

FEMALE REPRESENTATIVES

Promoting rural development in India is indeed crucial for the overall progress of the country. Rural areas often make up a significant portion of the population, and their development is essential for reducing disparities and improving the quality of life for millions of people.

Rural development encompasses a wide range of sectors and activities, such as education, culture, arts, medicine, community development, agriculture, social reform, animal husbandry, industries, employment generation, infrastructure, and communication systems. The inclusion of women in politics and leadership roles at the grassroots level is an important step toward rural development. Female public representatives, including Panchayat members, Councilors, MLAs, MPs, and others, play a crucial role in decision-making and governance in rural and urban areas. Their presence is a means to address gender disparities and ensure that the voices and concerns of women are heard in the political process. Female public representatives can help create a more inclusive and less conflicted political and social environment. Their presence can lead to a more balanced and empathetic approach to governance, which is often beneficial for addressing the needs and concerns of a diverse population.

The Historical Raghunath Ji Temple

It is a historical and ancient temple located in the heart of Jammu city .This temple has a great and magnificent architecture ,design and grandeur and provides spiritual beauty to Jammu city .It is frequented by the devotees throughout the year .It is the centre of religious ,spiritual ,social and cultural activities .The temple is associated with the history of Jammu and Kashmir .The large number of pilgrims who visit Mata Vashno Devi also pay visit to Shree Raghunath ji temple and seek blessings from Lord Ram and Devi Sita .This temple has become a famous pilgrim tourist spot of Jammu and Kashmir as a very large number of people visit the temple and pay obeisance to Lord Ram .Raghunath temple, with seven shrines each with its own 'Shikhara' (Shikhara ,a Sanskrit word translating literally to mountain Peak ,refers to the rising tower in the Hindu temple architecture in north India) is one of the largest temple complexes of north India ,located in Jammu city .Maharaja Gulab Singh and his son Maharaja Ranbir Singh built the temple ,during the period of 1853-1860.The temple has all most all gods and goddesses of Hindus ,but presiding deity is Lord Ram ,an avatar -incarnation if Lord Vishnu .The temple came under public glare and intense scan ,when in November 24,2002.While the Hindus were performing Puja in the complex ,the fdayeen terrorist attack took place ,resulting in at least 10 deaths and injuries to several devotees .As already mentioned the gigantic Raghunath temple has seven lofty shikharas ,where every shrine has its own shikkara .On the very entrance to the temple ,a portrait of Maharaja Ranbir Singh and an image of Lord Hanuman beautify the site .The central shrine is dedicated to Lord Ram/Raghunath ,who is the commanding deity .Apart from the main shrine ,the other shrines encompass various incarnations of Lord Vishnu .There is another remarkable shrine of Lord Surya -sun God ,which houses different forms of the Lord .Inside the temple there are other shrines that house colossal statues of Hindu gods and goddesses .It is notable to mention here that gold sheets envelop the interior walls on three sides of the temple .It also has a gallery ,where various 'lingama ( phallic form of Lord Shiva) and saligrams are placed .Raghunath temple comprises almost all the images of the Hindu Pantheon ,an unusual embodiment in temple architecture .Sermons and rituals of the temple include morning and evening aarti .Glimpses of Mughal masonry can be visualized in the architecture splendor of Raghunath Temple .The carvings and arches being extraordinarily resplendent ,grab everyone's attention .There is a library in the temple complex ,housing rare Sanskrit books and manuscripts .People visit this temple in large numbers to pay their homage to the deity and seek blessings from the Lord. .Raghunath Temple is a Hindu temple located in Jammu city in the Indian union territory of Jammu and Kashmir .It consists of a complex of seven Hindu shrines .The temple houses many gods and goddesses but the presiding deity is Lord Rama-also known as Raghunath the incarnation of Lord Vishnu .All the spiral shaped towers have golden plated spires .The niches in the walls of the shrines are decorated with 300 well -crafted icons of gods and goddesses including those of Surya and Shiva ,but most are particularly related to the life stories of Rama and Krishna. The paintings in the 15 panels of the main shrine are based on themes from Ramayana ,Mahabharata ,and Bhagavad Gita .The temple premises include a school and a library that preserves over 6000 manuscripts in many Indian languages ,with a notable collection of Sarada script Sanskrit manuscripts .The temple complex is located in the old city north of River Tawi with an average elevation of 350 m(1150ft) in Jammu and Kashmir .During the reign of the rulers of Jammu Shivaliks after 1765,there was a spurt in temple building activity in Jammu area ,which continued during the early period of the 19th century .The rulers built spiral shaped temples with bricks and crowned each with tower with bright Kalashas in the shape of shikaras -rising tower .This temple complex was started in 1835 by Gulab Singh ,the ruler of Jammu and Kashmir and was dedicated to his guru Baba Prem Das .Its construction was completed in 1860 by his son Maharaja Ranbir Singh..During the reign of Ranbir Singh, the temple complex started a Pathshala -school which welcomed students from all castes and classes .The Raghunath temple remains a significant scholarly source of sarda manuscripts and one of the largest collection of Hindu and Buddhist texts of the Kashmir tradition .The Ragunath temple has been an early promoter of digitization initiative of the manuscripts. .It houses and has started the eGangotri initiative to digitize ancient manuscripts from other parts of India .The Raghunath temple has seven shrines .The temple complex is dedicated to Raghunath ,another name for Rama .The entrance has a Surya icon ,another manifestation of Vishnu .It is built over a raised platform of 5 feet height in an octagonal shape .The temple is dedicated to Lord Rama as an incarnation of Lord Vishnu .The temple consists of gold sheets that cover the inner three sides of the temple .This temple is famous all over India and especially in north Indian states and devotees come from these states to visit Ragunath temple to pay obeisance and seek blessings from Lord Rama .The architecture and grandeur of the temple is worth seeing and it is a source of attraction .The visit to this temple leaves one spiritually and mentally elevated and the beauty of the temple is a matter of joy and pride and it also helps in the peace of mind of the devotees .One who comes to Jammu and visits Mata Vashno Devi shrine should also visit the Raghunath Temple as the tour of Jammu is incomplete without paying a visit to this temple complex .What differentiates Ragunath temple from rest of the temples of India is the fact that it houses all most all gods and goddesses of Hindu religion and it is the temples distinguishing feature .Though the Ragunath temple is dedicated to Lord Rama ,but it has all the deities of Hindu religion and thus it is doubly worth visiting .All the people who visit Jammu are advised to visit Ragunath temple and have a glimpses of its architecture and design and it is in fact a good marvel of engineering. The temple complex stands duly guarded by the security personnel so that no further untoward militant incident will take place .May Lord Rama be our torch bearer and path pradershak.

