

MEDIUM OF SWEET REVOLUTION

As per the statement of Chairman of Khadi & Village Industries Commission, Government of India, Manoj Kumar the beekeeping is the medium of sweet revolution, more income can be earned by joining this work. On the call of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Khadi and village industries are working with commitment to bring Sweet Revolution in the country. So far, 1 lakh 75 thousand bee boxes have been distributed by the Commission after providing beekeeping training to 17 thousand 500 beneficiaries across the country. In Haryana state, 4,400 boxes have been distributed by giving training in beekeeping to 440 beneficiaries. Manoj Kumar, Chairman, Khadi and Village Industries Commission, Government of India, was speaking during the distribution of 200 bee boxes to 20 beekeepers in village Devra, Kaithal, Haryana participating in the Khadi Honey Mission dialogue program. On reaching the village, Tehsildar Sudesh Mehra and Sarpanch Vikram Singh and other dignitaries welcomed the Chairman on behalf of the district administration. Addressing the gathering, Chairman Manoj Kumar said that work is being done in the direction of special promotion of beekeeping in Haryana, so that villagers can get benefited by joining this work in rural areas. 200 bee boxes have been provided to 20 beekeepers in village Devra and 300 bee boxes will be distributed soon to 30 beneficiaries of district Kaithal itself. He said that work will be done to increase Khadi activities in the entire state. In the present scenario, employment is being created in new areas under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Describing the beekeeping industry as the need of the hour, he said that this eco-friendly industry not only produces honey which gives income to the entrepreneurs/farmers, but also increases the productivity of the crop by up to 30 percent due to the pollen grains spread by the bees. In this way, with this mission of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, there will definitely be a relative increase in the income of the farmers. He informed that in the second phase, in district Bhiwani and district Sirsa and after that in other districts of Haryana state also, it has been decided to encourage beekeeping industry by distributing bee boxes by giving training to the beekeepers. On this occasion, Chairman Manoj Kumar interacted with the beneficiaries and other present people and also took suggestions from them. After the program, the Chairman of the commission Manoj Kumar visited the Khadi and Village Industries enterprises and met the beneficiaries of the PMEGP Units. After that he also visited the units established under the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Program and discussed with the beneficiaries.

OFF 'D' CUFF

You can't attain God by scripture study alone

The Hindu scriptures provide the means for Self-realisation and moksh. The earlier in life we study them, the better we will understand the transient and unreal nature of this world. True happiness lies in experiencing the Atman directly as the only constant at all times. Never affected or changed by maya, the Silent Witness remains always as undifferentiated Consciousness. Atman is Brahmn everywhere. This is the Truth expounded in all Hindu scriptures, which we can only realise by leaving them behind.

One of the few Hindu texts which warns of attachment to scriptural study is the Shriti Gita. In the Bhagavata Purana's Skandha 10, the Vedas are given power of speech and address the Supreme with praise and adoration.

However, the Vedas themselves also admit how difficult it is to reach Oneness through cognition: "The shrutis find their ultimate fruit in you. But their conclusion is indirect, negating every assertion about you."

All the world's holy texts glorify God, but they cannot help one realise it. In the light of Truth, even words refute themselves. This quote is reminiscent of the Upanishadic teaching of 'neti-neti', which means that one simply cannot fathom the Infinite Truth in words – we can only negate what we think it could be. Brahmn is transcendent of any mental concept and can only be realised in divine experience.

We should never become dependent on scriptures because, as per verse 27, "...those who turn away from you are bound down by your words, like animals. Indeed, only those who are devoted to you are purified." We must understand and reflect on the teachings of scriptures, but remember that

Mushroom Magic: Govt employing latest technological interventions to diversify Agri sector

Agricultural diversification is the key to reduce the risk in farming activities and the Government is constantly employing latest technological interventions to diversify agriculture sector across Jammu and Kashmir. Mushroom cultivation is one important tool in not only enhancing agricultural income of the farming community but also securing it against rising changes in climate and soil resources.

With this in mind, the Government of J&K is implementing a full-fledged project on 'Promotion of Round the Year Mushroom Cultivation' (PRYMC) across the UT.

The project to be implemented at a cost of around Rs 42 Cr over the next three years by the Agriculture Production Department of J&K will increase the production of Mushrooms by 3.5 times and revolutionize Mushroom Cultivation here.

The project will also increase employment generation by 3 times and more than 768 new enterprises are also being created in the process to ensure sustainability of the interventions.

"Mushroom farming generates revenue and helps to reduce poverty. The produc-

tion of mushrooms creates a significant amount of direct and indirect employment opportunities in the fields of cultivation and marketing, as well as providing opportunities for processing businesses and labour-intensive management", said Additional Chief Secretary, Agriculture Production Department, Atal Dulloo.

