

VANA PREMI

Nau Say Navay Sall Tak Ke Bachon Ka Sathi

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Vol .16

JULY - 2015

No.7

Vana Premi Wishes Happy Prosperous & Healthy Ramzaan



Trees Mean Water

Water Means Bread

& Bread is Life

Conserve Nature For Better Future

Plant More Trees During Vana Mahotsava For Rains And Better Crops

JOURNAL OF THE ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED FOREST OFFICERS TELANGANA & ANDHRA PRADESH

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EDITORIAL

Van Mahotsava July 1 to July 7:- Van Mahotsav was started in 1950 by Sri K. M. Munshi, the then Union Minister for Agriculture and Food. The name Van Mahotsava means 'the festival of trees' or 'festival of forest'. This movement was initiated in the year 1950. The first such festival took place even before its formal announcement and a flourishing tree plantation drive was undertaken in Delhi in July 1947 in which national leaders like Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru participated. It was started as a crusade with the lofty purpose of saving the mother earth. It is a week-long festival, celebrated throughout India and only in India to create enthusiasm among masses for forest conservation and planting trees. Its original aim was to see that every citizen of India plants a sapling during the Van Mahotsav Week. Generally, native species are planted as they readily adapt to the local conditions, integrate into eco-systems and have a high survival rate. Besides, such trees are helpful in supporting local birds, insects and animals as well.

Amrita Devi Bishnoi said that "If a tree is saved even at the cost of one's head, it's worth it." Bishnoi is a social group found in the Western Thar Desert of India. The name is derived from *Bis* (twenty) and *noi* (nine) i.e. followers of 29 principles given by Guru Jambheshwar. Guru Jambheshwar gave the message to protect trees and wildlife around 540 years ago, prophesying that harming the

environment means harming our self. He formulated twenty nine tenets. The tenets were not only tailored to conserve bio-diversity of the area but also ensured a healthy eco-friendly social life for the community.

Humans with their greedy needs have cut down a large part of the forest cover of our country in the name of urbanization, development and globalization of cities. This is continuing even today. The large scale felling of Red Sanders, Sandal wood, Teak and valuable species has almost eliminated these Species in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh states from Forests. This declining number of trees has brought a major change in climate too. India has long been vulnerable to floods, droughts, heat waves, cyclones, and other natural disasters and this trend is increasing with each day. With continuous human intervention against Nature, these disasters can no longer be considered 'Natural'. An immediate example that comes to our mind is that colossal event that occurred recently in Uttarakhand, which claimed the life of thousands of tourists & left many stranded, and the heat wave in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh during the months of May and June 2015 which killed more than 2300 human beings only in these two states. The dwindling number of rainy days and increase in the intensity of precipitation raises serious questions on the increasing developmental

activities taking place at the cost of cutting a large number of trees. In a bid to retain the vanishing forest covers of the country Van Mahotsav celebrations became necessary, and afforestation drives are launched. So there is a dire necessity of festivals such as Van Mahotsav, to restore the tree cover in the country. To further highlight the importance of trees, we can take the example of dense mangrove forests growing along the coastal areas of our country, which helped in reducing the devastating effects of the Tsunami in 2004. They absorbed the oncoming waves and protected a large number of human habitations. Mangrove forests grow where the ocean meets the land and act as a barrier against storm surges and coastal erosion. Mangroves, the oldest and the most productive wetlands on earth, not only serve as a silent protector of our coastline, in fact their role extends far beyond. They consist of world's richest biodiversity of species and are a home to many fishes, supporting the livelihood of millions of people across the world. Sundarbans, a UNESCO world heritage site, and a biological reserve despite their ecological and economic importance, this ecosystem is under great pressure and threat. The mangroves are being destroyed at an alarming rate. This is mostly due to deforestation, degradation and conversion to other land uses like intensive shrimp farming and habitations. If the mangroves disappear, much of the global primary productivity will be lost. Is it not necessary for us to plant trees to save our planet at least during Vana Mahotsava?

In Telangana and Andhra Pradesh states, State Governments are taking massive planting programme from this planting season and in Telangana State the programme is named as *Telangana ku Harita Haram* which means Green Necklace for Telangana under which the following targets are fixed. 1. Total target 230 Crore seedlings to be planted, in next four years, 2. Planting in Forest area, 100 Crore seedlings, 3. Planting in Non forest area 120 Crores seedlings and 4. Planting in HMDA areas 10 Crores seedlings. The program envisages increasing the tree cover of the State from present 25.16% to 33% of the total geographical area of the State. In Andhra Pradesh the programme is named as *Neeru Chettu* and the target is to plant 10 crore seedlings in next five years. Planting will be done in open spaces, canal banks, village community lands, and tank foreshores, Institutional plantations (government office, Pvt. Institutions, schools, colleges etc.), and Homestead planting. Tree planting will be done in degraded forest lands, barren hills, silvi-pasture lands, arid zones etc. as well as planting of seedlings in farmer's lands, and farm bunds. Planting of seedlings of timber, fruit and fodder bearing species in forest areas. It is not enough to plant huge number of seedlings and forget them after planting but the seedlings should also be looked after and protected at least for the next three years by which time they get established. Only after three years the plants will be able to survive on their own.

People celebrate Van Mahotsava by planting trees or saplings in homes, offices, schools, colleges, etc. Awareness campaigns are held at various levels. Novel promotions like free distribution of seedlings are also taken up by various organizations Governments and volunteers. The very existence of man would not have been possible without trees and other green plants. Trees also play an important role in the achievement of human security. Whether it is through the provision of livelihood resources (e.g. food, medicine, cooking fuel, construction materials etc.) or ecosystem services such as water and air purification, climate regulation and erosion control, trees undeniably provide security to humans and are a means for

sustaining life. Consequently, loss of trees will certainly result in human insecurity leading to global warming, acute vulnerability to natural hazards and a polluted and unhealthy planet. Hence we need to plant and protect trees at least once in a year during Vana Mahotsava.

Vana Premi wishes a very happy and successful Van Mahotsava 2015 and wishes that all the citizens of our country will take part in tree planting and plant at least one seedling each on any day during one week of Van Mahotsava 2015 and look after it carefully and successfully, for at least next three years after planting by which time these seedlings will be able to survive on their own. **QMK**

INVITATION

The Association of Retired Forest Officers, Telangana & Andhra Pradesh, Congratulates the following Forest Officers, who are retiring from service on attaining the age of superannuation on the dates mentioned against their names and cordially invites them to join the Association of Retired Forest Officers to keep in touch with their old colleagues and to keep themselves occupied.

Name of Officer	Retirement Date
Sri Rajesh Mittal	31-07-2015
Sri N. Shyam Prasad	31-07-2015

For further details they may contact the following –

Sri B. M. Swami Dass, Secretary	Mobile Number.... 9000817781
Sri A. V. Govindarajulu, Jt. Secretary	Mobile Number.... 9440764611

-Secretary

LETTERS TO EDITOR

Sir,

I read with interest the case law, ***D.S. Rame Vs. The State of Maharashtra*** published in your esteemed journal Vana Premi of May 2015 under the regular feature Legal Notes by KBR. This case was the basis in deciding my writ petition before the Maharashtra Adm. Tribunal (MAT) in 1987 and I won that case. However my further claim for payment of arrears from the date of promotion was not considered favourably as I got that order of deemed date after my retirement, thanks to one Under Secretary who was not getting on well with my own brother, his Deputy Secretary, in the same department. He played the mischief. Anyway I got my scales regularised from that deemed date and it has benefited me in fixing my pension.

Sharad Varadkar, Mumbai

27 May 2015

Dear Sir,

I have become an ardent reader of Vana Premi ever since my attention was drawn that even Urdu articles are included in a few issues now and then. I tried to collect earlier issues to find whether I have missed any. I found that almost all the articles, except one by Dr. Wahab Andleeb, were written by one Dr. B Raghotham Rao Desai, IFS (R), and even that one written by Dr. Andleeb was about Dr. Desai!

I was particularly moved by the attractive style and the way of Dr. Desai's writings which are rarely come across. While being informative one gets educated on many an aspects through his articles, such as those recently published on "Sir Shaikh Md. Iqbal & Hyderabad State" and "Maqdoom & Hyderabad" which were so touching with great prose narrated in chaste yet simple & attractive Urdu. It was a delight to read again and again. Not many can perhaps write like him these days when expression in Urdu has become a scarce commodity. I would like to thank you for encouraging Urdu readership by including such articles, for which you need to be congratulated as the said bold move was initiated during your tenure of Editorship. I would like to thank the author through your magazine and hope he will continue to contribute similarly more and more. With regards,

Yours sincerely,

Abdul Aleem

DFO (R)

Dear Sir.

June issue having been received, it was such a pleasure to go through your Editorial on World Environment Day, which was celebrated with fervor even here on 5th, highlighting the year's theme "Seven Million Dreams, One Planet Consume with Care", participated aptly by the Ministers for Forests (Ecology & Environment) and Transport who planted saplings and awarding prizes to the

children & employees who competed in drawing & essay writings. Noted environmentalist Salumarada-Thimmakka was also felicitated, as many educational institutions & Corporate Companies as also Tesco & State Legal Services Authority (Lea by Justice Subro Kamal Mukherjee) launched a green future campaign and organized a photographic competition after their respective planting programs. The Transport Minister also announces new bus routes. All these programs were with the co-ordination of KFD and I was happy to be back from Hyderabad in time on 3rd morning. All other articles, including the Telugu poem by Usha and an analysis in Telugu of the recent incident of "shoot to kill the Red-sanders smugglers", were interesting to go through. Lastly I am to attach herewith the scanned-copy of Urdu Essay.

Dr. Raghotham Rao Desai.

Dear Sir,

There is disquieting news about Kolleru. It is said that the lake is dry emanating stench of dead fish and the area is desolate and looks inhospitable for fish and migratory birds. Not much of information is forthcoming about the reasons therefor. Some nature lovers feel that it is not a normal annual feature of seasonal variation. And this is a cause for concern.

There were reports in the media that the AP Government and particularly its Chief Minister is strongly in favour of restricting the Kolleru Sanctuary area to +3 contours instead of notified +5, to favour the vested interests and to promote their commercial interests. Ironically, all the political parties appear ranged against the Sanctuary for reasons of populism and other benefits. Moot point is whether the degradation is induced to kill the lake in which it is a serious matter and deserves to be pursued vigorously.

I am sure readers remember that the Lake was subjected to all kinds of abuse with brazen acts of encroachments, formation of huge ponds for pisciculture and laying of permanent pathways by vested interests in the past, with the Regulatory Authority looking the other way. It was a PIL by an NGO which saved the Sanctuary with the Supreme Court taking a firm stand to restore the lake to its past glory. The Government of the day had to comply the Apex Court directions dismantling all the illegal formations. There is reason to suspect that the Lake is in for another round of trouble from the present Government with its ally in power at the Centre.

It also needs to be seen whether the Sanctuary has any environmental threat from the proposed State Capital. I request the environmental activists conversant with facts to throw more light on the issue. I hope my apprehensions are wrong.

Regards,

J.V.Sharma

Date: 10th June 2015.

A CASE TO IMPROVE THE VEGETATION COVERS IN THE STATE OF TELANGANA

By
S.D. Mukherji

The government of Telangana celebrated the completion of one year of its formation with all the pomp and show of its achievements and future plans. Government deserves congratulations for its efforts towards improving the life of the poor and plans for the revival of growth and employment opportunities for its youths, who were feeling neglected in the undivided State of Andhra Pradesh. Telangana State is fortunate to have a developed capital city of Hyderabad. The plans to develop it as a world class city would further enhance its importance as a destination for setting up facilities of international significance. Along with Hyderabad, there are plans to develop smart cities in Warangal, Karimnagar, Nizamabad and other districts.

Similarly, there are plans to improve the agriculture on which more than fifty percent of the rural population depends for their survival. Poor absorption of rain water leading to lowering of water table and depleting yield from the pump-sets is resulting in crop failure and poor crop yield. Another major cause of poor yield is soil erosion leading to loss of soil fertility and siltation of water bodies. This trend has to be

reversed by improving the ground water for better productivity of the agriculture land for the survival of poor farmers who are forced to commit suicide due to crop failure. The government plan of rejuvenation of lakes and ponds under 'mission Kakatia' is in the right direction. However, this may not be sufficient to conserve all the rain water going as run-off and wasted.

In order to improve the economy of the State major thrust would have to go towards manufacturing by setting industries that can provide employment. Infrastructure in the state has to be improved by providing better connectivity through roads, railway lines, and airports. Mining would become an important component of growth to supply raw material for the industries. Coal mining would need to be enhanced to improve the power generation from thermal plants. Fortunately, the State is endowed with rich mineral deposits, mostly in the remote forested regions. The mining operation must be carried out taking due care to cause minimum damage to the soil and vegetation that would do least harm to the nature.

This ambitious programme of developing the State in to '*Bangaru Telangana*' would be incomplete without the development of its environment, to provide its citizens clean water and pollution free air. The high summer temperature witnessed during this year that made the life unbearable and killed more than two thousand three hundred people needs to be controlled. People working in crowded cities need places of peace and tranquillity where they can spend their weekends and get rejuvenated. A dense vegetative cover plays a vital role in several aspects. It controls air pollution by absorption of atmospheric carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen, reducing the air temperature by absorbing the heat, attract cloud and improve the rain fall, improve the ground water by absorbing the flowing water, reduce soil erosion by holding the soil through its roots, reduce sound pollution by forming a barrier. Nothing is better than visit to a dense forest with roaming wild life and flowing water for the tired people to breathe pure air and enjoy the beauty of the nature to sustain them for continued effort in building the state.

It is, therefore, necessary that State must have a dense canopy of tree cover spread over the urban and rural areas in addition to dense forests with plenty of wildlife. Unfortunately, the present situation of forests presents a very depressive scenario. As per the 'India State of Forest Report

(ISFR)-2013' prepared by the Forest Survey of India (FSI) and released by the Minister of Forest and Environment on the 8th July, 2014, the total forest cover in the State of Telangana is only 21759 sq. km, working out to 18.94 per cent of the geographical area of the State as against 33 per cent required to maintain ecological balance. Moreover, majority of the forests are in degraded to much degraded condition. A very dense forest, (forest density above 0.7) is confined to only 484 sq. km forming 2.22 per cent of the total forest area of the State. Moderately dense forests (forest density of 0.4 to 0.7) cover 12916 sq. km covering 59.36 per cent of total forest. The rest of the forest covering an area of 8359 sq. km, forming 38.42 per cent of the total forest area, is open forest where the density of forest cover varies 0.1 to 0.4 per cent only.

The most distressing part of the report is that Telangana State alone accounts for a loss of 251 sq. kms. of forest cover between 2011 and 2013 against the total loss of 273 sq. km in the whole country, representing 91.94 percent of the loss of forest cover in India. Khammam district tops the loss of forest to the extent of 177 sq. km which accounts for 70.52 per cent of total loss of forest in the State and 64.83 per cent of loss of forest in India. It is followed by Warangal losing 29 sq. km and Adilabad losing 21 sq. km. All the three districts are with sizeable tribal

population who live in and around the forests and dependent on forest for their livelihood. According to the ISFR-2013 the loss of forest is due to huge forest areas found under encroachment in Adilabad, Khammam and Warangal districts and illegal cultivation by the nearby villagers.

Telangana government has planned to turn one-third of the land with green cover by launching 'Harita Haaram' to plant 230 crore seedlings and saplings over the next four years across Telangana. However, the past experience on the success of tree plantation, both inside and outside the forests, has not been encouraging. More than plantation it is the protection of the trees that needs to be improved. Instead of leaving the protection of vegetation on the forest department alone, all government agencies are required to be roped in to take the responsibility of tree protection in their area of influence. In addition to the government departments, there is need to involve the local people to improve the protection. At the same time government must take serious action against the people involved in- illicit felling of trees, forest encroachment, timber smuggling, poaching, forest fires and grazing/ browsing of

growing vegetation – the destruction of vegetation.

With the increasing demand of land for various development projects it may not be possible for the government to increase the land under forest. However, government must ensure that the remaining forestlands are made free from biotic interference. Unless the fragmentation of the forestlands are stopped no amount of government effort can save the forest and wildlife. Moreover, forest blocks must be joined with corridors for the free movement of wildlife. For this the existing habitations within the forest blocks must be shifted out of the forest or to the border of the forest blocks. Even if it means reduction of some forestland to rehabilitate the people living inside the forest it is worth as no forest can be saved if the people's movement is allowed freely inside the forests. It would need political will. People have to be convinced of the fact that better rehabilitation measures would make their life more comfortable than living in the forest areas. Forest officers should be involved in the development of forest fringe villages so that people understand that forest officers are there to improve their livelihood.

Ageing is not lost youth but a new stage of opportunity and strength. (Betty Friedan)

WHAT MATTERS IS (THE) MOTIVATION!

