Rashtriya Poshan Maah

Rashtriya Poshan Maah, celebrated every September, is a month-long initiative under the Poshan Abhiyaan (National Nutrition Mission) launched by the Government of India in 2018. The aim of this campaign is to address the issue of malnutrition among children, adolescents, pregnant women, and lactating mothers, with the ultimate goal of ensuring a healthier and more nourished population.

The word "Poshan" translates to "nutrition" in Hindi, and the campaign emphasizes the importance of proper nutrition for overall health and development. The theme for Rashtriya Poshan Maah typically varies each year, focusing on different aspects of nutrition and health to raise awareness and drive action at the grassroots level.

Throughout the month, various activities are organized across the country to educate and engage the community. These activities include nutrition drives, health check-ups, awareness campaigns, and cooking demonstrations to promote healthy eating habits. Special emphasis is placed on the First 1,000 Days of Life-a critical period for a child's physical and cognitive development-underscoring the need for adequate nutrition during pregnancy and early child-hood.

The initiative involves multiple stakeholders, including the Ministry of Women and Child Development, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, and other government departments, non-governmental organizations, and community leaders. Anganwadi and ASHA workers play a crucial role in disseminating information and providing on-ground support to ensure the success of the campaign.

Key interventions under Poshan Maah include promoting exclusive breastfeeding, encouraging the consumption of locally available nutritious foods, addressing anemia through iron and folic acid supplementation, and improving the coverage of immunization. Poshan Maah not only aims to reduce the prevalence of malnutrition but also strives to build a healthier future by empowering communities with the knowledge and tools necessary to make informed nutritional choices.

Celebrating the Unsung Architects of Our Lives: A Tribute to Teachers



S. S. SODI

Reacher's Day, celebrated in honor of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, the esteemed President of India, is not just a day on

the calendar; it's a day to recognize the profound impact teachers have on the very fabric of society. From the smallest village schools to the grandest world platforms, it is the teacher who quietly and relentlessly shapes the future of every nation.

As I sit down to pen these thoughts, on this Teacher's Day, I find myself walking down memory lane. It's a path paved with chalk dust, the gentle rustling of pages, and the timeless sound of a teacher's voice guiding, admonishing, encouraging. We often celebrate the milestones in our livesthe first steps, the graduations, the achievements-but how often do we stop to acknowledge those who held our hands at every turn? Who nudged us when we faltered and cheered the loudest when we soared? I speak, of course, of our teachers.

My respect for teachers is not born of mere courtesy; it is rooted in a life spent observing the quiet, unyielding dedication they bring to their craft. Teaching, I've realized, is not just a profession. It's a calling, a commitment to shape the minds, hearts, and souls of the future. And while that might sound lofty, let me assure you-there's nothing romantic about the 6 AM alarm, the unending piles of notebooks to check, or the relentless challenge of managing a classroom full of restless young minds. Yet, they do it. Day after day.

From the first tentative step into a classroom, a child is a lump of clay. It is the teacher's hands that mold, shape, and sometimes, with the precision of a sculptor, carve out the rough edges. But it's not just the intellect that a teacher shapes; it's the very character of the child. The first lesson of sharing, the first taste of discipline, the first experience of failure, and the first burst of pride-all happen under the watchful eye of a teacher.

But here's where the magic lies: A good teacher does not simply teach; they inspire. They don't just fill your mind with facts; they set it ablaze with curiosity. They touch your soul in ways that textbooks never could. I've seen this magic happen, year after year. I've seen the dullest of students suddenly awaken to a world of possibilities, simply because a teacher believed in them.

I've seen how a kind word, a bit of extra time, or even a stern reprimand, delivered with care, can change the course of a life.

Today, as I reflect on the success stories of countless individuals-politicians, doctors, defense personnel, engineers, architects, film stars, guides, sportsmen, musicians, dancers, pilots, police officers, even businessmen-I see the unmistakable imprint of a teacher's hand. These accomplished professionals, celebrated in their respective fields, were once guided, nurtured, and shaped by teachers who believed in them. Their confidence, courage, and intelligent minds are the creations of those who spent hours crafting lessons, imparting wisdom, and nurturing dreams.