He added that Mushroom farming requires little capital, little technical expertise, and it is even possible to grow mushrooms indoors on a small scale and easily earn a high return on investment. He further said that women can grow mushrooms in their homes with little investment and as a result, mushroom farming not only gives rural women more power but also fights poverty at its source. 'Promotion of Round the Year Mushroom Cultivation' is one among the 29 projects, which were approved by the Jammu and Kashmir administration after being recommended by the UT Level Apex Committee for holistic development of Agriculture and Allied Sectors in UT of J&K. The prestigious committee is headed by Dr Mangala Rai, Former DG ICAR and has other luminaries in the field of Agriculture,

Planning, Statistics & Administration like Ashok Dalwai, CEO NRAA, Dr P K Joshi, Secretary, NAAS, Dr Prabhat Kumar, Horticulture Commissioner MOA & FW, Dr H S Gupta, Former Director, IARI, Atal Dulloo IAS, Financial Commissioner (Addl Chief Secretary) APD apart from the Vice Chancellors of the twin Agriculture Universities of the UT. "Mushroom is an important cottage industry in rural areas. It leads to economic betterment of small & marginal farmers, landless laborers, and women. Being a cash crop it is a good means of generating employment opportunities for youth of the UT", said Director Agriculture & Farmers Welfare Jammu, K.K Sharma, who is implementing the project in collaboration with SKUAST.

He added that lack of availability of pasteurized compost & unorganized market were the major constraints in mushroom production and this project is going to address them in a significant way. Under the project 26 pasteurized compost making units, 10 spawn production labs and 72 controlled conditioned cropping rooms (2000 bags capacity), will be established in span of three years.

For the promotion of mushroom cultivation in non-traditional areas, 1.5 lakh subsidized pasteurised compost bags will be distributed among mushroom growers.

Women empowerment through establishment of 300 women Self Help Groups (WSHGs) will be undertaken.

The project also focuses on value addition of the perishable commodity through creation of four canning units and distribution of 60 solar dryers among mushroom growers.

In addition to this, an amount of Rs 2.1 Crs has been earmarked for research and development. Under this emphasis will also be laid on promotion of medicinal mushrooms and introduction of new strains of mushrooms.

It will also have specific emphasis on standardization of locally available substrates and documentation of conditions for their optimal growth. All in all, the mushroom sector in J&K is about to witness a resurgence in the form of unprecedented institutional and capital support which will boost production, productivity as well as export of mushrooms from the UT.

Zanskar: Land of inner Himalayas

■ G L KHAJURIA

In the midst of western snowy Himalayas at an elevation around 7,150 Mts (22,594 ft) from mean sea level (MSL), lying between 77 degree Latitude, 33 degree longitude are situated 'Zanskar Mountains Rang', Intervening - Deosai Mountains to its North-West and "Bara Lacha La" to its South-East encompassing snowy glaciers with enchanting valleys in her lap in and around the vicinity of Kargil - the most prominent Chorobat pass, Lamayutru, Rupshu to the North and Drass, Amarnath, sanctum sanctorum, Nun and Umas La to the south.

And so charming and hunting are honey-dewed - Deosai plains, just below Deosai Mountains, where one can most conveniently attribute, a piece of heaven, though of course, mistakenly fallen over here by the almighty Gods and Goddess.

And then river Sindh off-shooting from lake 'Mansarovar' serpent crowning up and down is the rarer of the rarest Ral river. Is it not astonishing to every human, who so ever glimpses even through google indeed? Yes, one becomes wonderstruck beyond any shadow of doubt and all this finds illustration in the most popular Rajtarangini by Kalhana. Rightly has thus remarked by Dr E F Neve, Ancient India has nothing more worthy of its remote civilization than the grand remains of Kashmir which though inferior to Palmyra or Persepolis in stateliness, are in possession of beauty so immensely superior to either".

Surrounding 20 Km to south, Rangdum finds its existence of Pazila, in other words also nomenclatured as Pazita, top perched upon some 4400 mts from Mean Sea Level (MSL) and while crossing this beauteous watershed, lies the most prominent Zanskar, de facto, the most secluded of almost all the Trans- Himalayan valleys. The meadow tableland is the rarer of the rarest

picturesque velvety spot with milky clouds wafting the azure sky and as the road winds down the steep slopes toward the head of Stood valley, one becomes wonderstruck viewing the most enchanting and haunting, the main tributary valleys of Zanskar .

The mighty and majestic 'Drang-Drung' glacier which looms large into its fullest view. And so true is with majestic and mighty 'Zanskar' where the narrow snowy uplands extend far and wide for miles and miles in togetherness far away hills which surround the Sindh river, where all the slopes, its steeps and meadow are covered with milk-white snows with multihued honey-dewed herbs and shrubs and further where rushing silvery steams, with nectar clear water outflows. It is here in the interiors of Zanskar which courses through splendid scenery of sylvan splendor.

