

DRINKING IS GREAT FOR THE ECONOMY

On Satyameva jayate, there was a discussion between a village change agent and Amir Khan. The sardar related his difficulty in creating a zone where there would be no sale of alcohol. The most scary part was his narration of his struggle with the collector. "If we don't have wine shops and earn the tax revenue, how will Punjab progress?"

While the story was around the success of the village attempts to stay alcohol free, my mind went into the pervasiveness of this argument. "If India has to progress, we need to create revenue." This is the argument for destroying Niyamgiri the sacred hill of a tribe in Odisha, for destroying rivers, desecrating nature.

The village elder says, "I clinched the argument with the collector by saying we don't want a development built on the destruction of our youth". Are we aware that all arguments for development of the GDP have the same flavor as the collector batting for keeping wine shops open?

It is time for us to say, "We don't want a development that is built upon the destruction of our own future and the futures of our children and our grand children".