

AIR-QUALITY SCENARIO

In a move to mitigate dust arising out of Construction and Demolition (C&D) activities sites and intensify actions to further ameliorate the overall air quality of the National Capital Region (NCR), the Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas (CAQM) has mandated all C&D projects in the NCR to deploy adequate numbers of anti-smog guns, in proportion to the total area of construction for the project. The State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs) of NCR and Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) have also been directed to ensure continuous and effective use of the anti-smog guns installed at different C&D sites in their respective districts. As per the recent Statutory Direction of the Commission, all C&D sites must deploy adequate numbers of anti-smog guns, as per following yardstick based on construction area, at least 1 for a total construction area between 5000 - 10,000 sqm, at least 2 for a total construction area between 10,001 - 15,000 sqm, at least 3 for a total construction area between 15,001 - 20,000 sqm, at least 4 for a total construction area above 20,000 sqm. Dust from the C&D activities is a major and consistent source of air pollution and contributes adversely to the spike in PM 2.5 and PM 10 levels in the NCR. Use of treated water to mitigate large quantities of dust generated at C&D sites through use of anti-smog guns, sprinklers etc. with prescribed wet suppression, wind brokers, dust barrier screens, covering of construction material and C&D debris, proper disposal of C&D wastes including transportation in covered vehicles etc. are some of the steps that are essentially to be followed by C&D projects in the NCR. The comprehensive Policy to Curb Air Pollution in the NCR formulated by the Commission in July, 2022, towards management of C&D activities to reduce dust, also stipulated deployment of adequate number of anti-smog guns in C&D project sites. Apart from that, the revised Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) to deal with adverse air quality scenario that generally prevails in the winter season in the entire NCR also calls for enforcing guidelines for use of anti-smog guns at construction sites.



OFF 'D' CUFF

'Love is always new'

As anti- and pro-CAA riots rocked a national Capital, polarizing people and claiming dozens of lives, one began to wonder why netas were blatantly using religious beliefs to turn people against each other. This and similar questions popped up in the head as one approached Baba Ram Singh, mahant of the Nirmal Ashram, Rishikesh, at a satsang in Gurugram.

"Satnam tera naam... Satnam tera naam..." kirtan was in progress. Devotees with heads covered, sat on white gaddas, mattresses, singing Nanak bhajans, eyes closed and palms joined together in faith.

Guru Maharaj who runs schools and charitable health care facilities in Rishikesh had been invited by a devotee and her family for a satsang at her new residence. His organisation follows the path of seva and simran, service and God-remembrance — working for the welfare of society, keeping the divine name in mind, always.

Babaji smiles away our concerns and asks us to participate in the satsang, which literally means keeping the company of truthful souls. "You will automatically get all your answers in the satsang," says the 70-year-old spiritual master in orange robes and flowing white beard.

"That is always the case. Have faith in Parmeshwara."

Meanwhile, our host hurriedly introduces an old friend of hers to Babaji and requests him to bless her "as she has been through many ordeals in life." "Aum Satnam, may God bless you. Your friendship is old because love is always new," he says. We look puzzled. Babaji continues, "True love never gets old, because it is beyond space and time. Only those things which are bound by space and time get destroyed. Whatever is born at one point, will die at some point. It will change its form. A table, for instance, once was a tree. It was cut and made into a log of wood, which then changed form, and was made into a table. Thus, changing form over a period of time, it will disintegrate one day. But true love is something else. It is eternal. It always was, is and will be the same, always new, never getting old."

But what does one need to do, to access true love — something that we all need so desperately? The

Mona Mehta

Project Management- essential skill for managing your start-ups

■ SHIVANI GUPTA

Exponential growth is the holy-grail for start-ups. And most start-ups are built around creative, driven individuals, passionate about the business. Why then in spite of the brilliant founders of start-ups do we not see them all boom into large business successes? While their product or service is truly unique, financially viable and attractive to the market place, many have stumbled in their attempt to translate that nascent success into a large sustainable rapidly growing organization.

