

MODI FACTOR

Modi factor looks to take once again centre stage in the current edition of Parliamentary elections like the last edition in 2014. The BJP has been making strenuous effort to gain hold in left-ruled states and has been playing the caste and community cards. If the trends are to be taken in Bharatiya Janata Party would be on the saddle thus breaking the jinx for the saffron outfit. The victory for the party would be a stepping stone into the southern political arena. As if now Tamil Nadu is politically with BJP and Left-ruled Kerala and Andhra Pradesh are the next political citadel to be conquered thus reducing the main opposition party literally into the oblivion. The outcome if turns out a majority the saffron lotus flag would reign in South India which is a non-Hindi majority segment. And Modi's Congress-Mukt Bharat dream would cement further to rule unopposed. Though the final count has not been made public but it has given jitters to the Congress leadership who seeing the early trend feel quiet disappointed and attributed party's loss to wrong caste management. The Karnataka outcome was a setback for the BJP in 2014 which miscalculated the communal card. This time had it been on a development ground or a social justice ground, the BJP is looking to rule the roost once again. The caste polarization, social divides have become so apparent that violence has become the integral part of electioneering. What one has seen in the current edition of electioneering is the degradation of campaigning followed with violence. West Bengal has seen one of the worst in campaigning. Uttar Pradesh has always acquired centrality during general elections on account of the sheer number of Lok Sabha seats it offers. In 2014, the BJP under the leadership of Narendra Modi together with its ally, Apna Dal, was able to win 73 of the state's 80 seats, which helped it form the government at the Centre. The Congress obtained just two seats, the Samajwadi Party (SP) five and the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) none. However, this time the political experiment of the Mahagathbandhan (grand alliance) - in which the two former political rivals, the SP and BSP, have joined hands - has made the ongoing electoral discourse in the state different. As Lotus blooms once again one cannot deny the fact the combo of Modi card and Amit Shah strategy playing the role at the background for such a win.

POOR AMMO

The poor quality of ammunition supplied to the army has been a matter of concern. The ammunition supplied by the state-owned Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) has seen a slow down grading of the quality. The OFB with its 41 factories is the main supplier of ammunition. However, the army has told the defence ministry that ammunition related accidents are causing deaths, injuries and damage to equipment. Regular accidents are occurring with 105mm Indian field guns, 105mm light field guns, 130mm MA1 medium guns, 40mm L-70 air defence guns, as well as the main guns of T-72, T-90 and Arjun main battle tanks due to defective ammunition. In fact, the army has stopped all training firing of the 40mm high explosive ammunition after the latest accident in February in which an officer and four soldiers were seriously injured. The downgrading of the quality in ammunition certainly would undermine the army's operational preparedness. Failing to ensure basics such as quality ammunition belies all the tough talk of the Narendra Modi government on national security. Defence modernisation is not just about inducting big-ticket weapons platforms (on which, too, there has been more controversy than movement). It necessarily includes an efficient ordnance network. In this context, PM Modi recently accused previous Congress governments of making India dependent on foreign defence imports, even as China became a strong exporter of defence equipment over the same period. However, we have had a BJP-led government for five years - blaming Congress for today's ills will not wash for much longer. It's time to stop playing politics over the army and institute serious reforms to boost indigenous defence production by bringing in the private sector. India should not make the mistake of underestimating its enemies and rivals - they are smart enough to judge it by its deeds, not by its words.

OFF 'D' CUFF

Spiritual legacy is alive

His presence is prakata for some time, and then he becomes aprakata. A spiritual master's influence on the disciple, his teachings and his revelation of knowledge can continue even after he has become aprakata. There have also been instances, where a spiritual master makes arrangements for his ongoing presence and for his influence to continue. For instance, can we say that Jesus' influence is not there now? These are spiritual personalities, whose influence on human society will continue to prevail even after they are gone. They manifest in different forms to impart spiritual knowledge in society. Is vairagya, renunciation, important for bhakti, devotion? Vairagya is essential for spiritual knowledge. But for that, you have to know what is vairagya. The subject has been covered extensively in the Bhagwad Gita. At the end of the Gita, Arjuna says: Nasto mohah smrtir labdha tvat-prasadan mayacyuta - 'Now my ignorance is gone and all my doubts are cleared by your mercy. And now I am ready to act. With this knowledge is Arjuna heading to the forest or to the mountains? No, he becomes a good warrior, fights and wins back the kingdom, stays in the palace and assists his brothers in administering it. Usually

