REVOLUTIONIZING FARMING

In an era defined by data, connectivity, and automation, agriculture-the backbone of India's economy-can no longer afford to operate in silos of tradition. The Digital Agriculture Mission (DAM), launched by the Government of India, is a visionary step toward modernizing Indian agriculture and integrating it with cutting-edge technologies. With over 55% of India's population dependent on agriculture for their livelihoods, the mission is not just a technological reformit is a social and economic imperative.

At its core, the Digital Agriculture Mission aims to leverage emerging technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), drones, GIS (Geographic Information Systems), blockchain, and Internet of Things (IoT) to empower farmers with real-time, precise, and actionable information. These technologies are intended to streamline farming practices, improve crop yields, enhance supply chain transparency, and ultimately ensure better income for farmers.

One of the most promising aspects of DAM is the creation of the AgriStack, a unified database of farmers linked to their land records. This digital infrastructure will act as the foundation for tailored advisory services, direct benefit transfers, crop insurance, and credit services. By integrating data from multiple sources, AgriStack can provide farmers with predictive analytics on weather, pest attacks, soil health, and market trendsallowing for timely decisions and minimizing losses

Furthermore, precision farming-a major component of the mission-enables the application of water, fertilizers, and pesticides only where needed, thereby reducing input costs and promoting sustainable agriculture. Drone-based surveillance, for instance, can help in assessing crop health, monitoring field conditions, and even in spraying pesticides, saving labor and reducing environmental impact.

The collaborations between the government and private tech firms under DAM also reflect a much-needed shift in India's approach to agri-development. Partnerships with industry leaders like Microsoft, Amazon Web Services (AWS), and others are expected to develop scalable models that can be replicated across states. However, this also raises valid concerns around data privacy, ownership, and commercialization, which must be addressed through clear policy frameworks to protect farmers'

Yet, as with any transformative policy, challenges persist. Digital literacy among farmers, especially in remote and underserved regions, remains a major hurdle. Infrastructure issues like poor internet connectivity, lack of access to smartphones or digital tools, and resistance to change among older generations of farmers could hamper implementation. To ensure equitable success, the government must focus on capacity-building programs, localized training, and support systems that bridge the digital divide. Moreover, for the Digital Agriculture Mission to succeed, it must remain farmer-centric. Technologies must be developed with empathy and a deep understanding of the realworld problems faced by farmers. It is equally important that small and marginal farmers-the majority in India-do not get left behind in the rush toward high-tech solutions tailored for largescale farming. The Digital Agriculture Mission represents a landmark opportunity to revolutionize Indian agriculture and bring it in line with global best practices. If implemented inclusively and transparently, it has the potential to boost productivity, ensure food security, and uplift millions of farmers. It is a bold stride toward not only increasing efficiency in agriculture but also ensuring resilience, sustainability, and prosperity for

Taking Jammu's Cultural Spirit to the Global Stage

MOHD. YASEEN



over four decades, Padma Balwant Shri Thakur has been a commanding voice in Indian theatre, known for his productions visionary that bring the cultural ethos of Jammu to life on

stage. This summer of 2025 has turned into another landmark chapter in his career as he undertook a month-long journey to the United Kingdom. The visit, filled with cultural encounters, academic discussions, and theatrical explorations, has not only strengthened international recognition of his work but has also placed Jammu's identity at the heart of global conversations on art and theatre.

The first highlight of this remarkable journey came on 29th July when Thakur visited Stratford-upon-Avon, the birthplace of William Shakespeare. For any theatre practitioner, the site carries the aura of history and timeless creativity, but for Thakur it became an inspiration for a bold new vision. At the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, he engaged with resident actors who performed select scenes from Romeo and Juliet. The interaction sparked an idea that transcends continents: Thakur announced his plan to adapt Romeo and Juliet into Dogri and merge it with the folk love tale Kunju Chanchlo. Both stories, he observed, are tragic love sagas that implicitly advocate peace by highlighting the devastating consequences of hatred and confliet. With Dogri folk music and his signature theatre of images, Thakur's proposed production aims to become a living example of theatre as a tool for peacebuilding and conflict transformation. It is a project that promises to bring Jammu's narratives into dialogue with Shakespeare's legacy and to travel across borders in the years to come.

