

SKILLED PROFESSION: Entrepreneurial Opportunities in Sericulture Sector

The demand for new skilled workers with new skills in the service sector and manufacturing is increasing rapidly. This is a special occasion for India. Due to globalization, countries of the world need new skilled professionals in the field of technology and information technology.

India is getting any benefit due to globalization. Therefore, it has to work in a strategy to train and educate a large number of skilled professionals in 'outsourcing', especially in the IT and service sectors, to reap the benefits.

India's initiative of South Asian Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA) and BIMSTEC (BIMSTEC) puts it at the top as compared to other countries in this era of globalization. India has a unique identity as an advocate and lobbyist for regional economic integration. Due to this the demand of Indian professionals has increased in the world. India's economic policies, geopolitical developments and global economic trends are paving the way for India's progress on the world stage today.

Pre-Monsoon Strategies: Jammu & Himachal

■ SACHIN SHARMA

The pre-monsoon season in India, which generally spans from June to July, brings a mix of anticipation and concern. This transitional period between winter and the onset of the monsoon carries its own set of challenges, particularly in regions like Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh. These regions, known for their picturesque landscapes and unique geographical features, experience distinct weather patterns during this time.

Effects of the Pre-Monsoon Season

Rainfall: Pre-monsoon showers can be erratic and sporadic, resulting in variations in precipitation patterns across the affected regions. This irregularity often leads to flash floods, landslides, and waterlogging in low-lying areas. Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh, with their hilly terrains and steep slopes, are particularly vulnerable to these hazards.

Snowmelt: The pre-monsoon season sees a gradual melting of the winter snow, adding to the volume of water flowing in rivers and streams. The rapid melting of snow can lead to increased water levels, which, combined with heavy rainfall, can result in devastating floods.

Avalanches: In mountainous regions like Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh, the pre-monsoon season poses a heightened risk of avalanches. The warming temperatures and occasional rainfall can destabilize snowpacks, triggering avalanches that pose a threat to human settlements and infrastructure.

Strategies for Preventing Losses

Early Warning Systems: Establishing and enhancing early warning systems is crucial for minimizing losses during the pre-monsoon season. Utilizing weather monitoring technologies, including Doppler radars and satellite imagery, can help forecast rainfall patterns, identify areas prone to landslides and floods, and issue timely warnings to the population.

Infrastructure Development: Constructing robust infrastructure is essential for managing the impacts of the pre-monsoon season. Building well-engineered roads, bridges, and drainage systems can enhance resilience to heavy rainfall and minimize the risk of flooding and waterlogging. Additionally, reinforcing vulnerable slopes with retaining walls can mitigate the risk of landslides.

Land Use Planning: Implementing effective land use planning measures can significantly reduce the vulnerability of human settlements to natural disasters. This includes regulating construction in high-risk areas, such as landslide-prone zones or near riverbanks, and promoting sustainable development practices that consider the region's unique geological characteristics.

Public Awareness and Preparedness: Educating the local population about the risks associated with the pre-monsoon season is crucial for their safety and preparedness. Conducting awareness campaigns, providing information on early warning signs, and conducting mock drills can empower communities to respond effectively during emergencies.

Afforestation and Soil Conservation: Increasing green cover through afforestation and implementing soil conservation measures can help prevent soil erosion and reduce the risk of landslides. Planting trees and grasses with extensive root systems can stabilize slopes and improve water absorption, minimizing the chances of devastating mudslides.

Strengthening Emergency Response: Building a strong emergency response infrastructure is vital to managing the aftermath of disasters. Enhancing the capacity of local authorities, providing them with necessary resources, and conducting regular training exercises can ensure a prompt and coordinated response during the pre-monsoon season.

■ DR. BANARSI LAL

Rearing of silkworms on mulberry trees for the production of raw silk is known as sericulture.

Sericulture involves the rearing of silkworm, collection of cocoons and their delivery for reeling purpose, reeling of raw silk from the cocoons and availability of mulberry trees from which fresh leaves can be obtained. J&K is one of the leading silk producing territories in the country. In Union Territory of J&K there are around 2,800 villages where the sericulture is considered as an important activity for the farmers. In J&K there are over 7 lakh mulberry trees out of which 53 per cent are available in Jammu region and 47 per cent in Kashmir region. Approximately 6,680 quintals of raw silk of Rs.50 crores worth is produced annually. J&K is the only Union Territory in the country which is at the same altitude in which leading bivoltine sericulture countries of the world lie. Union Territory J&K is blessed with the conducive atmosphere to produce the bivoltine silk. Sericulture is the traditional cottage industry in J&K producing high quality bivoltine silk comparable to the international standard. Sericulture can help to improve the economic condition of the rural people and also generates employment opportunities for them.

