

Need of the hour: Common educational institution for villages

After advising every industrialist, urban authority and SEZ to voluntarily place 1% of their land as institute conservation area, the author now emphasises on the importance of rural development. Read on to know more about his encounters...



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MINDS ON THE MARGIN

The last time we talked about believing that nature has been very kind and generous, and that every industrialist, every urban authority and every SEZ voluntarily agree to place one per cent of their land as an institute conservation area.

For a person with 5,000 hectares of land, giving 50 will not be a large offering. He will be blessed by his grandchildren, who help him build the conserve. And he will be blessed by the grandchildren in the community. So let us not wait for an incentive from the state. It is but a small individual venture. So let's say you have given someone 5,000 hectares with no grass. People may say that it is nothing but wasteland. But no land can be wasted.

There are a large number of people in the state who have animals to take care of and while there are agricultural policies, these livestock people remain very weak. So we should have, say in Kutch, a collection of various grasses, which can be conserved on this plot. If we face a crisis tomorrow and some disease causes damage to all food crops, than we can survive thanks to livestock and we can regenerate the grasses that have been destroyed. Where will we find the seeds for this? We have to provide for that day right now. There are grasses in Kutch which have 13 to 14% protein. We need to conserve these and others, an example of which is a seed called Theg, found in

Nalsarovar, which is only available in winter. How many people know about this? Who will conserve it?

I hope that after this column, every entrepreneur managing an SEZ will voluntarily offer land. Secondly, industries should try to help workers in such difficult times. If not more, they should at least ensure that the workers' children are not withdrawn from school.

We should remember a stranger who has helped us and make sure that the help is returned in some form. Another thing we need to do is ensure a common educational institution or person for villages. There is a person called Golbaba, Ahmed Khan Solanki, from Char village in Junagadh. People come to him with their animals and he solves their problems.

People believe he understands the pain of the animals as all he does is touch the animals, rub his hand over them and they are cured. He commands respect that very few can.

Industries should try to help workers in difficult times. They should at least ensure that workers' children are not withdrawn from school.

Golbaba undertakes yatras and provides help wherever required. He has many tales to tell: once a person came to his house, asked for help for his animal and took him to his house on his scooter. By the time Golbaba was done, it was night. One would believe that the least that could be done is that he would be taken home. However, Golbaba walked home.

He reluctantly narrated the incident, saying, "Talking about payment, I don't expect it and I give all my blessings. I do what I do and they do what they want. Why should I bother?"

He is a living example of the philosophy of life. I cannot believe that not a single of 200 children who listen to him speak will not be affected. If one person is inspired by Golbaba or any other such person, we will be institutionalised. So, when we talk about culture and continuity, this continuity will come about by providing opportunity.