


END OF A LEGEND

Potential of natural farming in J&K

A veteran of the industry and one of the most versatile actors Vikram Gokhale who has predominantly worked in the Hindi and Marathi film industries, breathed his last in a hospital in Pune on November 26. Vikram Gokhale was a very seasoned actor and his demise is deeply saddening. Vikram Gokhale was a noted actor in Marathi theatre and cinema, as well as in Hindi films, where he acted in movies such as Agnipath (1990), Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam (1999), Bhool Bhulaiyaan (2007), Natsamrat (2015), Hichki (2018), and Mission Mangal (2019). Born on November 14, 1945, Vikram Gokhale was an actor best known for his work in Marathi theatre, Hindi movies, and television. Vikram started his acting journey on Marathi stage and was awarded the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for acting in theatre in 2011. His big-screen journey began in 1971 with Parwana, which also featured Amitabh Bachchan. Apart from Bollywood films, the duo also worked in a Marathi film titled AB Ani CD. In his career of 59 years, Gokhale acted in every medium, from theatre to television to cinema in at least two major languages- Marathi and Hindi. He was without a doubt the most talented actor to have made a name for himself in the movie industry. As a result, he was regarded as the most well-known and adored actor in the movie business. His roles in the films Barrister, Gafila and Sau Jhooth Ek Sach are the ones he found the most challenging. The actor made his film debut in the 1971 Amitabh Bachchan-starrer Parwana. He is best known for his performances in films like Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam, Agnipath, and Khuda Gawah. He won the National Award for Best Actor in 2010 for his performance in the Marathi film Anumati. In 2010, he made his directorial debut with the Marathi film Aaghaat. He is fondly remembered for playing the patriarch in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Hum Dil De ChukeSanam. He also appeared in films like Salim Langde Pe Mat Ro, Bhool Bhulaiyaan, Mission Mangal, Aijaary among many others. He was honored with the National Award for best actor at 60th National Awards in 2013 for 'Anumati', a Marathi film. The actor, who was close to reaching his golden jubilee in movies, received praise for his outstanding acting abilities and won numerous awards. In recognition of his contribution to cinema, the actor was honoured with the Vishnudas Bhawe Award in 2015 by the Akhil Maharashtra Natya Vidya Mandir. Over the decades, Gokhale gave stellar performances in a range of roles in prominent Hindi films such as Bhool Bhulaiyaan, Traffic, Hichki and Ab Tak Chhappan. He used to say, "An actor should not hard-sell skills. Acting should not be about peddling your abilities. To me to be seen acting is not acting. To act to believe is acting. Acting is the art of creating the illusion of the truth. You have to make people forget you are acting." No doubt, we shall miss his presence on the big screen but he has left an indelible mark on the hearts of all cinema lovers and his work will always be remembered.



OFF 'D' CUFF

How To Create Your Own Mental Sunshine

Fear something that characterises us, as we are children of a septelial age. We are afraid of the future, afraid of poverty, afraid of unemployment, afraid of dishonour and disgrace, afraid of disease and death – it seems to me that sometimes, we are afraid of life itself!

We live in fear; we work in fear; we walk in fear; we talk in fear. We move through life from one fear to another, crushed beneath the weight of a woeful existence!

Fear casts its dark shadow over our lives at one time or another. We are prone to fear almost instinctively. Neither the highest nor the lowest of us is exempt from fear. The most powerful nations fear their rivals and neighbours. Politicians are afraid of losing elections. People fear for their future. Students are afraid of failing in examinations. Mothers are afraid about their children's safety... the list is endless.

Fear is at the root of all our problems. Fear gives rise to all our misfortunes. Living in constant fear saps our vital energies, leaving us too drained and exhausted to savour the joy of life. Fear paralyses the mind, even as a stroke paralyses the body. It strikes at the nervous system; it causes stress and tension. It undermines our well-being. Worst of all, it robs us of happiness and destroys our peace of mind.

"The mind is its own place," wrote Milton, "and in itself, can create a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven." The mind can create fears and phobias; it can also create security and self-confidence. If we are to live life to the fullest, we must be fearless.