I speak from experience-both as a student and as someone who has spent decades in the field of education. I owe much of who I am to the teachers who refused to give up on me, even when I was determined to take the easier path. They saw potential where I saw only obstacles. They did not just impart knowledge; they imparted wisdom, values, and most importantly, the confidence to pursue my

There's a saying that goes, "The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires." In my life, I have been blessed to have known many such great teachers. They were not just instructors; they were mentors, guides, and sometimes, even second parents. They understood that teaching is not just about the mind, but about touching the heart and soul.

And so, on this Teacher's Day, as we take a moment to honor those who have shaped us, let us remember that the role of a teacher is not confined to the walls of a classroom. They are the unsung architects of society, the ones who build futures, one lesson at a time. Their influence extends far beyond the blackboard, and their legacy is etched into the lives of every student they have ever taught.

In a world that often measures success by material gain, let us not forget the true measure of a teacher's success-the lives they've touched, the minds they've opened, and the hearts they've inspired. Here's to the teachers, who have given us the tools to not just make a living, but to live a life of purpose and meaning.

As for me, I'll forever be in debt to those who shaped me, not just into a better student, but into a better human being. So, on this day, I raise a toast-not just to the teachers of my past, but to all the teachers who continue to light the path for generations to come. May you always be the guiding star in the night sky of

lives.

(The writer is Chairman J&K Intellectual Civil Society &

Pro-Vice Chairperson/ Director DPS Schools- J&K)

AIIMS Jammu: An Epitome of Prodigious Student-Teacher Relationship

■ DR SUNITA KUMARI AND DR REEHA MAHAJAN





he core of education is the relationship between the teacher and the student, and the extent to which that relationship nurtures the longing of the student to matter in the world, and the longing of the teacher to nurture and fulfil that desire."

-Timothy Shriver and Jennifer Buffet AIIMS Jammu idealises the 'Trinity of Mission' - Training, Patient Care & Research. According to a survey conducted by India Today, MBBS is the toughest course requiring National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) conducted by the National Testing Agency, which is extremely difficult, with lakes of aspirants competing for a restricted number of seats. Themedical curriculum is very challenging requiring students to acquire a vast amount of information, expertise and skills. After struggling hard and getting selected in MBBS course, the students are in an ambivalent situation, as on one hand, they are in an eased frame of mind and on the other hand, theybear the brunt of the tough academic medical curriculum. Apart from this, many students face issues related to homesickness, time management, changed food habits and climate for students belonging to other regions of the country, etc. The role of medical teachers is very pertinent for the medical students to thrive and flourish in these adverse circumstances as they are instrumental in providing a motivating, helpful, warm, and supportive learning atmosphere for learn-

The understanding and bonding teachers with their students is of utmost importance. The students having a healthystudent-teacher relationship, can cope phenomenally well, with emotionally unstable situations which contributes to the development of refined academic skills as well as socio-emotional and behavioural skills, which acts as a predictor of students' academic performance.

The faculty development programmes conducted at AIIMS Jammu for all medical teachers are aimed at fostering substantial student-centric approach for medical training which is vital forholistic development of students, their socio-emotional aptitude and personal associations with colleagues and teachers. These relationships have a significant impact on student's motivation to learnand development of their cognitive skills. Taking these facts into consideration, medical teachers at AIIMS Jammu are approachable, support-

ive, encouraging, and take a personal interest in the lives of students. The faculty of AIIMS Jammu respects the individuality of students, as per the principles of ancient Vedic Education, which aims at developing will-power and preparing the humans to live the highest quality of life in all circumstances. The individual approach helps the educator to effectively identify the type, persona, and condition of the student and the student becomes more focussed and the process of learning becomes smoother.

Medical training at AHMS Jammu looks after the academic, physical, social and mental growth of its stakeholders, meticulously, by providing various opportunities to its students right from the beginning in the form of foundation course, mentormentee scheme, promotion of extra-curricular activities, excellent residential facilities, cafeteria, guest house, state-of-theart library and sports facilities etc.

Foundation course is a great initiative taken by National Medical Commission (NMC) in the interest of the students which takes care of their physical, mental and social well-being in addition to the MBBS course orientation classes. The students are in a very vulnerable phase of life during the initial few weeks of joining the MBBS course as they come out of the cocoon, where they were guarded by their parents, grandparents, and elder siblings. The lectures in the orientation classes, include deliberations on important aspects of life, such as, stress management, time management, nutrition, attitude, ethics and communication skills etc., which help them in gradually acclimatizing with the changes happening in the transition peri-

Mentor-Mentee scheme: The aim of this programme is to develop an exceptional relationship between the mentee and the mentor, so that the mentor can play the role of a counsellor, guideand first-level problemsolver for the mentee. The mentormentee meets are scheduled at regular intervals to support this programme.

