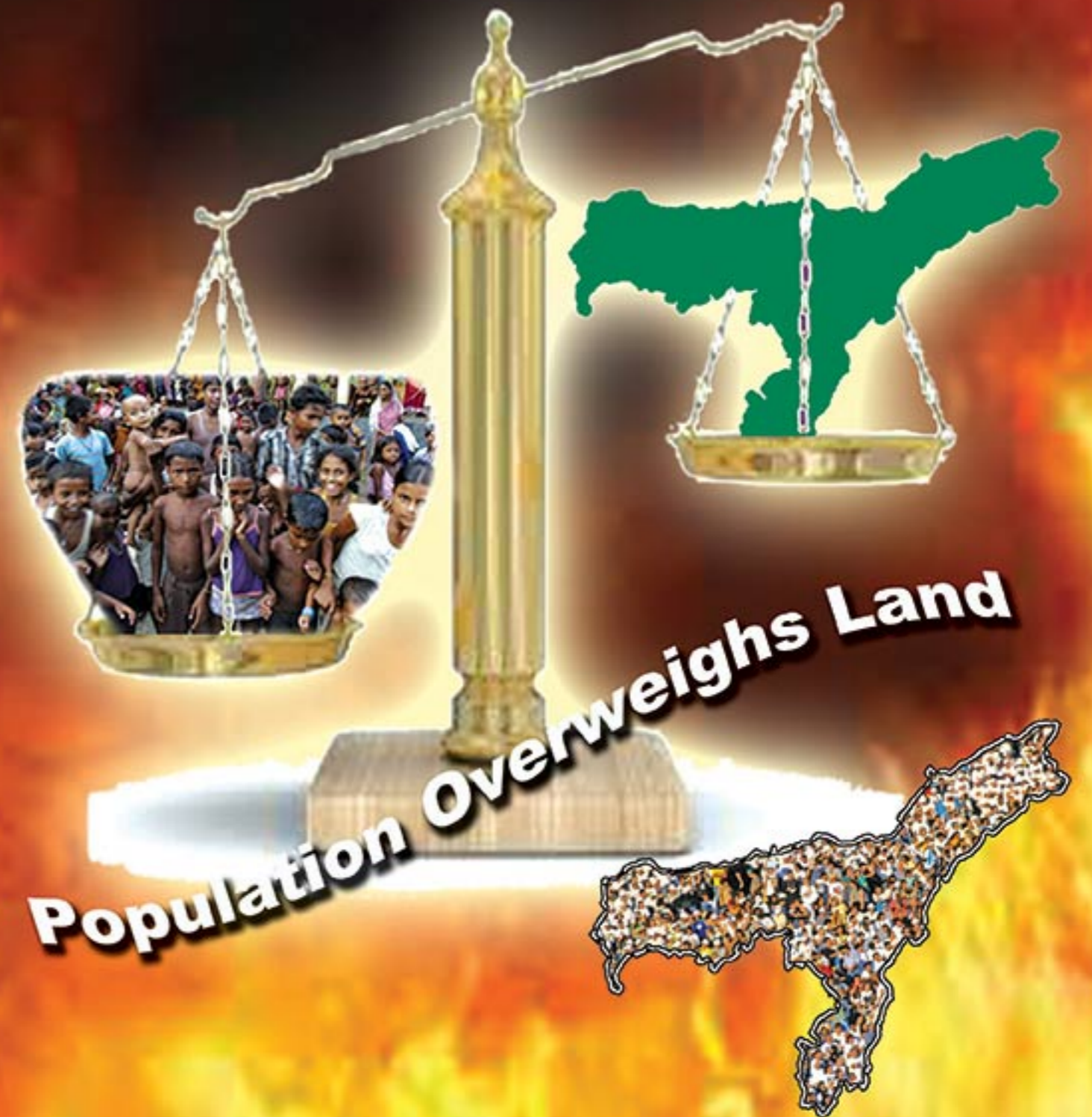
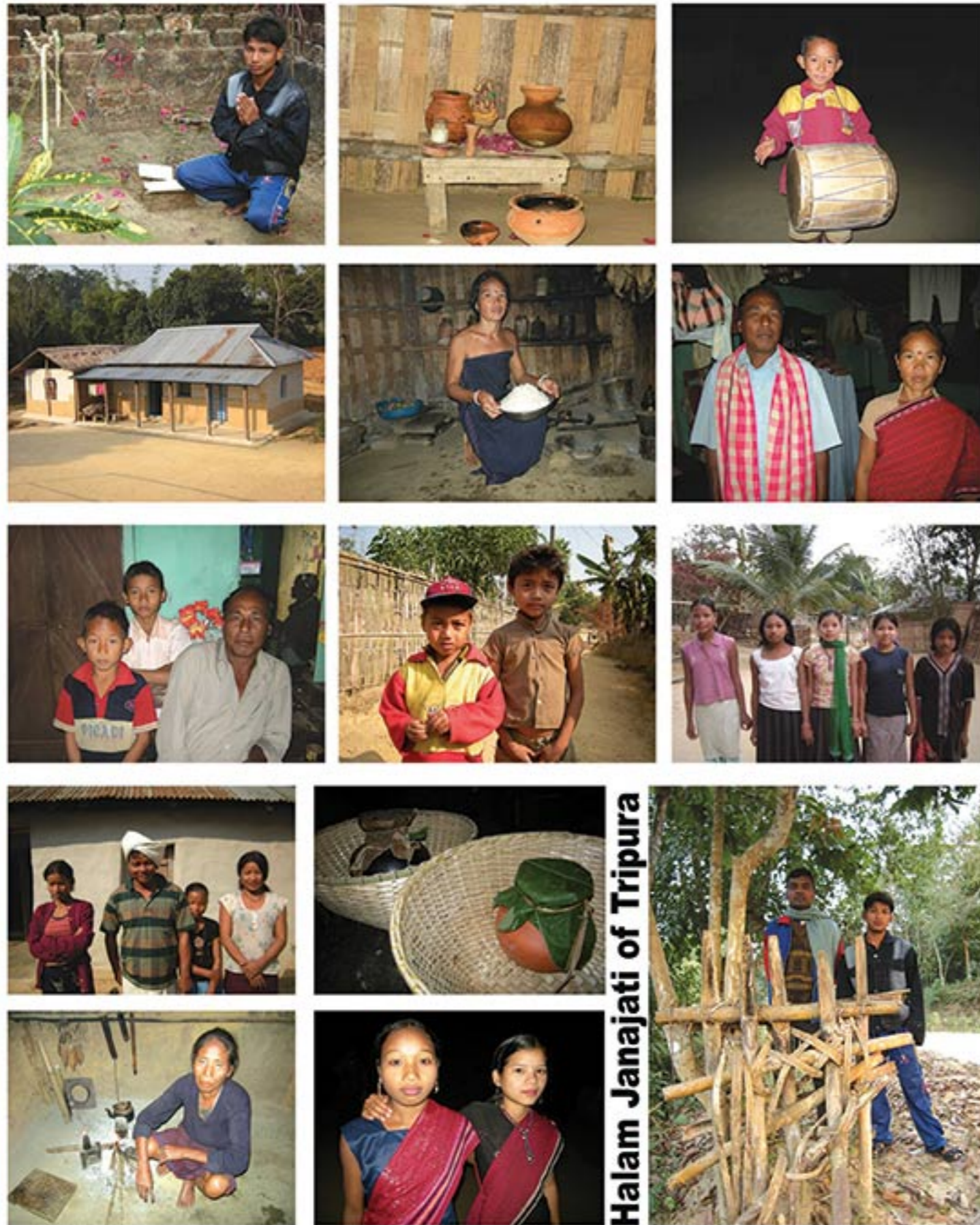




HERITAGE Explorer

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VOL. XII, NO. 07 JULY 2013

A Monthly News Bulletin



Heritage Explorer

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Edited by: Amarendra Brahma, C/o. Heritage Foundation, K.B.Road, Paltan Bazar, Guwahati-781008, Published & Printed by : Narayan Dev Sarma on behalf of Heritage Foundation, K.B.Road, Paltan Bazar, Guwahati-781008, Published at: Heritage Foundation, K.B.Road, Paltan Bazar, Guwahati - 781008 (Assam). e-mail: ourheritage123@yahoo.com, Website:

www.heritagefoundation.org.in, Printed at: Arindam Offset & Imaging Systems, Rajgarh, Guwahati-3 & Angik Press, GNB Road, Guwahati - 781001

Subscription may be sent by M.O./ Cheque / Demand Draft to :

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STRENGTHENING THE MORAL VALUES IS THE ROLE OF WOMEN

“We believe that where women are honored God resides there. So women have respect in the Indian society. Our society is changing fast. Materialistic development is increasing but social values are being neglected. So, a woman folk has to play vital role to strengthen the social values is the need of the present hour”. Smt. Sadhinata Mahanta, Rtd. Principal of Darrang collage has expressed her views in the opening session of the seminar at Tezpur. A seminar on the topic “Women – Indian concept, Thoughts and Present Day scenario” conducted at Vivekananda Kendra Auditorium on 2nd June. The seminar was organized by Kalyan Ashram Assam. Addressing the seminar Smt. Charu Chaharia Nath, Principal Tezpur Collage as Guest of Honor said, “Education is a tool of women empowerment. We have to educate our family socially, culturally along with academic education. We have to aware our society too.” Smt. Bina Bora

gave keynote address. She expressed that, “The motherhood in our country has been playing vital role of preserving, protecting and promoting Bharatiya culture through ages. Swami Vivekananda openly praised the Indian



women folk which symbolize motherhood in America and Europe.”

Various scholars and educationists presented papers. They ventilated their thoughts as – Women and men are not competitor but they are complimentary to each other. We have to educate our daughters and teach them to respect elders. Women have

to strengthen our families. We should not blindly imitate western way of life on the name of modernization. We have to get modern education but we should not forget our traditions.

Eminent personalities like Smt Dipti Borah, Smt Amia Chetri, Smt Chinu Pathak, Smt Ranju Goswami, Smt Anju Borah, Smt Mira Boro, Smt Hemalata Pathak, Smt Chanra Probha Khaund, Smt Mamu Sarma, Smt Bina Kalandi, Smt Promila Kilingpi, Smt Jonali Chaora and Smt Namita Brahma.

More than one hundred delegates were present in the seminar from Udalguri, Shonitpur, Nagaon and Golaghat districts. Vote of thanks was given by Smt Jonaki Boro.

The seminar was organized on the occasion of 150th birth year celebration of Swami Vivekananda. Such another three seminars were organized by Kalyan Ashram Mahila Samiti at Dibrugarh, Diphu and Kokrajhar in the month of May.

Lummer Dai Literary Award for Kengsam Kenglang

ITANAGAR, June 1 – The Asom Sahitya Sabha today conferred the 3rd Lummer Dai Literary Award 2013 on eminent writer from Arunachal Pradesh, Kengsam Kenglang posthumously, in recognition of his literary contributions to Assamese literature.

Instituted by the Sabha in 2009 in memory of ‘Sahitya Surya’ Lummer Dai, the bi-annual award carrying a citation and a cash reward of Rs 25,000 was presented by Asom Sahitya Sabha (ASS) president Imran Shah to Maipa Kenglang, son of late Kengsam Kenglang, at a function organised jointly by ASS and Arunachal Pradesh Literary Society (APLS) marking the 73rd birth anniversary of late Dai, the renowned novelist.

Speaking on the occasion, the Sabha president exuded hope that the

age-old relationship between Assam and Arunachal will be further reinforced through such joint initiative by the literary bodies of the two States.

Sahitya Academy Award winning litterateur and president of APLS, YD Thongchi said literature knows no boundaries and we will bring it beyond the borders towards cementing the socio-cultural ties between Assam and Arunachal.

While stating that language is the mirror of the society, State Planning and Finance Minister Chowna Mein, the chief guest on the occasion, called upon the social thinkers, intellectuals, academicians and linguists to prepare a roadmap to preserve the indigenous languages in the State. He also called upon the literary circle to further strengthen the age-old relationships between Assam and Arunachal.

The Minister gave a positive

response that the State Government will look into the Sabha's suggestion for introduction of Assamese as third language in the State's school curriculum.

Recipient of Phulchand Khandelwal Award, 2011, late Kenglang, an Assamese writer from Arunachal's Changlang district, was chosen for the prestigious award for his immense contributions to the world of literature in the form of books - ‘Lonkai aru Thaknang’ and ‘Teeli’ – both in Assamese language. His other literary works included ‘Tangsa Janajatri Sadhu’, ‘Jene kukur tene tangun’, ‘Air homan hobo kun?’ – all in Assamese language. ‘Air homan hobo kun?’, which is a children's book, was translated into Hindi.

(<http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=jun0213/oth06>)

A Study of Change in Demography of Assam - A Threat to the Identity of Indigenous People

Sri Debarun Baruah
Faculty of Law, University of Delhi

Introduction

At the turn of the 20th century, British India consisted of eight provinces that were administered either by a Governor or a Lieutenant Governor. The Assam province was one amongst those. During the partition of Bengal (1905-1911), a new province, Assam & East Bengal was created as a Lieutenant Governorship. In 1911, East Bengal was reunited with Bengal and the new provinces in the east became Assam, Bengal, Bihar, Orissa. In 1947, Assam, including the present Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram and Meghalaya became a state of the Union of India and a district of Assam Sylhet, chose to join Pakistan.

Since 1947, with increasing socio-political as well as economic problems in the state, separatist groups began forming along various ethnic lines and demands for autonomy and sovereignty grew, resulting in fragmentation of Assam. Present day Assam has undergone numerous territory alignment changes, its map being altered more than any other province, its size drastically reduced due to political changes that came one after another.

Assam has also undergone a huge demographic change due to the large scale and unabated illegal migration from Bangladesh. Here, distinction has to be made between refugees, i.e. the Hindus & the Buddhists, and infiltrators from Bangladesh i.e. Muslims. This is because, in Bangladesh the persecution of Hindus, Buddhists and other minorities of radical Muslims is an old trend. Prior to India's Independence and also during partition and post-partition years and after creation of Bangladesh in 1971, anti-Hindu atrocities were quite common in Bangladesh, which has increased sharply in recent years when the

Jamat-e-Islami joined the coalition government led by the Bangladesh National Party, prior to the present Awami League Government. A U.S. Based Human Rights Organization states, "Refugee minorities, specially Hindus still face discrimination in Bangladesh. In 1971, at the time of creation of Bangladesh, the Hindu population accounted for 15% of the total population. After 30 years it became 10.5%." The Bangladeshi Hindus were forced to migrate towards India as refugees, hoping that India being a Hindu Majority Nation will safeguard their rights. So the Hindus who are migrating to India are actually refugees & not infiltrators. But this is not the case with Bangladeshi Muslims who have migrated and are still migrating into Assam in large numbers.

