

## MISSION MAUSAM

Mission Mausam is an initiative launched by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, in 2014. The program seeks to explore and revive India's ancient maritime routes and cultural exchanges with over 39 countries along the Indian Ocean littoral, including East Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Arabian Peninsula. It aims to highlight the role that coastal communities and trade routes played in shaping cultural, religious, and commercial links between these regions.

Drawing inspiration from the seasonal monsoon winds that facilitated sea voyages and trade, Mission Mausam seeks to document the shared maritime heritage and foster deeper cultural ties with participating countries. It promotes archaeological and historical research, bringing together scholars from various nations to study ancient port cities, artifacts, and trade routes. The mission also aims to establish a transnational World Heritage nomination, promoting tourism and international cooperation.

By uncovering these connections, Mission Mausam aims to strengthen India's diplomatic, economic, and cultural relations with Indian Ocean countries.

It emphasizes not only the historical importance of maritime exchanges but also the contemporary significance of cultural diplomacy in the globalized world. Through this initiative, India seeks to reaffirm its role as a bridge between the East and West, building a future rooted in shared history.

## Transforming India's Food Processing Sector for a Viksit Bharat



■ **RAVNEET SINGH BITTU,**

The food processing sector in India stands as a beacon of our nation's ambition, symbolizing the strides we are making toward a Viksit Bharat. No longer just a contributor to the economy, this sector is rapidly transforming into a cornerstone of India's growth story. Under the visionary leadership of the Prime Minister, a masterful blend of policies, initiatives, and infrastructure development has catapulted the sector to new heights, turning it into a formidable force on the global stage. India currently boasts a thriving economy valued at USD 3.7 trillion, with ambitious goals of reaching USD 30-35 trillion economy by the nation's centenary of independence in 2047.

At the core of India's transformation lies its rich agro-climatic diversity, empowering our farmers to cultivate a remarkable variety of crops. As a global leader in producing pulses, millets, milk, wheat, rice, and a vast range of fruits and vegetables, India possesses an unparalleled resource base for value addition. This agricultural abundance, meticulously nurtured by our hardworking farmers, has sparked a wave of innovation and entrepreneurship, giving rise to a thriving food processing sector.

This sector has become a cornerstone of India's economic development, driving growth through employment generation, technological advancements, and the creation of new market opportunities. India also boasts the largest and youngest working population among the top global economies, further fuelling this dynamic transformation. By harnessing advanced processing technologies, the industry has been instrumental in reducing post-harvest losses, extending product shelf life, and ensuring that farmers receive better returns for their efforts.

As India's food processing sector continues to evolve, it not only meets international quality standards but also diversifies its offerings to cater to the ever-changing tastes and preferences of global consumers. The close synergy between agriculture and food processing has thus become a powerful engine of economic progress. It underscores the vital role that our farmers and agriculture play in shaping the nation's future, ensuring that India's agricultural produce reaches every corner of the world with enhanced value and quality. Through this integration, supported by a vibrant and youthful workforce, we witness the emergence of a resilient, globally competitive sector that is poised to lead India toward a prosperous and sustainable future.

As an inflection point, the COVID-19 pandemic revealed the sector's impressive resilience, swiftly adapting to the rising demand for processed foods. The gradual shift towards ready-to-eat, ready-to-cook, and value-added products emphasized the sector's crucial role in food security and nutrition. A strong food processing sector is essential for addressing food and nutritional security challenges in India, providing convenience, longer shelf life and better access to remote areas. It also ensures improved price realization for farmers and enhances market opportunities, making a significant impact on GDP and supporting livelihoods.

