


KEEP FINGERS CROSSED

As the delimitation exercise has finally come to conclusion, it is time for the people to keep their fingers crossed as anytime from now onwards the Election Commission of India (ECI) can declare the election schedule for the upcoming Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir. It is pertinent to mention that Delimitation Commission has rendered yeoman's service by completing the delimitation exercise in J&K in a short span of time despite number of bottlenecks including the worst ever pandemic COVID-19 that brought life to standstill for about two years in succession. According to the Law Ministry the orders of the Delimitation Commission which redrew the Assembly and Parliamentary Constituencies in Jammu and Kashmir have come into force yesterday and from now onwards the report of the Commission will form the basis of Assembly polls in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. This change paved the way for the Assembly Elections in J&K followed by restoration of statehood as was announced by Home Minister Amit Shah on various occasions. Though several changes have been made in the delimitation exercise, the exact scenario will become clear only after the Assembly elections will be carried out in the UT as different views are being shared by the different political outfits with several criticizing the aforesaid exercise while others supporting the same. It is pertinent to mention that the delimitation panel had given six additional Assembly seats to Jammu region and one to Kashmir Valley and brought areas of Rajouri and Poonch under the Anantnag Parliamentary seat. Jammu division will now have 43 assembly seats and Kashmir 47 in the 90-member house. Although many political parties are making hue and cry over the changes made in the process, what will be the final outcome is nobody's guess because it is not that easy to foretell things as far as electoral processes are concerned. Definitely the changes made in the constituencies' structure will make a difference but who is going to get benefit out of it is still a big question and the answer to it lies only in the upcoming Assembly polls.

MET DEPTT'S ROLE CRUCIAL

While another life has been lost to vagaries of weather in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, the role of Meteorological Department becomes crucial to save human lives from the inclement weather conditions and extreme happenings due to natural occurrences as the officials have state of art facilities to forecast weather conditions precisely. Reportedly, a man was killed after he was struck by lightning in Poonch District. Though in this case, the nature didn't give any chance to the victim to save his life but as far as Met Department is concerned it can save many lives by giving information about inclement weather conditions beforehand as its branch has given the same to Shikarwallahs and tourists to refrain from venturing outside for a day or two as strong winds and gale, and thunderstorms are likely to hit the Valley and other parts of the Union Territory. This is a noble job to save lives as in the past many accidents had been caused due to storms. In the unfortunate Poonch incident, the man was at his home when natural lightning struck and he fell unconscious. He was taken to hospital but the doctors on duty declared him dead. In this context, many parts of Jammu and Kashmir received rain while the aforesaid department has predicted more "intermittent" showers and thunderstorms till May 24. This is the time when the Met Department can play a vital role by publicizing the weather forecast well in time especially for places having hilly and difficult terrain as chances of landslides, mudslides and other catastrophes are more in such places as seen in the cases in the past. The people should also be informed about the precautions which they have to take during the time of inclement weather as many a time lives can be saved by following the precautions. Every year strong winds used to cause accidents in world famous Dal Lake as Shikaras overturned causing injuries and even deaths of tourists who are not used to handling such emergencies therefore Met Department's advisories are of great significance in making things safer in Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory.



OFF 'D' CUFF

### A New Commandment

to be His disciple (Luke 9:23). The love He had poured into them they must pour into each other if His message was to impact the world after He was gone. The love that Jesus Christ had and continues to have for His followers is infinitely more profound than the love expressed in "you shall love your neighbor as yourself." Putting into practice His "as I have loved you" kind of love, Jesus Christ willingly paid the price for our sins. As He explained, "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends" (John 15:13). The great cost of our sin was His suffering, torture, and horrific death. That is the self-sacrificial and redeeming love He showed for all mankind. Without that love, we would have no hope and no opportunity to live forever. There are two main doctrines in the Bible; to love God and to love people. When a lawyer and expert of the law asked Jesus what the most important commandment is, Jesus responded, "To love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind..The second is to love your neighbor as yourself." (See Matthew 22:36-40) When carefully considered, Jesus' answer was really a perfect response not only to the religious people of His day but also to all modern-"religious people". Jesus gives us two commandments that summarize all the laws and commands in Scripture. In other words, the entire Bible has been given to us to teach us about loving God and loving people.