By

Dr B. Raghotham Rao Desai

While glancing through the pages of World History on an occasion recently, I had chanced upon to have a glimpse or a short dream into an incident describing the attitude of Hernando Cortes, the Spanish explorer who is credited to have achieved his goal of conquering a new land — by pushing West to the Pacific — when he landed at Veracruz on the Gulf of Mexico (Gulf of Campeche) in the 16th century.

The way he thought it to be done is interesting: eliminate the possibility of his men losing heart and sail back to Spain, by burning the ships by which he and his fellow-sailors crossed the Atlantic! His idea was that the presence of the ships would give his forces an alternative to return to their country if they lost the fight that lay ahead. Thus he gave the men a powerful motive to win and believe it and eventually they all turned out into soldiers from sailors as they saw victory the only means of survival. The rest is history, as they marched ahead to defeat their foes, driven by exemplary motivation.

Motivation has indeed been a driving force that accompanied movers and shakers of history. Scaling any height is made possible when a

person is driven by an earnest motivation. But in reality a vast majority of people fail miserably in finding required motivation and settle down to an empty life of sheer drudgery. Yet, if somehow motivation could be pumped into living, it can in all probability transform drudgery into a great adventure and emptiness into abundance.

You might have come across several cases of persons who could jump out of their beds every day with an indomitable spirit and undying enthusiasm are the ones who amply feed their minds with plenty of motivation.

Motivation is nothing but a reason for action: fundamental in getting any action started, thus becoming the key to an engaging life and which is an essential element that separates the enthusiasts from the indifferent. It underscores the fact that potentials can be reached to the fullest, when fed by a gripping motive.

There are two days in every week about which we should not worry — one of these being ‘yesterday’, and the other being ‘tomorrow’.

With its mistakes and cares, its aches and pains,

its faults and blunders, yesterday has passed forever beyond our control and all the money in the world cannot bring it back. Further, we cannot go back to rectify blunders we had committed, nor can we erase a single word we said or correct a single mistake — yesterday had passed forever beyond recall, and let it go. And we should not worry about tomorrow with its possible adversities, its burdens, its large promise & poor performance, as it is beyond our immediate control — tomorrow's sun may rise either in splendour or behind a mass of clouds! That leaves us but one day 'today' — elucidating that yesterday and tomorrow should not be our agenda for today, making investment in it the smartest way to worry less and live fully more for, when the past and the future are both eliminated from our attention, complete focus on the present can be achieved — 'today' providing us with the opportunities not to commit past mistakes, outsmart previous decisions, outwit closest competitors, better the nearest rivals and distance ourselves from prior faults by allowing love to outshine hatred, truth to overthrow deceit, humility to surpass arrogance, freedom to conquer addictions, generosity to beat self-centredness and enthusiasm to win over listlessness, no matter what the story was 'yesterday' or what it is going to be 'tomorrow'. 'Yesterday and tomorrow'

matter only from the perspective of learning and growing — 'yesterday' to be used as a bench-mark in bettering ourselves, just as 'tomorrow' should form part of our strategic planning for progress: one must act as 'a teacher' and the other as 'a promoter' in reaching to our full potential. Pouring all our energy today will make yesterday's mistakes immaterial and ensures tomorrow's success a reality.

How does one define the present? Strange but true: the moment we think of the present, it has already become the past! At the same time, even 'the point ahead' is really 'the future': neither in any literal nor a logical sense does a present exist! As an adage or a witty remark goes 'The past is history, the future is mystery, but today is a gift, that is why, it is called 'present'!!

Didn't Mahatma Gandhi find the motivation to accomplish the impossible by finding something as fundamental as: "restoring freedom to the oppressed" to something as superfluous as: "finding a new way to enjoy music out of our pockets"?

You may even be tempted to call it a story: an infinitesimal yet by no means insignificant incident quoted in history to conquer Latin America motivated me to write the foregoing article!

Birth Day Greetings

We wish the following born on the dates mentioned
“ A very Happy Birth Day ”

S.No.	Name of Members			
Assn.Members		Date of Birth		
	Sarva Sri			
1.	K. Buchiram Reddy	07-07-1932	6.	Swargam Srinivas 15-07-1962
2.	K. Madan Mohan	10-07-1942	7.	N. Shyam Prasad 16-07-1955
3.	N. Varaprasad Rao	10-07-1948	8.	G. Chandrasekhar Reddy 18-07-1965
4.	M. Prasada Rao	10-07-1947	9.	Dr. K. Gopinatha 21-07-1963
5.	C.Ramakrishna Reddy	11-07-1931	10.	Rajesh Mittal 25-07-1955
6.	M. Padmanabha Reddy	14-07-1941	11.	R. Sundara Vadan 01-08-1956
7.	M. K.Prasad	14-07-1945	12.	A. V. Joseph 08-05-1956
8.	A. Shankaran	16-07-1956	13.	Ajay Kumar Naik 03-08-1965
9.	B. Pratap Reddy	18-07-1928	14.	Ratnakar Jauhari 02-08-1970
10.	K. Santokh Singh	21-07-1937	15.	N. Khadar Vali 06-07-1960
11.	Mohd.Ibrahim	22-07-1954	16.	P. Premkumar 10-07-1983
12.	Onkar Singh	27-07-1953	17.	S. Ravishankar 16-07-1964
13.	Dr. K.Kesava Reddy	01-08-1935	18.	Smt. S. Sujatha 18-07-1975
14.	S. M. Selvaraj	01-08-1953	19.	B. M. Chanakya Raju 18-07-1957
15.	V. Parthasarathy	02-08-1944	20.	Smt. T. Jyothi 23-07-1975
16.	Hitesh Malhotra	03-08-1952	21.	Mrs. G. Krishna Priya 24-07-1982
WORKING OFFICERS		DOB		
1.	Prashanth Kumar Jha	07-07-1959	22.	V. Anjaneyulu 07-24-1966
2.	N. Pratheep Kumar	07-07-1963	23.	Smt. I. Padmaja Rani 26-07-1976
3.	Dr. Chandra B.Malasi	08-07-1957	24.	B. Janaki Rao 26-07-1961
4.	Rahul Pandey	14-07-1974	25.	Ms. M.Babita 27-07-1972
5.	D. Nalini Mohan	15-07-1962	26.	P. Dhanraj 28-07-1963
			27.	A. V. Ramana Murthy 28-07-1969
			28.	Smt. M. Hima Sailaja 29-07-1980
			29.	L. Ch. Tirupaelu Reddy 01-08-1956

Secretary

DEMOCRACY AND LEADERSHIP

By
J. V. Sharma

Though the concept of citizens' right to have a say in governance is as old as Greek Civilization, it caught the imagination of the people only in recent history towards the end of 18th Century. Two events of historical importance took place; the first the American Revolution a.k.a. American War of Independence during 1775-1783 and the second, the French Revolution during 1789. The two are distinctly different from one another in character; the first was a political upheaval seeking liberation from the alien British rule while the latter was essentially a civilian revolt to assert the will of the people in governance.

The American Revolution was a war fought with arms and the rebels had a goal as well as a command to prosecute the war. Therefore there was discipline as well as a method in going about the task, the violence and loss of life notwithstanding. Unlike the American experience, the French Revolution was a mass upsurge against ruling monarch. It was a violent revolution without any pre-planned workable roadmap or to take things forward after the revolution. Hundreds of counterrevolutionaries and those loyal to the Crown were massacred. Victims included landlords, feudals, courtiers and those in royal service. King Louis XVI, himself was arrested and condemned to death for crimes against the State and sent to guillotine. Even his wife, the queen, Marie Antoinette was not spared

and suffered the same fate a little later. The executions took place in full public gaze ignoring the basics of human sentiment and civility. Those were bizarre events decided on impulse rather than the outcome of sane deliberations of discussion, consultation and consensus. It was the mob which dictated the terms, the louder and the forceful voice always having its way. As a result, there was a great deal of violence, bloodshed, bitterness, pain and abuse of human values & sentiments. Historians say that the events were so brutal and repulsive that the cause itself suffered its credibility in the aftermath eventually leading to a different kind of monarchy. However, despite all these abhorrent characteristics, the revolution played critical role in subsequent period in shaping the future of many nations with the "will of the people" prevailing.

Revolutions have since been replicated in several countries. But the logistics varied. Native India fought a protracted war for independence from British rule but without resorting to violence. With this, the means of struggle for freedom had assumed importance. It was totally a non-violent revolution and when it succeeded, even the British had a word of praise for the strength of non-violence. The Indian experience provided an ethical angle to the issue and exposed that colonialism is no longer

a viable option for global supremacy and dominance. Though Colonial powers withdrew from their prized possessions voluntarily in many cases, the transition was violent in some other cases. Common thread that connects all these developments is the "will of the people" to shape their future. To translate this urge into practice, a system is necessary. And the most acceptable concept that guides the system is "democracy".

Democracy means a system of government by whole population usually through elected representatives. It is however subject to several interpretations and variations in implementation. Though the basic ingredient of democracy continues to be the will of the people, it gets hugely blurred, diluted and even corrupted in implementation more often than not. Ironically, the will of the people itself becomes disputable and questionable in some cases. No fool proof mechanism appears possible to elicit the will of the people on each issue.

There is an inherent paradox in this philosophy of democracy. It is absurd to expect all the people to have the same opinion on every issue. Unanimity is therefore impossible. The next best option is to go by majority opinion which necessarily implies there is dissidence and opposition. The 51-49 syndrome is highly deceptive in the sense that the support and the opposition are almost evenly poised, eroding the very credibility of the decision. Two wavering

minds could have reversed the decision and even one could ensure a tie rendering the whole exercise unfruitful. So, there is every chance of miniscule erratic minds influencing the outcome to make mockery of democracy.

There are other serious pitfalls which devalue the concept of democracy, important among them being the number of people who come forward to express their opinion and their capacity to make a decision. Indian democracy suffers from both these ills. Instances where 30% of the electorate choose to exercise their franchise and their votes get fragmented among contesting candidates and finally a person who polled 10% of votes becomes the victor are not uncommon. In the broader picture, there could be majority of people among the 70% absentees who do not like the 10% winner. This is against the spirit of democracy. Similarly, the success of democracy depends upon the prudent exercise of the vote by the electorate. Firstly, the voter should be equipped with the capacity to make the right decision and secondly, the voters should not be under extraneous influence. We must admit that Indian democracy is yet to get over these inadequacies. Electoral reforms so ardently articulated to set things right and recommended by the Election Commission are still a far cry as the political parties who are reaping rich harvest in the existing system do not like to upset their applecart.

Practical difficulty in directly eliciting the will of the population brings the representatives of the people into focus. With this comes the major change in the source of opinion making. The people's representative makes an opinion on behalf of his electors which could as well be at variance with that of his masters. As the representative democracy makes its upward journey, the base population in whose name the democracy runs, get more and more distanced and irrelevant. The people's representative, his leader and his leader, go on becoming more and more powerful in the matters of State. In the end analysis, the power effectively gets transferred to the leaders with the base voter nowhere in picture.

Cause for concern is the scant regard and attention the leaders pay to those at the bottom. There is a visible gap between the population on one side and the leaders on the other, in their living, exposure, status, conduct, function, approach, behaviour and even mind set. The ruling elite rarely care for the feelings and opinion of the common man. Though welfare measures are taken on large scale, it is more for garnering their votes and to derive electoral dividends than love and sympathy for the needy. There is total dis-connect between the two entities. The effusive public talk of sympathy often heard is artificial and devoid of genuine love.

But it is all part of the system. Perhaps we have no other option. Personal touch with common

man may not be possible in a populous country like India given its size, population and divergence. People's representatives and political leadership is therefore unavoidable and becomes a necessary evil with which the population has to live with. Point to be made in this context is; the 'dilution' of the democracy in the process remains unattended and unanswered.

Even if a system is evolved and practised with direct participation of the common man in active governance, such a mode, besides its impracticability, could be counterproductive bringing the entire governance to a grinding halt. It is well-nigh impossible to secure unanimity over an issue and a decision on any and every issue will become elusive. Besides, the original problem whether the common man is capable of making a decision comes up for reckoning. If he is not, the consequences are horrible and could be as horrendous as in the French Revolution where it was classic example of mobocracy when death sentences were handed down on voice vote in people's assembly at the street corner. It is relevant to mention here that there are quite few outfits even in India who advocate "Praja Court" (Peoples Court) for instant justice and death sentences are passed without batting an eyelid and even implemented. There have been any number of instances where persons in public life, the rich, village officers, landlords, branded police informers etc. being condemned to death after summary trials by the Communists

during their armed struggle in Telangana prior to the Police Action and even thereafter. What is more unfortunate is the present day Naxals believe in the same philosophy even now and instances of this nature are too many. That this should happen in a country of robust judiciary is really unfortunate. It only shows how a handful number of wayward and misguided pseudo-intellectuals can sully the otherwise peaceful atmosphere.

While the word democracy does not specifically mean majority, the implication is none other. Underlying spirit of the word is the 'will' of whole population. As this objective is Utopian in practice, the nearest interpretation can be 'the common good' of all. It otherwise means that dissent also needs to be accommodated to the extent possible, the bottom line being the good of whole population. It is easier said than done. A part of the society can never reflect the mind of the entire society. It is for this reason a healthy compromise becomes unavoidable between different interest groups. Such moderation is possible only when there is a possibility of arriving at rational decisions not burdened by bias or prejudice. Since opinions do not crystallize in unison among masses, their representatives being less in number become important and a dialogue among them is easier. This is representative democracy wherein the representatives become leaders to exercise power on behalf of people though they may not reflect their views and sentiments wholly, truthfully and honestly. Thus the leaders and

leadership become all important in functioning of democracy.

If the leadership can rise above the narrow confines of a group or section, creed or caste, religion or caste, and their exclusive interests, and look at the broader picture of the society as a whole, results are bound to be positive, minor irritations due to clash of interests in the initial stages notwithstanding. Role of leadership thus becomes crucial for success of any functional democracy.

Despite India being the largest democracy in the world, its experiment with its bulkiest Constitution appear to have its own grey areas. While the progress made in these 65 years is quite significant, there is reason for disappointment in some vital areas. In fact there is a feeling in some informed circles that the score on report card in certain areas is negative. It is a cause for alarm in the sense that these areas are so important that if ignored and not taken care, they may pose insurmountable problems in the future. This could be because of huge diversity in almost in every aspect of country's population. But that is all the more reason why it should be taken seriously.

Prominent among the negative trends are; Common man's indifference to place national interests above his own, General slide down in the moral standards, Failure of leadership to guide the nation with vision and wisdom, Fall in standards of governance, Populism, Narrow and parochial outlook in respect of rights and

privileges, Insensitivity to duties and obligations etc. Significantly, these are the trends which influence the future of any country.

It is not difficult to search for the reasons for the negative trends. A little bit of historical perceptive should provide proper appreciation of changing trends. As long as we were under alien rule, it was poverty, illiteracy and ignorance. Selfless persons fighting for independence were not elected or appointed but emerged as leaders from the masses on account of their commitment and dedication to the cause. It was sweat, toil and sacrifice for the leaders as well as followers. It was selfless service with no rewards and if there was any, it was only hardship. People had mainly the ideals in mind rather than their rights and comforts. Situation is vastly different post-independence. Now, whoever is elected as representative acquires the advantages of power. Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. The elector as well as the elected, both, became conscious of this fact. The people's representatives play to gallery instead of going by principles. Populism materialises and the leaders bend over backward to accommodate even unreasonable demands. They have no moral strength left with them to say their demands are unreasonable and guide them properly.

As against this, we can take the example of Gandhiji who believed in non-violence. He prepared the nation for Civil Disobedience Movement in 1922 and when the Movement

was at its peak, he called it off himself because of the outburst of violence in Chauri Chaura. Some of his close associates dissented but Gandhiji said that means are as important as goals. Lesson one can learn is that the leader should have the courage to guide the people on right lines instead of toeing their line for electoral benefits. India had apparently missed the bus after independence as the leadership had failed to maintain the pre-independence mood of the people. Pandit Nehru was more of an idealist and a liberal. To accommodate diverse interests of several sections of the society he loosened the grip on core principles. His successor Lal Bahadur Shastri was a leader firm on principles but did not live long to make course correction. I am reminded of an incident of his time in which he wrote to his Cabinet Ministers not to inflate the past achievements and counselled them to make sober assessment of situations with realistic and practical approach.

That breed can no longer be seen. Things appear to go worse with time. Leadership is not mere enjoying power but is coupled with responsibility to guide the people in right manner and not to strike bargain with them, a *quid pro quo*, for votes against populism. It is the responsibility of leadership to nourish democracy on strong and healthy traditions. To promote populism, there is no need for a leader –anybody can do that.