Only two days later, on 31st July, Thakur's cultural mission reached a new height when he was hosted as a special guest at London's Tara Theatre. The evening, dedicated to the themes of race, identity, and inclusion, was a fitting platform for him to present his vision. Tara Theatre, founded by the legendary Jatinder Verma, has long been a space where South Asian voices in Britain find expression, and Thakur's presence added another powerful layer to its history. In his address, he spoke with passionate clarity about the richness of Indian theatre and the challenges it faces. While praising the diversity and dynamism of theatre traditions in India, particularly from Jammu, he lamented the lack theatre receives generous patronage from the state and civil society, he argued that Indian theatre too could become a transformative cultural and economic force if given similar structures of support.

What made the evening more memorable was his dialogue with Professor Jerri Daboo, a distinguished academic whose work has extensively documented South Asian theatre in the UK. Their exchange opened the door to potential collaborations that could bring academic rigor and global exposure to Thakur's artistic endeavors. His insistence that Jammu deserves recognition as a cultural hub resonated strongly, marking an important moment where Dogri theatre was spoken of not as a local art form but as a voice with global significance.

On 5th August, Balwant Thakur's journey took to the airwaves when Asian Star Radio London featured him in an exclusive primetime broadcast. Hosted by the lively anchor Payal, the program became a wide-ranging conversation about theatre, culture, and cross-cultural storytelling. Thakur spoke passionately about his ongoing mission in the UK and shared details of his recent experiences at Stratford-upon-Avon. He reflected on his vision of adapting Romeo and Juliet with the Dogri folk tale Kunju Chanchlo, describing it as an Indo-English narrative that would resonate equally with Indian and British audi-

During the same broadcast, he revealed another of his inspirations from his UK visit: his study of the world-renowned musical The Lion King. Impressed by its grandeur and technical sophistication, Thakur expressed his desire to conceptualize an even larger theatrical spectacle based on Indian mythology. "Our stories are deeply layered, emotionally rich, and culturally vibrant," he remarked, "the only thing we lack is professional showcasing access to world-class production facilities." His words carried the conviction that Indian theatre, with the right support, can not only match but even surpass global stan-

The media appearance also allowed him to recall his earlier international achievements, particularly his visually stunning performance Celebrating Diversity which had enthralled over 50,000 spectators at Trafalgar Square and was later staged at the British Parliament. For his listeners in London and Birmingham, these recollections painted a picture of a man who has consistently carried the cultural identity of Jammu and India to the world stage with pride and

The journey gathered further momentum when, on 13th August, Thakur met with leading figures of the UK theatre world. Among the highlights was his meeting with Chris Sudworth, Creative Director of the Hippodrome Theatre Complex, one of the most prestigious institutions supported by the Arts Council UK. In studying the functioning of this iconic theatre, Thakur explored avenues to bring Natrang's celebrated productions to British audiences. He was candid in his reflections, noting that while Natrang's productions may be more innovative in terms of content, the UK theatre scene is far ahead in technology and economics. He pointed out that the budget of a single theatre production in England often exceeds that of a Bollywood blockbuster and that the box-office revenue of a single performance could surpass one crore rupees. "If Indian theatre had similar support and patronage, we could achieve extraordinary results," he emphasized, while also asserting that the creative strength and originality of Indian theatre give it a unique edge over its Western counterparts.