**Bishop Lalachan Abraham**

Rising above narrow religious & caste considerations

**S.K. KHUSHU**  
Rising above the narrow religious & caste considerations & limitations like egoism, prejudice against a particular section or community, personal likes & other elements of subjectivity, I as a concerned, conscientious, well meaning & above all one who has like millions of fellow beings been a victim to the ongoing terrorism of well over three decades -----brutally battered & emotionally hurt, feel goaded by my inner consciousness not only to protest against crimes against humanity that include the select killing of duty bound innocent people like Rahul Bhat, police officers & the like but also to seek answers to my simple questions from the perpetrators of such heinous crimes that too, unfortunately in the name of religion/Jihad:

As per my understanding, the fundamental teachings, sermons, pronouncements, doctrines, Do's & Don'ts are common to all religions. What differentiates between any two religions, in respect of the fundamental teachings at least, is different interpretations given to them that mostly arise from difference in understanding as also from the fact that some element of subjectivity also plays its part.  
For instance, the meaning of the word 'Jihad' often used to justify violence & killings. If I am correct in the truest sense of the word, it means battling the conflicting ideas weighing one train of thoughts against the other, attempting serious introspection & more importantly

to kill the evil in one's heart. 'Jihad' as against the interpretation of misleading Mullahs, did not mean waging a war against peaceful nation or commuting atrocities on unarmed & innocent fellow human beings. Islam, if I have understood it well, is against such inhuman acts. So, my dear Muslim brethren why do you not raise your voice against such misleading interpretation of Jihad? Is it not a crime against humanity & sin before God Almighty?  
Secondly, Who is a Kafir, again a often used term? Is a non Hindu or Kashmiri Pandit a Kafir?  
Like any other religion, \*Islam preaches equality before God, for, we all are his children.\*  
When he is the sole creator of this world, why these man-created distinctions on the basis of caste, religion, creed etc.? A Kafir is a non-believer in God-----an atheist. One who believes in God, whatsoever be the form & manner of worship, or whatever his faith, is not a Kafir by any standards. It is clearly enshrined in the holy Quran itself. So, to use this misunderstood to justify innocent killings of a community of a different aim is again a sin before God. Islam also preaches mutual respect for different faiths. Why should the well-meaning Muslims not object to misleading indoctrination by vested interests?  
Dear brethren, God cannot bless the perpetrators of crimes against humanity with a place in heaven with 72 hareems (hooras) at their service. This is unacceptable to the right thinking God fearing

people. Please, dear brothers & sisters, do listen to your inner conscience & stop all this.  
The unforgettable & bone chilling Wandhama massacre of 24 innocent KPs, the murder of the owner of Bindroo Chemists, the killing of dutiful police men & civilians dubbing them as informers (Mukhbirs) etc. to name only a few were all unjustifiably killings and not a single Muslim came out openly against these atrocities why? Some Muslims justify these killings saying that in places like Gujarat Muslims have been killed. This is ridiculous. Is there any instance of the killing of a Muslim by a KP? No! We are peace loving people. We do not possess and wield AK -47, or even a knife. We do not possess any weapon. We do not believe in violence. We have always stood for communal harmony. I can firmly and surely say that the grounds on which killings are committed & the talk of being blessed with a place in heaven with 72 hareems waiting on the so called Jihadis do not find acceptance with any conviction even in Pakistan. I have been watching Pak TV Channel with the lady anchor cornering Imams over such beliefs.  
So, dear Muslim brethren, please follow the dictates of your prophet in letter & spirit so that further unjustified crimes like innocent killings are stopped forthwith. God be with us all.  
There is no point in resorting to dirty politics. What politicians say they never mean it. When on chair they speak one thing and once out of chair their tone

gets changed. They befool people. So, act upto your own conscience. It is a fervent appeal to you all.  
To the fellow KPs, I would request you all not to question the sagacity of KPs choosing to serve in Kashmir. They had no option but to avail themselves of the opportunity in the absence of any better opportunity. After all, the young KPs who are not tech savvy or not highly qualified to get a job in the corporate sector, are left with no choice but to work in government departments under such packages. We too have failed to create or arrange jobs for them that are relatively safe. We must not harp on such baseless issues. What we must instead do is to take up the security issue with the central leadership; alternatively, we must strive hard for their transfer & adjustment in Jammu province till such time as the militancy is not completely eradicated. Lastly political blunders of the past committed by the leaders, the hollow misleading promises made as far back as the accession (time) can in no way be considered as the reasons for the present turmoil or to justify terrorism and killings of innocents in Kashmir.  
In the end I implore the central authorities to kindly provide adequate security to the vulnerable people in Kashmir and fight out terrorism with renewed vigour & determination. There has already been blood- shed in the past 32 years & no more of it should be there. I hope all Kashmiri Pandits and even our Muslim brothers come out of slumber and work for peace and harmony.

Farmer Producer Organization: A Paradigm towards Doubling Farmer's Income

**DR. ASHU SHARMA**  
Agriculture has always been a lifeline and significant contributor to the nation gross domestic product and Indian economy providing livelihood to millions of farmers.

Around 70 per cent of rural population depends on farming and allied activities. The population has increased 3.5 times from 350 million to 1.40 billion hence demand for food has increased while total cultivable land has shrunk. The grain area per person has been shrinking steadily for several decades from 0.22 ha to 0.10 ha and it is projected to be as less as 0.06 ha per person in 2050. So the big, alarming question on food and income security has been raised.

