

LESSONS FOR INDIA

France is burning with riots and violence. The magnificent historic building that survived the two world wars were set ablaze by the rioters. When government fail to deal with their inner problems and the rulers and opinion makers spend their energies following the agenda set up others, situation gets worst. The French riots started as so called protest against the inefficiencies of the government systems, a shoddy educational policy and rise in gas prices. But soon, the protests had turned into riots and most of the violence is being attributed to illegal migrants in the country. Here are a lot of lessons for the people and the state of India to learn from this. The government has to deal with issues and predict future problems to ward off social unrest. The Narendra Modi government is doing all this. India doesn't get involved in the political issues and tensions between two countries. Even under tremendous pressure, India refused to take sides in the Ukraine versus Russian and Israel vs Hamas wars. The clarity that India is trying to sort out its own developmental issues and is globally for peace is a big signal to youth not to feel disillusioned. Countries like France get over involved in the global wars without caring about impact on its population. The nation state is a reality. Nations are not just boundaries and people but it's passion that makes them alive. Sacrificing national interests or looking at global issues with myopic eyes brings its own set of problems to the countries, as France is facing today. The country, like many Europeans nations encourage illegal immigrants without bothering for its longterm impact on its society. These countries thought of the immigrants only as cheap labour and never tried to protect their societies. The result is for everyone to see. India is doing the right thing by removing illegal immigrants and not meddling in wars of others.

Pankaj Arora

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Learning is not a transaction of silent packets downloaded into passive minds - it is an intersubjective, dialogue-driven awakening. In the classroom, the human voice is an ethical compass and emotional anchor. When synthetic knowledge is instantaneous and ubiquitous, the educator becomes not only a content provider but also an irreplaceable voice of mentorship, questioning and moral discernment.

The scale of this imperative is vividly reflected in the empirical realities of Indian education. According to the latest UDISE+ data, India's school ecosystem encompasses nearly 14.7 lakh schools and over 24.7 crore students, guided by a national cadre of over 1.02 crore schoolteachers. Sustained national commitments under the National Education Policy 2020 have brought structural pupil-teacher ratios well within healthy benchmarks, recording 10:1 at the Foundational stage, 13:1 at the Preparatory stage, 17:1 at the Middle stage, and 21:1 at the Secondary stage, with women comprising nearly 55 per cent of this workforce. These figures indicate that In-

Dogri Ram Lila : A Milestone for Dugger Heritage

Sanjay Rohmetra

The staging of a Ramlila in the Dogri language is far more than just another cultural program; it represents a conscious, living effort to promote Dogri as a spoken, heard, and felt language. For too long, the promotion of Dogri has been largely confined to academic seminars, university departments, and students pursuing it as an elective subject. However, the true battleground for linguistic survival lies outside the classroom—in the kitchen, the mohalla, and the homes where future generations are raised.

When the sacred Ram Katha is articulated in chaste Dogri—complete with its indigenous idioms, subtle humor, and distinct tehzeeb—it transcends demographics. It reaches the homemaker managing the household, the child hearing a complete narrative in their mother tongue for the first time, the school-going student who otherwise knows Dogri strictly as a textbook syllabus, and the elder who savors every single native nuance. In doing so, Dogri ceases to be merely an academic subject and transforms into a living sanskar.

This grassroots momentum rests upon a rich literary foundation. The Ramayana was translated into Dogri by Sh. Shambu Nath, while an original Dogri Ramlila penned by Padma Shri Narsingh Dev Jamwal was published as far back as 1987. More recently, the Nami Dogri Sanstha (NDS) released the pioneering music video and paath of the Dogri Ramayan Mala, authored, sung, and produced by Dr. Nasib Singh Manhas. The recent Dogri Ramlila initiative successfully translates this literary heritage from the written page to the live stage, where a language truly lives and breathes.

Behind every transformative cultural movement lies a dedicated human core. In Jammu, that vital force has been championed by the Senior Citizens Support Service Club, Chowadi. Formed in 2019 to aid the infirm and underprivileged elderly, the Club established a formal Management Committee in October 2022 under the leadership of Dr. Kasturi Lal—a renowned gynecologist, former Principal of Government Medical College Jammu, and Director of the Lajwanti Medical Trust. Dr. Lal has endowed the organization with a visionary mandate that extends far beyond general welfare: the preservation and propagation of our mother tongue.

At an age when most individuals retreat from civic concerns, Dr. Kasturi Lal has made Dogri his daily mission. He regularly welcomes participants to Dogri Kavi Goshthis, apprizes dignitaries of the language's declining social footprint, and advocates passionately for its revitalization. Under his chairmanship, the Club has expanded its scope far beyond routine gatherings. It has celebrated Elders' Day in collaboration with Nami Dogri Sanstha, hosted interactive policy sessions with the Jammu Chamber of Commerce and Industries (headed by Arun Gupta), and organized Dogri Rangotsav 2025 to showcase regional theatre. Crucially, the Club conducts competitive events in debating, poetry recitation, essay writing, and folk singing across schools and colleges, empowering the youth to claim ownership of their linguistic identity.