Benefits of mentoring

1. Encouragement, empowerment, confidence building and personal development ofmentees.

2. Helping mentees in identification and achievement of career goals.

3. Helping mentees in identification and correction of gaps in generic skills and knowledge.

4. Developing and maintaining a broader prospective of career options and opportunities.

opportunities.
5. Having access to a senior role model anytime and anywhere.

The students are provided round-theclock psychological support by the psychiatrists of AIIMS Jammu, keeping in view their fragile physiological state of mind. Extra-Curricular Activities

AIIMS Jammu regularly organises extra-curricular activities for its students as they help in promoting learning outside the classroom and offer opportunities to learn specific skills. They also boost confidence, expressiveness and enhance multitasking abilities. These activities include academic quiz, rangoli, poster, model-making and sports competitions. The winners of the various competitions are awarded with prizes and all participants are given certificates of participation. The students are also encouraged to spread health awareness through skits, role plays and theatre activities, which boosts their confidence and public speaking skills.

Apart from this, the students are provided entertainment facilities in the form of cultural programmes, patriotic movie shows on national holidays and medical inter-college fests such as PULSE etc. They are also motivated to participate in intercollege fests in collaboration with other institutes of national importance (IIT Jammu and IIIM Jammu etc.) to enhance their overall personality development.

Residential Facilities

The students at AIIMS Jammu are provided congenial residential atmosphere within the campus as it is directly linked with their academic performance. The facilities include clean, spacious and well-ventilated rooms, clean and safe drinking water, apart from many others. The students can purchase items of daily use at subsidized and reasonable prices within the campus. There is also provision of ATM facility for the convenience of students.

Cafeteria Facility

The students are provided clean, safe and nutritious food in the cafeteria located within the academic block near the lecture theatres, which is indispensable for their overall physical and mental wellbeing. The menu offers a variety of food options for catering to the needs of all students coming to AHMS Jammu from various parts of the country.

State-of-the-Art Library

The students at AIIMS Jammu are bestowed with state-of-the-art fully airconditioned library extending on two floors which are well connected with each other. The library is fully digital and students have access to all kinds of E-books, E-journals, Learning Management Information System (LMIS) platforms which can be retrieved 24×7 at their ease. Apart from this, there are sound-proof discussion rooms so that students can discuss their projects, seminars and journal clubs without disturbing the others.

State-of-the-Art Sports Complex AIIMS Jammu believes in the holistic well-being of its students which is incomplete without their physical development. Various measures are being taken in this regard to satisfy the requirements of students, which includes development of facilities for indoor and outdoor games in its lush green campus.

State-of-the-art lecture theatres

AIIMS Jammu offers smart lecture theatres to its students, which are fully airconditioned and equipped with latest audio-visual aids. The lecture theatres have sound-proof walls, comfortable seats with individual electric points for using Elearning methods of learning. They are provided with fourdoors, two in front and two behind, taking into account the safety of students in case of any untoward incident such as fire etc. There are fire alarms in each lecture theatre. Also, power back up is provided in all lecture theatres for uninterrupted electric supply for smooth conduction of classes. The medical teachers at AIIMS Jammu are quite tech savvy and abreast with latest technology to meet the needs of its students. There is a strong support by IT team, which acts like an "Icing on the cake" for medical faculty as well as students.

Intramural and Extramural research

The administration and academic section at AHMS Jammu emphasise the importance of research in medical profession. The training for research starts in the very beginning of the MBBS course, where the students are encouraged to attend the research methodology workshops and submit research proposals to various national funding agencies of repute such as, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR). Department of Biotechnology(DBT), Department ofScience Technology(DST), Council for Scientific and Industrial research(CSIR), Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB) etc.

The MBBS students are encouraged to submit proposals in the ICMR-Short-term Studentship (STS) program as well. The medical faculty are guiding the students sincerely and the institute has provision for allocation of funds to students for pursuing various research activities, approved by the institutional research and ethics committee.

Jammu is becoming an educational hub with a trio of institutes of national importance (AHMS, HT, HHM), functional in letter and spirit for the furtherance of the people of Jammu, its neighbouring regions and the country as a whole.

