

GRATITUDE TO ALL TAX PROFESSIONALS AND TAXPAYERS

More than 30.75 lakh audit reports, including about 29.5 lakh Tax Audit Reports have been filed for AY 2023-24 on the e-filing portal till the end of the due date on 30th September 2023 with respect to filing of Tax Audit Reports (TARs) and other audit reports in Form No. 29B, 29C, 10CCB, etc, ensuring compliances in time.

The department has expressed gratitude to all tax professionals and taxpayers for their support in compliances.

To facilitate the taxpayers, extensive outreach programmes were carried out. Around 55.4 lakh outreaches were done through e-mails, SMSs, social media, along with information messages on Income Tax portal to create awareness among the taxpayers to file the Tax Audit Reports and other audit forms within the due date.

Various user awareness videos were uploaded on the Income Tax portal to provide guidance. Such concerted efforts have been helpful to the taxpayers and tax professionals in filing the audit reports within the due date.

The e-filing portal successfully handled the traffic, providing a seamless experience to the taxpayers and tax professionals for filing the audit reports.

This smooth filing experience has been appreciated by professionals on various platforms including social media.

The e-filing Helpdesk team has handled approximately 2.36 lakh queries from the taxpayers in the month of September, 2023 supporting the taxpayers and tax professionals proactively during the filing period, helping them resolve any complexity involved.

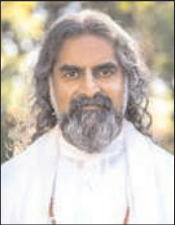
The support from the helpdesk was provided through inbound calls, outbound calls, live chats, Webex and co-browsing sessions.

The Helpdesk team also supported resolution of queries received on the Twitter handle of the Department through Online Response Management (ORM), by proactively reaching out to the taxpayers/stakeholders, providing assistance to them on different issues on a near real-time basis.

Various webinars related to filing of Audit forms were conducted to guide the Tax professionals.

Self-realisation: When body, mind, intellect and ego become silent

■ MOHANJI



Over the ages, masters have guided people to understand themselves and attain Self- realisation. Self-realisation happens when the body, mind, intellect and ego become silent.

It is then that the experience of self happens. It's almost like graduation - once you graduate, you remain a graduate. To get there, a Guru's hand is helpful because somebody who has already travelled that path can hold your hand and say that this is the way to go.

For recognising and realising your self, there are the paths of Bhakti Yoga (devotion path), Karma Yoga (activity path), Jnana Yoga (knowledge path), and Raja Yoga (dissolution path). These are based on what suits someone's orientation.

While all paths are effective, the right path for you is the one that suits you, the one that is effortless and easy for you. It is the one that makes you feel aligned.

For some people, devotion or Bhakti is easy and enjoyable, and they connect in an emotional way through feeling, singing and chanting. When analysis stops, and feeling and surrendering happen, then the devotee dissolves into the One that is being worshipped.

On the Jnana path, you accumulate knowledge and then assimilate all the knowledge, digest it, and then eliminate whatever is not Consciousness. Then you dissolve. It's slightly more difficult because the mind enters into analysis and analysis can detach you from the Truth.

Then there is the selfless service path (Karma yoga). When you serve the beings around you without the feeling of ownership, purification happens.

Knowledge, devotion and service are all gains in some way. A more powerful path of connection is the path of annihilation.

Annihilation means you lose all your identifications and just merge with the Supreme Unmanifested God, pure consciousness, or brightness. This is called the Golden Path, Raja Yoga, or the Royal Path. There are no forms attached; you connect to your soul.

The fundamental tenet of the Raja Yoga path is that things are happening; there is no 'doing', only 'being'. It is a lifestyle; it's not about activities. The Raja Yoga path is about shedding! Not shedding consciously -- the moment you say, "I don't want this," and you move something out, its residue will stay. But if it goes off by itself because you are not using it, it will not come back.

It's about awareness. What are you being aware of? The energy inside you. You're remembering all the time: "I'm not this personality which I'm projecting, but I'm the energy which is activating this projection." This remembrance is enough.