The Royal Shakespeare Company added yet another feather to Thakur's cap on 21st August by inviting him as a special guest to witness the Pulitzer Prize-winning play Fat Ham at the Swan Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon. The invitation itself was a recognition of his stature as a cultural leader and theatre visionary. For Thakur, the experience was overwhelming. Watching a contemporary reimagining of Hamlet in Shakespeare's own hometown, he remarked, was among the most inspiring moments of his visit. It reaffirmed his belief that theatre, through innovation and adaptation, continues to remain the most powerful medium of storytelling and cultural

The momentum did not stop there. On 23rd August, Balwant Thakur attended the world premiere of Lightning Boy at the Birmingham Hippodrome, produced by the National Youth Music Theatre of England. The play, a retelling of Greek mythology through the story of a young Zeus, impressed Thakur with its creativity and discipline. After the premiere, he presented his monograph to the Artistic Director of the National Youth Music Theatre Chris Cuming and production head Tooey Gowar, marking the beginning of another cultural dialogue between India and the UK. Speaking on the occasion, he called the production "a refreshing example of how classical stories can be adapted to connect with modern audiences."

These engagements across England are not mere symbolic appearances; they represent a larger mission. Thakur's UK journey

has been about strengthening the international presence of Natrang Jammu, the theatre organization he founded, and about creating platforms where young artists from Jammu can interact with global practitioners. His vision is to build enduring cultural bridges that not only showcase the vibrancy of Indian theatre but also allow it to engage with the best of world theatre on equal

Balwant Thakur's career has already been marked by milestones. From Ghumayee and Bawa Jitto to Mata Ki Kahani, his plays have travelled to over 100 international theatre festivals. As India's former Cultural Diplomat to South Africa and Mauritius, he has represented the nation's performing arts on some of the most prestigious global platforms. What makes his current UK journey distinctive is the way it positions Jammu, not just India, at the center of global theatre conversations. His repeated emphasis on Dogri theatre and its potential to engage with international audiences reflects his lifelong commitment to giving regional voices a

The past month in the United Kingdom has thus been more than a professional tour for Balwant Thakur. It has been a cultural pilgrimage, a process of learning, sharing, and envisioning new possibilities. Whether in Shakespeare's birthplace, on the stage of Tara Theatre, across the airwaves of London, in discussions with theatre leaders, or at the premiere of a youth musical, he has consistently carried the spirit of Jammu with him. His words, actions, and artistic vision have reminded audiences and institutions in the UK that India's strength lies not only in its well-known metropolitan centers but also in its regions, where traditions thrive and creativity blossoms.

As Balwant Thakur returns from England, he does so not just with memories of performances witnessed and collaborations initiated, but with the resolve to transform his inspirations into living realities. His planned adaptation of Romeo and Juliet with Kunju Chanchlo, his dream of producing grand theatrical spectacles based on Indian mythology, and his mission to globalize Natrang Jammu all stand as testaments to his unvielding vision. In his journey, Jammu finds its voice on the global stage, and India finds a cultural ambassador whose work continues to inspire, innovate, and build bridges across nations.

(The writer is a National Scholarship and Fellowship Holder in the field of theatre from Ministry of Culture,

Krishnamurti: A Voice of Inner Freedom in the Age of Noise

DR. RAMIYAN BHARDWAJ



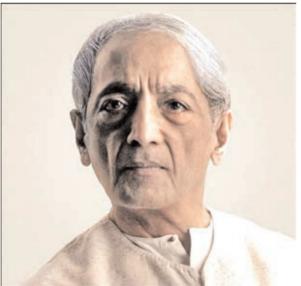
t a time when humanity finds itself struggling with political A itself strugging with polarization, digital distraction, and a deep crisis of meaning, the words of Jiddu Krishnamurti (1895-1986) return with striking urgency. A philosopher, speaker, and spiritual revolutionary, Krishnamurti rejected authority in every form and insisted that truth is not something to be given by any religion, ideology, or guru, but discovered within one-

self through awareness. 1895 in Madanapalle, Andhra Pradesh Krishnamurti was discovered by members of the

Theosophical Society, who believed he was destined to be the "World Teacher." Yet, in 1929, he stunned his followers by dissolving the Order of the Star, declaring, "Truth is a pathless land." With that single act, he freed himself from the role of messiah and set the tone for a lifetime of independent

Freedom from Conditioning

Central to Krishnamurti's philosophy was the idea that human beings live in deep psychological bondage. From birth, people are conditioned by religion, culture, education, and family to think in set patterns. This conditioning, he argued, breeds fear, conformity, and division. To live freely, one must see through these patterns without resistance or suppression. Awareness-choiceless, direct observation-was