(The author is a columnist, social and KP activist).

Promoting Value-Addition in Agriculture

■ DR. BANARSI LAL

Agriculture forms the backbone of the Indian economy. Although there has been large industrialization in the last 60 years, agriculture still occupies the prominent place of importance. Agriculture has provided us the food security but so far it has failed to provide us the nutritional security. Value addition is the process in which for the same volume of a primary product, a high price is realized by means of processing, packing, upgrading the quality or other such means. Value addition is one of the important components of nutritional security. Sometimes farmers get less price of a particular farm produce due to its surplus production. This problem can be solved by the crop diversification which creates an opportunity to earn more money from the different crops produce. Crop diversification and value addition are the two techniques for the profit maximization and nutritional security. The most important problem now-a-days is to provide the remunerative price to the farmers for their farm produce. This problem can be solved by the value addition in different crops produce and can be marketed both inside and outside the country. This can also generate more employment for the rural people. Value added agriculture helps to increase the value of primary agricultural commodities through a particular production process. Small scales processing units, organic food processing, traditional crops production, agri-tourism and bio-fuels development are examples of various value-added projects that have supported to create new jobs in the rural areas.

Value addition in agriculture is needed for the profitability of the farmers, to empower the farmers and weaker sections of the society, to provide safe, quality and branded food to the consumers, to reduce post-harvest losses, reduction in import and increasing exports, encourage the growth of

subsidiary industries, to reduce the risk of marketing, to promote the crops diversification and to increase the financial stability of the farmers. Attentiveness to consumer demands in quality, variety and packaging are important. In order to be unique and novel, new product should be attempted. The product we develop should be one of its own kinds for which crop and variability indigenous to our country should be exploited. The product should be new and unusual like black or blue rose so that no one can compete in the market. Biotechnology can be utilized for the value addition especially in horticultural crops. The product we develop should have demand in the market. The product should have high value for low volume for ease of trading and distribution and the extracts such as spices and herbal plants can fulfill this requirement. Quality and quantity of the product should be maintained in the market. Ultimately market is the key for success of any product.