You'll start connecting more and more to the subtle or sookshma aspect inside. Satisfaction isn't sitting with anything outside. It's what's sitting inside that satisfies. You come to a state where no thoughts are produced, which means there are no desires, no inclinations, and no tendencies. You become more and more stable within, where you are not chasing anything in life. Whether a position or possession is available or not, whether a relationship is there or not, you are still stable.

And with that level of stability, you start experiencing the real energy that activates all these faculties. That's the time when you come in contact with the soul. Your mind and body are then totally aligned and as one unit; you are fully established inside. You gain the potential to become the Universe.

It helps to be connected to the consciousness of a master, not be confused with the personality of the master. Since the master is already aligned, when you are in the master's consciousness, then automatically you will be aligned.

So what do you get when you walk this path with full awareness of being connected? You become a master - you aren't a slave to life anymore. In a nutshell, Raja Yoga is the yoga where you are connecting and dissolving into the Supreme Unmanifested, the intangible form of pure energy brighter than a million suns. We are not connecting to an object. It is beyond bhakti, jnana, karma, etc. or it is a mixture of everything.

Raja means king or an emperor - not bound by anything on earth. It is a state where nothing can bind you, no practice, thing, person, situation, or time. It's a state of being totally free.

Crave for a thing, you will get it. Renounce the craving, the object will follow you by itself.

-Swami Sivananda

J&K achieves 100 pc ODF plus model status

■ ANUBHAV SINGH

In yet another remarkable accomplishment, achieved during the ongoing 'Swachhata Hi Seva' Campaign, the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir has declared all its 6650 villages across 285 blocks in 20 Districts as ODF Plus Model. The achievement of ODF Plus Model for all villages in the UT is a significant milestone as it goes beyond constructing and use of toilets towards cleanliness by managing grey water and solid waste in each village.

For a village to achieve the status of ODF plus Model, it is required to pass through three stages of ODF Plus namely Aspiring, Rising and Model. When a village achieves a condition where it is visually clean with minimal litter and stagnant water, apart from solid and liquid waste management (SLWM) and adequate cleanliness awareness generation activities, it is declared as ODF plus Model.

In its attempt to make all villages ODF Plus Model, comprehensive plans were made, bringing all the stakeholders on board before execution. The Village Sanitation Saturation Plans (VSSP) for each village were made to ensure it has assets available for SLWM. Based on the plans, considerable SLWM infrastructure has been created under SBMG and MGN-REGA. For Grey water management i.e., water generated from kitchen, bathing etc. soak pits, magic and leach pits have been developed at household and community level. 4,83,404 individual soak pits and 24,088 community soak pits have been constructed in J&K. Wherever kitchen gardens are available people have been motivated to dispose grey water through the kitchen gardens. For Biodegradable waste management individual and community compost pits have been constructed. 1,77,442 individual compost pits and 12621 community compost pits have been constructed either by the government or by people themselves in their households under MGNREGA. More and more of these assets are being constructed thereby making people accept and adopt of self-disposal of their organic waste, whether solid or liquid. People are being encouraged to segregate dry and wet waste and process wet waste in compost pits. 6509 waste collection and segregation sheds have been constructed for

proper disposal of waste. 5523 number of Community Sanitary Complexes and 17,46,619 Individual Household toilets have also been constructed in J&K, since it embarked on the journey of ODF and ODF plus.

GOBARdhan which is Galvanising Organic Bio Agro Resources is a waste to wealth initiative where animal dung and kitchen waste is used to generate biogas/bio slurry. While two such projects are already functional in J&K, 18 more projects are in the final stages of completion. Door to Door collection of waste has been initiated in all the panchayats. Through involvement of locals, youth clubs, NGOs, and expert agencies, waste is being collected from households to be taken to segregation sheds where waste is segregated into various categories such as paper, wood, plastic etc. for its disposal. Some of these segregations shed are semi mechanized with bailers, shredders etc. User charges are being collected from the households, commercial and institutional establishments, both government and private. A financial model has been put in place for all the districts based on their waste collection agency, to ensure sustainability of the waste collection mechanism and also generate revenue for panchayats out of the waste disposal, thereby converting this waste to wealth.

To cater to plastic waste in villages, Plastic Waste Management Units (PWMU) are being established in each block, which are at different stages of completion. The plastic in these centers would be cleaned, shredded, baled etc. for its final disposal. The complete life cycle of the waste is properly managed.