THE FUTURE OF INDIAN FORESTS & FORESTRY IN THE LIGHT OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE HLC OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS & CLIMATE CHANGE

**By
S.B. Singh**

Ours is a diverse country of continental proportions with varied climate, topography and soil types. The interplay of these locality factors produces vegetation of numerous types from scrub and open thorn forests of arid areas to closed canopied wet evergreen forests of the Western Ghats, the North East and the Andaman and from the alpine vegetation of Himalayan heights to the mangroves of coastal regions. These different forests types in their varied stages of progression towards climactic stages produce a plethora of diverse but unique and rich flora and fauna of the country each of which type needs to be protected irrespective of the density of their canopy cover. However Shri TSR Subramanian led High Level Committee (HLC) of Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change, Govt. of India have inter alia recommended in their report that only the forests with 70% and more of canopy density together with wildlife protected areas (PA_s) should be notified as 'no go' or inviolable areas (Para 5.4 of the report). By implication the rest of the forests which constitute over 2/3rd of the forest cover of the country would be officially but indirectly declared as violable and therefore easily available for disforestation ostensibly for development as if these have no role to play except as land reserve for being allotted ostensibly for development when ever asked for. Unless the idea of such declaration be based on

some sense of equity in destruction, it is most unfortunate, totally unacceptable and against the forest policy. The underlying assumption of the HLC in this regard suffers from at least four serious fallacies.

Firstly there are open forest areas of even 10% or less of canopy cover which though not having density as prescribed by the HLC, are nevertheless valuable treasures of biodiversity and may have more ecological value and therefore need to be protected at all costs. The Committee however is under the false notion that only forests with 70% or more of cover density need to be protected and declared inviolable areas. The rest of the forests, the Committee apparently feels, do not deserve to be called so and therefore may be dispensed with for the cause of development. Therefore if the HLC had its way, most of the states like Rajasthan, in course of time, may be left with no other forests apart from the few of their PA_s. The HLC has made even existence of these few left over areas at the mercy and whims of the union cabinet of the day (Paragraph 5.4 of the report), which as is known, can at times, be managed and manoeuvred by powerful vested interests as happened at the time of formation of UPA-2 Government. In retrospect one is led to repent for transfer of 'Forest' from 'State List' to 'Concurrent' one by 42nd amendment of the

Constitution. Possibly the FRA could never have been passed/implemented by *all the states if the Forest had remained in State List and in that scenario one would have never thought of such an HLC nor such a Committee if ever constituted could have given such a damaging recommendation.*

The Second fallacy with which the Government and impliedly the HLC appear to suffer from is their apparent belief that destruction of forests is an essential pre-requisite for ushering in development and therefore, for higher GDP growth of the country. The forests therefore have per force to be sacrificed. This is most fallacious argument that development is not possible without destruction. There are a number of examples to show that sustainable development is possible without destruction of forests. Japan is a prime example in this regard. Its density of population at around 350 souls per square kilometre is only slightly less than ours but its forest cover at over 68% of its geographical area is about three times ours at about 23% only. In fact its forest cover has been steadily increasing over the past several years. Plantations make up for over 40% of its total forest cover. It does not destroy its forests even for its own requirement of wood and timber products which it meets through imports from the USA, Canada, Russia, Malaysia and Indonesia etc. and thereby preserving and increasing its own forest cover. All this has been achieved by it during last 60 years while it developed and rebuilt its shattered economy from ravages of the World War II.

Israel is another example of development without destruction. The country came into existence as a separate entity almost at the same time we became independent. It started literally from the scratch with only the *idea* of having a mother land of their own as their sole capital. Jews from other parts of the world came down to the place now called Israel, purchased land from their Arab owners and thus created their country. It is now a developed country. Its density of population is about the same as that of Japan and only slightly lower than ours. Its per capita income is in the same bracket as that of Japan and at least seven times higher than ours. For its development and industrialisation it had **no forest** to allot to the project proponents what our Government has been doing and proposes to do at faster pace with help of HLC's recommendations. Israel, on the contrary, has been adding plantation forests during all these years since coming into existence. Its forests thus created now occupy 8.3% of its land area from almost nil at the time of its coming into existence. Both these countries are vibrant democracies.

The third glaring example is of our next door neighbour China which though following a different political system has now become the second largest economy of the world without apparently destroying its forests. Its forest cover during 1949 when the Communists took over was only about 12% of its geographical area (including Tibet which we recognised in haste as China's part and are now regretting at leisure). From about 1980 as the country embarked upon

a faster pace of development, its forest cover also started increasing which is now over 20% of its geographical area. These three examples establish without any doubt that destruction of forest is not sine qua non for development. There are other examples of countries which have developed without causing destruction to their environment.

The third fallacy with which the HLC appears to be suffering from is its apparent belief that the forests of the country are the sole property of the Government of India and that it has the unfettered and absolute right to squander away this natural asset the way it likes forgetting the stakes of millions of forest dependent families – dwelling within the forests, in its vicinity, the people at large and the **State Governments concerned**. The number of daily head loaders bringing out faggots of firewood from these forests – how so ever undesirable that practice might be – runs into millions. A very substantial proportion of the fodder requirement of the country is supplied by the forests mostly of the low cover density – precisely those that are targeted by the HLC for making them easily available for industry. A sizable percentage of the energy needs of the country also come out of these forests. However the HLC do not appear to be bothered about these concerns while virtually decreeing their destruction.

Fourthly the Committee feels that the Prospective User Agency (PUA) including entrepreneurs are now totally honest, trustworthy and paragon of all virtues so that we need not doubt their assertions and hand

over the forests as soon as asked for by them. The HLC therefore recommends that the first stage clearance of the projects may be given to PUA on utmost good faith even without making an inventory of the standing crop (Paragraph 5.10 of the Report). Not only that, the Committee recommends the work of inventorization of growing stock may also be out sourced and the PUA is not excluded from such allotment! The reading of all these bizarre recommendations may give an idea that HLC did not bother about its brief but was more interested in devising means for simplifying and easing of procedure for release of forests for industrialists. While the whole world is getting more concerned with the perils of global warming and climate change and therefore wants to do everything for a cleaner environment and sustainable development, here we have a Committee devising means to do exactly the opposite !

The quantification of canopy density for violability or otherwise of a forest area as recommended by the HLC is fraught with the danger of its manipulation by PUA. Thus in a grid of 1 km² of forest, about 8-10,000 stems of suitable species and girth class can provide the desirable crown density as prescribed by the HLC. Powerful PUA_s can always contrive to bring it down to the violable level by illicitly removing a few hundred stems from the crop and then applying for release of land from such depleted area. Laying down such a criterion is therefore a virtual invitation for manipulation of the crown density to keep it below 70%. The recommendation of the HLC in this regard

which happens to be its most important one (**the first** out of a list of 55 – Chapter 10 - Summary of Recommendations) is in fact the most dangerous and least desirable and therefore must be rejected.

It may thus appear that the *raison d'être* for constitution of the Committee and therefore of its main recommendations are all designed to facilitate smooth and faster transfer of the forests ostensibly for developmental projects but in so doing the HLC has resorted to double speak and quotes scriptures (though not always correctly) and talks about **generational equity** and **sustainability** of development. How can generational equity with regard to forests be maintained if the exercise itself is designed to smoothen and quicken the process of transfer of forests of less than 70% canopy density for non-forestry purposes and leading to their destruction? Had the HLC undertaken an independent inquiry to ascertain (a) if the CA reportedly raised, say during past 10 to 35 years (i.e. during the period 1981-2005), have been successful qualitatively and are equal to or more in extent than the corresponding area from out of 1.19 million hectares (paragraph 5.2 of the Report) released for non-forestry purpose and (b) the forest land thus released has actually been put to use for the purpose for which it was meant and found that the answer to both these posers was positive, the Committee's rhetoric on generational equity could have carried some weight.

The HLC in its anxiety to adhere to the time limit allotted to it to complete its assignment has

given a go bye even to facts at times belying common sense. Thus in paragraph 3.3.3 as also elsewhere in its report it repeatedly states that "the land under forests has increased from 40.48 million ha during 1951 to 77.18 million ha till date" forgetting that the former figure refers to the extent of Reserved Forests **only** while the latter figure includes all types of forests includes P.F., U.S.F., community forests, private forests and tree lots besides the R.F. **In fact no one including the Govt. of the day had any idea of the total extent of the forest cover of the country during 1951 or earlier and even in later years. Forget the extent of the forest cover, even geographical limits of the country in some parts of the north and greater part of the north east were hardly configured on the ground then and that may perhaps be one of the reasons of the Henderson Brooks – Bhagat Report on 1962 debacle of our Army at the hands of the Chinese not seeing light of the day.** The first attempts to ascertain the total extent of forests of the country were not made till 1970, when NRSA came out with some tentative figures which were later on drastically revised by them in their next report. This uncertainty continued till 1987 when the FSI published its first State of Forests Report (SFR) and put the total extent of forests of all types of the country at 75.18 million hectares (R.F. - 40.18, P.F.- 21.73, U.S.F.- 13.27).

Such howlers perhaps could have been avoided if the HLC had the benefit of advice of some technically qualified expert of the field of its inquiry in its composition and failing that, sought

help of such persons during the course of its deliberations. Unfortunately the Committee also does not appear to have made any effort to make good this deficiency in its composition. It did not even think it proper to visit any area/place in the NE region of the country (Para 4.4 Rapid Assessment – understanding the issues of various part of the country) which is not only home to more than 25% of the country's forest resources though occupying only 7.98% of its land area but is also one of the 18 hot spots of the world's biodiversity. There are other unique features of these forests of NE region. Barring plains of the Bramhaputra, the Barak and the Imphal, most of the hill areas of the NE ***have never been cadastrally surveyed and consequently there are no records of rights of such areas. Thus except for the R.F., the ownership of the rest of the forests in this region is nebulous. All these areas of the NE are not governed by the IFA but by Assam Forest Regulation 1891 (AFR) or its variants. Another distinguishing feature of NE is that all these forests are subject to shifting cultivating or jhuming which even the F.C. Act has not been able to control. The Apex Court also perhaps could not fathom the complexities of the forestry situation of NE while deciding the Godavarman case (1996).*** It was therefore most unfortunate that the HLC remained totally oblivious of these facts regarding forests and forestry situation of the NE Region.

These glaring omissions lead one to believe that the HLC was only perhaps interested in addressing certain limited issues and was not a broad based exercise to hold in-depth examination of the environmental laws as its

terms of reference may indicate. This becomes more obvious from a close reading of its third term of reference specially the closing part which states “to recommend specific amendments needed in each of these Acts ***so as to bring them in line with the current requirements to meet objectives***”. Here the clause ‘the current requirement ‘may be the euphemism for ***the current difficulties in granting clearances for big ticket projects***. It might have been the reason why the HLC chose to visit only some of the hot spots of controversies which had stalled these big ticket projects. But that still leaves the other question wide open viz. why no one having experience in enforcement of any of the listed laws was appointed on or associated with the committee? Repeated references to ‘rent seekers’, ‘rent seeking propensity’ in the Committee’s report may perhaps hold some clue to the glaring omission. But are we then to believe that everyone having worked in the system under scrutiny must necessarily be a rent seeker? But the chosen ones may then be painted with the brush of ‘Delhi- centric post-retirement employment seekers’ and between the two, the Govt. chose to go with the latter set. Or was it a case of endemic malleability of the latter class that excluded a specialist from the job? Any way the committee appears to have accomplished the Govt.’s bidding quite successfully! That it has not outright recommended repeal of the FC Act is a cause for rejoicing.

Such ludicrous observations/recommendations in the Report are not confined to an isolated

case but there are quite a few of the same genre. For example the HLC under paragraph 6.2 of its report discusses the problem of damage to standing crops caused by Blue bulls and wild boars and then recommends to the MOEF to issue circulars to the state Governments to use powers delegated under section 11(b) of WLP Act to tackle the problem without pondering why the states have not done so for the past over forty years when the power was all along available not only to the CWLW but on delegation to his subordinates and others as well. The HLC either did not have time or aptitude to ponder over the issue or else it has been taken for a ride by fobus (babus of forest variety, have only contempt for field work in forests) of the ministry to make such a recommendation. The fact is that section 11(b) is to be used for solitary animal which has either become dangerous to human life and property including standing crop or is diseased /disabled beyond recovery. In such a situation the CWLW issues a proclamation describing the concerned animal as closely as possible and allows for its destruction. However as per section 39 of the ACT, the animal remains the Govt. property. This raises practical difficulties. First section 11(b) is applicable only in case a solitary wild animal of species listed in schedules II, III or IV. Now there has seldom been any case of a solitary blue bull having caused any loss to human life. In case of loss of standing crop, it has been noticed that the loss is caused always by herds as Blue Bulls always mostly move in large herds. In order to use section 11(b), each and every animal of the herd causing the damage is to be clearly identified and described.

Even if all these hurdles are got over, the problem posed by section 39 still looms large. Members of Minority community are prepared to liquidate the herds of blue bulls (not of wild boar of course!) provided they are allowed to take away the carcass but that being Govt. property as per section 39, cannot be allowed and there are few to render free service on this score. It is on account of these problems that section 11(b) has not been used to control the population of these crop marauders. Had the HLC been provided with the benefit of advice of someone with practical experience, it would not have given the type of advice it has prescribed under the paragraph 6.2. In any case the fobus could have done it themselves without any prodding from the HLC.

The HLC, as per its terms of reference, was asked to study the six Acts referred to it, the judicial pronouncements in the cases pertaining to these laws and then to suggest amendments to these Acts wherever necessary in the light of current requirements to meet their objectives. The first five of these Acts which were referred to it by the notification dated 29th August 2014 are the Acts which are more or less, directly administered by the GOI but the central Govt. has little to do with the sixth Act viz. Indian Forest Act which with its state variants is directly administered by the State Governments concerned. The latter Act was referred to it as an afterthought through a separate notification dated 18th September 2014. But the first recommendation of the HLC appears more like an executive direction concerning this latter Act rather than any draft

of an amendment of any law or rules made either under the IFA or FC Act. In fact it is more like an instruction to a WPO which could have come from authorities under a state Government rather than from such a high powered Committee. The HLC has itself accepted this fact of dabbling into the spheres not referred to it vide paragraph 4.6 of its report. Therefore the HLC have transgressed its terms of reference and its recommendation in this regard and others of the same ilk need not be given any credence.

The HLC has made 7 out of a total 55 recommendations on forests including the first one already discussed heretofore. The **second recommendation** of the HLC is to the Ministry to come out with a definition of 'forest' (Para 5.5 of the Report). The Committee's recommendation in this regard is designed to bypass the Govt.'s difficulties which have arisen due to the Court's interpretation of the term in cases arising out of FC Act. The matter has also been discussed and debated at length by the Forestry Commission which was headed by a retired Chief Justice of the Apex Court and there appears to be no necessity to revisit the issue. The HLC appears to have been oblivious of the deliberations of the FC in this regard.

The HLC in its **third recommendation on forests** has asked the Govt. to offer incentive for increased community participation in farm and social forestry by way of providing legal safeguards to tree lands that may come up on private lands. This recommendation has come at least 65 years too late to be of any practical use. The land holdings now being so fragmented and miniscule, the recommendation even if

accepted by the Govt. will be hardly of any use apart from providing another avenue for the rent seekers.

The **fourth** recommendation also falls in the same category. There are few private holdings now of the type envisaged by the committee which may be planted up and then traded for compensatory afforestation. However if the percolating down of the effects of trading in carbon credit is taken to the individual tree farmers' level, the trading as envisaged by the HLC may fructify. If and when such trading gets quantified in terms canopy cover per unit area per year or better still per month basis, or such other parameters, a farmer may be tempted to grow tree crops and maintain the same for which he gets credit in monetary terms for the period he maintains such a cover. However if and when he harvests his crop, he stops getting benefit of carbon credits for it. If and when such an arrangement for canopy cropping is made, raising and maintaining of tree crop may become more lucrative than growing other cash crops. The Corporates then may have to provide for absorbents for their emission of GHG_s. This either they themselves have to do by being forced to raise plantations which absorb CO₂ and such other gases equivalent to what their factories are spewing out in the atmosphere or else they would have to purchase carbon credits from tree farmers who have that much of *surplus* absorbents (Tree crop) at their disposal. When taken to its logical end, the scenario may even envisage environmental audit of not only the polluting industries but the individual and families as

well. The whole process of trading may have to be vetted by the DFO who may then be called the DEO (the District Environment Officer) of the district where the absorbents are located. For such a development to materialise the DEO of each district may be required to maintain record of each holding in his district which shows number trees with canopy classes of species standing in each individual plot of land. This is equivalent to maintenance of half yearly khasra (land record showing the crop raised in each plot of land – presently held by Lekhpal/Patwari/Mondal or the revenue official of the village). Since the village revenue map is on 1:4000 (16" = 1 mile) scale, the FSI by that time might bring up their mapping skills to that level from the present 1:50,000 scale. Simultaneously the cycle of their reporting (The State Of Forests Reports) which is now biennial may have to come down to half yearly publication if not even more frequent.