At the forefront is the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI), championing flagship programs like the PM Kisan SAMPADA Yojana (PMKSY). This initiative is transforming the sector by developing cutting-edge infrastructure and optimizing supply chain management from farm gate to retail. Complementing these efforts, the PM Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME) Scheme propels the growth of micro food processing units through support for technology upgrades, capacity building, and marketing. The Production Linked Incentive Scheme (PLIS) further energizes domestic manufacturing and export growth by offering financial rewards tied to incremental sales. Additionally, the Special Infrastructure Fund of INR 2000 crore under NABARD plays a crucial role in reinforcing the sector's infrastructure. This coordinated approach underscores a comprehensive strategy to elevate the food processing industry and related sectors, ensuring a robust, integrated, and forward-looking growth path.

India's rapidly growing economy and its demographic dividend create a unique and unprecedented opportunity for the food processing sector to reach new heights. The government's forward-thinking pro-business reforms, including strategic tax incentives, streamlined ease of doing business initiatives, and significant infrastructure development, have fostered an environment ripe for investment and growth. This supportive landscape not only attracts global attention but also positions India as a dynamic hub for innovation and expansion in the food processing industry.

After the resounding success of the previous edition in 2023, the Ministry is organizing the 3rd edition of World Food India from 19th to 22nd September 2024. In this event, stakeholders from every facet of the food industry will come together to exchange ideas, explore opportunities, and contribute to the overall development of this crucial sector. It will be one-of-a-kind gathering of manufacturers, producers, investors, policymakers and organizations from across the global food ecosystem.

World Food India 2024 serves as a platform where stakeholders converge to explore innovations, forge partnerships and chart a course towards a sustainable food future. Let us seize the opportunities before us and embark on a journey towards a more prosperous and resilient food system that benefits all stakeholders across the value chain. In this moment of convergence, we are not merely advancing an industry but embracing a shared vision of a future where innovation, sustainability, and prosperity uplift every corner of our nation.

(The writer is Minister of State, Ministry of Food Processing Industries)

### ■ SAJJAD BAZAZ

In my previous column Banks Face Drought on Deposits published in this newspaper on August 21, 2024, I pointed out an unprecedented shift in the bank depositors' behaviour; especially the young ones, who have boarded (and continue to board) the capital market platform and are investing in financial products fearlessly. The household and other retail investors' large-scale participation in the financial market reflects their growing interest and confidence in the equity (stock) market. This surge is evident through the significant rise in demat accounts and robust inflows into mutual funds. Here it is the same amount of money which used to be parked in bank deposit schemes.

The shift of household savings from banks into the stock market was vetted by the union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman while speaking at a Viksit Bharat 2047 event at BSE, Mumbai, on May 14. She said, "Households savings is finding a way into equities. This surge is evident through the significant rise in demat accounts and robust inflows into mutual funds. Here it is the same amount of money which used to be parked in bank deposit schemes."

Attractive returns than the bank deposit schemes - savings account scheme or term deposit schemes - offered by Capital market investment in equities, mutual funds, tax-saving equity-linked savings schemes (ELSS) etc. is enticing the new-age investors to plunge into the world of stock market. However, they pay very little attention to the risks associated with the investment they make in the stock market.

Since the market is crowded by novice investors, it is imperative for them to understand certain basic things of the market. They need to know how to make the most of their investments. Precisely, there are many crucial things for new-age/first-time investors to take into consideration to stay invested safely in the stock market.

It is imperative for those intending to make their initial investment to first get themselves acquainted with the stock market dynamics and have a thorough understanding of the architecture of the financial products they intend to invest in. It is equally important for them to understand the associated risks, potential returns, lock-in periods, any applicable charges etc. Once they get themselves loaded with knowledge of the financial products, they can start with their initial investments.

### ■ ER. PRABHAT KISHORE

'Udant Martand' was the first Hindi weekly paper, which was published on 30th May 1826 from Kolkata. Shri Yugal Kishore Shukla single-handedly carried out the work of publishing this first paper of Hindi in a resourceless state for the benefit of Indians. The notable verse printed on this paper was :-

Dinkar Kar Pragatat Dinhin Yah Prakash Ath Yam

Aiso Ravi Aab Ugaun Mahi, Jehi Sukh Ko Dham.

