

# After Lavender & Marigold, now it's turn of wild 'Tagetes Minuta' to change fortunes of Bhadarwah farmers

## ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

**BHADARWAH:** After successfully bringing the purple revolution by growing exotic lavender followed by large scale cultivation of marigold under Union Government's Aroma Mission, dozens of marginal farmers and labourers in Jammu and Kashmir's Bhadarwah region have gone a step further in search of looking into new opportunities in the field of essential oils and have already started reaping in rich benefits by utilising another aromatic plant - Tagetes Minuta popularly known as southern marigold or stinking Roger which grows wildly and in abundance in Jammu and Kashmir's Bhadarwah region.

After Union Government's encouraged more farmers to adopt growing aromatic plants by starting Aroma Mission 2.0, dozens of marginal farmers and labourers who were lying idle and without work since November after the completion of harvesting season in the hilly Chenab region, have found a new lease of life to earn their livelihood that too from a weed which up till now was



*Farmers and labourers engaged in collecting Tagetes Minuta at Bhadarwah. (Pic by Raja Rehber Jawa)*

taken as useless for them as even cattle use to shy away from it because of its strong aroma.

An award winning farmer and entrepreneur Touqeer Bagwan who has remained instrumental in bringing in the Purple revolution in Bhadarwah by joining hands with CSIR under Aroma Mission encouraged locals to collect wildly grown flowers of Tagetes Minuta from their surroundings and waste land after getting technical support and go head from the scientist of IIM to extract Aromatic oil from it.

While expressing his gratitude to the union Government's for starting

Aroma Mission 2.0, Touqeer Bagwan of JK Aroma said that today hundreds of poor farmer who traditionally remain jobless in winters as all the works come to a standstill after November due harsh weather conditions, this year are reaping in the benefits by joining hands to fulfil our prime Minister's dream to become global leader in essential oils and under Aroma Mission 2 our aim is to make Jammu and Kashmir Bulgaria of India.

Touqeer Bagwan of JK Aroma Bhadarwah said that I was surprised, when during a workshop at Delhi, I came to know from the scientists of

CSIR that the wild flowers which grows and spreads like a weed in entire Bhadarwah Valley can be used in essential oil from it.

"At the begging I was a little apprehensive about the quality of oil extracted from the wild Tagetes minuta but in the laboratory tests it turned out to be one of the best available in essential oil market and in the very first year we manage to extract 250 liters of oil which costs almost double of the lavender oil," Bagwan added saying that, beside extracting oil we have also collected the seeds and hopefully next year, we will distribute free seeds among 300 farmers of Bhadarwah to grow the flower in their respective fields.

Dozens of farmers and labourers, majority of them women are a happier lot as they are earning @ Rs 1000 to 1500 a day by collecting the flowers of Tagetes minuta that too from their surroundings and waste land.

Bachan Singh of village Butla of Bhadarwah said that two years of corona has taken a toll on poor farmers and labourers like me as we are without work since last one

abda half year but this weed of whom we hate the most came to our rescue at this difficult time and my family is earning from Rs 2000 to Rs 3000 a day since last one month by collecting the flowers that too from the vicinity of our home.

"My father is a Daily-wage labourer and lockdown have left him jobless and I was about to leave my studies but by collecting the flower along roadside in our village, I not only contributed to my family to store the essentials for winter months but have also kept money to get admission in college and for this I'm thankful to the pungent weed," said Shweta Rani (19) of Mathola village.

Not only labourers and small time farmers but some unemployed educated youth have also joined Aroma Mission to start and give a new dimension to their career.

"After completing my B tech in computer science, I was without job since last two years but Government's Aroma Mission 2 changed my life for good as by engaging and encouraging the farmers to collect tagetes Minuta and selling it to the JK Aroma, I earned handsomely and now I want to venture into full time

business of aromatic plants," said another youth of Bhadarwah.

"Since last 1 months 60 families from Chinta, Manthala, Mathola, Duggi, Dandi, Thanhala, Basti, Bhala and Seri villages have collected and sold 100 quintals of wild Tagetes minuta so far," youth added saying that Bhadarwah Valley alone has a potential of 2,000 quintals of wild Tagetes minuta.