Under its **fifth** recommendation, the committee desires the forest clearance procedure to be streamlined and made a single window process. There may not be any objection to the proposal except that it should not become alibi for silencing any dissent. However since a number of agencies and that too of different Govts., are involved in the process, it may not be possible that easily to accomplish the job as is desired by the Committee.

The sixth and the seventh recommendations are on determination of ratios for CA and for fixing NPV. In fact there is a strong case for making forest land dearer than adjoining agricultural land so that PUA approaches forest land as a last resort. However for determining the value of the forest land, it is desirable to determine its

present Expectation Value (EV) which is found out by adding the discounted values of the crop at the end of its successive rotation. But for doing so the value of all the yields of the crop both the direct and indirect ones like the net absorption of GHG and the release of the vital gas should also be taken into account. Prescription of 5 times the NPV by the HLC is arbitrary.

There are only these seven out of fifty five recommendations on forests. However the main emphasis of the Committee's recommendations is on quickening the pace of clearances for diversion of forest for non-forestry use rather on any other aspect of the IFA or FC Act referred to it. There is however nothing in its term of reference to draw such an inference. The FC Act had initially succeeded in retarding the pace of destruction of forests but of late even this was found to be inadequate. In the competitive politics of destruction, when the success of an environment minister is judged from the number of clearances granted and the extent of forests thus diverted, the future of forests is indeed very bleak and frightening. But if the recommendations of the HLC are accepted in their present form, Shri Javedkar Ji would definitely win the race of forest destruction hands down beating all his competitors S/Sri Veerappa Moiley, Jayanthi Natrajan and Jairam Romesh.

(Editor's notes: 1. The author is a retired Chief Wildlife warden, Meghalaya and now settled at Lucknow. 2. Article on the same subject was published in this journal in 3 instalments from Jan to March 2015 by Sri J. V. Sharma)

HARITHA HAARAM

To

The Honourable Chief Minister, Telangana State, Hyderabad.

Respected Sir,

Sub: Telangana State – Forest Resource – Improvement of Tree Cover in the State – Steps to be taken – Suggestions from Forum for Good Governance – Submitted – Reg.

Your announcement on 27th June 2014 to bring one-third of land mass of Telangana under green cover is the happiest news the well-meaning section of people heard in several years past. Forests had a harrowing time in India during the last decade as large chunks of forest land was diverted for non-forest purposes during the period. Telangana had its own tale of woes. We consider the present announcement as new Government's resolve in tune with National Forest Policy. We convey our hearty compliments for the gesture.

During last six years forest land to an extent of 8.08 lakh acres has been distributed to the Scheduled Tribes and other Traditional Forest Dwellers under Forest Rights Act resulting in decrease of 11.2% in State Forest Area. Forest land to an extent 4 lakh acres in Adilabad, 2.1 lakh acres in Khammam and 1.6 lakh acres in Warangal Districts were given away. These are the initiatives to help the tribal population and should be welcomed even though it brings down the area under forests in the State to 22.6% of Total Geographical Area (T.G.A).

Following figures will place the entire matter in perspective:

Total Geographical Area of State	2, 83, 82, 627 Acres
Total Area under Forests as per records	72, 25, 698 Acres
Forest Area alienated under Forest Right Act (during last 6 years)	8, 07, 971 Acres
Net Area under forests	64, 17, 727 Acres- 22.61%
One-third of TGA required being under forest cover as per National Forest Policy and as pledged by the Hon'able Chief Minister of Telangana	94, 60, 882 Acres
Net deficit of area under forests as per norms	(-) 30, 43, 155 Acres

Environment is an issue which should rank only next to defence of the priorities of the country, as the health and well-being of the endless future generations depend upon the environment we create/abuse now. The decision of the Government to improve the green cover is laudable despite the fact that the task is challenging. To bring the forest cover to desired 33% of geographical area of the state we need about 30 lakh Acres of land which is impossible to get. Than the other alternative is Agro forestry, Tank for shore plantations, village waste lands plantations and urban forestry. We offer the following suggestions in this regard for kind consideration:

1. More than 8 lakh acres of forest land has been distributed under Forest Rights Act. These patches of lands are situated mostly in interior forest areas away from the established farm land infrastructure. Government is said to be trying to drill bore wells and provide other facilities but the logistics appear to make things difficult. Tribal farmers are finding it difficult to cultivate these lands profitably with conventional crops and agricultural practices. The terrain is harsh with difficult accessibility. It is in the interest of tribal farmers and without disturbing the ownership of tribal's, if the Government designs an extensive agro-forestry programme to raise valuable timber and minor forest produce, medicinal plants and horticulture, the tree crops so raised will blend with surrounding forests amounting to reclamation of 8 lakh acres of forest land in the form of environmental asset.
2. Telangana has an age-old minor irrigation system with a chain of small & big tanks and kuntas linked one to other. Almost every village has this resource in place. We understand that renovating these chains of Tanks is the top priority of the government. With changes in farming practices, these resources are not receiving their due importance. Land up to Full Tank Level and buffer up to a prescribed limit is out of bounds for any other use as per the law in force. All the tank foreshores including the buffer area can be planted with Babul and other suitable species which will also serve as a bank of small timber and agricultural implements. This programme is expected to bring substantial area under tree cover running into lakhs of acres besides

reducing pressure on forests. Tank foreshore plantations should be an integral part of Tank renovation.

3. There are bald hillocks and waste lands at several places not fit for agriculture or any other use. All such areas can be identified and converted into village forests. It will be a substantial value addition to good environment.
4. People's participation should form an important component of forestry improvement plan. Past experience of Vana Samrakshana Samities involving people in protection of Forests did not give the desired results and needs corrective measures.

Yours faithfully

(M. PADMANABHA REDDY)

Secretary, Forum for Good Governance

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA FOREST DEPARTMENT

From:
Sri S.B.L. Misra, IFS.,
Pr. Chief Conservator of Forests
Head of Forest Force, Aranya Bhavan, Saifabad,
Telangana, Hyderabad-500 004.

To
Sri M. Padmanabha Reddy, IFS. (Retd.)
Secretary,
Forum for Good Governance,
H.No.6-1-69, Flat 204, GKR Mansion,
Lakidikapool, Saifabad, Hyderabad.

Ref.No 2508/2014/Scheme-II, dt:04-08-2014

Sir,

- Sub: Telangana State - Forest Resource - Improvement of Tree cover in the State- Steps to be taken - Suggestions from Forum for Good Governance - Meeting to be held on 4-08-2014 at 3.00 pm at O/o. PCCF (HoFF), Telangana, Hyderabad- Reg.
- Ref : Repnt. from Sri Padmanabha Reddy, IFS., (Retd.), Secretary, Forum for Good Governance, Hyderabad L.No.FGG/CM/RTI/59/2004. dt.5-07-2014 as addressed to the Hon'ble Chief Minister. (Received from Pr. Secretary to Hon'ble Chief Minister, Govt. of Telangana, Hyderabad Ref.No.113/ Pr. Secr. CM/2014, dt. 18-07-2014).

.....

In the reference cited, the Secretary, Forum for Good Governance, Hyderabad has addressed a letter to the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Telangana State, Hyderabad with a request to bring 1/3 of land mass of Telangana under Green cover and people participation should form an important component of forestry improvement plan and some suggestions have been made by him in this regard.

In this connection, the Addl. Pr. Chief Conservator of Forests/ Director, APPA, Dulapally, Telangana State will hold a meeting with the Secretary and other representatives of Forum for Good Governance on 4-08-2014 at 3.00 PM at O/o. PCCF (HoFF), Telangana, Hyderabad regarding steps to be taken for the improvement of tree cover in the Telangana State as suggested by the Forum for Good Governance on

1. Promoting Agro Forestry in RoFR Lands
2. Taking up Babul Plantations/ Tank Foreshore Plantations and, 3. Barren Hill Afforestation

Further the Forum for Good Governance is also requested to indicate the specific role it wishes to play in improvement of tree cover in the State and whether they are willing to motivate RoFR title holders in at least one district/ Mandal to adopt Agro Forestry. Secondly they are also requested to indicate the corrective measures for further improving the functioning of Vana Samarakshana Samithis.

You are requested to attend the above meeting along with your team members.

Yours faithfully,

Sd/- P. Raghuvver

for Pr. Chief Conservator of Forests

MY FORAY INTO PHILOSOPHICAL WORLD

By
V. S. Joshi

The last line scribbled in my horoscope prepared by a family priest read as 'He will be an orthodox during later part of his life'. Though I didn't much perceive the implied meaning of word orthodox during earlier part of my life; the events that unfolded during post-retirement period of my life certainly revealed the true meaning of this word. The story runs like this.

Sage Manu, supposedly originator of human race in the present era had prescribed in his famous Vedic law '*Manusmriti*', the fourfold system of enlightened stages in human life. They are 1. Celibacy (*Brahmacharyashram*) meant for learning, 2. Householder-ship (*Grihastashram*) meant for leading purposeful married life, 3. Forest dwelling (*Vanaprasthashram*) meant for discarding worldly pleasures and 4. Renunciation (*Sanyasashram*) meant for striving hard to achieve final liberation from worldly existence. As a forest officer by profession, I had rolled into one, the second and third stages of this Manu-diktat and I believe most of the forest officers are required to indulge into this sort of jugglery during their service period in order to have best of both the worlds. On my retirement from service, I was leading peaceful life at Pune as all my three sons were well groomed, happily married and had left the nest for excelling in their

respective professions. However, the things were not to be as smooth as per happily ending film story. My wife eventually fell seriously ill and breathed her last leaving me alone to face the mundane worldly life. Left with very little choice to pass the boring time, I used to make weekly visits to British council library at Pune, pick up three or four books on which I could lay my hands, read them voraciously and revisit the library to fetch a new set of books.

As if to break my routine, Mr T. M. Chavan, one my colleague from forest department gave me ring after gap of nearly three decades and said that he will be calling on me in the evening. On his arrival, he showed me three spiral bound bundles of printouts containing the verse to verse Marathi translation of '*Dnyaneshwari*', a commentary on '*Bhagavat Geeta*', the first of its kind in India delivered in *Prakrit* language prevalent during twelfth century by a legendary philosopher saint *Dnyaneshwar* who at the tender age of sixteen extemporarily narrated this commentary consisting of 9000 verses at a nondescript village Newase in western Maharashtra. Chavan had performed this stupendous task after toiling untiringly for five years. Unfortunately, he was not finding any publisher ready to publish his book on the plea

that such books have very little marketability. I suggested to him the name of *Padmashri* (Now *Padmabhushan*) Dr Vijay Bhatkar, a renowned computer scientist who created the first Indian super computer '*Param*' during year 1993 at behest Rajiv Gandhi, then Prime Minister of India; as Dr Bhatkar reverently believed in philosophy of saint Dnyaneshwar. But real problem was how to contact such a famous person without having any acquaintance with him. Eventually, this book found its way on the table of Dr Bhatkar through one of his close associate. Dr Bhatkar on observing work of Chavan remarked that he was in search of such verse to verse '*Marathi Dnyaneshwari*' for long time and he will publish this book through his Multiversity Publications. To make a long story short, this book went through four editions and so far more than 6000 of its copies have been sold out. This long story was to initiate the divine predictions mentioned in my horoscope.

Chavan on observing my high appetite for reading English books on any subject under sun once asked me "Why don't you translate my '*Marathi Dnyaneshwari*' into English?" Initially, I was reluctant to undertake such venture as I had never in the past forayed into unknown territory of philosophical world. However, on second thought I decided give it a fair trial and started translating few verses from first chapter of '*Dnyaneshwari*' into English. When I showed my

work to Chavan, he was quite pleased and said "Now don't look back, go ahead with full speed." Then without looking back I completed translation of first two chapters of '*Dnyaneshwari*' and showed it to Dr Bhatkar who was delighted to see that work and asked me to complete this job as early as possible. His patronising attitude gave me enough courage to sail with full steam through choppy waters of this task. I completed this entire job with continuous efforts of four years on my part and again showed it to Dr Bhatkar who promised me to publish it in due course of time through Multiversity Publications.

After completion of English translation of '*Dnyaneshwari*', I at the insistence of Dr. Bhatkar started translating into English the works of another blind philosopher saint Gulabrao, who during short span of thirty four years of life created magnificent philosophical literature consisting of 6000 pages through discourses in Marathi and Hindi languages delivered by him during late nineteenth century at various places in eastern Maharashtra. The translated version of one of his book titled '*Sadhubodh*' was published at the time of 'Saint Gulabrao literature conference' recently organised at Pune. If this is what it meant by being an orthodox, I consider myself to be very fortunate to belong to such orthodoxy bestowing feeling of immense contentment and peace of mind.

PRAYER OF THE FOREST

Man!

**I am the warmth of your home in the
cold winter night and The Protective
shade when summer's Sun is strong
I am the Frame work of the roof to your
house and the top of your Table;
The bed in which you sleep and the
timber which you fashion your boats,
I am the handle to your hoe and the
door to your hut,
I am the wood of your Cradle and the
boards of your Coffin
I am the bread of kindness and the
flower of beauty Hear my prayer
"Destroy me not"**

*Collected and contributed by
Sri . R.R. Rao with thanks*

“ABHAYA” A DESTINATION FOR THE DESTITUTE

By
V.V. Hari Prasad

It was a busy railway track frequented by number of trains and surrounded by the enchanting green fields. Agricultural labourers were busy with their seasonal works in the fields. They noticed a fast approaching train at a long distance. A Woman was walking with a child in her hands in the opposite direction. They found the woman keeping the child on the track and walking coolly away. Those who were at a stone throw distance, rushed to the track and grabbed the child. The woman vanished into the bushes nearby and not so attractive male child, probably a few days old who could not even open his eyes was crying. Unmindful of this event the train proceeded towards its destination apparently in a huff.

This is not a script prepared for any video film but a stark reality that took place in the sub urban limits of Tirupati in Chittoor district a few years back.

The following day the discarded child found solace in the lap of Dr Tasleem Sultana Founder cum Director of “Abhaya Kshetram” a charitable trust located near Railway gate, Bismilla nagar, Renigunta of Chittoor district Andhra Pradesh.

Tasleem Sultana a simple person hailing from a

lower middle class family, the daughter of a tailor and one among his six children strove hard got gold medal in M.Sc. Psychology and completed her Ph.D. in special Education. She worked in one of the reputed N.G.Os and in the state government. The service rendered by her could not satiate her appetite for doing service to the unfortunate, underprivileged, neglected and faceless multitude in the society. Thus consequently came in to existence on 26th August 2003, on which falls the birth day of Mother Theresa an epitome of kindness and service to the mankind, a trust called “Abhaya Kshetram Charitable Trust” at Renigunta of Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh.

In the last week of May 2015 I went to visit the trust activities accompanying Sri K. Ch. Pillai a retired DFO, who has been one among the scores of philanthropists contributing their might for sustaining the trust. In the absence of financial assistance by the government to the trust to my surprise I found the helping hands which include those of auto drivers, working class personnel and also of a physically handicapped pensioner who sends money order of Rs.500/- every month from the meagre

amount that he receives as pension. Great souls indeed I was moved by the back ground of each one of the 170 destitute persons inhabiting the orphanage run by the charitable trust. The back grounds of a few of the inmates are narrated below.

POLIO AFFECTED: Ramachandra has non-operational legs (polio affected) and has been with "Abhaya Kshetram Charitable Trust" for more than nine years. He has graduated in Arts and education. Through his determination and encouragement from the trust he now takes care of all the donation accounts and looks after active cash management of the institution. He got married to another lady from "Abhaya Kshetram" and has five year old kid.

MENTALLY RETARDED: Manoj Kumar a 22 year old mentally retarded individual is provided special education, speech therapy and physiotherapy at "Abhaya Kshetram". He goes out alone and purchases vegetables and he has been helping the cooks in the kitchen

VISUALLY IMPAIRED: Saraswati is a paraplegic visually impaired and mentally retarded person. She is administered with physiotherapy and occupational therapy. Her situation has improved and now she helps in the kitchen and takes care of other special children.

DEPRESSIVE AND POLIO AFFECTED: Kalavati another polio affected person (dysfunctional lower limbs) joined the trust more than 4 years back in bad health and depression. With her

dedication she has improved significantly to an extent that she is in charge of the entire "Girls' Campus" at "Abhaya Kshetram". She has become adept in handling any type of retarded child especially the teenage girls.

The heart rending scenario here is that the physically challenged inmates take care of other orphan younger ones and children with warmth and affection by sitting on a wheel chair because of their inability to move on their legs. The sense of belongingness in their behaviour is seen to be believed.

CHILDREN WITH OUT PARENTAL CARE

GLOBALLY: According to UNICEF, children worldwide lose their parents in conflict, or due to poverty, disability, **HIV/AIDS**. Hence there is a large population of children that grow up without one or both of their parents. Children without parental care are at a high risk of abuse, exploitation and neglect. Large numbers of children end up in institutional care. Inadequate individual care of institutions can socially and emotionally impair children. About 1.5 million children in the Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States live in public care institutions. In Europe and Central Asia, over 1 million children live in residential institutions. Way back in 2003 itself there were an estimated 143 million orphans in 93 countries of sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean. Asia had the highest number of orphans due to all causes,

with 87.6 million children. The present scenario must be much more pathetic.

