"My first film was 'Thiranottam.' I cannot discount that film because I got initiated into films with it.
-Mohanlal"

Zero Tolerance Against Terrorism

Terrorism remains one of the gravest threats to global peace, national sovereignty, and the safety of civilians. Over the past few decades, countries around the world have been affected by acts of terror, which not only result in loss of lives but also destabilize economies, disrupt development, and erode public trust in governance. In response to this persistent threat, many nations, including India, have adopted a Zero Tolerance Policy against Terrorism, emphasizing that no form of terrorism will be condoned, justified, or negotiated with.

A zero tolerance policy against terrorism means that governments will deal with terrorist threats and acts with the strictest possible measures. This includes proactive intelligence gathering, stringent law enforcement, diplomatic isolation of states sponsoring terrorism, robust border security, and uncompromising punishment for those involved in terror-related activities. It sends a clear message: terrorism of any kind, by any group, under any pretext, will not be tolerated.

India has been a victim of cross-border and domestic terrorism for decades. From the 2001 Parliament attack to the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks and continuing infiltration attempts in Jammu & Kashmir, terrorism has challenged India's internal security repeatedly. In response, India has consistently taken a hardline stance.

Under the leadership of successive governments, India's anti-terror strategy has evolved. The strengthening of agencies like the National Investigation Agency (NIA), modernization of the armed forces, amendment of anti-terror laws like UAPA (Unlawful Activities Prevention Act), and global diplomatic efforts to isolate terror-sponsoring nations are examples of how India's zero tolerance approach has translated into policy and action.

The Balakot air strikes in 2019 after the Pulwama attack marked a paradigm shift in India's counter-terrorism doctrine. It signaled that India would no longer restrict itself to a defensive posture but would actively neutralize terror infrastructure beyond its borders when necessary.

A zero tolerance policy cannot succeed in isolation. Terrorism is a transnational threat, often funded, planned, and executed across borders. Thus, international cooperation is critical. India has consistently advocated for a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) at the United Nations, aiming to define terrorism uniformly and establish a legal framework for global cooperation.

Strategic partnerships with countries like the United States, France, Israel, and Australia have enhanced intelligence sharing and counter-terror capabilities. Organizations such as INTERPOL and UN bodies have also supported anti-terror initiatives through sanctions, information exchange, and capacity building.

While governments play the lead role in enforcing anti-terror laws, society has a crucial part to play. Community vigilance, public awareness, and early detection of radical tendencies are vital. Educational institutions, religious leaders, and NGOs must work together to counter extremist ideologies and promote inclusivity, tolerance, and critical thinking.

A zero tolerance policy against terrorism reflects a nation's commitment to safeguarding its people, upholding the rule of law, and preserving democratic values. While such a policy must be implemented firmly, it should also remain just, transparent, and accountable to prevent misuse. India's unwavering resolve, backed by strong legal frameworks, military preparedness, international alliances, and public support, underscores its determination to fight terrorism in all forms.

In a world increasingly threatened by violence and extremism, the zero tolerance approach serves not only as a defense mechanism but also as a moral stance - that violence will never be legitimized, and peace will always be pursued, no matter the challenge.

Problems and Prospects of Hill Agriculture in J&K

■ **DR. BANARSI LAL**

Agriculture in India holds the significant position in the economy, a way of life which permeates all sectors and spheres of life. In India ,there is high concentrate of rural poor in low agricultural potential areas I.e. rainfed compared to high potential areas I.e. irrigated. Farming systems are facing immense difficulties owing to severe water shortage, changing climate patterns, dying traditional knowledge and increasing animal menace. Natural resources are under huge pressure with diminishing land and water resources. Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir is endowed with diverse agro- climatic conditions, rich genetic diversity and vast natural resources that offer a great scope to develop agro-ecosystem by specific technological interventions for diversification of hill agriculture and allied activities. This hilly territory of India displays distinct ethnic, socio-cultural and economic features, geographical identity with climatic variability different from the rest of the country. Around 80 per cent of the people depend directly or indirectly on agriculture for their livelihood.

Jammu and Kashmir is surrounded by the hills and comprises of its 20 districts. Over the years, the farmers of J&K have adopted new agricultural technologies but still this territory is having low productivity of almost all the crops. Due to diverse regional typologies, difficult terrains, marginality, fragility, extreme vulnerability to natural events, lack of infrastructures, distinctive gender dimensions, only 30 per cent of total geographical area in J&K is under cultivation. Agriculture contributes about 65 per cent of J&K revenue which explains its overdependence on agriculture.