Their migration is not due to persecution but has stemmed from greed on both sides - the enticement of cultivable land and opportunities for economic prosperity on one side and greed for votes on the other. Several political parties in Assam extend patronage to these immigrants, most of whom then enroll their names in the voters' list with the help of the politicians, with the promise of votes in return.

One of the major reasons of this large scale infiltration is the kilometers long and porous international border which Assam shares with Bangladesh; which is neither sealed nor guarded properly.

This migration is not a new phenomenon. The immigrants first came at the end of 19th century, and then surged in the 1930s. As far back as the 1931 Census Report of Assam, C. S. Mullan, the Superintendent of census operations has recorded the following observations - "Probably the most important event in the province

during the last 25 years - are event, moreover, which seems likely to alter permanently the whole future of Assam and to destroy... the whole structure of Assamese culture and civilization - has been the invasion of the vast horde of land hungry Bengal immigrants, mostly Muslims, from the districts of East Bengal and in particular from Mymensingh. Without fuss, without tumult... a population which must amount to over half a million has transplanted itself from Bengal to Assam Valley during the last 25 years. The only thing I can compare it to is the mass movement of a large body of ants."

One other major cause that encouraged large scale migration is the policy of expansion of Islamic state through demographic change, which is evident from the course of events that took place from the 3rd decade of 20th century till today. The plans to alter Assam's demography were launched much ahead of Partition. Amalendu Guha in "Planter Raj to Swaraj : Freedom Struggle and Electoral Policies in Assam, 1826-1947", pointed out that Muslim presence in the Brahmaputra Valley rose from 9% in 1881 to 19% in 1931 and 23% in 1941. In Barpeta subdivision alone Muslims comprised merely 0.1 percent of the population in 1911, but were almost 49% in 1941.

During Partition, there was a clear attempt to include Assam as a part of Pakistan and immigrants were settled on one lakh bighas in the Brahmaputra Valley in 1939-1940 alone. But for the efforts of Gopi Nath Bordoloi, Sarat Chandra Bose and Mahatma Gandhi, Assam would not have remained with India. Yet today, once again, Assam's abnormal demographic change could well make it a part of Bangladesh. This can be best appreciated by taking a look at the increase in the population of Assam over decades (Table 1).

Table 1. (Figures are in millions)

1901	3.29
1911	3.849
1921	34.637
1931	5.561
1941	6.694
1951	8.029
1961	10.837
1971	14.625
1981*	19.896
1991	22.295
2001	26.656
2011	31.16

(* Assam did not have census operation in 1981, the figure for the year is a projection made by the Census of India on the basis of earlier figures.)

Assam's population doubled in the years between 1901 and 1941, and 1971. Between 1901 and 1971, Assam's population showed a 343.77% increase over a period when the population of India had increased by only about 150%. The general fertility rate for rural Assam for 1978 was 126.5 (all India rural rate was 137.3) and of urban Assam was 94.3 (national urban figure of 102), thereby negating it as the cause of the population explosion.

Analysis of the changing demographic pattern of various religious groups in Assam shows an abnormal growth pattern among Muslims. According to 2001 census the various religious groups living in Assam and India respectively are 64.9 and 80.5 per cent Hindu, 30.9 and 13.4 per cent Muslim, 3.7 and 2.3 percent Christian and 0.5 and 3.8 per cent others respectively. It is clear that the proportion of Muslim population in Assam is significantly higher than that of the country as a whole.

The large scale influx of Bangladeshis and their inclusion in the electoral list has also resulted in Socio-Political Chaos in the State. The initial change in the areas & districts of Assam bordering Bangladesh has now spread to almost all parts of Assam at a fast rate. The people of Assam have a well-founded fear that with change in demographic ratios, they would be

reduced to a numerical minority & ultimately lose their identity.

Muslims with doubtful citizenship are buying land in Assam at a very high speed. A testimony to these are the official records, statistics and data which are also unable to hide the extreme realities of this demographics change.'

The unabated infiltration has also resulted in encroachment of government land, wetlands, forest reserves, National Parks, land of indigenous Vaishnanite religious institutions (called Satras) in almost all Tribal belts and blocks of Assam with serious ecological & socio-political consequences. The forest cover of Assam is decreasing at a fast rate leading to habitat destruction of wild-life. Infiltration has led to Communal riots in which the indigenous tribes are severely displaced.

The first Bodo clash with Muslims occurred in 1952. The recent clashes that took place between the Bodos and Muslim migrants in 2008 in Darrang & Udalguri districts and in 2012 in Kokrajhar, Chirang, Dhubri districts are because of similar reasons. This fear is not limited to the tribals of Assam alone but extends to the greater Assamese Community including both indigenous Non-tribal & tribal population.

Aim & Methods of the study

To realize the ground situation and feeling of the natives in Assam after the 2012 communal riots, we conducted a survey among tribal and non-tribal indigenous people in two places i.e. Assam and Delhi, through a questionnaire consisting of 23 questions with options ranging from Disagree (*Strongly- 1, Moderately - 2, Slightly - 3*) to Agree (*Strongly - 4, Moderately - 5, slightly - 6*), which were then analysed.

Results & observations

A total of 650 people responded amongst 750 approached, of which 56% were males and 34% females,

More than 75% of responders were of the opinion that encroachment of tribal land was ongoing and all opined that the infiltrators were of doubtful Indian citizenship (illegal immigrants). Only a mere 1% did not agree that demographic pattern had definitely altered due to this illegal immigration. 636 (97.8%) people were of the opinion that there was lack of political will to tackle the issue of illegal immigrants, in varying degrees. 3/4th strongly believed that it is likely to lead to armed rebellion in the future while 22% moderately believed it. The overwhelming majority believed that concerted political & legal mechanisms, and political and constitutional reforms were effective ways of tackling the issue but rued the lack of such political will & motivation. Nevertheless, almost 30% people did not support armed rebellion as a solution to the issue. Most people living in the affected belts supported armed rebellion to some extent or other, while the ones who did not, mostly lived in the urban unaffected areas.

Discussion

It is extremely unfortunate that even after so many years of its signing, the Assam Accord still remains a bunch of papers, sans any implementation of its major covenants. The National Register of Citizens (NRC) is yet to be updated, and successive governments, both in the Centre and State, have not done anything substantial either to stop the ongoing infiltration or to detect and deport those who have already entered Assam.

In 1949, a Bill was passed by the Parliament as Immigrants (Expulsion from Assam) Act, 1950, despite which, the process of infiltration in Assam continued and at the only conference convened by the Election Commission, the Chief Election Commissioner had to admit that influx into Assam has become a regular feature. "The increase that is likely to be recorded in 1991 Census would be more than 100% over the 1961 Census." These observations constitute a grim reflection on the way the provisions of

the above act have been implemented, and also give rise to a serious query as to how far those in authority had the political will to enforce the said enactment.

Even after more than 60 years of India's independence, the Indo-Bangla border has neither been guarded well nor sealed. Apart from this, introduction of controversial IM (DT) Act, not implementing the Assam Accord properly and not updating NRC till now by the Government raises serious doubts on its political will to push back the illegal migrants out of Assam, even after repeated instructions and orders, both by Honorable Guwahati High Court and the Honorable Supreme Court of India.

According to a tripartite agreement of the Union Government, Assam Government and AASU in 2005 that set a deadline of 2006 for the upgrading of NRC, the revision of NRC was to be done by taking NRC 1951 as the base document. The State Government mooted the proposal of having three pilot projects. But even before the pilot projects could begin, riots triggered off by Muslim groups led to four deaths. Not to speak of taking up the delayed work of revising the NRC, even the pilot projects have been scrapped. This is a clear example of appeasement policy of government towards the Muslim infiltrators.

Conclusion

While moving towards a solution for the problem of infiltration three basic points must be considered.

1. Although there may be some disagreement regarding the quantum of infiltration, there is no disagreement that infiltration has taken place.

2. There may be disagreement regarding the reasons for infiltration, but there is no denial that such infiltration can cause political and economic problems and create social tensions.

3. That effective measures should be taken to stop further infiltration is not debatable but what to do with those who have already come is a debatable point.

It is the second part of the 3rd point

which has to be considered primarily for the settlement of the entire issue. The first and foremost step that the government must take is to seal the border immediately. The number of BSF Jawans has to be increased sufficiently, supported by a 2 line of defence or border guards comprising Assam Police personnel, i.e. the natives. Secondly, the border areas upto 2-3 Kilometers from border should be evacuated, with proper rehabilitation plan, and new villages comprising of army men should be settled so that no antisocial elements can settle near the border. Thirdly, the NRC should be revised immediately, with proper implementation of Assam Accord. Special teams comprising of government officials, village chiefs and other prominent personalities of the locality should be made, for identification of infiltrators in each and every village. Once they are recognized, their names from the voters list should be immediately deleted. With proper investigation and proof, the Government of India should convince Bangladesh diplomatically to take back their people. In case all cannot be sent back, they should be made stateless citizens with no right to vote or to buy immovable properties. They should be distributed equitably in all 28 states of India, with strict family planning for them so that their population remains under control & cannot change the demography of any state in India. They should not be allowed to hold any government job or higher posts in private sectors. These are some practical solutions that can be applied to tackle the serious crisis of Bangladeshi infiltration. If the concerns of the indigenous people that there is no political will to tackle the issue is not taken seriously by the Government, then the fear of armed rebellion may well turn into reality, as highlighted in this survey. If solutions are not found and implemented as soon as possible, the day is not far when the entire Assamese community will be outnumbered by these unwelcome guests, causing total loss of identity of the Assamese in their own motherland.

Play on Kalidasa's Shakuntala to be Staged at Rabindra Bhawan

GUWAHATI, June 9 - In an attempt to interpret the much loved tale Abhijnanashakuntala in the modern day context, Sarsa is going to present Dushmanta: The Liar on June 16 at Rabindra Bhawan in collaboration with the Directorate of Cultural Affairs.

Dushmanta: The Liar, scripted and directed by Asim Kumar Nath has been based on Kalidasa's Abhijnanashakuntala and Sunil Ganopadhyay's novel Aranyer Din Ratri. The play takes a look at the theme of Abhijnanashakuntala from a different perspective trying to establish the plight of Shakuntala as the predicament of simple folks to whom promises are made by the sophisticated only to be broken.

The play, which infuses the element of Ojapali to heighten the intensity of the emotions will be staged at 7 pm.

"Initially I wanted to do the play as was presented by Kalidasa, but when I went deeper into Kalidasa I realised that actually Dushmanta was a liar and I decided to highlight this aspect in my play," said Nath, pointing out that the situation of Shakuntala is the situation of the common people in the State, who are always cheated by the political class.

"The public representatives always make assurances to the people, but those promises are never fulfilled. Just like Dushmanta, who forgot Shakuntala after returning to his kingdom, the ministers and all other public representative go back on their promises once they get to the helm of power," said Nath, adding that for the theatre lovers the play would be a totally different experience as they would be able to relate to an ancient tale from their present circumstance.

(The Assam Tribune - 10.06.2013)

2011 Census Figures for Assam Ring Alarm Bells for the Indigenous People

- J P Rajkhowa

With the release of the final figures of the 2011 Census, by the director of Census Operations, Assam before the media on 23 May, 2013, the exercise by the Census authorities, over the Provisional results declared earlier, is now completed. The total population of Assam stands at 3, 12, and 05,576 against the India population of 121, 07, 26,932, representing 2.58% of the country's population. Against the provisional population of 3, 11, 69,272, there has been an increase of just 36,304 persons, thereby making the final figure of 3, 12, 05,576 or 3.12 Crore. The decadal growth rate (GR) for Assam during 2001– 2011 was 17.07 percent against the GR of 18.92 percent in the previous decade, which seems to be good. For the country as a whole, the GR during the decade 2001–11, was 17.7 percent against the previous decade's GR of 21.5 percent, and that way, India did much better, in terms of population control, through 'family planning', as compared to Assam.

In a previous column in this Daily, captioned "Some Disturbing Trends from 2011 Census Report" based on the provisional figures, I had pointed out that, 14 Districts had much higher GR over the Assam as well as India average GR, primarily due to immigration of suspected illegal foreigners as well as higher pro-creation, on account of wide- spread practice of polygamy among the immigrant Muslims. The final figures have not changed the position, as the total increase over the provisional figure by just 36,304 persons, has not changed the status of these Districts. Dhubri, with GR of 24.44 percent (24.40 percent provisional) heads the list, closely followed by Morigaon, Goalpara, Nagaon, Hailakandi, Karimganj, Barpeta, Dhemaji, Cachar, Bongaigaon, Darrang, Kamrup (M), Karbi Anglong and Lakhimpur. Had the GR been even equal to the national

average of 17.7 percent, the population of these 14 districts would have gone down to that extent, but that was not to be for reasons already said and known. So, the indigenous people of Assam have got nothing to rejoice from the higher GR, as, in the remaining 13 districts, the GR had been far below the Assam as well as the India- average.

It may be observed that, the lower GRs in the Upper Assam districts, are attributable to lower birth rate as well as lower level of immigration of illegal or other migrants in to those districts, as compared to the other districts, many of which have international borders or are close to those having such borders, signifying higher level of immigration. For example the Barak Valley districts and Goalpara & Dhubri are having borders with Bangladesh and both these have also inter- district borders with several districts of Lower Assam, apart from some having borders with West Bengal, through which immigrants from Bangladesh enter and mingle with the local population on our side.

It is reported in the latest analysis of final Census figures, that, Assam ranked 15th in the arena of density of population, with Kamrup (M) heading the list in the State, with 1,313 persons per square kilometer. This is due to obvious reasons, of unplanned growth and rush of population from the rest of the State and Northeast for habitation, may be as a second home, as also from outside the northeast due to the thousands of building complexes coming up. Bangladeshi migrants and other immigrant Muslims have also moved in, for filling the vacuum of labour supply and demand, in the construction and other economic activities. Interestingly, Kamrup (M) is closely followed by Dhubri, with the next highest density of 896, Barpeta with 742, Nalbari 733 and Nagaon 711. In other Muslim majority districts also,

the density is much higher than the State average of 397 and National average of 382 persons, meaning thereby the growing pressure on the land due to higher population growth, as compared to other districts and not due to urbanization, which was quite low.