India is the 2nd largest producer of silk in the world after China. It is also the largest consumer of silk in the world. India is the only country in the world that produces all 5 varieties of silk on commercial scale and holds the global monopoly for production of the famed golden 'Muga' silk. Almost all the Indian States, except Gujarat and Rajasthan are involved in the production of one or the other variety of silk. Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Jammu & Kashmir are the major mulberry silk producing States/UT in India which together account for 96 per cent of country's total mulberry raw silk production. A wide scope exists across the nation for the horizontal and vertical expansion of this sector. Silk is a wonder fibre which has emerged stronger amongst the various textile fibres, competed with synthetic fibres to retain its unique position. Despite, a miniscule 0.2 per cent of the textile production worldwide, silk continues to dominate from the socio-economic viewpoint.

The J&K Government has taken various innovative initiatives to boost the age



old traditional sericulture industry for the rural development. Cocoons made in J&K are very famous due to the purity and people from across the world prefer to purchase silk produced from J&K. This sector is assisting to boost the economy. The J&K government is making some strenuous efforts to revive this industry for the benefit of the rural people. There is dire need to promote the silk produced from J&K. The government has launched some small schemes including free plant material and distributing of free silk rearing kits that growers are using during rearing process of cocoons.

In J&K this industry has been considered as the old industry and the scientific technologies are assisting the farmers to produce the high quality silk. Sericulture authorities organized cocoon auction markets across J&K where the growers sell their cocoons. In Union Territory of J&K, sericulture is an ideal enterprise for the rural development especially for the weaker sections of the society. Sericulture is an eco-friendly vocation and has high potential for poverty eradication. It has proved an ideal tool for women and tribal farmers of J&K.

Mulberry silk is the product of silkworm, Bombyx mori L. which feeds on the leaves of mulberry plant. These silkworms are completely domesticated and reared indoors. The mulberry silkworms are classified as Japanese, Chinese, European or Indian origin based on their geographical distribution or as univoltine, bivoltine and multivoltine depending on the number generations in a year under natural conditions. Univoltine silkworms have long life cycle and their larvae and cocoons are large. The life cycle of bivoltine silkworms is shorter than univoltines.

The bivoltine silkworms are stronger than the univoltine silkworms. Multivoltine silkworms with tropical origin are robust as compared to univoltine and bivoltine silkworms but produce qualitatively inferior raw silk. Sericulture is predominantly done in the rural areas and even small farmers can do it. Sericulture involves the cultivation of silkworm food plants, rearing of silkworms for the production of cocoons, reeling the cocoons for unwinding the silk filament and other post-cocoon processes such as twisting, dyeing, weaving, printing and finishing. Commercially traded varieties of natural silks are Mulberry, Tropical Tasar, Oak Tasar, Eri and Muga.

Silks other than mulberry are all grouped together and called as Vanya Silks. Tasar silk is mainly produced in the States of Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Odisha, besides Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh. Tasar culture is the main stay for many tribal communities in India. Oak tasar is produced in the Sub-Himalayan belt of India covering the States such as Manipur, Nagaland and Uttarakhand. Eri culture is mostly practiced in the North-eastern States and Assam is its largest

producer. It has been popularized in the states such as Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Odisha, Uttaranchal, Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. Muga culture is specific to the State of Assam but the Muga culture is also getting popularized in other States such as West Bengal, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and Nagaland. In 1949-50 raw silk production in India was 1211 MT which has grown substantially over the years. In the post-independence era the mulberry silk production has improved due to the rigorous efforts of Government of India through Five Year Plans.

Mulberry silk production involves a series of activities and the success of mulberry cocoon crop depends on the productivity levels of breed, quality of the mulberry leaves, supply of disease free laying, adoption of scientific rearing technologies and climatic conditions. Rearing of silkworms which is done domestically under controlled conditions is an important component of sericulture and throughout the rearing period, silkworms have to be taken care of properly and nourished with good quality mulberry leaves. Silkworm larvae pass through five instars (stages) beginning from hatching of the larvae from eggs to their maturation and change their skin called as moulting for four times. Silkworms are very delicate and susceptible to a various diseases. They need to be reared scientifically under the close supervision of the experienced technicians. Every year, 5-6 cocoon crops can be taken in the irrigated conditions as the mulberry leaves will be available throughout the year. Sericulture is considered as an effective tool for poverty eradication in the rural areas. This enterprise provides employment opportunities to all the family members of the farmers. This sector has the unique feature of converting family labour into useful income for the family of the farmers. This vocation can bring significant revenue to the households, thereby helping several poverty stricken families in the rural areas, especially the marginalized section of the population. Sericulture is one of the most potential agricultural vocations with low capital investment and high returns. Silk is produced by the farmers belonging to economically weaker section and is purchased by the rich people. It is an excellent tool for transfer of wealth from affluent section of the society to the poor.

