
Poverty Alleviation Through Inculcation of Olive Culture in Balochistan, in The Light of Islamic Teachings

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ABSTRACT

The fruit of olive is a God gifted fund on the account of its trade, food stuff and holds prime importance for healing purposes. Though, its patrimonial region is Mediterranean but in Pakistan there are multiple suitable places for olive culture. Especially, in Balochistan, the appropriate regions for the olive farming are Zhob, Sherani, Musa Khel, Loralai, Khuzdar, Wadh, Lasbela, and Kharan. By the dint of Islamic teachings, the masses of Balochistan can be stimulated for the cultivation of olive plants, owing to their deep concern with religion Islam. Due to religious tendency of the local people of Balochistan, they can be persuaded and educated to cultivate olive plants. This will bear upon remarkable change in environmental outlook and will also boost up economic position of the locals. This research paper under view is regarding the significance of olive cultivation in Balochistan under the limelight of Islamic teachings. This will assist to diminish environment desertification and poverty alleviation too.

INTRODUCTION

Balochistan is the largest province of Pakistan in terms of area but is the smallest regarding its population. It has great importance on account of its geographical location. According to the survey of bureau of statistics:

“The entire area of Balochistan is consisting of 347910 Sq Km which makes up 43.6% of the total area of Pakistan.”

Balochistan has rich natural resources and containing large amount of gold, coal, copper, natural gas and other minerals too. Despite abundance of natural resources, the people here are very poor and backward compared to the other provinces of Pakistan. In this lime heart touching state of poverty many areas of Balochistan have the capacity to expand its economic and environmental postures on agricultural grounds especially through the cultivation of olive plants.

Olives are not only the magnificent diet premise but also a great source of better human hygiene. The olive tree has remained a source of income, cultural

element and remedy for the transformation of desertification into fertile lands in many areas of the world. In the same way there are many areas in Balochistan too which are suitable for olive planting. According to the Research Study of Pakistan Agriculture Research Centre, the areas in Balochistan are as under:-

“The appropriate regions of Balochistan for Olive cultivation are Zhob, Sherani, Loralai, Musakhel, Khuzdar, wadh, Kharan and Lasbela.”

History and Importance of Olive Plantation

Before proceeding to the main idea of this research article, it is an essential gist to commence with the preliminary introduction of the olive. A well-known scientist Guillaume Besnard has acquainted olives origin and domestication in his book as under:-

“The cultivated olive is the most iconic tree of the Mediterranean basin, and its omnipresence in agro system makes these species economically significant

and a key stone of the traditional Mediterranean agriculture.”

While elaborating the history of olive growing in the world, a famous archeologist Loanis Nickolaos wrote in his book that:

“Archeological excavation has revealed the existence of olive leaf fossils dating back to the Paleolithic eras 37000 BC on Santorini Island Greece.”

The Olive was the traditional food of Mediterraneans and many myths and religious customs are also tied to the olive trees and its oil. Some considered it as the food of God and Gods. While others regarded olives as ancestral ritual in many parts around the Mediterranean sea. The branches of olive had always been a sign of peace and reconciliation. In human history the olive is associated with the noblest acts of the society. They have been used as a sign of honour and tribute. Western historian and scientific researchers Stan Kailis and David Harris have written the human regard and consideration towards olive as under:\

“Olives have been used to honor heroes, exalt the virtues of great men, reward excellent in fine art and symbolise peace.”

Olive and Prophetic Medication

In Balochistan, the diseases of skin, cardiac and others caused due to shortage of food have been immensely increasing. Allah almighty has bestowed cure for many diseases in the fruit of olive which is thoroughly described in the Holy Scriptures of Quran, Hadiths and through the sayings of religious scholars. Therefore, the inducement and education about the plantation of olive can seriously mitigate the mentioned diseases in the province. The Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) while elaborating the advantages of olive said:-

“then, treat tuberculosis with the olive oil.”

Similarly, saying in another hadith The Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) said:-

" اِنْتِدِمُوا بِالزَّيْتِ وَاذْهَبُوا بِهِ فَاِنَّهُ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ مُّبَارَكَةٍ " (7)

Translation: - Use olive as curry and apply it on your head and body

The Sunnah of Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) and saying of scholars and clerics can play a vital role in attracting people of Balochistan towards the cultivation of olive. The cultivation of olive will not only augment the income of the masses but shall also curtail the number of diseases through prophetic medication.

