

PARVATMALA PROJECTS

The Parvatmala project is a transformative infrastructure initiative aimed at enhancing connectivity and accessibility in mountainous regions of India. Spearheaded by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH), this ambitious project focuses on building a robust network of tunnels, bridges, and roads to improve transportation and stimulate economic growth in remote and challenging terrains.

The primary objective of the Parvatmala project is to create an efficient and resilient transport network that overcomes the geographical barriers posed by India's mountainous regions. The project covers various states, including Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and parts of the north-eastern states, which are characterized by rugged landscapes and difficult terrain.

The project plans to construct several state-of-the-art tunnels to facilitate smooth travel through mountain passes and reduce travel time significantly. Building new bridges and reinforcing existing ones to ensure safer and more reliable transportation across rivers and gorges is a crucial aspect of the project.

The successful completion of the project promises to revolutionize transportation in India's mountainous regions, bringing long-term benefits to both residents and broader economy.

Managing Watersheds

■ G L KHAJURIA

In forestry parlance, a watershed cannotates an area, though small or large in its existence and is well identified ecosystem and can further be defined as such like areas in the broader outlook, which is having a common drainage system, and such like areas are very poor and with vegetative cover those which are particularly in the high canopy to the 16l level ground flora strata.

In a sense when we broadly nomenclaturise all such areas, there are three major watersheds in India alone viz, a). Himalayan range with its Karakoram branch in the north b). vindyann and satpura ranges in central India and sahyadri or western Ghats on the west coast And in general, with the ever-escalating environmental degradation and ruthless biotic pressure, preferably, over the forests, many areas have become barren most profoundly result being that our mountainous tops and other up-lands have now taken the shape of what we call as "wasteland". The environmental scenario, therefore, depicts vast, varied ramifications of watersheds, though of course, differing variably in their magnitudinal degrees, some forming maga or sub-micro watersheds. But one thing definitely stands that all such areas are warranting "rapid action treatments" by way of designing potential and the most workable strategies to arrive at developing such areas at all levels by the interactive response emanating from all the departments et. al. forests, flood control, agriculture. horticulture R&B and all the other line departments to rehabilitate all such areas to safeguard from further degradation throughout every nook and corner of country.

A watershed as well is the hydrologic system having cohesive linkage between inputs like those of rains / snowfall as well as the outputs viz, the water conglomerated with sediments, that out-flow in shape of Nallahs, streams and rivers etc, and the duo, the inputs and outputs are fundamentally being controlled by way of water percolation vis-a- vis its run-off, apart from water evaporation. All these factors in union are wholly solely are dependent upon the remnant vegetative cover and the land use practice in vogue. 'The central soil and water conservation Research & Training institute" (CSWCRT). DehraDun and its ramified branches spreaded over through out the country are pioneering agencies rendering yeoman's service through their research, demonstration and training programme.

So, to make the integrated watershed development success-oriented, it becomes pertinent in an effort to bring in togetherness experience of multidisciplinary departments face-to-face with development which is diminishing quality of environments improving resources and adding to people predicaments and as well to mitigate ever-amounting the worst kinds of malaise of man-made misdeeds.

Men of mountains have registered serious concern in what is happening in some of the most unique yet-most fragile, high mountains and as such it warrants rapid action treatment to provide green cover to the barren watersheds This coupled with raising of minor-to major engineering works, gully plugging, check damming and allied operation to avert fast water run-off accruing from unprecedented and torrential rains which take along with it enormous sediments beyond all dimensions.

And in treating developing all such watersheds, it becomes pertinent to gather basic datas, surveying the local human / live stock population falling under all these areas. It further needs to ensure and ascertain RF regime (legal status etc, Revenue, Forest or private owned), the location away from human denizens or in close proximity, credibility gap (unability through forestry is sighted away, fear loss of ownership), the afforestation works coupled with the choice a species most suited to site, preferably aromatical and medicinal plants; apart from survivality and the best soil binding species an4those others so that nothing goes eerie.

The second part inviting importance to "Integrated Watershed Management" is to ascertain estimated output capacity of land resources which include amongst others, to use the unused land crop improvement, regeneration potential, measures to shelter afforestation areas from human, cattle and disease /insects manifestations otherwise it will ebb away the entire exercise. In addition, there are three major potent factors to the "Integrated Watershed Management" fruitful and success oriented, first the possibility and probability to rehabilitate watersheds for sustained yield and rise in the productivity of land, second potent consideration inviting development (Ecosystem development) and lastly to test the CF model for planning implementation of" Integrated Watershed Management" for the landless poorer.