In the present era the whole world has become a single global market and there is too much competition in the market. Value addition and crops diversification has become key words in the agricultural trade. Product diversification is must for harnessing the full potential from present scenario of development. Value addition helps in the avoidance of post harvest losses, industrialization, employment generation, export, extended availability of produce, foreign exchange earnings, product diversification, easy marketing etc.

Agro- processing industries can play a significant role in achieving the objective of 'doubling the farm income'. The consumption of processed foods is synchronous with the rise in incomes as income elasticity of these foods is very high. Presently our country reached the status of 'lower middle-income' among the countries in

the world and therefore, the share of processed food in the food basket of our population is bound to go up. Urbanisation, diversification of diets, globalization of diets, rising share of women in work force, nuclear families, changing policy perspectives including digitalisation and export opportunities propel growth of food processing sector. Agricultural innovations have a significant impact on agricultural performances and can be beneficial for both the producers and consumers. Processed foods were considered as rich people food for a long time and suffered heavy taxation, riddled with so many taxes including steep taxes for packaged products. This has been gradually changed with successive reduction in excise duties and state taxes to benefit farmers. Concept of cold chain was non-existent before the nineties and post-harvest losses were very high due to poor infrastructure facilities. Transport costs are relatively high leading scholars to conclude that importing from other countries is cheaper than transporting from one part of the country to another. Standards and protocols for food safety and laws for food safety were almost negligible.

Before eighties the food policy in India has mainly concentrated on increasing the production with a view to substitute imports which became a common feature during the immediate post-independence years. Before eighties the issue of processing the food did not arise as a policy question. On the other hand, the industrial policy since the second five year plan concentrated on the heavy industries required to build up the necessary infrastructure for the industrial development. Though there were some foods processing industries in the organized sector, they were part of small and village industries and have no separate identity. The consistent rise in per capita incomes and the shifting of the

incomes after 1981 to a higher growth path led to the rise in middle classes, who were able to purchase the power to buy the processed foods. The growth of manufacturing industry also necessitated encouraging food processing sector. The central government, in view of these changes, has started attempts to invigorate the sector by forming a separate ministry for food processing industries in 1988. India is a late entrant into the food processing sector and international market. Though some measures are initiated after the formation of the ministry for the speedy development of the sector; it is only after the country embarked on full scale liberalization in 1991 that the food processing sector got real impetus. Several policy initiatives for freeing the licensing system, foreign investment etc., are taken during this time to encourage this sector.

The main paradox in food processing industries is the dichotomy between organised and unorganised segment in regard to output and employment. While output and value added are higher in the organised segment, unorganised segment with one-fifth of output employs three times higher employment. Food processing sector creates lot of employment in comparison to the manufacturing sector as a whole. The productivity of this sector needs improvement though studies show that there has been improvement after 2000s. There is a need to infuse more technology in both the organised and unorganised segments with liberal provision of credit. Value of land poses the biggest threat to unorganized manufacturing in general and food processing in particular and needs special attention of the policy makers. Recent initiatives like mega food parks and cold chain schemes are well conceived and showing signs of positive impact.

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Role of Family in Education: Significance, Benefits and Beyond

■ DR RAJKUMAR SINGH

The role of family in school education is crucial and plays a significant impact on a child's academic success and overall development whose key aspects include:

a. Early Childhood Development: Families are a child's first educators, influencing their cognitive, social, and emotional development from a very young age. Positive interactions within the family contribute to a child's readiness for school, including language development, motor skills, and social skills.

b. Attitude Towards Learning: The family environment shapes a child's attitude towards learning and education. If parents' value and prioritize education, children are more likely to adopt a positive attitude toward school. Involvement in educational activities at home, such as reading, puzzles, and discussions, can foster a love for learning.

c. Academic Achievement: Families that provide a supportive and stimulating environment at home positively impact academic achievement. This includes having a quiet space for homework, encouraging good study habits, and setting expectations for academic performance. Parental involvement in a child's education, through activities like parent-teacher conferences and communication with teachers, can enhance academic success.

d. Values and Discipline: Families in still values and discipline that can influence a child's behavior and performance in school. Consistent expectations for behaviour and consequences for actions contribute to a positive school experience. Parents and guardians can help instill a strong work ethic, responsibility, and respect for authority, all of which are important in an educational setting.

e. Social and Emotional Support: Emotional support from the family is crucial for a child's well-being and success in school. A stable and nurturing family environment contributes to positive mental health, which in turn impacts a child's ability to focus and

learn. Open communication within the family helps children navigate social challenges at school and develop interpersonal skills.

g. Cultural and Social Capital: Families bring cultural and social capital to a child's education. Cultural capital includes knowledge, skills, and education-related resources, while social capital involves networks and relationships that can provide support and opportunities.

h. Lifelong Learning: Families that emphasize the value of lifelong learning contribute to a child's understanding that education extends beyond the classroom. This perspective can encourage curiosity and a proactive approach to learning throughout life.