The practical manifestation of this cultural awakening culminated in the Dogri Ramlila conducted during Shardiya Navratri, held from October 10th to October 18th, 2026, at the historic Panj Mandir in



Channi Himmat, Jammu. The seamless execution of this landmark event was spearheaded by Sh. Rajneesh Gupta, a veteran writer and one of Jammu's most accomplished theatre and film directors.

Sh. Gupta is no stranger to the region's cultural vanguard. His recent Dogri feature film, Shah Shani, produced under the banner of JK Cineplex and premiered at PVR Cinemas KC Jammu, earned immense acclaim—including personal appreciation from the Deputy Chief Minister for its authentic portrayal of regional identity.

Directing a theatrical production of this magnitude over nine consecutive, power-packed days is a formidable challenge. Managing a diverse ensemble of over 34 actors, synchronizing performances, and maintaining high artistic standards day after day required extraordinary stamina and discipline. Serving as the true anchor of the team, Sh. Gupta meticulously refined dialogues, inspired the cast, and oversaw every logistical and creative detail from the

opening curtain to the grand finale, setting a new benchmark for commitment in regional theatre.

While a script forms the soul of any masterpiece, the resounding success of the Channi Himmat production was driven by the collective heartbeat of an entire community of artists. The production was successful by the seasoned skillful and veterans such as J.R. Sagar, Rajneesh Kumar Gupta, Dimple Sharma, Lalita Tapasvi, and Meera Tapasvi, whose decades of theatrical wisdom brought profound grace to the stage.

They were supported by an exceptional ensemble of talented actors who delivered compelling portrayals, including, Mukesh Bakshi, Sahib Hans, Shiv Vohra, King C. Bharti, Ishu Bharti, Ajay Saini, Mangal Singh, Seema Dogra, Dr. Meetu Meenia, Mannat Bhau, Rishab Manhas, Sahil Singh Rajput, Naresh Kesar, Amanjit Verma, Sudesh Kumar, Shambu Ram, Nikhil, Ishan Mansotra, Haqiqat Singh, Bindia, and Yashovardan.

The auditory landscape

of the Ramlila was orchestrated by musician Yuvraj Gupta, while its emotional and devotional fervor soared on the powerful, soul-stirring vocals of singers Munish Kumar, Dr. Meetu Meenia, Shiv Vohra, Anju Bandal, Pushpa Bharti and Sanjay Rohmetra. Visual authenticity was expertly maintained by makeup artist Pintoo ji, and the atmospheric lighting and stage clarity were commanded with precision by Vijay Kapoor. Sh. Vijay Sharma ji, General Secretary of the Senior citizen club remained steadfast for each department of the play ensuring its smooth running. Together, actors, musicians, technicians, and backstage crew members scripted a proud, glorious chapter in Dogri performing arts.

A vital pillar of this success was the ready cooperation of the Panj Mandir Trust members, who opened their temple premises not just as a place of worship, but as a vibrant cultural manch. When a religious institution actively champions the mother tongue, it lends the language a sacred and social legitimacy that no government directive can replicate.

Furthermore, this event is part of a broader, maturation process across Jammu. The city has long preserved Ramlila as heritage, notably through the historic productions of Shri Sanatan Dharam Natak Samaj at Dewan Mandir (over 150 years old) and the Saraswati Dramatic Club at Billu Mandir, Panjirthi (over a century old). The Dogri Ramlila at Billu Mandir has long proven that audiences actively crave hearing epic figures speak in the cadence of their own homes. With this tradition now firmly taking root in Channi Himmat within the new city, Jammu is demonstrating a profound, city-wide shift: it

is no longer apologetic about Dogri; it is intensely proud of it.

True Maa Boli is not defined by inclusion in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution or by decorative signboards. It is the language a mother uses to scold, to comfort, and to tell stories. For Dogri to truly thrive, it must migrate from bureaucratic files into everyday family conversations.

The convergence of dedicated civil initiatives like the Senior Citizens Club, visionary artistry by directors like Rajneesh Gupta, the welcoming embrace of temple trusts, and active school-level competitions forms a robust, self-sustaining ecosystem. It is a people's movement where every resident of the Dugger region is a stakeholder.

A decade ago, there were genuine anxieties regarding whether the younger generation would retain the language. Today, we witness a different reality: homemakers rehearsing Dogri dialogue, children inquiring about native vocabulary, students preparing Dogri poetry, and elders applauding cultural couplets. The Dogri Ramlila has achieved what countless policy resolutions could not—it has transitioned Dogri from a demand on paper to a language of daily use. When Lord Rama spoke in chaste Dogri at Panj Mandir this Navratri, he was not just Maryada Purushottam; he was a son of the soil communicating with his people in their own Maa Boli.

If this momentum is maintained—if every mohalla fosters its own Dogri Ramlila, every school encourages Dogri debates, and every household shares a story in Dogri each week—the day is not far when Dogri will no longer require artificial preservation. It will simply be lived, naturally and proudly.