Insufaras goes people's participation, it is beyond all ambiguities that the most pertinent part where the associated multifihned communities are made to be motivated to function and to contribute as a predetermined task it warrants to be born in the mind that all adults who get their livelihood within the watershed itself are referred to as watershed community, apart from the fact that people living and in watershed areas have variable parameters of knowledge, literacy, attitude, capabilities above, all perceptions.

In a sense, they in toto, therefore, cannot address to the problems and prospects of "Integrated watershed Management". It is, defacto, more so due to heterogeneity which becomes important to have people's participation cum organizational off shooting thereby community decision and later their implementation to make the integrated watershed development more success oriented. People's participation, therefore, 'in the process will involve interaction of people in the execution and further management of watersheds.

Though, it is no more a denying the fact that "Integrated watershed Management" basically begins with the management of land, soil, water in such a manner that leads to the development and other allied resources and further leads to over all other sustainable development of the watershed community to become self relent / supportive.

And insufaras goes its implementation part, land use modification and adjustment is very vital and essential. But ironically, this faces resistance from the community due to the ever mounting traditions and culture inbibed by them over the years. They rather look to such changes which have attempted to deprive from them of success to various resources to which they had full and free use earlier. And to cap it all the Integrated watershed Management impules academic spectrum and urge to develop a blue print then to watch its implementation, which is be shelved. The detailed inflow of aims and objectives 'in this context from all related / sister agencies warrants consolidated support with maps, photographs and all other relevant datas in making 'Integrated watersheds Management" a mega success.

■ SAJJAD BAZAZ

India has rolled out its first budget containing massive financial layouts for job creation and skill development initiatives to pursue the Viksit Bharat plan. As envisaged in the plan, India will earn the developed country status by the year 2047. Before deliberating upon the first budget layouts for the Viksit Bharat plan, lets understand when a country is considered developed.

The main benchmark to determine the level of development of an economy is per capita income. It roughly shows how much a citizen of that country is likely to earn in a year. The per capita income together with level of industrialization, the general standard of living and technological infrastructure determine if a country is developed or not. Besides, the human development index, which measures several parameters of non-economic factors like quality of education, health and literacy, is also taken into account to categorize a country as developed or developing. However, high per capita income alone does not guarantee a developed country status to a country, if its human development index is not matching the benchmarks envisaged for categorizing a country as developed.

Now let's deliberate upon the budget and what exactly it contains for the Viksit Bharat plan. To begin with, a snippet of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's address to the nation on last year's (77th) Independence Day. He said India will be a developed country (Viksit Bharat) by 2047. He also stated that India, currently enjoying the fifth largest economy status, would become the third-largest economy during his third term.

Now being elected Prime Minister of the country consecutively for the third time, Modi's ambitious Viksit Bharat plan has officially found its roots in the Union Budget 2024-2025, prioritizing skilling and massive thrust on job creation. The government unveiled a robust package to bolster employment and skill development, targeting 4.1 crore youth over five years. This includes three Employment-Linked Incentive Schemes to enhance job creation and support employees and employers. This never-seen-before job creation programme has been allocated a support of Rs.2 lakh crore. Besides, a significant portion of the budget, Rs.1.48 crore, has been allocated for skilling initiatives, to train 20 lakh youth and upgrade 1,000 Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) over the next five years. Even small businesses have found mas-

■ DR. BANARSI LAL

Health is the biggest wealth for all of us. Presently we are grappling with the unforeseen deadly Coronavirus pandemic. Immunity is our body natural defence against diseases-causing bacteria and fungus. It is due to the weak immune system because of which people are being affected by the wide-spread pandemic. Experts are guiding us to strengthen the immune system of body so that we can save ourselves from this virus. In order to fortify our immune system we should think for our ancient wisdom of the Indian kitchen system. Turmeric is loaded with anti-inflammatory, antiseptic and anti-bacterial properties due to presence of curcumin in it. So it should be added in our diet so that we can fight against different kinds of viral and bacterial diseases by strengthening our immunity system.