For declaring a village as ODF plus besides the uploading of ground reporting with clear visual, videos of Gram Sabhas being conducted and declaring their villages as ODF Plus are all required to be uploaded on the portal, thereby making the entire process very transparent and public. The work done on the ground was captured and updated on the IMIS portal of SBM- G by the Blocks and Districts which facilitated in declaring J&K ODF Plus Model which is a remarkable accomplishment.

To enhance Capacity Building of officers, village level workers, elected representatives about Swachhata, Capacity Building programs across 285 blocks in

20 districts have been conducted at the panchayat level in which entire Rural Development Deoartment's team and swachhagrahis have been trained to further train the people professionally for sustaining the goals of the mission.

Trainers have been trained to dispense information and provide orientations at the panchayat level. SBM(G) is not just a scheme for asset creation but is a behavioural change program which each household of the UT has to embrace for its success.

The focus of the departments on IEC through paintings, banners, awareness programs, plog runs, nukkadnataks is immense. Innovative ideas such as SwacchataKarwan, Swachhata Karwaan 2.0, Swachhata Internship, Swachh Yodha Pratiyogita, Swachhathon, Swachhata Bulletin and Swachhata Quiz have been launched to nudge behavioral change through cleanliness. The role of PRIs is pivotal in motivating people to understand the importance of Swachhata and help in making the everyday activities such as Door to Door collection of waste a success. Some elected representatives have done exceptional work in their respective panchayats for which they have received awards and appreciation at the UT and national level. Today every village of J&K so conspicuously carries messages of Swachhata on every public and private building.

Throughout Phase II of the Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen campaign, J&K has carried out many innovative campaigns and initiatives such as "Pink Toilets" to improve school attendance, Zero Landfill Shri Amarnath Ji Yatras, Give Polythene Get Gold campaign, pink societies to promote holistic development, Sarpanch Samvads, Swachhata internship, Swachhata quiz and Swachh Yodha Pratiyogita.

In another remarkable move to combat the sanitation challenges in rural areas of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, the Directorate of Rural Sanitation, J&K announced the nomination of country's highest gallantry awardee, the Param Var Chakra recipient Captain Bana Singh, a dedicated and decorated former soldier; as the ambassador for the "War Against Waste" initiative in Jammu & Kashmir.

As part of other new initiative aligning with the ongoing Swachhata Hi Seva cam-

paign, the Directorate of Rural Sanitation in Jammu and Kashmir has introduced the 'Swachhata Bulletin'. Its primary objective is to monitor and share daily updates on Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) activities conducted by districts under SHS 2023. It would create a platform wherein additional community members would come forward and would add to the cause of Swachh and Swasth Bharat. The bulletin can be used to collect feedback from stakeholders, aiding in program evaluation and improvement

Through consistent efforts, support of the people and elected representatives the department has achieved the status of ODF Plus Model. However, the biggest challenge shall be in sustaining the efforts that have been put to ensure that J&K becomes the cleanest UT of the country.

Sustainability begins with robust infrastructure. To ensure sustainability of ODF Plus model status of J&K in rural areas, department of rural development has to ensure consistent building and maintaining sanitation facilities, including toilets and waste management systems across districts, blocks and panchayats, paid usage of this massive infrastructure through its every citizen, to ensure accountability and responsibility and regular efforts towards behavior change so that filth and unhygienic behavior becomes unacceptable to everyone and Swachhata becomes a mass movement in a real sense. For this, engaging the communities, socio-cultural groups, PRIs, and more particularly close to 90000 women SHGs of J&K is pivotal.

Moreover, leveraging technology and innovation can significantly enhance sustainability. The use of smart sanitation solutions, remote monitoring, and data analytics can help in efficient resource allocation and timely maintenance.