Zanskar comprises of a triarmed (three armed valley, a system which is lying between the greater Himalayan Range vis-a-vis Zanskar lofty mountains having similarity of snow-capped high-altitudinal clefts and as on the date occupies its own uniqueness and appropriate placements of prominence, apart from its seclusion and to the least interfering with Ladakh as a whole in so far as microcosmical phenomenon is concerned. And of course, some of the religious endowments have, de facto, evolved with revolving wheel of time over the remote past.

And which way the prominent caves have taken use of transmigration to transcendentalism and meditate though ambiguously is hypothethical as far as it goes to the eminence of 'Buddhist' saints and sages.

Down the ages, Chinese pilgrims of whom Hiuen Tsang is a living legend in our olden yet golden scripts who transversed Leh, Ladakh, Kargil and Zanskar around seventeenth century and was eminently been captivated by lovely and enchanting beauty of Zanskar

amongst other paradisical places.

And the "Kailasa" and its surrounds including Zanskar is the best place in the world.

And amongst snowy Himalayas, next to the value of Kashmir which is nomenclatured as paradise on mother Earth as thus written and reflected by Kalhana, in his historical treatise "Rajtarangini".

A century and a half ago, French authorities deputed their most prominent Naturalist and botanist by name "Victor Jacquenon" to go as a travelling naturalist, preferably to the interiors of greater Himalayas and in his monumental collection of data from greater Himalayas was later published after his death in six volumes which added considerably the beauties of the greater Himalayas of Leh, Ladakh, Kargil and Zanskar, preferably the immersive importance of rich, vide, varied manifestation of flora and fauna recorded in everyday language much of what he noticed and experienced.

Undeniably, therefore, it is on record that as per the latest survey conducted by wildlife department there are on this date as many as many as 800 black bears out of which 80 per cent exists in Zanskar whereas the rest are spread over the other part of great Himalayan region to our part of territory, apart from many more varied flora and fauna in the greater part of the Himalayas and its surrounds.

Conclusively, therefore, it is no denying the fact that if our pride the greater Himalaya is the crown of India, Zanskar is doubtlessly a golden feather in it and in the ultimate analysis, add here an important quote of our revered Gurudev, R N Tagore, "He lies lost who confines himself to his own self, he attains self-expression who realizes himself in all".

(The author is former Deputy Conservator of Forests, J&K.)

Wildlife is worth worshiping

■ SHIV KUMAR PADHA

S ave earth, save wild life, save environment, are the slogans echoing in the nook and corner of the globe these days. Question arises, after all who is responsible for posing threat to our earth, wild life and environment? The answer to the question need not be sought from anywhere because it is mankind who is cutting the same branch of the tree on which it is sitting quietly and peacefully. The mankind, by its very nature, has been expansionist since evolution. Increasing population at global level and the need for meeting its requirements have compelled him to spread its tentacles on the land, in the deep oceans and the infinite space has resulted in the global warming, greenhouse effect and depletion of ozone layer. The encroachment of the animal habitation by mankind has resulted in the extinction of many animal species like lions, white tiger, musk deer, black buck, Kail (Pashmina yielding) goat of Leh and Hangal (a deer found in Kashmir region). Cutting of forests for selfish purpose has brought with it extinction of many bird species like eagles, vultures (natural scavengers) and hawks (birds of prey). There was a time when animals lived with human beings, peacefully and amicably confined to their respective territories. Their existence depended largely upon their coexistence and interdependence on the earth. Unlike present age the animals have always proved a true and sincere friend of mankind since time immemorial. According to first Shaloka of Geeta, 'God descends on earth, whenever there is erosion of human values and evil forces dominate the noble ones'. Our scriptures and epics have ample evidences about the descending of God (Vishnu) on the earth partially or completely in the shape of animals. In Sanatan Dharam (The oldest Dharam of mankind) the human beings and the animals lived in peace and harmony. It is true, but for the assistance and cooperation of the animal world our gods of the times could not have achieved their goals of liberating the life on the earth from