It's clear enough, that, about 9 to 10 districts had already become Muslim- majority by February 2011, not due to our own Assamese Muslims, who just contribute about 6.5 percent of the total population of Assam and about 18 percent of the total Muslim population, but because of the immigrants (both legal as well as illegal), who are mostly polygamous and do not follow any family planning norms. Now, what should the indigenous people do, so that, they would not be outnumbered in the remaining districts, in the near future, by hordes of Bangladesh- origin and pre- Bangladesh- centred Muslim immigrants, in order to protect their customs, religion, language, culture and to be precise, identity?

We may consider a few alternatives, considering that, the Hindu rate of growth had been only 1.49 percent as against the Muslim (immigrants') rate of growth of 2.93 percent, so that, even without further immigration from across the international borders with Bangladesh, the Muslims would not outnumber the Hindus, Christians, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists and others in the rest of the State, by a sheer higher growth rate.

How about not limiting the number of children per family of husband and one wife to two or three and have as many children, that, a couple should be able to procreate. Since there is no legal bar to a couple, to having unlimited number of children, perhaps, this option could be considered for racial or ethnic survival of the indigenous people. As the immigrants

already produce many children from each of his four or five wives, there would not be question of any further competition from their side, in order to halt the Hindus and others not following the 'small family norm'.

Secondly, the leaders of all the indigenous / ethnic organizations and all political parties must vigorously pursue with the government of India, through submitting mass petitions, representations, demonstrations and other peaceful means, for banning bigamy, polygamy etc. totally, without leaving it to the Shariat or Muslim Personal Law to decide, how many wives a Muslim could or should have. In other words, there must be a strong political movement for a Uniform civil Law in the Secular India, which already has a Uniform Criminal Law. The Constitution too has provided for such a Law, which, the seekers of 'Muslim vote-bank' have conveniently ignored to implement. This must be done within a specific time -frame, e.g., by May 2014 or one year from now positively, failing which, the people should have other options to ask for, which, the intelligentsia must work out and let people know.

Thirdly, the governments of India and Assam must be pressurized by the public bodies and organizations, to disallow all financial benefits under poverty alleviation of employment generating schemes, to those adults who are not monogamous. Similarly, benefits of Janani Suraksha Scheme must not be extended to more than one wife of a married man. How this could be done, may be debated and decided upon, but has to be done for the survival of the indigenous people.

Pressures must be built up on the Union Home Ministry to immediately cause an investigation, in to the causes of very high GR of population in the 14 Districts, mentioned earlier, and based on the findings, to be made public, to declare a slew of time-bound measures for correcting the 'demographic imbalance'.

Finally, the Family Identity Cards / Adhar Cards / BPL Cards should not

45.5 Lakh Increase in State Population in 10 Years

GUWAHATI, May 23 – Altogether 14 districts of the State, Dhubri, Morigaon, Goalpara, Darrang, Nagaon, Karimganj, Hailakandi, Barpeta, Bongaigaon, Cachar, Dhemaji, Kamrup (M), Karbi Anglong and Lakhimpur out of 27 districts recorded population growth rate above State growth rate. It was also observed that urban area growth rate (27.89 pc) is higher than the rural area (15.47pc) in Assam.

The total population of the State according to the latest census is 31,205,576 with 15,939,443 males and 15,266,133 females. There has been an increase of 4,550,048 persons in absolute number of population in Assam during 2001-2011 with increase of 2,162,406 males and 2,387,642 females. The growth rate of females (18.5pc) in the State is higher than males (15.7pc).

Population of India grew by 17.7 per cent during 2001-11, against 21.5 per cent in the previous decade. On the other hand, population of Assam grew by 17.07 per cent during 2001-11, against 18.92 per cent in the previous decade. Dhubri district recorded highest 24.44 per cent population growth followed by Morigaon, Goalpara and Darang, and the rate was lowest in Kokrajhar district (5.2 pc).

Assam Primary Census Abstract (PCA), the first set of final data from the population enumeration held in February 2011, released today by the Director of Census Operations, Assam,

allow inclusion of names of more than one wife and allow inclusion of children from one wife only, unless more than one wife, are legally permitted, for specific reason. The indigenous people have to fight for these legal provisions; otherwise, their survival, maintaining separate identities, would be just impossible and days are not far off, when they all, would be second or third grade citizens in their own home land.

RK Das highlighted some interesting facts about demographic changes in the State.

"Of the total population, 14.9 per cent belongs to 0-6 years' age group in Assam and it is of immense significance that the State has ranked third in the sex ratio in this age group with 962 females per 1000 males," said the Director. States like Haryana, Punjab and Gujrat were at the bottom of this list.

The sex ratio of this age group attempts to bring out the recent changes in society in its attitude and outlook towards the girl child. Also, it is an indicator of the likely future trends of sex ratio in the population.

Ranked 14th in terms of population in the country according to the 2011 census, Assam has reasons to cheer with a healthy sex ratio of 958 females per 1,000 males, bridging the gap by 23 points in comparison to the census of 2001 with a ratio of 935:1000.

Also, the State ranked 3rd in terms of child sex ratio after Chattisgarh and Kerela, whereas the much developed states of the country found their place at the bottom of the list.

With a steadily declining gender gap in literacy rate in Assam, the 2011 census recorded a gap of 11.50 points against the national average of 16.3 points. Against the national average of 73 per cent, the literacy rate in Assam is 72.19 per cent recording a growth at the rate of 8.9 per cent and a male female ratio of 77.8 and 66.3 per cent respectively.

Assam is ranked 15th position in terms of density in the country. In Assam, Kamrup (Metro) is the most densely inhabited district with 1313 persons per sq km followed by Dhubri (896), Barpeta (742), Nalbari (733) & Nagaon (711) district. Whereas, the lowest density of population is reported from Dima Hasao with only 44 persons per sq km. (*The Assam Tribune 24.5.13*)

Hindu Temples, Bollywood and a Yemeni City's India Ties

- Hamdi Al-hosami

A Hindu temple that dates back over 150 years, a market that sports an Indian name and love for Bollywood reflect the India connect of the Yemeni city of Aden.

The famous Hindu temples include the Shri Tarichmerga Temple that was built in 1862, the Shri Ram Ji Temple that was built in 1875 and the Hanuman Temple that was built in 1882.

It is estimated that Indians in Aden numbered 8,563 in 1856 and gradually increased to 15,817 in 1955. Now an estimated 100,000 people of Indian origin are concentrated in southern Yemen around Aden, Mukalla, Shihr, Lahaj, Mokha and Hodeidah. Many of them have acquired Yemeni citizenship and become part of the country's fabric. They, however, still retain ties with their families in India.

Since 1839 and until 1932, Aden, located in the southern region of Yemen

and overlooking the Arabian Sea, was administered by India's British rulers from Bombay (now Mumbai), and during this period the influence of the Indian community in the economic and financial life was very strong. Indian customs and traditions, whether in clothing or in food, are very evident.

Buildings with a distinct Indian character can be spotted in Aden's old quarters like Tawahi and Crater. There is also an Indian lane in Crater.

The Alpinaan market, named after an Indian dealer, is widely known within and outside Aden.

In fact, the economic and social impact of the large Indian community so astonished French sociologist Arthur de Gobineau that he remarked about Aden in 1855: "We have seen an Indian city on Arab land."

According to Massoud Amchosh, professor of comparative literature at the University of Aden, "in the forties

of the last century, Aden gained some attributes of Indian cities that distinguish it from the rest of the cities in the Arabian Peninsula".

Indian culture had such an impact on Aden's society that the first band in the city in 1903 was an Indian ensemble.

Yemeni researcher Shafiq Al-Arasea said that the Indian influence so penetrated the cultural and social life of Adeni society that Arabic songs were sung to Indian music.

Khalil Mohammad Khalil, an artist, said Indian influences impacted the personal and professional lives of many of his ilk. "Indian films have had a clear impact on my personality and art," he added.

Khalil said that he did not miss any new Indian film.

(<http://www.indiaafricaconnect.in/index.php?param=news/6062/panorama/115>)

Former Akhil Bharateeya Prachara Pramukh Dwaraka Charya is No More

Senior Vanavasi Kalyan Ashram Karyakarta Dwaraka Charya (72) took his last breath on 30th May 2013 at Hyderabad.

Dwaraka Charya, after completion of his Engineering education at Tirupati in 1963, came as a Sangh Pracharak. He served many years in Sangh as a Pracharak at Kurnool, Hyderabad, Nellore and Vijayawada of Andhra Pradesh. Then he became the Pranta Bouddhik Pramukh of A.P. In 1977 there was a big Toofan in Andhra, near Vijayawada in which thousands of people lost their lives. RSS served the people there and got the appreciation from many elderly people, as RSS means "Ready For Selfless Service". Acharyaji was Incharge of building houses for the people, who lost everything and that village was named as Deen Dayal Nagar.

Since 1981 Acharyaji worked for Vanavasi Kalyan Ashram. In Bastar

District of Chattisgarh. he started Hostels and attracted many Vanavasi Karyakartas as fulltimers. He worked as Khsetra Sanghatan Mantri of Madya Kshetra. Then he was the incharge of Arunachal Pradesh, where the organization was started and grown in all the districts. Then Acharyaji took the responsibility of all India Prachar, Prasar Pramukh.

When Kalyan Ashram was organizing "Janajati Cultural Youth Meet", Acharyaji went North East to encourage the workers. At Agartala Suddenly he fell down unconsciously. He was treated at Kolkata TATA Hospital for 2 Months.

Since then, he was taking rest at Hyderabad RSS office. Sri Hanuman all time assistant, who came from Baster, was serving Acharyaji. Since one week Acharyaji was unable to take breath and was suffering from severe fever. He was admitted in Hospital,

where he took his last breath.

Acharyaji was a great thinker, speaker and organizer. His demise is a great loss to the national uplifting cause, particularly for Vanavasi Areas.



Growth of Maoists

The Government of Assam recently requested the Centre to declare nine districts of the state as the left Wing Extremism affected districts so that special development funds are made available by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to deal with baèkwardness. But the request proved beyond doubt that the Maoist rebels have managed to increase their presence in the State in recent times. The State Government had earlier requested the Centre to declare the districts of Tinsukia and Dibrugarh as Left Wing Extremism affected districts and the request is under consideration of the MHA. But only recently, the Assam Government submitted a fresh. Request to the Centre to declare nine districts - Tinsukia, Dibrugarh, Dhemaji, Lakhimpur, Golaghat, Sivasagar, Goalpara, Cachar and Karimganj as districts where the Maoist rebels have their bases. The fresh request proved that the Maoist rebels have managed to expand their bases to nine districts

of Assam, which is a matter of serious concern and the State and the Central Governments should launch coordinated efforts to check further growth of the rebels before the situation goes out of control. It is a fact that in recent months, a number of Maoist rebels including Maoist central committee member Aklanta Rabha were arrested by the police and security forces, which will definitely check th expansion plan of the rebels to some extent, but till date, no one is quite sure about the exact number of members of the Maoist rebels in Assam and other parts of the North east region.

Now it remains to be seen whether the Government of India accepts the request of the State Government as normally several factors including the level of violence is assessed before any district is declared as Left Wing Extremism affected district. The Maoist rebels are yet to indulge in any major act of violence in Assam, but

the Assam Government's contention is that the problem should be dealt with at the nascent stage without waiting for the situation to go out of control. If the Centre accepts the request of the Assam Government, the districts declared as Left Wing Extremism affected districts will get an infrastructure development fund of Rs.10 crore a year for development of public infrastructure to prevent the Maoist rebels from winning over the hearts of the deprived sections of the society and it will be the responsibility of the State Government to ensure that the funds are properly utilized in a well planned manner. Till the Centre accepts the request of the State Government, efforts should be made to ensure that all the funds earmarked for development, particularly the funds provided by the Centre for rural development, are properly utilized and strict action should be taken against anyone found to be misusing funds.

(The Assam Tribune - 03.06.13)

Maoists Pumping Funds in NE

- R Dutta Choudhury

GUWAHATI, May 24 – The central committee of the Maoist rebels has been pumping in funds to the North East region for some time to expand their bases in this part of the country. Meanwhile, hardcore Maoist rebel Aditya Bora is likely to be elevated within the outfit after the arrest of Aklanta Rabha alias Maheshji, a central committee member of the Maoists.

Highly placed official sources told The Assam Tribune that some vital facts regarding the plan of the Maoists came to light after the recent arrest of Aklanta Rabha and a few other Maoist rebels. Sources revealed that the security agencies have come to know that the central committee of the Maoists has been pumping in funds to the region every month through

Rabha to expand the bases of the Maoists in this region and also to recruit members for the outfit. But it is still not known whether Rabha could fulfill the expectations of the Central committee in matters of recruitment of new cadres for the outfit.

Sources revealed that normally the Central committee members of the Maoists are given bodyguards and each of them also use several couriers, but in case of Rabha, he was mostly moving alone, which is very unusual.

On the expansion plan of the Maoists, sources said that the questioning of Rabha and other recently arrested Maoist rebels, the security agencies have come to know that in recent times, the Maoists are trying to take advantage of the vacuum

created after a number of militant outfits of Assam came overground to solve their problems through dialogues. Though the Maoists had earlier made attempts to establish strong roots in this region, the attempts failed because other militant groups were active in the state and there was no vacuum for the Maoists. But the situation has now changed and the Maoists are trying to take advantage of the situation.

Sources said that apart from Assam, the Maoists are trying their best to establish strong roots in Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh, particularly in the coal belts, while, according to the Maoist leaders, they still do not have a vacuum to penetrate into Manipur and Nagaland.

(The Assam Tribune – 25-5-13)

Insurgency in Arunachal Linked with Naga Issue: Governor

ITANAGAR, May 23: Outgoing Arunachal Pradesh Governor Gen (Retd) JJ Singh today said that the insurgency problem in Eastern Arunachal districts could be solved only after a permanent solution to the vexed Naga issue could be resolved.

"The people of three Eastern Arunachal districts – Tirap, Changlang and Longding, are living under fear due to presence of cadres of both the faction of NSCN who are resorting to kidnapping, extortion and factional feuds," the Governor said while interacting with media persons at Raj Bhavan here.

He said, the State government had already done everything to build confidence among the people and to make them aware that crackdown on insurgents could be possible only by their (people) support.

