

## ENHANCING AGRICULTURE PRODUCTIVITY

India is a nation with maximum people dependent on agriculture and other allied sectors for their livelihood and producing huge quantity of food-grains and other things required for people to remain alive. But it is really surprising that earlier Governments provided least attention to this crucial sector, which also plays major role in boosting economy of the country. Understanding the gravity of the situation, the ruling Government accorded a focused attention to the sector not only for uplifting the socio-economic status of people but also to enhance the productivity for making the nation self-dependent in the sector. Among several such initiatives, Indian Council of Agricultural Research with its National Agricultural Higher Education Project and Crop Science Division is organizing Hackathon 3.0 'KRITAGYA' on promoting 'speed breeding for crop improvement'. Taking forward the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi through National Education Policy-2020, the program will provide an opportunity to students/faculties/entrepreneurs/innovators and others to showcase innovative approaches and technology solutions to promote innovation for crop improvement. Under the guidance of the Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Narendra Singh Tomar, such initiatives will give impetus to the desired rapid results in the crop sector with the ability to learn, innovation and solutions, employability and entrepreneurship. It will also encourage greater adoption of technology enabled solutions in the country. According to Dr Rakesh Chandra Aggrawal, Deputy Director General (Agricultural Education) and National Director, National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP), the definition of KRITAGYA is: KRI for Krishi meaning Agriculture, TA for Taksnik meaning Technology and GYA for Gyan meaning Knowledge. In this competition, students, faculty and innovators/entrepreneurs from any university/technical institute across the country can apply and participate in the program as a group. The participating group shall consist of maximum 4 participants, with not more than one faculty and / or more than one innovator or entrepreneur. Participating students can collaborate with local start-ups, students from technology institutes and can win up to INR 5 Lakh while registration for event shall take place till September 26, 2022. During 2020-21 and 2021-22 NAHEP in association with Agricultural Engineering and Animal Science Divisions of ICAR organized Hackathon 1.0 and 2.0 to promote the innovation in Farm Mechanization and in Animal Science, respectively. The events witnessed immense participation across the country where more than 784 teams i.e., 3,000 participants actively participated in Hackathon 1.0 and more than 269 teams participated in Hackathon 2.0. At national level, 4 teams were awarded by Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare with a cash prize of Rs 9 lakh. This event is also extending the support to winners for further development in their concept propositions, its scalability and future plan in collaboration with Agri Business Incubators, MSMEs and other investors through support of ICAR. ICAR commenced NAHEP with the assistance of World Bank (WB) in November 2017. The overall objective of NAHEP is to support participating Agricultural Universities (AUs) and ICAR in providing more relevant and higher quality education to the students.

## OFF 'D' CUFF A Predictable Character

Virtuous are those who, despite their love for it, give away their wealth to their relatives and to orphans and the very poor, and to travellers and those who ask [for charity], and to set slaves free, and who attend to their prayers and pay the alms, and who keep their pledges when they make them, and show patience in hardship and adversity, and in times of distress. Such are the true believers; and such are the God-fearing. (2:177)

This Quranic verse tells us what kind of moral qualities a true believer has. The summing up of these qualities is that he is a predictable character. In every situation, you can believe with certainty that he will do this and he will not do that.

For example, if he promises you something in the course of his dealings with you, you can feel convinced that he will not break his word. He will certainly fulfil his promise. If you are in his neighbourhood, you can believe with certainty that he is not going to create any problems for you.

Being predictable in character is the best description of a true human being. Man is a social animal: he lives in a society and every time he is with other people he must exhibit the best human traits, the most important of which is his predictability. He must always fulfil predictions about himself and live up to the expectations of others regarding his speech and behaviour. His dealings should invariably be fair and just according to the accepted social norms.

A predictable character,

in projecting a better image of your personality, has many benefits. It is the source of all kinds of social good.

The quality of being predictable promotes high values in a society, such as mutual confidence, and it removes all kinds of negative feelings such as hate, intolerance and indifference. It, moreover, obviates any occasion for complaint, protest or conflict and prevents unnecessary misunderstanding, etc.

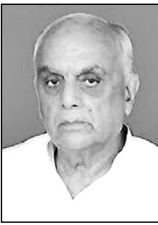
All good machines are predictable, but there is a difference between a man and a machine. A machine is a lifeless mechanism, the contrived product of technology, but man's predictable character is the outcome of his intellectual awakening, his ability to control his emotions, and the repeated demonstration of his just behaviour. On the one hand, it gives peace of mind to the person himself and on the other hand it helps promote a peaceful atmosphere in the society.

A predictable character means a self-disciplined character; it is a sign that the person who shows this kind of behaviour is a man of a high calibre. He has that admirable quality of being realistic in his approach. He is a positive thinker and free of all kinds of negative thought. Only men of predictable character can build a better society. There is no alternative to this.

