

## BJP GOVT IN J&amp;K

The statements coming from local BJP leadership in the UT of J&K hinting that the next government in the region will be of their party has some very solid reasons. To make this assertion a reality, all those who matter in the party have started asking the cadre to gear up for the polls by disseminating information about achievements and plans of BJP among the masses as much has been accomplished by the party in J&K for ensuring a bright future for the people belonging to all shades of the life. It has been observed that all the party stalwarts in the UT are reiterating that the next Chief Minister will be from BJP. The way the BJP has been striving in the country, there is no instance when any statement has been made by its leadership without a strong basis thus making it amply clear that BJP will ensure numbers to install its Chief Minister since Home Minister Amit Shah has given indication that within six-eight months after the completion of Delimitation Process, the elections will be held. Already political activities have become day to day norm and different parties have started moving within the electorate to convince them that they are the best. The BJP has many strong points in the J&K to sway people to come and join the party's stride in making India a developed country with new industries and investments becoming new norm in the UT of J&K. It is likely that Election Commission of India will sound the bugle by issuing the schedule as the onus of conducting the polls actually lies on the shoulders of ECI. No doubt the party cadre will have to work hard as conventional path cannot bring the desired outcome, the party is likely to hold rallies and public meetings to mobilize its entire workforce to get a resounding majority in the upcoming Assembly polls. The PDP and NC have seen some problems in the past with many stalwart leaving their parties to find place in BJP making the assertion of BJP leadership convincing. Although in politics no one can predict things will precise accuracy but the idea floated by BJP leadership can be realized by the cadre through hard work and sincerity.

## ACT AGAINST DEFAULTERS

The large numbers of government employees who have reportedly failed to submit property return details despite extension given in the last date to file the same means that there is something fishy and that is why employees are showing inhibition in filing property returns. The government work force is accountable and cannot simply refuse to divulge the aforesaid information therefore government should take steps to have complete knowledge about the property owned by the government staff and if anything hanky-panky comes to fore strict action should be taken to give a lesson to others not to indulge in delinquency. It is good that the government has decided to give the last and final opportunity to the defaulting workforce as employees can now submit details through online mode on the Property Returns System (PRS Portal) from March 22 to 28. It is pertinent to mention that in December last year, government issued detailed instructions to all the employees to register themselves on the PRS Portal and subsequently file their Annual Property Returns for the year 2021 necessarily, on the portal from January 1 upto January 31. As the response was poor, the government gave another chance to employees for submitting property returns till February 15, 2022 but despite passing of this date a large number of employees are still away from the aforesaid portal showing reluctance towards giving the aforesaid details. Another thing which has been reportedly noticed by the government is that some employees registered themselves but not shared property details thus joining the group of defaulters. It is intriguing that despite knowing the fact that failure/non-submission of the Property Returns by the Government employees invites a punitive action under the provisions of the Jammu and Kashmir Public Men and Public Servants Declaration of Assets Act and Rules made thereunder, the employees are not cooperating thus raising a doubt over their status with regard to possession of property. This should be taken very seriously and the government should show no delinquency in this regard because who knows that rampant corruption may be the reason behind employees hiding their details because if they file the property details, the disproportionate assets case can be filed against them and that will be more embarrassing for them.



## Life is a Balancing Act!

Life is a long journey of ups and downs, trials & tribulations, and agonies & ecstasies-but the ultimate key is to maintain your joy and inner peace in all situations. When things are in their favour and go according to their wish, people feel happy, but even a small adversity makes them profoundly sad. Understand that life is a balancing act wherein harmony is important in whatever you do. Some days can give you reasons to smile while others, reasons to be worried as well. Try to know how to bring balance to them and stay joyful in all situations.

Never Run Aimlessly!

There could be various factors determining a person's happiness or sadness in life, and therefore, people run day & night to maintain these factors in their life -be it health, wealth, relationships, work-life balance, etc. In this endeavour, some get successful while some not. But learn to be independent so that you are in control of your happiness. Some people, moreover, run their whole life, yet fail to reach anywhere that can give them a sense of true happiness. They keep moving in a limited circle and spend their whole life within that circle only. They fail to accomplish anything worthwhile. This happens because most people run aimlessly and that is a futile exercise. So, before starting your journey towards success, sit and reflect for

By: SS Maharej

Climbing to the top demands strength, whether it is to the top of Mount Everest or to the top of your career.