Besides this the marginal and small farmers are facing a rapidly overflowing basket of challenges. Though they produce food of sufficient amount, the output which they get of the input isn't worth satisfying mainly due to lack of facilities like market facilities i.e., transportation, storage, processing etc. value chain addition, credit facilities, input supplies, proper support of technical staff, information dissemination. However the high production cost, low access to credit as well as poor market linkages also hinders the growth.

Rapid alteration and uncertainty like scarcity of irrigation water, menace of wild animal, shortage of labour growing inter-farm as well as inter-regional disparity, unequal household income and low productivity are the prominent witnesses in present day agriculture. The problems have imposed critical implications on farming community and as a result every day more than 2000 farmers are leaving agriculture and many more rural youth are migrating to cities for other professions.

One of the major joint initiative of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government and Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi under NITI Aayog also emphasizes on doubling the farmer's income. In this scenario the solution is possible through exploring innovative market led extension models in order to integrate the farmers, especially the small farmers; with the value chain so that the net return at the farmers end is remunerative enough for them to remain

in agriculture. Several institutional models have been tried in India to integrate farmers with production and value chain like Self Help Groups, Farmers Interest Groups, and Farmers Cooperatives etc. But the recent model "Farmer Producer Organization" is one of the major initiative which enables farmers to organize themselves as collective, provides them a business outlook to agriculture, links them to market and to improve their own economics and social situation. Strategies to boost income through Farmer Producer Organization (FPO), a formal or informal institution for collective action in which most of its members are the one whose main source of income and livelihood is agriculture and allied activities.

FPO provide services which are the main source to enhance the livelihood, access to market information, inputs and advocaey FPO helps in improving socio economic condition of farmers, enhancing the capacity of farmers through better market access and improving the orientation of farmers towards entrepreneurial activities. Indian government has declared 2014 as the 'Year of Farmer Producer Organization' and these were introduced by support of ministry of agriculture and farmer welfare and research and is keen on doubling the income by 2022 through covering 10,000 FPOs and providing better life for those engaged in farming.

Government of India has launched a new central sector scheme "Formation and Promotion of 10,000 Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs)" with a clear strategy and committed resources to form and promote 10,000 new FPOs in the country. FPOs are to be developed in produce clusters with focus on "One District One Product" to promote specialization, better processing, marketing, branding, export for leveraging and improving market access for members.

Benefits of Forming FPO  
Providing Services: FPO provides various services to their farmers from enhancing the capacity by providing capacity building services, improving market access by providing better market linkages and increasing production per crop by

providing better quality seeds, fertilizers, and their development through increasing linkages with better institutions. Better income to farmers: Better services provided by FPO helps in strengthening the socio economic condition of farmers by making Net increase in output and improving production of the farmers produce by providing better quality produce. Procurement of input in bulk at lesser cost and selling them in a market at bulk would help the farmers in getting better prices for the produce and thus help in enhancing the income of the farmers.

Linking farmers to market: Linking farmers to markets is critical for improved livelihood of smallholder farmers and beneficial for the consumers.

Smallholders are more efficient in production, yet they face serious disadvantage mainly on account of marketing their produce.

Farmer producer organizations assured marketing linkages and provide small farmers to participate in the marketing collectively and more effectively, they are in a better situation to lessen the transaction costs of accessing inputs and outputs, obtaining the essential market information, securing access to new technologies, and to enter into the high value markets, allowing them to participate with larger farmers and agribusinesses.

Value chain addition: FPO has better value chain addition processing unit.

Value addition of produce at farmer's level would help the farmers in doing business ease and retaining better income through performing beyond the farm level. Value addition through branding, sorting and processing enhances skills and knowledge and helps in procurement of produce and provides reasonable prices for the farmers facilitating marketing options, reducing post harvest loss and tremendous employment generation potential for rural poor in general and for women in particular.

(The author is Scientist at KVK Kathua of SKUAST Jammu).

YOUR COLUMN  
Accountability for deaths

Dear editor,  
It is a matter of concern that in one year more than sixteen lakh people died due to air pollution in India. According to the latest report of the world's famous health magazine Lancet, seventy-five percent of the nine million deaths due to pollution in the year 2019 were due to air pollution. Also 13 lakh people died due to drinking polluted water. Pollution, which accounts for every sixth death in the world, suggests that we have to rethink the anomalies of modern development models. There should be a serious initiative to curb the industrial and chemical pollution which is taking millions of lives today. Undoubtedly, this problem is not only of India or developing countries, developed countries are also facing this crisis. But affluent countries are able to take measures to avoid this crisis. In fact, the prosperity of developed countries has come only through the unethical exploitation of the resources of the rest of the world and the industrial revolution that took place without concern for the environment. When the developing and poor countries decided to expand industries to feed their