DESTITUTE CHILDREN: Children may be destitute, for the interim or permanently of parental care for many reasons including the illness, death or imprisonment of parents, separation due to migration or armed conflict, the removal by child welfare authorities and/or the courts based on the child's best interests, detention of the child, or following the child's own initiative to leave home.

INDIAN SCENARIO: In India the child parent relationship is often seen as one of obedience of a social order more so than a right of the child. Hence when a child is separated from his/her parent it is not viewed as the duty of the state to provide that child with a family environment. Nonetheless adoption is supervised by the state, but India does not have a long term foster care or alternate care system outside of institutionalisation.

UNICEF estimated that there were 25 million orphaned children in India way back in 2007. Children without Parental care Another study estimated there were about 44 million destitute children and over 12 million orphan and abandoned children in India, yet there were only 5000 (0.04%) adoptions every year.(Not the latest statistics) The institutions for children in conflict with the law host a few thousands of children. The wide gap that exists in the knowledge of and attitude towards child adoption and

intention to adopt a child between people from different socio-economic backgrounds exposes the need of the state to initiate promotion of child adoption and creating a system of non-institutional care for children above the adoption age.

Adoption in India comes under the provisions of three acts and is carried out centrally by CARA

- The Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act 1956
- The Guardian and Wards Act 1890
- The Juvenile Justice Act 2000

ORPHANS ALL OVER THE WORLD:

It is estimated that there are between 160 million and 210 million orphans worldwide (UNICEF). To give one an idea of the enormity of the numbers compare it with the population of the United States which is just a little over 300 million; or the population of Russia -141 million. 143 million children would equal the combined populations of New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago and 47 other of the largest cities in the USA, plus the combined populations of Ireland, Norway, Denmark, France, Greece Nicaragua and Costa Rica. These are not just numbers and statistics, these are *CHILDREN! Distressed, struggling and with little hope in the world.*

As per an estimate

- ◆ Every day 5,760 more children become orphans.
- ◆ Every 15 seconds, another child becomes an AIDS orphan in Africa

It is estimated that many orphans will spend an average of 10 years in an orphanage or foster care program. Infants may stay as long as 18 years while children who become orphans at an older age stay a shorter time.

250,000 children are adopted annually but 14,050,000 orphan children will grow up and age out of the orphan care system. That means every day 38,493 children will age out. That's one orphan every 2.2 seconds who will leave an orphanage or foster care with no family to belong to and no place to call home. Less than 1% of all orphan children will be adopted. Who will care for the rest of the millions of orphaned, abandoned and homeless children? The ruling governments have to understand the magnitude of the problem.

Russia - It is estimated that since the fall of the Iron Curtain there are between 1 and 4 million homeless children in Russia. There are 30,000 children living on the streets and in the sewers and subways in Moscow. At around age 16 or 17, orphans are forced to leave the orphanage system and enter the world with limited education and minimal support. Within the first five years, almost 90% of these orphans end up in crime, prostitution, drug and alcohol addiction, or commit suicide. In Ukraine and Russia 10% - 15% of children who are out of an orphanage commit suicide before age 18, 60% of the girls are lured into prostitution, 70% of the boys

become hardened criminals. Another Russian study reported that of the 15,000 orphans aging out of state-run institutions every year, 10% committed suicide, 5,000 were unemployed, 6,000 were homeless and 3,000 were in prison within three years.(as per the estimates of one of the reputed international N.G.Os).

Latin America - There are an estimated 8 million orphans. In Latin America a common cause of being orphans is abandonment by poor families unable to feed all their children. Brazil - there are 3-4 million street children, nearly 8,00,000 child prostitutes. The average homeless child survives 3 to 4 years on the streets. Almost half of all street children in Brazil will die before 18. Girls begin prostitution as early as age 11. Drug-running for money begins as early as age 8. Most children on the streets are between the ages of 5 and 17 years old.

Haiti has an estimated 1.2 million orphans and vulnerable children (OVC). About 7,000 children roam the streets of Port-au-Prince. Thousands more can be found across the island in cities such as Cap Haitien and Gonaives. Every week hundreds of babies and children are abandoned in Haiti shortly after birth. They are left in hospitals, shop doorways, alleys or simply dumped in the street. Haitian mothers feel forced to abandon their infants in order to survive. Many are abandoned because their

parents have no means to feed and take care of them. A large number of children become orphaned because their parents have died from disease, natural disaster, conflicts, and political turmoil.

ORPHANS IN INDIA: - The orphan crisis in India is staggering. It is estimated that there are over 11 million abandoned babies in the country; ninety percent of these are little girls. India has more than 18 million children living on the streets. Orphanages are filled with abandoned children and millions more wander the streets just doing whatever they can to survive. A pathetic situation indeed

Asia has an estimated 61.5 million orphans.

The US Foster Care System - There are approximately more than 500, 000 children in the foster care system in U.S.A. Of those about 1, 18,000 are available for adoption.

Although reflecting only broad projections, the estimated number of orphans globally currently reported by the US Government and UNICEF include:

- 17.8 million Children worldwide have lost both parents ("double orphan").
- 153 million children worldwide have lost either one parent ("single orphan") or both parents.

Missing From the Estimates

One of the greatest weaknesses in these global

orphan estimates is that they include only orphans that are currently living in homes. They do not count the estimated 2 to 8+ million children living in institutions. Nor do current estimates include the vast number of children who are living on the streets, exploited for labour, victims of trafficking, or participating in armed groups. Thus, global orphan statistics significantly underestimate the number of orphans worldwide and fail to account for many children that are among the most vulnerable and most in need of a family.

Many of these children who live in orphanages or on the streets are known as "social orphans." Although one or even both of their parents may be alive, social orphans rarely see their parents or experience life in a family. Some never do. Global orphan statistics shed virtually no light on the reality of the vast number of social orphans who have one or more living parents, yet experience life as if they did not

"Abhaya kshetram" a ray of hope for the destitute in A.P

At "Abhaya kshetram" 170 hapless citizens of this **KARMABHOOMI** have been provided with shelter, food, education and medical care at Renigunta located at the lotus feet of Lord Venkateshwara. The government, political bigwigs and other resourceful and mighty left their plight to a dedicated and committed

woman called Smt. Tasleem having very meagre resources at her command and the God forsaken group comprises the following.

Total strength 170

Mentally retarded orphan children 91.(girls.43 boys 48)

Orphans with mental illness 24. (Boys 12 girls 12)

Old aged orphans 35 (Men 17 women 18)

Orthopedically challenged orphans 20 (Men 11 women 09).

The founder of the trust has been running the trust with the grit of her teeth with no worth mentioning resourceful helping hand coming to her rescue, by running from pillar to the post for donations. She lamented saying that one of the local politicians wielding power gave just a contribution of Rs1000/- while expressing abundant lip sympathy, another celebrity promised that he would extend substantial help provided he became the Chief minister and another equally popular celebrity handed over ¼ th Kg of sweet on his birth day to be distributed among all the 170 inmates of "Abhaya kshetram".

A great Contribution indeed?

Coming to the recognition received Dr Tasleem received "RAJEEV GANDHI MANAVA SEVA AWARD 2010. She was also presented with "DEVI" award recently in addition to several awards in the past including **Andhra Ratna and Mother Theresa awards.**

After being moved by the plight of the inmates and the commitment of the founder in providing them basic amenities including education I have

taken a decision to emulate a squirrel which helped Lord Rama in the construction of mammoth bridge across the huge sea to reach out Ravana. I handed over a cheque for a reasonable amount of five digit contribution to the trust from the first payment of honorarium made to me by T.T.D Tirupati in connection with the assignment I have taken up for T.T.D Forest wing. Then Dr Tasleem thanked me for which I am afraid that I do not deserve much because she has been doing the job of Lord Rama whereas me that of a humble squirrel .**I would sum up this article with a plea to all those philanthropic readers to explore the possibility of contributing their might to the trust and there by extend their helping hand to the great soul Dr Tasleem whose indomitable spirit in coming to the rescue of God forsaken souls of this great country is par excellence.** The particulars of the trust are as follows

Abhaya kshetram charitable trust,
Renigunta, chittor district

Current account number 30371094299 (branch code SBIN 0006677)

State Bank of India, Settipalli branch Tirupati

Mobile numbers: 9346402089; 9291225514

www.abhayakshetram.org

E-mail: sthasleem@yahoo.com

(Note: The statistics furnished above were collected from Internet –Author)

MINUTES OF THE 76TH GENERAL BODY MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED FOREST OFFICERS TELANGANA AND ANDHRA PRADESH HELD ON 14.06.2015 AT HYDERABAD.

Sri B. M. Swamidas, Secretary of the Association invited the Office Bearers S/Sri T. Narayan Swamy, Vice-President, A. V. Govinda Rajulu, Joint Secretary and Qamar Mohd. Khan Editor Vana Premi to occupy the chairs on the dais. He informed the General Body that the President of the Association, Sri S. K. Das, is out of Station and as such requested the Vice-President Sri T. Narayan Swamy to preside over the meeting. Sri T. Narayan Swamy presided over the meeting and conducted the proceedings.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY: The Secretary explained about the action taken by him on the decisions of 75th General Body Meeting held on 22-3-2015 and 87th Executive Committee meeting held on 14-5-2015. It was decided to constitute a small group/committee of Retired Forest Officers who are willing to spare their time and energy and discuss matters relating to Forest Protection, Development of Forests, Haritha Haram in Telangana and Neeru-Chettu programmes in Andhra Pradesh. Notices were published in Vana Premi of April 2015 issue to intimate their names to the Secretary /Editor Vana Premi. There was not much of encouraging response from the members. As decided by the Executive Committee, the matter is now placed before the GB Meeting.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS: At the outset Sri T. Narayan Swamy welcomed the newly joined members. He placed a proposal before the General Body for change of venue of next General Body Meeting to Aranya Bhavan premises. All the members unanimously accepted the proposal. The next GBM will be held in Aranya Bhavan Premises after obtaining permission from the concerned authorities. The Presiding Officer further informed the following:

Enhanced Dearness Relief is likely to be paid to IFS Pensioners along with June pension. Arrears w.e.f. 01.01.2015 will also be paid.

The VII Central Pay Commission is likely to submit its report by the end of September 2015. The Director, CGHS has revised the package rates for kidney transplant, cardiology, DVR etc.

NEW EMPANELLED HOSPITALS UNDER CGHS:

The Additional Director CGHS, Hyderabad, by an Office Order, empanelled the following Private Hospitals for a period of 2 years:

1. Aditya Hospitals Tilak Road, Hyderabad.
2. Star Hospitals Banjara Hills, Hyderabad.
3. Prime Hospitals Ameerpet, Hyderabad.
4. Prime Hospitals Kukatpally, Hyderabad.
5. Sai Vani Super Speciality Lower Tank Bund, Hyderabad.

6. Usha Mullapudi Cardiac Centre Jeedimetla, Hyderabad. 7. Anand Eye Institute, Habshiguda Hyderabad. 8. Centre for Sight, Banjara Hills, Rd.No.2, Hyderabad. 9. Likhitas Diagnostics, Dilsukh Nagar, Hyderabad.

FORMATION OF SMALL GROUP/ COMMITTEE OF RETIRED FOREST OFFICERS TO STUDY AND PREPARATION OF PLAN OF ACTION FOR FOREST IMPROVEMENT: The following members have given their willingness to join the committee:

1. Sri S. D. Mukherji, 2. Sri Hitesh Malhotra, 3. Sri J. V. Sharma, 4. Sri M. Padmanabha Reddy 5. Sri Murali Krishna Rao, 6. Sri Jaya Ram Prasad and 7. Sri Darshanam. The matter was discussed. Sri S. D. Mukherji, Sri Hitesh Malhotra and Sri Padmanabha Reddy explained the need for constituting a committee to study various aspects Forest Improvements like Haritha Haram and Neeru- Chettu Programmes. The GB named Sri M. Padmanabha Reddy as Convener of the Committee and requested him to convene meetings and prepare an action plan at the earliest.

VANA PREMI CONTRIBUTIONS: Sri Qamar Mohd. Khan, Editor, Vana Premi, informed the members that every year about 1000 copies of Vana Premi are being supplied to Forest Department for which the Department paid Rupees two lakh per

annum. In view of bifurcation of State, he suggested that, from now onwards, we may charge Rupees One Lakh from each state of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. The General Body approved the suggestion.

ANY OTHER ITEMS: False Advertisements: Sri L. Krishna Bhoopal Rao enlightened the members about the false advertisements in newspapers and media. He pointed out that many advertisements are being given in print and electronic media about health remedies, increase of height, gaining of fair colour and weight loss etc. The false advertisements create a false hope which cannot be achieved. He advised members not to believe such advertisements.

VOTE OF THANKS: Sri A. V. Govinda Rajulu, Joint Secretary Cum Treasurer, proposed vote of thanks. He particularly thanked the ladies and members who attended the meeting today. He also thanked the speakers for their suggestions. Special thanks were extended to Sri V. V. Hari prasad, Sri P. Bhushanam and Sri Kishan Das who hosted the lunch for the day. He also thanked all the persons who assisted in successful conduct of the meeting.

The next General Body Meeting will be held in September 2015.

B. M. SWAMIDAS, SECRETARY

NEWS AND NOTES

Groundwater depletion in India worst in

world: NASA: Washington, June 18 (IANS) Groundwater is disappearing fast from the world and India is among the worst hit, shows data from NASA's Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment (GRACE) satellites.

Among the world's largest groundwater basins, the Indus Basin aquifer of India and Pakistan, which is a source of fresh water for millions of people, is the second-most overstressed with no natural replenishment to offset usage, said two new studies led by the University of California - Irvine (UCI), using data from GRACE satellites. About a third of the Earth's largest groundwater basins are being rapidly depleted by human consumption, the studies said.

Groundwater aquifers are typically located in soils or deeper rock layers beneath the Earth's surface.

The most overburdened aquifers are in the world's driest areas, where populations draw heavily on underground water. Climate change and population growth are expected to intensify the problem, the researchers warned.

"What happens when a highly stressed aquifer is located in a region with socioeconomic or political tensions that can't supplement declining water supplies fast enough?" asked Alexandra Richey, the lead author on both studies, who conducted the research as a UCI doctoral student.

"We are trying to raise red flags now to pinpoint where active management today could protect future lives and livelihoods," Richey said.

The Arabian Aquifer System, an important water source for more than 60 million people, is the most over stressed in the world, the findings showed.

The studies are the first to comprehensively characterize global groundwater losses with data from space, using readings generated by NASA's twin GRACE satellites.

A GRACE measure dips and bumps in the Earth's gravity, which are affected by the mass of water. In the first paper, researchers found that 13 of the planet's 37 largest aquifers studied between 2003 and 2013 were being depleted while receiving little to no recharge.

Eight were classified as "overstressed", with nearly no natural replenishment to offset usage. Another five were found to be "extremely" or "highly" stressed, depending upon the level of replenishment in each.

Those aquifers were still being depleted but had some water flowing back into them.

"Given how quickly we are consuming the world's groundwater reserves, we need a coordinated global effort to determine how much is left," principal investigator Jay Famiglietti, who is also the senior water scientist at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California, said.

The findings appeared in the journal *Water Resources Research*.

3 Quick Tips to Make Flowers Last Longer: -

It's amazing to see how much brightness and cheer a simple vase of flowers can introduce to a room. But like other forms of beauty, bouquets are a fleeting treat, and it's only a matter of days before they wilt away. Though you cannot prevent the inevitable, there are a few ways to forestall it. First, check to see whether the florist included a packet of flower food with your purchase. Believe it or not, that stuff actually works. If there's no flower food available—if, for instance, you cut the flowers in your own garden—try one of these time-tested tricks to keep cut flowers fresh just a little bit longer.

1. Container Conscious: Since bacteria and fungi accelerate the natural deterioration of cut flowers, it's imperative to wash—thoroughly wash—whatever vessel you're planning to display your blooms in. When cleaning the container, use hot and soapy water. Or, if you like, disinfect the vessel with a solution of diluted household bleach (one part bleach for every, 10 parts water). Finish up by rinsing with plain water.

2. Careful Cutting: Clipping flowers from your garden? Try to do so early in the morning, before the heat of day saps vigor from the blooms. Along with your pruner, remember to bring a bucket of tepid water. As you cut each flower, place it into the bath so as to prevent the end of

the stem from drying out and sealing off.

If working with store-bought flowers, remove about one inch from the bottom of each stem. Make your cut at an angle, under a running tap. Shortening the stem encourages the flower to take up water again. Before setting your bouquet into its container, remove the lower leaves to minimize decay.