"The problem of Arunachal is directly linked with Nagaland and

Centre should immediately resolve the Naga issue to bring peace and normalcy in these districts," he suggested.

Stating that insurgency in North East was going out of fashion, the former Army Chief said that the problem could be resolved if the Centre as well as the respective State governments implement the surrender policy in the right perspective.

"We have not implemented the surrender policy in the right manner so as to attract the cadres to shun violence and join the mainstream. The surrender policy should be viable incorporating a suitable package like training, necessary grants and skill development for the surrendered cadres to start new self employment ventures," he added.

The Governor who served the State for the last five years disclosed that the major challenges he faced during

his tenure was in the security and law and order front.

"I am fortunate that there were no major disturbances in the border between China and India and the law and order in the State by and large remained peaceful. My government in the last few years could minimize the bandh culture in the State and unlawful activities came down significantly with our policy of 'Iron fist and velvet gloves'," he added.

The Governor also expressed his appreciation and gratitude to the State government and the people for their unstinted support and affection towards him.

"I am very fortunate to be at the helm of affairs during a historical phase of development in the State in all spheres. I will leave my heart in the State which was embedded with the people," the Governor said in an emotional note.

(The Sentinel 24.05.13)

Situation in State Worsening: Lt.Gen.(Retd) Sinha

- R Dutta Choudhury

GUWAHATI, June 4 – Vote bank politics resulted in deterioration of the situation in Assam and there is every possibility of worsening of the situation if the problem of infiltration of foreigners is not dealt with, said former Governor of Assam and Jammu and Kashmir, Lt Gen (Retd) SK Sinha.

Talking to The Assam Tribune, Lt Gen Sinha said that the situation of Assam today is worse than what it was when he was the Governor of Assam and submitted a detailed report to the President of India on the gravity of the problem. He expressed fear that if the problem of infiltration is not dealt with immediately, the situation would worsen in the days to come and Assam might witness serious law and order situation like the ethnic clashes in Kokrajhar and other parts of Bodoland Territorial Autonomous Districts (BTAD) last year.

Commenting on the fact that 14 districts of Assam recorded abnormal growth of population as per the 2011 census, the report of which was released recently, the former Governor

said, "it is a self inflicted wound. Over the years, no Government tried to deal with the problem of infiltration of foreigners and the abnormal growth of population is a result of the vote bank politics."

Lt Gen Sinha, in his report to the President of India in November, 1998, had given a series of suggestions for dealing with the problem of infiltration of foreigners, but he lamented that none of the recommendations was given serious consideration by the Government and the result is showing now with the census report.

The former Governor said that the only silver lining in the otherwise dismal scenario for Assam is that India now has a friendly Government led by Sheikh Hasina in Bangladesh and the Government of that country is bold enough to deal with Islamic terrorists boldly. But at the same time, he pointed out that the situation might change if a change of guard takes place in Bangladesh as the general elections in the country is due later this year.

Lt Gen Sinha further pointed out that when BK Nehru was the Governor of Assam, he along with the then Chief Minister Bimala Prasad Chaliha, tried to deal with the problem of infiltration of foreigners strongly. But they were stopped from doing so by the Government of India. That prompted Nehru to write in his autobiography that the old Congress was keen on national interest and the new Congress was keen on party's interest, he added.

Replying to a question on his recent comment on militant-politician links, which created a political controversy in the State, Lt Gen Sinha said, "there is no reason for any controversy. I only said that there is a former ULFA man in the present Cabinet. I need not mention the name of the person as everyone is aware of the fact. I also said that during my tenure as the Governor of Assam, the then state government headed by the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) fully cooperated with me to deal with militants with strong hands."

(The Assam Tribune – 3-6-13)

Heritage Under Threat

Since time immemorial Assam has been renowned for its traditional handloom, bell-metal and other hand-crafted products; as testified to by treatises such as the Harsha-Charita or accounts like that of the Mughal historian Shihabuddin. But today all segments of the glorious heritage of our craftsmanship are under threat. We tend to blame the colonial pattern of exploitation of British imperialists for most of our economic woes, yet traditional craftsmanship and production of unique items such as Assam silk and bell-metal items thrived during their rule. The rot began to set in only after India became "independent," when enterprising traders in mass-manufactured goods from other parts of India began to intrude into this region's market with spurious versions of local Assamese products. The flood of such goods resulted in the near decay and destruction of traditional craftsmanship, whose proponents could not compete in aspects such as volume and cost of production. It is not merely the Assam silk-industry which

has been brought to its knees. Due to official apathy and lack of support other economic contributors such as cottage handloom, brass-ware, bell-metal and iron-ware industries have languished. The most culpable for such a state of affairs are the Assamese people themselves — they have opted for cheapness and patronized gamochas and sorais manufactured outside the State over locally made ones, making it inevitable that indigenous cottage industry would be endangered.

Thus there is a closing the stable door after the horses have bolted aura around the report that a Rip Van Winkle Assam Government, awakened by the strong protest from traditional craftsmen of the internationally famous Sualkuchi village, is now "trying" to get geographical indication (GI) rights for handloom and bell-metal industries of the State, which would include ethnic products such as gamocha, dakhona and the Sarthebari kah (bell-metal) industry. Apparently, the State Handloom and Textile Directorate and the Industries Department have been

instructed to prepare "flawless" petitions for the purpose, though given the ponderous pace with which our bureaucracy moves, there is no telling how long this would take! In a typical bureaucratic fashion sub-committees within Committees have been entrusted with the task of getting the job done now, a process that should have been undertaken at least half a century ago. The people of Assam can be rest assured that neither this sudden awakening on the part of the State Government nor obtaining of a GI certificate is going to revive our traditional handicraft industry. Only an aggressive campaign to step up demand for the authentic products of a glorious heritage and creating a "market" would bring about the economic viability of hand-made items in a milieu where mass-manufactured products rule the roost. Equally important, it would require strong societal support from the Assamese people themselves if we are to succeed in reviving our traditional industries.

(The Assam Tribune - 6.6.13)

China Welcomes Constructive, Sensible Advice on Tibet's Development:

Tibetologist LONDON, May 22 (Xinhua) — China welcomes constructive and sensible advice and suggestions on the Tibet's development, visiting Chinese Tibetologists said here Tuesday.

"There are many scholars that are studying Tibetan history and culture. We hope the scholars and political leaders from other countries, and all those who care about Tibet would participate in its development, and offer constructive, sensible, feasible advice," said Zhaluo, a scholar from the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

A Chinese delegation of Tibetologists, headed by Zhaluo, visited Cambridge Monday and held

academic exchanges with scholars from Mongolia and Inner Asia Studies Unit on the protection of Tibetan language manuscripts.

China will stick to regional ethnic autonomy in Tibet, boost legal protection of Tibetan culture and religion and offer comprehensive support for the region, Zhaluo said.

He noted that China will also facilitate the development of social security system, education, housing projects and environmental protection in Tibet...

After a two-day tour in Britain, the Chinese Tibetologists will head to Ireland and Israel for a visit later this week.

(<http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2013-05/22/c>)

My children,
the secret of
religion is not
in theories but
in practice. To
be good and
to do good -
that is the
whole of
religion.

- Swami Vivekananda

Government Hiding Vital Facts on the Deal Surrender before China

- Lt. General Prakash Katoch

News headlines of May 9 say “Salman to give tough message to China”. This would have been very believable if the news was about a coming Bollywood movie with a different Salman. To expect Salman Khurshid giving a tough message to China is akin to believing Hafiz Saeed converting to Hinduism even though Sushil Shinde eulogises him as “Shri Saeed” in Parliament.

Can you expect a mouse to roar? Remember Salman ran off to Jaipur to host Raja Pervez Ashraf on a private visit against bureaucratic advice from within MEA, while Raja returned to head a resolution in the Pakistan Parliament condemning hanging of Afzal. Surely, Salman had not gone seeking funds for his wife’s NGO. Look around India’s neighbourhood and see what respect India commands with the policy of bending backward pursued by our political hierarchy headed by Manmohan Singh, who is referred to by former Ambassador Gajendra Singh as Sonia’s three monkeys wrapped into one.

The Government says there is no deal with China in exchange to withdrawal of their intrusion from Daulat Beg Oldi (DBO). How can you believe this in the first place to in a torrent of lies emerging from the apex like “notional” loss in 2G Case, CBI without government interference, Coalgate, Railgate and what have you. But coming back to ‘no deal’ made with China the facts on ground expose the lie. If there is no deal, then why have we agreed to demolish our bunkers at Chumar? Why the attempt to describe these fortifications as ‘tin sheds’? With such a deep intrusion (19 kms acknowledged officially though it is 30 kms from the northeast extremity of J&K at KK Pass) inside Indian Territory, why have we withdrawn our troops? If this is not a deal, what else is? Page 18 of The Times of India of 4th May (Delhi edition) stated that surveillance imagery captured by spy drones shows that the PLA made three simultaneous incursions in adjoining areas in the DBO Sector in mid April this year. What has been conveniently left vague is that whether

the Chinese continue to sit at these three other locations or have gone back. The hard fact is that there have been numerous intrusions by China over the years, which have been hushed up by the political authority on account of being petrified by China. Former Ambassador P Stopden (who hails from Ladakh) stated on national TV recently that in Ladakh alone, India has lost over 400 square kilometers of territory to China, over and above her illegal occupation of Aksai Chin (36,500 sq kms) and Shaksgam Valley (5,800 sq kms).

This particular Chinese intrusion at DBO (that would give China another 275 sq kms over and above the 400 sq kms disclosed by Ambassador Stopden) too would have been perhaps hushed up had it not been for some enterprising journalists to have spilled the beans. Even then, what appeared in media (on obvious government behest) described the intrusion only 10 kms deep. Only when the map of the intrusion at Raki Nala appeared in media that government extended the distance to 19 kms, which again is false.

What actually showed our meek mentality was both Manmohan and Salman going on emphasising that the intrusion was a ‘localised’ issue. How can one be so naïve knowing the Chinese system where every unit and above are virtually ruled by the posted Political Commissar and the PLA Chief reports directly to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and not the Chinese Government. In fact the timidity of our hierarchy has encouraged China to blatantly intrude into areas well inside Indian territory despite being signatory to the Macdonald- McCartney proposals in 1899. Such an intrusion has NOT happened first time in DBO / Ladakh / India territory and by keeping these intrusions under wraps is the mother of all scams involving national security, which amounts to treason although the ruling polity dupes the population under garb of “Chinese perception of LAC”, while actually the intrusions are much deeper and beyond the LAC perception of even the

Chinese, as in the instant case. Chinese perceptions also keep changing – take case of earlier to Tawang expanded to entire Arunachal Pradesh in 2006. For that matter, Chinese claim to Tawang was based on Tawang Monastery where Tibetans want to worship. So what stopped India from staking claim to Mansarover where thousands of Hindus go every year for pilgrimage?

Details of China’s loot of Indian Territory (including the 400 sq kms mentioned by Ambassador Stopden) need to be made public but the government will not unless someone knocks on the doors of Supreme Court and takes up proceedings on emergency basis in interest of national security. To add to India’s woes, the hierarchy has ensured the road communications and infrastructure in border areas has remained totally neglected, as have the equipping and modernisation of our military. AK Antony as the longest serving Defence Minister has ensured the crippling of the military-industrial complex to such an extent that even assault rifles and carbines are planned to be imported. Ironically, as per intelligence sources, Antony may well be the next Prime Minister candidate of the Congress. The deliberate leak of a letter by Gen VK Singh to Manmohan Singh created ripples but the military drives home these deficiencies every six months during Army Commanders Conference, as well as during the Unified Commanders Conference besides periodic reports writing.

What we should expect during Salman’s Beijing frolic and Li Keqiang’s trip to India is Chinese making noises that India likes to hear and then do exactly the opposite. It would be worthwhile to send our national hierarchy on attachment to a country like Vietnam for they only visualise nuclear and cyber attacks from China if we do anything other than meek diplomacy, as if there is nothing in between.

(<http://organiser.org/Encyc/2013/5/12/Government-hiding-vital-facts-on-the-deal.aspx>) (The writer is a former Lieutenant General of Special Forces)

Buddha's Teachings for a Peaceful World

- Dr. Lalit Shyam

Guwahati, May 24 — The Buddha is the supreme teacher who depends on no one else for guidance, who has reached perfect enlightenment through his own self-evolved wisdom. His teachings are a beacon of light to mankind to rid it from worldly sufferings and to provide guidance and spiritual strength. The Buddha saw that hatred and enmity continue and spread in a self-expanding cycle responding to hatred by hatred only breeds more hatred, more enmity, more violence, and feed the whole vicious whirlpool of vengeance and retaliation.

The Buddha delivered his message of spiritual emancipation to the suffering humanity. He was a human being alive to this world as one of the religious and philosophical leaders of mankind. His teaching can be transferred into ethical terminology as follows 'Not to do any evil, to devote oneself to doing good, and to purify the mind'. This teaching promotes human welfare and well-being and aims at the realization of the truth of human life and, finally, at freedom from suffering. Buddhism is to teach man how to discover and realize the right principles of life and to act according to these principles for his own benefit, welfare and well-being. This concerns with human existence and immediate human experience in dealing with the problems of human life. Buddhism is a system of thought, a religion, a spiritual science and a way of life.

The Buddha addressed himself to people who were in trouble. Everything he taught had a beneficial bearing upon someone's concrete quest and search. According to the Buddha, the immediate need is to realize the nature of the difficulties and problems of human life and to adopt the right ways of removing them. Thus, the Buddha's main concern is to remedy and remove the sufferings of mankind. His gospel is the gospel of love advocating generosity, justice, gentleness, loyalty

serenity and compassion among human beings. His heart was full of love for mankind and for all living beings and his sole purpose was to dedicate his life to the propagation of his religion for the sake of mankind. He taught people how to purify their minds, words and deeds, for overcoming of sorrows and despair, disappearance of grief and objection, reaching of the way, and realization of security and salvation. The Buddha spoke about compassion and tolerance for the welfare of mankind and of all living beings.

The spiritual human being declared that one should not speak of such things - seen, heard, thought and known - by saying which unprofitable things increase and profitable things decrease. On the contrary, one should speak of such things - seen, heard, thought and known by saying which unprofitable things decrease and profitable things increase.