A. P. J. Abdul Kalam

## EDITORIAL

## Entrepreneurship development through mushroom cultivation

■ DR BANARSI LAL & ADARSH GUPTA

The agriculture, which is an engine of growth and development and a significant contributor to national economy, has been greatly influenced by the process of globalisation. There is a matter great concern about imbalance of total production, the urban-rural divide, national food security and economic access to food. The agricultural strategy in the country seeks to bridge the product and production gaps. The policy envisages promotion of sustainable agriculture through a regionally differentiated approach, improvement in the input use efficiency, development and transfer of technology. There is a need to focus on technology generation and its application in different agro-ecological or social circumstances. The recent trends in consumer behaviour surges the demand for high quality niche products and forces the agricultural sector to step up and adopt the technically, commercially and economically viable agribusiness solutions.

Mushrooms are the fleshy-to-tough structures which are the part of the reproductive phase of a certain group of fungi. Mushroom cultivation was started in the 16th century but on a commercial scale it was started in Europe in 17th century and many farms for the mushroom production were established. India with the diverse climate conditions and abundant agricultural wastes has been producing the mushroom from the last four decades. Commercial mushroom cultivation in India has been started and growing mushroom under controlled condition is of recent origin. Its popularity is increasing day by day and it has become a business which is export-oriented. Today mushroom cultivation has been taken up commercially in states like Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan, etc. (during winter months) while earlier it was confined to Himachal Pradesh, J&K and other hilly areas. Mushroom is an excellent source of proteins, vitamins, carbohydrates, fibers, minerals, folic acid and is a good source of iron for anemic patients and is described as one of the best options to convert agro-wastes into quality proteins. Mushroom can be taken by the diabetic and heart patients as it has low calorific value. Mushrooms are of different types: a) Button Mushroom (Agrius bisporus) b) Dhingri (Pleurotus) c) Milky mushroom (Calocybe indica). Of all the types, button mushroom is the most popular one (85 per cent). Mushroom cultivation can be done at cottage and small-scale levels besides large-scale farming. Mushroom cultivation provides option for income and employment generation especially for the educated youths and women without any major arable resources. China claims to grow 60 types of mushrooms and the reported production of all mushrooms was around 70 per cent of world production.

Mushroom cultivation in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir was started in 1964 by the Department of Agriculture, Lalmandi, Srinagar and work on edible fungi was taken by RRL at Srinagar. Presently more than 600 tons of mushrooms are

being produced annually in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. There is an immense scope for round the year mushroom cultivation in Jammu region because of diverse agro-climatic conditions and availability of raw material. The farmers are showing keen interest in mushroom cultivation because mushroom cultivation generates more income as compared to other crops. The three types of mushrooms vary in their shape, size, colour and biochemical composition. Earlier only the button mushroom was grown but now oyster and milky mushrooms are also grown in J&K. In Reasi district of J&K a special joint effort is being made by the NABARD, KVK Reasi, an esteemed NGO 'We Care Society', Department of Agriculture and NRIIM to promote oyster mushroom in the district. National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has financially sponsored a programme for skill development of 100 farmers in district Reasi to train farmers' in Oyster Mushroom Cultivation. All the technical support, inputs, marketing facilities, management practices etc. were provided to the farmers by the concerned organisations. This enterprise is now able to generate more income especially among the farm women.