There are two options open to you. One is to submit to your fears,

-Dada Vaswani

■ DR BANARSI LAL

J&K is a mountainous Union Territory in which about 30 per cent of the area is under cultivation. Agriculture is the backbone of J&K. This sector provides employment directly or indirectly to about 70 per cent of its inhabitants. The average size of landholding in India is 1.08 hectares where as in Jammu & Kashmir it is 0.54 hectare. Agriculture contributes significantly to the economy of J&K which signifies the overdependence of the J&K on agriculture. Agricultural development harbingers the overall growth and development of J&K. The use of fertilizers and other agrochemicals has started to increase in J&K which deteriorates the soil health. Natural farming is a method of chemical-free agriculture drawn from the traditional Indian practices. It is a unique method of farming which relies on agroecology and reduces the cost of cultivation nearly zero. There is no need of expensive agro-inputs such as pesticides, fertilizers and intensive irrigation for natural farming. It has attained a wide success in many states of India especially in the Southern states. Government is stressing on this farming calling for a back to the basics of the Indian agriculture. It is a unique system of farming which sustains the agro-ecosystem including biodiversity and soil biological activities. Natural farming can prove as a major tool for the second green revolution especially in the hilly regions of India.

Majority of farmers of Union Territory of J&K have small and marginal size of land holding which generate less income particularly in the hilly areas. Natural farming system is not new and it is being followed in J&K from ancient times. It is the tradition in J&K to add organic manures in the soil which supplement nutrients and improve physical and biological properties of soils. Over the years, the farmers of the hilly Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir have adopted new agricultural technologies but still J&K is having low crop productivity of almost all the crops. There is need to develop systematic approach and plan for the development in natural farming in Jammu and Kashmir as J&K has

immense potential for natural farming. Significant steps have been taken by the government in order to highlight the importance of natural farming in the growth of J&K economy. There is need to make rigorous efforts to promote natural farming in J&K. Soil health deteriorates due to indiscriminate use of chemical fertilizers in the soil. In order to sustain the health of soil, natural farming is the best option. Natural farming is picking up pace in the UT of J&K and there is need of awareness and trainings of farmers for natural farming. Union Territory of J&K has huge potential for natural farming as the large area in J&K is already under semi-organic cultivation especially in hilly districts of J&K due to the lack of availability of chemical fertilizers in these areas and the farmers of these areas hardly apply the chemical fertilizers. There is need to explore markets in the country and abroad for saffron, basmati rice, Rajnash, spices and various other organic agricultural produce from J&K. Natural farming is generally environment friendly maintains soil health and enhance biodiversity. Already large numbers of farmers of J&K are growing spices, walnuts, herbs etc. by natural farming. There is need to introduce natural farming commercially and in a systematized way so that the farmers can get rich dividends and farming can become sustainable. Natural farming is a market demand driven agriculture which aims to fetch more prices. Postharvest crop residues can be utilized to the fullest extent. The reduction in the input cost in natural farming ensures higher economic net returns.

In order to improve the socio-economic status of farmers of J&K, there is need to help them to get higher returns per unit area and overall improvement in the soil health. In order to break the debt cycle, reduce the cost of cultivation and produce the healthy food, Subash Palekar Padma Shri award recipient introduced Zero Budget Natural Farming for many small and marginal farmers. According to him one cow is needed for 30 acres of land provided it should be of the local Indian breed. His method promotes soil aeration, minimum watering, top soil mulching and discourages

intensive irrigation and deep ploughing. This farming is very effective in addressing the uncertainties of climate change. Farming without chemicals is possible under the natural farming method. The method of this farming is very simple and easy to adopt. Under this method of farming plants consume only 10 per cent of water that crops consume in conventional methods. Jivamrita/Jeevamruthais, Bijamrita/beejamrutha, Aachadana and Whapasa are the four pillars of natural farming. Intercropping, contours and bunds, local species of earthworms and cow dung are other principles of Natural Farming. Under this farming, revival of local deep soil earthworms through increased organic matter is most recommended. Dung from the Bos indicus (humped cow) is beneficial and has the highest concentrations of micro-organisms as compared to European cow breeds such as Holstein. This type of farming is environmentally friendly and helpful to conserve the nature by improving the microbial content and water retention capacity in soils.

