

As arrival and had to have ner by on the pavement? Matters ve gone pretty far if such ngs can happen. I hope Minis- s like Mr Indrajit Gupta (I am t sure under whose portfolio is comes) will do something out it.

THE same lawlessness applies i the national highway. King's famous Grand Trunk ad. From Chandigarh to De- i, only for some length of the ad is four-lane traffic, with a vider. For the rest, people in rs are held up by lorries, racing uses, racing tankers and hold- g up fast traffic for almost the hole length of the journey. The affic is cluttered up with trac- rs, sometimes diven by farm ds not even in their teens, by affalo carts, by three-wheelers, ro-wheelers, cycles, cycle- ckshaws, lorries with long steel d other roads protruding from ie back for two lorry lengths ithout the mandatory red flag r light at the end, tractors with eavy bales jutting half way cross the road, not allowing

allowed to operate only at night and keep the roads free during the day for fast cross-country traffic.

The heavily mixed traffic on our national highways is not only a disgrace and quite outmoded, the lack of any traffic patrols makes matters worse. Even a surprise check at intervals and heavy fines for breaking traffic rules and not allowing fast traffic the right of way, can act as a deterrent.

It is all very well to boast about the fancy cars coming from abroad as a result of liberalisation. But where are the roads for them and the traffic control to allow one to drive them as they should be driven after paying an astronomical price. Let our traffic crawl in peace before it is allowed to run. Otherwise it will only remain one big status symbol to impress the rest of the world about our wealth and modernity. The fact of the matter is, as far as traffic control goes, we are still literally in the bullock cart age.

The eco-friendly international cycle Yatra, the first of its kind, is undertaken to focus the attention of the people living on the bank of river Yamuna on the need of re-establishing the Braj of Krishna.

Jamunotri, nestled in the Garwal Himalayas, the abode of gods and sages, sacred rivers, alpine lakes, towering peaks, thundering waterfalls and hot springs, will be the starting point of the this unique ecological Yatra.

Over the period of three weeks moving along the course of the river, which according to mythology is twin sister of the God of Death, the Yama, cycle riders will make their way through the pains of North India to the national capital of Delhi.

On the way the cyclists will plant the trees, educate the people on the need of preserving ecology by organising public meetings and raise fund for their Braj project.

At Delhi the British High Commission will host the reception for the cycle riders and introduce them to the local media.

After leaving Delhi the expedition will move into sacred region of Braj and traversing the pilgrim trail popularly known as Braj Mandal Parikrama reach the city of Vrindavan.

The trip will offer rich experience to the riders. The Indian mountains, mythology, flora and fauna, rivers, villagers, activity of the national capital and finally the serenity of Braj and the holy town of Vrindavan with its late medieval monuments will add to the understanding of Indian culture of the international participants.

Saroj learns the computer

Integrated education for the blind

by Preeti Singh

WHERE there is a will, there is a way.

This age-old proverb is reconfirmed with the declaration of the CBSE results. Vision impairment did not prevent Dinesh Kumar of Government School, Paschim Vihar, from scoring 79.8 per cent in the class 12 examination this year. Nor did lack of sight keep Parnav Lal, commerce student of APJ school, Saket, from getting away with a score of 77 per cent. Monica Sharma, a student of class 10 Delhi Public School, R.K. Puram, scores 71 per cent with distinction in English. Sangeeta passes class ten with 64 per cent from Saraswati Bal Vihar School, Mehrauli, with distinction in English and Sanskrit. Saroj, also from the same school gets 61 per cent with distinction in English. Last but not the least, Ravish, student of the President Estate School makes his class 10 with a 60 per cent.

These children have been studying in regular schools along with other children under the integrated education scheme of the Government of India. This scheme makes provision for education of blind children in regular schools. This is a boon for children with vision impairment as the number of special schools for the blind are too few, to cater to the education of the growing number of blind children.

The National Association for the Blind, Delhi, is an institution which prepares visually impaired children for integration into regular schools. NAB, Delhi also helps blind children to get admission into suitable schools. Once the children are admitted into regular schools, NAB acts as a support system throughout the schooling period. The blind students are provided with braille books for their use, they are also given other equipment like cassette recorders, braille slates, braille and talking books, to help these children keep abreast with the class. Computer education is also provided at the NAB computer centre. NAB, Delhi has hostel accommodation for blind children are housed.

Once back from their respective schools they are helped with homework and extra studies by the specially trained NAB teachers. The NAB teachers regularly visit the schools to keep in touch with the progress of the visually impaired students.

NAB Delhi has integrated 140 children in the past eight years. These 140 children have been integrated into 33 schools.

INTEGRATED education is proving to be a great success, not only from the academic point of view, but also from the social integration aspect. Sighted children grow up with their sightless counterparts, naturally learning to appreciate each other. By the time they become adult they no longer see any difference between the two worlds. Actually there is no difference. Society has created these differences by segregating blind persons and keeping them hidden in special homes and schools, hidden behind gloomy and drab boundary walls. The net result being neither the sighted ones, nor the sightless know how to go about breaking this wall. Let me tell you, both wish to pull this wall down but both don't know how to go about doing so. This results in unemployment and loneliness for the blind people.

Integrated education is a major step towards making visually impaired people productive members of our society. I don't see the need to make us an unnecessary burden by segregating us from the mainstream. Let us visually impaired persons walk shoulder to shoulder, we will together make the winning team. I am sure most of you sighted people have asked your class-mate to read a certain portion of the black board at some time. So where is the disaster if your child reads out the black board to his blind class-mate? That is all it takes.

I take this opportunity to sincerely appreciate the principals of these 33 schools and of other such school, who have given us blind persons the chance to make it in life.

Jna

once clean river

mountain range of Govardhana which literally means expander of cow-wealth. Krishna, the Yamali used to roam around these forests, groves grazing his cows and playing melodiously on his flute.

And it was on the white sands of river Yamuna that he danced with beautiful cowherd girls, fair as Champak flowers, on the full moon night of Sharada-ritu.

Probably it was Krishna himself who initiated the measures of preserving the local ecology, purifying Yamuna and starting the tradition of nature worship.

It was Krishna who cleared the Yamuna water of its contamination caused by cobra Kaliya. It was Krishna again who replaced the worship of Indra by that of Govardhana mountain which nourished his cows.

He revered rivers, he worshipped mountains, he, in fact, showed the way as to how one should respect his environment and ecology, forests, rivers and mountains. he delighted the birds by his flute-playing and, according to his biography, the Bhagavata Purana, even fed the local monkey-population with delicious butter.

IT is now the Friends of Vrindavan which is launching an ambitious project of reviving the lost glory of several sacred groves, ponds, forest clusters and river Yamuna herself.