

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 Jawal)

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 wildy grown flowers of Tagetes Minuta from their surroundings and waste land after getting technical support and go a head from the scientist of IIIM 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 fulfill our a 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

abd a half year but this weed 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 tagetus Minota 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 Minota 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 Minota 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.

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 Abhiyaan 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.

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

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 Abhiyaan. 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.

BJP will form next Government in J&K: Raina

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
DHARAL: BJP J&K led by its President Ravinder Raina held a massive rally at Dharal on Sunday. J&K BJP General Secretary Adv. Vibodh Gupta, State Executive Member Devinder Rana, BJP DDC Mohd Iqbal Malik, District President Rajinder Gupta, Dinesh Sharma, Thakur Randhir Singh, Arif Jaat, Rajouri MC President, Bharat Bushan and other senior leaders also addressed the rally.

Ravinder Raina while addressing the rally said that the while delivering his address said that the people of India have approved the Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikaas the famous quote of PM Modi. He said that parties like NC, PDP & Congress failed to



BJP J&K President Ravinder Raina along with Senior leaders Devinder Rana and Vibodh Gupta during the rally.

address the issues of common masses for decades together. And they utterly failed in doing so, he said and acclaimed that now the people of Jammu & Kashmir have decided that BJP will form next government in J&K.

Raina said that the present dispensation under Prime Minister Narendra Modi has proved its credentials by working for the persons living in the remotest of the areas and the most

neglected communities. Modi government has ensured that the benefits of those schemes meet their goal to uplift the masses going by the principles of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikaas and Sabka Vishwaas".

Raina said that Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan, Jan-Dhan Yojna, PM Fasal Beema Yojna, Atal Pension Yojna, Mudra Bank, Beti Bachao Beti Padao, Sukanya Smridhi Yojna, PM Ujwala

Project, PM Awaas Yojna, Make in India, Digital India, Start Up-Stand Up India, Udaan Scheme, are some of the pioneering projects and schemes, which have been launched by Narendra Modi government and our party activists should educate the masses about them and help in getting the benefits of the same.

Vibodh Gupta while addressing the gathering thanked them for their love and support for BJP by participating in the rally in such a big number. He said that the participation of all the sections and regions in this rally proves that the people have accepted the party by their hearts and are satisfied with the good governance of the government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

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 Madrassa, Charrel in district Ramban in which a total of 35 students participated to showcase their talent. Hamd 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.



JKTA members during the meeting.

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
RAMBAN: JK Teacher Association (JKTA) District unit Ramban conduct a meeting of its executive member led by District President Vikram Katoch at Dakbanglow Ramban on Sunday.

During the meeting all the issues and problems faced by the teaching fraternity were discussed with pros and cons in the meeting.

While speaking on the occa-

sion the representatives of the association expressed his angush 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 Balaria road commences



DDC Member Suresh Sharma starting road work.

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
AKHNOOR: Suresh Sharma, member District Development Council on Sunday inaugurated the work of black topping on the main road of Targah-Balagara to be built at a cost of 15 lakhs in Balgara, Block Maira Madrian. "People of this village had been demanding for a long time and the promises made in the Janta Drabar are being fulfilled" Sharma said while addressing the gathering. Due to construction of this road, it will be very convenient for the public to com-

mute. On this occasion BDC Sushma Devi, Mandal President Dr. Ram Lal ,Distt. Vice President Vikram Singh, Sarpanch Tarlochan Dutt, General Sectt. Chanchal Singh Vice President Satyapal Sharma Mandal Sectt. Sukhdev Raj ,Mandal Mahila Morecha President Sunita Devi, Panch Ashok Kumar ,Nisha Devi ,Joginder Kumar Capt Rattan Lal ,Tarsem Lal ,Mohan Lal, Vijay Kumar Engineers of R&B Department and local were present.

Army facilitates promotion of Mushroom farming in district Kishtwar

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
KISHTWAR: Taking a new leap towards self-reliance, people in the remote areas of Chhatroo block of Kishtwar district are all set to make a good income in Mushroom Cultivation, thanks to the handholdings provided by the Army in the form of expertise and inputs.

To promote the cultivation of this cash crop, Indian Army had conducted a Mushroom Farming Awareness Camp in collaboration with the District Administration at Chhatroo. During the camp, youth were made aware of Button mushroom cultivation and marketing of the product.

Subsequently, a self help group was formed consisting of 10 youth who were briefed on the method of cultivation of Mushroom, techniques of storage and its marketing. Till now, 100 Pkts of mushroom have been distributed by the youth in the villages of Chhatroo sub division and 19 Kg mushroom has been produced.