Aant Kamalani Vigsit Karat Badhat Chav Chit Vaam

Let Nam Ya Patra Ko Hot Harsh Aru Kam.

Born in Kanpur in the year 1788, Shuklaji was the Proceeding Reader in Diwani Kacheri of Kolkata and published 'Udant Martand' for the Hindi loving people. Then its price was two rupees per annum. Looking at the news and other materials published in the paper; it appears thatthe foundation of journalism in those days was laid on struggle, sacrifice and fearlessness. Apart from domestic, foreign and local news, comments and articles on humor and satire were also published. It contained the appointment of government officials, fortnightly letters, time of arrival and departure of ships and the market rates of Kolkata. He was confident that this newspaper would get the full support of the government and the public and would continue its journey uninterrupted. But his hope was not fulfilled. As a result, due to his limited resources and meager capital, he had to close down the paper after one and a half years with its last issue of December 4, 1827. In its

### ■ VIJAY GARG

Livestock rearing and organic farming have been integral parts of agricultural development. Along with the success, several concerns arise as to the proper and humane treatment of animals in the state. Several parts of India especially the remote areas, have rugged terrains which are levelled by the draft animals like bulls. Continuous use of these animals without proper care can lead to fatigue, injuries and malnutrition. Moreover, in small-scale dairy farming practices that are common in the state, issues like poor nutrition for animals, lack of clean water, and inadequate shelter persist. Also, in remote areas, access to veterinary services is limited, leading to untreated diseases and poor animal health.To combat these issues moving forward, this article will help provide an insight on the importance of animal welfare and its benefits on ethical farming. Efforts to improve animal welfare and ethical farming in India should focus on increasing education about sustainable farming practices, improving access to veterinary care, and ensuring that both farm animals and wildlife are treated ethically as part of the state's overall commitment to environmental sustainability. As the global food industry evolves, the spotlight is increasingly focused on how farm animals are treated.

Women-Centric Schemes: The Heartbeat of india Progress under PM The Landslides Animal welfare is no longer a peripheral concern-it is central to the future of farming.

## Are You A First-Time Investor?

## Be cautious. The market has volatility in its nature. Evaluate your risk appetite.

However, they need to align their investment with the time horizon - short, medium, or long-term - to achieve their financial objective. This will offer vital guidance to the investor not only about the amount to invest, the duration of the investment, the types of investment products to consider; but will also help them to evaluate their risk tolerance and their liquidity needs (the ability to pull out of the investment as and when required) .

In other words, investments should be closely tied to financial objectives. And one should start gradually, and progressively increase his investment exposure, ensuring that his/her investments contribute effectively to achieving the desired goals within the desired time-frame. It is prudent to refrain from allocating all capital to a single investment that captivates investors' interest at first glance. Instead, one should aim to diversify his/her investments across a range of instruments that encompass various asset classes and risk profiles, each offering different potential returns. This strategy can help the investors to manage the overall risk of their investment portfolio and facilitate consistent, favorable returns, ultimately aiding them in achieving their financial goals in a timely manner.

It is also advisable not to borrow funds for investment purposes. Investing should ideally be done with the money one has earned and saved after fulfilling his/her financial responsibilities.

Meanwhile, volatility is the permanent companion of the market. The market has failed even the best of the experts. However, there are certain basic guidelines which an investor needs to follow to negotiate the volatility and stay safe in the market. In this context, the following is an extract from a chapter in my forthcoming book Straight Talk - Decoding Contemporary Banking, which is soon to be launched in two volumes.

How should an investor evaluate selling and buying decisions of stocks?

You have to keep it in mind if buying at the right price is vital; selling too is equally a vital link. It's selling which decides your profit and loss in the investment matters. If you can't sell at the appropriate time, the benefits of proper buying disappear.

No one wants a loss while being in the stock market. But if it happens, don't let your ego get in the way of making the right decision. Most of the time, the best course of action is to cut your losses and move on to the next deal.