people think vairagya means one has to give up everything and go to a forest. Prabhupada gave an example: A man stands in front of the Reserve Bank and says that he is giving up all the erores of rupees in the bank's vaults... what is he giving up? The money is not his. Vairagya is the realisation that whatever you possess belongs to Krishna, and you are only taking care of those possessions and using as much as is required in the service of God. That new perspective is vairagya. When you think that you have to renounce everything and go to the forest, it's phalgu vairagya, false renunciation. Sometimes, feelings of guilt and being irresponsible occur because of false notions of renunciation and how to practise that. Does a soul exist eternally? Do we have the power to change it? If the soul terminates, one dies. So the body is different from the soul. Soul is the one that keeps taking different bodies. When the soul comes to its natural state, it does not have to take any more bodies and suffer. We are trying to come to the natural state of the soul. Terminating the succession of bodies is in your control, but termination of the soul itself is not in your control. It is one of the characteristics of the soul, that it will live eternally. (Concluded)

Celebrating National Technology Day

DR. BANARSI LAL AND DR. PAWAN SHARMA

Every year National Technology Day is commemorated to mark India's technological advancements. The day highlights the importance of science in our daily lives and encourages students to embrace science as a career option. The day reminds us the anniversary of Pokhran nuclear test which was carried out on 11th of May, 1998 also known as Shakti. On this day the achievements of our scientists and engineers are also highlighted in the field of science and technology. Various events are being organized in different technical institutions to mark the significance of the day. The day is crucial for scientists, engineers, planners and others who are engaged in nation building and governance. This day is considered as a symbol of pursuit for technological creativity, scientific inquiry and the conversion of that pursuit in the integration of science, industry and society. The technology has brought massive changes in many fields whether that is agriculture, education, health, space, defense etc. Changes by the technology are quite apparent from our daily lives. Everybody has different opinion of technology. Some consider it as a boon while consider it as a bane. Generally our perception towards science is limited to weapons and automobiles. With the increase in population and urbanization, food and agriculture are becoming an alarming issue, which must be looked at to make the population survive. Recently, the Indian agricultural scientists have developed precision agricultural technologies that increase the agricultural yield and production of crops, analyse soil and seed quality. We have developed the electrostatic sprayer that charges the molecules and enables the farmers to spray pesticides judiciously and not letting it seep into groundwater or cause cancer owing to overuse.

We lose around 30 per cent of the agricultural produce as a waste owing to poor storage facilities. Scientists have developed technologies for increasing shelf life of different crops. We are looking at futuristic technologies like plasma technology to enhance efficacy of germination of seeds and early warning systems for plant health to save crops from certain infestations. We have also developed mobile apps for measuring accurate pH value of food materials recently. With the Kisan portals we are able to send the messages to the farmers to mitigate the agricultural problems at their field. Many efforts have been made for rural upliftment. We have certain noteworthy achievements in the last 6 decades. We launched green revolution, yellow revolution, white revolution and also blue revolution in our country. But these unicoloured and uni-dimensional revolutions were not sufficient. We need a technocolor or multicolor or rainbow revolutions. Our ex-President Dr.A.P.J.Abdul Kalam emphasised that our country can

become developed country by 2020. He initiated providing urban facilities in rural areas(PURA) scheme through four connectivities viz., physical, economic, electronic and spiritual to be brought in a cost-effective way. Now many experts are thinking for second green revolution. Now our country needs to move towards evergreen revolution from green revolution. While working scientifically now the aspects of ecology and environment are kept in mind. In agriculture, we need to minimize the indiscriminate use of chemical fertilizers and chemical pesticides.