As the volume of business increases, the operational challenges multiply and often times the firms begin to crumble under the weight of their own success, unable to match market expectation and failing to deliver the same product or service at scale. Why is the same group of start-up founders, unable to replicate their initial success at scale? What is the missing ingredient that can bring a method to the seeming chaos and madness of exponential growth to ensure that it is sustainable? Streamlined repeatable processes are the key and driving their usage, application and adoption is the art & science of Project & Portfolio Management. The discipline of project management offers a framework, tools and techniques to success right from ideation through planning, execution and delivery. Raising money and deploying it effectively is perhaps the most foun-

dational aspect of a high growth business. Project and Portfolio Management offers tools that provide a dispassionate view of the best places to invest the money as well as the optimal sequence for such investment uncovering hidden linkages between various priorities of the business. Cost evaluation, cost forecasting and cost control assist in predicting the future financial outcome of an initiative- be it a minor project or a startup organization. The cost budgeting process includes measuring and managing investment costs which is covered in detail in project management armory for professionals. Startup owners/resources can leverage budgeting and cost management skills extensively covered under project management that add an immense and unparalleled value to the ability to drive business successfully.

As firms grow in size, communication challenges arise. One of the key components of Project Management armory is Communication management that guides about various methods, channels and types of communication and how can it be leveraged for meeting expectations of your team members / stakeholders. Entrepreneurs can certainly utilize other knowledge areas of Project Management specified in PMBOK by PMI (Project Management Institute- www.pmi.org) like Time management, Quality Management and Risk management and

Procurement management for building their startups and achieving business goals. Risk identification and its qualitative and quantitative analysis is of tremendous importance while making financial decisions in a business. A well-planned risk response plan can minimize the impact of unforeseen situations. Some of the risks that startups can encounter are legal risks, financial risks, resource and manpower risks, political risks, operational uncertainties. These risks can have minor or major consequences. The important factor here is to understand the probability of occurrence of the risks, impact and design a risk response strategy. Various techniques like Monte Carlo analysis, qualitative- quantitative risk analysis help cover detailed view of these various kinds of risk and uncertainties and plan risk avoidance, mitigation and acceptance plans. Time is Money and Time management, which is an important project management skill-set, is the key to make sure that products/services are made available to customers competitively. Accurate estimates help drive coordination of multiple dependencies and projects in terms of marketing efforts, procurement deals, manufacturing processes etc. Project management skills emphasize on importance and techniques of estimating activities/tasks and are an essential toolkit at the hands of entrepreneurs for schedule management and streamlining various parallel or sequential

initiatives they had to lead as part of the process. From procurement of raw materials to launch of new product, adhering to quality standards to recruitment of resources- knowledge of project management principles help in all and hence Project management knowledge is the secret ingredient when you start your business or scale your startup. Establishing and implementing an appropriate procurement strategy is key to control and effectiveness of sourcing goods and services. Innovative startups are instrumental in shaping the future of procurement. Project procurement management is a crucial skill-set that allows organizations to negotiate contracts per their best interests and requirements and could enhance certainty of better-quality offerings. Entrepreneurs are always looking to crack better deals whether it's in terms of procuring goods and services or planning and managing their outsourcing portfolios. The expertise to handle the process of sourcing, requisitioning, ordering, expediting, validating, and reconciling procurement is second to none and projects management is a great way to enhance and master these skills. On the whole, project management is a must have package for entrepreneurs, startups and all types and forms of business organizations.

(The author is Forbes Business Council Member and 2021- President of PMI South Florida.)

Verdict on 10 pc reservation to EWS

■ MAHADEEP SINGH JAMWAL

In order to ponder upon the Supreme Court 3:2 divided verdict on amendment of the one hundred and third amendment of the Constitution of India, {To amend Articles 15 (Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth) and 16 (Equality of opportunity in matters of public employment) of the constitution} officially known as the Constitution (One Hundred and Third Amendment) Act, 2019, that came into effect on January 14, 2019 has introduced 10 per cent reservation for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) of society, we must be aware who were the beneficiary under EWS reservation. This quota was supposed to be availed by persons with an annual gross household income of up to Rs 8 lakh. Families that own over 5 acres of agricultural land, house over 1,000 square feet, a plot of over 100-yards in a notified municipal area or over a 200-yards plot in a non-notified municipal area cannot avail the reservation. Persons belonging to communities that already have reservations such as Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and the 'hon creamy layer' of Other Backward Classes are also not eligible for reservation under this quota (creamy layer of OBC crosses 8 lakh limit).