With his compassionate purpose of promoting human interest and welfare — material, moral and spiritual - the Buddha too recognized human dignity and free choice and never wanted blind followers of his authority, who would accept and carry out his instruction without examining, testing and trying its value, necessity and reason. He encouraged people to follow him, not for the sake of himself and not merely because of their faith in a claim of his Omniscience", but of their own free will, experimentation and insight into the truth of teaching.

Thus, the Exalted Buddha preaches the gospel of non-violence, social justice, observance of the code of ethics, selfless service and friendship among people for maintaining proper border and discipline. The holy orders always stood for fraternity, harmony and for inculcating the spirit of selfless service to the humanity, compassion and tolerance which are based on spiritual wisdom. The Buddha was rightly

described as the king of physician because he was concerned for the welfare of the whole humanity irrespective of religion, caste creed and sex. We may mention the humanitarian views of the great master as follows - "Let all beings be happy, Let all beings live without fear, Let all beings enjoy peace and happiness and-be free from all sorrows and troubles".

The Buddha was a great psychologist too who gave immense importance on mind. According to the teachings of the Buddha, the mind is the forerunner of all events and happiness. Dhammapada opens with a clear assertion that the mind is the forerunner of all that we are, the maker of our character the creator of our destiny. It is from the mind there arises happiness or sorrow and suffering. If an individual does an act of righteousness, there arises happiness. If he does an immoral activity, the mind produces sorrow and suffering to the individual. These activities proceed from the volition of the mind. If the mind is controlled, - cultured and trained to do only the moral acts, there shall arise only happiness to the individual. Our restless mind is the source of great suffering. There is no suffering if the mind is peaceful and happy.

By mind the world is led, by mind the world is moved. And all good and bad things exist in the world because of mind. The practice of meditation is the only way by which an individual can control his mind and culture it for perfection anti spiritual attainments.

Samatha or calmness meditation and Vipassana or Insight meditation rediscovered by the Buddha over 2557 years ago is the effective mean by which we can learn in depth to reach the real life centre, and understand what life is all about., how suffering ceases after it occurs, how life-quality development can be done, and how real

peace can be achieved by human beings. This is the method of practice followed by Gautam Buddha leading to enlightenment over 2557 years ago. These two meditation techniques are non-sectarian and practiced by all without any distinction of race, caste, religion and nationality. The techniques teach how to-develop the mind to- go hand in hand with material development so that life will be truly peaceful. Spiritual development is meditation leading to peaceful mind. When the mind is peaceful,- spiritual insight or wisdom is achieved. When we have

meditation and wisdom, all other virtues will come about. The essence of meditation in Buddhist philosophy is pure calmness of mind together with equanimity by wisdom without prejudice. Besides, the purpose of meditation is not only to cure physical diseases, but as the by-product of mental purification, many psychosomatic diseases get eradicated. The highest achievement will be the attainment of Nirvana, the cessation of all sufferings and the realization of perfect bliss. Meditation practice is the way to the lasting peace.

At this critical juncture, the Buddha's methods of meditation practice to the modern world has great relevance as it is the only way by which people can control their mind. Buddhism has spread without fire or sword, spread its doctrines of tolerance, peace and compassion to a world in turmoil and suffering. Buddhism preached universal brotherhood and equality of man. Let the world traverse the path of peace and happiness with the bliss of sacred teachings of the Buddha.

(The Assam Tribune - 25-05-2013)

A Tribal Areas Alarm

The results of the examinations conducted by the Assam Higher Secondary Education Council (AHSEC) in the streams of science, arts and commerce are a huge disappointment in the sense that most of the tribal-inhabited areas have performed very poorly, while the need of the hour is to increase the quality of education in these areas so that the chronic problem of poverty and backwardness is countered effectively and meaningfully and so that the youth of these areas are not forced to take to militancy to sustain their lives. For instance, with 63.48 pass percentage in the science stream, Dima Hasao district, which has witnessed armed rebellion of one of the most violent kinds, is at the bottom of the pass percentage list of all districts in the State. In both the arts and commerce streams, Chirang district in the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) area is in the last spot with pass percentages of 46.06 and 35.71 respectively, which is patently a dangerous sign. The All Assam Tribal Sangha (AATS), an apex body of all the leading tribal organizations of the State, has put the blame on the lack of quality education in tribal districts. "The poor performance of students (in tribal areas) is a serious issue. Even in the matric examination, the students of tribal districts fared poorly.

There must be some serious lapse in the education scenario," Aditya Khakhlari, the AATS general secretary, has been quoted as saying. He cannot be disputed.

The fact of the matter is that the State government has all along been showing a remarkable proclivity to prioritize mainly the urban areas, calling the achievements by students here signs of development, and has failed the tribal areas very badly, which is completely unjust and undemocratic. One should visit areas like Dima Hasao and Chirang to get introduced to the grim realities there. And it is not just about education. Look at the health-care facilities. Look at the quality and level of infrastructure development. It is pathetic. When it comes to the extremely poor quality of education in these areas, the perils are far greater. In the absence of quality education, and given the poor show this time in the higher secondary results in these areas, it will not be astonishing at all if new forms of militancy begin to haunt them and the rest of the State too.

The State Education Department ought to sit up and take notice. It ought to effect a course correction as early as possible in consultation, of course, with other departments that

have a role to play in infrastructure development. Education Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma cannot merely be seen to be making tall claims in front of TV cameras. All that he needs to do urgently is preparation of a tangible road map to bring about the desired change in the education scenario in tribal areas, given especially the potential of these much-underrated areas to mutate into new and more virulent theatres of armed insurrections, accompanied by state terror in the name of counter-militancy operations, and a vicious circle thereafter. Since there is a lack of private quality educational institutes in tribal areas, and since private parties would not evince interest to set up such institutes in these areas due to armed movements, extortion, and the lack of infrastructure development, the State government cannot afford to sit back and bask in the glories of rhetoric and meaningless future plans. It must knuckle down and draw a solid blueprint, in consultation with academics, for a complete metamorphosis of the education scenario in tribal areas by changing the character of government schools, which is definitely possible. What is called for is will and vision — lacking so far, very unfortunately. But is Dispur bothered?

(The Sentinel - 23-5-2013)

Names Borrowed from India, in Trinidad

- Sneha M. Hazarika–Rampersad

It is incredible how the south Caribbean nation of Trinidad & Tobago has places named after Indian towns, cities, and India itself! However, it is also an understandable phenomenon, considering the ethnic mix of populace in the twin island State, especially Trinidad.

The nation has transitioned under various colonial rulers ever since Christopher Columbus discovered it (for Spain), on his third voyage to the Americas, in 1498. Both the islands were then inhabited by indigenous Amerindians: mainly Caribs and Arawaks.

Tobago changed hands among the British, French, Dutch and Courlanders (inhabitants from the small duchy of Courland and Semigallia in modern-day Latvia), but eventually ended up in British hands.

Trinidad remained under Spanish control until 1797, but it was largely settled by French colonists. In 1802 it was formally ceded to Britain.

With the abolition of the slave trade in 1807, plantation owners of the new British colony of Trinidad and Tobago had to compensate for the loss of their African slaves by bringing in labourers during the period 1830 to 1917. Initially, Chinese, West Africans, and Madeiran Portuguese were brought. They were eventually replaced by indentured laborers from India; the first cohort arrived on 30th May, 1845.

The twin island State which won its independence from the British in 1962, has an area of 1,980 square miles, and consists of two main islands –Trinidad and Tobago plus numerous tiny islands. Trinidad is the larger, more populous of the main island-pair. Tobago comprises 4% of the entire population, of approximately 1.3 million people.

The multicultural society comprises an ethnically diverse population. Afro - Trinidadians and Indo Trinidadians constitute the population

majority; followed by Chinese, Syrians and Caucasians, as well as a significant mixed-race population (the colloquially called Reds). Hence, the presence of streets, villages, towns and cities with names originating from the Spanish, French, African, English, Portuguese, Amerindian, Syrian-Lebanese, Chinese and Indian.

A number of areas which were once sugar-cane plantation zones still carry names assigned by the Indian indentured workers. So, one can find a village called Madras Settlement named after present day Chennai, which is located in Caroni County, Central Trinidad.

In west-central Trinidad, we find the Calcutta Settlements, with their Calcutta Roads. The naming has roots in Calcutta, India; from where many indentured labourers had set sail for the new world. Many of them had also been recruited from there.

Then there is Fyzabad, a town in south-western Trinidad. This little town got its name from the historically rich city and district of Faizabad, Uttar Pradesh, India. Canadian, Reverend Kenneth J. Grant, a Presbyterian missionary who had come to Trinidad, founded it in 1871. His purpose was to separate Christian Indians from the unconverted Hindu and Muslim populations. It later grew with the discovery of oil in the area in 1917, and attracted many immigrants from Grenada and other Lesser Antillean islands. In the year 1937, Fyzabad became the nucleus of oil-worker labour unrest and protest, led by Spiritual Baptist preacher/union leader, Tubal Uriah "Buzz" Butler. Hence, Fyzabad is the womb of the local trade union movement.

Barrackpore is a village in south Trinidad, inhabited largely by Indo-Trinidadians. It is named after Barrackpore, West Bengal; a town made very prominent by Mangal Pandey and the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, better known as the First War of

independence, in Indian History.

In the 19th century, the name Golconda was given to a fertile and loamy tract of land of Southern Trinidad. That name stemmed from Golkonda, also known as Golla Konda (shepherd's hill); a ruined city of South India and, capital of the ancient Kingdom of Golkonda.

Interestingly, there is also a Hindustan, the alternate name of India itself, in Victoria County, Trinidad.

St. James, Trinidad, has a community once known as Coolie town because of its significant population of Indian immigrants, especially people from Madras, who settled and developed the area, formerly lands from an abandoned estate. Many streets there have Indian names:

Ganges, Lucknow, Benaras, Cawnpore (likely to have stemmed from Kanpur), Bombay, Madras, Bengal, Calcutta, Patna, Agra, Delhi, Mathura, Hyderabad, Nizam and Baroda. In Petit Valley, Diego Martin, Trinidad, one can find Patna village, a region famous for Diwali celebrations.

(The Sentinel - 26-05-2013)

Where should you go to seek for God? Are not all the poor, miserable, the weak, Gods? Why not worship them first? Why go to dig a well on the shores of the Ganga? Let these people be your God - think of them, work for them, pray for them incessantly - the Lord will show you the way.

- Swami Vivekananda

Hindus Living 'Dangerously' in Balochistan

Islamabad, May 19: Though Hindus have richly contributed in the economic prosperity and development of Pakistan's restive Balochistan province since pre-partition days, they are today faced with the dilemma of survival and living "dangerously".

Historically, it is not clear in documents to assert how and when Hindus originally settled in Balochistan. But the Balochistan-based Baloch and Hindu historians and writers agree that Hindus have been living here since time immemorial along with Buddhists, according to columnist Muhammad Akbar Notezai of the Daily Times.

He says Hindus ruled Balochistan before the invasion of the Arabs in 712 A.D.

In his article, "The Balochistan Hindus' dilemma", Notezai says today "Hindus are considered low caste. They are treated unequally and as second grade citizens. They are living isolated lives in their separate localities. They do not have the right to vote. The standard of their children's education is abysmal."

In Balochistan, Hindus have two ancient sacred places — the Hinglaj Shrine in Lasbela district, and Kali Devi, dedicated to Goddess Kali, in Kalat town.

During partition, communal riots were rampant in the subcontinent but Hindus lived harmoniously and peacefully in the princely state of Balochistan, which was under Yar Muhammad Khan, the chief ruler of the Kalat state. He respected the indigenes of Hindus while giving them economic and religious freedom. Thus, the Hindus did not leave Balochistan during partition of the subcontinent.

Though Hindus lived amicably with the Baloch and Pashtuns, many had to leave Balochistan's Pashtun belt to settle in Baloch-populated areas or migrated to India after partition. In 1941, the Hindu population was 54,000 in Balochistan's Pashtun belt which soon dwindled by as much as 93 per cent after 1947.

Notezai, quoting a prominent Hindu

intellectual Sham Kumar, writes that in contemporary times "Hindus are now facing a situation worse in Baloch residing places than they had to face in the past living in Pashtun residing places".

"Because the Baloch elders, who would show great respect for their neighbourhood Hindus, are no longer living in this world, or they have become very old."

For Balochistan's economic prosperity and development, Hindus have built schools, libraries and hospitals. Many of the educated Hindus have been offering services in health, education and other sectors.

The Daily Times article said it is profoundly shocking that Hindus are now living dangerously in Balochistan".

"They cannot even perform their religious practices freely due to the nightmarish situation where they interminably fear for their lives, faith, honour and property."

"Hindus, in spite of being Balochistan's peaceful and largest minority, are running from their old 'motherland' to escape persecution, because their lives are in a precarious and worsened condition these days."

"In Balochistan, it was the 1990s period that turned into a great conflagration for Hindus. After that, gradually the Hindus' manifold problems, whether it was abduction, religious persecution, migration or killing, all of them have been intensifying."

"Many Hindu families have migrated to India, inside Pakistan to Karachi, and interior Sindh. But they are economically living a pathetic life in these places. There are many more Hindus who still utter the words 'migration' and 'insecurity' in Balochistan."

In Balochistan, there has been mass Hindu migration from the districts of Kalat, Khuzdar, Quetta, Mastung, Lasbela, Hub, Nushki, and Dalbandin.

According to Dr. Shah Muhammad Marri, a well-known Baloch historian, "This land has been burning for the last 30 years. It has become an inferno for

all the castes."

"Same is the case with the Hindus, the Christians, the Hazaras, the Baloch and the Pashtuns. All of them are migrating from pillar to post to find a safe place."

Balochistan's Minority Minister Basant Lal Gulshan, a Hindu, however, denies reports of Hindus migrating from Balochistan.

The government officials, on the other hand, say majority of Hindus who have been migrating from Balochistan or the country are economically sound. They see a bright future for their children in India.

"But it is worth mentioning here that 90 per cent of the Hindus of Balochistan are unsound economically. They cannot afford to leave their indigenous places and settle somewhere else, especially India."

Notezai wrote: "... a sane person or community would never give up their connections to their place of birth until or unless circumstances compel them."

Hindus - whose exact numbers are not known - also complain that their sufferings hardly and rarely get discussed in mainstream media. They rely on private TV channels to highlight their sufferings. Nearly 35 Hindus were killed during former dictator General Pervez Musharraf's regime where he launched the fifth military operation against Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti, the former chief minister of Balochistan.

