

## CONSUMER PROTECTION

Exploitation of consumers assumes numerous forms such as adulteration of food, spurious drugs, dubious hire purchase plans, high prices, poor quality, deficient services, deceptive advertisements, hazardous products, black marketing and many more. In addition, with revolution in information technology newer kinds of challenges are thrown on the consumer like cyber crimes, plastic money etc. In addressing consumer protection, governments should enact and enforce laws, establish regulatory oversight, implement product standards, and provide effective redress mechanisms. These measures aim to ensure transparency, safety, ultimately fostering trust and enhancing consumer welfare.

## The future of music and entertainment

■ SURJIT SINGH FLORA

Before the digital, social media and internet phase, showing off your cassette collection used to be a big deal. In the 90s, the cassette player was a part of almost everyone's life. Songs of Surinder Shinda, K. Deep, Jagmohan Kaur, Kuldeep Manak, Gurdas Maan, Yamal Jatt etc. were usually heard in trucks, buses, cars. Before that, there were stone records, which later came to be plastic. When playing cassettes, they become so worn that they start to get stuck or break, which can be attached with ordinary glue by moving it around with a pencil. After the addition, the fun of listening to the songs became a little rough because from where the addition was made, the song would speed up and make a very bad sound, which spoiled the juice of the ears. Many of us became very good at rewinding tapes with a pencil, and some even became experts at carefully cutting off a bad piece of tape with a blade and then cutting a strip of Scotch tape to reassemble the rest. was That cassette player also had an AM and FM radio, which had a small, visible antenna that stretched out after opening the layers. Then we kept turning it, sometimes to the right and sometimes to the left, forward and sometimes backward, until his voice became clear:

There was a collection of cassettes in the houses. Homes had a growing collection of cassettes, sometimes reaching large shelves in the living room. It was common practice to place a microphone in front of the cassette player and play the speaker on the barn at weddings, etc. According to time, first CDs and then DVDs came into the market. Old radios and cassette players began to disappear. CD players also entertained people for a few years but soon the digital age started changing things rapidly. Now all the music and movies are put on a stick, which you can listen to at home, in the car or on the phone wherever you want. Along with this, smart phones and smart watches came, which ate everything from stone records to CD players.

There is still a market for collectors. However, there is still a niche market for cassette players and tapes among collectors, enthusiasts and some musicians who appreciate the vintage sound and aesthetics. Additionally, there is a resurgence of releasing music in the format of cassette tapes. Not as a whole, but cassette players and tapes continue to exist in some societies. In fact, the cassette is making a comeback in some circles and is going through a bit of a renaissance as an accessory to the revival of vinyl records. There are bands releasing new music on cassette. The importance of cassette tapes in the context of human culture has become more.

## A world that often seems divided

In an ideal world, the values of kindness and consideration would guide our interactions, leading to the resolution or reduction of many of the challenges we currently encounter. The prevalence of challenges such as conflicts over religion, greed, jealousy, and revenge in society cannot be denied. These issues continue to plague our communities, causing division and hindering progress. Whether it is the clash of different religious beliefs, the insatiable desire for wealth, the destructive force of envy, or the destructive cycle of seeking vengeance, these challenges pose significant obstacles to the well-being and harmony of our society. It is crucial that we acknowledge and address these issues head-on, fostering understanding, empathy, and compassion in order to build a more peaceful and equitable world. Only by confronting these challenges can we hope to create a society that is truly inclusive and just for all. Throughout history, the repercussions of negative human traits have been abundantly clear; with wars and conflicts serving as stark reminders. In order to tackle these pressing issues, it is imperative for both individuals and communities to actively advocate for and uphold values such as empathy, cooperation, and tolerance. The concept of advocating for a universal "religion of humanity" or fostering a collective sense of brotherhood is undeniably commendable. It is crucial to acknowledge the fact that individuals possess a wide range of beliefs, backgrounds, and perspectives. In a world that is becoming increasingly interconnected, it is crucial to recognize the power of unity and understanding. While a collective dedication to humanity and shared values can undoubtedly bridge numerous divides, it is equally essential to honor and appreciate the unique qualities and cultural diversity that each individual brings to the table. By embracing both our commonalities and our differences, we can foster a more inclusive and harmonious society. Encouraging empathy and kindness is a crucial endeavor that should begin with each individual. However, it is equally important for educational institutions, communities, and governments to actively participate in fostering these values. By working together, we can create a society that prioritizes empathy and kindness, ultimately leading to a more compassionate and harmonious world. In today's tumultuous times, it is crucial for leaders and influential figures to recognize the power they hold in shaping society. Instead of perpetuating division and discord, they should strive to be beacons of unity and inspiration. By setting positive examples, these individuals can foster a sense of togetherness and encourage others to follow suit. In a world that often seems divided, it is imperative that those in positions of influence use their platforms to promote unity and bridge the gaps that separate us.