Turmeric is the yellow spice extracted from the tuberose rhizome of the plant Cureuma longa. It was originated from the South Asia region. Its scientific name is Cureuma longa belonging to Zingiberaceae family and is considered as the triploid. In Hindi it is commonly called as Haldi. It has been used in the traditional Indian systems of medicines for centuries to treat different types of ailments such as anorexia, diabetic wounds, jaundice, hepatic disorders and menstrual difficulties. Medicinal effects of turmeric are attributed to curcumin, the principal curcumanoid found in turmeric. Curcumin contains strong anti-inflammatory and anti-oxidant properties. It is helpful to cure cancer and other inflammatory diseases. Curcumin affect has also been seen on the lymphoid cell populations, antigen presentations, cytokine production, humoral and cell-mediated immunity. Turmeric if taken properly, it can

■ S K K VAIID

Retirement from work was traditionally perceived as the resting phase of life mainly due to old age and the challenges it offered to lead an active life. In the last few years, the world has evolved both mentally and technologically. We have professed significantly as a society with these changing times. Retirement, today is celebrated and considered to be a whole new chapter of well - planned opportunities to live life to its fullest.

OH: God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can and wisdom to know the difference.

We must accept that we will age, getting older should be fun and we should be happy and contented in our selves. Let us not use age as an excuse, then what is the fun of growing. Obviously aging is inescapable and the end is inevitable, then why not we live life fully. Most of us working in our professions all our lives think that aging and retirement go hand in hand. But it is transition from work life to home life with less stress and live life as a senior. Why should we grumble getting older; and if we do, we start getting older then we actually are. Getting older or aging can

A Budget for Job Creation Financing employment and skill development is the first baby step in the direction of Viksit Bharat

sive financial support in the budget as Mudra loan limits have been increased to Rs.20 lakh from Rs.10 lakh.

If we look at India's current economic scenario we find unemployment and lack of skilled workforce as major impediments to the economic growth of the country. According to the latest data from the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), the unemployment rate in India stood at 9.2 percent in June 2024, a sharp increase from 7 percent in May 2024. CMIE's Consumer Pyramids Household Survey shows that female unemployment reached 18.5 percent, exceeding the national average, in June 2024. This is up from 15.1 percent in the same period last year. At the same time, male unemployment stood at 7.8 percent, slightly higher than 7.7 percent in June 2023. The rural unemployment rate rose to 9.3 percent in June from 6.3 percent in May. The urban unemployment rate climbed from 8.6 percent to 8.9 percent.

Meanwhile, a World Bank data shows India's per capita income around \$2,400. A country is tagged with developed status having \$12,000 to \$15,000 per capita income. However, a section of economists consider a country to be developed if its per capita income is above \$25,000 or \$30,000. Here it is pertinent to mention that a country having high per capita income doesn't qualify for a developed nation status if it is confronted with vast income inequalities and a lack of educational opportunities for its citizens.The impact of rising unemployment rate on the economy has serious consequences as it hugely influences spending, growth, and job opportunities. It hinders economic progress and can even trigger social unrest.

In the given scenario, achieving the target of becoming a developed nation is a surmountable task and laying the foundation of Viksit Bharat 2047 in the Union Budget 2024-25 prioritizing skilling and employment is a move in the right direction if implemented well. Skilling equips the workforce with the necessary competencies to meet industry demands, fostering innovation and productivity. While employment not only ensures economic stability but also empowers individuals, enhancing their quality of life and contributing to overall societal progress.

India has a unique advantage in terms of demographics with more than 60% of its population young. So there is a vast opportunity to harness this demographic dividend by nurturing a workforce that is equipped with

employable skills and prepared to meet the needs of the industry. Precisely, it is the employability that needs to be enhanced.

Notably, skill needs to be understood in its actual form. There are new things that one learns every day at the workplace. However, picking up experience and actively seeking new skills are two different things. The most successful people understand that achieving career goals relies on being proactive to build and grow their skills.

In the current market scenario where technicalities matter, the experts are rightly pinning persistently high unemployment on unemployed youths' inadequate skills. Over a period of last two decades, we have witnessed a widening mismatch between job openings and the skills of those looking for job. So, as explained in economics jargon, we have a problem of "structural unemployment," and not the "cyclical unemployment" caused by a downturn in the business cycle.

Lets discuss the skill scenario in the context of the J&K region.

Basically there are some major areas in our economy where huge potential has remained unexplored and a skilled work force is required to bring those fortunes into our economy. Some time back a group of unemployed youth was enthusiastic to take the route of Sher-i-Kashmir Employment Welfare Programme for Youth (SKEWPY) for entrepreneurship in gem and jewellery. A local consultant of international repute in Gemmology had drafted their project, which was approved and even bank loan sanctioned for the venture.