The whole of nature is completely predictable. Nature will accept only those men and women who prove to be as predictable as other parts of nature.

-Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

■ ER P L KHUSHU



September: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said the holiday is a 'tribute to the Maharaja's services'. Great celebrations were held in Jammu after the announcement, when the valiant Dogra population of Jammu said it was their long overdue demand, which remained pending for a long time. Better late than never; it is ultimately fulfilled. It is a great victory for the right thinking people of Jammu & Kashmir in general and the people of Jammu the Duggar Desh in particular. Jammu was always discriminated upon in all respects right from the taking over of the reins of governance of State by Sheikh Abdullah in 1947, almost till now, when even BJP forgot Jammu during its murky alliance with PDP, led by Muftis. Declaring a holiday on the birth day of Late Maharaja Hari Singh is no favor to him or the people of Jammu, when Maharaja Hari Singh was the sovereign ruler of the Jammu and Kashmir, which included Ladakh, Gilgit-Baltistan, Muzaffarabad-Mirpur, Aksai Chin and Saksham Valley. The British wanted him to lease them Gilgit agency. The Maharaja was reluctant. He was a rare Hindu king who ruled over his predominantly Muslim subjects. He was a great secular leader of courageous acumen, who ruled Jammu and Kashmir with a solemn grip. Tracing back the history and Journey of the State of Jammu & Kashmir; one gets reminded of the happenings of the past and in this context, when it will be necessary to recall how the undivided State of Jammu and Kashmir was created. The State of Jammu and Kashmir came into being on March 9, 1846, with the signing of the Treaty of Amritsar by Maharaja Gulab Singh with the British. This multi-regional, multi-cultural and multi-religious state continued until 26th October 1947, when Maharaja Hari Singh signed the Instrument of Accession with India. Half of the state was lost when ceasefire agreement was signed with Pakistan, which came into effect on January-1st 1949. Whom to blame about it? The inference is implied. This left the huge area of Gilgit-Baltistan and the western Muzaffarabad-Mirpur strip under Pakistan control, involving roughly half the geographical area of the original State and a third of its population getting bifurcated from this state. The state of Jammu and Kashmir finally came to an end on 31st October 2019, with the original State having finally been bifurcated into two Union Territories of Ladakh and Jammu-Kashmir: History is witness to the fact that the original State of

## Modi-architect of India's destiny

■ SHIV KUMAR PADHA

A short period of 8 years of NDA government, under the premiership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, from 2014 to 2022, in the history of India, will be remembered for the extraordinary and unprecedented events which took place in the country which no other government under any prime minister could succeed during 705 years after independence. The credit of the heights, India has scaled during this short period of five years, goes to a person none other than our nation's beloved Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Whether it is about carving out a prestigious place for India at the international level, procuring a seat in the front row of the big nations, successful diplomatic relations of India with the most developed countries of the world, curtailing and eliminating terrorism in the valley, killing the enemy in its own den, tightening the noose around the separatists, drying the source of terror funding, successfully dealing with China at Dhoklam, release of Indian pilot Abhinadon from Pakistan captivity within 36 hours, declaration of Masood Azhar as global terrorist in the teeth of China's repeated use of veto power, withdrawing the MFN status from Pakistan, raising the tax on the goods from Pakistan, breaking the spine of the terrorism. The nation has also witnesses how the citadels of castes, religion have been demolished by the voters during the elections, the blasphemous remarks against the Hindu Gods, use of filthy and vulgar language by the political leaders against the prime minister and the majority population has been given befitting answered by the voters. The grateful nation knows that all these achievements of the country could be possible only due to PM Narendra Modi's vision and wisdom, but for both of these qualities nothing could be achieved during a short period of 8 years. Farsightedness, unfathomable love for the nation, sincere and tireless efforts, his honesty, spirit of patriotism and nationalism, and above all his unshakable faith in Indian democracy and love for his countrymen, he could save and steer the national vessel proudly defeating waves of humiliation, discrimination, hatred and isolation at the international forum. The faith of Narendra Modi in democracy and his belief in the future of India's destiny could carve out a unique and distinct place in the world and also could procure a seat in the front row of the big nations. There was a time when India was looked down upon by the big nations, calling India a nation of poor, beggars and illiterates. Indian diplomats, athletes, celebrities and even the vice president of the nation were not spared from inflicting humiliation at the international airports under the pretext of security checks. It was the magic spell of Narendra Modi, the Prime Minister of India who could reach the heights, within a short period of 8 years, which the premiers of so called developed and superpower countries have been aspiring for since long. The 2019 parliament elections have been fought under the teeth of grim criticism where the opposition parties made vulgarity, filthy language, character assassination as their weapons, did not hesitate in seeking co operation of enemy countries. The opposition parties spared no effort in showing the nation and Hindu community down in the eyes of the hostile countries. But as it is said that 'truth triumphs in long run', Prime Minister redefined the term secularism which was used as a tool against the Hindu community. The ruling parties, in order to win the vote bank always kept the temples out of bounds for the Hindu leaders and were declared as communal if they dared to stand in front of any temple. Prime Minister Narendra Modi started his campaign from Kaashi, Kedarnath Maha Kaleshwar and proved that practicing one's religion is the fundamental right as enshrined in the constitution.

