

Jammu- State Cancer Institute

Jammu State Cancer Institute to be ready by early next year. Setup at a cost of around 120 crores, it is planned to be a state of art institute with all ultra modern facilities and equipment, right from diagnosis/treatment to physiotherapy, factually one of the best. It is really heartening to see Jammu map having AIIMS and Cancer Institute, a fact that present regime has given much required importance to Jammu Healthcare infra which was lagging behind miles as compared to Kashmir valley for decades, no discrimination of allocation of health projects now, be it DRDO hospitals or AIIMS or GMCs or even Cancer Institute. Jammu is still facing severe health infra issues with the result relatives rushing their patients to neighboring Punjab for even minor diseases. Science has changed the life of humans, more comfortable, improved longevity, almost all infectious diseases controlled now a days, but it's also a fact that non communicable diseases, number one cardiac diseases followed by cancer, are major health wreckers these days. It is a shocking fact that more than 2 million registered cancer cases are getting added each year in India with much younger affected age group, normally diagnosed at later stage with the result poor recovery record. Jammu is no exception as with low level of awareness in the population, lack of screening programmes, lack of diagnostic facilities locally and vast distances to travel, cancer has no doubt ruined numerous families in Jammu, more so in rural area where almost nil facilities are available. With State Cancer Institute going to start soon the focus must now shift simultaneously to place of stay for patients and relatives as it takes much longer time taken for investigations and middle and poor class have limited finances not enough for long outside stay, luckily thanks Ayushman Bharat card which comes handy as far as medicines and treatment. Another important aspect is recruitment of staff, especially best ones in the field of health pan India. It is indeed difficult to have set team of medical, surgical and radiation oncologists, pain and palliative care experts and auxiliary services. Fact is Doctors in Jammu and Kashmir are far less paid as compared to other neighboring states with the result total talent migration. Administration must look into this at the earliest. Recruitment of pharmacists, technicians, nurses should be full time unlike new Emergency Ward of GMC Jammu being taken care by adhoc staff, some even overage now for job, sorry state of affairs indeed with no explanation or excuses. Prevention is best cure as such focus must also be on educating people about cancerous effects of environmental pollution, tobacco, clean water and personnel hygiene especially women. Food adulteration is major contributor in cancer as such departments responsible for adulteration checking must also be made active. Ample space must be allocated to all import diagnostics and testing labs/equipment. Jammu official departments has unique distinction of overlooking things even at conceptual level itself and our upcoming Cancer Institute is no exception. With even COVID oxygen fiasco, it seems nothing was learnt as engineering wing has made no provisions for oxygen generation plant or even a must requisite for any medical facility, Sewage Treatment Plant.

It is just matter of time now, building is ready, all necessary equipment purchases in pipeline, every aspect has been taken care. SCI is almost ready to serve masses. Gol has given us one of the best possible Cancer Institute, onus of taking it to exemplary height lies with local administration now.

Interstate water disputes

India despite 1.4 billion population is rich in resources but still certain natural resources like air and water has to be shared naturally as and when required. Unfortunately, in present scenario, both invisible air and water are bone of contention between different states of India. It is really tragic while we Indians are fighting among ourselves for water distribution and much of the water flows down unutilised to oceans. Climate change has been showing its true colors too much these days with unusual excess rains in one part of India while other adjacent part facing draught like situation. Interstate water disputes are not new and factually in 1956 itself Inter-State River Water Disputes (ISRWD) Act was passed and got amended in 2002. When the concerned States cannot resolve disputes through negotiations then the Central Government constitutes a water dispute tribunal for resolving the water dispute. A peek into different tribunals formed reveals with scarcity of water in present century more interstate water disputes happened. Our own Shahpur- Kandi project got delayed for decades due to Jammu Kashmir- Punjab water dispute, much of Ravi river water flowing to Pakistan but Jammu not getting its share. Same is the story of Sutlej-Yamuna Link Canal dispute. Around 80% of water is used in irrigation in India and in absence of proper rains and canal water, ground water is being used beyond capacity with the result ground water table going meters down per year creating even drinking water scarcity.

During India Water Week, both President Murmu and Vice President Dhankar have rightly raised the issue of interstate water sharing. These disputes should be settled "in favour of none" and practically go against the interest of the country and people at large. Gol can intervene on this subject under Indian Constitutional Act 262. There has to be no politics on this issue and sooner the respective States resolve this issue better it will be for States, public and in totality for India.