Protection from Environmental Pollution and Cultivation of Olive

Trees and forests are of immense importance among all the major sources for the providence of clean air. They not only add to the beauty of nature, but also keeping our environment safe and healthy. In the light to the significance of trees and forests, Balochistan has greatly suffered the deficiency of trees and plants. Thus greatly damaging the environmental pollution. It is high time to educate the masses of Balochistan province so as to reduce the level of environmental pollution and make it resilient. In the Holy Quran, Allah Almighty has referred to this system of vegetation and plantation as an intense blessing and delicacy. There upon, describing the falling water from the heaven and its merits, Allah Almighty has revealed in Quran: -

" هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً لَكُمْ مِنْهُ شَرَابٌ وَمِنْهُ شَجَرٌ فِيهِ تُسِيمُونَ

يُنْبِتُ لَكُمْ بِهِ الزَّرْعَ وَالزَّيْتُونَ وَالنَّخِيلَ وَالْأَعْنَابَ وَمِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

Translation: - It is He who sends down water from the skies; you drink thereof, and thereof [drink] the plants upon which you pasture your beasts; [and] by virtue thereof He causes crops to grow for you, and

olive trees, and date-palms, and grapes, and all [other] kinds of fruit: in this, behold, there is a message indeed for people who think.

The plantation of olive not only brings down the level of environmental pollution but also provides with its tasty fruit. Olive plants are resistant to severe conditions as they can rely on mountainous, arid and semi fertile lands consuming less water and thus cutting down the environmental pollution by raising the release of oxygen and other human friendly nutrients.

Miraculous Features of Olive in the Light of Islam

One of the finest ways to induce the masses of Balochistan about the plantation and vegetation of olive is to unfold before them the miraculous advantages of its fruit and the wisdom that lies in it, to inspire them and invigorate the cultivation process of its plant. Allama ibn-e-qeem one of the elderly scholars and saints, prescribing his viewpoint regarding olive said: -

“The use of olive brings refreshment in the mood and polishes and beauties the color of skin making it look reddish ”

Likewise, another famous physician and wise Bu Ali Sina expressing his views about olive that: -

“Oil of olive is highly beneficial for burned wounds. Using warmed olive oil on the wounds of burned is really useful”.

Use of Olive for Food Purposes

The fruit and plants of olive not only fulfills the food requirements for humans but also birds. Similarly, Human beings can use the fruit of olive for food and digestive purposes, on the other, oil extracted from it can be utilized for manufacturing medicines, beverages and food oil. In a similar fashion, a lot of birds, insects and animals obtain food from the trees, plants and branches of olive, of which honey bees in particular. In the Holy Quran, Allah Almighty

mentioning honey bees says that the honey bees suck juice from the trees and as a result produces honey which is a gift. Allah Almighty says:-

" ثُمَّ كُلِّي مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ فَاسْلُكِي سُبُلَ رَبِّكِ ذُلُلًا يَخْرُجُ مِنْ بُطُونِهَا شَرَابٌ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهُ فِيهِ شِفَاءٌ لِلنَّاسِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ".

Translation:- Then eat from every [kind of] fruit and follow meekly the ways of your Lord.’ There issues from its belly a juice of diverse hues in which there is a cure for the people. There is indeed a sign in that for a people who reflect.

Then, Allah Almighty verily elaborating the significance of olive trees in the Holy Quran. Allah says: -

" وَشَجَرَةً تُخْرُجُ مِنْ طُورِ سَيْنَاءَ تَنْبُتُ بِالذَّهْنِ وَصَبِغٍ لِلْكَالِبِينَ".

Translation: - And a tree that grows on Mount Sinai which produces oil and a seasoning for those who eat.

In Surah Al-Noor, Allah Almighty has denominated the tree of olive as auspicious and blessed tree.

" اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ مَثَلُ نُورِهِ كَمِشْكَاةٍ فِيهَا مِصْبَاحٌ ۚ الْمِصْبَاحُ فِي زُجَاجَةٍ ۚ الزُّجَاجَةُ كَأَنَّهَا كَوْكَبٌ دُرِّيٌّ يُوقَدُ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ مُبَارَكَةٍ زَيْتُونَةٍ لَا شَرْقِيَّةٍ وَلَا غَرْبِيَّةٍ يَكَادُ زَيْتُهَا يُضِيءُ وَلَوْ لَمْ تَمْسَسْهُ نَارٌ ۚ نُورٌ عَلَى نُورٍ ۚ يَهْدِي اللَّهُ لِنُورِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَيَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْأَمْثَالَ لِلنَّاسِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ".