Technology development has a critical impact on many aspects of hilly areas development, especially the way we choose it, the way we design it and the way we deliver it to the end users. Technology should be carefully chosen for the farmers of hilly areas to imbibe knowledge appropriate to their needs, cultures and environment. Technology should be designed in such a way so that it can upgrade the skills and capabilities, reduce drudgery, minimize fatigue, capable of easy assimilation, generate added value to the existing methods of operation, generate employment and income, low in capital investment, low in cost of production, be capable of replication and adoption and should blend harmoniously with existing eco-systems leading to tangible improvements in the living conditions and development of the people of hilly areas of Union Territory of J&K. There is a need to introduce appropriate technologies in the hilly areas of J&K particularly in disadvantaged sections of the society. There is a need of institutional linkages and active participation of voluntary organizations, Science and Technology based institutions, Research and Development institutions, financial agencies and most importantly people who are the primary stakeholders. Success of these technologies lies on participatory systems with a systematically approach for effective dissemination of technology. There should be proper mechanism in development and transfer of effective technologies in the hilly areas of J&K.

The technologies should be assessed and refined by the Science and Technology based institutions. These organizations then look for ideal technology option ensuring the availability of local resources and skills. Technology should be developed according to the in-house capability of the local people with the assistance of technical institutions. The technology should be developed in such a way so that it is accepted by the people of hilly areas and which is best suited in their local conditions for a long-term sustainability. The people should be trained persons to operate the new technology and also trained in its maintenance and repair. The Science and Technology institutions and NGOs should help in backward and forward linkages both for production as well as marketing for long-term sustainability. There should be proper linkage between the scientists, field functionaries and the farmers. Extensionists should conduct the awareness/training camps in the rural areas on new technologies so that the capabilities of the farmers of hilly areas can be upgraded. The awareness on new technologies among the farmers of hilly areas should also be created by the print media and electronic media.

Looking into constraints and priority needs of the farmers of hilly areas of J&K, various thrust areas need special attention ensuring involvement of local community through network of developmental field groups in technological empowerment. Agriculture in hilly areas of J&K is the most important activity as it is directly related with the villager's sustenance. Agriculture in hilly areas of J&K is mostly rain fed, poor crop productivity, poor cultivation practices etc. Hilly areas have immense potential in agriculture and if below mentioned interventions are made in these areas then the socio-economic condition of the hilly areas farmers can be improved.

(1)Organic and Natural Farming: Hilly areas have immense potential in organic and natural farming. Already the farmers of hilly areas use meagre amount of fertilizers in the soil. The litter fall in hilly areas can be utilised for compost making. This can highlight unproductive hilly areas contour as organic farm. Organic products produced in hilly areas can help the farmers to fetch better prices. Agricultural department and Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) should promote the organic and natural farming in the hilly areas so that the livelihood of the farmers of hilly areas can be improved.

(2)Off season vegetable and seed production: In hilly areas off season vegetables can be grown which can fetch higher prices. Seed production and low cost nurseries units can be established in hilly areas to generate extra income and employments. Many farmers of the hilly areas are still using their indigenous varieties of seeds of the vegetables. There is need to provide the new varieties (hybrid/improved) vegetables seeds to the farmers of hilly areas.

(3)Non-perishable cultivation: The perishable products do not fetch better prices due to various market intricacies. The hilly areas agro-climate offers better potential for non-perishable products such as spices, pulses, oilseeds etc. There is need to introduce new varieties of these crops through Front Line Demonstration by the KVKs so that the yield of these crops can be increased.

(4)Advance Horticulture: Hilly areas have immense potential in horticulture. Different varieties of fruit crops can be produced in hilly areas of J&K. But the fate of all such produce has been poor due to certain reasons such as: transportation facilities, storage facilities and processing facilities. Horticulture in hilly areas is largely ignored but it has immense potential. Hilly areas farmers need proper training on the advance horticulture. There should be storage, processing and packaging facilities of fruit crops for commercial purpose. Farmers of hilly areas need proper transportation facilities to sale there produce. The roads should be well connected with the cities.

(5)Animal husbandry: In hilly areas scarcity of fodder crops for animals is observed specially in off seasons. There is a need to introduce good breeds of animals in hilly areas of J&K. Buffalo rearing, poultry farming and goat rearing has lot of scope in hilly areas. The special varieties of fodder crops should be introduced in hilly areas so that the need of fodder can be mitigated. Backyard poultry has tremendous scope in hilly areas. Egg laying varieties of certain poultry strains should be introduced through Front Line Demonstrations (FLDs) by the KVKs.