Meanwhile, selling a stock is triggered by two things - either it may be personal reasons or may be market driven. You may find your risk tolerance reaching to maximum and you immediately off load the stock and reinvest in a new stock. Sometimes an 'unexpected' happens and you need cash to negotiate that 'unexpected'. So you lay your hand on your stock for this financial emergency. Or you may find the stocks in your investment portfolio not matching your moral and ethical values and you sell them. The stock falling to unexpected levels are some of the market driven reasons which may prompt you to sell the shares. There may be other valid reasons to sell , but it's important to evaluate your selling decision in the context of all the alternatives and consequences.

Precisely, when a sale results in a loss, and is accompanied by an understanding of why that loss occurred, it too may be considered a good sell. Share market experts say selling is bad when it is dictated by fear. They want investors to always focus on selling dictated by rational reasons of valuations and price.

What should retail investors do to insulate themselves from the risk of losing their money?

In the given circumstances, it makes sense to route through your investment in the market through professional financial advisors. It has assumed significance and you have to think about the importance of a financial advisor as you think about a doctor who prescribes medicines for treatment of your illness. Precisely, a financial advisor is like a medical doctor for an investor.

Before making any investment, it would never be a bad idea to have an expert opinion of a professional financial advisor.

For example, you should not go into the stock market without a professional stock market consultant. This way you can lay your hands on profitable investment tools and a worry-free future with respect to your financial strength. You may think about yourself as a knowledgeable investor for having access to financial information on the internet, but the fact is that advice from a financial advisor in the matters of the stock market definitely makes a difference.

Today the market is flooded with varied financial instruments and it is impossible for an individual to understand everything that is available for them. In this crowd of financial instruments, individuals cannot pick what is best for them and it's only a good financial advisor who can help an investor to put the right investments in place.

Since financial markets are unpredictable, we cannot say financial advisors will give foolproof advice. However, his advice based on your particular situation and goals can help you to minimize the financial risks. To get maximum out of your financial advisor, you have to at least let him know about your level of conservativeness and your appetite for risk.

Don't forget to make your financial advisor understand you better so that his financial plan for you includes a diversified portfolio of various instruments to meet your goals. It's the financial advisor who will help you to strike a balance by making you aware of various options.

Let me also have a word about market analysts. Of course,analysts in today's markets are key to important sources of information. But investors should understand the potential conflicts of interest they might face. Some analysts work for firms that underwrite or own the securities of the companies the analysts cover. Analysts themselves sometimes own stocks in the companies they cover-either directly or indirectly. So what matters is the investor's own application of mind while playing in the markets. You as an investor should not exclusively rely on an analyst's recommendation when deciding whether to buy, hold, or sell a stock. Instead, you should also do your own research about the company whose stocks you are going to purchase. Don't overstep your financial circumstances while making a decision to invest in the financial market. However, an analyst may have a conflict of interest, but it does not mean that his recommendation is always faulty. It's up to you as an investor to assess whether the recommendation is wise for you. You should educate yourself to make sure that any investment you choose matches your goals and risk bearing capacity. It's to be noted that engaging a financial advisor doesn't exonerate you to remain aloof from your investment portfolio. Once you are on board with a financial advisor and your portfolio is put together; you need to monitor that portfolio. You should have a regular performance review of your investment portfolio with your financial advisor: Don't forget to update your advisor about any life situation change which you may undergo at any point of time.

(The author is a veteran journalist/columnist.

He is former Head of Corporate Communication & CSR and Internal Communication & Knowledge Management Departments of J&K Bank)

# Architects of Hindi Journalism

concluding issue, he expressed his anguish as follows:-

Aaj Diwastau Ugi Chukyon Maratand Udant. Astachal Ko Jaat Hai Din Aab Aant.

