

SAVE ELECTRICITY

Electricity is indeed a vital resource that powers various aspects of modern society. Promoting electricity conservation is not only essential for reducing the strain on natural resources but also for economic and environmental reasons. Here are some additional suggestions and information to further promote electricity conservation:

Encourage the use of energy-efficient appliances and lighting. LED bulbs, for instance, consume significantly less electricity compared to traditional incandescent bulbs.

Even when electronic devices are turned off, they can still consume electricity when plugged in. Consider unplugging chargers, TVs, and other devices when they are not in use.

Conduct energy audits for homes and businesses to identify areas where energy is being wasted. This can help in making informed decisions to reduce energy consumption.

Invest in smart thermostats that can optimize heating and cooling based on your schedule and preferences, reducing energy waste.

Renewable energy sources like solar panels and wind turbines are sustainable alternatives to traditional electricity generation methods. Governments and individuals can explore these options to reduce reliance on fossil fuels.

Increasing public awareness about the importance of electricity conservation through educational campaigns and community initiatives can drive positive change.

Governments can play a significant role in promoting electricity conservation by implementing policies that encourage renewable energy adoption, setting energy efficiency standards, and offering incentives for sustainable practices.

Encourage industries to adopt energy-efficient technologies and practices to reduce their electricity consumption. Incentives and regulations can help in this regard.

Some regions implement time-of-use pricing, where electricity costs more during peak hours. This can incentivize consumers to shift their energy-intensive activities to off-peak hours.

Many devices consume small amounts of electricity even when they're not in use, often referred to as phantom load. Power strips with on/off switches can help disconnect multiple devices at once.

By incorporating these strategies and promoting a culture of electricity conservation, individuals, businesses, and governments can collectively contribute to a more sustainable and environmentally friendly future.

14th September EXILED AND GENOCIDE-VICTIM HINDUS OF KASHMIR

Respected Prime Minister Modi Ji,
On this 14th September, which we, the EXILED AND GENOCIDE-VICTIM HINDUS OF KASHMIR, have been commemorating as 'Balidan Divas' since 1990, all across the world wherever we exist, do make the following unanimous submission to your goodself. This submission stands adopted unanimously by the delegates attending the Annual Convention of Panun Kashmir.

Having the Interests of the nation of Bharat at heart;
Committed to the peace and progress of the nation;
Supporting all such efforts of Government of India which bring security and prosperity to the people of India; and
Faced with the continuing spectre of genocide unleashed upon us

We seek the attention and consideration of your goodself to the following:
Article 370

The neutring of Article 370 and removal of Article 35-A as well as reorganisation of Jammu and Kashmir into two Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, were hailed and described as Epochal liberating acts by Panun Kashmir.

We were in the fore-front of the struggle against draconian Article 370 which was an acceptance of the Principal of the Two-nation theory on the territory and India, and kept Pakistan alive in Jammu and Kashmir. It not only kept the people of Jammu and Kashmir outside the constitutional organization of India but the very enactment of this provision was a negation of the vision of India based on the principles of democracy, equality and justice.

Hindus of Kashmir considered Article 370 as the worst legacy of colonial period and a subversive space to allow imperialist interference. Our participation in large numbers and our contribution towards the Praja Parishad Movement and then in the making of Bhartiya Jan Sangh is quite well known.

Hence when in August, 2019 under your stewardship Article 370 was neutered and Article 35-A removed along with the reorganisation of Jammu and Kashmir, PANUN KASHMIR hailed it as a decolonizing act and a decisive blow to the imperialist manoeuvres.

We the Hindus of Kashmir expected the Government of India to describe this epochal event in these many words and in the same spirit rather than as a mere act of providing better developmental initiatives to the people of Jammu and Kashmir. And in fact, the decision of the Government of India to remain ambiguously silent on the dangerous implications of Article 370 viz. a viz. principles of equality, pluralism, secularism and nation-building kept us baffled.