The main consumers of mushrooms are food restaurant, hotels, clubs and households. Mushrooms are mostly sold through vegetable shops. The growing domestic and export market as also the delicacy and food value provides extensive and good potential for cultivation of mushroom. Marketing is an individual affair and the marketing channels are very limited. The seasonal growers do not have cooperatives. There is demand for opening the market outlets but this is feasible only when there is ample mushroom production. Mushrooms have perishable nature and this is the reason that the trade of mushrooms is limited. The canned mushrooms can be kept for a long time and can be transported in a better way. China, India and Indonesia are three most important mushroom exporting countries in the world. Initially there were very few quality strains of mushroom. Presently Krishivigyan Kendras (KVKs) of State Agricultural Universities (SAUs) and Horticultural Boards are playing a crucial role in popularizing mushroom cultivation among the farmers. Spawns are available in the Directorate of Agriculture and State Agricultural Universities (SAUs). If desired, the same can be produced and sold commercially. There are two methods of composting for mushroom cultivation. One is long method and another is short method. Short method requires less time but it is costly. Most of the growers still use the long method for the compost making which leads to the poor yield and also requires indiscriminate use of chemicals. There is need to diversify and popularize different types of mushrooms and go for multifunctional use of mushroom tunnels. These tunnels should not only be used for pasteurizing straw for button but can also be used for pasteurizing straw for oyster, milky and button mushrooms cultiva-

tion. This will help in product diversification and there will be less use of power. Oyster mushroom is very easy to cultivate and rural women can easily cultivate it to increase their income.

In long method 7-8 turns at regular intervals are required for a period of 28 days. Good compost is dark-brown, ammonia free, little greasiness and having 65-70 per cent moisture. Mushroom seed is said to be spawn which is white in colour. It should be free from any disease and insect-pests. Before spawning the surface should be washed with 2 per cent formalin. For mixing spawn with compost any of the three procedures can be followed: (i) Compost is divided into equal layers and spawns spread in each layer. Result is spawning in different layers. (ii) 3 to 5 cm of compost is remixed, spawns spread and covered with compost. (iii) Spawns are mixed with compost and pressed. A bottle of spawns is good enough for 35 Kg of compost spread over 0.75 Sq mt area (about 2 trays). That is, spawns to compost ratio is 0.5 per cent. Trays are then arranged in tiers in the cropping room and covered with newspapers. 2 per cent formalin is sprinkled over them. Desired room temperature should be around 18 degree C with 95 per cent humidity. Spawns are covered with suitable material is said to be casing. It helps to convert vegetative phase into reproductive phase. Besides temperature and humidity mentioned above, proper room ventilation should be ensured. After casing mushroom bags should be kept moistened. Mushrooms prop up in 30-35 days. These fungal fruit bodies appear in flushes and harvested when buttons are tightly closed. In a cropping cycle of 8-10 weeks an average yield of 10 kg mushroom/sq. meter is feasible. Cropped mushrooms can be packed for marketing. Technical training and assistance can be taken from: (a) Krishivigyan Kendras (KVKs) of State Agricultural Universities (SAUs) (b) Rashtriya Anusandhan Evansh Prashikshan Kendra, Chambaghat, Solan (HP). (c) Regional Research Lab, Jorhat, Assam. (d) Central Food Technology Research Institute, Cheluvamba Mansion, Mysore etc. Raw materials should be procured preferably from local areas.

It has been observed that the mushrooms are having good demand in the market. Mushrooms cultivation requires awareness on modern production technology and health benefits, product diversification, better transportation with cold chain facilities, cooperatives, incorporation of mushroom in Indian food habits, introduction of mushrooms in mid-day meal scheme in schools and dissemination of information for scientific mushrooms cultivation through electronic media.

There is ample scope of integrating mushroom farming in existing integrated farming system. There is need of more value addition methods of mushrooms for the mushroom growers and more trade and marketing network is needed for its growers.

(The writers are Head, KVK Reasi (SKUAST-J) and DDM, NABARD, Reasi.)

## Transforming J&amp;K

## ODOP: Manifestation of PM's vision towards fostering balanced regional development

Jammu and Kashmir government launched centrally sponsored initiative 'One District One Product' (ODOP) under PM Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME) scheme, a component of Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan (ABA) to boost micro food processing industrial sector in the UT.

The ODOP scheme was introduced in 2020 by the Center government to boost traditionally produced perishable indigenous products with their promotion and export as well. The aim of launching this ambitious scheme was to foster balanced regional development, enable holistic socio-economic growth, boost exports and encourage investment. This innovative initiative is generating enhanced employment opportunities, creating an ecosystem that promotes success and encourage local producers to go global. This scheme is also complementing the existing promotional efforts of the government through Agriculture Crop Clusters, Agriculture Export Policy and National Rural Mission.