Translation: -Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The parable of His Light is a niche wherein is a lamp the lamp is in a glass, the glass as it were a glittering starlit from a blessed olive tree, neither eastern nor western, whose oil almost lights up, though fire should not touch it. Light upon light. Allah guides to His Light whomever He wishes. Allah draws parables for mankind, and Allah has knowledge of all things.

Olive as Medication for Cure

The incentive measures considering the great significance and importance of olive tree for its food and agricultural purposes and motives can really help the common public of Balochistan. So, as to build a campaign for the cultivation and plantation of olive in the province. Hence, it is to educate the masses

about. The advantages of forestation and trees which can provide shadow and hygienic environment. Simultaneously, of fuel, furniture, cooking and energy etc. several forms of oil can be extracted from olive tree which can be utilized The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said: -

“Use the oil of olive and massage through it. For it is cure to seventy diseases”

According to modern surveys, the oil extracted from olive tree can not only be used for food but also be utilized as a medication for cure. In Britain and America, the North American Olive Association, have conducted a research on olive oil stated: -

“the catalogue of medicines published by America and Britain also encompasses olive as it can be used both as nutrition and medicine”

On a similar account, Dr.Khalid Ghaznawi in his book describing the importance of olive has written:-

“olive is the finest medication and also nutrition for the patients of kidneys”

Systematized Tree Plantation Campaign through Religious Scholars

A campaign ought to be initiated about the cultivation of olive and nourishment of tree plantation culture in Balochistan. Since the people of this province, Strictly adhere to the religion of islam, there upon, the clerics and religious scholars through Masajids can play a significant role which has thoroughly elaborated in the Holy Quran and saying of Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) while emphasizing the holiness, purity and blessing laid in this fruit, Allah Almighty has sworn in the name of olive. Allah says:-

" وَالْثَّيْنِ وَالزَّيْتُونَ". (17).

Translation: -By the fig (Injeer) and the olive, islam has not only emphasized upon the plantation of trees but also labels harm to wild life and trees

offensive. Allah Almighty while quoting the signs of hypocrites says:

" وَإِذَا تَوَلَّى سَعَى فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيُفْسِدَ فِيهَا وَيُهْلِكَ الْحَرْثَ وَالنَّسْلَ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفُسَادَ". (18)

Translation: - And if he were to wield authority, he would try to cause corruption in the land, and to ruin the crop and the stock, and Allah does not like corruption.

Plantation is of immense importance in Islam. Acacia, which is a source shadow and air, Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said,

" من قطع سدره صوب الله راسه في النار". (19).

Translation: -“The one who cuts down an Acacia, Allah will throw him down in the fire of jahanum”

Tafseer-al-Qurtabi while explaining this states that cutting down of trees which provide food to wildlife is a sin, therefore, The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) declared it as a sin.

Cultivation of Olive and Climate

The land of Balochistan is well suitable for the cultivation of olive. It also comprises of the areas which are barren and arid. Farmers cannot farm or cultivate on these lands for numerous reasons. Some of these reasons are deep presence of water, expenditures for watering plants, need of fertilizers and soil, Harsh cold or hot weather conditions. However, cultivation of olive does not confront these issue because it is resistant in harsh weather conditions and relies on less consumption of water.

A famous scientist Adriana, in his book states about the cultivation of olive:-

“Cultivation of olive requires a climate where it is dry in hot summer and temperature below 7 celsius in winter and these trees can remain on less consumption of water.”

The areas of zhub, sherani, musakhel, khuzdar, kharan and lasbella of Balochistan province are highly suitable for the cultivation of olive. The

climate and conditional features of these areas greatly fit to the cultivation of olive. According to agriculture research institute Quetta and SMEDA, state that the above mentioned areas of Balochistan are well suitable for the cultivation of olive trees.

In its report 2018, SMEDA stating in context to the climate and weather features of these areas declared:-

“Hot, cold and rainy areas of Balochistan are well suitable for the cultivation of olive trees. Among the hot areas, lasbella, kharan, khuzdar, zhob are at the top where temperature falls 5 to 10 celcius in winter. Whereas musakhel and sherani districts are highly recommended for olive plants”.

Cultivation of Olive through Drip Irrigation in Balochistan

Many areas of Balochistan face the problems of scarcity of water due to the drought for many years. Therefore, major crops do not have sufficient or required access to water. However, olive trees can remain stagnant with low rain cast and less consumption of water. Hence, the plants of olive can be successfully cultivated in Balochistan through drip-irrigation. It is said by Annarita Leva, about the smart irrigation regarding the cultivation of olive crops that.