In fact, the Government of India has been under attack by the votaries of Article 370, within and outside India, by describing the decision of neutering of Article 370 as an attack on democracy and secularism and as the ushering in of an era of religious fascism. This ambiguity has kept alive such a tirade alive. And how can the Government of India think that such a political restraint of not telling the real reasons for doing away with Article 370 would serve the national interests and help the process of nation-building?

We believe that a perverted strategic vision has been guiding the Government of India right since the accession of the State of Jammu and Kashmir with the Union of India in 1947. This vision has internalised an approach of empowering, tolerating and even protecting tyranny of Muslim communalism in Jammu and Kashmir. In this vision, while tyranny of majority is to be discouraged and dismantled in rest of India the same tyranny of majority is to be embraced and encouraged in Jammu and Kashmir as an act of secularism and pluralism.

GENOCIDE
This faulty vision of the state (discussed above) has transformed Government of India into a prime force of the Denial of Hindu Genocide in Jammu and Kashmir.

It appears that the Government of India fears that by formally accepting the crime of genocide committed against Hindus of Kashmir might further alienate Muslims of Kashmir and obstruct political rapprochement with them. And rapprochement with the perpetrator being a strategic necessity, Denial of Hindu Genocide in Kashmir is accorded the importance of a national security measure.

GENOCIDE CONTINUES
Honourable Prime Minister Sir, we hope that you are aware that two successful religious cleansing campaigns have been launched in Kashmir during the BJP rule.

Both the cycles of religious cleansing succeeded in forcing the paltry number of a few thousand Hindus living in Kashmir to run away. And isn't it a fact that both the Central Government in New Delhi and the government in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir coerced these helpless victims to return by threatening to stop the salaries of the employee class.

To be continued

‘World Ozone Day 2023: Unite Combat Climate Change and Protect Human Health’

■ DR PRAGYAN PARAMITA PARIJA



On this World Ozone Day, 16th September 2023, the theme is "fixing the ozone layer and reducing climate change".

Earth's ozone layer plays a vital role in shielding out harmful ultraviolet rays of the sun. In this context, this year's World Ozone Day 2023 assumes greater significance in a world facing the daunting challenges of climate change with a depleting ozone layer. The event this year brings together all countries, health professionals, and environmentalists all around the world to emphasise the crucial part the ozone layer plays in preserving life on Earth and reducing the detrimental effects of climate change.

By absorbing the bulk of the dangerous ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun, the ozone layer, a section of the Earth's stratosphere with a higher concentration of ozone (O3) molecules, plays a crucial part in protecting our planet. The triatomic oxygen molecule ozone creates this shield, which acts as a barrier to excessive UV radiation. Life on our planet would be subjected to dangerous UV radiation levels without the ozone layer, increasing the risk of skin cancer, cataracts, and other health problems as well as ecological changes.

The discharge of synthetic compounds known as ozone-depleting substances (ODS), such as halons and chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), has put the ozone layer in danger for decades. The ozone layer began to slowly but steadily recover after the historic Montreal Protocol in 1987. Its signified a massive global effort to phase out the manufacture and consumption of ODS. The ozone layer's critical function in controlling Earth's temperature is one of the less well-known features of it. The ozone layer affects how solar energy is dispersed in our atmosphere, affecting temperature patterns and wind currents. These patterns can change when the ozone layer is disturbed, causing climate anomalies such as altered precipitation patterns, increased storm activity, and difficulties in agriculture.

Furthermore, the emission of greenhouse gases (GHGs) including carbon dioxide (CO2) and methane (CH4) is directly related to the ozone layer's depletion. ODS and GHG are frequently released by the same industrial processes. So, in the fight against climate change, tackling ozone depletion and reducing GHG emissions work hand in hand.

This year, as we observe World Ozone Day, we must reaffirm our commitment to protect and rebuild the ozone layer while simultaneously celebrating the accomplishments of the Montreal Protocol. Our efforts on this front directly affect how we fight climate change.

