

War against drugs in Punjab is for all to fight

By Tarun Chugh

Punjab prisons are brimming with drug-peddlers and addicts. The social fabric in the state is in deep crisis. The drug menace in Punjab has wreaked havoc, which has been chronicled by several national agencies. This calls for a national response to deal with the pervasive menace of drug addictions.

The magnitude of the drug-addiction among the people in Punjab is mind-boggling. The people from all walks of lives are being drawn into the cobweb of drug-addictions. While Punjab has been the bulwark of India, Pakistan set its nefarious designs on the state. Pakistan's military designs were crushed on the battlefields. Still, Pakistan persisted to wage proxy wars, beginning with terrorism exported to Punjab, which India successfully defeated. Now Pakistan has resorted to a new warfare of drugs, which have been weaponised with aims to subdue the bravery of the people of Punjab.

A vast tentacle has been created at the behest of Pakistan to push drugs into Punjab, and drones are being used for peddling drugs. Cross-border smuggling of drugs even through the sea routes to push the drugs sourced from Afghanistan is being used. There is a syndicate of drug-peddlers active in Punjab.

The extent of challenge has overwhelmed the existing facilities of de-addiction centres. Families are shaken. Hospitals are overflowing, and tales of agonies of broken households, financial stress, indebtedness of the rural people, deaths are widely being shared.

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the BJP has taken several causes. The Central government has come out with policy response to deal with the social challenges. Some of the northern states

had a very poor sex ratio in the 0-6 age groups. A few of the states had seen mushrooming of the ultrasound clinics. They had come up solely to meet the growing demand to kill the girl child in the fetus. PM Modi rose to the occasion and gave a clarion call to the nation with 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao'.

Within a few years, the practice of killing the girl child is now mostly eliminated. Similar result was seen with the campaign of 'Swachhata Abhiyan'. Sanitation became the mantra of nation. This helped India in dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic effectively. Now, the BJP is taking out yatra to extinguish drug menace in Punjab.

Battle against drugs in Punjab has to be a social cause, which should be on the top agenda of all the stakeholders. The civil society must step up their resources to deal with the issue. Political parties too must own up the challenge. Social activists must counter the sociological and psychological aspects of the crisis. Religious leaders too have abundant duty to intervene and rescue the people.

Social service drives the Bharatiya Janata Party. Politics for the BJP is the means to serve the people. 'Sewa (service)' is the mantra of the BJP. In times of the Covid-19 pandemic, when the people faced hardships on account of the national lockdown, the BJP workers were on the street for 'Sewa', to ensure that none went hungry and there was no suffering. This has been ingrained in the DNA of the BJP workers. They don't need to be directed by the party leadership to respond to the social crisis. The BJP workers on their own step out. For them, the people in distress are the family members.

The BJP will be launching a 'yatra; in Punjab to free the state from the clutches of drug menace. This is the abundant duty of the BJP workers. Punjab cannot wait anymore. Time to crush the tentacles of drug menace and the cause cannot be postponed for another day anymore.

The top leadership of the BJP has taken a call to launch the yatra against the drug menace in Punjab. Union Minister for Home Affairs Amit Shah will take part in the yatra. The BJP president Jagat Pratap Nadda will also take part in the yatra. Several top leaders of the BJP will walk alongside the people of Punjab to send out the message that the drug menace has to be crushed in the state.

(Author is National General Secretary of the Bharatiya Janata Party)