Presently our country is moving in the right direction to reach the developed country status by 2020 provided we need to prepare our rural base. Presently we need to adopt the renaissance concept taking advantage of the many advances in science and technology. We have the desired motivation-the mission 2020 vision. We should employ the modern tools of information technology and knowledge management. Now we have to integrate our ideas and design a management strategy to develop a strong rural technology base in agricultural, non-agricultural and service sectors. Rural road connectivity, rural housing, health, sanitation, safe drinking water projects are already in progress. Setting up of more and more rural technology based rural enterprises will help to upgrade human skills, generate employment and create wealth. Also era of growth and development will be ushered by the use of rural technologies. It has been observed that rural technologies are not reaching to the rural people to an extent as they should have to reach. There are various reasons like lack of awareness about rural technologies, lack of resources to access technologies, rural technologies are not cost-effective, not according to the needs of the users, not according to the culture of the people, not skillfully demonstrated etc. responsible for it. Policy makers need to understand rural people's aspirations. Now the time has come to change our mindset for rural renaissance. Technology works for a specific purpose, be it hi-tech or low-tech, hi-investment or low-investment oriented and need of hi-profile or low-profile marketing. Any technology that is developed by an individual or an institution needs to be transferred for field use. For rural development we need to prepare a Directory of Rural Technologies (DRT) which can be a valuable source for rural information. It can be particularly useful for potential entrepreneurs, consultants, promotional and financial agencies and field functionaries in rural areas. Even the research and development scientists should have rural technology information for further improvements. Some rural technologies like handicrafts, artisans and traditional ones are not documented in the conventional sense. The directory of rural technologies should be available in local language of the respective areas.

In the 6th and 7th plans there was much excitement with the establishment of many National Technology Missions on certain projects like oilseeds, safe drinking water etc. It was thought that all the rural problems would be solved with the implementation of these projects. But unfortunately that did not happen. Presently we all know the status of rural areas: around three-fourth of our rural population does not have access to proper sanitation, one-third does not have access to clean drinking water, around one half of rural population is illiterate, many villages do not have road connectivity and electricity position is also critical. We all are aware of the rural problems and perhaps we also know how to solve these problems. There are lots of funds for rural areas. There is another barrier. Is it commitment to implement the rural programmes? Is it our mind-set? Is it a problem in prioritization?

The choice of an entrepreneur is one of the key elements of successful transfer of rural technologies. A competent entrepreneur can understand and absorb the technology and make transfer of rural technology a success story. A mediocre technology can be translated into a successful enterprise in the hands of a competent entrepreneur where as the best technology can be spoiled by an insincere and incompetent entrepreneur. There are examples when an entrepreneur's aim is only to secure bank loans for selfish purposes and failed projects in such cases often bring a bad name to the technology developers. Business opportunities are abundant in our villages. There is much talk about a huge potential of rural markets in our country. Multinational companies are in a hurry to capture this oasis. Packaged mass consumption goods are making rapid entry in rural markets. Marketing in the present context is highly challenging. Without a minimum assured market but with best of rural technologies, the best of entrepreneurial talent and the best of transfer of rural technologies support mechanism, an enterprise has an uncertain future. Hence, while setting up an enterprise, a market potential survey, an effective marketing strategy and a dynamic salesman are must.

There is need an all round development in both rural and urban areas if India has to reach the developed country status by 2020. The PURA (providing urban facilities in rural areas) initiated by Dr.A.P.J.Abdul Kalam has shown significant results. The focus is given on setting of rural technologies based enterprises. In order to get quick results, replication of rural technologies which are successful at one place should be implemented at other places also. The rural technology should be carefully converted into wealth-generating enterprises by motivated, talented and committed entrepreneurs.

(The writers are: scientist with KVK, Kathua (SKUAST-J))

Pakistan's lapses taking their toll on Indus waters

LT GEN PK GROVER (RETD)

Water is perhaps the most coveted resource in the world today. With a burgeoning world population and consistently increasing demand, it is also becoming a highly scarce resource, especially in the developing countries. Its misuse, overuse or wastage is a matter of global concern.