The world has recently experienced the effects of climate change, including more frequent and powerful hurricanes,

deadly wildfires, and droughts. Rising sea levels, melting ice caps, and damaged ecosystems result from the increase in global temperatures, mostly due to the build-up of GHGs in the atmosphere. It is obvious that the world and all of its inhabitants are in great danger due to climate change.

Let's keep in mind that as we observe World Ozone Day in 2023, our planet is dealing with two crises: the destruction of the ozone layer and the unrelenting march of climate change. This article tries to give an overview of ozone depletion, climate change and their effect on health.

Q1: Why is Ozone Day significant, and what does it mean?

A: September 16th is designated as Ozone Day, commonly referred to as the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer. It honours the occasion of the 1987 signing of the Montreal Protocol, a significant international agreement designed to gradually phase out compounds that cause ozone depletion. Ozone Day is significant because it underscores the importance of the ozone layer in preserving both the environment and human health and serves as a reminder of the efforts being made worldwide to conserve it.

Q2: What is the ozone layer, and why is it so important to the health of our planet?

A: A section of the Earth's stratosphere known as the ozone layer contains a disproportionately high concentration of ozone (O3) molecules. It serves as a shield, preventing the majority of the sun's harmful ultraviolet (UV) radiation from reaching the surface of the Earth. Without the ozone layer, life on Earth would be exposed to high levels of UV radiation, which would have several adverse effects on human health as well as the environment, such as cataracts, skin cancer, and harm to ecosystems.

Q3: How does the ozone layer's reduction impact human health?

A: When the ozone layer is thinner, more UV-B and UV-A radiation reaches the Earth's surface. Long-term exposure to these dangerous UV rays can impair people's health in several ways, including

1. Skin cancer: UV radiation, particularly melanoma, the deadliest type of skin cancer, is a primary cause of skin cancer. Skin cancer risk can be dramatically increased by prolonged sun exposure without protection.

2. Eye Damage: UV rays can harm the eyes, resulting in cataracts that can impair vision or even result in blindness.

3. Weakening of Immune System: Prolonged UV exposure can weaken immunity, leaving people more vulnerable to infections and illnesses.

4. Premature Ageing: UV radiation can hasten skin ageing, causing wrinkles, age spots, and other skin-related problems.

Q4: What precautions may people take to safeguard themselves from UV radiation?

A: People can take the following actions to shield themselves from UV radiation's negative effects:

1. Use sunscreen: Before heading outside, use a broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher. Apply again

INDIAN FISHERIES: THE SUNRISE SECTOR

■ DR L MURUGAN



As India confidently marches ahead under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to become the third largest world economy, the fisheries sector has surged forward to take up the mantle in this journey. Thanks to Prime Minister's 'Seva, Sushasan and Gareeb Kalyan', the Indian fisheries in last nine years has emerged as a sunrise sector, firmly launching the country on the path of becoming a leading Blue Economy.

India, blessed with more than 8000km of sea shores, vast Exclusive Economic Zone, some of the biggest rivers and reservoirs, and importantly, hardworking human capital has always possessed the immense potential for fisheries development. But, perhaps the neglect, apathy and policy paralysis of previous regimes never allowed to realise it fully. Many reports indicate that, since independence upto 2014, the Central government could release a paltry sum of less than Rs 4000 Crore for fisheries development.

A fisherman, eulogized as the King of Ocean in many songs and tales, in reality struggled everyday to earn his livelihood. The legendary Tamil actor M G Ramchandran (MGR) in his movie 'Padagotti', sensitively captured this plight of the fishermen. The heart-wrenching depiction of the agony and struggles of fishermen, their exploitation and helplessness accentuated by the insensitive system made an indelible mark on the viewers.

It was the Prime Minister Narendra Modi who understood the immense potential of the Blue Economy for our fisher communities and decided to initiate systemic development of this sector. Under his leadership, the Central Government initiated a series of reforms through the Blue Revolution Scheme (2015-Rs 5000 Cr) and the Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (2017-Rs 7522 Cr).