Transforming Jammu by introspecting beyond partisan agendas

Lt Gen Bhopinder Singh (Retd)

The bicameral legislative assembly of the 'State' of Jammu & Kashmir was dissolved on 21st November 2018, only to be reorganized into a lesser framework of a unicameral legislature that was in consonance with the reduced status as a 'Union Territory'. It was the second time in less than 75 years that the landmass and relevance of the greater 'State' of Jammu and Kashmir had been cut, especially in consequence for the southern region of Jammu. Earlier the honour of the largest 'Princely State' of the Raj Days including the regions of Ladakh, Gilgit-Baltistan, Aksai Chin and areas currently under Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir (POK) were partly severed from the grand Jammu & Kashmir State, due to the nefarious designs of the hostile neighbourhood and erstwhile colonists. Certain amount of pusillanimity and miscalculations in the handling of the aftermath of the 1947-48 war with Pakistan didn't help matters, either. Pre-independence, Jammu had been the undisputed epicenter of the glorious, inclusive and progressive Dogra Kingdom, that was effectively diminished and forgotten in the national consciousness, post-independence.

Since Independence, Jammu region has continued playing its patriotic role of defending the nation with its blood, unflinchingly - unbeknownst to most citizenry of India, the Dogras of the larger Duggar lands have the singular distinction of the highest number of gallantry awards if added collectively from the martyrs list from catchment Regiments like the Jammu & Kashmir Rifles, Dogras, Punjab, Jammu & Kashmir Rifles and in other 'Uniforms' of all possible lanyards and denominations. Even though most in the country would still

think and attribute that preeminence of gallantry to States like Rajasthan, Punjab or Haryana - this too is symptomatic of the fabled reticence, underlying reserve and civilisational humility that besets the Dogra's martial identity, which is often taken for granted. The net result of this lack of 'marketing' (in an era of 'pitches') by Dogras and to the wider expanse of Duggar lands spilling into tracts of Himachal Pradesh and Punjab is that they remain a blurred, indistinguishable, and underappreciated, considering the sacrifice of these lands since cons. It has been the first, foremost and the bloodiest frontier against the invasive forces and hordes that threatened the larger part of what is now territorially, India. While most of the country is well versed with warriors like Rana Pratap, Shivaji, Ranjit Singh, Rani Jhansi and so many other deserved heroes/heroines, the simply unmatched heroics (even if assessed by independent and unbiased historians in terms of conquests, topography of operations and other elements of militaristic challenges) of a General Zorawar Singh is travesty of justice - and to only blame the local politics after independence is basically ostrich syndrome, as the blame must accrue onto the Dogras themselves who haven't made a compelling, persuasive and 'well marketed' case of their own heroics. In recent times, the healthy re-imagining of the relatively unsung heroes like the Assamese Ahoms, Birs Munda or Babu Kunwar Singh is a case in point - whereas the Dogra story line languishes. Sadly, and increasingly, it is known only as a narrow religious 'identity' (which too is incorrect) which is made to contrast sharply with the supposed religious identity of its northern 'K' landmass of hyphenated identity, in the recently reduced 'Union Territory'. Too simplistic a narrative.

The purely whittled and bigoted 'divide' between the North and South of J&K is neither part of the glorious Dogra culture, heritage or Kingdom, but only a 'divide' that helps galvanises electoral passions in the 'rest of the country' - it may even have elements of undeniable truths, but it remains an infinitely poor, petty and revisionist identity for an otherwise people of much unsung secular-ity, dignity and unrecognised loftiness. The fact that the many within the Duggar lands fell for this simplistic 'divide' as the only reason of blame and misery has led to the perpetuation of the ensuing stalemate, that haunts the Duggar lands. The essential conversations have only been in the realm of 'us-versus-them' or 'Jammu-versus-Valley' - this in many ways facilitates the untruths as propagated by Pakistanis, at all forums. It has become a reductive narrative that almost got sanctified the shortness-of-spirit posited from across the Line-of-Control (LOC) or by our own lazy politicians, within. The day Jammu gets out of its fixation with an undeniable 'part' of its own in the North and moves on to articulate and shape the right questions and answers for itself, is the day when the essential storyline and fate for the much deserving resuscitation of Duggar land, changes.

In the context of India's constitutional framework, the empowerment to Indian citizens within the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir to elect their 'own' leaders and shape their 'own' destiny as they deem their 'own' priority (as opposed to what 'Delhi' decides), will be through the next legislative assembly elections, tentatively in 2023. But the onus of defining what ought to be that 'own', is extremely important - If yet again, the said 'own' gets divided into the age-old, regressive and thoroughly unproductive prism of religiosity or

'Jammu-versus-Valley' script - nothing will change substantially, and more of the same will continue.