(The writer is a veteran journalist and freelance writer based in Brompton).

## I salute Jammu Dogras

■ PROF HARI OM

I salute Jammu Dogras. Each time they fought, they won splendidly.

Examples: Article 370 diluted before August 5, 2019.

In 1998, they, including students and Jammu University teachers, fought and got Agriculture University, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University and Singhal Committee which recommended that all the seats available in Jammu based technical and professional institutions shall be the sole preserve of Jammu youth. Great Prof DK Rampal was member of the Singhal Committee.

Sad, Jammu leaders did nothing to get the Singhal Report implemented.

In 1967-68, 4 Dogra students sacrificed their precious lives and Jammu got Jammu University of Jammu in 1969.

In 2010, Dogra students and JJSF leadership fought for and got Central University.

In 2015, Dogras of Jammu fought for and got AIIMS.

Sad, so-called Dogra leaders consistently defeated them for the sake of personal power and profit and today, they do not deserve to be called even small time politicians.

The fact of the matter is that the Jammu Dogra leaders were not political persons; they were rank politicians incapable of feeling the Dogra pulse.

When will they.....?

# Azolla: Nutritious Feed for Livestock

■ DR. BANARSI LAL AND SH.ADARSH GUPTA

The word Azolla has been derived from two words i.e.'Azo' means dry and 'Ollya' means to kill. Thus, Azolla means the property of a fern that would be killed by drought. It is a free floating, fastly growing aquatic fern on the surface of water. It belongs to the Azollaceae family and Azolla genus. It resembles with the mosses or duckweed. It is also called as the water fern, duckweed fern or fairy moss. Its native place is said to be Asia, Africa and America. It has high nitrogen fixing ability. It floats on the surface of water with roots hanging underneath. It has small leaves which overlap each other. The leaves are water repellent, green in colour, sometimes red in colour. It is also called as the super plant because of its rapid speed of growing and doubling of its biomass within 2-3 days. Presently this plant has at least six species but Azolla Pinnata is mostly found in Asia. A.filiculoides, A.nilotica, A.caroliniana, A.maxicana and A.microphylla are some of its species. Each species has different fond size and colour. Red coloured Azolla is considered as the resistant to high salinity, purple is resistant to acidity and green is resistant to high temperature. The size of its leaf is 1-2 cm and its root is also 1-2 cm. The fern has sporophytic cycle. The environmental factors can alter its nutritive value. Because of its high nutritive value it is used as the feed for livestock (for dairy animals, poultry and sheep and goat).Dried Azolla has crude protein, fibre, calcium, phosphorus, nitrogen free extract, lysine, ash, cystine and methionine. It also helps in nitrogen fixation. It lives with the blue green algae which fixes atmospheric nitrogen for the rapid plant growth. It can be used to grow the organic paddy. The symbiosis of Anabaena Azolla is estimated to produce 1 tonne of green manure each day from one hectare of land. It contains 3Kg of fixed nitrogen which is equal to 15 Kg of Ammonium Sulphate or 7Kgs of urea. Dry Azolla contains 3-5 per cent of nitrogen. The colour of Azolla does not indicate its nitrogen content. Both red and green Azolla contains almost the equal nitrogen.