Seeing it as a boon, local youth expressed their gratitude towards the Army for the noble initiative and displayed enthusiasm for cultivation of this aromatic crop in the area.

Girl students, women made familiar with police working

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
REASI: Woman friendly Policing and making students aware & familiar towards Police working, a visit of more than 150 girl-students & women were organized in Police Station Arnas of district Reasi to familiarize them especially girls regarding functioning of Police Station. Students of Govt. Girls Higher Secondary school Arnas were excited while visiting the remote police station catering to hilly villages.

The students in small groups covering their faces with COVID masks were made to visit each desk to familiarize them with working of each section of the Police Station, the role of SHO, Munshi and Duty Officer, Woman Police Officer incharge of 'Woman Help Desk' etc. were also narrated to the students. Students showed special



SSP Reasi Shailender Singh giving school bag to a girl.

interest in chatting with 'Women Help Desk' Officer of the Police Station witnessing the shelf of weaponry & protective gear against bullets as well as Law & Order.

Shailender Singh Senior Superintendent of Police Reasi reached Arnas to interact with students. In his speech he made girls aware of the present

threats of cyber crime & exploitation there of. He also gave them educative tips to protect them against criminal exploitation of their innocence & asked them to be aware 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.

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 fraudulents.

GDC Ramnagar organises Alumni Meet

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
UDHAMPUR: IQAC cell of Govt Degree College Ramnagar organised annual Alumni Meet 2021 through online platform under the patronship of Dr Udhey Bhanu, Principal GDC Ramnagar and guidance of Prof Brinder Kumar, Convener IQAC and Prof Suresh Kumar Dogra, senior faculty and HOD Physics of the college. The Alumni meet was conducted to reminisce the old memories and a fruitful get together of the ex-students of the college which will provide a necessary feedback to the college for further development and improvement.

The entire meeting was coordinated by Prof Ritika Mahajan, HOD chemistry of the college. The programme started with the welcome address by Prof Brinder Kumar followed by the felicitation by Dr Udhey Bhanu, Principal GDC Ramnagar. Then after a power point presentation was conducted to have an overview of the developments in each sector of the college.

Ajay Kumar, Assistant Professor Plant Sciences, Central University Kerala, Dr Rashmi Gupta, Assistant Professor Physics, GDC Ramnagar, Rakesh Kumar, Lecturer Physical

Education and Meena Rani, Department of Animal Husbandry alumni of the college shared their journey after graduation, role of the college life in shaping their future and also gave many suggestions for the upliftment of the college.

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. and Prof Suresh Kumar Dogra, senior faculty and HOD Physics of the college along with other staff members of the college were also present.

Five-day Chir Pine needle-based handicraft training starts

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
NOWSHERA: Training of Handicrafts based on Chir-pine needles as raw material has been conducted in Nowshera Forest Division with an aim to generate livelihood among local youth and to prevent the forest fires, for which Chir Pine needles act as fuel. Every year forest fires occur in Nowshera Forest Division causing loss of forest and wildlife. Collection and processing of needles would help in prevention of forest fires thus averting major disaster. Nowshera Forest Division started preparation of handicraft items using Chir Pine Needles. A number of items such as Baskets, Tray, Hats etc has been prepared using Chir Pine Needles by involving Village Forest



Participants during the training at Nowshera.

Committees. Initially, two VFCs have been selected for the said innovative work, Salheri and Brevi as pilot project. At the initial stage a self help group of 10 ladies has been constituted, who is preparing the handicraft items. A five day training program

was conducted at Forest Division Office, Nowshera under the supervision of Vivek Verna, Conservator of Forests, West Circle Rajouri for the woman of SHG's which are recently been constituted in Nowshera Forest Range. During interaction, Neelima

Shah, Divisional Forest Officer, Nowshera Forest Division informed the members of SHGs about the possible help to be provided by the department. She also mentioned that forest department is working towards Market linkage of SHG for the marketing of Handicrafts. The products prepared by SHG's were named as "Chir Dastkar".

Sudesh Kumar, Range Forest Officer, Nowshera made all the arrangements in collaboration with Rakesh Verna, Range Forest Officer, Sunderbani.

The whole work shop will be conducted under the direct Supervision of Sh. Vivek Kumar IFS Conservator of Forest, West Circle Rajouri and Neelima Shah Divisional Forest Officer Nowshera.

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