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# Staying ahead of the curve - Be resourceful and Atmanirbhar



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**M**ITRON. Thanks for the fantastic title suggestions. We went with this title since it's the popular choice. Although popular choices aren't quite living up to their promises, sometimes we have to live with whatever flowers in the swamp.

I wanted to start my *man ki baat* on a positive note but stuck in my soul is the heart-wrenching plight of millions of migrants; left high and dry due to an abrupt lockdown. To claim that one 'cannot plan for every contingency' is to demonstrate a sociopathic social distancing from reality; who didn't know that India has millions of migrants? You ignore them when they need help but spend millions to beg for their votes even before the blood on their

feet has dried. "SAD!" as friend Dolund often tweets.

China is no shining example, but they too have millions of internal migrants. Did you hear of any dying on roads, or in trains that get lost? I didn't even know trains CAN get lost.

I'm so shaken and stirred that I wanted to focus on them. But what's the point? Those who care are already helping. Many don't care about anything happening today - they only want an account for the past 70 years. Or insist that everyone unquestioningly 'respects' and 'supports' the powers-that-be in these 'difficult' times. Which is fair, except that the last 5-6 years we're suffering one 'difficulty' after another; mostly self-inflicted, especially when any elections are happening. Also, respect for any office happens when the office-bearer

first respects their own office AND the people who put him in it.

Times now are such that no one wants to face any inconvenient truth. Chinese in Ladakh. Killing our soldiers. Nepalese cartographic aggression. Banks collapsing. Riots. Lynchings. Economy, unemployment, petrol prices, Covid and Covid-treatment cost spinning out of control. Yet Whatsapp University insists sab changa si. And the Republic is worried about Paki-Trained-Locust-terrorists. And who has been asked to chair WHO. Seriously? Who cares for an appointment as rotational as the Antilia chowkidar?

Antilia reminds me of this other island, *Kailaasa*. Or *Kailaassa*? I'm not sure how many 'sses' are in it, but it's a brilliant idea. I was thinking of taking a bank loan and buying one. I'd

call mine Fukra. Or Dholera. Classy! Right?

But a friend reminded me, 'You do have an M in your name, but you're a middle-class moron and your residential address is not within fifty miles of the Kathiawar Peninsula. Which bank will give you an unsecured loan? Stop dreaming.'

A harsh reminder; my *achche din* aren't here yet.

Are yours?

Anyway. Let's be positive. Migrants in Punjab and Kerala fared better. Unsurprising.

Who's not acquainted with the *Khalsa's* huge heart and selfless soul? They're always at the forefront when it comes to helping those in need. Placing a *Khalsa* at the helm of affairs might bring some empathy, courage and people-orientation into policy. Or a woman. Me-thinks, the best would be a Sikh

woman; barring those who hear the sun chanting Aum. (Jacinda MUST be one; see how well New Zealand is doing.)

As for Kerala. I guess education matters. I bet even monkeys in Kerala Google 'should I plan before...' they do anything, especially important things like throwing away your money.

Anyway. Let's stay with positivity.

Covid-19 has changed the way we eat, pray, love - everything. To flourish in this shifting sand reality, we need to leverage an inner resource that we're all born with - RESOURCEFULNESS. Towards that I'd like to share a story.

When I was a young officer, our *paltan* (14 SIKH LI) was deployed in terrorist-infested jungles. One rainy night, my platoon was tasked to set up an ambush. We were normal

infantrymen equipped with bayonets and bullets.

As we were setting out, our Senior JCO, a huge *Khalsa*, handed me a condom.

I was bewildered. 'For what? To screw terrorists? Or have safe jack-offs while waiting in ambush?'

Before I could make a fool of myself by asking, he said, 'put it on the muzzle, *sahibji*, otherwise rain and slush will clog the barrel!'

Ah! Safe shooting!

That's how resourcefully *atmanirbhar* we were. Even before the slogan was coined. I'm told that these days slogan-spinners are better paid than policy planners. But then, they seem to be the only ones working.

I share this story to remind you how easy it is to activate resourcefulness. Everyday look for things you can do differently.

And different ways in which you can use everyday things.

Here's a challenge!

What all can you do with a beer can? (Other than drinking from it.) Whoever shares the maximum 'alternate' uses for a beer-can, wins a prize.

Email me. (Hint - Google, like mummy, knows everything.)

Righto then. Till next fortnight.

Stay Safe!

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