Bugti used to keep the Hindus in proximity to his legendary fort in Dera Bugti to safeguard them from criminal elements. "That is why many Hindus, mainly women and children, were killed and sustained severe injuries in the assault against Nawab Bugti on March 17, 2005."

To a lesser extent, the last government would also be held responsible for the Hindus' sufferings. "That is why the incoming government should be civilised and democratically elected so that Hindus may find a solution to their tragic dilemma," said Notezai.

(<http://in.news.yahoo.com/hindus-living-dangerously-balochistan-100543233.html>)

CARING FOR OTHERS

In a hostel there lived one hundred students. They hailed from different places, belonged to different communities and were of different tastes. They lived together like a well-knit family. Each student shared the pain and pleasure of the other but they never interfered in the affairs of one another. This was the reason for their having good times. Amongst them there was one student Satish who never cared for others. He was very healthy and also had a lot of money. He was not in need of anybody's help. So, he thought that he need not help anybody. He ended up by being isolated. No doubt there were a few students in the hostel who were attracted by his wealth but none liked him in their heart of hearts.

Once Satish started running a temperature. He could neither go to college nor eat. His friends got him some tea from some hotel and they went away to college. The temperature mounted and Satish became restless. He had a terrible headache. He needed someone to give him company and to massage his forehead. Unfortunately fair-weather friends are not friends in need. Boys who were good to him were not even aware that he was suffering from high fever. Satish could do nothing but lie in his bed in the room and shed tears.

Unexpectedly a boy named Ramesh passed in front of Satish's room on some errand. He was the prefect of the hostel. When he saw Satish shedding tears he approached him. He touched him and found that his body was as hot as a frying pan. He immediately sent a message to the superintendent that Satish was suffering from high fever and that he had to attend to him. The superintendent reported the matter to the Principal who gave him attendance. The Principal was pleased to know that there were at least some of his students who cared for others in times of need.

Ramesh sat at the bedside of Satish and massaged his head, applied a cold pack on his forehead and later cleaned up the room. With

this care Satish regained his spirit. He was greatly attracted towards Ramesh. He declared that Ramesh could now attend college since he was well. Ramesh said, "I am in no great hurry to attend college. I can stay with you for some more time." Satish protested. But sitting here you will miss the lectures."

Ramesh - Looking after you is my foremost duty now. I am going to do it. We want to be educated so that we could care for others in times of need. Now, that I have an opportunity to do it, why should I miss it?

Satish - Brother, you are the blessed one who serves others in this way.

Ramesh - Why do you call it service? It is nothing but caring for others. There is no necessity forgiving thanks. All of us are living together. Who knows tomorrow I may be in need of help? Then why not help others now?

Satish - Look at me, I have never cared for you. Why only you, I have never served anyone. Then why should you care for me?

Ramesh - This is only the beginning. But ultimately we do not serve others expecting any return from them. We should care for others in a spirit of service. It is our duty. That way we get peace of mind. Our circle of friends widens, our society and country become strong. Thus, considering every point of view we see that it is our duty to render service to others.

Satish - Then do you want even the mighty and the great to care for the weak and the Poor?

Ramesh - Undoubtedly. Now then tell me who is weak and who is mighty in this world? The situation makes the weak strong and the mighty weak. Have you not heard the famous story of the camel?

Satish - What's that?

Ramesh - Once there lived a camel in a forest. One day after feeding on grass and leaves the camel was lying down dozing. A rat came out of its hole which was nearby. It looked out

this side and that. After ascertaining that it was safe for it to come out, it started running hither and thither freely. Roaming about leisurely it came near the camel and taking it for something to eat started nibbling at it. When it started hurting, the camel got up hesitantly. Immediately the rat started to run but in spite of its agility its tail came under the camel's foot. The camel also realised that it was the rat which had nibbled at it. So, glaring at the rat, it said, "Should a puny creature like you have the audacity to bite me?"

The rat implored, "Brother I have erred. I mistook you for something edible. That is why I bit you. Please excuse me for this once. I will never repeat the mistake." Still the camel glared at the rat. The rat again begged, "You will gain nothing by killing me. Kindly release me. I may be of some service to you in the future." "What!" cried the camel, "What can a tiny thing like you do for me? Still I will let you go now. Do not dare be impudent again." It lifted its leg and the rat raced into its hole. It never harassed the camel again. The camel had a bridle and one day it got caught in a clump of bushes. The harder the camel tried to release itself the more the bridle became entangled in the bushes. Its nostrils started bleeding and it suffered excruciating pain. Exactly at that time the rat came out of its hole. It saw that the camel was suffering much. It approached the camel and with its sharp teeth cut the bridle which was entangled in the bushes. The camel was greatly pleased. It became clear to the camel that in this world nobody is too great and none too small. It is the situation that makes a thing great or small. This is only a tale but even among humans if a person cares for the weak it is possible that the weak also may be of service to him sometime.

Ramesh narrated this story without interruption. Satish listened to it in silence. He had decided in his heart that Ramesh was a nice boy. He also resolved to shed pride and serve others.

(Moral Fables)

पूर्वोत्तर के नौ पर्वतारोहियों ने तिरंगा फहराया

पूर्वोत्तर के नौ पर्वतारोहियों ने माउंट एवरेस्ट पर अपने कदम रखे और वहां तिरंगा फहराया। इन पर्वतारोहियों को यह उपलब्धि शनिवार को हासिल हुई।

अरुणाचल माउंटेनियरिंग एंड एडवेंचर स्पोर्ट्स एसोसिएशन (एएमएएसए) के अध्यक्ष सेरिंग वागे ने आज यहां बताया कि छह पर्वतारोहियों ने शुक्रवार की रात आठ बजे साऊथ कोल से चढ़ाई शुरू की और आगे बढ़ते रहे। नेपाली मानक समयानुसार, काल सुबह पांच बज कर 40 मिनट पर वह शिखर पर पहुंच गए।

इन पर्वतारोहियों के नाम अंशु जानसेनपा (अरुणाचल प्रदेश), तरुण सड़किया (असम),

डेविड जोमनगैहा (मिजोरम), वांगशुक माइरथांग (मेघालय), काजी शेरपा (सिक्किम) और नैमेराकपम चिंगखेनगनबा (मणिपुर) हैं। केवल 16 साल की उम्र में माउंट एवरेस्ट फतह कर ये लोग सबसे कम उम्र के भारतीय पर्वतारोही बन गए।

इससे पहले, शुक्रवार को अरुणाचल प्रदेश के नीमा लामा, मणिपुर की बिद्यापति देवी और सिक्किम के आनंद गुंखा ने दुनिया की सबसे ऊंची चोटी पर कदम रखा था।

केवल दस दिन में दो बार इस शिखर पर चढ़ने वाली अंशु एकमात्र ऐसी महिला है जो एक मां भी है।

इन पर्वतारोहियों ने 100 किमी प्रति घंटे

की रफतार से चल रही हवाओं और प्रतिकूल मौसम के बीच शिखर की राह तय की और उस पर कदम रखा।

पर्वतारोही मनीष डेका (असम) और अथोकपम राबर्ट (मणिपुर) को साउथ कोल यानी 26,000 फुट की ऊंचाई पर अपना अभियान रोकना पड़ा था क्योंकि पर्वतारोही वारिबम जेम्स (मणिपुर) की तबियत अचानक खराब हो गई थी।

राष्ट्रपति प्रणव मुखर्जी ने 20 मार्च को अब तक के पहले पूर्वोत्तर माउंट एवरेस्ट अभियान की झंडी दिखा कर शुरुआत की थी।

(दैनिक पूर्वोदय - 20.5.13)

संस्कृति हमें तोड़ती नहीं, जोड़ती है: मोहन भागवत

भारत की सनातन संस्कृति पूरे विश्व को एक सूत्र में बांध सकती है। हमारी संस्कृति हमें जोड़ती है, तोड़ती नहीं। उक्त बातें सर संघ चालक मोहन भागवत ने गीताश्रम में आयोजित प्रशिक्षण शिविर के समापन समारोह को संबोधित करते हुए कहीं।

उल्लेखनीय है कि गत 22 अप्रैल से 20 दिवसीय उत्तर असम प्रांत के प्रथम एवं द्वितीय वर्ष के अधिकारी प्रशिक्षण वर्ग शिविर का आयोजन किया गया था। गत रविवार को गीताश्रम में आयोजित समापन समारोह को संबोधित करते हुए मोहन भागवत ने कहा कि सारी दुनिया विकास की राह पर चल रही है, विकास से हमें सुविधा मिली है, सुख नहीं। विश्व में अध्यात्मिकता का अभाव देखा जा रहा है। अध्यात्मिकता के अभाव में नीति नहीं रहती है।

श्री भागवत ने कहा कि आज देश में घुसपैठिए

बिना किसी डर के आ रहे हैं तथा यहां रोजगार कर अपने परिवार का भरण-पोषण भी कर रहे हैं। पर क्यों सरकार की आंखें नहीं खुल रही। पाकिस्तान व चीन का जिक्र करते हुए उन्होंने कहा कि पाकिस्तान का अपना कोई ठिकाना नहीं, वो हमें जब इच्छा आंखें दिखाने लगता है। दूसरी तरफ चीन ने भी हाल ही में हमारी सीमा में अतिक्रमण करके हमारी संप्रभुता का उल्लंघन किया। परंतु हमारा देश विश्वशांति का नारा देकर ईंट का जबाव पत्थर से देने में हिचकिचाता है। हमारे पास एक सशक्त सेना है - हम किसी भी मायने में कम नहीं हैं। चीन की वाणिज्य व्यवस्था तथा अर्थ व्यवस्था भारत पर निर्भर है। इसलिए उनका उद्देश्य लड़ाई नहीं बल्कि भारत पर अपना दबदबा बनाए रखना है। चीन ने अपनी मर्जी से हमारी सीमा में अतिक्रमण किया और अपनी मर्जी से चले गए। इससे यह लगता है कि हमारी सीमा में

चौकसी को और मजबूत करना पड़ेगा। संघ के संबंध में बोलते हुए सर संघ चालक ने कहा कि आज देश भर में एक लाख तीस हजार से ज्यादा स्वयंसेवक राष्ट्रहित में लगे हैं। संघ का एकमात्र उद्देश्य राष्ट्र की रक्षा, राष्ट्रहित में काम करना है। जब-जब देश में कोई प्रलयकारी घटना घटित होती है। वहां सबसे पहले स्वयंसेवक बिना भेदभाव, जाति धर्म से ऊपर उठकर राष्ट्रहित में कार्य करते हैं। इसके बावजूद सरकार सदैव हमें टेढ़ी दृष्टि से देखती है। राजनीति से कभी भी समाज का भला नहीं होगा। समाज में परिवर्तन की बहुत बड़ी आवश्यकता है। हमारा देश सनातन देश है। मुसलमान, ईसाई, आदि अपने को अलग समझते हैं किंतु वे भी भारतीय हैं और वे यहीं रहेंगे। समापन समारोह में भारी तादाद में उत्तर पूर्वांचल के लोग उपस्थित थे।

(दैनिक पूर्वोदय - 16.5.13)

Food For Thought

पहाड़ में फंसी एक बेटी ने अपनी मां से पूछा - अम्मा, रेडियो पे सुना ईंडिया जीत गई, जो खेल रहे थे उन्हें एक करोड़ रुपिया मिली।

मां बोली - हाँ बेटी सरकार कहती है वो देश के लिए खेल रहे थे, इसलिए...। बेटी आसमान में हैलीकॉप्टर से लटकते जवान को देख के बोली - अम्मा क्या इन्हे भी मिलेगा एक करोड़?

मां बोली- ना-बेटी-ना हमारे यहां बल्ले से खेलने वाले को ईनाम मिलता है जान से खेलने वाले को नहीं...।

कल्याण आश्रम असम महिला संगोष्ठी की आलोचना चक्र सम्पन्न

स्वामी विवेकानन्द सार्ध शती समारोह के शुभ अवसर पर कल्याण आश्रम असम के तत्वावधान में असम के चार प्रमुख शहरों में 'स्त्री भारतीय विचार एवं वर्तमान स्थिति' इस विषय पर महिला आलोचना चक्र का आयोजन किया गया था। यह आलोचना चक्र डिब्रुगढ़ में 18, 19 मई को सम्पन्न हुआ जिसमें डिब्रुगढ़ विश्वविद्यालय की प्रोफेसर श्रीमती अर्चना महंत मुख्य अतिथि एवं श्रीमती अनिमा हजारिका प्रोफेसर, मनोहारी कॉलेज, डिब्रुगढ़ ने अध्यक्षता की। इस संगोष्ठी में 82 बहनों ने सहभाग लिया जिसमें 15 महिलाओं ने अपना विचार सब के सामने रखा। यही कार्यक्रम डिफू एवं कोकराझार में दि. 25, 26 मई को सम्पन्न हुआ।

डिफू में सम्पन्न हुए कार्यक्रम में भक्तिमत्त सेवा ट्रस्ट से माँ अम्बिका तोगबिपी ने दीप प्रज्वलन कर आशिर्वाचन दिए तो अतिथि के रूप में श्रीमती बीणा तेरोनपी ने मार्गदर्शन किया। डिफू में 70 बहनों की उपस्थिति में 16 महिलाओं ने अपने विचार रखे। 25, 26 को कोकराझार में उपरोक्त कार्यक्रम सम्पन्न हुआ जिसमें बी.टी.सी. की ज्वाइट सेक्रेटरी श्रीमती मंजुमाला ब्रह्म ने अध्यक्षता करते हुए सभा को सम्बोधित किया। इसी सभा को कोकराझार बी.एड. कॉलेज की सेवा निवृत्त प्रोफेसर श्रीमती

कृष्णा बागची, कोकराझार गवर्मेंट कॉलेज की प्रोफेसर श्रीमती अंजली बसुमतारी, कोकराझार जिला खेल अधिकारी श्रीमती जग्यवती महिलारी ने सम्बोधित किया। इस कार्यक्रम में 105 महिलाओं ने भाग लिया जिनके सामने 16 बहनों ने अपने विचार प्रगट किए।