AHMS Jammu is thriving hard to contribute for academic excellence in the field of medical education by developing a student- centric approach of teaching.

AIIMS Jammu is truly an epitome of prodigious Student-Teacher relationship!!

(Dr Sunita Kumari is Assistant Professor in the department of Physiology & Dr Reeha Mahajan is Associate Professor in the department of Anatomy, AHMS Jammu)

"Emergency - remembering the dark days!

DR. VARINDER SHARMA

he Emergency, which lasted from 1975 to 1977, witnessed the incarceration and torture of thousands, the curbing of media freedom, and the suspension of civil rights. The decision to observe 'Samvidhan Hatya Diwas' on 25th june honors the spirit of those who endured these atrocities. It also serves to remind the Congress party of its role in one of the most controversial and oppressive periods in India's democratic history.

The Emergency saw the suspension of civil rights, the imprisonment of opposition leaders and the overcrowding of jails. Stories of the brutalities emerged after the Emergency ended on March 21, 1977, revealing the extent of the regime's oppression. Black laws were enacted to suppress dissent, with forced sterilizations being one of the most notorious policies. Press freedom was severely restricted, with censorship imposed, and journalists who dared to criticize the government were jailed. The true state of the Emergency was kept hidden from the public by Indira Gandhi's administration.

The government's decision to observe 'Samvidhan Hatya Diwas' on June 25th each year will ensure that the memory of those who suffered during the Emergency is preserved. It will also reinforce the importance of safeguarding democracy and individual freedoms, preventing any future attempts to repeat such a dark chapter in India's history.

A Dark Chapter in Indian Democracy
The Emergency, lasting from 1975 to
1977, marked a grim period in Indian history. In 1971, Indira Gandhi won the elections from Rai Bareli with a substantial
margin. Her opponent, Raj Narain, an
Indian freedom fighter and politician, challenged the election results in court. He succeeded in a landmark case of electoral malpractice against the then Prime Minister
Indira Gandhi, leading to her disqualification and the subsequent imposition of the
Emergency in 1975. Raj Narain went on to
defeat Indira Gandhi in the 1977 Lok

Sabha elections.

Raj Narain's petition accused Indira Gandhi of election misappropriation and using unfair means to secure her victory in Rai Bareli. This led to an unprecedented situation where Indira Gandhi was cross-examined in the High Court for five hours, marking the first time an Indian Prime Minister had to present themselves in court in such a manner. Frustrated by her disqualification, Indira Gandhi imposed the Emergency, effectively curtailing democracy-a fact the Congress Party, par-

ticularly Rahul Gandhi, should be remind-

ed of every June 25.

Over half a century has passed since the Emergency, yet its scars remain vivid for those who endured the atrocities perpetrated by Indira Gandhi's government. By suspending all laws and wielding absolute power, the regime suppressed the populace, turning the entire country into a vast prison. On June 25, 1975, under the direction of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed invoked Article 352, declaring a state of Emergency in India.

Widespread Atrocities and Human Rights Violations

During this 21-month period, the government unleashed unprecedented repression. Key political leaders, including Vijayaraje Scindia, Jayaprakash Narayan, Mulayam Singh Yadav, Raj Narain, Morarji Desai, Charan Singh, Jivatram Kripalani, George Fernandes, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Lal Krishna Advani, Arun Jaitley, Jai Kishan Gupta, Satvendra Narayan Sinha, Gayatri were arrested. Rashtriva Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and CPI(M) was banned by Indira Gandhi and leaders V.S. Achuthanandan, Jvotirmov Basu besides Congress leaders who dissented against the Emergency declaration and amendment to the constitution, such as Mohan Dharia and Chandra Shekhar were

also arrested.

Members of regional opposition parties such as DMK were also arrested. Many cases where teens were arrested and imprisoned have come to light, one such example is of Dilip Sharma who aged 16 was arrested and imprisoned for over 11 months. The police were out in force for the demonstration and arrested the protestors, including the Shiromani Akali Dal and Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) leaders. Over 40,000 Akalis and other Sikhs had courted arrest during the emergency.

The emergency regime cracked down on trade unionism, banned strikes, imposed wage freezes, and phased out wage bonuses. In the garb of increasing "productivity" public holidays including Sundays, were cut. Bonuses were denied, wages freezed and layoffs increased leaving poor to fend fpr themselves. Worker demonstrations during the emergency were subject to heavy state repression.