3. Feeding Frenzy: Rather than simply filling your chosen container with water, many recommend keeping cut flowers suspended in a solution comprised of one part lemon-lime soda, three parts water, and, for every quart of liquid, a quarter-teaspoon of household bleach. Don't use diet soda; the full-calorie sugar provides valuable nourishment to the flowers. Meanwhile, the bleach keeps harmful bacteria at bay.

Having taken all the right steps toward keeping your cut flowers fresh, go ahead and set them out on a surface in your home. Be aware, however, that not all surfaces are equally conducive to flower longevity. Avoid putting blooms in direct sunlight, near heating vents, or next to heat-generating appliances

The happiest countries in the world, according to neuroscientists, statisticians, and economists: - An international team of economists, neuroscientists, and statisticians just released their third World Happiness Report, which measures well-being in countries around the world to help guide public policy.

Switzerland topped the list of the happiest nations, and all of the top eight countries were in the global north. Switzerland was followed by Iceland, Denmark, Norway, Canada, Finland, the Netherlands, and Sweden.

The United States ranked 15th, behind Mexico and Austria. Still, that's a slight improvement from the last report, in which the US ranked 17th. The World Happiness Report isn't without a scientific basis.

One of its key findings, based on decades of neuroscientific and psychological research, suggests that keeping the brain happy relies on four main factors: 1) staying positive, 2) recovering from negative feelings, like a bout of sadness or anger, 3) caring about and spending time with family and friends, and 4) being mindful and allowing ourselves to feel "captured" by emotions like awe or joy.

Global warming behind heat waves' It Is India's Second-Most Fatal As Well : - As the death toll in the current heat wave crossed the 2,000 mark, this has become the fifth deadliest ever heat wave in the world and the second deadliest in India, according to an international database of disasters.

Weathermen are predicting that there are a few more days left in the ongoing heat wave -which has killed the most number of people in Andhra Pradesh (1,636) and Telangana (541) -while affecting large parts of the rest of the country.

The deadliest heat wave on record in India is the 1998 one in which 2,541 people died. The most

lethal heat wave in the world was the one that crippled Europe in 2003, killing 71,310 people. These figures are maintained in the Emergency Events Database (EM-DAT) maintained by the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters based in Brussels, Belgium. Weather expert and founder of Weather Underground Jeff Masters writes that "death tolls from heat waves are very difficult to estimate, since excess heat is typically not listed as the primary cause of death in cases where the victim has a pre-existing condition such as heart or lung disease." This means that in most cases, especially in India, the actual death toll will be much higher in all the listed events, including the current one.

Researchers of the Ahmedabad Heat Climate Study Group analyzed all deaths in Ahmedabad in the 2010 heat wave and compared it to all deaths in the previous year (2009) and the subsequent year (2011) to find out the real number of excess deaths attributable to a heat wave. Their results, published in the journal PLOS-ONE in March 2014, were stunning. While the official death toll due to heat wave conditions was recorded as 50, the study found an excess of 1,344 deaths in 2010 over other years. That's a 43% spike in deaths due to heat wave conditions.

In the list of top ten deadliest disasters, Indian heat waves figure four times - 1998, 2002, 2003 and 2015. Unsurprisingly, six of the top ten heat waves in terms of deaths have occurred in the 21st century, which has also recorded eight of

the ten warmest years ever since records of global temperatures have started being kept. 2014 was tied as the warmest year on record with 1998, and the first quarter of 2015 has already been declared the warmest on record. So, global warming and increasing population are contributing to the increasing ferocity of heat waves. (Source Times of India with thanks)

Extinct' Myanmar Bird Rediscovered After 73

Years: - A bird that was long thought to have gone extinct has been rediscovered in Myanmar after a team of scientists used a recording of its distinctive call to track it down. The Jerdon's Babbler (*chrysomma altirostre altirostre*), a small brown bird similar in size to a house sparrow, was last spotted in Myanmar in 1941 and was thought to have died out altogether. But a team of scientists in May 2014 managed to uncover multiple birds nesting in a small area of grassland in Myanmar's central Bago region, according to their report published in the latest edition of *Birding Asia*.

The scientists targeted some of the few remaining patches of wild grassland left along Myanmar's mighty Irrawaddy River, now one of the most heavily cultivated regions of the impoverished but emerging south-east Asian nation. At one small patch of grassland near an abandoned agricultural station, the team heard what they thought could be the babbler's distinctive call, successfully recorded it and then played it.

"The bird readily came in to playback and revealed it to be a magnificent adult Jerdon's Babbler," the team from the Wildlife Conservation Society, Myanmar's Nature and Wildlife Conservation Division and the National University of Singapore wrote in their report.

"Over the course of the next 48 hours, we repeatedly found the species at several locations in the immediate vicinity and managed to obtain blood samples and high quality photographs," they added. Scientists in Singapore warned that the bird's survival is still far from guaranteed given pressure on Myanmar's few remaining grasslands.

"This discovery not only proves that the species still exists in Myanmar but that the habitat can still be found as well," Colin Poole, director of Wildlife Conservation Society's regional hub in Singapore, said in a statement. "Future work is needed to identify remaining pockets of natural grassland and develop systems for local communities to conserve and benefit from them," he added. Myanmar has more species of bird than any other country in mainland Southeast Asia, with ornithologists saying this number is likely to increase if more scientific research is conducted.

(Pls see last cover page for photo)

BOOK REVIEW

A DICTIONARY OF 3 LANGUAGES: It is a unique attempt of compiling a dictionary of three languages, viz. Urdu, English and Kannada. It is basically an Urdu dictionary with meanings in English and Kannada. A language takes years and years to transform and reach perfection – it keeps on improving year after year in a continuous process.

Urdu, according to the said dictionary, means “The Hindustani language spoken in India and abroad (an Indo Aryan language); an army, a camp.” Since the language has its origin to army, it was first known as “Lashkar”.

Hindustani is a simple language, not much influenced by Sanskritised Hindi, while chaste Hindi is full of Sanskrit words. In the evolution of Urdu, it has borrowed and digested many words from Persian (Farsi) and Arabic (Arabi) and has enriched itself. Its script is an adaptation of Persian, written from right to left.

The book under review is the result of hard labour of its author, Dr B. Raghotham Rao Desai, over a considerable period. He earned a doctorate in Urdu; Kannada, is his mother tongue; and English as the official language during his forestry service over more than three decades. He has thus become a master of three languages. He richly deserves to be called a “THRI BHASHA PRAVEENA”

One rare and special feature of the book: it

provides pronunciation guide of Urdu words, in English and Kannada. This feature undoubtedly is a user-friendly innovation. In the South Indian States, even before the advent of British Rule, certain words like Istemrar, Darkhasth, Maazi, Manzoor, Ijara, Jagir, Maqtha, Muddayi, Chalan etc. had become part of the local language in usage, for which their English meanings are given. The book is an endeavour seeking academic excellence, the object being portrayal with empathetic fervour.

The author, the publishers and the editorial board have done a commendable job in bringing out this volume at a reasonable price. It would have been better if the origin of each Urdu word to its parent (H for Hindi; P for Persian and A for Arabic) is indicated.

In the Foreword, the Director, Prof. Khaja Mohd. Ikramuddin desired that it would be a great work if similar dictionaries are prepared for other Indian languages. He paid glorious tribute deservingly to the author for his thorough knowledge of three languages.

TRILINGUAL DICTIONARY: Published by the Director, National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language, Urdu Bhavan, FC 33/9. Institutional Area, New Delhi, 110 025. It can be had from: West Block 8 R. K. Puram New Delhi 11066. Price Rs 554/-

K. B. R. Reddy

LEGAL NOTES

State of Himachal Pradesh & others, vs Halli Devi

Smt. Halli Devi, resident of a village in Chamba district of H.P., was going to her Cattle-Shed on 27.3.1984 to feed her cattle. She was attacked by black bear and the woman sustained multiple injuries and lost sight in her left eye. Under the scheme formulated by the state Government, a relief of Rs. 5,000/- was granted to her.

Halli Devi, as an individual person, filed a suit on 19.12.1991 against State of Himachal and others, for recovery of Rs. 1, 00,000/- on account of personal injuries. It was averred that the Divisional Forest Officer, for protecting the wild animals, had let loose the bears and other animals. As a result of the attack by the black bear, she incurred expenditure of Rs. 50,000/- on her medical treatment. An additional sum of Rs. 50,000/- would be required for further treatment. She asserted that she suffered because of the acts of commission and omission of the forest officials, The defendants resisted the claim and denied that the averment that the black bear was let loose. Objections were also raised on the maintainability of the suit on several grounds like jurisdiction, limitation, misjoinder etc. On the pleadings of the parties, issues were framed and trial of the suit took place.

By judgment and decree dated 25.7.1995, the trial court (The Court of Sub-Judge, Dalhousie)

dismissed the suit. The court came to the conclusion that the plaintiff is not entitled to any damages / compensation as she failed to prove that the black bear was let loose by the defendants.

An appeal was filed before the District Court, Chamba. The appellate court reversed the judgment of the lower court and decreed the suit on 20.8.1997 for a sum of Rs. 50,000/-

Aggrieved by the judgment of the District Court, a second appeal was filed before the High Court. During the examination of the appeal, the High Court found that two substantial questions of law are involved in the matter, viz.

- 1). Whether jurisdiction of the court is barred by Sec.60 of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 ?
- 2). Whether the state is liable for damages in the event of a person being killed or injured by wild animal?

The Deputy Advocate General, who appeared for the State, submitted that the suit is hit by Sec. 60 (2) of the Wildlife Protection Act. But the court did not agree with the argument. Sec. 60 (2) of the Act protects the Central Government, State Government and their officers from any suit for damages caused by any act done in good faith. The court was of the opinion that claiming

damages for injuries sustained as a result of an attack by wild animal would not be an action for damages, for act of good faith. Therefore it was held that the jurisdiction of a civil court is not barred.

The Hon'ble Justice R. Khurana, who heard the appeal, explained the scope and meaning of the terms damage, damages, and injury in the following words:

"Damages under the law represents the pecuniary recompense recoverable by process of law, by a person who sustained an injury through the wrongful act or omission of another. **'Damage'** may be defined as the disadvantage which is suffered by a person as a result of the act or default of another. **'Injuria'** is damage which gives rise to a legal right to recompense. If the law gives no remedy, there is DAMNUM ABSQUE INJURIA that is damage without right to recompense. In considering the legal import of the term 'damage', it is necessary to bear in mind that the injury for which pecuniary compensation is awarded in an action in law, may have been caused by the defendant or by any one for whose acts of commissions, the law holds the defendants responsible and that the injury complained of may be the result of a breach of contract or tort."

It was asserted by the plaintiff that the Divisional Forest Officer, with an object to preserve wildlife, has let loose bears and other animals; killing these animals is prohibited. The defendant paid

a sum of Rs. 5,000/- only as compensation, and has refused to pay the actual loss for the acts of commission by letting loose ferocious animals like bears. But the plaintiff did not adduce any evidence to the effect that ferocious animals like black bears are let loose. The court overruled the contention of the Plaintiff that all wild animals are the property of the Government and any damage caused by wild animals would be the liability of the State.

Adverting to the definition of the wild animal in Sec. 2 (36) of the Act, the court held that wild animal includes any animal mentioned in Schedule I to V. The court found only two species of bear, viz. Sloth Bear and Himalayan Black Bear mentioned in the Schedules. The court further held that assuming that the State is liable for the damage caused by wild animal, there is nothing on record to show that the black bear which attacked the Plaintiff and caused injuries was of the species specified in the Schedules to the Act. In the absence of such evidence the defendants cannot be held liable. The State Government granted Rs. 5,000/- as gratuitous relief to the victim and paid the amount.

In conclusion it was held that in tortious liability of the defendants, the onus was heavily on the plaintiff to prove that the damage suffered by her is due to act of omission or commission. The plaintiff failed to discharge the onus. In the result the appeal was allowed and the suit for damages was dismissed on 4.5.2000.

A.I.R. 2000 H.P. 113 K.B.R

కామ్రేడ్ మఖ్దూమ్ - హైదరాబాదు ఉర్దూ కవి

రచన : డా. బి. రఘోత్తమ రావు

స్వేచ్ఛానువాదం : కె. బుచ్చిరామ్ రెడ్డి

పూర్తిపేరు మఖ్దూమ్ మొహియొద్దీన్, జననం మెదకు జిల్లా లోని ఓ కుగ్రామం. ఉన్నత విద్యాభ్యాసం కోసం హైదరాబాదు చేరి యిక్కడే స్థిర పడ్డాడు. మఖ్దూమ్ నిలువెల్లా హైదరాబాది. యీ నగరంపై ఆయనకు అపారమైన ప్రేమ. నగరంలోని అనేక వాడల్లో ఆయన పేరు మారుమోగుతుంది. మఖ్దూమ్ చే రచించబడి, వ్యాప్తి చెందిన “గజల్” -

“ఏక్ చంబేలీ కె మండువే తలే

మేకదే సే జెరా దూర్ ఉసు మోడు పర్

దో బదన్ ప్యార్ కే ఆగ్ మే జల్ గయే

.....”

(మల్లె చెట్టు పందిరి కింద

మధుశాలకు కొంచెం దూరం ఆమూల కాడ

రెండు ప్రాణాలు ప్రేమాగ్నికి ఆహుతైనాయి

.....)

యీ గజల్ మఖ్దూమ్ కవితా పటిమకు తార్కాణంగా నిలిచి పోయింది.

మఖ్దూమ్ నైజాం రాష్ట్రంలో కమ్యూనిస్టుపార్టీ వ్యవస్థాపకులలో ఒకడు. డా. రాజా బహదుర్ గౌడు మఖ్దూమ్ కు అత్యంత సన్నిహితుడు. మఖ్దూమ్ రాసిన కవితలోని మొదటి చరణం తీసుకొని తన ఇంటికి ‘చంబేలికి మండువ’ అని నామకరణం చేసి ఒక మల్లె చెట్టు పందిరి కూడా వేసుకున్నాడు. ఇది వారివారి మధ్య స్నేహానికి ప్రతిరూపం అని చెప్పాలి.

సుమారు 64-65 సవత్సరాల కింది మాట. నేను హన్మకొండ (వరంగల్) కాలేజియల్ హైస్కూల్ లో విద్యాభ్యాసం చేస్తున్న రోజులు. దక్కన్ క్రానికల్ లేదా డేలీ న్యూస్ వార్తాపత్రికలో చదివిన వార్త. మఖ్దూమ్

మొహియొద్దీన్ ‘అండర్ గ్రౌండు’ అయినాడు. యీ పదానికి అర్థమేమిటో తెలువదు కాబట్టి తెలుసుకోవాలని కోరిక కలిగింది. ఎందుకనగా మా చదువు నైజాం పాలనలో ఉర్దూ మీడియంలో జరిగింది. అది మాతృభాష కాదు. వ్యాపార భాష కూడా కాదు. అది కేవలం అధికార భాష మాత్రమే ‘అండర్ గ్రౌండు’ ను ఉడ్డలో ‘జెరెజమీన్’ (భూగతం) అని తర్జుమా చేసుకున్నాను. దానికి పర్యాయ పదం ‘రూపోష్’ (అజ్ఞాతం) అని తర్వాత తెలిసింది.

‘అండర్ గ్రౌండు’ అనే పదానికి సరియైన అర్థం తెలుసుకోలేని పొరపాటు నేనే కాదు. పాకిస్తాన్ లోని సుప్రసిద్ధ రచయిత సజ్జద్ జహీర్ విషయంలో కూడా జరిగింది. ఆయన రాజకీయ వ్యవహారాలలో చిక్కుకొని కొంతకాలం అజ్ఞాతంలోకి వెళ్ళాడు. యీ లోగా తజ్కిస్తాన్ లో ప్రసిద్ధి గాంచిన ఓ కవి పాకిస్తాన్ లో పర్యటించడానికి రావడం జరిగింది. ఆయన పాకిస్తాన్ లో మరో కవితో పారసీ భాషలో “సజ్జద్ జహీర్ కుజా అస్తు?” (సజ్జద్ జహీర్ ఎక్కడున్నాడు?) అని ప్రశ్నించాడు. దానికి పాకిస్తాన్ కవి తడుముకోకుండా “సజ్జద్ జహీర్ జేరెజమీన్ అస్తు” (సజ్జద్ జహీర్ భూగతం ఐనాడు) అని సమాధానమిచ్చాడు. ఆ మాట విన్న తజ్కిస్తాన్ కవి నిర్విర్యమై అశ్రువూరిత నయనాలతో మరీ ప్రశ్నించాడు. ఇది ఎప్పుడు జరిగింది. ఆయన్ని ఏ వ్యాధి పీడించింది? అంటూ మరి కొన్ని ప్రశ్నలు వేశాడు. జరిగిన పొరపాటును తెలుసుకొని జేరెజమీన్ (భూగతం) అనే దానికి బదులు, ‘రూపోష్’ (అజ్ఞాతం) అని వచ్చి రాని పారసీలో సైగల సహాయంతో తేల్చిచెప్పాడు. దానితో ఆ సమస్య తీరింది.