All the ethnic communities' casts proved that they are one as a nation and have nothing to do with the religion or cast so far as the future of the nation is concerned.

There is a long list of big and the small awards which have been conferred upon him by the international community. Out of the long list of awards there are dozens worth mentioning here as these awards have been awarded to man of international standing.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi won, Readers poll for the Time magazine in 2016, King Abdullahiz Shah award of Saudi Arabia on April 3, 2016; Amir

Jammu and Kashmir covering 84,000 square miles, one of the largest princely State in British India, was in fact a Dogra empire built up with the great efforts and sacrifices by Maharaja Gulab Singh and Maharaja Ranbir Singh, who extended the frontiers of India to the very borders of Tibet and Central Asia. It is this legacy of those warrior Dogra rulers, which Government of India is defending through its military might, when a part of it in Ladakh is under an invasion from China. Let us pay tributes to those great Dogra rulers who had brought all such territories under their domain of ruler ship. This state was ruled for about 100 years by the Dogras and then for about 70 years by the Kashmiris. Jammu and Kashmir was one of 562 princely states that acceded and integrated with India upon or after Independence in 1947. The 2019 revocation of special status under Article 370, and downgrading and division of into two union territories, other being Ladakh, equally also wiped out a legacy of the Dogra empire. When the British formally left on August 15, 1947, Maharaja Hari Singh, Hindu ruler of a Muslim-majority state, wanted his state to remain independent. But he signed an Instrument of Accession with the India in October that year to get support of its army against an invasion by tribal raiders backed by Pakistan. He later lived in exile in Mumbai, where he died in 1961. Even after the accession, the state had its own code of punishments, Ranbir Penal Code, named after one of Hari Singh's predecessors, Ranbir Singh. These laws were reminders of the Dogra reign. Among the most notable was the State Subject law that barred outsiders from owning land in Jammu and Kashmir. But all that was gone as Article 370 was hollowed out on August 5, 2019. The glorious status of Jammu ended with the signing of the Instrument of Accession in favor of India on October 26-27, 1947, by the Maharaja Hari Singh. There was a constant pressure from the congress leaders of that time on Maharaja that Sheikh Abdullah should be introduced into the new power mechanics of the state somehow. When there was an invasion from Pakistan on Kashmir through frontier raiders in 1947, Maharaja Hari Singh appealed to the Lord Mountbatten the Governor-General of India for Indian military aid. In his Accession Offer dated 26 October 1947 which accompanied The Instrument of Accession duly signed by him on 26 October 1947, Maharaja Hari Singh wrote "I may also inform your Excellency's Government that it is my intention to set up an interim Government and ask Sheikh Abdullah to carry the responsibilities in this emergency with my Prime Minister." Lord Mountbatten accepted the accession after a meeting of the Defense Committee on 26 October 1947. In his letter to the Maharaja Lord Mountbatten wrote "My Government and I note with satisfaction that your Highness has decided to invite Sheikh Abdullah to form an Interim Government to work with your Prime Minister." The support of Mahatma Gandhi and Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, was a key factor in getting Sheikh Abdullah appointed as Head of the emer-