Coal miners were forced to work in abysmal conditions with irregular pay, collieries were made to run for all seven days a week, and complaints of workers and unions about the abysmal and dangerous working conditions were ignored and met with state repression. Situation was made so miserable that Despite this there was a loss in revenue, to compensate for this the Indira Gandhi government decided to cut spending in education and social welfare.

The jails overflowed, and the state employed black laws to silence dissent. Compulsory sterilizations, led by Sanjay Gandhi, were forced upon thousands without their consent, and the press faced severe censorship. Government officers were stationed in newspaper offices to monitor and control the narrative, ensuring that any criticism of the government was swiftly quashed.

Suppression of Civil Rights and Political Opposition

Opposition
The Emergency saw a brutal crackdown on civil rights and political opposition. The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) was banned, and leaders from various parties, including CPI(M) and DMK, were arrested. The infamous 1974 railway strike led by George Fernandes was met with ruthless suppression, with thousands of employees arrested and their families driven out of their homes. The state repression extended to all sectors, including the judiciary, where the Shah Bano case highlighted the government's disregard for Supreme Court decisions.

Media Censorship

No newspaper was allowed to publish anything against the Indira Gandhi government. Government officials were deployed in newspaper offices to check editorials before publications. A few days after the Emergency was imposed, the Bombay edition of The Times of India had carried an obituary that read, "Democracy, beloved husband of Truth, loving father of Liberty, brother of Faith, Hope and Justice, expired on June 26".

A few days later censorship was imposed on newspapers. The Delhi edition of the Indian Express on 28 June had carried a blank editorial, while the Financial Express reproduced in large type Rabindranath Tagore's poem "Where the mind is without fear". This was the statua of freedom of press in India during the emergency period imposed by Indira Gandhi and today Rahul Gandhi says that democracy in under threat.

Economic and Social Turmoil

The Emergency also had devastating economic and social repercussions. Public holidays, including Sundays, were cut to increase productivity, wages were frozen, and layoffs became rampant. The poorest sections of society bore the brunt of these policies. In September 1976, Sanjay Gandhi initiated a widespread compulsory

sterilization program to limit population growth.

The exact extent of Sanjay Gandhi's role in the implementation of the program is disputed, with some writers holding Gandhi directly responsible for his authoritarianism, and other writers blaming the officials who implemented the program rather than Gandhi himself. Rukhsana Sultana, a socialite known for being one of Sanjay Gandhi's close associates, gained notoriety for leading the sterilization campaign in Muslim areas of old Delhi.

As if this were not enough, Sanjay Gandhi's "urban renewal" program, aided in large part by DDA vice-president Jagmohan Malhotra, who had a desire to "beautify" the city, led to the displacement of 700,000 people in Delhi due to demoli-

A Tribute to the Resilience of the Indian

People
"Samvidhan Hatya Diwas" serves not only as a reminder of these dark days but also as a tribute to the resilience of the Indian people. The courage and determination of those who endured and fought against the gross abuse of power during the Emergency should never be forgotten. It is crucial to keep the eternal flame of individual freedom and democracy alive in every Indian's heart to prevent the recurrence of such dictatorial forces.

atorial forces.

A Call to Remember and Reflect

The recent notification by the Union Home Ministry emphasizes the need to remember the atrocities committed during the Emergency. The period saw the gross abuse of power by the government, and the people of India were subjected to excesses and atrocities that left lasting scars. By commemorating "Samvidhan Hatya Diwas," the nation pays tribute to those who suf-

fered and fought against these injustices.

Even the union home minister Amit Shah had said and I quote, "As we observe Samvidhan Hatya Diwas, let us commit ourselves to safeguarding democracy and ensuring that such dark periods never recur. The resilience of Indian democracy and the power of its constitution should inspire future generations to uphold the values of liberty, justice, and equality. By remembering the past, we can build a stronger, more vigilant, and democratic India".

It reminds me a couplet "zulm uska sitam uska hakumat bi uski, fariyaad Karein kisse adaalat bi uski.

Kis chehare ko sacha kahein kis chehare ko jhoota, har waqt badalti huye surat bi

> (The writer is Co-convenor Professional Cell J&K BJP)