Even after the closure of 'UdantMartand', the spirit of journalism continued to strike in Shuklaji's heart. As a result, in 1850, after collecting some money, he started the publication of another paper named 'Shamyadant Martand'. This was a shining symbol of Shuklaji'svibrant journalism. But misfortunes follow him again and due to lack of capital, it has to be closed after two years. It was the courage of Shuklaji's hardworking personality that he took the initiative to publish the Hindi newspaper without any kind of government assistance. The self-respecting nature of Shuklaji was never acceptable to bow down to the British bureaucracy. This remarkable man, who single-handedly inaugurated the door of Hindi journalism, died in 1853 in Kolkata.

The first two decades of 20th century is famous as the 'Dwivedi Yug' in the history of Hindi journalism. Acharya Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi, the promoter of literary and cultural journalism, took the editorship of 'Saraswati' in 1903 and continued to edit it till 1920. In this periodhe gave new direction and dimension to journalism, due to which this period is termed as 'DwivediYug'.

The publication of 'Saraswati' started from the Indian Press,Prayagin January 1900. Initially, its editorial board consisted of Babu Kartik Prasad Khatri, Kishori Lal Goswami, Babu Jagannath Prasad Das B.A., Babu Radhakrishna Das and Babu Shyam Sundar Das B.A. The motto of the magazine was:

Saraswati Sriti Mahati Na Diya Tam.

There were essays on 59 subjects in the first issue of 'Saraswati'.

The last lines of itseditorial are worth praising: - "Due to the immense compassion of the Supreme Karunik Almighty Jagdishwar such a unique opportunity has been received that today we are excited with new enthusiasm in the service of the spiritual people of Hindi and have come with a new gift whose Name is Saraswati.

In the issue of 'Saraswati', an essay by Babu Radhakrishna Das was related to Bharatendu Harishchandra. In this sequence, the author has discussed the motto of 'Kavi Vachan Sudha', whose opening lines are as :-"Khal Gagan Se Sajjan Dukhi, Mati Rohi, Hari Param Tir Hai. Up Dharma Chhutai Swat Nij, Bharat Gahai Kar Dukh Bhai". Unmayak Prasad Vajpayee, the exclusive of modern journalism, has written in relation to 'Saraswati' in the history of newspapers: - "In 1900, the President of Indian Press of Prayag, Babu Chintamani Ghosh published 'Saraswati'. In those days a message printed on 'Saraswati' was as - 'K a s h i N a g a r i P r a c h a r a n i S a b h a D w a r a A n u m o d i t'. This meant that Saraswati had the support of the Sabha. Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi used to send articles and poems in 'Saraswati' even from his service period as Telegraph Inspector in GIP Railway in Jhansi (probably 1901 or 1902). In the year 1903, when he became the editor of 'Saraswati', the line 'Kashi Nagari Pracharani Sabha Dwara Anumodit' was removed from the paper. During the editorship of Dwivedi, 'Saraswati' made great

progress and in the Hindi world, his essays became fierce. He became a source of inspiration for Hindi writers and journalists. He wrote many comments in Saraswati on the ability to edit and the education system of editorial arts. In the year 1907, with the efforts of Mahamana Madan Mohan Malaviya, one of the propagator of Indian journalism, the publication of a Hindi weekly named 'Sahitya' was started from Prayag. Initially Malaviyaji himself was its editor, but when he became more busy in public works, Rajarshi Purushotam Das Tandon took over its editorship. During the First World War it was briefly converted to a daily, which was again made a weekly.

Around 1907, 'Hind Keshri' came out from Nagpur in the editorship of Madhav RaoSapre, which contained Hindi translation of Lokmanya Tilak's writings. In the year 1909 Tilak and Sapre were tried for sedition, but surprisingly Sapre apologized. Unhappy with this happening, the publication of Hind Keshri was stopped.

Many Hindi papers came out during the First World War (1914-1918), but most of them were discontinued after the end of the war. Only 'Vishwamitra' which came out from Kolkata in 1915 with the effort of Shri Moolchand Agrawal, is still being published today. It was also published from Mumbai, Delhi and Pataliputra, but later it was closed. In contemporary or later dates, literary journalists like Baburao Vishnu Paradkar, Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, Bharatendu Harishchandra and others gave a new direction to journalism with their writings.