Education Beyond Conformity

Krishnamurti's perspective on education was revolutionary. He believed schools should not produce obedient workers but awaken intelligence and sensitivity. The schools he founded in India, the UK, and the US continue this mission. Here, students are encouraged not just to excel in academics but to inquire into life, relationships, and inner freedom. He often warned that competition and comparison destroy creativity,

and that true education must prepare young people to live

with clarity, compassion, and responsibility. Critique of Organized Religion

Unlike most spiritual teachers, Krishnamurti had no doctrines to offer. He was critical of organized religion, rituals, and belief systems, arguing that they divide humanity and give false security. He did not deny the sacred but insisted that the sacred could not be approached through tradition, dogma, or blind belief. Only a quiet, alert mind-free from the clutter of thought-could touch what he called "the immeasur-

Society and Relationships

Krishnamurti's teachings also exposed the roots of social inflict. He aroued that society is the outward projection of the human mind. If individuals live with greed, fear, and ambition, society will inevitably reflect those qualities. Thus, the real revolution must begin within the individual.

In relationships, he emphasized attention and freedom. He pointed out that most relationships are based on dependency, desire, and projection, which leads to conflict. Only when individuals relate without possession or expectation can lovefree of attachment-exist

Relevance for Today's Youth

In the 21st century, where social media dictates lifestyles and algorithms shape desires, Krishnamurti's critique of conditioning finds new resonance. His statement, "It is no measure of health to be well adjusted to a profoundly sick society," speaks directly to the struggles of today's youth, caught between ambition and anxiety. By urging young people to question success, comparison, and conformity, his phi-

losophy offers a counter-narrative to the pressures of consumer culture.

Krishnamurti and Media Krishnamurti's perspective also provides insight into the

role of media. In an era where communication is often used to manipulate, divide, or sensationalize, his emphasis on deep listening and understanding becomes critical. He saw communication not as persuasion but as shared inquiry-a principle that could guide journalism toward responsibility

A Legacy of Inquiry, Not Belief

Unlike many spiritual leaders, Krishnamurti left behind no organization to preserve or propagate his teachings. Instead he established foundations and schools to keep his dialogues and writings available, not as doctrines but as invitations for inquiry. His legacy is a mirror, not a system: he did not want followers but individuals willing to look within and question.

Today, as the world grapples with ecological collapse, loneliness, political strife, and restless pursuit of success, Krishnamurti's voice stands as a quiet rebellion against chaos. His central questions remain timeless: Can the mind be free of fear? Can we live without division? Can truth exist

without authority? For those willing to listen, his words remain not as echoes of the past but as urgent guidance for the present-a reminder that true freedom begins not with systems or lead-

ers, but with the courage to see oneself clearly. (The writer is Assistant Professor Department of Journalism and Media Studies Jammu University)

The Rise of the Chamberic Personality in Modern Workplaces

■ DR.ASHWANI KUMAR

he modern workplace always creates a paradox. On one hand, organisations are more dynamic and diverse than ever. expecting employees to be adaptable, collaborative, and innovative. On the other hand, many individuals struggle to meet these broad expectations. For instance, a recent study found that over 70% of employees reported feeling overwhelmed by the rapid pace and diverse demands of their work environments.A phenomenon that can be described as the development of a "chamberic personality."

Unlike traditional work models. which prescribed roles but were easy Today's workplace demands that expectations be constantly negotiated across teams, projects, and management styles. It is not easy for everyone to adapt their role and meet the expectations. For some individuals, the availability of diverse perspectives, responsibilities, and performance criteria can be overwhelming. Instead of expanding to accommodate this broader framework, they may retreat inward. They may create an internal space for themselves in which their perspective is the priority; they do not trust the larger sys-

tem, and collaboration prevails. Trust in the larger system diminishes, and collaboration takes on a threatening rather than supportive sense. These chamberic traits are not necessarily harmful, but they have effects and consequences, primarily in this context that people who encounter them often perceive them as limited, narrow-minded, or resistant to shared goals. Colleagues may perceive them as "difficult" or even 'toxic in nature," not out of malice, but because they struggle to align their private thoughts with the shared cognitive structure of the group. This misalignment can create mistrust, conflict, or disengagement, and others in the group may experience those being cocooned in a bubble, whereby they are misapprehending intentions and having difficulty engaging as fellow beings.