महिला आलोचना चक्र का चौथा कार्यक्रम दि. 1, 2 जून को तेजपुर में सम्पन्न हुआ जिसमें तेजपुर कॉलेज की प्रोफेसर श्रीमती चारू सहरिया नाथ मुख्य अतिथि एवं दरंग कॉलेज की सेवानिवृत्त सहप्राध्यापक सुश्री साधीनता महंत विशेष अतिथि के रूप में उपस्थित थी। इस कार्यक्रम में 96 महिलाओं ने भाग लिया तथा 19 महिलाओं ने अपने विचार सबके सामने व्यक्त किया। इस कार्यक्रम में सभी स्थानों पर कल्याण आश्रम के राष्ट्रीय सहसंगठन मंत्री श्री अतुल जोग, क्षेत्रीय महिला प्रमुख कु. फूलमय स्वर्गियारी, असम प्रांत महिला समिति की अध्यक्ष श्रीमती जोनाकी बोड़ो, आलोचना चक्र संयोजक सुश्री बीणा ने अपने-अपने विचार व्यक्त किया कि भारतीय संस्कृति का मुख्य आधार स्त्री, जगत् जननी, शक्ति दायिनी, सुखवर्धिनी जैसे अलग-अलग रूप स्त्री के हैं। किंतु आधुनिकता के शिकार होने के कारण स्त्री अपना दायित्व, कर्म भूलती जा रही हैं जिसके



कारण संस्कृति विनाश, धर्म हानि (ग्लानि:), मर्यादा का उल्लंघन हुए दिख रहे हैं।

परिवार, घर, समाज को सही मार्ग पर चलानेवाली शक्ति है स्त्री है जो आज स्वयं ही पाश्चात्य संस्कृति के मोहपाश के जाल में दिखता है। स्त्री का सही स्वरूप, उसका कर्तव्य समझने की अत्यंत आवश्यकता है।

कार्यक्रम को यशस्वी बनाने में सुश्री ज्योतिर्मयदेवी, कु. मनचली हाजोंग (डिब्रुगढ़), कु. सेर्लिन तेरोनपी, कु. काचे बेपी (डिफू), श्रीमती प्रतिमा ब्रह्म, कु. जीवश्री बोड़ो, कु. दमयंती स्वर्गियारी (कोकराझार), श्रीमती मीरा बोड़ो, कु. गंगा बसुमतारी, कु. सोनाश्री ब्रह्म ने अथक परिश्रम किया।

म्यांमार में दो ही बच्चे पैदा कर सकते हैं मुसलमान

म्यांमार के राखाइन प्रदेश में एक नया सरकारी आदेश जारी किया गया है। इस आदेश के तहत यहां रहने वाले रोहिंग्या मुसलमान सिर्फ दो ही बच्चे पैदा कर सकते हैं।

गौरतलब है कि यह आदेश सिर्फ मुस्लिमों के लिए ही है, इन इलाकों में रहने वाले बौद्ध परिवारों के लिए नहीं। धर्म के आधार पर जनसंख्या वृद्धि रोकने वाला यह दुनिया का पहला सरकारी आदेश माना जा रहा है। इस आदेश के बाद यहां की सरकार पर मुस्लिमों से भेदभाव करने का आरोप लग रहा है।

शनिवार को जारी इस आदेश के दायरे में फिलहाल राखाइन प्रांत के दो कस्बे आते हैं।

बुथीडांग और मौनदा नाम के ये कस्बे बांग्लादेश से लगी सीमा पर स्थित हैं। राज्य में मुस्लिमों की सबसे ज्यादा आबादी इन्हीं दो जगहों पर है। अगर पूरे देश की बात की जाए, तो म्यांमार की छह करोड़ की आबादी में मुस्लिम चार फीसद हैं।

इस आदेश के बारे में सरकारी प्रवक्ता ने कहा कि इसका मकसद मुस्लिमों की तेजी से बढ़ती संख्या पर काबू पाना है। उन्होंने कहा कि सरकार ने जब हालिया नस्लीय हिंसा की जांच की, तो पाया कि मुस्लिमों की आबादी में तेजी से बढ़ोत्तरी टकराव का एक बड़ा कारण है। विन ने आंकड़ों का हवाला देते हुए कहा

कि राखाइन में रहने वाले बौद्धों के मुकाबले मुस्लिमों की जनसंख्या बढ़ोत्तरी की दर 10 गुना ज्यादा है।

गौरतलब है कि राखाइन प्रांत में एक साल पहले नस्लीय हिंसा शुरू हुई थी। टकराव राखाइन के बौद्धों और रोहिंग्या मुस्लिमों के बीच हुआ था। इस दौरान हथियारों से लैस बौद्धों ने मुस्लिमों के हजारों घर जला दिए थे। इस हिंसा में सैकड़ों लोग मारे गए थे और लगभग सवा लाख मुस्लिमों को पलायन के लिए मजबूर होना पड़ा था।

(http://visakeo.blogspot.in/2013/05/blog-post_4863.html)

स्त्रियों के प्रति स्वामी विवेकानंद की भूमिका

देखते-देखते 21 वीं सदी के 12 साल गुजर गये। आज स्त्री शिक्षा और अर्थार्जन के क्षेत्र में पुरुषों के बराबर किंबहुना आगे ही नजर आती है। व्यक्ति की स्वतंत्रता की पहचान, पुरुषों के कन्धे से कन्धा मिलाकर स्वतः का स्थान निर्माण करने की सिद्धता, समाज में सहज और स्वतन्त्र बर्ताव, रहन-सहन में परिवर्तन इन सभी के साथ जीवन को जो एक गति मिली है, उसने एक शतक में बहुत बड़ा परिवर्तन किया है। कई समाज सुधारकों ने स्त्री शिक्षा पर जोर दिया। वे सोचते थे कि शिक्षा प्राप्त के बाद कई प्रश्नों का हल अपने आप निकल आयेगा। एक बात माननी पड़ेगी कि पिछले शतक तक संकुचित और बन्दी जीवन, कई रुढ़ियों, परम्पराओं आदि से मुक्त होकर आज की नारी खुली हवा में सांस ले रही है।

इसलिए आज की स्त्री के जीवन का निरीक्षण किया जाये तो क्या यह परिवर्तित उन्हें विकास की ओर ले जाने वाला है? विकास किसे कहा जाये? क्या स्त्रियों का स्वयं की ओर दृष्टिकोण बदला है? क्या समाज का स्त्रियों की ओर दृष्टिकोण बदला है? बदलती समाज व्यवस्था, कुटुम्ब व्यवस्था, औद्योगिकीकरण, संस्कार हीनता, जीवन मूल्यों के प्रति उदासिनता इत्यादि का परिणाम सभी की तरह स्त्री पर भी हुआ है। अपने स्त्रीत्व की रक्षा और शालीनता क्या पिछड़ेपन की निशानियां बनती जा रही हैं? और सुधार का अर्थ पुरुषों की बराबरी से बोलना, रहना, व्यवहार करना इत्यादि बनता जा रहा है। स्त्री-पुरुष समानता शब्द ही मूल रूप से अनाकलनीय है। स्त्री-पुरुष दोनों ही भिन्न गुण-धर्मों के जीव हैं तो वे समान कैसे हो सकते हैं? स्त्रीत्व को कम आंकना ही गलत है। स्त्रियों पर होने वाले अत्याचार और उनकी भीषणता बढ़ती ही जा रही है। यह सब कहां जाकर थमेगा? क्या इसका कोई मार्ग मिलेगा?

स्वामी विवेकानंद के विचार पश्चिमी राष्ट्र भी स्वीकार कर रहे हैं, क्योंकि ये विचार मूलभूत हैं, जिसमें अखिल मानव जाति का विचार किया गया है। स्त्री चाहे वह भारतीय हो या विदेशी, स्वामी विवेकानंद का दृष्टिकोण दोनों के लिए

ही आदरपूर्ण था। उनका संस्कृति और तत्व ज्ञान का अभ्यास सूक्ष्म था। स्त्रियों के विषय में बात करते समय वे कहते थे कि भारतीय स्त्रियों का आदर्श सीता, सावित्री, दमयंती इत्यादि हैं। वेद, पुराण भले ही नष्ट हो जाये परन्तु इनके चरित्र जीवित रहने चाहिए। हम इन्हीं की संतानें हैं। वैदिक काल में लड़कियों को लड़कों के साथ ही शिक्षा दी जाती थी। गार्गी, मैत्रेयी, लोपामुद्रा, सुलभा, वाचकनवी, लीलावती, इत्यादि कई महिलाएं विदुषी और ब्रह्मवादिनी थी। उन्हें विद्वानों की सभा में सम्मान प्राप्त था। उन्हें हर तरह की स्वतंत्रता थी। भारत के इतिहास में यहां की संत परम्परा में भी कई महान स्त्रियों का समावेश रहा। स्वामी जी कहते हैं कि सेवाभाव और आध्यात्मिकता उन स्त्रियों के स्वभाव में ही था।

स्वामी जी अत्यन्त वैराग्य सम्पन्न संन्यासी थे। उनकी परम शिष्या भगिनी निवेदिता कहती है कि 'उनको स्त्रियों से डर नहीं लगता था। उनकी अनेक शिष्याएं थी, सहकर्मी महिलाएं थी और सहेलिया भी थी। वे इन लोगों के श्रेष्ठ गुण और चरित्र देखते थे। पवित्रता का जो आदर्श उनके सामने प्रकट होता था वे उसकी उपासना करते थे। वे अपने शिष्यों से कहते थे कि हमें यह बात नहीं भूलनी चाहिए कि हमारा उद्देश्य पिछड़े लोगों और स्त्रियों का उद्धार करना है।' पश्चिमी देशों के प्रवास में उनका अनेक स्त्रियों से परिचय हुआ। सुशिक्षित, आत्मविश्वास से परिपूर्ण, निर्भय और प्रेम से ओतप्रोत नारी गुणों का उन्हें दर्शन हुआ। स्त्रियों ने वात्सल्य भाव से उनकी देखभाल की। वे कहते हैं कि स्त्रियों से प्राप्त पुत्रवत् प्रेम के लिए शब्द भी कम पड़ जायेंगे। उन्होंने कई संसार देखे, आध्यात्मिक रूप से उन्नत नारियां देखी। शिकागो में जिनका घर उनका निवास स्थान रहा, उन मेरी हेल को वे 'मदर' कहते थे। उनकी दो बेटियां और उनके जेठ की दो बेटियां चारों ही स्वामी जी की बहने थी। केंब्रिज की ओली बुल को, जिन्होंने कलकता में भगिनी निवेदिता विद्यालय को आर्थिक सहायता दी, स्वामी जी धीरामाता कहते थे। मिशिगन की

एमिली जॉन लॉयन के पास उसी तरह स्वामी जी अपने पैसे सुरक्षित रखा करते थे, जैसे कोई अपनी मां के पास रखता है। एक बार स्वामी जी ने कहा कि 'मुझे प्रेम हो गया है तो एमिली लायन ने पूछा वो भाग्यवान लड़की कौन है? स्वामी जी ने हंसकर जवाब दिया कि वह कोई लड़की नहीं, संगठन है।' स्वामी जी के विचारों और कर्मों का प्रभाव इतना था कि कई विदेशी स्त्रियों ने भारत में आकर सेवा कार्य की शुरुआत की। इंग्लैण्ड की श्रीमती चार्लोटी सोवियर अपने पति के साथ स्वामी जी की शिष्या बनी और बाद में यह दंपती अपनी संपत्ति बेचकर भारत आ गये। स्वामी जी की इच्छानुसार उन्होंने हिमालय में मायावती नामक स्थान पर अद्वैत आश्रम की स्थापना की। जोसेफाइन मैलिलअड, हेनरिटा मूलर, क्रिस्ताइन ग्रीन स्टाइडल, मैडम एम्मा कॉफ इत्यादि अनेक रूप गुण संपन्न, धनवान स्त्रियां आध्यात्म भाव से प्रेरित हुईं। स्वामी जी से आठ साल बड़ी श्रीकृष्ण परमहंस जी की सहधर्मचारिणी शारदा मां को स्वामी जी माता मानते थे और अपने से केवल चार वर्ष छोटी भगिनी निवेदिता को वे अपनी कन्या मानते थे। उनका विलक्षण भाव इसी से प्रतीत होता है।

स्वामी जी जब युवा थे उसी समय बंगाल में स्त्री शिक्षा का प्रसार धीरे-धीरे शुरू हो गया था। कुछ बंगाली बालाएं तो स्नातक भी थी। स्वामी जी का विश्वास था कि 'लड़कियों को शिक्षा देने पर वे स्वतः ही अपने प्रश्नों को हल कर लेंगी। स्त्री शक्तिस्वरूपा है, वह रूप से साक्षात् लक्ष्मी है, गुणों से सरस्वती है, वह साक्षात् जगदम्बा है। जब ऐसी हजार जगदम्बा तैयार हो जायेंगी तो मैं सुख से देह त्याग कर सकूंगा। सम्पूर्ण समाज की धात्री भारतीय स्त्री हृदय से कार्य करेगी और अपने साथ ही समाज की भी उन्नति करेगी।' वे आह्वान करते थे कि स्त्रियों को मूल्याधारित शिक्षा, पारम्परिक और आधुनिक शास्त्र, इतिहास और कला की शिक्षा दें, जिससे वे आत्मनिर्भर बनेंगी। लड़कियों को सिखाएं कि न कम उम्र में विवाह करें न गर्भधारण करें और न ही कमजोर बच्चों को जन्म दें- 'कन्याप्यव पालनीया शिक्षणीय अतियत्नतया।'

विवाह केवल इंद्रिय सुखों के लिए नहीं करना चाहिए। प्रार्थना, व्रत, उपासना से वंश को बढ़ाने का प्रयत्न करना चाहिए। मातृत्व एक मंगल वरदान है। पति-पत्नी के बीच का संबंध परस्पर पूरक, एक दूसरे को आधार देने वाला होना चाहिए। मातृत्व की कल्पना में स्वार्थ भाव नहीं है। संत ज्ञानेश्वर के अनुसार यह भावना 'अनाक्रोश क्षमा' के समान है। इससे केवल परिवार का ही नहीं, समाज का स्वास्थ्य सुधरेगा। इस प्रकार के मंगलमय वातावरण में निर्माण होने वाली, बढ़ने वाली पीढ़ी व ऐसा गृहस्थाश्रम सम्पूर्ण समाज की देखभाल करता है। वे एक उज्जल विचार करते हैं कि स्त्री संन्यास धर्म अधिकारिणी है, क्योंकि उसमें स्वभावतः ही वैराग्य होता है। उस पर विवाह के लिए जबरदस्ती नहीं करनी चाहिए। परन्तु यह व्रत कठिन है और विवाह भी उतना ही महत्वपूर्ण है। इसी से पति-पत्नी सहभाव, निष्ठा, रिश्तों की मिठास, जिम्मेदारी और कर्तव्य का बोध होता है और पीढ़ी दर पीढ़ी संस्कारों का आदान-प्रदान होता है।