(Author is a technocrat & educationist.)

# Increasing Importance of Animal Welfare and Ethical Farming Practices

Ethical farming practices, which prioritise the well-being of livestock, are not only essential for the humane treatment of animals, but also offer tangible benefits for farmers, including enhanced productivity and greater market appeal.Why Does Animal Welfare Matter?At its core, animal welfare is about ensuring that farm animals are brought up in conditions that meet their physical and psychological needs. This means providing ample space, clean water, nutritious food, and access to veterinary care. Additionally, it involves creating environments where animals can engage in natural behaviours like cows grazing in pastures, chickens roaming freely, and pigs rooting in the soil. Research has shown that when animals are raised in environments that prioritise their well-being, they tend to be healthier and more productive. For instance, cows that are allowed to graze freely often produce more milk of higher quality. Similarly, chickens raised in humane conditions are less prone to disease, leading to better egg production. In essence, when animals thrive, farms do too. In India, several organisations focus on animal health and ethical treatment:1. People for Animals (PFA) : Rescues animals, runs shelters, conducts sterilisation/vaccination drives for stray dogs, and advocates for animal rights and cruelty prevention.2. Anti-Rabies and Animal Health Program: A government-international partnership that focuses on rabies control, street dog vaccinations, sterilisation, and public education on humane treatment.3. Animal

Husbandry and Veterinary Services Provides veterinary care, promotes ethical livestock farming, and offers health services to farm animals. The Elements of Ethical Farming Ethical farming goes beyond the basic care of animals-it encompasses a holistic approach to farming that considers the impact on the environment, society, and the animals themselves. Few key components of ethical farming include:1. Humane Handling: Ethical farms avoid practices that cause unnecessary stress or harm to animals, such as overcrowding or harsh handling during transport and slaughter. 2. Pasture-Based Systems: Allowing animals to graze and roam freely in open spaces not only improves their quality of life, but also enhances the soil health and biodiversity on the farm.3. Organic and Natural Feeding: Ethical farms often emphasise organic feed, avoid the use of antibiotics and synthetic hormones, and ensure that animals have access to a natural diet.4. Respectful Slaughter: Adopting humane slaughter practices is a key aspect of ethical farming, ensuring that animals are treated with dignity throughout their lives. Benefits for Farmers Adopting ethical farming practices not only involves the right treatment of animals, but it also brings about significant advantages to farmers. Healthier, less stressed animals exhibit higher productivity, leading to better growth rates, higher yields and thus, enhanced productivity. Eg: Stress free pigs have better efficiency and well treated dairy cows produce more milk. Another advantage

for farmers is that they can enter higher-value markets where customers are willing to pay extra for labels like 'Certified Humane' and 'Animal Welfare Approved'. This growing market will help farmers increase their income. Moreover, ethical farming practices can enhance a farm's reputation. Farmers who prioritise animal welfare can build strong relationships with customers, retailers, and even animal welfare organisations, leading to greater business opportunities. Overcoming Challenges Transitioning to ethical farming practices does require an investment of time, money, and effort. Eg: Upgrading facilities to provide more space or implementing new feeding systems can be costly. Additionally, there may be a lot to learn as farmers adapt to new methods and technologies. However, the long-term benefits-both ethical and economic-outweigh these initial challenges. Ethical farming practices can lead to more resilient farm operations, better relationships with consumers, and a stronger market presence. In conclusion, animal welfare and ethical farming practices are no longer just trends, they are becoming standards by which modern farms are judged. By adopting these practices, farmers can not only improve the lives of their animals but also enhance their own livelihoods. As consumer demand for ethically produced food continues to rise, those who embrace these practices will be well-positioned to thrive in the years to come.

(The Writer is Retired Principal and Educational columnist malout)