After Independence, the Indus Waters Treaty was negotiated at Pakistan's insistence to allay the fear of water insecurity in the lower riparian state. The treaty was signed with the World Bank as facilitator on September 19, 1960.

The spirit of the treaty, as stated in the preamble, included three essential parameters - optimum utilisation of all available water in the Indus basin; to maintain goodwill and friendship; and to cooperate in future for further exploitation - which were also to be taken into consideration while approving loans to Pakistan for replacement and developmental works.

For the past over 58 years, Pakistan has been the beneficiary of 80 per cent of the water available in the Indus basin. Pakistan had also received financial assistance in creating/developing the best canal and irrigation system in the world. This amount included \$62 million paid by India.

Water is becoming an existential issue for Pakistan. As per a recent report, the

United Nations has estimated that Pakistan's water supply has dropped from about 5,000 cubic metres per person in the 1950s to about 1,000 cubic metres. It is expected to fall below 700 cubic metres (international marker for water scarcity) by 2025. Pakistan is the third most water-stressed country in the world.

Pakistan has been attributing its water scarcity to Indian action of constructing hydroelectric power projects on the western rivers, a situation that would jeopardise economic growth and prove to be a health hazard for Pakistan. Broadly, the problems may be attributed to Pakistan having drawn limited benefit of India's benevolence, despite the fact that it has been receiving more than its authorised share. As per the treaty, Pakistan was to receive 136 MAF (million acre feet) of water annually, but as per a recent report it is getting about 154 MAF.

The treaty was signed with undivided Pakistan to provide requisite food security. Thus, the interests of erstwhile East Pakistan were also part of this agreement. Even though India has a separate treaty with Bangladesh, Pakistan continues to get more than its authorised share of water under fundamentally changed circumstances and with no justification for declining per capita water availability.

It can be inferred that optimal utilisation

of water has been overlooked. This is most evident in the case of inefficient use of water for irrigation by Pakistan as almost 80 per cent of the water is used for low-value agricultural production. Moreover, for an irrigated agricultural area of 36 million acres, out of an average 104 MAF of river flows diverted for canal irrigation, a considerable amount of water is lost in conveyance and in its field applications. Water loss in field applications is due to lack of coordination between agriculture and irrigation departments. Incidentally, Pakistan is also permitting about 39.4 MAF of fresh water, worth approximately \$25 billion, to flow into the Arabian Sea annually as it does not have enough reservoirs or dams to store water. Views regarding mismanagement of water have been expressed on the floor of Pakistan's Senate on a number of occasions.

The treaty had been worked out on the assumption of 75 per cent cropping intensity. However, Pakistan has crossed 160 per cent in 2018, resulting in utilising about 95 per cent of the available water for agriculture alone. Further, the continued use of traditional and antiquated agricultural techniques has also led to the non-judicious use and excessive loss of water. As a result, the yield per hectare of cereal crops continues to be consistently low even when the most fertile lands are available in the interfluvies (doabs) of the rivers.

Even a five year old child is not interested in reading and has more interest in watching videos on youtube. We have failed to develop a habit of reading among youth. We need to make them understand that books are one's best friend and we must read book to get authentic knowledge.

Sugandha Sharma, Jammu.

Global warming and mangrove forest

Dear Editor, I would like to highlight the concern through your esteemed daily newspaper. Global warming has become a real threat for India and rest of the world over the years. Not only are we cutting down our trees, we have also lost our once lustrous mangroves. Global warming is a long term rise in the average temperature of the Earth's system, and aspect of climate change shown by temperature measurements and by multiple effects of the warming. Though earlier geological periods also experienced episodes of warming, the commonly refers to the observed and continuing increase in average air and ocean temperature since 1900 caused mainly by emissions of greenhouse gases in the modern industrial economy. In the modern context the global warming and climate change are commonly interchangeable but climate change includes both global warming and it's effects such as changes to precipitation and impact that differ by region. Many