Tagetes Minuta is a tall upright marigold plant from the genus Tagetes, with small flowers, native to the southern half of South America. Since Spanish colonization, it has been introduced around the world, and has become naturalized in Europe, Asia, Australasia, North America, and Africa.

Tagetes Minuta oil is used for chest infections, coughs and catarrh, dilating the bronchi, facilitating the flow of mucus and dislodging congestion and can be used in cases of skin infections. It also has a healing effect on wounds, cuts, calluses and bunions.

Prof. Rajshree Dhar, Principal, GDC, Jindrah applauded the efforts of the NSS team and volunteers in organizing the

## GDC Jindrah conducts Swachhta Abhiyan



*Faculty along with students during the programme.*

## ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

**JINDRAH:** The NSS unit of Government Degree College (GDC) Jindrah conducted Swachhata Abhiyan under #CleanIndia, to clean Tawi river located near Nagola, Jindrah.

Dr. Sunil Sharma, Program officer, NSS Unit of GDC Jindrah supervised the whole drive and Dr. Seema, Librarian and member of NSS team compiled and reported the cleanliness drive.

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cleanliness drives in the area.

The NSS volunteers and team visited the site and clean the area along side Tawi River. The locals of the area also participated in the Swachhata Abhiyan.

Everyone around also promised to maintain the sanctity of the rivers and respect natural water bodies to have clean and fresh water in future too.

Then after many suggestions given by alumni were cleared by Principal of the college. Finally the vote of thanks was delivered by Prof. Brinder Kumar, Convener IQAC cell.

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## JKTA holds meet, discusses various issues



*JKTA members during the meeting.*

### Naat singing competition organised

## ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

**RAMBAN:** A friendly and interactive Naat Singing Competition was organised by the Indian Army at Gunyat-Ul-Uloom Madrasa, Charvel in district Ramban in which a total of 35 students participated to showcase their talent. Hand and Naat form a musical genre that features religious chants set to lyrics praising Allah (God) and the Prophet Muhammad respectively.

The event was conducted with an aim to develop a competitive spirit amongst the students and was successful in channelizing the young energy, foster friendship and harmony amongst them. The spirit to volunteer and perform with zeal and enthusiasm of the participants was whole heartedly supported by the spectators cheering for their performance.

Students and Religious Teachers expressed their gratitude for organising the event.

While speaking on the occasion the representatives of the association expressed his anguish and surprising over the attitude like DPes, withdrawal of salary on due date, creation of master posts in UPS, implementation of transparent transfer policy for all, Restoration of Old Pension Scheme for all NPS employees. Members of the association said that the promotion of large no. of teachers has stagnated since 2013, as no DPC were held by

education department till now.

They are continuously off delay delaying tactics on releasing Pay dues on time by drawing and disbursing officers in various education zones of the District. "We hope that Director School Education Jammu will take sympathetic look into the burning issues faced by the teaching fraternity taking appropriate action towards the problem" they said.

## Blacktopping of Targah Balgara road commences



*DDC Member Suresh Sharma starting road work.*

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**AKHNOOR:** Suresh Sharma, member District Development Council on Sunday inaugurated the work of black topping on the main road of Targah-Balgara to be built at a cost of 15 lakhs in Balgara, Block Mairaj Madrian. "People of this village had been demanding for a long time and the promises made in the Janta Drabari are being fulfilled" Sharma said while addressing the gathering.

Participants appreciated this gesture of Reasi Police and expressed that such interactions bring public confidence & will also prove beneficial for their carrier building. It'll also discourage the practice of being exploited in the hands of fraudsters.

Speaking on the occasion

Singh conveyed that such type of programs are being

organized to make woman

& girls aware of their

rights and role of Police in it.

As a goodwill gesture 60 school bags along with stationery were distributed among the orphan students of the area. Woman police officers, school teachers & woman public representatives were also present in this interaction & interacted with the students. More than fifty girl students present in the function expressed their wishes to join police in future. SSP, police officers, teachers & representatives of PRI shared lunch with the students.

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