These schemes unleashed a series of activities in Indian Fisheries, creating ground level infrastructure, and touched the lives of 2.8 Crore fishermen. As the Indian fisheries

started moving forward, Prime Minister Modi, in 2019, carved out a new Fisheries Ministry for its focussed development.

While Indian Fisheries was preparing for a big leap, suddenly the world came to a halt due to COVID-19 global pandemic. But, the leadership turned this crisis into an opportunity, and announced the Atmanirbhar Bharat package for the Fisheries sector, bringing in a Rs 20050 Crore Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) in September 2020, committing the biggest ever investment in the history of Indian Fisheries.

Thanks to this fresh chunk of investment and focussed attention, the PMMSY began to address the critical gaps in the fisheries value chain from fish production, productivity and quality to technology, post harvest infrastructure and marketing. It has identified key strategic priority areas: Marine Fisheries, Inland Fisheries, Fishermen's welfare, Infrastructure and post-harvest management, cold water fisheries, ornamental fisheries, aquatic health management, sea weed cultivation among others.

The sustained efforts by the Central government involving the central/state government agencies and fishermen over last nine years, has dramatically altered the state of Indian fisheries. Core infrastructure like more than 107 Fishing harbours and Fish Landing centres which are essential for safe landing, berthing and loading-unloading are constructed/modernised. Modernisation of major fishing harbours at Cochin, Chennai, Mumbai, Vishakhapatnam and Paradeep has been activated.

The income of fishermen is directly linked to the Post harvest management of the crops i.e. how the fish is stored, preserved, transported and sold. With approvals given to more than 25000 fish transportation facilities, 6700 fish kiosks/ markets, and 560 cold storages, this fisheries infrastructure at grass root level is increasingly strengthened.

The fishermen face risks and hazardous working conditions in open seas. To mitigate these risks, approvals have been accorded for upgradation of 1043 existing fishing vessels, replacement of 6468 boats and 461 deep sea fishing vessels and for installation of 1 lakh transponders on marine fishing

vessels, using satellite based communication.

The PMMSY pulled out inland fisheries from traditional waters, and infused technology, inspiring many talented and enterprising youth to venture into fisheries.

Today, young woman entrepreneurs from Kashmir valley are efficiently rearing cold water rainbow trouts using Recirculatory Aquaculture System. The Nellore aquapreneurs have become successful exporters, thanks to the biofloc cultivated shrimps.

The PMMSY has helped to expand the Fisheries to non-traditional areas. Almost 20000 hectares of fresh pond area is being brought under inland aquaculture, and even landlocked Haryana and Rajasthan farmers are successfully converting their saline waste lands into wealth lands through aquaculture.

The PMMSY has empowered the fisher women to explore remunerative options and alternative livelihood, like Ornamental fisheries, pearl culture and seaweed cultivation. A recently launched Rs 127 Crore Seaweed Park in Ramanathapuram District of Tamil Nadu is a truly pioneering step by the Modi Government.

Seed, Feed and Breed are important components of the fisheries sector. The PMMSY has enabled 900 Fish feed plants, 755 hatcheries, and is supporting research and genetic improvement of Indian White Shrimp at Chennai, development of specific pathogen free brood stock and domestication of tiger shrimp at Andamans.

The welfare of fishermen and fishery entrepreneurs, and betterment of their lives are central to the Blue Economy objectives. Many measures like nutritional support to fishermen in lean and ban period, development of integrated coastal villages, hundreds of young Sagar Mitras for assisting fishermen, Group Accidental Insurance scheme, institutional financial support through Kisan Credit Cards are complementing to the comprehensive development of Indian Fisheries.

The Modi Government's partnership with Indian fishermen has empowered them, giving them confidence and a sense of pride. The Fishermen across the country were invited to Independence Day Celebrations at Lal Quila, Delhi. This partnership is continuously bolstered by a direct interaction

every two hours, particularly after swimming or perspiring.

2. Dress Protectively: Wear long-sleeved shirts, slacks, sunglasses and wide-brimmed hats to cover any exposed skin.

3. Seek Shade: Avoid being in the sun directly between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., which are considered peak UV hours.