Azolla is an excellent alternative to concentrates/fodder/feed thereby providing a sustainable feed for livestock. Azolla can be grown under wild and controlled environmental conditions. It has the ability to fix the nitrogen. It helps to solubilize ele-

## Ups & downs of Power Politics in Bihar-II

■ ER. PRABHAT KISHORE

Congress returned to power in the Mid-term Bihar Assembly election in 1980 and Dr. Jagannath Mishra (08.06.1980 to 14.08.1983), became the CM for the second time. Mishra's worst functioning angered the Congress high command and Chandrashekhar Singh, a Rajput (14.08.1983 to12.03.1985) was made the CM. The general election in 1985 was fought under Singh's leadership and the Congress returned to power; but surprisingly he was stepped down and State Congress President Bindeshwari Dube, a Brahmin, was blessed as the CM (12.03.1985 to13.02.1988) by the Party high-command. Dubeji has full support of the MLAs, but Congress High Command pressurized him to resign and a new face,Bhagwat Jha Azad, a Brahmin, (14.02.1988 to 10.03.1989), was made the CM.

In the meantime, V.P. Singh started his activities against Bofors Scam & corruption and lateron Socialists also joined him. To counter V.P. Singh in the coming the Vidhan Sabha election, the Rajput leader Satyendra Narayan Sinha (11.03.1989 to 06.12.1989) was made the CM, his long awaited dream. He tried his best to implement the popular welfare schemes and to sort out unemployment issues. But in V.P. Singh wave, the Congress loose in Lok Sabha election and Satyendra Sinha was stepped down. Dr. Jagannath Mishra (06.12.1989 to 10.13.1990), who had the image of a corrupt politician in the public, was again made the CM. Dr. Mishra hampered all those popular ongoing works, which were of no personal benefit. Corruption has reached the highest level ever since independence. In the 1990 general election of Vidhan Sabha, Janata Dal came to power and the Congress was ousted forever.

In 1990, there was direct fight for leadership in Janata Dal between Devilal supported Laloo Prasad and V.P. Singh supported Ram Sunder Das. Das had an edge over Laloo, but at the last moment Chadrashekhar supported Raghunath Jha jumped into fray spurring some upper caste MLAs, who were loyal to Dasji. Nitish Kumar and Sharad Yadav were instrumental in favour of Laloo Prasad, a Yadav, who was elected leader and sworn in as the CM (10.03.1990 to 25.07.1997). Due to technical reason President's Rule was in force since 28.03.1995 to 4.5.1995. For his involvement in Fodder Scam, Laloo Prasad had no way other than to step down. Laloo surprised everyone, when he put forward his house-wife Rabri Devi for the post of CM. Rabri Devi was elected the leader of the legislative party and in its history, Bihar saw its first women CM (27.7.1997 to 2.3.2002). Although, for short time President's Rule have been imposed since 11.02.1999 to 9.3.1999.

In the general election of 2000, no single party secured majority. Governor Vinod Narayan Pandey invited Nitish Kumar, a Kurni, (3.3.2000 to 10.3.2000) to form the government, but he could not succeed to gather majority mark and resigned within 7 days. Rabri Devi was once again sworn in as the CM with the support of the Congress, whose all legislatures got ministerial berth and

ments like iron, zinc, manganese etc. and make available to paddy plants. It suppresses the weed present in the crop. It releases the plant growth regulators and vitamins to support the plant growth. It can be used as a substitute of chemical fertilizers and is useful for organic farming. It reduces the water evaporation in the farming area. It increases the fertilizers use efficiency. It is cheaply and readily available. It can be grown easily in the farming area. It helps to balance the carbon dioxide cycle. In order to make the Azolla unit firstly we have to select the land. Then there should be adequate amount of water and land should have shade otherwise shade needs to be maintained. The site should not contain stones or thorns. The size of Azolla unit can be made according to its need. Generally a pond size of 6x4 ft. can produce 1Kg of Azolla each day for one year. The land should be leveled and cleaned. The pond can be created with the bricks, cement and sand or it can be made by raising the embankbanks by evacuating the soil. The area should be covered by the durable polythene sheet which should be secured by the bricks from all the sides so as to avoid the effect of air on the sides. The sheet should not contain any hole to avoid leakage of water. Wooden poles or bamboo sticks can be installed around the pond to support the shade net. Azolla is propagated vegetatively .It is difficult to preserve the species in very cool or very hot temperatures. Azolla can be preserved in the winter by placing it in a pit with 25 cm of water and covering it with the plastic sheet to keep it air tight. During winters kit should not be touched or transported otherwise it will die. Azolla is grown by the two methods. One is to grow in nurseries and then sow them in the paddy fields for further propagation and second is to grow independently over a large areas as a green manure crop.