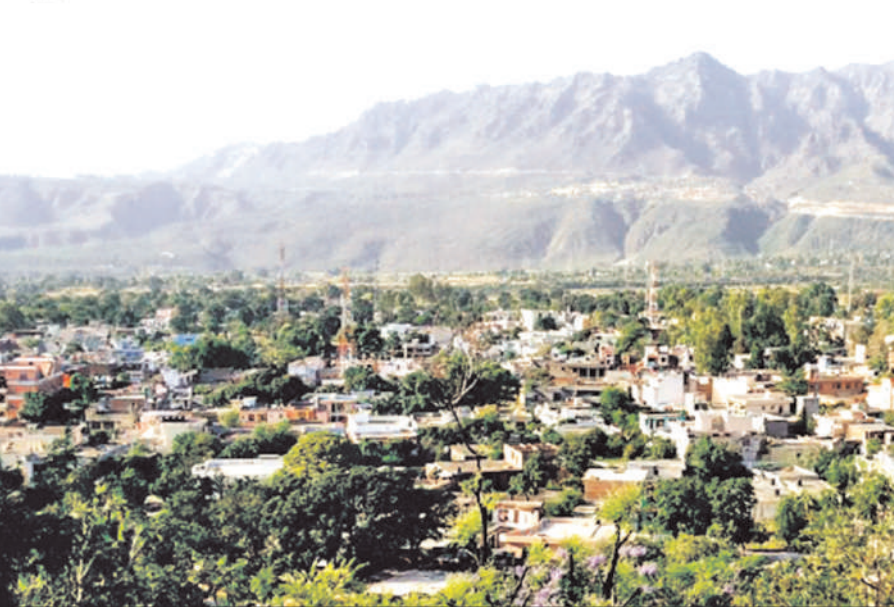
Sustainability in ODF Plus is not a one-time achievement but a continuous journey. It requires a multi-dimensional approach encompassing infrastructure development, behavioral change, community engagement, financial sustainability, technology integration, and more. By embracing these principles, J&K can not only sustain its ODF Plus Model status but also maintain it for generations to come, ensuring a cleaner, healthier, and more sustainable future.

Cultural Heritage: Reasi women reviving traditional handicrafts

■ DR. BANARSI LAL

Rural women from Reasi District of Jammu and Kashmir have added new life to the traditional local grass made handicrafts by indigenously innovating new items. Their unique creations in making the new items from local grass and wild palm have ignited widespread admiration and applause. Anita Devi, an innovative woman farmer has expressed her happiness at the transformation of new handicrafts. She remarked that "This innovative touch to our work has not only filled us with joy but has also given our crafts a refreshing and needful perspective". She said that their endeavours have been noticed and appreciated by all. She narrated that these handicrafts were declining but we have strived to inject a new vitality by making new items from locally available grass and wild palm. She informed that initially women were making only the Chabadi and Binna and using at their homes. With the impressive creations rural women of the area made new items such as pen stand, dry fruit trays, jewelry box, hot cases, laundry bags, wall clocks, footwears and many other decorative and useful items by applying their innovative skills and knowledge. Their success story have also been published in the 75 inspirational success stories of Atamnirbhar women published by the Govt. of India. Anita

Reasi



Devi highlighted her commitment towards making the different designs of grass made handicrafts. She told that these items are time taking and require lot of patience and hardwork. She expressed that we have got outlets to sale our products. She thanked district administration, Jammu & Kashmir Rural Livelihood Mission (JKRLM), Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Reasi,

Department of Rural Handicrafts, NABARD etc. for their support in revival of the faded handicrafts in the district. She shared her ambitious plans for making more innovative items of local grass. Dr.Banarsi Lal, Sr.Scientist & Head, KVK, Reasi said that the Babiyan grass and wild palm leaves are used to make the useful and beautiful handicrafts. He added that these prod-

ucts are eco-friendly and durable. He stressed on the variety of different innovative products for more returns. He expressed that some new income and employment avenues have been generated in the district through local grass and wild palm leaves processing. He remarked that the younger generation shy away from this art resulting in its gradual decline but now many rural youths are showing keen interest towards these handicrafts. Yungal Kishore Sharma, nodal officer, JKRLM, Reasi said that these traditional local grass made handicrafts are considered as the major avenue of culture heritage of rural areas of Reasi District. He added that many SHGs members are associated with these crafts and they manually make useful and decorative items. He emphasized on the entrepreneurial skills developed among the rural women and discussed on the branding, labeling, packaging and marketing of the products. He informed that rural women are selling grass made handicrafts within the UT and out of UT. He revealed the dedication to preserve and evolve this cherished tradition. The rural women of Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir are able to revitalizing the heritage and they are bridging past with the present through their endeavours.