The roots of this issue are not individualistic but instead social. Today's workplaces are more than just sites of professionalism and transactional value; they function as social ecosystems, which require the ongoing negotiation of identity and belonging. Where a worker's role used to be stable, employees now often have to be specialists and generalists, collaborators and independent thinkers,

and innovators and rule-followers. Employees who are not able to balance these competing expectations withdraw as a means of coping to avoid overwhelming misunderstand-

However, these chambers come with a price. The inability to engage with shared realities leads to isolation. A 2020 study published in the Journal of Organisational Behaviour found that employees who felt disconnected from their colleagues experienced a 21% decrease in productivity and a 45% increase in turnover intention. Additionally, the growing mistrust within these walls hinders genuine connections. Over time, this isolation becomes a self-fulfilling cycle: colleagues recognise the individual's distance and respond similarly, deepening the separation. What starts as a survival strategy turns into a pattern of alienation.

Importantly, however, this is not only a story of organisational failure. Organisations set expectations, but how individuals make sense of those expectations is impacted by historical context, disposition, and coping responses. People have varying degrees to which they can stretch expectations of scope; for some, expectations of scope lead to a mentally and emotionally positive experience because they see expectations as a chance for growth; for others, expectations of scope lead to distress because they see the expectations as too strong a pressure. Thus, the chamberic personality develops not out of spite or ineptitude, but the inability to stretch their own psychological frame enough to meet team collective demands.

The challenge, then, is understanding. Too frequently, colleagues and managers react to various stages of chamberic personality with frustration as they try to grapple with this sense of resistance or anger. The isolated and chamberic person is labelled as an unproductive team member, and one's instinct is to then push back even harder. In this way, yet more resistance is created. But these responses do not generally assist those who are behaving in a chamberic way. What these people require is not hostility or anger in some form, but a means of working through their sense of frustration and anger using a degree of empathy. Therapy, counselling, or structured mentoring might be much more useful than confrontation. If employees were offered bits of space for reflection and care, this would allow

employees the time to reflect on how to be more conscious about returning to a more integrated understanding of a more encompassing reality without feeling like they were receiving an attack or punitive reprimand from co-workers or managers.

In many ways, the notion of a chamberic personality mimics our society. While we live in times of digital echo chambers, most human beings are retreating into spaces where we curate our own bubble that affirms only what we believe and provides less complexity to the world. The workplace is not immune to the narrowing of worldviews. A chamberic employee is, in many senses, the organisational manifestation of all humans tending to lessen their worlds, since the larger world feels so overwhelming. Taking this lens to examine chamberic employees inoculates some of the stigma: instead of viewing them as an anomaly, organisations can see chamberics as part of a larger social phenomenon that requires interven-

The broader message is clear. Workplaces are changing, and they will become more complex, interconnected, and demanding of broader perspectives. But studies show that

people don't change in the same way or at the same pace. Instead of categorising employees into a dichotomy of "good fits" and "toxic misfits, there is value in nurturing a supportive organisational culture where people developing chamberic tendencies can have greater pathways for reconnection. Interventions do not have to be super elaborate. It could be as simple as offering a little mentoring, patience, someone to listen. or providing structured feedback

with kindness rather than judgment. Ultimately, the chamberic personality serves as less of a threat and more of a reminder. A reminder that the human mind has restrictions; that not every individual has the ability to infinitely devalue themselves for the benefit of the community; and that being kind is still the best way to overcome workplace adversity. When a workplace can replace anger with empathy and conflict with earing, then what would have been divisive spaces can be turned into spaces of growth-for the individual and the shared experi-

(The author is Assistant Professor of Sociology at UILS, Chandigarh University, Punjab. ashwinsociology@gmail.com)