But the group lost their enthusiasm midway of achieving their dream for being unskilled to handle the venture. They lacked technical knowhow to handle the machinery required to cut and shape up the raw stones. Even as they were given some training regarding the venture, it was only the theoretical part of their venture. Before making the venture operational, they needed technical training of a few weeks so that they would know how to operate the machinery which they had to procure out of the bank loan.

For technical training, they were supposed to go outside the state and involved expenditure. The scheme had no option to fund their training and the group was asked to bear the expenditure out of their own pocket. Since they didn't have money to meet the training needs, their project despite having viability and scope died its own death.

Turmeric-The Queen of Spices

considerably reduce the chance of sickness. Nutritionists and health experts have often considered turmeric as the booster for health immunity. Now as the summers are approaching, our immune system gets compromised slightly due to change in weather: Due to the weak immunity system people get affected by the various viruses and bacterial diseases.

Turmeric contains anti-inflammatory, antiseptic and anti-bacterial properties. It also keeps us away from various serious ailments. Turmeric contains 3-5 % of curcumin and it helps us to make our immunity stronger:Curcumin is phyto-derivative and it contains the healing properties. As the season approaches from cold to warm, individuals are affected by the flu or cold. Turmeric helps to cleanse the respiratory tract naturally. It protects the individuals from flu or cold and helps to fight the infection. People suffering with bronchial problems such as Sinuits, Sinus etc. face lot of problems. Curcumin in turmeric is helpful to fight against such kinds of problems by building the strong immunity system. Bronchial asthma, congestion of nose and airways due to inflammation, cough, cold and shortness of breath affects children, adults and elderly people. Inflammation constricts the airways and thus makes it difficult to breathe. It leads to chronic inflammation and affects the lungs tissues. Curcumin in turmeric inhibits inflammation, relieves congestion, pain and improves breathing. Curcumin boosts the immunity of body and helps to fight against the various viral infections. It reduces the inflammation and reduces the cause of viral infection. It contains all the antiviral properties and reduces the replication of virus. It reduces the viral load. Although a good diet, proper sleep and a good exercise are good factors to

strengthen the immunity but turmeric is very handy to improve the immunity of the body.

Turmeric also said to be the golden spice is one of the most important spices across the globe. It contains a wide spectrum of qualities and medicinal uses. For countless centuries, many different people are using this versatile herb to treat a myriad of ailments. This crop is known for its multipurpose value such as for the medicines, colour pigment, spicy flavor etc. It is anti-cancerous, anti-inflammatory, antiseptic, antispasmodic, antiproliferative, antioxidant, carminative diuretic etc. The curcumin found in it is used as a food colourant. Turmeric annual growth rate in terms of area is 3.7% and in terms of production is 9.1%. Its somatic chromosome number is 63.Modern science has recognized the healing qualities of turmeric and much research is being conducted on it. Presently turmeric is being used in the treatment of the most intense ailments afflicting today such as Diabetes, Sclerosis, Sexually Transmitted Diseases, Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS), Aene, Kidney Infections, Alzheimer's disease, Arthritis, Anemia, Leprosy etc. It can also be used as the mosquito repellent, cure of scorpion stings and wound healer. It also helps to balance the reproductive system of the females and males. Presently it is one of the most important herbs in any natural medicines. Turmeric was very sacred to the Aryans due to its golden yellow colour. Even now the Hindus consider turmeric to have auspicious qualities and use it in many sacred ceremonies. During the Indian wedding ceremonies, the bride and groom paste it on their bodies.

India is the largest producer, consumer and exporter of turmeric in the world and 46% of world turmeric trade is run by India. Jamaica

Aging and Post Retired Life

be great and enjoyable if handled right For us Age should mean " Aging gracefully every day " and not "Aging grumpy every day ". George Bernard Shaw said " You don't stop laughing when you grow old ,you grow old when you stop laughing ".So being senior in today's World is to be merry and consider it as a laughing matter.

We retire after three decades or more either in a demanding job or boring job, either in a high-flying job or a nondescript job; you retire either in a senior position or in a junior position. But all the retired people have the same issue -How to spend the post retired life happily and meaningfully? All of a sudden you are a free bird, as free as a bird can be. You have all the time with you. No boss no work, retirement kitty and in most cases, no major family responsibilities as children are already settled or on verge of settlement. And you have another 15 to 20 years of active life before you. Post retired life is a new beautiful chapter beginning in our lives.