Jammu needs to go beyond emotional demand (relevant, but not critical) e.g., requesting for a state holiday for a former leader's birthday, demanding Bharat Ratna for another, restoration of old Durbar infrastructure etc.,. All these may be emotively important but that does not tantamount to tangible transformation for the future. What Jammu needs is a hard, time bound, initiative-based economic plan - it doesn't need vacuous generalities like 'Smart City', it needs a financial number to be specifically committed with transparent implementation schedule. It needs specific vision, unprecedented imagination, and sheer scale of on-ground initiatives.

It needs to go beyond partisan language, passions and most importantly 'packaging' of politics e.g., the vision of Jammu Smart City is, "Transforming Jammu into a sustainable and economically vibrant city focusing on tourism, quality of life and trade by leveraging its heritage and location" - now, with over 2/3rd projects already completed, it would be safe to assume that a substantial transformation of the socio-economic-infrastructure-civic status of the region, has happened? Has it happened, think again? Is the local citizenry satisfied with the changes beyond the brouhaha of partisan agendas? Has the employment (which ought to be the most pertinent issue) issues been addressed? Has the traditional occupation of 'Soldering' for the region been satisfactorily addressed with Agniweer plan? Have new industries or corporations announced transformational investments? Have new economic zones come up? Is the society less divided and less polarised than earlier?

Indeed Article 370 is done and dust-

ed, but looking beyond its national ramifications, important to introspect on its ostensible benefits to Jammu? Most people often invoke the delimitation exercise as the new 'manna' that could deliver Jammu, even though what ought to be a standard and institutionalised exercise of reorganisation of the electorate framework is also given a context of partisan/religious angularity - it is more of the same, yet again!

Neighbouring Himachal Pradesh which is going to the electoral hustings and was decidedly the lesser region of Duggar lands in terms of socio-economic conditions vis-à-vis Jammu given its outlying status of the Duggar lands, has made far more impressive strides - one of the reasons is their ability to delink national and regional issues, and fight for each with equal sincerity and not fall prey to chicanery of national/regional parties. It kept rotating governments and partisan outfits to keep each on their toes - but Jammu seems to have become a hub for one sort of political persuasion, just as the Valley has become for another sort of persuasion, and the proverbial twin never meet.

Time for Jammu to navel gaze and accept that all national/regional parties and their incestuous coalitions have done precious nothing since independence. If anything, then they have invested in 'dividing' and both, Jammu and the Valley have regrettably fallen for it, and basically emerged as a laboratory to play larger national politics, at their cost. Vote for honest, dedicated and 'inclusive' individuals (irrespective of the parties) and not for sweeping statements of bravado, jingoism, divide and future-pointing dreams, especially when the reality of today remains unarticulated, unfixed and unaddressed.

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Harsh Dev Singh

Whenever discussions are held on present day politics and politicians, I am reminded of a famous movie "Aaj ka MLA" starring Rajesh Khanna in the lead. The film epitomizes the modern politician in true colours. The portrayal of a modern political leader/MLA was so vivid and realistic that the film became an instant hit. Thereafter many other movies, serials and web series have been made on politics and politicians which very effectively describe our present day leadership including MLAs, MPs and Ministers in the true perspective. Rightly the people are fast losing faith in such an institution.

Politics has been pictured variedly and defined in multiple ways but the essence has always remained the same. A game of shocks and surprises. A play field of scoundrels. A dirty game. A hobby for clever characters who do not speak truth even by mistake. The conduct of public life for private advantage. The last resort of a ruffian and so on and so forth. The said interpretations of politics and politicians have become most befitting in the present era than ever before. Gone are the days when honesty, probity, morality, truth were the hallmarks for a successful political career. Once considered highest virtues they do not even show up anywhere near a today's prospered politician. A successful MLA today is the one who is adept in the art of manipulation and manoeuvrability, who can speak lies with ease, who never means what he says and never says what he means. Rather than practising morality, he needs to be articulate in preaching morality. Truthfulness, consistency and honesty are no longer considered as virtues. They are rather construed as negative traits in the character of modern 'neta' who seeks to pursue a career in politics. And consequently such characters are fast becoming extinct from the present day political arena.

Politics today is the pursuit of public life for personal gains. Just as you need to study law or medicine to be a lawyer or physician, you need to study your-own interests to become a modern politician in this new political era. Inventive acronyms, deceptive adroitness, jugglery and hollow rhetoric are the mantras for success in today's politics. The more morbid emotionalism and paroxysm you create by your platitudes and seductive slogans, the more successful will you

'Aaj Ka MLA'

be. To reach the pinnacle of your career in political life you don't have to endure the black board bungle of formal schooling. For politics does not require any educational qualification. It is the only profession in the country which offers lucrative livelihood to its practitioners without any educational paraphernalia in the form of degrees, diplomas etc.