It produces more than 4 to 5 times of protein of excellent quality in comparison to lucern and hybrid napier. Besides this, the bio-mass production is almost 4 to 10 times as compared to hybrid napier and lucern, respectively. It is helpful in improving the livestock health in an organic way. It is an excellent alternative source of concentrates, fodder and feed, thus it provides a sustainable feed for livestock. It contains most of the nutrients which are required for all classes of livestock, including poultry and fish. It does not have any

its leader Sadanand Singh was chaired as Vidhan Sabha speaker.

In the general election held in February 2005, no party got a clear majority. Ram Vilas Paswan's Party, LJP was in position of king maker, but he takes "Na Lenge, Na Denge" policy on the question to support any of the two alliances. Rabri Devi had to resign and President's Rule was imposed on 7th March 2005. At last, Ram Vilas's Party broke up and a large chunk of its legislatures joined Nitish's Party JD(U). In the November 2005 election, JD(U)-BJP alliance got an absolute majority and Nitish Kumar (24.11.2005 to 22.05.2014 and 22.02.2015 uptill now) was elected leader of the alliance and sworn in as the CM. In the November 2010 election, JDU-BJP alliance again got landslide majority winning 203 of the total 243 seats and Nitish Kumar continued.

In 2013, during the Goa session of the BJP working committee meeting, the then Gujarat CM Narendra Modi was made the chairman of the Party Campaign committee, with an indication that he would lead the Party (and also NDA !) after the Lok Sabha election. This angered Nitish Kumar and he broke his ties with the BJP and all the ally ministers were dropped. Nitish continue as CM with 118 JDU and 4 independent MLAs; but in the 2014 Lok Sabha general election, his Party lost badly and got just two seats. Taking moral responsibility, he resigned on 17th May 2014 and his surprising choice Jitan Ram Manjhi, a Mushar, was elected as the leader. Manjhi was sworn in as CM on 22nd May 2014. Manjhi had no control over the administration; progress works, initiated by Nitish, slowed down and image of the Party began to deteriorate.

There was a strong demand from the aggrieved legislatures for Nitish to lead the government. Seeing himself in the midstream Manjhi revolted; but with no support in the party, he had to resign on 20 February 2015. On 22 February 2015, Nitish Kumar was sworn in as CM. He had to seek the support of Laloo's Party RJD, having 22 MLAs, as a dozen MLAs of his party stood behind Manjhi. In the November 2015 general election, faced with the four parties NDA, Nitish Kumar joined hands with his close friend-turned-arch rival Laloo Prasad and the Congress to form Maha-Gathbandhan (MG). In the amidst of a tight battle between Narendra Modi and Nitish Kumar, the Maha-Gathbandhan secured 178 seats, while the NDA was shrinked at just 58 seats. As leader of MG, Nitish was sworn in as CM, which was his 5th term in the office.