The bill was challenged in the Supreme Court by: 1. a non-governmental organization 'Youth For Equality' claiming that the Bill violates the basic structure of the Constitution and also against the earlier Supreme Court judgment that had fixed the maximum reservation under all quotas at 50 per cent. The 103rd Amendment raises the total reservation quota to 59.5 per cent. 2. The DMK filed a motion in the Madras High Court challenging the Amendment. The party argues that reservations should be based

on the community to which an individual belongs and not their economic status. In August 2020, the case was referred to a five-judge Constitution Bench for hearing. A five-judge constitution bench Justices Dinesh Maheshwari, Bela M Trivedi and JB Pardiwal held that amendment is not in violation of the Constitution whereas Chief Justice UU Lalit and Justice Ravinder Bhat held otherwise and are not on the same platform as other three Justices. CJJ dissented with the majority view upholding EWS reservation. The Supreme Court upheld the 10 percent quota for economically weaker sections (EWS) in public jobs, public and private education institutes in a 3:2 split verdict. The judgment was pronounced on a batch of pleas challenging the validity of the 103rd Constitution amendment providing 10 percent reservation to EWS persons in admissions and government jobs. The reservation policy is implemented not only in India but also in other countries. About one-fourth of the countries have policies in the form of affirmative action, reservations, alternate access, and positive discrimination to give equal opportunities to the deprived section of the society. But in India it is more like dancing dolls for a political regime to capture votes rather than beneficial to the deserving one.

Between the lines of Judgments, we must concentrate on the observation of Justice Trivedi and Justice Pardiwal. Justice Trivedi while validating the amendment has said that there is a need to revisit the reservation policy as it should have a time span. Justice Pardiwal, while holding the amendment valid, observed that reservation policy cannot go indefinitely and agreed with Justice Trivedi on a need to re-examine reservation policy. The divided verdict has given a recipe for our political parties to debate

as per their suitability. These observations carry us to the case of Indra Sawhney v/s Union of India, where the Supreme Court has held that the policy of reservation has to be operated year-wise and there cannot be any such policy in perpetuity. Even when we visit the source of reservation policy, The Constitution of India, the reservation policy was framed and implemented by the Constituent Assembly as ad-hoc policy only for the term of 10 years after the commencement of the Constitution. But it was given extensions to extensions after every ten years by political governments to create vote banks and it is still in operation after 72 years of implementation of the Constitution. Had this policy really helped the backward section of the society, a big question mark? It is a political gimmick nothing more than that. It has created a feeling of enmity among the people of upper class against the caste-based reservation policy, as they are getting less opportunity in jobs and admissions in education institutions because of continuation of reservation policy. In the present time and as per the perspective of SC, there is a need to revise the reservation policy so that the benefit can reach the marginalized sections of the deprived class. But while revising the reservation policy, we must ensure that the benefit of the reservation should reach the socially, economically, and educationally backward section of the society, social, educational and economic criteria cumulatively to determine the backward classes of the society. Along with this, equal importance should be given for the abolishment of the caste system and other sorts of discrimination from our society so that equality in society can be ensured.

(The author is a Police veteran).