Politics of today has transformed in its functioning, character and facade. Rather than people recommending him as a leader, the modern MLA

raphy, science and so on. And after he gets elected, his followers present his words as the gospel truth. He can't be incorrect or dishonest. He has a battery of minions to vouch for his truthfulness and honesty. He often dishes out his own definitions of caste, religion, history as per his political expediency and convenience. The only condition is that he should be able to create mass hysteria by his rhetoric.

Hollow statements and statistical jugglery are his watchwords. A successful MLA is the one who specializes in verbal gymnastics. Unrelent-

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today portrays himself as the ultimate. He could go to any extent to project his image and to present himself as the real messiah of the people especially of the poor and underprivileged. His political opponents can never match his competence and charisma. He is the idol politician while his adversary is the devil incarnate. He has coined a new grammar for political campaigns. He can attack his opponent left and right levelling the wildest of allegations and unsubstantiated muck raking against him without any qualms of conscience in a bid to score political brownie points. Such vitriolic attacks could extend to even mother, father, brother, sister, spouse, children and even to the ancestors of his political opponents. No bars, no red lines. Gone are the days of so-called political morality. Power is the ultimate goal and the arena is free for all with no rules in the game.

The politician can distort history, civics, geog-

ing harangues is the staple on which he feeds and thrives. He is the one who never speaks the truth even by mistake. He likes to keep the fire of controversies and contentious issues burning even after coming to power. For no other issue can be as effective for diverting the attention of the general masses and that of his electorates. After winning elections he is altogether a different individual. His mannerism, body language undergoes a complete metamorphosis. The humility and grace of yesterday gives way to arrogance and disdain. The pre-election servant of people often calling himself as "Sipahi" and "Chowkidar" becomes the all powerful and unquestionable despot who scripts the destiny of his erstwhile "Masters". He takes pride in blatant and brazen displays of authoritarianism. He does not like to remember his pre-election slogans and conveniently forgets the promises which he made to the voters. The Election manifesto for him is

a waste paper after elections. He does not even like to recall his promises and is averse to those who try to remind him of the same. "My way or the Highway" is the rule to be followed after his ascendance to power in the Jurisdiction in which he rules. No one can question his policies for the reprisals and consequences could be disastrous. The state machinery and administrative paraphernalia is often treated by a private limited company by him where the rule of whim prevails over rule of law.

The present day MLAs have surpassed all their mentors and predecessors in their mastery of modern politics. We have several J&K leaders who have proved their 'talent' in the quick grasp of this art and science of politics. And then there are those Jammu based leaders who once proclaimed to be champions of the Jammu cause but now have jettisoned their parties as well as their pious slogans for their personal expediences and the yet un-reaped fruits of power. Hardly any qualms of conscience or principles whatsoever. Needless to mention that these are the very politicians who have been specializing in the art of changing colours like the chameleon. We know of grasshoppers. What we have in the new age as 'netas' are political hoppers. Jumping from one party to the other in their frantic pursuits for greener pastures. Hardly any qualms of conscience. And hardly any commitment for a political philosophy or principles. Changing sides with changing times. One party, 2nd party, third party, fourth party and so on and so forth. Likewise, the other "successful" politicians of the state particularly of Jammu region, who gave loud slogans of political morality, surpassed even their seniors in their mastery of modern politics, with all their solemn pledges having turned into somersaults with the passage of time and change of situation. And they chose to abandon their respective parties at the first available opportunity to embrace those who were earlier labelled by them as anti people and even anti-nationals. Having analysed the behaviour of modern politicians of the new era, we can therefore safely conclude that politics is now certainly the first, the second and also the last resort of a ruffian.

Of course. There are exceptions to this general rule. It is, however, for the people to differentiate and give the final verdict.