Jai Duggar, Jai Dogri,

HELP CHILDREN MAKE FRIENDS WITH FOOD

Sonali khan

There is a stage in childhood when food is wonderfully simple. A banana is something to peel. A roti can be rolled into a little tube. A bowl of curd can become a place to mix, dip and experiment. A handful of peas can be counted before they are eaten. A child may know the taste of a favourite snack long before they know what nutrition means. Then, gradually, adults begin explaining food.

Eat your vegetables. Drink your milk. Have some fruit. Finish what is on your plate. This has protein. This has vitamins. This is good for you. The advice comes from a place of care. Every parent

wants a child to grow well and have the nourishment needed for an active childhood. The early years are an important period for growth and development, and the foods introduced during this stage contribute to children's nutritional needs while also helping them become familiar with different tastes and textures. WHO describes the period from six months onwards as an important stage for establishing healthy dietary patterns and learning to accept a variety of nutritious foods.

There is another part of this learning that deserves attention: the meaning children attach to food. A child watches before a child chooses. Children watch the adults around them with remark-

able attention. They notice what appears in the kitchen every morning. They see a parent cut fruit while packing lunch. Food has colour. Food has texture. Food comes from somewhere. Some foods are eaten often, some occasionally. Meals can be prepared together. The child is learning all this long before anyone asks them to remember the food pyramid.

Give children a place in the process.

There is something different about eating a food that a child has helped prepare. The same cucumber that was ignored on a plate can suddenly become interesting when the child has washed it, sliced it with help and arranged

it beside the other ingredients. Sesame Workshop India's Healthy Habits initiative brings nutrition, movement and play, and sleep into one broader conversation about childhood well-being. Its India resources include Aahaar Cards, storybooks, flash cards, a Healthy Calendar and activity-based material designed to help children and caregivers explore healthy routines.

A healthy childhood is built through several everyday routines. There is the food a child eats, the water they drink, and the habits around hygiene and daily care.

These parts of childhood often overlap. Sesame Workshop's current Healthy Habits programme

follows this wider approach, using play-based activities and family resources to make healthy routines easier for children to understand and practise.

A useful routine is one that a family can repeat. Over time, these small experiences can give children a sense of what caring for themselves looks like. We can give children information about nutrition, and we can also give them experiences that make healthy choices understandable. Let them ask why a carrot is orange.

Let them choose between two fruits. Let them help stir the yoghurt. Healthy habits are like a language in themselves for children.

Smart classrooms need the human touch

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dia has achieved significant demographic capacity. The urgent systemic frontier is no longer numerical provisioning alone, but ensuring that this vast teaching cadre is empowered to speak, guide and mentor beyond mechanical routines.

If a teacher's professional voice is just textbook recitation or standardised test administration, then digital tools will expose institutional redundancies; if that voice is trained to ask questions critically, be philosophically sceptical and be emotionally resilient, then technology is relegated to its rightful place as an administrative ally

(absorbing clerical work so teachers can do what machines cannot); it frees educators to do what machines can never do.

To bring this voice out of bureaucratic silence and into pedagogical leadership, the National Council for Teacher Education has institutionalised the National Professional Standards for Teachers as PUSHTI (Professional Upholding of Standards for Holistic Teaching and Integrity).

For decades, career mobility in Indian schooling was based on passive seniority, administrative compliance and tenure-based stagnation. Instruc-

tional depth, classroom voice and reflective pedagogy rarely got structural recognition. PUSHTI changes all that by replacing administrative inertia with an objective merit architecture for professional progression. Under PUSHTI, an educator's professional journey evolves across three distinct, progressive milestones.

It commences with the Proficient Teacher, or Praveen Shikshak, the foundational practitioner whose voice establishes classroom trust, demonstrates conceptual clarity and responds attentively to early developmental diversity. It advances to the Advanced Teacher, or Unnat Shikshak, the skilled practitioner whose voice articulates interdisciplinary connections, models differentiated instruction and elevates the collaborative dialogue of the wider school community. At its apex stands the Expert Teacher, or Kushal Shikshak, the master practitioner whose reliable voice guides curriculum design, pilots contextual innovations and mentors generations of emerging colleagues. This professional voice requires nurturing across the entire career continuum. Pre-service preparation is being reimaged through the four-year multidisciplinary Integrated Teacher Education Programme, instilling pedagogical confidence, cognitive under-

standing and clinical school residencies from the outset. Simultaneously, the mandated fifty annual hours of continuous professional development are shifting from passive compliance seminars into spaces of vocal, critical engagement, equipping teachers to challenge algorithmic outputs and guide students in ethical digital literacy.

Through MITRA – the National Mission for Mentoring – this voice is sustained by structured intergenerational dialogue, pairing emerging practitioners with master teachers to keep human insight at the centre of institutional change. As India advances towards Viksit Bharat @ 2047, our schools will increasingly hum with computational power, adaptive software and automated dashboards. Yet we must remember that silicon can organise knowledge, but it cannot awaken the spirit.

A smart classroom may generate the right answers, but only a human voice can inspire a child to ask the right questions, stand up for the vulnerable and dare to dream beyond the screen. By anchoring our one-crore-strong teacher community in PUSHTI's clear standards and dignified career pathways, we ensure that the heart of Indian education remains an enduring dialogue between human minds.