Special impetus on preparation of natural farming inputs, certification of organic produce and assistance for promoting bio-agents needs to be given so that farmers in near future become more competitive and generate better returns from their farms. Some specific projects on natural farming should be implemented specially in the hilly areas to promote natural farming in J&K. Area under natural farming and certified organic area need to be enhanced with the assistance of experienced service providers. Cluster approach needs to be followed to identify the potential areas and emphasis should be given on natural farming in selected areas. Specific zones need to be identified and niche areas of natural farming production needs to be identified. Firstly the base line survey of the areas needs to be conducted and after that farmer meetings need to be conducted to orient the farmers on commercial natural farming. Specific demonstrations on organic input preparation such as Jeevanrit, Beejanrit, Panchgavya, fermented buttermilk etc. should be given to the farmers. The literature in local

dialect on natural farming should be provided to the farmers of selected areas of J&K. After that comprehensive trainings on all aspects of natural farming should be imparted to the farmers by the experts. Farmers should be acquainted with the uses, doses, time of application, stage of growth etc. of various natural farming bioagents. Farmers should be oriented on less cost of cultivation and higher market returns by the adoption of commercial natural farming. By practicing natural farming even small and marginal farmers in J&K can generate more returns from their farm produce. Natural farming can benefit the farmers economically and ecologically by reducing the cost of cultivation. By natural farming, the farmers of J&K can leave a better legacy for their future generations. Farmers can also generate additional income by selling the natural farming inputs. Appropriate policy framework and package of practices are needed to increase the adoption of natural farming in J&K. Institutional mechanism is also needed to promote the Natural Farming in J&K. The farmers of Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir can tap the opportunity of growing demand of natural farming products. Keeping the importance of organic products in view there is need to shift from chemical to natural farming. There is need to provide logistic support for natural farming to the farmers so that they can get maximum benefits from it. Currently the demand for organic products is more than supply. The market for organic crops is growing at a very high rate each year. The emerging challenge for food security and environment sustainability can be mitigated by the natural farming. Good market demand for natural farming products will have a positive impact on the socio-economic status of the farmers of J&K. Proper marketing mechanism needs to be strategized to sale the chemical free farm produce. It can play a significant role in enhancing the income and employment among the farmers of J&K.

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Remembering Dr Rajendra Prasad

■ ER PRABHAT KISHORE

Dr Rajendra Prasad was a symbol of nationalism due to his efficiency, devotion to service, intellectual brilliance, truthfulness, sincerity, and gentleness by entering public life as Gandhi's associate in Champaran. This pioneering leader of the Indian freedom struggle, with his service and support of Sardar Patel, held the highest office of the President of Congress, President of the Constituent Assembly and then the first President of the Republic of India for twelve years.

Dr Rajendra Prasad was born on December 3, 1884 in Iradei village of Siwan district in Bihar. After completing early education in Chhapra and T K Ghosh Academy, Patna, he was enrolled in FA in the Presidency College, Kolkata in the year 1902. He passed the MA (Economics) Honours in 1907, BL in 1910 and ML (Master of Law) in 1915 from the University of Kolkata. After this, he started practicing in the Calcutta High Court. Rajendra Babu started his public life in year 1905 with Bang-Bhang movement. He became a member of the All India Congress Committee in 1911. After the establishment of Patna High Court in 1916, he shifted to Patna and started practicing law. In Patna, there was less opportunity for advocacy and more opportunity to participate in public work.

In Lucknow Congress of 1916, a delegation of farmers from Champaran met Gandhi and narrated the atrocities of the Foreigners. Gandhi reached Motihari and personally saw the plight of indigo peasants by the British. He called Rajendra Prasad and some other lawyers from Patna to Champaran and asked them to pen the sad story of the farmers. The statements of about 22 to 25 thousand raiyats were recorded. In Champaran, the work of emancipating the farmers from slavery was going on, while in Gujarat, under the leadership of Vallabhbhai Patel, the farmers of Kheda were performing Satyagraha. Rajendra Babu went to Kheda to meet Patel and gave moral support to the movement. After about two years of agitation, the British indigo managers left Champaran.