PMFME, being implemented with the central funding of 60 per cent and state funding of 40 per cent, is working tremendously towards strengthening unorganized micro food processing units besides promoting formalization of the sector. As per the scheme, existing micro food processing enterprises as well as new enterprises will be provided financial support on an individual basis for strengthening the infrastructure of the existing units and other related aspects of their enterprises.

Under the scheme, a micro food processing unit may secure 35 per cent or up to Rs 10 lakh subsidy besides 50 per cent subsidy will be provided for marketing. In addition, support for bank credit will also be provided to the units under the scheme. In J&K, the initiative has immensely helped the government to identify products with export potential in the district and address bottlenecks for exporting these products. The initiative is also encouraging the local exporters and manufacturers to scale up their production and find poten-

tial buyers outside India with the help of government.

J&K government is also working on partnering with e-commerce platforms and large e-commerce players to support rural artisans and farmers in leveraging web-based sales through dedicated storefronts for ODOP. The UT department of Agriculture Production and Farmers Welfare has identified district-wise priority agriculture produce for development under the Micro Food Processing Enterprise scheme with special focus on region specific Basmati Rice, Saffron, Apple, Walnut, Maize, Organic Vegetables, Mushroom, Lavender, Trout and Rajnash among others. Taking into consideration the feedback received from various stakeholders, the J&K administration has selected Jammu for dairy products; Rajouri and Kathua for spices; Poonch for mutton and poultry processing; Kishtwar as well as Doda for walnut processing; Ramban for honey processing; Udhampur for pickles and J&K Reasi for organic vegetables and Samba for mushroom for coverage under ODOP initiative.

Similarly, the government has chosen Anantnag for TroutFish; Pulwama for saffron; Shopian for apple; Kulgam for apple and spices; Srinagar for flowers; Budgam for exotic vegetables; Baramulla for dairy products; Kupwara for walnut; Ganderbal for honey and Bandipora for processed poultry and mutton for coverage under ODOP scheme. The ODOP initiative is aimed at manifesting the vision of Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, to foster balanced regional development across all districts of the country. The idea is to select, brand and promote one product from each district of the country for enabling holistic socioeconomic growth across all regions. It also aims to attract investment in the district, boost manufacturing and exports as well as generate employment in the district. It is also aimed to provide an ecosystem for use of latest technologies at the district level to make them competitive with domestic as well as international markets.

around them are provided for sufficiently to allow the perpetuation of the human race. Of course, there are some hiccups in the form of immorality that cause failures in achieving these objectives smoothly. When brought to light, a wave of disgruntlement arises to foul mouth those who point them out. Oscar Wilde puts this beautifully in 'The Picture of Dorian Gray' where he writes, "The books that the world calls immoral are books that show the world its own shame." Many writers of yesteryears like Ismat Chughtai and Saadat Hassan Manto and even those of our time were and are persecuted for uncovering society's false veil of piety and exposing the filth accumulated underneath. They hold the mirror that reflects truth yet we are not willing to learn our lessons. They tell us exactly what we look like then why do we, as a society, hesitate to confront ourselves with reality? The idea is to learn about them and resolve the detrimental issues. In other words, we need to face the truth and stop shoving dirt under the carpet. We fail to realize the mischief that we perpetuate the moment we deliberately or inadvertently commit an immoral deed. They say that it takes many lies to justify one lie. Just one act can trigger off a chain of events capable of unleashing many complications some of which may not even have any solutions. For example, a trader desirous of minting money decides to adulterate the food items he sells. What will happen? There are ample chances that this impurity, being harmful may cause health hazards to consumers. The well-off may seek medical help but the poor may not be so fortunate resulting in the suffering of a formidable community leading to all sorts of perversions where to look for remedies people may indulge in social vices. Again, a lot also depends upon the morality of some medical practitioners who may exploit the rich patient to an irritating degree making him spend a fortune on treatments.

These days, India is confronted with a lot of political activism at the hands of opposition parties. Many questions regarding morality crop up in the mind of a person who is

Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, while talking about different initiatives launched by J&K administration for development of industrial sector, said, "We are enhancing people's access to financial products, promoting One District One Product, institutional credit to women, youth, SMEs, handicrafts, horticulture and various other priority sectors." Recently, Pashupati Kumar Paras, Union Minister for Food Processing Industries, unveiled six brands including Kashmiree chilli, as part of 'One District-One Product' (ODOP) strategy under centrally sponsored scheme PMFME.