of the observed warming changes since the 1950s are unprecedented in the instrumental temperature record and in historical and paleoclimate proxy records of climate change over thousands to millions of years. In India our mangroves are suffers most. The mangroves forest which is not only beneficial to us but also plays a significant role gorgeous the environment the birds and marine life. It acts as a natural barrier to storms and cyclones by absorbing the shock of the tides, reduces their intensity and help one to prevent erosion. The threat to mangroves also includes the release of heavy metal toxic substances and industrial waste. As we all know that water pollution is caused by the leakage and spills from the ships which are harmful for the mangrove forests also. The Govt needs to ensure that untreated waste is disposed of properly and there are no oil spills as these decrease the flow of fresh water. It is to learn that 35% of the mangrove forest has already been and is decreasing day by day. Mangrove forests require a stable sea level gorgeous long term survival. They are also sensitive to the current rising sea level caused by Global warming and climate change. Last but not least we should releasing Green House Gasses into the atmosphere that are responsible for causing Global warming. Also we should protect mangroves trees from being cutting by the people so that the mangroves ecosystem should be preserved.

Mool Raj Bhagota (Panjsoo), Doda.



Tik Tok Ban

VINOD CHANDRASHEKHAR DIXIT

Banning of Tik Tok is a good decision as it has effected the society ingauid and children in particular. Tik Tok, originally called Douyin in China, Tik Tok was launched in 2016 by Zhang Yimin, who is also the founder of Beijing-based news and information platform Toutiao. Tik Tok was brought to Indonesia in September last year by tech company Byte Dance. Tik Tok, is billed as a 'YouTube killer' globally, is a serious player and it is backed by China's ByteDance Technology which is currently valued over \$75 billion. The app allows its users to create short music videos. It reached the one billion download mark in February. It was the fourth most-downloaded non-game app in 2018. It is a social network application that allows its users to share a 15-second video with enhancements like adding songs and dialogues. People defying gravity, imitating celebrities, dancing dangerously in front of moving cars or even simply smiling at the camera packed with all kinds of special effects. India had become a large and growing market for TikTok, with nearly 300 million users in the country out of over 1 billion total downloads, according to Sensor Tower. (TikTok notes it had over 120 million monthly actives in India.) India is not the first country seeking a ban on TikTok. In fact, authorities in Indonesia went ahead and banned TikTok last July. While lawmakers have long criticised the indiscriminate usage of social media, TikTok in particular appears to have irked authorities for its popularity and mass outreach particularly among youngsters.

One of main reason for the TikTok ban were "pornography. Although the apps page in Play Store and Apple Store state that it is rated PG (parental guidance needed) for user interaction, the app's terms of service do not specify an age limit for users, which means anyone of any age can easily create an account. Though TikTok is banned, the ban has proved ineffective when it comes to controlling wayward tech and content.

The Tik Tok application had taken India by storm, it is quite famous in the rural areas of the country too. Under Indian laws, as per Section 79 of the Information Technology Act, 2000 incorporates these basic rules of removal of illegal content and due diligence. The Intermediaries Guidelines Rules, 2011 specifically gives intermediaries the right to remove users who do not follow their guidelines under Rule 3(5). This will, at the least, prevent further exposure of children to such individuals.

"Tik Tok allows users to make interesting content with its various features. If you manage to make interesting content, people will see you as a trend-setter and follow you but since the app is largely used to enact popular film scenes and it is also found that a number of them feature obscene dialogues objectifying women from softcore pornographic films. The court opines that the "dangerous aspect" of Tik Tok is the "inappropriate" content. It also said "there is a possibility of the children contacting strangers directly".

In a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi in February, right-wing group Swadeshi Jagran Manch said that Tik Tok is known for sharing the details of children and being an open ground for child pornography and possibly "anti-national" activities.

In an official statement Tik Tok has said that they have been stepping up efforts to take down objectionable content. Till date they have removed over 6 million videos that violated their Terms of Use and Community Guidelines, following an exhaustive review of content generated by their users in India.

Maintaining a safe and positive in-app environment at Tik Tok should be our priority. We need to have tough measures to protect users against misuse, protect their privacy and digital wellbeing. Parents need to learn more about social media literacy in order to protect their children from any harm that could come to them on the internet.

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