In September 1920, Rajendra Prasad was completely engrossed in the service of the country by giving up his advocacy. For the promotion of the national movement, he started the publication of "Desh" in Hindi and "Searchlight" in English, which gave a big boost to the national freedom movement. On January 15, 1934, in the devastating earthquake of Bihar, lakhs of houses collapsed, wells were filled with sand and there was panic all around. An NGO named 'Bihar Central Relief Committee' was formed under the chairmanship of Rajendra Babu and efforts were made to control the situation with the money received in the relief fund. Gandhi, Sardar Patel, Kripalani and others worked with full commitment and coordination in their help. Demolition was converted into construction and Rajendra Babu was given the title of 'Deshratna' by the countrymen.

In 1934, for the first time, Rajendra Babu was elected as Congress President. Under his presidency, the Golden Jubilee year was celebrated in the Bombay session in

October 1934 to commemorate the 50 years of the Congress. He established "Deshi Rajya Praja Mandal" in the native states. When Subhash Chandra Bose was elected president for the second time in the Tripura Congress session, he was facing fierce opposition from Gandhi. Subhash Babu called a meeting of the All India Congress Committee in Kolkata on 28 April 1939, in which he resigned when his leadership was not disclosed and Rajendra Babu was asked to take over the post of Congress President for the second time.

In the 'Quit India' movement of 1942, all the top leaders were arrested. Rajendra Babu was arrested in a sick condition and kept in Bankipur Jail of Patna. On 15 June 1945, he along with other leaders, was released from the prison. On 16 February 1946, the British Prime Minister announced the constitution of a three-member "Cabinet Mission" and on 23 March 1946, its members Pethick Lawrence, Sir Stafford Cripps and A.V. Alexander came to India.

After talks with various political and social leaders in India by the three-member mission, two plans were published by the British Government. The first plan published on 16 May 1946 was related to the formation of the Constituent Assembly and the second plan published on 16 June 1946 was related to the formation of an Interim government at the Centre. After accepting the plan on 16 June 1946, a twelve-member cabinet under the leadership of the Congress President Jawaharlal Nehru was sworn in on 2nd September 1946 and Rajendra Babu was inducted as the Minister of Agriculture and Food.

After becoming the Prime Minister of the Interim Government, Nehru had to leave the post of Congress President. As per Patel's wish, Acharya J V Kripalani became the President of Meerut Congress. Acharya Kripalani resigned from the post of Congress President on 17 November 1947 due to differences of opinion between the government and the Congress organization. Then Gandhi wanted socialist Jayprakash as president and Nehru wanted Acharya Narendra Dev, but eventually Patel's choice Rajendra Prasad was made Congress president. After some time he resigned from the post of Agriculture and Food Minister.

According to the long-term plan announced on 16 May 1946 and accepted by the Congress, the Constituent Assembly of India sat (in the Central Hall of the Lok Sabha) on 9 December 1946. Nehru wanted N GopalaswamiIyengar to be made its permanent chairman, but ultimately Patel's choice RajendraBabu was elected permanent chairman. On 15 August 1947, power was handed over to the Government of India by the British Government, which was transferred to the President of the Sovereign Constituent Council of India. At 12 o'clock in the midnight of 15th August, Rajendra Prasad proposed that the Viceroy should be informed that - (1) the Constituent Assembly of India has assumed the authority of India, (2) the Constituent Assembly of India has accepted the recommendation that Lord Mountbatten

should not be the Viceroy but only the Governor-General with effect from August 15, 1947, and (3) this message should be conveyed to Mountbatten by the Speaker and Jawaharlal Nehru.