huge population, the western countries started chanting the slogan of environmental crisis. At the same time, to address global environmental concerns, the help promised by developing countries in return for the steps to be taken by poor countries to control greenhouse gases, was not fulfilled. This is the reason that from the Tokyo Agreement, the Paris Agreement to the Glasgow Declarations, could not be implemented. Whereas the reality is that the poor and developing countries of the world are paying the price for the imperialism and profiteering of western countries. In fact, the race to earn profits to the extent of human greed had started dissolving the poison of pollution in the environment from the twentieth century itself. Later this development started taking human towards destruction. Today the temperature of the world has reached such a level that human beings are groaning due to the havoc of nature in the form of global warming. In fact, the greed to earn profits by keeping environmental standards at bay has pushed millions of innocent people to death through pollution. It is also not that only factories and factories have created pollution, the increasing competition of vehicles has also become a big factor in this. Due to prosperity, those who keep three to four cars in a house also have a role in this. Vehicular

Progressing Jammu & Kashmir From Laggard to Leader; J&K witnesses completion of 65,000 projects in 3 years UT administration completes 1193 works languishing since past 10-20 years

Reflecting exponential rise in completion of development works and establishing itself as leader from laggard in the world of progress and prosperity, Jammu and Kashmir has completed over 60,000 development projects in the past three years.

According to official document, 66,724 development projects have been completed in the Union Territory from 2019 to January 2022.

The break up details stated that 9229 projects have been completed during 2018-19, 12637 in 2019-20, 21943 during 2020-21 exhibiting a steep increase as compared to previous years' achievements while 22975 works have been completed during the financial year 2021-22, till January 2022.

The records added that the "financial reforms and interventions" initiated by the Centre have facilitated completion of such a long list of development projects within the set timelines in the Union Territory.

"Authorization of projects and resources allocation is made through Budget Estimation, Allocation and Monitoring System (BEAMS), which is a real-time and paperless system. Through these interventions, the Union Territory has witnessed an unprecedented rise in completion of development works and projects in three years," the document reads further.

Similarly, implementation of transformative reforms such as BEAMS which enables online budgetary process and timely release of funds against approved works, online submission of bills through J&K PaySys, Mandatory Administrative Approvals, Technical Sanctions and e-Tendering, digital payments, GFR, GeM and related measures have paced up the development works and brought J&K at par with any other progressive state in the country.

Apart from prioritizing newly sanctioned works, the administration has also focused on languishing projects.

During a review meeting of the Jammu & Kashmir Infrastructure Development Finance Corporation (JKIDFC), it was revealed that a total of 2357 projects have been approved in HPCs for funding under JKIDFC for an amount of Rs. 7110.78 crore, of which, 1239 projects for an amount of Rs 1748.65 crore have been completed.

It was also informed by the officials of JKIDFC that till date disbursement amounting Rs 2270.08 crore with 4637 payments for 1923 projects has been made out of total 2500 crore loan lifted from different financial Institutions and Nationalized Banks.

JKIDFC has achieved tremendous transparency with incorporation of online payment tracking mechanism, tender details/allotment information and geo-tagging of all the projects approved for funding under the languishing scheme of JKIDFC that in itself is a unique model across the country, maintained an official spokesperson.

The J&K administration linked every project approved under JKIDFC with Google Earth for real time monitoring which facilitated public viewing on the official website of JKIDFC. It was stated that these measures had been taken to ensure the quality and timely completion of all these infrastructural projects languishing in the UT for a long time, he added.

The official figures revealed that 1193 projects worth Rs 1984 crore have been completed including five projects which had been lying incomplete for more than past 20 years, 15 projects for more than 15 years, and 165 projects for more than 10 years under the languishing projects programme.

Pollution has also become a challenge for human life. There are governments that do not seem to be making serious efforts to improve the quality of public transport. The crisis of pollution is posing a big challenge to humanity and the country and the governments are embroiled in unnecessary issues. The smoke of toxic gunpowder arising from other wars of the world including the Russo-Ukraine war is also increasing this crisis, due to which the toxic gases and chemicals continue to dissolve in the atmosphere. This crisis is even bigger for those people who are working in these industries. Millions of people die of untimely death just by coming in contact with toxic chemicals. Governments will have to think about alternatives to thermal power plants emitting toxic smoke by giving preference to the use of clean energy.

Before this crisis deepens, there should be a meaningful initiative at the level of the government and citizens to stop it. Instead of organizing a conference of rich countries every year on environmental protection, the option of helping poor countries will have to be looked at. The problem of poor countries is that their priority is to feed their people before pollution. Nevertheless, all countries have to find environmentally friendly sources of employment.

Vijay Garg.