.Protestant Reformation: The Reformation in the 16th century led to more lenient views on divorce in Protestant countries. Reformers like Martin Luther and John Calvin accepted divorce in cases of adultery and abandonment. d. Modern Era: Enlightenment and **Legal Reforms:** The Enlightenment brought about changes in attitudes towards marriage and divorce. Secular legal systems began to allow divorce more broadly. For example, France legalized divorce during the French Revolution in 1792.19th and 20th Centuries: Divorce laws continued to evolve, with many countries adopting more liberal divorce laws. The United States saw significant changes in the 19th century, with states like Indiana and New York passing laws to simplify the process. The no-fault divorce revolution began in the late 20th century, making it easier for couples to divorce without proving wrongdoing.Some countries have progressive divorce laws, allowing for no-fault divorces and equitable distribution of assets, while others maintain more restrictive practices.

Main causes of divorce: Common causes of divorce can vary widely among couples, but some frequently cited reasons include:a. Lack of Communication: Poor communication can lead to misunderstandings, resentment, and unresolved conflicts.b. Infidelity: Extramarital affairs can break the trust and bond between spouses, leading to divorce. c. Financial Problems: Disagreements over money, debt, and spending habits can create significant strain in a marriage.d.

Lack of Intimacy: Physical and emotional intimacy are crucial for a healthy marriage; a lack of intimacy can lead to feelings of neglect and dissatisfaction. e. Constant Conflict: Frequent arguments and unresolved disputes can erode the relationship over time. f. Growing Apart: Over time, couples may find they have grown in different directions and no longer share common interests or goals. g. Unrealistic Expectations: Unrealistic expectations about marriage and one's partner can lead to disappointment and frustration. h. Substance Abuse: Alcohol or drug abuse can cause significant problems, including financial issues, health problems, and trust issues.i. Domestic Violence: Physical, emotional, or verbal abuse can make a marriage unsafe and untenable.. **Lack of Commitment:** A lack of commitment to the marriage and to working through problems can result in divorce.k. Incompatibility: Fundamental differences in values, beliefs, or lifestyles can lead to irreconcilable differences.l. **Life Transitions:** Major life changes, such as career shifts, moving, or the birth of children, can create stress and impact the marriage negatively if not managed well.These causes can often overlap and combine, contributing to the decision to divorce. In coming days the future of divorce is likely to be influenced by various social, legal, economic, and technological trends.As societies become more accepting of divorce, the stigma associated with it may continue to decline, leading to a higher incidence of divorce as individuals feel freer to leave unsatisfactory marriages.

Gender Equality: Advances in gender equality and women's rights may empower more individuals, especially women, to seek divorce if they are in unhappy or abusive marriages.Economic Independence: As economic opportunities for women and other marginalized groups increase, financial dependence will decrease, enabling more people to leave unsatisfactory marriages.

Impact of Economic Conditions: Economic downturns or prosperity can influence divorce rates. For example, economic hardship might delay divorces due to financial constraints, while economic stability might make it easier for individuals to afford to divorce.Overall, the future of divorce will likely reflect broader societal trends toward individual autonomy, equality, and technological integration, resulting in more accessible, fair, and nuanced divorce processes globally.

(The writer is a youth motivator and former Head of the University Department of Political Science, B.N. Mandal University, Madhepura)