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Even Judiciary Is Not Spared

■ K.V. SEETHARAMAIAH

"Democracy has been murdered. Unfortunate that justice has not been provided", thundered the Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar. Speaking to reporters, Shivakumar asserted that the entire country and the opposition parties are behind Rahul Gandhi. If it is said the entire opposition parties are behind Rahul Gandhi against centre, it can be accepted. Because of their disagreement with the centre, they are in opposition. But to say that the entire country is behind him is ridiculous. If the entire country had been with Rahul, why would he lose the election in Amethi? Shivakumar's claim holds water if no voter had cast his/her vote against Rahul Gandhi in any of the elections he previously contested. "Since India's independence in 1947, no one has been convicted of criminal defamation with a two-year sentence, which also carries the risk of disqualification from Parliament. I am truly disappointed by this verdict", laments, Congress leader Shashi Tharoor. Tharoor must also know that no one since India's independence in 1947 was guilty of issuing

statements of the kind issued by him. If no one had been convicted in the past for a particular offence, it must start with someone only when such offence is committed. "The journey of a Thousand Miles begins With a Single Step", said Lao Tzu, semi-legendary ancient Chinese Taoist Philosopher. The fury by the two Congress leaders is against the Gujarat High Court for not staying conviction in the defamation case. State-wide protest by Congress in front of the Gandhi statue has been planned on July 12. Congress has stooped to such a low level that it has been dragging judiciary into its dirty politics. The sanctity of judiciary has been shoved under carpet. It has been made the target of attack for political reasons. Justice is always the property of victims, not the perpetrators of crime who promote enmity and ill-will among people. Freedom of expression guaranteed by the Constitution of India does not guarantee the right for creation of disharmony among people. It is boon if it is used for throwing light on the government going on wrong path and making the government wean away from it. What is wrong path to a political party may be right

path to other party. What is sauce for goose is not sauce for gander. It will be so when politically motivated views are held and aired. Freedom of expression does not permit anybody to cross the line of decency. Rahul Gandhi put all eggs in one basket by calling all the people with Modi as surname as criminals. The planned protest against Gujarat court verdict is the confrontational approach adopted by the Congress even though legal remedy is available in top court. The final call is taken by the Supreme Court when it is approached. Outrageous statements and protest strategy by Congress are an attempt to browbeat the top court to get a judgment to its liking. It is highly reprehensible. Judiciary is sacrosanct. The sanctity of judiciary must be protected at all costs. If all other political parties do not break the rank to condemn the Congress for condemning judiciary, justice will be the casualty. Shivakumar and Tharoor are desperate to woo Rahul Gandhi even though Shivakumar was not considered by him for the post of CM in Karnataka and Tharoor did not have the backing of Rahul Gandhi for presidency of AICC.

Need and Necessity of UCC in India

■ OMKAR DATTATRAY

India is a diverse country as there are diversities not only between different religious communities but there are even diversities between various sections in the majority Hindu community. Besides India is a secular and plural country where every religion has got freedom to profess, propagate, follow and last but not the least to change his or her religion. Given such diversities and pluralism and secularism, is there need and necessity to have a uniform civil code for all Indians irrespective of their religion. At the outset it can be said that in one nation and country there should be same laws which apply to all religious communities uniformly. There is nothing bad in it as we have to accept the fact that in a liberal and dynamic democracy, various religious communities cannot be governed by different laws and instead for equality and uniformity, there is great need and necessity of having a same laws for all communities. When all religious communities will be governed by the same civil laws, it will lead to national harmony, national cohesion and above all will help in national integration. So uniform national law is the need of the hour. Therefore there is no wrong if there will be same laws in force in the country for all religious communities as it will enhance the basic premise of equality before law which is the foundation of our democratic society and country. There should be no confusion and misunderstanding about the fact that UCC will ensure uniformity in civil law and no uniformity in religious practices and religious freedom will remain intact and so there is no need to raise voice against this move of the government.

The UCC debate is very old but it has again reached to centre stage because of the law commission asking and inviting objec-

tions from the people and religious organizations and all the stakeholders and also because of the push given by the BJP government and the PM Modi to the need for having a common civil code. The law commission should circulate and advertise the draft UCC to the public so that the people will give suggestions and arguments in favor and against the UCC otherwise we will be talking in thin air. The UCC is not a new topic of debate as it has continued since the time of the framers of the constitution deliberated upon it. Dr B.R Ambedkar who is called the founding father of the constitution as the chairman of the drafting committee, was clearly in favor of the uniform civil code in the constituent assembly debates. Part 4, Article 44 of the constitution says, "State shall endeavor to provide for its citizens a UCC throughout the territory of India."