మఖ్దూమ్ ఒక మహా కవి. మంచి వక్త, సహృదయుడు. నిరహంకారి. మానవతా వాది. అందరి ఆదరణ పొందిన సుప్రసిద్ధ నాయకుడు. ఆయన్ని అసమాన సామాన్యుడు అంటే అది అతిశయోక్తి కాజాలదు.

నైజాం పాలనలో అజ్ఞాతంలో ఉన్న మఖ్దూమ్ ని బొంబాయి పంపించడానికి అన్ని ఏర్పాట్లు జరిగాయి. ఈ మధ్య కాలంలో హైదరాబాదు లోని రామాంతాపురం ప్రదేశంలో స్నేహితులతో కలసి చదరంగం ఆడుతుండగా అధికారులు అతన్ని అదుపులోకి తీసుకోవడం జరిగింది.

మఖ్దూమ్ గుణ దోషాలు విశ్లేషించి చెప్పే మాటలు వినాలని జనం ఉత్సాహపడుతుండే వారు. ముషాయిరాలలో (కవి సమ్మేళనాలలో) వారి గీతాలు వినడానికి, పత్రికా సంచికలలో వారి రచనలు చదవడానికి కుతూహలం చూపుతుండే వారు.

హైదరాబాదు రాష్ట్రంలోని చట్ట సభలో మఖ్దూమ్ ఎం.ఎల్.సి గా వ్యవహరించినపుడు నాకు వారిని చూచే అవకాశం దొరికింది. ఆ కాలం మంత్రివర్గంలో పూల్ చంద్ గాంధీ ఒక మంత్రిగా వుండే వారు. ఆ మంత్రిని ఉద్దేశించి సభలో మాట్లాడుతూ “ ఆప్యే విజారత్ మే పూల్ ‘చంద్’, కాంటే ‘జియాద’ (మంత్రి గారూ, మీ మంత్రిత్వ శాఖలో పువ్వులు ‘కొంచెం’, ముండ్లు ‘అధికం’) అని ఫలోక్తి వినరగా సభ్యులందరూ గొల్లుమని నవ్వారు. యీ విధంగా జీవితంలో చతురతకు చెరగని ముద్ర వేసుకున్నారు మఖ్దూమ్.

మఖ్దూమ్ ప్రతిభావంతుడు. ఆయన తలుచుకుంటే యూనివర్సిటీ లో ప్రొఫెసర్ గా ఉద్యోగం సంపాదించుకోగలిగేవాడు. కావాలనుకుంటే గేయ రచయితగా, సంగీత దర్శకులకు అనుగుణంగా సినీరంగంలో రాణించే అవకాశముండేది. కాని ఆయనకు పార్టీపనియే పరమార్థం.

చట్టసభ సభ్యత్వం ముగిసిన తర్వాత, హిమాయత్ నగర్ లోని ఉర్దూ గలీలోని ఒక చిన్న ఇంటిలో నివాసమేర్పరుచుకున్నారు.

రచయితలతో పోటీపడడం, ఆరోగ్య వంతమైన వాతావరణంలో ఒకరి నొకరిపై ఒత్తిపొడుపులతో ముచ్చటపడేవారు. ఒక రోజు ప్రఖ్యాత చిత్రకారుడు సయీద్ బిన్ మొహమద్ తో భేటి జరిగింది. చిత్రలేఖనం గొప్పా, సాహిత్యం గొప్పా అన్న అంశం మీద తర్జన భర్జన జరిగింది. మఖ్దూమ్ వాక్యానికి తట్టుకోలేక చిత్రకారుడు పలాయనం చిత్తగించాడు.

పనిలో ఎన్ని అడ్డంకులొచ్చినా క్రమశిక్షణ తప్పేవాడు కాదు. చివరిదశలో ఒకసారి ఢిల్లీకి వెళ్ళాడు. వెళ్ళేముందు నాలుగు రోజుల్లో వస్తానని చెప్పి మరీ వెళ్ళాడు. అనుకున్న ప్రకారం వచ్చాడు. కాని శవ రూపంలో మాత్రమే వచ్చాడు. జీవితంలోనే కాదు మరణంలో కూడా స్నేహాన్ని మరువని రాజబహదూర్ గౌడు శవం వెంట వచ్చారు.

అంత్యక్రియలు ఆరంభం నుంచి ఖననం వరకు జరుగుతుండగా వేల మంది బోరు బోరుమని విలపించారు. అంతిమ యాత్రలో చివరి వీడ్కోలు అశృధారలతో మఖ్దూమ్ కు జరిగినంతగా ఏ ఉర్దూ కవికి జరిగి వుండక పోవచ్చు. ఈ విధంగా మఖ్దూమ్ ‘జేరెజమీన్’ (భూగతం) ఐనాడు. తన వెంట ఏమీ తేలేదు. వెంట ఏమీ తీసుకపోలేదు. కవిత్వం, సాహితీవైభవం, అపారమైన సాహితీసేవ, ఉర్దూ భాషకు వన్నె తెచ్చిన విలక్షణం, చిలిపి మాటలు, చిట్టి కథలు అన్ని మధుర జ్ఞాపకాలుగా మిగిలిపోయినై.

మఖ్దూమ్ జననం 1908 లో. మరణం 1969 లో. 61 సం॥ ప్రాయంలో దైవ సన్నిధికి చేరుకున్నాడు. వారి ఆదర్శ జీవితానికి నా శ్రద్ధాంజలి సమర్పించుకుంటున్నాను.

ఆర్థితో అమ్మకు

‘మార్చి 10’ “మాతృ దినోత్సవం” సందర్భంగా

కొండా మోహన్

అమ్మా! ఈ పదం పలకడం నేర్చిన నాటినుండీ, నాకు ఊహ తెలిసిన నాటి నుండీ కమ్మనైన నీ రూపం నా హృదయ ఫలకం పై నిక్షిప్తమై యుందమ్మా!

నా జీవిత పుస్తకంలో ఎన్ని కొత్త పేజీలు వచ్చి చేరినా, అందులో మొదటి పేజీలో ప్రతిష్టించుకున్న నీవు నాకెప్పుడూ నిత్య సూతనమేనమ్మా! పరిణితి చెందుతున్న బుద్ధి, వయస్సులతో పాటు ఎంత ఎదుగుతున్న నవ్య సూతనమైన అనుభూతులతో నా ఆలోచనా ధోరణి ఎంత పరిమళించుచున్నా, బుడి బుడి అడుగులతో నా బాల్యంలో చేసిన ప్రతీ కదలికనూ నాన్నతో పాటు నీవు ప్రతి క్షణం కంటికి రెప్పలా కాచిన నీవేనమ్మా నా దేవత!

అమ్మా! ఊరంతా కరువుతో కొట్టు మిట్టాడుతూ వరిపొలాలు ఎండి పోయి సజ్జణొన్న సంకటులతో కుటుంబాన్నంతా పోషించిన నువ్వు, పసివాడిని సంకటి తినలేడని చెప్పి ఒకటికి రెండొత్తులు జొన్నలిచ్చి బియ్యం తెచ్చి నాకొక్కడికే కడుపు నింపిన నీ చల్లని హస్తాన్ని, నీ అమృత హృదయాన్ని నేనెలా మరువగలనమ్మా? నీ అమృత హృదయాన్ని నేనెలా మరువ గలనమ్మా? నీవు అర కడుపునే నింపుకొని నిండు మహాలక్ష్మిలా ఇళ్ళంతా తిరుగుతూ, ఊరందరికీ “లచ్చమ్మ” నైన నిన్ను నా మనోఫలకంపై శాశ్వతంగా ముద్రించుకున్నానమ్మా!

నేను ఆరవ తరగతి నుండే పక్కఊరికి బడికి వెళ్ళొచ్చి, నిన్ను పిల్చి, కాళ్ళు చాపి కూచోమని చెప్పి నీ పాదాలపై నా తల పెట్టి పడుకుని, నీ వెండి కడియాల తలకు తగులు తుంటే తలగడలా పెట్టుకుని కడియాల తాలూకు కాయలు నీ కాళ్ళకు చూసి నా చిన్నారి చేతులతో తాకుతూ నే ఆదమర్చి పడుకుని సేద తీరుతుంటే, నీ ప్రేమ పూరిత పెదవులు నా నుదిటిపై మద్దులు పెట్టిన రోజులు నేనెన్నటికీ మర్చిపోలేనమ్మా! నేడు నేను పట్టు తివాచీల్లో పడుకున్నా నగిషీల సోఫాలో కూచున్నా నాటి అనుభూతిలో రవంతైనా పొందలేక పోతున్నానమ్మా! నిజమైన పూలకూ ప్లాస్టిక్ పూలకూ ఎంత తేడా యుంటుందమ్మా ఇప్పటికి కానీ అర్థం కాలేదమ్మా!!

నేను బడికి వెళ్ళి వచ్చి, ఇంట్లో నీవు కానరాక నేను నీ కొరకు కాలుగాలిన పిల్లిలా తచ్చాడుతూ తిరుగుతుంటే, నా చెవులకే అనుభవమైన నీ కాలిమెట్టల సవ్వడి వినవడగా, నీవు ‘జెండా గద్దె’ నుండి మన వీధిజలో పదిఇళ్ళ ఆవలి నుండి నడ్చి వచ్చినా “అమ్మ” వస్తుందనే ‘సంకేతం’ తో ఎంత ఆనంద పడే వాడినో కదమ్మా! నీవు రాగానే పుస్తకాల సంచి గిరాటేసి నీ పాదాలను నేను లతలా అల్లుకు పోగా నీ ఆప్యాయమైన

చేతులతో నా జుట్టు నిమిరి నీ హృదయానికి హత్తుకోవడం నేనెన్నటికీ మర్చిపోలేనమ్మా!

నేను పదవ తరగతి చదువుతున్నా నాకు నీవే లోకం కదమ్మా! బడిలో చదివిన చదువు పక్కన పెడితే నాకు నీవే ధ్యాస కదమ్మా! ఏ రాత్రైనా నీ కథలు విననిదే నిన్ను ఆప్యాయంగా పెనవేసుకోకుండా నేను పడుకోలేదు కదమ్మా! ఇంతటి ప్రేమమూర్తిని ఇంతటి కారుణ్య మూర్తిని నేనెంతో క్షుభ పెట్టిన రోజు నేనెన్నటికీ మర్చిపోలేనమ్మా!

పక్క ఊరిలో మావయ్య ఇంటికి నీవు వెళ్ళిస్తానని చెప్పి, నన్ను మిగతా వారితో ఇంట్లో ఉండమంటే నా మనస్సు చివుక్కుమని ఉండనన్నానమ్మా! నా చదువుపై ధ్యాసతో ఉండమని నీవు చెప్తే, నేను కోపంగా నీ కాళ్ళ పట్టీ లాక్కొని పరిగెత్తిపోగా, నేనెక్కడ పోతానో అని భయంతో నీవూ నా వెంట పరుగెత్తుకురాగా, పక్క వూరి వరకూ దాదాపు రెండు కిలో మీటర్లు నేను నిన్ను ఉరికించి, దాచుకోగా నీకు కనబడక దారి మధ్యలో బావిలో పడిపోయానేమోనని బెరుకుతో నీవు ఏడ్చిన ఏడుపులూ చేసిన ఆక్రందనలూ అక్కడే చెట్టు చాటున ఉండి విన్న నా చెవులు ఈ నాటికీ ప్రతిధ్వనిస్తూనే యున్నావమ్మా పరిగెత్తిన ఆయాసంలోనే ప్రతి

బాటసారికీ చెప్పి నా కొడుకు ఇప్పుడే ఇక్కడ యుండే, క్షణంలో మాయమయ్యాడు, బావిలో పడ్డాడేమో చూడండని బేల తనంతో బెంబేలెత్తి బాటసారుల కాళ్ళవేళ్ళా పడడం నా కళ్ళతో నాడు చూసిన దృశ్యాలు, నా జీవితం కడతేరే వరకూ నే మరువలేనమ్మా!

నీ జీవితం సర్వస్వం నా కోసం ధారపోసి క్రొవ్వెత్తిలా నిన్ను నీవు మాకు అర్పించుకొన్నానమ్మా! చదువులూ, పరీక్షలూ, పెళ్ళీ, పిల్లలూ ఇవన్నీ ఐపోయే వరకూ నీ గురించే నేనాలోచించలేదు కదమ్మా! ఐనా నా కొడుకు ప్రయోజకుడయ్యాడు అని నీవు ఆనందంతో నా కుటుంబం వైపు చూస్తూ చెప్పానమ్మా! నీ బాగోగులూ, మంచి చెడ్డలూ పూర్తిగా చూడ లేకపోయానమ్మా! నాకు జ్ఞానోదయమయ్యి నేను నిన్ను ప్రేమతో మురిపిద్దామనే వరకు నీవు నా ఇంట్లోనే నా చేతుల్లోనే 'తుది శ్వాస' విడిచావు కదమ్మా!

అమ్మా! నీ బుణం ఏమిచ్చి తీర్చుకోగలనమ్మా? నవమాసాలు మోసీ, కంటికి రెప్పలా కాచి, నాకు జన్మనిచ్చి, జీవితాన్నిచ్చి, దిశానిర్దేశం చేసి, నా ఈ దశకు కారకురాలివైన నీవు నా దేవతవమ్మా! కాదు కాదు అమ్మవమ్మా అమ్మవు, అమ్మవు!! అమ్మవు!!

Remember- Time takes away everything from us. Be good, do good to anybody and everybody in the world, because skin, face and personality will never stay, but our work and name will always be there.

ایک سو صدی میں حیدرآباد کے حالات بدل چکے ہیں۔ حیدرآباد کی آبادی قریب ایک کروڑ تک پہنچ گئی ہے۔ اور آج بھی حیدرآباد ہندوستان کا پانچواں شہر ہے۔ چھوٹی سی میونسپالٹی سے گریٹر حیدرآباد میونسپل کارپوریشن قائم ہو گیا ہے۔ مگر سڑک کے دونوں جانب کچرے کوڑے کے انبار لگے ہوئے ہیں۔ ہر طرف تعفن پھیلا ہوا ہے اور حیدرآباد ایک گندہ شہر ہو گیا ہے۔ ٹریفک بالکل بے ڈھنگی ہو گئی ہے۔ کوئی قانون نافذ کرنے والا نہیں ہے۔ پولیس والے خاموش تماشا بنے ہوئے ہیں۔ رشوت کا بول بالا ہے۔ رشوت دیکر کوئی بھی کام کروایا جاسکتا ہے اور بغیر رشوت کے کوئی کام بھی آگے نہیں بڑھتا ہے۔

نلوں میں پانی تو آتا ہے مگر تین دن میں ایک دفعہ وہ بھی صرف ایک گھنٹے کیلئے نل میں پانی آمیزش زدہ ہو گیا ہے جو نل اور ڈریج لائن کے مل جانے سے بیماریاں پھیلانے والا پانی آتا ہے۔ لائن صرف 20 گھنٹہ سپلائی ہوتی ہے وہ بھی کم یا زیادہ ڈوئیج کے ساتھ جس کی وجہ سے الیکٹرکس چیزیں خراب ہو جاتی ہیں۔ تقریباً 30 سال کے بعد اس گرما میں حیدرآباد میں برقی کٹوتی نہیں کی گئی۔ سڑکوں پر جگہ جگہ گدھے پڑ گئے ہیں اور اکثر سڑکوں پر ڈریج کا پانی ابل رہا ہے۔ کوئی پرسان حال نہیں ہے۔ سڑک تالاب و جھیل میں تبدیل ہو چکی ہے۔ فٹ پاتھ پر ناجائز قبضہ ہو گئے ہیں۔ پیدل راہ گیر اور دوسری سواریاں چلانے والے سخت پریشان ہیں۔

شادیاں رات میں شادی خانوں میں ہونے لگی ہیں۔ شادی خانوں کو جگہ گاتی روٹنیوں سے سجایا جاتا ہے۔ کھانا میز کرسی پر ہو گیا ہے۔ تقریباً 20 قسم کے ڈشس سجائی جاتی ہیں۔ رقعہ میں وقت تو بعد مغرب لکھا ہوتا ہے مگر مہمان رات میں 10 بجے کے بعد ہی آتے ہیں اور کھانا رات 11 بجے شروع ہوتا ہے۔ جب کھانے کا اعلان کیا جاتا ہے تو مہمان ایسے دوڑتے ہیں جیسے کئی دن سے بھوکے ہیں۔ دھکم پیل شروع ہو جاتی ہے بزرگ لوگ تو جا ہی نہیں سکتے ہیں اور جب بڑی مشکل سے وہاں پہنچتے ہیں تو معلوم ہوتا ہے کہ ساری کرسیاں بھر چکی ہیں اور بے چارے بزرگ لوگ لوٹ جاتے ہیں دوسرے دور کا انتظار کرتے ہیں۔ اکثر بزرگ لوگ ذیابیطس کے مریض ہوتے ہیں۔ ایسے لوگ گھر سے ہی کھانا کھا کر آتے ہیں۔ یا پھر بغیر کھانا کھائے جلد ہی اپنے گھر لوٹ جاتے ہیں۔ تندرست لوگ بھی بہت دیر تک بھوکے رہنے کی وجہ سے ان کی بھوک مر جاتی ہے اور خوب سیر ہو کر نہیں کھا سکتے ہیں۔ آمد کا کرایہ دینے کا رواج آج ختم ہو گیا ہے۔