(The author is Sr. Scientist & Head KVK Reasi, SKUAST-J).

YOUR COLUMN Bharat Ratna for Dr. Swami & Kurien

Dear Editor,

It's surprising that both the iconic personalities Viz. Dr. MS Swaminathan and Dr. Verghese Kurien have not been honoured with the Bharat Ratna, India's Highest Civilian Award, during their lifetimes despite their monumental contribution. The former was instrumental in ushering in Green Revolution in the country, making India self reliant in food security while as the latter was behind the While Revolution, making country self reliant in milk production. All citizens hold them in high esteem because for their immense contribution in the field of agriculture and in milk farming respectively.

Prof. MS Swaminathan has brought the country out of the hunger trap and also enabled it to come out of the PL-480 agreement with the US. He has done a lot of research work on finding high yielding variety of seeds for wheat and rice to increase their production manifold and make India self-reliant. He has done a lot to address the woes of farmers in the country. He wanted to see them prosperous by increasing their income by ensuring that they must get fare price for their farm products. Both have contributed immensely in the overall growth and progress of the country.

As such both deserve Bharat Ratna for their stupendous contribution to the country. It's, therefore, our moral responsibly to honour such great personalities with this prestigious award in recognition of their stellar contributions to the nation. Any further delay in honouring both of them, of course, now posthumously would be construed as great disservice to them. Awarding them would be a great moral booster to our incumbent scientists as well as those young ones aspiring to be agriculture scientists in future.

Ravi Sharma,
Dharawal

New India faces new challenges especially in the field of education

Dear Editor,

In a rapidly evolving global landscape, the education sector is experiencing a profound transformation. This transformation is especially critical for a country like India, where education plays a pivotal role in shaping the future of its burgeoning population. Burlington English, in collaboration with Scoo News, recently released a groundbreaking report titled 'Unlocking Success: Turning Policy and Frameworks into Real-World Action.' The report presents a compelling roadmap for the implementation of the National Curriculum Framework in India. By drawing insights from educators across the nation and offering practical toolkits, it has the potential to transform the school education landscape in India, making it more inclusive, innovative, and future-ready.

This report sheds light on the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) implementation roadmap, drawing insights from the experiences and perspectives of over 1000 school teachers across six states in India. The key findings of this report discuss how it has the potential to revolutionise school education in India. One of the report's most compelling insights is its emphasis on embracing the 'Scope for Failure' as a crucial element of the learning journey. This perspective encourages a shift in the way educators and students perceive failure, turning it into an opportunity. This mindset shift is fundamental in preparing students for the challenges of the future. Besides, it acknowledges the importance of English and treats it as a skill that helps employability in India and abroad. The report suggests a two-language set up to take load off the students. One of the strengths of the report lies in the extensive research conducted. The insights gathered from over 1000 teachers, spanning the K-12 domain, provide a comprehensive understanding of

the challenges and opportunities within the Indian education system. This diverse sample size ensures that the report's recommendations are grounded in the realities faced by educators at all levels. The report addresses several key themes that are crucial to shaping the future of education in India:

The concept of 'Future Schools' explores the need for educational institutions to adapt to the rapidly changing technological landscape. It emphasises the importance of incorporating innovative teaching methods and cutting-edge technologies to prepare students for a world that is vastly different from what it was a decade ago.

Recognising that teachers are the backbone of any educational system, the report delves into the importance of providing teachers with the necessary resources, training, and professional development opportunities. Empowering teachers is key to improving the quality of education. To translate these key themes into actionable steps, the report provides eight essential action points and three project toolkits designed for classroom implementation. These practical tools equip educators with the resources and strategies needed to transform their classrooms into dynamic learning environments. This hands-on approach bridges the gap between policy and practice, ensuring that the NCF is implemented effectively.

The report is particularly well-suited for the educational landscape of 'New India,' which is characterized by its aspiration for innovation, inclusivity, and excellence. The report aligns with NCF as the report directly addresses the NCF, aligning its recommendations with the national education policy framework. This ensures that its insights can be seamlessly integrated into the existing educational structure. The emphasis on adaptive assessments and teacher empowerment promotes inclusivity in education, catering to the diverse needs of students in a country as diverse as India.

Vijay Garg