gency administration by the Maharaja. As a consequence, Sheikh Abdullah was appointed head of an emergency administration by an order issued by the Maharaja which was undated except for the mention October 1947 in place of the date. He took charge as Head of the Emergency Administration on 30 October 1947. Sheikh was appointed as Prime Minister of the Jammu & Kashmir State, as the post of Chief of Administration was subsequently abolished and Sheikh Abdullah was made the Prime Minister of the State in March 1948. This happened with the constant intervention from Jawaharlal Nehru to Maharaja Hari Singh that Sheikh Abdullah should be made the Prime Minister and power of administration transferred to him fully. Thus started the step motherly treatment with the Jammu division in all the parameters of development, be it education, be it employment, be it agricultural development, be it tourism development, be it communication infrastructural development, be it cultural development, be it its representation in the legislative bodies and above all every endeavor was used and applied to keep Jammu under the monopoly of the Kashmir centric politics. This was the case with all the political parties who ruled the state, when Jammu had very little say in governance. While declaring Maharaja's birthday a holiday, is a welcome step, much more needs to be done to fulfill the long awaited aspirations of the people of Jammu. Should still the people of Jammu remain calm and continue to suffer. Probably they will not. Let the ruling political powers in Delhi feel the pulse of the people of Jammu now and rectify all previous acts of hypocritical discriminations against them and ensure that Jammu is declared a separate full-fledged state and the union territory tag removed from it. This is the right time to do so, as Jammu & Kashmir cannot remain as a perpetual union territory and today or tomorrow its statehood stature has to be restored in any case. In that case Jammu will probably refuse to be a part of the Jammu & Kashmir state for obvious reasons of discrimination, which Jammu has been facing so far. Once bitten twice shy. Why shouldn't Jammu be a separate state and suffer for the problems of Kashmir; which can be geo-political and strategically loaded with other security considerations? Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha declaring the public holiday on his birthday is a "befitting tribute" to the Maharaja. It is an achievement for the lost Dogra pride, when the people of Duggar Desh Jammu should be very much thankful to the Government of India through the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha. Displaced Kashmiri Pandits of the Valley congratulate their fellow citizens of Jammu for such an achievement, when KPs lost their pride and power in Kashmir valley in 1947, after his exit as the Maharaja of Kashmir; when the power was handed over to Sheikh Abdullah.

(The author is a Chartered Consultant Civil Engineer, passionately attached and devoted to his Motherland - Jammu & Kashmir).

## PROGRESSING J&K For developing scientific temperament among students, SED to establish VRLs in every district

With an aim of developing scientific temperament among students, the J&K School Education department (SED) is going to establish Virtual Reality Lab (VRL) in each district of Jammu and Kashmir. Virtual Reality Lab is a unique facility by which one can walk through virtual reality representations of products that are yet to be realized using virtual reality technologies. These labs would enable students and staff to visualize designs, develop immersive VR environments, and to test new VR and AR technologies. The amount of immersive learning that VR brings will take it to the next level and make it fun and engaging for students. Central Government has already sanctioned ten Virtual Reality Labs for Jammu and Kashmir to develop a scientific temperament among the students at a cost of Rs 20 to 25 Lakh each. With the help of virtual labs, students will be able to create their own login ids, as well as have leader boards to track their performance. Teachers will be able to conduct lab exams, give individual assignments and assess students as well after the establishment of virtual labs. Virtual labs can also promote conceptual understanding, especially in microscopic and abstract concepts. This ability to increase the visual impact and experience during an experiment and to visualize what is taking place can really help with student understanding. These labs will allow the students to perform experiments on educational fields, such as Physics or Chemistry or biology in 3D multiuser worlds where users are represented by avatars and they are offered a wide range of communication and collaboration on services in order to simulate efficiently a real learning experiment. Through this lab, students can work on a virtual course in a lab setting, while a course facilitator at the school monitors students and provides classroom management. Instruction is provided both synchronously and asynchronously by the Virtual teacher and through the online course.

## YOUR COLUMN Encouraging girl-students towards STEM

Dear Editor,  
It is a universally accepted reality that girls and women are systematically tracked away from science and math throughout their education, limiting their access, preparation and opportunities to go into these fields as adults. In virtually every realm of society, women's contributions have historically either been deterred or ignored. For long, nations have attempted to draw more women to the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) fields. For what happens when the female perspective is lost in science, consider that the symptoms of heart attacks widely disseminated are based on research of male subjects. Women make up only 28 per cent of the workforce in STEM and men vastly outnumber women majoring in most STEM fields in college. The gender gaps are particularly high in some of the fastest-growing and highest-paid jobs of the future, like computer science and engineering. STEM fields globally are still male-dominated, and the women who do work in those fields don't always get the recognition that they need. This makes it harder for younger women and girls, buffeted by cultural and societal pressures, to pursue careers in these fields. Supporting women STEM students and researchers should not only be an essential part of India's strategy to out-innovate, out-educate, and out-build the rest of the world; it is also important to women themselves. Women in STEM jobs earn 33 per cent more than those in non-STEM occupations and experience a smaller wage gap relative to men. And STEM careers offer women the opportunity to engage in some of the most exciting realms of discovery and technological innovation. Increasing opportunities for women in these fields is an important step towards realizing greater economic success and equality for women across the board. On the brighter side, technology firms in India have a better female to male staff ratio than the tech giants of Silicon Valley. Female role models could be having a positive influence. The relatively high proportion of women in technology roles in India is an encouraging factor; not just in India, but world-wide. There have been focused efforts by the government, industry and academia towards attracting and retaining girls and women in STEM. But a lot is yet to be done in this regard. The development of world-class talent in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics is critical for India's global leadership. It is imperative that the government understands that fostering an open and diverse scientific community that draws from an array of unique experiences and viewpoints, is necessary step to realizing the goal. In this context, it is imperative that a course correction takes place.

Vijay.