(6)Green Cover Management: Green cover in hilly areas is very important for the maintenance of environment. The green cover with appropriate bio-engineering plantation management is considered as the need based.

(7)Water power: Water and energy are important resources for the hilly areas ecosystem. In hilly areas large numbers of dams are in process in but the traditional water mills, huller, carding devices should also be taken into consideration for the up gradation. Strenuous efforts are needed to develop sustainable technologies for harnessing and conserving renewable energy like water lifting devices, solar lantern etc. Micro-irrigation water technologies should be promoted in the hilly areas.

(8)Disaster Management: Capacity building and technological empowerment are needed to mitigate the disaster management challenges for the people of hilly areas. Intensives should be provided to the disaster affected farmers of the area.

(9)Herbal Industries: Medicinal plants occurring in hilly areas have a great national and international importance. Creating awareness towards herbal therapy can provide immense scope for developing herbal industries in hilly areas.

(10)Health care and sanitation: Health care of hilly areas people is an important area that needs to be taken care of. There is need of technology intervention in the area of rural sanitation. Medical facilities should be provided to the people even in the remote hilly areas of J&K.

(11)Alternate Crops in Monkey Prone Areas: Hilly areas are infested with the monkey menace. There is need to introduce crops such as turmeric, ginger, floral crops, lemongrass etc. These crops are not damaged by the damaged by the monkeys and farmers of monkey prone can fetch more farm returns by growing them.

(12)Agro-Eco-Tourism: Tourism forms the basis for the economy of many hilly places. There should be linkage between the people of hilly areas and hill tourism. Agro-eco-tourism tourism should be promoted in hilly areas. There is need to create awareness on rural tourism among the farmers.

Bottom up approach for participatory technology development starting with the people and with the contribution of Science and Technology Institutions and close interface with voluntary organizations can provide sustainable models for technologies development and their dissemination. Appropriate networking and linkages amongst people and various institutions can change the lives of the people of hilly areas of J&K.

(The writer is Chief Scientist and Head of KVK Reasi SKUAST-J)

Bhaderwah, the Lavender Capital of India

■ **MANU KOTWAL**

The air in Bhaderwah, traditionally scented with pine and the earthy aroma of its fertile valleys, is now imbued with a new, delicate fragrance: lavender. This isn't merely a shift in olfaction; it's the blossoming of a "Purple Revolution," a transformative movement poised to redefine the socio-cultural, economic, and environmental landscape of this picturesque Himalayan town. The inauguration of Bhaderwah as India's first Lavender Capital by Dr. Jitendra Singh, the Hon'ble Union Minister in PMO, wasn't just a ceremonial act; it was a pronouncement of a promising future, a testament to the power of agricultural diversification in fostering holistic development.

The Economic Bloom: A Sweet Scent of Prosperity

At the heart of the Purple Revolution lies its profound economic potential. Bhaderwah, a region historically reliant on traditional agriculture and limited tourism, is now embracing a high-value cash crop. Lavender, a perennial plant, offers multiple economic avenues:

Essential Oil Extraction: This is the primary driver of lavender's economic appeal. Lavender essential oil, prized for its therapeutic properties in aromatherapy, cosmetics, and pharmaceuticals, commands premium prices globally. Local cultivation means local processing, adding significant value to the raw produce. Distilleries, large and small, are likely to spring up, creating direct employment opportunities for skilled and semi-skilled labor.

Floriculture and Bouquets: The vibrant purple blooms themselves are a marketable commodity. Fresh and dried lavender bouquets, popular in décor and events, can provide an additional income stream for farmers, particularly during peak blooming seasons. This could also spur a niche market for local florists and artisans.

Value-Added Products: Beyond the essential oil, lavender can be incorporated into a wide array of products. Lavender sachets, soaps, candles, culinary lavender for teas and baked goods, and even lavender-infused honey represent opportunities for small-scale enterprises and women's self-help groups. This diversification promotes entrepreneurship and strengthens local supply chains.

Agri-Tourism: The sight of vast lavender fields in bloom is a captivating spectacle. This aesthetically pleasing landscape can attract tourists, both domestic and international, who seek unique experiences. "Pick-your-own" lavender farms, guided tours of distilleries, and workshops on lavender product making could become popular attractions, boosting the local hospitality sector, including hotels, guesthouses, restaurants, and local transport.