“Olive is extremely resistant and strong against drought. It can maintain, keep up and extend itself on less water. Nevertheless, it shall be provided water according to the weather conditions with the young ones a break of 4 to 10 days and the older ones with a break of 4 to 7 days.”

Similarly, Andrea Fabbri has stated regarding the irrigation of olive: -

“The plants of olive should be irrigated with the drip irrigation and its stem should not touch the water. Before the blossom, after becoming the flower, and 1 month before maturity. The plants should be irrigated.”

The concept of cultivation on less water can help the people of Balochistan about the cultivation of olive plants. As a matter of fact, the cultivation simultaneously, they can easily cultivate olive through smart irrigation. In this regard, we should adopt the Islamic principles which prevents loss of water and encourages plantation of trees.

Role of Religious Scholars in the Cultivation of Olive Trees

Olive has been mentioned in the Holy Quran seven times which signifies its importance and merits. The people of Balochistan strictly follow the religion of Islam. Therefore, they can be motivated about the cultivation of olive in the context of Holy Quran and Islamic teachings. In this regard, elderly scholars, senior clerics and tribal chiefs can play immense role by publicizing this opinion and propagating this message. Scholars and clerics are well aware about the wondrous advantages of olive. In a similar fashion, they can readily encourage people about the plantation of olive trees.

Olive Culture Imparting in Foreign Exchange

In an interview to The DAWN Newspaper, project director Dr. Muhammad Tariq Said,

“over 4 million hectares of marginal land had been identified for olive cultivation across the country, adding that by utilizing that areas Pakistan could cross Spain a leading world olive producer and could earn billions of dollars annually.”

In Balochistan the output of olive trees is insufficient as compare to its consumption. In order to overcome the shortage every year the government is consuming immense foreign exchange on olive, its oil and other products extracted from olive are imported from abroad. In Balochistan, by imparting incentives and benefits of the cultivation of olive can be enhanced several folds because the inhabitants of Balochistan are deeply concern with their religion Islam.

Wisdom of Olive and Poverty Alleviation

Olive trees are the natural gift and resources of the Almighty Allah to combat poverty, climate change and pollution. In Quran Allah takes oath regarding olive Allah Says,

" وَالنَّيْنِ وَالزَّيْتُونَ".

Translation: -By the fig (Injeer) and the olive,

In connection to Quran and hadiths the Mufasireen, (interpreters of the Holy Quran) are also considering that olive tree is worthwhile than any other plant or tree on the earth. They believe that the olive tree is most ancient tree of the world. Imam Ghazali in his book Nuskha-e-Kamiya has written that,

“After the tempest of Nooh was subsided and the water level diminished, the olive tree broke out”

As mentioned previously, that the people of Balochistan are gravely concerned regarding their religion. That is why, by the dint of the Holy Quran, Hadiths and sayings of interpreters, the benefits of olive can be imparted to the masses so that they can cultivate olive plants. Which will not only play due role in poverty alleviation but will also impact the environment positively.

On several places, The Holy Quran has highlighted the nutritious benefits of olive plant, Its fruit and oil. It is entitled as blessed tree “Shajra Mubarka” and also mentioned along with the heavenly fruits.

The Ulama (religious scholars) of Balochistan ought to advice the masses to utilize olive plant as fruit and oil in the light of the Quranic verses so they

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would be inclined to cultivate olive trees. Imam Ibn-e-Temia, who is a well reputed Islamic scholar. He, in his book Quotes the Fore deal of Olives in golden words. He said that: -

“The consumption of olives brings about strength in feeble body.”

CONCLUSION

Olive is called Shajr e Mubarak (The Holly Tree) and also considered as a virtual tree in Islam. Allah has mentioned olive for seven times in his Holly book Al-Quran. Even in Hadith too, its Merits are described multiple times. Therefore, it is essential for the development of agriculture in Balochistan to promote the cultivation of olive on large scale. Especially in the areas which are pointed by the Agriculture experts. They are Musakhail, Sherni, Zhob, Khuzdar, Lasbela and Kharan. A clear majority of 98.5% of population of Balochistan are Muslims. They have religious tendency and possess immense respect for Islam.

Therefore, the people of Balochistan be made known to the virtues of olive in the light of Islamic teachings. Accordingly, for the accomplishment of this task the services of Ulema, religious scholars and tribal leaders are essential. So that they can inspire, persuade and motivate the masses to cultivate olives in the light of Islamic teachings. The large and commercial scale planting of Olives will not only enhance job opportunities, per capita income and will play due role in poverty alleviation but will also transform the environment as green

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