JAMNALAL BAJAJ FOUNDATION

Dr. Dinkarrao Govindrao Pawar

Recipient of Jamnalal Bajaj Award for Application of Science and Technology for Rural Development-1993

Born: 13.6.1930; Educational Qualification: B.Sc. (Agri) D.Sc. 1992, Mahatma Phule Agricultural University, Rahuri.

Since his younger days, particularly after graduating from the University, Dr. Pawar's field of activity covered the entire gamut of Application of Science and Technology to Rural Development including Agriculture, Agricultural Processing, Dairying and Animal Husbandary, Cattle Development, Poultry, Training in self-employment of Rural Agriculturists, Landless Labourers and Women, Technical and Management Education including career development in the rural areas, Agricultural Development, Irrigation and digging of wells.

The Baramati tehsil of Pune district, which has been his central field of operation, is a drought prone area of 42 villages where more than 1 lakh people live at the mercy of fate and famine. Provision of water for agriculture was the main requirement and for this purpose 180 lift irrigation schemes on the Pravara and the Neera rivers were executed and feeder canals constrcted. But as the rivers could provide water only for 4 months, the water of 150 streams flowing through the area has been impounded in a water reservoir.

Besides, during 1968-1981, more than 250 percolation tanks were constructed resulting in the rise of water level of several wells. This not only solved the problem of drinking water, but made assured water supply available for irrigation of thousands of acres of agricultural land. To harness all this water fully, a large number of tube wells were sunk through boring and blasting unit provided by the Agricultural Trust which placed a sum of Rs. 10 lakhs as security deposit on the basis of which bank loans were obtained. M/s. Kirloskar's offered 60 oil engines and pumpsets to enterprising farmers free of cost. All this was done with a view to increase the agricultural output by maximisation of the return for each cubic meter of water and saving each drop of water.

The experience gained by Dr. Pawar during his visits to Israel in 1970 and 1980 was pressed into service and drip and sprinkler irrigation was started. This had an excellent demonstration effect. This system was adopted not only by the farmers in that area but thousands of farmers from all over the State have also now adopted the technique.

Realising that where there are no trees, there are no rains and no stopping of erosion, about 1 lakh of trees were planted in 4 villages on the government land and 97% of them have survived. This has been appreciated by the International Institution of Lutherom World Relief, U.S.A.

In addition, extension programmes are given as much importance as research. A model demonstration farm has been developed which includes units where all types of horticultural methods and units, using hybrid seeds, seedlings of new varieties and advanced technologies are set up.

Earlier, the daily milk collection in the, Baramati area was not more than 500 litres and there was not a single poultry farm in the area. Dr. Pawar reared about 500 better-performing cross breed cows and, with a view to educating farmers in dairy management, started classes. Farmers were encouraged to adopt cross breeding of cows. As a result, the daily milk production has exceeded 1 lakh litres and Baramati now ranks first in daily milk collection in the State. Similarly, the Rajhans Poultry Farm was established at Akluj in 1965 with 1 lakh birds. 30-32 lakhs chicks per year was the production. The Trust started a scheme involving the rearing of day-old chicks up to the egg laying stage covering vaccination schedule and other aspects of health cover and farmers were given birds at the laying stage. Response to this scheme from the farmers was overwhelming.

Recognising the increasing demand for natural fibres and the scope for silk worm-rearing, a unit of seri-culture was set up covering the entire range from mulberry cultivation to production of silk-worm cocoons and, in the weaving unit, up to the mechanized cloth weaving.

In the field of social welfare, Dr. Pawar, as Chairman of the Trust, has undertaken various programmes like distribution of 60000 boiled eggs daily in 600 villages to children, pregnant women and lactating mothers; promoting inter-caste and inter-religious mass marriages, promoting anti-dowry movement and supplying wedding needs including wedding dress, mangalsutra etc; mobile human health care unit and mobile veterinary unit to cover remote places in the Tehsil, a dispensary equipped with T.B. & Diabetes consulting centres which provide free medical services to poor patients, and provision of milk to patients in government hospitals and to students in the remand homes.

Dr. Pawar's efforts to apply science and technology to rural development is particularly evident in the development and running of processing units. Several cooperative societies have been established for this purpose. To encourage manufacture of value added products, he has propagated the production of sugar from cane instead of gur, cotton yarn from cotton and has set up a series of processing units, a spinning mill costing more than Rs. 18 crores and, has started courses on processing management including fruit processing, bakery and confectionary, doll-making etc. so that uneducated rural women can be given sustained employment opportunities.

A young farmers' association called the Sheti Vigyan Mandai was launched with a membership of 600 farmers. This Mandai undertook activities like arranging study tours for the farmers to various parts of the country; sponsoring a tour of 25 farmers from Baramati to Egypt and Israel to participate in the International Agricultural Exhibition called Agritech '93; publishing a bimonthly magazine called Sheti Vigyan Varta; provision of instruments, instrumentation, service tractor, ploughs trolly, spraying machines to poor and needy farmers on a no-profit-no-Ioss basis; propagation of advanced technique of research in the field of tissue culture, sugarcane treatment, use of plastic-mulch, use of biogas and solar energy and green house technology; starting of a huge nursery from which farmers can obtain seedlings, sugarcane set, seeds, pedigreed breeding bucks, rams, heifers etc; setting up a well-equipped laboratory for soil, water, feed and fertilizer analysis, providing services to farmers at subsidised rates; setting up Krishi Vigyan Kendra for transfer of technology through training and demonstration by agriculturists.

In order to sustain the impact of these developments, Dr. Pawar has undertakan many steps in the field of education - a technical college for boys who cannot take further education due to financial problems or who are school drop-outs has been started; special pre-primary, secondary and higher secondary school particularly for the weaker section has been set up. Similarly, for these students, an institute for self employment and career development has been set up in which numerous practical and job-oriented courses have been started for the rural youths. Courses relating to agriculture are also being taught at this institution.

The salient features of these educational efforts are: preference to girl students mainly from the rural areas and especially to those from the families below the poverty line; training rural youths through TRYSEM; accommodation facilities for about 600 girls and boys at a time and a social welfare hostel for 78 girls from the families below the poverty line.