Employment Generation: From planting and harvesting to processing, packaging, and marketing, lavender cultivation is inherently labor-intensive. This creates much-needed employment opportunities, particularly for rural youth who often migrate to urban centers in search of livelihoods. Women, traditionally involved in agricultural activities, can find enhanced roles and economic independence through lavender farming and related value-added activities.

Reduced Post-Harvest Losses: Unlike highly perishable traditional crops, lavender's durability and the ability to process it into oil or dried flowers significantly reduce post-harvest losses, offering farmers greater income stability.

Branding and Geographical Indication: As Bhaderwah establishes itself as India's Lavender Capital, there's potential for developing a "Bhaderwah Lavender" brand, perhaps even pursuing a Geographical Indication (GI) tag. This would enhance the product's market value, ensure authenticity, and protect the unique qualities of lavender grown in the region.

Environmental Harmony: A Purple Shield for the Hills

The environmental implications of the Purple Revolution are equally significant, promising a sustainable and ecologically friendly agricultural model:

Low Water Requirement: Lavender is a hardy, drought-tolerant plant. This is a crucial advantage in a region susceptible to changing rainfall patterns and water scarcity, especially as climate change impacts traditional water sources. Its low water needs make it a sustainable choice for the Bhaderwah hills.

Soil Health and Erosion Control: The deep root system of lavender helps in binding soil, preventing erosion, particularly on slopes and hilly terrains. This is vital for the fragile ecosystem of the Himalayas, where soil degradation is a constant threat. It can improve soil structure and even contribute to carbon sequestration.

Reduced Pesticide Use: Lavender is naturally resistant to many pests and diseases, requiring minimal to no chemical pesticides. This reduces the chemical load on the environment, protects biodiversity, and ensures cleaner agricultural practices, leading to healthier soil, water, and air.

Pollinator Support: Lavender flowers are highly attractive to bees and other pollinators. By cultivating lavender, Bhaderwah will be providing a vital food source for these essential insects, contributing to the health of local ecosystems and supporting the pollination of other crops in the region. This is particularly important given the global decline in pollinator populations.

Agroforestry Potential: Lavender can be integrated into agroforestry systems, complementing existing tree cover and enhancing biodiversity. Its shade tolerance and ability to thrive in varied conditions make it a flexible crop for integrated land management.

Aesthetic Enhancement: Beyond its economic and ecological benefits, the vast fields of blooming lavender will transform the landscape of Bhaderwah into a visually stunning spectacle, enhancing its natural beauty and promoting eco-tourism. This aesthetic appeal fosters a greater appreciation for nature and encourages sustainable practices.

Socio-Cultural Weave: Fragrance of Community and Heritage

The Purple Revolution is more than an economic endeavor; it's a socio-cultural catalyst, promising to rejuvenate community spirit and reinforce local identity:

Empowerment of Farmers: By providing a lucrative alternative to traditional, often less profitable crops, lavender cultivation empowers farmers, giving them greater economic stability and reducing their vulnerability to market fluctuations. This can lead to increased investment in education, healthcare, and overall quality of life for farming families.

Skill Development and Knowledge Transfer: The transition to lavender cultivation necessitates new skills, from planting and harvesting techniques to essential oil distillation and value-added product creation. This will lead to the establishment of training programs, workshops, and knowledge-sharing initiatives, fostering a culture of continuous learning and skill development within the community.

Youth Engagement and Retention: The promise of sustainable livelihoods and entrepreneurial opportunities in lavender farming and related industries can incentivize youth to stay in their hometowns rather than migrating to cities. This combats brain drain and preserves the social fabric of Bhaderwah.

Women's Empowerment: Women can play a significant role in every stage of the lavender value chain, from cultivation to processing and product creation. This can lead to increased financial independence, greater participation in decision-making, and enhanced social standing within the community. Self-help groups focused on lavender products can become powerful engines of change.

Community Cohesion: Collaborative farming initiatives, shared processing facilities, and collective marketing efforts can foster a stronger sense of community and cooperation among farmers. This shared purpose can strengthen social bonds and collective action.

Cultural Identity and Branding: As Bhaderwah becomes synonymous with lavender, it will forge a unique cultural identity. This can manifest in local festivals, culinary traditions incorporating lavender, and an overall sense of pride in their new agricultural heritage. "Bhaderwah Lavender" could become a symbol of the town's innovation and resilience.

Health and Well-being: The therapeutic properties of lavender essential oil are well-documented. Increased access to locally produced lavender products, such as essential oils and herbal remedies, could contribute to the overall health and well-being of the local population.