In 2017, when name of the Deputy CM Tejaswi Yadav, son of Laloo Prasad, figured in corruption case, Nitish advised him to come out of the government until he got a clean cheat; but Tejaswi did not do so and Laloo Prasad started criticizing the CM. To save the image of the government, Nitish Kumar and his Party came out from MG on 26 July 2017. High voltage drama was witnessed throughout the night and BJP supported Nitish, who was sworn in as CM for the 6th time on 27th July 2017 along with BJP and LJP. In the Ministry, Pashupati

adverse effects on the livestock and thus it can be said as the safe food for the animals. It has been observed through various researches that feeding of Azolla to dairy cows increased milk production by 15 to 20%.It also improves the weight of broiler chicken and increased the egg production in egg laying poultry birds. Azolla can be used as an unconventional high potential feed resource for non-ruminants. It can be used as an ideal source of feed for cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, rabbits and fish. It is very rich in proteins, essential amino acids, vitamins(vitamin A, vitamin B12, Beta Carotene), growth promoter intermediaries and minerals including calcium, phosphorous, potassium, ferrous, copper and magnesium. Dry Azolla contains 25-35% protein, 10-15% minerals and 7-10% of amino acids, bioactive substances and biopolymers. It is useful for small, marginal, landless and resource-poor farmers. Rocky and rain fed areas farmers lack the availability of green fodder for livestock and they are incapable for higher investment. They can produce Azolla cheaply at their farms to feed their animals and poultry birds.

In rural areas Azolla units can be established to provide the feed to the livestock, to enhance the soil health and to increase the crop productivity. There is need to create awareness among the farmers about the Azolla. This technology is very cheap and easy and can be adopted by the small and marginal farmers. In Reasi distt.NABARD, Reasi has established Azolla units with close co-ordination of Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Reasi and We Care Society. These units are working excellently and are helpful to increase the income of the farmers. The beneficiaries are from very remote areas of the distt. and they are producing sufficient quantity of Azolla. Presently they are feeding it to their cattle, goat and poultry and reaping very good benefits. The economically weak farmers of Reasi distt. were unable to purchase the quality feed for their animals and poultry. They found Azolla as an excellent feed for their livestock. It is a very successful model and can prove as a boon for the farmers of hilly areas of J&K.

(The writers Dr. Banarsi Lal is Sr. Scientist & Head of KVK, Reasi SKUAST-J and Adarsh Gupta is DDM, NABARD, Branch Reasi).

Kumar Paras, younger brother of Ram Vilas Paswan, was also inducted.

In the 2020 Vidhan Sabha election, there was a close fight between the two alliances NDA (JDU-BJP-HAM-VIP) and MG (RJD-Congress-Communist groups), in which national parties BJP & Congress has grabbed more seats in comparison to the previous elections. In reality, the fight was not "NDA vs MG", but was "Nitish vs All". Nitish Kumar was the solo target of not only opposition and Liquor Mafia, but BJP's core voters and TRP thirsty electronic media channels. The LJP parted ways with the NDA with a solo motto of "Finish Nitish" and fought on seats of JDU only with BJP background candidates. In JDU's constituencies the BJP's upper caste voters aggressively rallied behind the LJP and on some seats MG too to weaken Nitish. Although NDA crossed majority marks of 122, with the BJP securing 74 as against earlier 59 seats; but the JDU was reduced from 71 to only 43 seats due to betrayal of its own ally's core voters. As per the pre-poll strategy, Nitish Kumar, being the leader of the NDA became the 34th CM of Bihar; whose 7th times oath for the highest post is a record in Bihar.

Due to deceit in the election, day to day criticism by BJP leaders and a conspiracy to break up JDU on the tune of Maharashtra, Nitish came out of the NDA and formed Mahagathbandhangovernment on 10th August, 2022 with the support of Lalu Prasad-led RJD &UPA and took oath as CM for the 8th time. Nitish Kumar established his organizational skill at the national level by forming INDIA block of 28 national and regional parties to fight BJP. Opposition parties have a golden opportunity to fight under his non-controversial image and leadership. But the INDIA block failed in timely seat sharing and strategy formulation for the Lok Sabha election, which irked Nitish.

In Bihar, even though Nitish Kumar has announced publicly to contest thenext Vidhan Sabha election under the leadership of Tejaswi Yadav, but Lalu was in hurry to crown Tejaswi as CM by breaking some MLAs of Nitish Party. Such a conspiracy, forced Nitish to reconsider his alliance with Lalu Prasad and ultimately he stepped down from the post of Chief Minister on 28th January 2024 andagain formedthe NDA governmentin Bihar on the same day. Nitish Kumar took oath as CM for the record 9th times. Healso holds the record of serving as the Chief Minister of Bihar for the longest period of over 17 successful years.