The central scheme PMFME seeks to offer financial, technical and business assistance for up-gradation and establishment of two lakh micro food processing units based on ODOP method during a five-year period from 2020-21 to 2024-25, with a budget allocation of Rs.10,000 crore. J&K administration, capturing the essence of Kulgam, Jammu and Kashmir's spices, made the Kashmiree Lal Mirch product a part of ODOP component for spices in Jammu and Kashmir. The Department of Commerce is focusing on agriculture crops on a cluster approach to support exports under the Agriculture Export Policy and the Ministry of Agriculture is also focusing on a cluster approach for development of specific agriculture products in districts having a comparative advantage. The ODOP approach of the scheme would lead to easing in providing common facilities and other support services.

Popular universities like IIT, IIM and NIFT are all being roped in the project so as to achieve better productivity, improve the supply chain and have minimalist technology without disturbing the traditional ecosystem. In a significant achievement, Jammu and Kashmir administration has gained tremendous success in trade facilitation for walnuts and apples under the ODOP Initiative at the recently held Dubai Expo 2020.

objectively observing these developments. In the first place, what is the significance of the constitution of a country if an elected government is not allowed to work in peace? Is it not the moral duty of the elected government to abide by its election manifesto and refrain from deviating from the promises it set to lure public to vote for it? Besides, in all the chances they earlier had, how did they fare better than him? The fact is that many miseries the country is infested with are because of their doings.

Under the prevailing bleak economic conditions, it would be interesting to see how, if the opposition gets hold of power, it can turn around the fate of this country. Intriguingly, before taking the oath of prime minister, PM Modi was very optimistic about putting his aspirations for the country in action but when he got the opportunity to look into reality, he was probably shocked. Perhaps the health of the economy was not quite clear in his mind, which led him to take one summersault decision after another and in doing so he lost track of all his original plans. This is where it is very crucial to strongly hold onto the figurative mirror. Had he closely looked into it through the eyes of those who held it out to him, he may have thought twice before accepting this high position. Politics sans morality, is not an easy game. The lucrative seat of power is actually quite specious more so when surrounded by amoral opportunists, ready to pounce upon the first available chance to promote their immorality. For the people, it is time to ponder upon making correct judgements before casting their votes. There is a need to come to terms with morality in its true sense and consciously adhere to it in all fields of life because as George Orwell said, "Political language...is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind." Society and people must purposefully see their reflections in the moral mirror if they are sincere in providing a good and clean future for their children.

Mool Raj

## YOUR COLUMN

## Reflections in moral mirror

Dear Editor,

"It's discouraging to think how many people are shocked by honesty and how few by deceit." -Noel Coward (Blithe Spirit). Morality has been perhaps one of the most debated and researched subjects. The battle between right and wrong, and acceptable and despicable behaviour has been going on for ages. Divine religions stressed the importance of good versus evil relating them to rewards and punishments and the ultimate destination of either heaven or hell depending on one's actions. In addition to that, some brilliant persons of knowledge have expounded their ideas about morals that have emerged in the form of theories succinctly presented in an article Moral Theory by John McMillan PhD. Although he enumerates and explains briefly the concept of morality as understood by different theorists, his specific area of concern is the type of reasoning adopted by medical practitioners to arrive at certain conclusions. Among these are popular ones like Utilitarianism, Kantian Ethics and Deontology, Virtue Theory, etc. The question here is: Can morality be taught and if it is widely propagated then why do people indulge in immoral acts? The lucrative seat of power is actually quite specious more so when surrounded by amoral opportunists, ready to pounce upon the first available chance to promote their immorality. The generally accepted notion is that people are moralists. If this was not the position, societies would have degenerated so fast that survival for humans could become challenging even to the extent of their extinction. The fact that the majority of the people in the world are leading normal lives is on account of their desire to live and let live, to observe those standards that would enable them to sustain a reasonably happy life, to ensure that those