A Uniform Civil Code aims to replace personal laws based on the scriptures and customs of various religious communities, with a common set of rules governing every citizen of the country. This idea has elicited mixed reactions from various factions of the society. While article 25 to 28 of the constitution guarantee freedom of religion to every individual, it at the same time enforces the state to apply directive principles of state policy and common laws while drafting national policies. The origin of UCC can be traced back to 1935 when the British colonial rule stressed upon the immediate need for uniformity in personal laws for Hindus, Buddhists, Janis, and Sikhs. They however, exempted Muslims, Christians and Parsis. Now it is sought to have a UCC for all citizens in force for equality, uniformity and gender justice. A big section of the society that is the women including the women of the Muslim community are in favor of uni-

form civil law to save themselves from male domination and chauvinism. Therefore for gender justice and equality, UCC is very important. But unfortunately UCC has been widely criticized by the so called secular political parties, AIMPLB and other organizations so much so that AIMPLB has asked Muslims to oppose and raise a revolt against the UCC. But it is important to understand that AIMPLB is not the truly representative body of Muslims and so it has no inborn right to speak for and on behalf of Muslims.

Uniform Civil Code resonates with one country one rule/law to be applied to all religious communities. UCC calls for the formulation of one law for India, which would be applicable to all religious communities in matters such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, adoption. The code comes under article 44 of the Constitution, which lays down that the state shall endeavor to secure a uniform civil code for citizens throughout the territory of India.

BJP leader and former Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad noted at a press conference that the UCC has been a part of the ruling party's manifesto.

BJP said a process on the issue of adopting a UCC is underway and people should wait for its outcome, as it side-stepped a query on whether the measure will be implemented soon. The UCC has hogged the limelight after the Law Commission sought people's views on the contentious issue through a public notice on June 13. PM Modi later on made a strong push for the country having one civil code. Some groups, including those representing sections of Muslims and tribal's, have opposed the UCC while most opposition parties have linked the BJP's push for it to upcoming polls, including the Lok Sabha elections in 2024. The new effort by the 22rd Law

Commission will look at the personal laws relating to marriage, divorce, maintenance, custody and guardianship of children, inheritance, succession and adoption.

Along with the repeal of Article 370 and the construction of a grand Ram temple in Ayodhya, both of which the Modi government has accomplished, the adoption of a uniform civil code has been the third prong of the BJP's three -point core agenda since the late 1980.

The 22rd Law commission initiated a fresh consultation process on UCC by inviting suggestions, opinions and objections to it. As already said Directive Principles of State Policy Chapter IV of the Indian Constitution mentions about UCC Liberal -Intellectual Principles.

The desirability of a Uniform Civil Code is consistent with human rights and the principle of equality, fairness and justice. The UCC calls for the formulation of one law for India, which would be applicable to all religious communities in matters such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, adoption and the like.

It is intended to replace the system of fragmented personal laws which currently govern interpersonal relationships and related matters within different religious communities. Directive Principles are defined in Article 37 which proclaims, "The provisions contained in this part shall not be enforceable by any court, but the principles therein laid down are nevertheless fundamental in the governance of the country and it shall be the duty of the state to apply these principles in making laws."

It effectively means that the vision of a uniform civil code is enshrined in the Indian constitution as a goal towards which the nation should strive, but it is not a fundamental right or a constitutional guarantee.

One cannot approach the court to demand a UCC. But that does not mean courts can't opine on the matter. In fact the demand for a UCC came to fore in the important judgment pronounced in the Shah Bano case in 1985, more than three decades after the constitution was drafted. The Apex court bench, in a verdict in favor of Shah Bano, observed -"There is no evidence of any official activity for framing a common civil code for the country."

A common civil code will help the cause of national integration by removing disparate loyalties to laws which have conflicting ideologies. In 1995 Sarla Mudgal case, Justice Kuldip Singh reiterated the need for parliament to frame a uniform civil code, which would help the cause of national integration by removing ideological contradictions. In its manifesto or Sankalp Patra released, before the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, the BJP reiterated its stand to draft a uniform civil code to deal with the personal laws in India. The need for UCC is because of the following -1-UCC aims to protect vulnerable sections i.e including women and religious minorities.2-The code will simply the complex laws around marriage ceremonies, inheritance, succession, adoption making them one for all.3-It will ensure gender justice in the country among women of various religions. The centre government should see that it is not easy to make and enforce UCC in the country, it was comparatively easier to abrogate article 370, but it is very complex and difficult to frame law and implement the same in the country. All the above sums up that UCC is the need and necessity of today's India and all political parties should cooperate with the government to frame and implement the UCC for all Indians.

(The author is a columnist, social and KP activist).