Earning money or reemployment should be last option. To select the right course for post retired life, one need to identify one's core competencies and the activities that will make one happy and that bring out best in a person.

Retired people with literary interest can consider a book based on their work experiences. They can pursue their hobbies further such as acting, singing, painting and gardening etc. Those with rural heart can opt for organic farming in their villages and in the process can be a mentor and changing agent for the entire village. Some social work like working for under privileged children is a healthy option which will serve the society at large. Age and time have nothing to with goals and lofty dreams.

Be determined and cheerful in whatever situation you may find yourself and no matter what life throws at you. A best secret to stay young after you retire is actually nothing invincible except your spirits, so keeping the smile and humour matters. Find new dreams for you every day. People do love their grandchildren but they are not their sole responsibility and in a few years will be grownup and independent. First and foremost, we have responsibility towards our spouse and respect their feelings. After retirement one must assure himself that basic needs physiological (Air, Water, Food, Clothing and shelter) and safety needs (personal and financial security, health and wellbeing) have been best met before

The above described situation is just a simple example of our skill deficit economy. So, it is this lack of skilled work force which has led to a problem of employability.

In a skill deficit economy like ours, even an MBA type of qualification is a problem. For example, an MBA pass out opts for setting up a handicraft venture. He is fit to handle the unit but not the craft enterprise. Thus, he lacks the skill to run such a type of enterprise successfully.

So, there is a need to guide the unemployed youth to develop skills to match the job market requirements. Or we can say major skill upgradation is essential to fulfill the needs of the market. Specific sectoral training programmes can be carved out for unemployed youth to get them into a particular job. Once our youth are skilled, we can reap the benefit of the available resources and will ultimately solve the problem of employability.

However, we should not ignore the role of our educational institutions, particularly the highest seats of learning. It is overdue to introduce economic specific courses or realign certain courses according to the market needs. Most of our academic courses often emphasize theoretical concepts at the expense of practical skills. And the present-day vocational training industry lacks the bandwidth to handle demand in this area. We don't have enough vocational training institutions to meet the current need for critical skills development. In addition, many of today's job-oriented programmes don't make the grade when it comes to quality of instruction or industry linkage.

To be precise, in such a skill-deficit scenario, there is a need to capture the real picture with an aim to facilitate skilling every youth to bridge the gap between employment opportunities and skilled but unemployed youth. And, lastly, our economic policy has to be based on what our resources are. This means to align our economic policy to the structure of our domestic economy.

Meanwhile, it shouldn't be construed that skill deficit is the exclusive reason behind the burgeoning unemployment scenario. There's also a jobs deficit across the economy as the jobs created in various economic sectors have simply been inadequate to put the unemployed to work.

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and Peru are the main exporters of turmeric while Iran is the largest importer. In India total area under turmeric is about 1, 72,000 ha and total production is about 8, 51,000 tonnes. Turmeric occupies 6.6 per cent of total area of spices in India. In order to mitigate the increasing demand of this spice there is dire need to cultivate this crop in a scientific way. Turmeric became valuable to human beings when it was discovered that the powdered rhizome preserved the freshness and nutritive value of foods. Turmeric is used as a condiment, dye, food colourant, drug and medicine. Turmeric rhizomes have yellow colour component as curcumin, essential oil (5-9%) and oleoresin (3-13%).Curcumin is the substance that is responsible for the biological activity of turmeric. Turmeric rhizome is 70 % carbohydrates,7% proteins,4% minerals and 4% oil. It also has vitamins and alkaloids. Curcumin is used in cosmetics, preservatives, food industries and pharmaceuticals. The artificial colouring agents have been banned and so the use of curcumin is prompted. Curcumin protects the liver from toxic compounds as it acts like an anticoagulant by inhibiting collagen and by adrenaline induced platelet aggregation. Curcumin is also used to heal the wounds. It has antifungal and antiseptic effects. It has also antiviral effects and is found effective against the HIV.Various kinds of cancer including skin, colon and prostate can be cured by the use of curcumin. It has been proved through the research that turmeric stabilizes and protects biomolecules in the body at the molecular level which is shown in its ant-oxidant, anti-mutagenic and anti-carcinogenic action.

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