Cultural Revitalization: Weaving Lavender into the Local Fabric

The Purple Revolution offers a unique opportunity for cultural revitalization. Imagine:

Lavender Festivals: Annual festivals celebrating the lavender harvest, showcasing local products, traditional music, dance, and cuisine infused with lavender.

Art and Craft: Local artisans incorporating lavender motifs into traditional crafts, textiles, and paintings.

Culinary Innovations: Restaurants and homes experimenting with lavender in local dishes, teas, and desserts, creating a unique Bhaderwah culinary experience.

Homestays and Agri-Tourism: Local families opening their homes to tourists, offering an authentic experience of lavender farming, local life, and culture.

Research and Development: Local educational institutions and research centers focusing on lavender cultivation, processing, and product development, fostering a culture of innovation and scientific inquiry.

The Monkey Menace: A Natural Deterrent?

One of the most intriguing potential benefits of the Purple Revolution, particularly for the Bhaderwah hills, relates to the pervasive issue of the monkey menace. Monkeys, known for their destructive raids on agricultural crops, pose a significant challenge to farmers in the region. While anecdotal, there is a growing body of evidence and farmer experience, particularly from other lavender-growing regions globally, that suggests lavender may act as a natural deterrent to these primates.

Aversion to Scent: Monkeys, like many animals, have a highly developed sense of smell. The strong, distinct aroma of lavender, while pleasing to humans, is often found to be unappealing or irritating to monkeys. Planting lavender as a border crop or intercropping it with other vulnerable crops could potentially deter monkeys from entering fields.

Unpalatability: Unlike many fruits and vegetables, lavender is not a food source for monkeys. Its bitter taste and strong fragrance make it unpalatable, reducing the likelihood of monkeys consuming it and subsequently damaging the plants.

Habitat Disruption (Indirect): If extensive lavender cultivation replaces traditional monkey-attracting crops, it might indirectly alter their foraging patterns and encourage them to seek food elsewhere. However, this is a long-term and more complex effect.

Reduced Crop Damage: Even if lavender doesn't completely eliminate monkey incursions, its presence might lead to a reduction in the damage inflicted on other crops. If monkeys find the lavender fields less appealing, they might move on, thereby protecting the more vulnerable traditional crops.

It's important to note that while promising, the deterrent effect of lavender on monkeys needs further scientific validation specific to the Bhaderwah ecosystem. Local agricultural departments and research institutions could conduct studies to precisely quantify this benefit. However, the initial observations and farmer testimonials offer a hopeful prospect for addressing a persistent problem, adding another layer of practical benefit to the Purple Revolution. If proven effective, this would be a significant breakthrough, saving farmers from substantial losses and reducing human-wildlife conflict.

Dr. Jitendra Singh's Vision: Bhaderwah as India's Lavender Capital

The formal declaration of Bhaderwah as India's "first Lavender Capital" by Dr. Jitendra Singh, the Hon'ble Union Minister in PMO, is not merely a symbolic gesture. It underscores a strategic vision and a commitment from the highest levels of government to promote this initiative. This recognition provides:

National Prominence: It places Bhaderwah on the national and potentially international map, attracting investment, research, and tourism.

Policy Support: It signifies government backing, which is crucial for funding, infrastructure development (like distillation units, cold storage), market linkages, and research and development.

Boost to Farmer Confidence: The official recognition instills confidence in farmers, encouraging them to adopt lavender cultivation and invest in its long-term potential.

Inspiration for Other Regions: Bhaderwah's success can serve as a model for other regions in India with similar agro-climatic conditions, spurring a wider adoption of alternative, high-value crops.

Focus on Aromatic Agriculture: It highlights the government's emphasis on aromatic and medicinal plant cultivation as a viable path for agricultural diversification and rural economic growth under schemes like the Aroma Mission.

In conclusion, the Purple Revolution in Bhaderwah is a multi-faceted phenomenon. It's a strategic economic move towards high-value agriculture, an environmentally conscious shift towards sustainable farming practices, and a profound socio-cultural transformation that promises empowerment, community cohesion, and a revitalized identity. The gentle fragrance of lavender now rising from the Bhaderwah hills carries with it the sweet scent of prosperity, environmental harmony, and the enduring spirit of a community embracing a vibrant future. The potential for lavender to also mitigate the monkey menace, though requiring further study, adds another layer of profound significance, making this revolution truly holistic and transformative for the region. Bhaderwah, the Lavender Capital of India, is indeed poised to bloom.

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