There have been numerous ups and downs in the history of power politics in Bihar since independence. But resultant change was the downfall of national parties dominated by upper castes and the upsurgeof regional parties dominated by backward classes. People experimented various Parties, alliances, personalities in the laboratory of election for want of overhauling of the rusty system. Rise and fall of numerous stalwarts and political heavyweights took place. But, time and again, the dream of the People has been shattered, and journey of the democracy is still going on.

(Author is a technocrat & academician).

## YOUR COLUMN

### Salary during suspension period

Dear Editor,

The general rule regarding payment of salary during suspension period is that an employee under suspension draws subsistence allowance pending enquiry. On completion of enquiry, if the employee is found to be guilty of the charges levelled against him, the subsistence allowance paid to him will not be recovered and if the employee is exonerated of the charges, he will be paid the entire salary less the subsistence allowance paid during the period of suspension. Subsistence allowance paid will not be recovered on humanitarian grounds if the employee is found to be guilty. In the case of Anil Kumar Singh v. State of U.P. and others (Neutral Citation: 2024. AHC:45375), the Allahabad High Court has made right observation that the petitioner, working as a Routine Grade Clerk in a government college, cannot be denied salary for suspension for detention in jail in a criminal case since he was absolved of the charges framed against him. "No work, no pay" rule is not applicable when an employee is under detention in jail and subsequently cleared of the charges. This is what the court has observed and it is in line with the principles of natural justice too. The crux of the case is that no departmental inquiry was initiated against the employee after suspension. In this case, the suspension of the employee was revoked only after he was acquitted in the criminal case. Evidently, the employ-

ee in detention has undergone mental agony and the detention for no fault of his own is a blot on his service career. Service conditions in the government departments will be more or less the same in every state. No manual with service conditions can say that an employee who is prevented from discharging his legitimate duties due to administrative reasons or due to the erroneous assumption that the employee was guilty of misconduct is not entitled for his salary with attendant benefits. When an employee is exonerated, the suspension or detention shall be held to have been unjustified. Therefore the denial of salary makes no sense. The management of the College, reeling in the notion 'no work, no pay' has not applied its mind properly. Further, the service conditions clearly stipulate that an employee under compulsory waiting period during the period of transfer shall be entitled for his salary. The compulsory waiting period shall be officially treated as 'duty period'. Employee's leave account will not be debited. The message is clear that an employee is entitled for his salaries during the period he does not work if his abstention is due to the fault of management or for no fault of his own.

K.V. Seetharamaiah

## World Health Day

Dear Editor,

World Health Day is celebrated on the 7th of April every year to emphasize the need to lead a healthy and fulfilling life. Several activities are planned at different places to celebrate this day. It is the World Health Organization

(WHO) that came up with the idea of celebrating World Health Day.

World Health Day was for the first time celebrated worldwide in the year, 1948. It is universal: "Health is Wealth". It is the utmost important aspect of our existence which can't be denied. We all know various types of diseases prevail in the environment due to which people suffer.

World Health Day focuses on and raises awareness around health issues that affect people all over the world. It is necessary to make people aware that health is wealth. We need to recognise that well-being is an essential factor in our lives. Keeping ourselves fit and safe is significant. It will help spread awareness by imparting information about health and fitness to the public, and World Health Day is instrumental in raising people's consciousness. The day brings the public's attention to the relevance of global health. World Health Organisation plans a theme every year, based on which different activities for World Health Day are held. It targets all health-related problems as a day observed at both international and national levels. People should concentrate on eliminating unhealthy habits and behaviour and shift towards a healthier life, especially those who consume medicines for hypertension or other illnesses. We should look at our reformed areas and reflect on how well our well-being can be and can lead our loved ones and us to a well-behaved, safe life. So a big element of Health Day is a balanced lifestyle and a healthier world around you. The theme this year for World Health Day is "My Health, My Right."

Jubel D'Cruz