Perspectives of education

The role of family in education has been recognized and studied by educators, psychologists, and sociologists for many years. Understanding the background of the family's involvement in education involves considering historical, cultural, and social perspectives.

a. Historical Perspective: In many cultures throughout history, education was primarily an informal process that occurred within the family unit. Children learned essential skills and knowledge from their parents, elders, and community members. Formal education, as provided by schools, became more widespread in the modern era. However, families continued to play a crucial role in shaping children's values, attitudes, and early learning experiences.

b. Cultural Variations: The role of the family in education varies across cultures. In some cultures, there is a strong emphasis on the family as the primary educator, while in others, formal schooling takes precedence. Cultural values influence how families view education, the importance they place on certain subjects, and the expectations they have for their children's academic success.

c. Evolution of Parental Involvement: Over the years, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of parental involvement in education. Research has consistent-

ly shown that when parents are actively engaged in their children's education, students tend to perform better academically and have improved behaviour. The concept of parental involvement has evolved from a focus on simple tasks to a broader understanding of collaboration between families and schools for overall child development.

d. Social and Economic Factors: Socioeconomic factors play a significant role in shaping the family's influence on education. Families with higher socioeconomic status often have greater access to educational resources, extracurricular activities, and a supportive learning environment. Conversely, families facing economic challenges may encounter barriers to actively participating in their children's education, such as time constraints and limited resources.

e. Educational Policies and Practices: Educational policies and practices also impact the role of the family in education. Policies that encourage parental involvement, provide resources for family support programs, and promote communication between schools and families can enhance the partnership between the two. Educational institutions have increasingly recognized the need for a collaborative approach, involving families as stakeholders in the education process.

Significance of family education

The role of the family in education offers numerous benefits that contribute to a child's academic success, overall development, and well-being.

a. Enhanced Social Skills: Family involvement contributes to the development of a child's social skills. Through positive interactions within the family, children learn important social behaviours, communication skills, and the ability to work cooperatively with others.

d. Emotional Support and Well-Being: A supportive family environment provides emotional support, contributing to a child's overall well-being. Children who feel emotionally secure at home are better equipped to handle stress,

build resilience, and develop positive mental health. e. Cultural and Educational Values: Families play a crucial role in transmitting cultural values and educational expectations. The transmission of values related to education, discipline, and work ethic contributes to a child's understanding of the importance of these aspects in their lives. f. Improved School Attendance: Families that prioritize education are more likely to encourage regular school attendance. When parents emphasize the value of attending school regularly, children are more likely to develop a sense of responsibility and commitment to their education. g. Collaboration Between Home and School: Family involvement strengthens the collaboration between home and school. When parents and teachers work together, they can address the individual needs of the child more effectively, leading to a more comprehensive and personalized educational experience. h. Development of Life Skills: Families contribute to the development of essential life skills, such as time management, organization, and problem-solving. These skills are transferable to the academic setting and are critical for success both in school and in later stages of life. i. Increased Motivation and Goal Setting: Supportive families help children develop a sense of motivation and goal-setting. When parents show interest in their children's aspirations and provide guidance, it encourages students to set academic and personal goals for themselves. j. Promotion of a Love for Learning: Families that create a positive and stimulating learning environment at home contribute to the development of a love for learning. Reading together, engaging in educational activities, and fostering curiosity can instill a lifelong passion for acquiring knowledge. k. Sense of Belonging and Identity: Families contribute to a child's sense of belonging and identity. Understanding one's cultural background and family history provides a foundation for

(The author is a Youth Motivator).

YOUR COLUMN

Digital Library for the benefit of students

Dear Wditor,

In modern life there have been a lot of changes in our everyday life. We are very happy to live in the advanced age of technology, but still many people are deprived of education and information. The solution to this problem is digital library. If run properly it can lead to a social revolution. Undoubtedly, digital library is also in the interest of the students and it must also be said that without the facility of access to digital library, any educational institution, be it a school or a college, will not be able to access the knowledge. May not remain relevant in the economy. Like Himachal Pradesh, there is a need for digital library initiative in other states also. News is saying that digital libraries with modern facilities will be prepared in the country's leading state Himachal Pradesh before 31 March 2024.