تعلیم ایک تجارت بن گئی ہے۔ ہر شخص اپنے بچوں کو خانگی اسکولوں میں شریک کروانا چاہتے ہیں کیونکہ سرکاری اسکولوں کا معیار بہت گر گیا ہے حالانکہ سرکاری اسکولوں کے ٹیچروں کی تنخواہیں خانگی اسکول کے ٹیچروں کی تنخواہوں سے تقریباً دو گنی ہوتی ہیں۔ سائیکل اور رکشا کا رواج تقریباً ختم ہو گیا ہے۔ ہر شخص کے پاس موٹر سائیکل یا کار ہے اور ٹریفک بے ہنگم ہو گئی ہے۔ ہر آدمی کی آمدنی بہت بڑھ گئی ہے لیکن خوشیاں بہت کم ہیں۔ ہر شخص پریشان نظر آتا ہے جرائم بہت بڑھ گئے ہیں کوئی عورت یا نابالغ لڑکی بھی اپنی حفاظت نہیں کر سکتی ہے۔ عورت اپنے سونے کی چین کے ساتھ اگر باہر گئی ہے تو اکثر گھر واپس چین کے بغیر ہی لوٹی ہے۔ قد ریں بہت گھٹ گئی ہے۔ سیاسی رشوت کروڑوں میں پہنچ گئی ہے۔ سیاسی لوگ کسی بھی وقت بک سکتے ہیں۔ (حالیہ ووٹ کیلئے نوٹ) ایک ایک ووٹ کیلئے کروڑوں کی رشوت دی جا رہی ہے۔ لیڈر پکڑے جاتے ہیں پھر بھی باز نہیں آتے۔ بہت ہی بے شرم ہو گئے ہیں۔ لیڈر پبلک کو چوس چوس کر کھوکھلا کر رہے ہیں اور خود امیر ترین بن رہے ہیں۔

ہر روز ایک نئی صبح ہوتی ہے اور حیدرآبادی یہ سوچنے پر مجبور ہو جاتے ہیں کہ یہ صبح تو نہیں جس کا ان کو انتظار تھا۔

حیدر آباد و سکندر آباد میں گھروں و محلوں میں نلوں سے پانی سربراہ کیا جاتا تھا وہ بھی دو وقت۔ صبح میں چار گھنٹے اور شام میں پھر چار گھنٹے۔ پانی بالکل صاف و شفاف ہوا کرتا تھا۔ پانی کو بغیر صاف کئے ہوئے سب لوگ پیا کرتے تھے۔

حیدر آباد میں لائٹ 1910 میں آئی۔ گھروں یا اسٹریٹ لائٹ کیلئے زیر زمین کیبل بچھائے گئے تھے۔ اور اس سے گھروں کو لائٹ کا کنکشن دیا جاتا تھا۔ آج بھی پرانی بلڈنگوں میں اس کیبل کے آثار دیکھے جاسکتے ہیں۔ بجلی کی سپلائی بغیر کسی روک ٹوک کی جاتی تھی۔ دو بج میں بھی کمی یا زیادتی نہیں ہوتی تھی۔

حیدر آباد میں شادیاں دن کے وقت اور اپنے گھر میں انجام دی جاتی تھیں اور شادی خانوں کا رواج بالکل نہیں تھا۔ اڑوس پڑوس کے لوگوں کے مکان لئے جاتے تھے۔ وہ لوگ یا تو چند دن کیلئے گھر خالی کر کے کہیں اور چلے جاتے تھے یا پھر ایک کمرے میں ہو جاتے تھے۔ دلہن کے رشتہ داروں کو انہیں گھروں میں ٹہراتے تھے۔ نکاح دلہن کے گھر میں ہی ہوا کرتا تھا۔ نکاح صبح 9 سے 10 بجے کے بیچ ہو جاتا کرتا تھا۔ دلہا عام طور سے گھوڑے پر سوار ہو کر آیا کرتا تھا جو اکثر کرایہ کا ہوتا تھا۔ اس لئے دلہن والے دلہے کو گھوڑے جوڑے کی رقم دیا کرتے تھے جو اصل میں گھوڑے کا کرایہ ہوا کرتا تھا۔ آج یہ رقم ہزاروں تک پہنچ گئی ہے۔ عموماً دعوت صبح نصف النہار ہوا کرتی تھی۔ اور کھانا نکاح کے ساتھ ہی 10 بجے سے شروع ہو جاتا تھا۔ لال دسترخوان پر کھانا کھلایا جاتا تھا۔ کھانے میں بگھارا کھانا دلچہ اور ایک سوکھا سالن گوشت کے ساتھ ہوا کرتا تھا۔ ایک ہی قسم کا میٹھا جو ایک چھوٹی سی تشری میں ہوتا تھا۔ وہ ہر پلیٹ کے نیچے رکھ دیا جاتا تھا۔ جب دلہا صبح میں دلہن کے گھر میں داخل ہونا چاہتا تو دلہن کے بھائی دروازہ پر دلہے کو روک لیتے تھے اور جب تک دلہا دلہن کے بھائیوں کو کچھ رقم نہیں دیتا تب تک دلہا کو گھر میں داخل نہیں ہونے دیا جاتا تھا۔ اس رسم کو دھگانہ کہتے تھے۔ اب یہ رسم بھی تقریباً ختم ہو گئی ہے۔ دلہا اپنی دلہن کو لے کر مغرب سے پہلے اپنے گھر پہنچ جایا کرتا تھا۔ شادی کے دن دلہن والے ایک آدمی کو بہت سا چر دے کر باہر بیٹھا دیا کرتے تھے اور وہ شخص آنے والے مہمانوں کے رکشہ کا کرایہ دے دیا کرتے تھے۔ ایک طرف کا کرایہ میزبان کی طرف سے دیا جاتا تھا۔ دعوت و لیمہ بھی دن میں ہی دی جاتی تھی۔ چوتھی البتہ رات کے کھانے پر ہوتی تھی۔ رات کا کھانا مغرب کے بعد ہی شروع ہو جاتا تھا۔

حیدر آباد میں تعلیم اکثر سرکاری اسکولوں میں ہی ہوا کرتی تھی اور یہ تعلیم اردو میڈیم سے ہوا کرتی تھی۔ اردو کے علاوہ تملگو، مرہٹی، کنڑی اور انگلش میڈیم کے اسکول بھی تھے۔ خانگی اسکول مشنری والے ہی چلاتے تھے جہاں پر میڈیم انگریزی ہوتا تھا۔ تعلیم کا معیار بہت اونچا تھا اور اردو میڈیم میں تعلیم پانے والے دنیا بھر میں ڈاکٹر انجینئر اور پائے کے اڈمنسٹریٹر بنے اور اکثر لوگ بہت مشہور ہوئے۔ میڈیسن و انجینئرنگ بھی اردو میڈیم سے ہی پڑھائی جاتی تھی۔ عثمانیہ یونیورسٹی نہ صرف ہندوستان بھر میں بلکہ ساری دنیا میں مشہور تھی۔ یہاں سے تعلیم حاصل کرنے والوں کو دنیا بھر میں عزت کی نگاہ سے دیکھا جاتا تھا۔ اس یونیورسٹی کیلئے بھی کچھ دن بہت خراب تھے۔ شاید 1970ء سے 1975ء تک اس یونیورسٹی کا معیار بہت گر گیا تھا اور دوسرے ملکوں اور ہندوستان کے دوسرے صوبوں میں اس کی ڈگریاں قبول نہیں کی جاتی تھیں اور نوکریاں بھی نہیں دی جاتی تھیں۔

حیدر آباد اور ریاست حیدر آباد میں ہر جگہ امن تھا۔ چوری، ڈاکہ زنی، قتل و عارت گری، عصمت ریزی (زنا) بہت کم ہوتے تھے۔ اور جو بھی جرائم ہوتے تھے ان جرائم کو پولیس والے حل کر لیا کرتے تھے۔ حیدر آباد کا محکمہ سی آئی ڈی دنیا بھر میں مشہور تھا۔ حیدر آباد پولیس کی فہمائل ٹیم بھی بہت مشہور تھی۔ عورتیں بلا خوف و ڈر کہیں بھی، کبھی بھی گھوم پھر سکتی تھیں۔ رشوت کا دور بالکل نہیں تھا۔ اگر تھا بھی تو بہت ہی خفیہ سطح پر بالکل ہی کم جونہ ہونے کے برابر تھی۔

حیدرآباد اور یادیں

از : قمر محمد خان

شہر حیدرآباد کو محمد قلی قطب شاہ نے 1589ء میں موسیٰ ندی کے کنارے بسایا تھا اور 1591 میں چار مینار بنانے کے احکام جاری کئے تھے۔ بیسویں صدی کے آغاز پر حیدرآباد ہندوستان کے پانچویں بڑے شہر کے طور پر جانا جاتا تھا۔ یہ شہر بہت صاف ستھرا اور خوبصورت شہر تھا۔ شہر کی آبادی کوئی پانچ لاکھ کے قریب تھی اور شہر کا انتظام بہت ہی اچھا تھا۔ یہ شہر باغوں اور تالابوں کا شہر کہلاتا تھا۔

چار مینار سے جو بھی سڑک اضلاع کی طرف جاتی تھی وہ سڑک 20 میل یعنی 32 کیلو میٹر تک سمنٹ سے بنائی گئی تھی اور شہر کے اندر سڑکیں بھی مکمل سمنٹ سے بنائی گئی تھیں۔ یہ اس لئے کیا گیا تھا کہ جب بھی کوئی گاڑی سڑک پر چلے تو دھول بالکل نہ اڑے۔ ان سڑکوں کو Dust proof roads کہا جاتا تھا۔ بہت ہی کم لوگوں کے پاس موٹر گاڑیاں ہوا کرتی تھیں اور عام سواری ریل، بس، ٹانگے، رکشا اور سائیکلیں تھیں۔ سکندرآباد میں رکشاؤں کا داخلہ ممنوع تھا اسکی وجہ یہ تھی کہ سکندرآباد کیلئے ایک میونسپالٹی تھی جو رکشاؤں کو اپنے حدود میں داخل نہیں ہونے دیتی تھی۔ رکشاؤں اور سائیکلوں کو میونسپالٹی کچھ فیس لے کر لائسنس دیا کرتی تھی اور بغیر لائسنس کی سائیکل یا رکشا کو پکڑتے تھے۔ سکندرآباد میں زیادہ تر انگلو انڈین یا پھر جنوبی ہند کے رہنے والے بسا کرتے تھے۔ یہ لوگ فوج یا ریلوے میں ملازمت کرتے تھے۔ چار مینار کے اطراف راجہ مہاراجہ، نواب جاگیردار، شرفہ علی عہدیدار و پروفیسر رہا کرتے تھے۔ ان کی دیوڑھی یا مکان بہت بڑے بڑے ہوا کرتے تھے۔ عام طور پر یہ گھر ایک یا دو منزلہ ہوا کرتے تھے اور دو سے زیادہ منزلیں عام طور سے نہیں بنائی جاتی تھیں۔ اسکی وجہ یہ تھی کہ ہر گھر میں زمین کا رقبہ بہت ہوا کرتا تھا اور پردہ کا خاص خیال رکھا جاتا تھا۔ جب بھی اگر کوئی مرد اپنے مکان کی چھت پر جاتے تو وہ زور زور سے اطراف کے مکانوں میں دوچار بار آواز لگایا کرتے تھے۔ پردہ ہوتا تھا۔ یہ اس لئے کیا کرتے تھے کہ اگر بازو کے گھر کی عورتیں آنگن میں ہوں تو وہ عورتیں اپنے اپنے گھر کے اندر چلی جائیں اور بے پردگی نہ ہو۔ عورتیں یہ سنتے ہیں اپنے اپنے گھروں کے اندر چلی جایا کرتی تھیں اور پھر وہ مرد اپنے مکان کی چھت پر جایا کرتے تھے۔ یہ طریقہ اب بالکل ختم ہو گیا ہے۔

امیر خانگی و سرکاری ملازمین تجارت پیشہ لوگ اور طالب علم عام طور پر بس، ریل یا پھر اپنی اپنی سائیکلوں پر جایا کرتے تھے۔ چونکہ سڑکوں پر ٹانگے بھی چلا کرتے تھے روزانہ سڑکوں پر گھوڑے کی لید اٹھانے کیلئے میونسپلٹی کے کارندے مقرر تھے۔ اور وہ اپنا کام بڑی خوبی سے انجام دیتے تھے۔ روزانہ شام میں اہم سڑکیں دھوئی جاتی تھیں۔ کچرا کوڑا اٹھالیتے تھے اور سڑکوں پر کہیں بھی کچرا نظر نہیں آتا تھا۔ میونسپالٹی کا انتظام بہت اچھا تھا۔

بیماروں کے علاج کیلئے سرکاری دواخانہ ہوا کرتے تھے اور ان میں سے عثمانیہ ہاسپٹل، نظامیہ یونانی دواخانہ اور کنگ اوورڈ میموریل ہاسپٹل سکندرآباد بہت مشہور تھے۔ ان دواخانوں میں نہ صرف بیماروں کا مفت علاج کیا جاتا تھا بلکہ بیماروں کو کھانا، دودھ، ڈبل روٹی و چائے بھی دی جاتی تھی۔ اس کھانے میں نہ صرف بیمار کھاتے تھے بلکہ بیمار کے ساتھ رہنے والے بھی سیر ہو کر کھایا کرتے تھے۔ حیدرآباد کی مشہور ہستیاں بھی علاج کیلئے ان دواخانوں سے رجوع ہوا کرتے تھے۔ ان دواخانوں میں مشہور ڈاکٹر و سرجن متعین تھے اور وہ ڈاکٹر خدمت کے جذبہ سے کام کیا کرتے تھے۔ آج کے زمانہ میں سینکڑوں سرکاری و خانگی دواخانہ آگئے ہیں لیکن پرانے زمانہ کے دواخانوں جیسا ایک بھی نہیں۔ آج علاج کے نام پر لاکھوں روپیہ کے بل بن رہے ہیں۔ کھانا اور پانی کی بوتلیں خرید کر پینا پڑتا ہے۔



The Sole coal producer in South India and a key partner in the country's economic and industrial progress, Singareni Collieries Company Ltd. (SCCL) is more than committed to caring for the environment. Company's mission statement aptly reflects the emphasis given to protection of environment and ecology. Company has established benchmark practices and internationally accepted soil conservation, Overburden bio-engineering measures in its Open Cast mines. Mine plans include development of Siltation ponds, timely back filling and regeneration of original species on the back filled areas etc.



- Monitoring of air / water / noise / ambient pollution at each mine on a regular basis. Establishment of 16 effluent treatment plants (Oil and Grease traps) at mines / stores / workshops
- Constructed 7 Sewerage Treatment Plants
- Introduced LPG to its staff for cooking in lieu of the supply of 20,000 tonnes of coal per month
- Rehabilitation of mine sites / over dumps with a due emphasis on biological engineering. This has been done through protective and mechanical engineering works like gabions, cribs, rock fill dams, toe walls, garland canals, siltation ponds and contour stretches along with plantation of sapling of local suitable species
- Large scale greening of colonies through plantation of suitable shade and flowering species, free supply of saplings to households
- Adoption of environment friendly technologies like Input Crusher, Conveyors for reducing consumption of diesel and oil. Replacement of timber supports in mines with steel supports resulting in a 20% reduction in usage of wood and protection of natural resources
- Introduction of "Environment" as a subject in 13 schools run by SCCL, about 200 of SCCL's teachers trained on environment by WWF
- Construction of 641 rain water harvesting structures and 236 Sulabh complexes

AWARDS

- Best practices in Bio-medical waste disposal in the State during the 2007 from APPCB, Hyderabad
- Greentech Environment excellence Gold Award -2006 from Greentech Foundation
- Good Green Governance Award-2006 from Srishti Publications (P) Ltd
- Golden Peacock Environment Management Award - 2006, by the World Environment Foundation
- TERI Environmental Award - 2004/05
- Fly Ash Utilisation Award, jointly instituted by Ministry of Science & Technology, Ministry of Environment & Forests and Ministry of Power
- Indira Priyadarshini Vriksha Mitra (IPVM) award 2004 from Ministry of Environment and Forests, Gol



THE SINGARENI COLLIERIES COMPANY LIMITED

Kothagudem, Khammam District, A.P. 507 101. India. www.scclmines.com

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