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Re-structuring of farms into Tourism Model

Dr. Parvani Rekhi

As a crossbreed concept combining the essentials of the tourism and agriculture industries, agri-tourism can be exploited as a structure of special interest tourism, highlighting the distinctive travel experiences and activities that people can have in rural settings. Agri-tourism is a subsector of the tourism industry and a subset of rural tourism that uses a diverse array of farms as tourist destinations. It supports farm activities targeting tourists, including farm demonstrations, farm visits, farm training, etc., as well as on-site value-adding and sales of farm products. Agri-tourism occurs on a working farm or agricultural plant and is conducted for the visitors' enjoyment and to generate supplemental income for farmers. Agri-tourism and nature-tourism farms might include a diverse array of activities such as outdoor recreation, farming experiences, cultural entertainment, hospitality services, and on-farm direct sales. The term agri-tourism has often been used alternatively with agrotourism, farm tourism, farm-based tourism, and rural tourism. It may be characterized as "rural enterprises which integrate both a working farm environment and a commercial tourism element. Farm enterprise diversification has become an approach for small farms to remain practical, particularly during high risks facing situations of modern-day farming. It

includes different and integrated activities aiming to improve the environment and agricultural production, combines agriculture and forestation, and focuses on cultivating cash crops and improving soil quality and biodiversity, increasing the variety and quantity of farm products. With farmers becoming more market-oriented in response to declining farm incomes and rural restructuring, the reorientation of farming away from production to more entrepreneurial models of agriculture emerged. Thus, as diversification becomes an almost anticipated practice, farmers are being accepted as entrepreneurial, having to develop new skills and competencies to remain sustainable. This form of niche tourism has been considered as a growth industry in many parts of the world including India, Australia, Canada, the United States, and the Philippines. In India, the first idea of Agrotourism was operational in 2004 Baramati Agri Tourism Centre under the guidance of Pandurang Taware who received the National Tourism Award from the President of India, for the most innovative Tourism Product.

Why Agri-tourism?

First, rapid climate change and tourism induced pollution level and GHG emissions have resulted in rising demand for natural and rural destinations as tourist attractions which can bring eco-friendly tourism experiences such as agri-tourism into the mainstream busi-

ness.

Second, India's agriculture has been under stress due to increased input costs, volatile returns, climatic adversaries, land fragmentation, and so on. Although it is a mainstay of the economy, farmers have shifted to other industries in search of alternative livelihoods and income diversification and Agri-tourism can address the 'hollowing out' effect of rural decline and restore farmers' confidence in agriculture and ecosystem-based services.

Agri-tourism can serve a dual purpose of supporting incomes of farmers and create novel tourism forms for tourists contributing to economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainability.

Fourth, as an emerging segment of the tourism industry, agri-tourism brings in value propositions in various business segments. For example, market is split into activity, sales channel, and region/spaces. The activity segment categorises this market into on-farm sales, outdoor recreation, educational tourism, and so on.

Need and Importance of Agri-tourism in India:

It is said that agri-tourism is a better way to know about the traditional agricultural farming activities which can bring us very close to mother-nature and also very essential thing for a sustainable living on this planet. Today, Indian cities are facing the problem of overcrowd and

environment pollution. Now, it has become an assumed fact that agri-tourism can give us a relief from the hectic life of urban areas. That is why; agri-tourism, eco-tourism and rural tourism are emerging as key sectors of tourism business in India. It has been proved that due importance and need of agri-tourism on the following basis: Agri-tourism is a sustainable form of tourism business. It provides an additional source of income for the farmers. It gives prestige to rural life and creates new jobs at local levels. It gives an opportunity to urban tourists to escape from hectic life of the city. It enhances the quality of life for local residence. It gives the tourists glimpse of village ambience, local cuisine, culture and art. It expects the active involvement from the tourist, rather than a passive spectator, so a bond between guest-host is strengthened. It is eco-friendly which is very essential in the present environmental scenario. It makes tourists familiar with the rural life and roots of early civilization.

Benefits of Agri-tourism

The potential benefits of agri-tourism development extend to farmers, rural communities, and tourism operators.

Benefits for Farmers: For farmers agri-tourism is a potential way of:

- * Expanding farm operations;
- * Using farm-based products in new and innovative ways;
- * Improving farm revenue streams;

- * Developing new consumer market niches;
- * Increasing awareness of local agricultural products;
- * Increasing appreciation of the importance of maintaining agricultural land;

Benefits for Communities: From a community perspective, agri tourism can be a vehicle for:

- * Generating additional revenue for local businesses and services from tourists;
- * Upgrading / revitalizing community facilities for residents and visitors;
- * Increasing protection of rural landscapes and natural environments for tourists and residents;
- * Helping preserve and revitalize local traditions, art and craft;
- * Promoting inter-regional, inter-cultural communication and understanding;

Benefits for Tourism Operators: From a tourism industry view point, agri tourism can be a means of:

- * Diversifying the mix of tourism products and services available to visitors;
- * Increasing tourism flows into attractive rural regions;
- * Increasing season length during traditionally off-peak business periods;
- * Uniquely positioning rural regions in key tourism markets; and
- * Bringing more non-local currency to local businesses.

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