Chief Minister of the state has issued instructions to provide free study facilities on touch screens, servers and social sites in the state library and district libraries. Let us consider the importance and relevance of the idea of digital library. Digital library is a library which has a collection of books in digital or electronic format. It can be used through electronic devices and computers. A digital library is also known as an online library, Internet library, digital repository, or digital collection. It is an online database of digital objects, which may include text, images, audio, video, books in the form of digital documents. This type of library can be accessed through the internet can be done. In other words, digital libraries store documents in an organized electronic format and through the Internet or storage.

In 1994, the term digital library was first used in the world by the NASA Digital Library. American author Michael Stern hart is the founder of the first digital library project Hart created to make freely available electronic books accessible via

the Internet. Digital library brings us to the world We will get lots of resources and we will also get personalized services. We can unlock exciting new opportunities, such as collaboration, data sharing and innovation. Digital libraries that embrace this new dimension will be able to grow and meet the needs of their users. With the presence of a digital library, students' education will not stop even if books are not available. With a digital library, children will be able to study uninterrupted even if they do not have books. Due to constraints related to physical location Traditional libraries lack the flexibility to include different types of content. But digital libraries store a wide range of content - e-books, magazines, articles, blogs, papers, videos, podcasts and audio books - in a virtual environment. Nowadays sophisticated digital libraries store resources in the cloud to make content available to their users anytime and anywhere. Unlike larger universities and libraries, smaller libraries often have new books, magazines, and There is a lack of sufficient resources to purchase other material resources. But the education institution can update the digital library regularly.

Vijay Garg

Dear Editor,

Fissures in I.N.D.I.A. block are quite visible. It is not unusual when ideologically different parties come together for political gains. Ideological conflicts cannot keep the parties of different hues together. Uneasy alliance is the outcome of every party keeping its interest above. Soft Hindutva by Congress has caused consternation among other parties. Congress seems to be realizing that Hindus cannot be discarded. Appeasement of minorities and soft Hindutva must go hand in hand for Congress party. Kamal Nath has made U-turn on Mandir. He has expressed happiness with his strategic remark ahead of Lok Sabha polls. This is not good news for other partners of I.N.D.I.A. National Conference leader Omar Abdullah sees internal squabbles among I.N.D.I.A. constituents. The arrest of its MLA Suklpal Singh Khaira by AAP has not gone down well with the Congress party in a 2015 drugs case. Surely,

I.N.D.I.A. pot has been boiling. Nitish Kumar is sore over lack of progress over seat-sharing. He has accused the Congress of being busy with the upcoming Assembly elections. Kumar has rightly assessed that Congress has not been in preparation mode for Lok Sabha elections. His view point is buttressed with the infighting in Congress in Karnataka between the Siddaramaiah faction and D.K. Shivakumar faction. When Shivakumar staked his claim for chief ministership, the Congress high command pacified him with an assurance that the first 30 months would be ruled by Siddaramaiah and the second 30 months would be ruled by him. But Siddaramaiah has asserted that he would be the chief minister for the rest of the term also. This has caused bitterness in the mind of Shivakumar and his followers. The high command had deputed Surjewala and Venugopal to arbitrate between the feuding Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar. Stern warning has been issued by them not to air anything in the public fearing that any infighting assuming alarming proportions in the party would adversely affect on the performance in the Lok Sabha election. There is analogy between Kumaraswamy agreeing for transition of power to Yediyurappa and Siddaramaiah agreeing for transition of power to Shivakumar after completion of 30 months. The only difference is that it was an agreement between two different parties viz., BJP and JDS. Now it is between two leaders of the same party viz., Congress. BJP could easily dislodge the Kumaraswamy government by withdrawing its support. Same party leader dislodging the same party Chief Minister is not as easy as a different party dislodging the government run by another party. It is possible if D.K. Shivakumar can make Karnataka's Eknath Shinde. Attention for power-sharing after 30 months has deflected the attention of Congress for preparation to the Lok Sabha election. This is worrisome to Kumar. Now it is inevitable for Kumar to wait till the Assembly elections in other states are over. I.N.D.I.A. is likely to disintegrate if it fails to come to power at the centre. I.N.D.I.A. holding together is fragile in nature. Obviously all is not well in I.N.D.I.A.

K.V. Seetharamaiah