Gurpurab- Jayanti of Guru Nanak Dev

■ OKMAR DATATRAY

India is a land of different cultures, traditions and festivals. So different festivals are celebrated by the people with great pomp and show. In these festivals unity in diversity is demonstrated which is the characteristic of the Indian nation. Thus the people of various faiths jointly celebrate these festivals and one such festival is the Jayanti of Guru Nanak Dev which is commonly known as the 'Gurpurab'. This auspicious day marks the birth anniversary of the first Sikh Guru -Guru Nanak. Gurpurab is the most sacred festival in Sikhism and it is celebrated throughout the length and breadth of the country & even abroad with great fervor and gaiety. On this important occasion of the birth anniversary of the first Sikh Guru, the message of the brotherhood and communal harmony as given by the Guru Nanak is spread throughout the country. Guru Nanak was born on Puranmashi of Kartik in 1469 according to Bikrami calendar. As per Bhai Bala Jamansakhi, Guru Nanak was born on the full moon of the Indian lunar month of Karthik. Sikhs celebrate Gurpurab in the month of November for this reason. Guru Nanak Jayanti or what is popularly called as Gurpurab is celebrated throughout India and abroad to mark the birthday of the great Guru. This year it is the 522 Prakesh Utsav of Guru Nanak Dev Ji. Guru Nanak Jayanti, the day of the birth of the Guru Nanak as depicted in some texts falls on 15th April 1469. Guru Nanak was born in Talyandi village of Delhi Sultanate - present day Nankana Sahib which is situated in Pakistan. Guru Nanak is the founder of Sikhism and the first of the ten Gurus. His birth is celebrated world wide as Guru Nanak Jayanti or Gurpurab on Kartik Poornmashi. Guru Nanak is also known as Baba Nanak and Nanak Shah and Nanak Lama in Tibet. Guru Nanak was born in a Hindu family and his parents were Kalyan Chand Dass Bedi - Mehta Kalu and Mata Tripta. At the age of five, Nanak is said to have voiced interest in divine subjects. He would spend his time in spiritual discourse with Sufi saints to know more about Lord and spend time in meditation. So he is also known as a great spiritual saint. In the year 1487, Nanak married Mata

Sulakhni, daughter of Mul Chand and Chando Rani in Batala and was blessed with two sons. He said that Guru is God, God is Guru and in between, there is no difference. Guru Nanak says that do service sharing with others and giving to those who are less fortunate and that is why in every Gurdwara, there is the system of Langer - food open for all and people do Sava, where people belonging to every caste, creed and religion would come and sit together. His teachings have profound social implications. He denounced caste system prevalent in Hinduism and stressed the inner spiritual awakening. In the festival of Guru Nanak Jayanti or Gurpurab celebration is usually similar for all Sikhs only the hymns are different. The celebrations generally commence with 'Prabat-Pheris'. The 'Prabat Pheris, or the early morning procession begins from the Gurdawars to proceed around the localities singing hymns. Generally two days before the Gurpurab, Akhand Path- the 48 hour non-stop reading of Guru Granth Sahaib, holy book of the Sikhs is held in every Gurdwara. The day prior to the birth day of the Guru Nanak a procession referred to as Nagar Kirtan is organized. This procession is led by Panj Pyaras - five beloved ones. The head of the procession carrying the Sikh Flag known as the 'Nishan Sahib' and 'Palki'-palanquin of Guru Nanak. They are followed by teams of singers singing hymns and devotees singing in chorus. There are brass bands playing different tunes and Gatka displaying their swordsmanship through various martial arts and as mock battles using traditional weapons. The procession pours into the streets of the towns. The passages are covered with banners and gates are decorated with flowers and flags for this special occasion. On the day of Gurpurab, celebrations commence early in the morning at about 4 AM to 5 AM. This time of the day is referred as Amrit vela. The day begins with the singing of Asaa-Ki-Vaari-emoring hymns. This is followed by the combination of Katha and Kirtan meaning hymns from Sikh scriptures in praise of Guru Nanak. Following that is the Langar a special community lunch which is arranged and served at the Gurdawars by volunteers. The Gurpurab celebrations are espe-

cially colourful in Punjab, Haryana and Chandigarh and many more locations. Even some Sindhis also celebrate this festival. Guru Nanak has travelled different countries of the world including Macca in pursuit of the ultimate reality and truth. In Macca he fell asleep with his feet towards Kabba, the most sacred site in Islam and was considered dishonoring the house of God. On this Nanak replied calmly and said please turn my feet in a direction in which God or house of God does not exist. Qazi took hold of his feet and rotated him around but when Qazi lifted his eyes he saw the Kabba standing in the direction of Guru Nanak's feet. Guru Nanak said that God dwells in every place and every heart. Then Qazi bowed his head in feet of Guru Nanak and apologized for his act. Such is the greatness of Guru Nanak. Guru Nanak taught the philosophy of the oneness of the mankind and denounced the caste system of the Hinduism. He said that service of the mankind is the service of the God and thus this service to mankind is fallowed in the Sikhs. Nanak preached and practiced love for all the creatures and also said that all religions are divine and lead to the same truth. Respect to all religions was taught by this great Guru. Communal harmony and brotherhood was the message of Guru Nanak thus communal harmony and co-existence was one of the pillars of his teaching. He taught love and respect to all the men belonging to all faiths. Guru Nanak was for a casteless and classless society and he revered and respected all religions equally. To him, there was no high and low. The teachings and the philosophy of Guru Nanak are very relevant in today's world where greed and material welfare is supreme and name and fame is the order of the day. Thus in these days of greed torn world the philosophy of love and brotherhood of the mankind is very much needed. Let the Gurpurab bring peace, love and prosperity to the humanity and free us from the epidemic of COVID. All through his divine life, he stood for religious harmony, mutual brotherhood and love and respect to all the faiths which according to him are different paths to reach to the ultimate truth. May all of us imbibe the teachings of this great Guru of the humanity who always taught simplicity, truth and service to mankind.