The work of the Constituent Assembly started on 11 December 1946 and was completed and passed on 24 January 1950. Dr Rajendra Prasad had received the blessings of Sardar Patel for the nomination of the first President of independent India, but Nehru wanted the then Governor General Chakravarti Rajagopalachari to get this responsibility. Patel could have agreed if it had been handled efficiently. But Sardar Patel changed his mind for two reasons. Firstly, Rajendra Babu was the choice of most of the members of the Party. The members of the Constituent Assembly did not forget the incident during Quit India Movement when Rajendra Babu went to jail but Raja was pleading for reconciliation with British Raj and Muslim League.

When the Chief Whip S N Sinha, quipped that the members of the Constituent Assembly were of the view that without Patel, Nehru could not make Raja the President, Nehru tried to prove that he would do so on his own. He wrote to Rajendra Babu that he had spoken to Sardar Patel and he agreed that the present system should be continued i.e. Governor General Raja should be allowed to become the President, whereas in reality Nehru has no talk with Patel on this issue. Both Rajendra Babu and Nehru met Patel in Mumbai. Later in the party meeting also it seemed that Nehru would obviously lose, but handling the matter, Patel told Nehru that after his return from London, an appropriate decision would be taken on this issue. Writing a letter to Patel that night, Nehru threatened to resign if Raja did not become the President. Nehru continued his campaign to get Rajendra Babu out of the field; but Rajendra Babu, blessed by Patel, remained adamant. Sensing Patel's choice, the wishes of the members and the adverse situation, Raja announced his withdrawal from the field.

Finally, on 24 January 1946, Dr Rajendra Prasad was elected unanimously by the Constituent Assembly and became the first President of the Republic of India on 26 January 1950. Praising Patel's confidence on the issue, Raja commented. "It is the victory of versed Patel and the defeat of the hasty Nehru". After retiring from the post of President on 3 May 1962, he came to Sadaqat Ashram, Patna. He took the last breath of his life on 28 February 1963. The traditions and constitutional conventions upheld by Rajendra Babu as the President of the Republic of India are the biggest contributors to the stability of the Republic of India. Dressed in Khaddar from bottom to top, physique like a country farmer, humble eyes, chubby moustache - Rajendra Babu, the epitome of such proud gentleness, will always be an example to the Indian masses.

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Progressing J&K PMKVY projects preserving, reviving Namda craft of Kashmir

Namda project to benefit more than 2,000 persons in 30 clusters

The Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) 3.0 and its component; Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for upskilling of artisans and weavers of Kashmir is tremendously helping in preserving and revival of Namda craft of Kashmir. The Namda project will benefit more than two thousand persons of 30 Namda Clusters from six districts of Kashmir (Srinagar, Baramulla, Ganderbal, Bandipora, Budgam and Anantnag) and RPL initiative targets to upskill around eleven thousand artisans and weavers of Jammu and Kashmir. Namda craft is a rug made of sheep woolthrough felting technique instead of normal weaving process.

Earlier the export of this craft had

declined and Central Government through this special project under PMKVY, of Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) has designed short-term training curriculum to preserve this endangered craft. The project is being implemented in 25 batches in 3 cycles of training. Each training program is of approximately three and half months, which results in the cycles being completed in approximately 14 - 16 months.

The Namda project will be an industry-based training program with beneficiaries involved in Namda Crafts Production who will contribute towards preserving and reviving the rich heritage associated with Namda craft in Kashmir. This will also improve the access of existing artisans of

Namda crafts cluster in Kashmir and will improve their prospects of employability. The objective of these projects is to boost and preserve the traditional Namda craft of Kashmir and upskill the local weavers and artisans to enhance their productivity through RPL assessment and certification.

The vision of the central Government is to revive and promote traditional and heritage skills and to give artisans support to make them economically sustainable. Government is also offering artisans exposure to the international markets so that the world becomes aware of vibrant culture of Kashmir. The project was launched after artisans of J&K sought support to boost the local economy through cus-

tomised skill training programmes. This prompted the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship to come up with this programme in a bid to meet the economic aspirations of the local youth and take them on the path of development.

The programme will also focus on skilling, up-skilling and re-skilling of local youth to create a ladder of career progression and make them strong pillars of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat. Central Government is also facilitating the increasing export and making artisans financially independent by boosting the traditional art and is working with a laser focus towards J&K's development.