the terror of evil forces. The animal world can be classified as aquatic (water animals), terrestrial (animals of land), aerial (birds) and amphibians (of water and land). Our Vedas, Granths, Upanishad, Ramayan, Mahabharat, and all Puranas are full of examples about the successive births of lord Vishnu on earth in different shapes and forms from time to time. Once Sankadi seers (Rishi) went to Vaikunth Dham (Heaven) with the desire of having a glimpse of Shri Hari (god Vishnu) but they were checked and not allowed to enter the seventh gate by jay Vijay the 'Prasad' of the dham. The seers could not pocket such insult and sent a curse upon them. As a result of curse these two 'Prasad' were born as the two sons of Kashyapmuni and mother Dakshaputri Aditi with the names of Harnyaksh and Harnyaksh. Harnyaksh, a powerful daitya, in order to teach lesson to Devtaas (angels) sank the whole earth in the deep ocean which was later on brought back on the surface by Varha, pig like wild with rough hair and an incarnation of god Vishnu, with his snout. As per the command, god Varha vanished Harnyaksh from the soil and sent him to his abode. Out of 24 Avatars of lord Vishnu we come across with the Matsya Avatar of god not only in ancient Aryan epics but also in sacred Bible. One day when Manu Maharaj took fistful of water for achman he noticed a new born fish in his palm. He wanted to put it back in the water but that small creature forbade him to do so till it grows too large to be contained in any water reservoir except the ocean with the fear lest the big creatures should swallow it and prayed for asylum. The little creature warned Manu Maharaj about the impending danger of tsunami and promised to help save the planet earth from the destruction and destruction caused by the tsunami in the coming centuries. As per the warning the planet earth started drowning in tsunami waters which tried to capsize Manu Maharaj's boat but with the remembrance of god Matsya the whole danger of tsunami was averted and the planet was saved from destruction forever.

God Kurm or Kashap (tortoise) came on earth for the purpose of bringing peace and harmony between Sur (angels) and Asur (devils). Mountain Mandirgiri was used as Churner (Mathani) where the mountain was rested on the back of God Kashyap and the Sagar Manthan was enabled. God Vishnu, in the guise of Garudavtar, lifted the heavy Mandirgiri on its back and placed it on the desired place. Harnyakash, the elder brother of cursed Harnyaksh, was blessed by one son Parhla who had unshakable faith in omnipresence and omnipotence of god and also he was a dedicated devotee of Shri Hari, which his atheist father never liked. He made many attempts to kill his son Parhla, but he was saved by Lord Vishnu every time and lastly god appeared in the shape of Narsingh (a combined shape of human and lion) from the pillar and killed the tyrant and saved his dedicated devotee Parhla. Madhu and Kativ were created out of two droplets on the petal of lotus by the divine power of Lord Brahma who were extremely powerful and strong, once they stole away Vedas and hid them under deep sea. Deprived of priceless assets (Vedas) Lord Brahma prayed to Vishnu who appeared before him with face and long neck like that of a horse and rest of the body like human beings. This Avatar of Vishnu, with halo around, was called Haygrib. God Haygrib produced charming vocal sound and spread it throughout the deep ocean with the result these two wicked spirits came on the surface to have the glimpse of the singer. Haygrib availed this opportunity and recovered the Vedas from the hidden place and returned them to Brahma. God (Vishnu) took many Avatars on earth in the shape of Nandi (bull) Avatar, Hans (Swan) Avatar, Gajender (elephant) Avatar and likewise infinite avatars which an ordinary human cannot count. Sampati and Jatayu giant eagles were two brothers who were closely related with Raghu vanshis. They were gifted with extreme power of flight by god. Sampati the elder among them helped Rama's sena (army) in pin pointing the place in Lanka where Mata Sita was housed, whereas Jatayu laid his life while freeing Mata Sita from the custody of Cruel Ravan. Jamwant (a bear) Manasputar of Lord Brahma provided his fullest support and cooperation to lord Rama during war with Ravan. Lord Hanuman a ruder Avtar and true devotee of Ram provided his Baner sena (monkey) during war with Ravan and stood by Ram through thick and thin. Garuda freed Rama along with his allies from the Naagpash. Among the bird species Kal Bhashundi and Shuk Dev avatars occupy very high place in Hindu mythology. Crocodile, Mooshak, Garud, Lion, Peacock, Bull, Swan, Airawat (white elephant) have served maan Ganga, Ganesh, Vishu, Maan Durga, Krtike, Lord Shiv, Man Sarswati, Lord Indra respectively by becoming their rides (Vahan). Horses pulled the chariots of lord Krishna and Rama while the heads of Child elephant and that of goat were transplanted in order to revive the life of Ganpati and Raja Daksh by Lord Shiva. Naag remains coiled around the neck of lord Shiv whereas faithful dog accompanied Yudhishter, the eldest brother of Pandvas, till he reached his final abode. It is quite clear from the old scriptures how human beings and the animals lived together without hatred and ill will with each other in the remote past but whenever man has made futile effort to push the animals out from their natural habitats, both human beings and animals have suffered equally. Every day we read and watch on TV about beating of leopards to death whenever they entered into the human territory and about the merciless killing of elephants for their tusks. Many animals like bears, deer etc are killed and their skin is stuffed in order to make their trophies for their drawing rooms. Killing of the animals mercilessly can disturb the ecological balance which can lead to some serious consequences. The slogans referred earlier seem genuine and justified at the first sight and if these slogans remain mere words on the placards nothing solid cannot be expected except the verbosity.