Commercial Floriculture in Jammu and Kashmir is helping the farmers to multiply their profits with the help of Government sponsored schemes and other related interventions. Commercial Floriculture, a specialized form of Horticulture aimed at augmenting the income of Growers and generating employment opportunities involves setting up of Ornamental Nurseries, Aromatic oil crop farming like Lavender, Cut flower production of Rose, Carnation, Gerbera, Lilium, among others as well as Bulb production of Iris, Daffodils, Dahlia, Lilium, Gladiolus, Peonia, Cyclamen, Ranunculus, etc. Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) like MIDH, RKVY, and ATMA are being implemented for the promotion of the commercial Floriculture Sector in J&K. The department is organizing regular sessions of training within and outside J&K for farmers/growers in order to make them aware of modern trends in Floriculture Sector. Unemployed youths and farmers register themselves under these schemes and started their own business in loose and cut flower production, aromatic plant cultivation, ornamental nursery and use of integrated farming for their employment and revenue generation. Floriculture products mainly consist of cut flowers, pot plants, cut foliage, seeds bulbs, tubers, rooted cuttings and dried flowers or leaves. The important floricultural crops in the international cut flower trade are Rose, Carnation, Chrysanthemum, Gergera, Gladiolus, Gypsophila, Liatris, Nerine, Orchids, Archilea, Anthurium, Tulip, and Lilies. Notably, cultivation of lavender as part of commercial Floriculture has changed fortunes of farmers in Jammu and Kashmir under 'Aroma Mission or Purple Revolution', an initiative of the Central government towards transforming lives of UT farmers' community. As per official data, Purple or Lavender Revolution was launched in 2016 by the Union Ministry of Science & Technology through the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research's (CSIR) Aroma Mission. The aim of the mission is to support domestic aromatic crop-based agro-economy by moving from imported aromatic oils to home-grown varieties. Lavender cultivation is practiced in almost all 20 districts of Jammu and Kashmir. Under the mission, first-time farmers were given free lavender saplings while those who had cultivated lavender before were charged Rs. 5-6 per sapling. Farmers are happy with farming of unconventional aromatic plants under Aroma Mission. The mission promotes cultivation of aromatic crops for essential oils that are in great demand by the aroma industry. Rubenna Tabassum from Yarikalan Chadoora, Budgam has became an inspiration for many youth particularly women due to her dedication and passion which eventually helped her to set up Nursery of Flowers. Since then it has been no look back for Rubenna, as she is having busy schedule with the engagements in Nursery. Rubenna says that she started her venture titled as United Floritech with cut flowers. "I started variety of flowers in my Nursery by adding flowers like Lilium, Glidulus and other flowers. Due to huge public demand, I had to hire additional manpower," says Rubenna. Now I am not only self-employed, but I provide employment to other workers," Rubenna said with sense of satisfaction. The Department of Floriculture also contributed a lot by providing 50 per cent financial assistance to erect structure and assistance in procuring high value variety flowers which eventually resulted into flourishing of My Nursery of Flowers, she says. Bharat Blushan, a resident of village Lehrote, Block Bhalla Doda feels proud of his decision of adopting lavender farming as his income has gradually increased beyond expectations. Seeing my success all my fellow villagers have switched from maize to lavender farming," he said.