4. Regular Skin Checks: Check your skin frequently for problems and see a dermatologist annually for a skin cancer screening.

Q5: How do climate change affect health relate to the ozone layer's depletion?

A: There are connections between the thinning of the ozone layer and climate change. Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), for example, are some of the same compounds that destroy the ozone layer and are also powerful greenhouse gases that cause global warming. In turn, climate change causes a variety of harmful health repercussions, such as:

1. Heat-Related Conditions: Increasing temperatures can cause conditions including heatstroke and dehydration, which are heat-related conditions.

2. Vector-Borne Diseases: Due to changes in mosquito and tick populations, caused by climate change, diseases like malaria and Lyme disease are more likely to spread.

3. Air Pollution: Asthma and other respiratory disorders might become worse as a result of deteriorating air quality brought on by climate change.

4. Lack of Access to Food and Water: Climate change can affect the availability of food and water, resulting in starvation and waterborne illnesses.

Q6: How does the health of vulnerable people differ due to climate change?

A: People who are more at risk for health problems due to climate change include vulnerable groups like children, the elderly, and people who already have health issues. They might experience more heat-related illnesses, less access to health-care, and more exposure to hazards caused by the environment.

Q7: What can people do to lessen the effects of climate change on their health?

A: Using public transportation, conserving energy, and supporting climate change legislation are just a few of the steps people can take to lessen the effects of climate change on their health. The environment and human health can also be protected by encouraging sustainable practices like water and waste reduction.

Q8: What will be the main message of Ozone Day in 2023?

A: Ozone Day 2023 serves as a reminder of the interdependence between ozone layer preservation, climate change mitigation, and human health. It encourages individuals to take action to safeguard our planet and well-being and calls for individual cooperation to overcome these interconnected concerns.

(The writer is Assistant Professor, Department of Community Medicine, AIIMS, Vijaypur, Jammu).

YOUR COLUMN Compassionate Ground Appointment

Dear Editor,
The Karnataka High Court has held that sister cannot seek appointment on compassionate grounds upon the death of married employee. The judgment is very much in conformity with the rules governing compassionate ground appointments. Wife/husband or son/ daughter of the deceased employee is the stakeholder for compassionate ground appointments. Adopted son or daughter is also member of the family for this purpose. The case does not reveal if the diseased employee had wife or his offsprings. Whatever may be the case, the approach of the appellant for compassionate ground appointment upon the death of his married brother who happened to

be lineman in BESCOM (Bangalore Electricity Supply Company) is per se wrong since the rule does not permit for it. The ambit of rules of compassionate ground appointment needs to be expanded to include brother or son for appointment in case the deceased employee does not have wife/husband or son/daughter or when the wife/husband or son/daughter does not come forward seeking appointment. Appointment can be given to the brother or sister with no objection letter from wife/husband or son/daughter accompanying the application.

Earlier, compassionate ground appointment order was being issued to the minor son or daughter soon after they attained majority even after one year from the date of death of employee while in service. This had guaranteed succeor to the distressed family. Now this rule has been repealed. Only son or daughter attaining majority within a year of death of the employee is considered for appointment. If the minor son or daughter does not attain majority within a year after the

death of the employee, such children are deprived of the benefit that was available earlier. This is infringement of the welfare scheme introduced earlier to the benefit of the deceased family. This must be restored. For this, the employees' federations or unions have to place formal demand before the government. The demand for it can be stepped up in the coming days. If the demand is conceded the government that can give freebies on many fronts does not shoulder heavy financial burden. As a matter of fact, any benefit once given to people should not be either usurped or curtailed except in cases of gross abuses of the benefits given. There are some cases where the children of the deceased employees do not seek compassionate ground appointment if they are in hot pursuit of higher studies dreaming better future. It would be a fine gesture that any government can give to the bereaved family if it considers appointment for children attaining majority till 5 years after the death of employee.

K V Seetharamaiah