पूर्वी और पश्चिमी समाज का स्त्री की ओर देखने का दृष्टिकोण बहुत भिन्न है। पाश्चात्य

दृष्टिकोण में नारी शक्ति का केन्द्र पत्नीत्व में है। वह पत्नी, सखी, सहेली हो सकती है। पूर्वी दृष्टिकोण में स्त्री को मां का सम्मान प्राप्त है। पश्चिमी सभ्यता में घर की जिम्मेदारी पत्नी संभालती है और पूर्वी सभ्यता में यह जिम्मेदारी मां, सास तब तक संभालती है जब तक नयी बहु में भी मातृत्व का विकास न हो जाये।

स्वामी जी कहते हैं 'हे नारी तुझे केवल हाड़-मांस के शरीर संबंधों में बांधा जाना सही नहीं है। जिसके सामने जाने की काम भावना की हिम्मत न हो और जिसे पशुत्व छू भी न सके, ऐसा शब्द है केवल 'माँ'।' उनके अनुसार स्त्री-पुरुष समाजरूपी पक्षी के दो पंख हैं। दोनों समाज रूप से सामर्थ्यवान होंगे तभी समाज का विकास होगा। स्वयं की रक्षा के लिए आत्म संरक्षण की विधिवत शिक्षा लेने पर भी उनका जोर रहता था। स्त्री अबला है, उसे आधार की आवश्यकता है, जैसी पारम्परिक समझ से अलग हटकर वे कहते हैं कि स्त्री सामर्थ्यवान बने। स्त्री का स्त्रीत्व कायम रखते हुए उसकी उन्नति और विकास होना चाहिए।'

स्वामी जी के विचार अत्यन्त उदात्त और आदर्श हैं। आज की परिस्थिति में इन विचारों

को प्रत्यक्ष जीवन में कैसे अपनाया जाये? क्या यह दायित्व केवल स्त्रियों का है। दोषों की विवेचना करते हुए बैठे रहने की जगह सकारात्मक वातावरण निर्माण करने के लिए स्वामी जी के विचारों का बहुत अभ्यास करना पड़ेगा। कवयित्री स्व. पद्मा गोले के अनुसार 'मैं शक्तिस्वरूपा हूँ। यह कार्य मुझे करना है और मैं कर सकती हूँ' ऐसा आत्मविश्वास मन में रखना चाहिए। हम और आप संगठित होने का प्रयत्न करेंगे तभी इस समाज का भविष्य निखरेगा। जिन-जिन क्षेत्रों में महिलाएं होंगी वहां वे परस्पर ईर्ष्या न कर अभ्यास, चिन्तन-मनन, ध्यान, बुद्धि का समतोल, आहार, सामाजिक, राजनैतिक, वैश्विक जगत के प्रति जागरूकता, आत्मविश्वास, निर्भयता, व्यायाम, देश-धर्म परम्परा इत्यादि केवल शब्द नहीं रहेंगे। परिवार एक संगठन है। उसके ताने-बाने सभी जानते हैं। भारत की 50-60 करोड़ महिलाओं ने केवल महिलाओं का ही नहीं वरन सम्पूर्ण समाज का विशाल चित्र अपनी दृष्टि में रखकर अपने छोटे से परिसर में 'कृण्वंतो विश्वं आर्यम' की उक्ति के अनुसार कार्य करें। स्वामीजी की 150 वीं जयन्ती के उपलक्ष्य पर यही उन्हें सही मायनों में श्रद्धांजलि होगी। (हिंदी विवेक)

Female Virgins "Forcibly Married" Then "Raped to Make Executions Legal"



Members of Iran's feared Basij militia forcibly marry female virgin prisoners the night before

scheduled executions, raping their new "wives" and making it religiously acceptable to execute them, a self-professed member of the paramilitary group said.

The anonymous militiaman told the Jerusalem Post that at age 18 he was "given the 'honor' to temporarily marry

young girls before they were sentenced to death."

In the Islamic Republic of Iran it is illegal to execute a woman if she is a virgin, the former guard told the newspaper. So the government arranges "wedding" ceremonies to be conducted the night before executions, and prisoners are forced to have sexual intercourse with a guard.

Raped by her new "husband," a female prisoner is now fit to be put to death.

"I regret that, even though the marriages were legal," said the militiaman, who told the Jerusalem Post he had just been released from prison himself after freeing two teenagers rounded up during post-election protests.

Some of the prisoners in his care were drugged with sleeping pills to make them docile, as the girls in their custody always fought back, he said, fearing the night of the rape more deeply than their executions the following day.

"I remember hearing them cry and scream after [the rape] was over," he told the paper. "I will never forget how this one girl clawed at her own face and neck with her finger nails afterwards. She had deep scratches all over her."

(<http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,534116,00.html>)



भूमि अधिग्रहण कानून पर यूपीए सरकार की दोगली नीति

-विष्णुकांत

सरकार यह प्रचार कर रही है कि विपक्षी दल विशेषकर भाजपा ने संसद की कार्यवाही बाधित कर देश के 70 करोड़ लोगों को दो समय के भोजन देने की गारंटी देने वाला खाद्य सुरक्षा बिल और लाखों किसानों को फायदा पहुंचाने वाले भूमि अधिग्रहण बिल को पारित नहीं होने दिया। वोटों की राजनीति करने के लिए दावे कुछ भी किए जाएं परंतु आइए देखते हैं कि भूमि अधिग्रहण बिल क्या वास्तव में देश के किसानों विशेषकर जनजातियों के हित में है ?

१. आगे बढ़ने से पहले एक बात पर और गौर करने की आवश्यकता है। संसद में पेश करते समय जिस बिल में कुल 107 धाराएं हों सरकार पारित कराते समय उसमें 157 संशोधन कराना चाहती है। इसमें भी आधे से अधिक महत्वपूर्ण संशोधन। इसलिये विपक्ष यदि यह मांग करता है कि सरकार के इन संशोधन के कारण बिल में आमूलचूल बदल हो गया है, इसलिये इसे पुनः स्टेन्डिंग कमेटी या सलेक्ट कमेटी को भेज देना चाहिये ताकि सरकार के इन बदलावों पर सभी पक्षकारों से चर्चा कर इसे अन्तिम रूप दिया जा सके तो इसमें गलत क्या है ? 120 वर्ष पुराने-आजादी के भी 66 वर्ष बाद जिस महत्वपूर्ण कानून को बदला जा रहा है उसमें इतनी जल्दबाजी केवल वोटों के लालच को ही दिखाती है देश के आम नागरिकों-किसानों-आदिवासियों के हित को नहीं।

२. 1894 के कानून में जहां लोक उद्देश्य को परिभाषित ही नहीं किया गया था, अंग्रेजी सरकार के बड़े साहब कलेक्टर जो बोलें-बता दें वही लोक हित। पर इस नये बिल में लोक हित की परिभाषा को इतना व्यापक बना दिया है कि इसमें कुछ छूटता ही नहीं, निजी कम्पनियों-पीपीपी-(PPP-Public Private Partnership) (भले ही इसमें निजी क्षेत्र का 80-90% हिस्सा हो और सरकार का 10 %), SEZ, खनन, कल-कारखाने, पर्यटन-होटल, निजी क्षेत्र के लिए अस्पताल, शिक्षा केन्द्र-ढांचागत निर्माण (Infrastruc-

ture Development) के नाम पर सब कुछ लोक-हित की परिभाषा में डाल दिया।

केन्द्र सरकार पीपीपी मॉडल की परियोजनाओं को सरकारी अंकेक्षण से दूर रखना चाहती है जबकि भारत के अंकेक्षण एवं महानियंत्रक-सीएजी और संसद की अनेकों समितियों ने इन्हें अनिवार्य शासकीय अंकेक्षण के अधीन रखने की मांग की है।

३. 157 संशोधनों में एक संशोधन यह भी है कि यदि एस.आई.ए./मोनीटरिंग कमेटी यह रिपोर्ट देती है कि प्रस्तावित भूमि अधिग्रहण से वह उद्देश्य पूरा नहीं होगा जिसके लिए अधिग्रहण किया जा रहा है तो भी सरकार जमीन ले सकती है क्योंकि बिल में दिये गये 'कथित' (Stated) उद्देश्य की जगह अब 'कोई' (Any) उद्देश्य कर दिया गया है। यह तो गरीब लोगों की भूमि पर सरासर डाका डालना है।

४. इस विधेयक का क्रियान्वयन पूरी तरह से नौकरशाही पर निर्भर रहेगा। यहां तक कि चौकसी - (Monitoring) और पुनर्वास के लिये बनी समितियों में किसी भी निर्वासित जन प्रतिनिधि को सदस्यता नहीं दी गई है। भूमि अधिग्रहण कानून, 1894 को बदल कर 2007 से नया कानून लाने का प्रस्ताव संसद में लंबित है। भूमि अधिग्रहण कानून 1894 के स्थान पर भूमि अधिग्रहण एवं पुनर्वास विधेयक 2011 पर संसद के दोनों सदनों की स्थायी समिति ने लंबे विचार विमर्श के बाद अपने अनेक संशोधनों-सुझावों के साथ संसद को 17/5/2012 को लौटा दिया जिसे सरकार ने गत दिनों लोकसभा में प्रस्तुत कर दिया। स्थायी समिति में वनवासी कल्याण आश्रम ने भी जनजातियों के अनेक मुद्दों को रखकर विधेयक में आवश्यक बदलाव की मांग की जिसे समिति ने स्वीकार भी किया। वर्तमान में विधेयक जिस रूप में प्रस्तुत किया गया है उसमें भी किसानों-जनजातियों के हितों की अनदेखी की गई है।

1. यदि कोई निजी कंपनी भूमि खरीदती है या अधिग्रहित करती है तो इस विधेयक के पुनर्वास सम्बंधी प्रावधान तभी लागू होंगे जब

शहरी क्षेत्र में 50 एकड़ या इससे अधिक भूमि का अधिग्रहण हो और ग्रामीण क्षेत्र में 100 एकड़ या अधिक। यह भेदभाव अनुचित है विशेष रूप से तब जब हम देखते हैं कि पानी, कोयला और चूने जैसे अनेक आधारभूत संसाधन अधिकतर ग्रामीण विशेषकर जनजाति क्षेत्र में ही उपलब्ध है। इतना ही नहीं सुदूर जनजाति-ग्रामीण क्षेत्र में उद्योगों को बढ़ावा देने के लिए सरकारें इन उद्योगों को कर एवं अन्य मामलों में अनेक छूट देती है। परिणाम स्वरूप स्टील, सीमेंट, बिजली उत्पादन, खनन और अन्य छोटे-बड़े अनेक उद्योग बड़ी मात्रा में जनजाति क्षेत्रों में आ रहे हैं। ऐसे में विधेयक का यह प्रावधान जनजातियों को प्रस्तावित कानून के देय पुनर्वास के लाभ से वंचित कर देगा यदि अधिग्रहण की जाने वाली भूमि 100 एकड़ से कम होगी। अब केन्द्र सरकार ने इस 100/50 एकड़ की सीमा को राज्य सरकारों पर छोड़ दिया है। जो स्वयं या कंपनी एवं जमीन मालिक के बीच मोल-भाव करके यह तय करेगी कि क्या-कितना राहत पैकेज दिया जाएगा। गरीब ग्रामीण किसानों-आदिवासी लोगों की सरकार/कंपनियों के सामने मोल-भाव करने की Bargaining Power कितनी है यह सब जानते हैं।

यहां एक प्रश्न और उठता है कि मूल रूप से पुनर्वास पैकेज की अवधारणा भूमि अधिग्रहण से पीड़ित किसानों-आदिवासियों को राहत पहुंचाने से जुड़ी है। ऐसे में कोई समाज-कल्याणकारी शासन का दावा करने वाली सरकार राहत पहुंचाने के काम में भी इस प्रकार की कोई शर्त लगा सकती है ? यदि ऐसी शर्त लगानी ही है तो वह केवल निजी कम्पनियों के लिये अधिग्रहण के मामलों में ही क्यों सरकारी अधिग्रहण की स्थिति में क्यों नहीं ?

2. भूमि अधिग्रहण के मामले में यह नया कानून बन जाने के बाद भी देश में 13 और कानून भी प्रभावी रहेंगे जहाँ यह नया कानून लागू नहीं होगा। इनमें प्रमुख हैं परमाणु उर्जा कानून, दामोदर घाटी निगम कानून, भूमि अर्जन-खनन कानून, राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग कानून, कोयला धारक-क्षेत्र अधिग्रहण कानून, रेल कानून,

विस्थापित व्यक्तियों के पुनर्वास हेतु भूमि अधिग्रहण कानून आदि। इन सभी मामलों में बड़ी मात्रा में जमीन चाहिए परन्तु वहाँ पुराने कानून ही लागू होंगे-न सुनवाई, न बढ़ा हुआ उचित मुआवजा। अपरोक्ष रूप से यह बड़े औद्योगिक घरानों-बड़े सरकारी उपक्रमों-पीपीपी खिलाड़ियों को अनमोल सौगात व आदिवासियों-गरीब किसानों के साथ भद्र मजाक नहीं तो और क्या है ?

3. इस बिल में संविधान की पांचवी अनुसूची में आनेवाले राज्यों - मध्यप्रदेश, राजस्थान, गुजरात, महाराष्ट्र, छ.गढ़, झारखंड, ओडीसा, आन्ध्र और हिमाचल प्रदेश की आदिवासियों की भूमि के बारे में कहा गया है कि इनके इस सूची में दिये गए संवैधानिक अधिकारों की रक्षा की जायेगी। परन्तु उत्तर-पूर्व भारत की जनजातियों के लिए बनाई गई छठी अनुसूची को कोई सुरक्षा नहीं दी गई है। इन राज्यों में असम, नगालैंड, मणिपुर, मेघालय जैसे राज्य आते हैं।

4. प्रचारित यह किया जा रहा है कि इस बिल के पास होने के बाद भूमि अधिग्रहण के सभी मामलों में सभी जमीन मालिकों को जमीन के बदले जमीन मिलेगी। यह सरासर गलत है। केवल अनु. जाति एवं जनजाति के लोगों को जमीन के बदले जमीन मिलेगी वह भी ली जा रही जमीन के बराबर या अधिकतम 2.5 एकड़। बाकी किसानों को कोई जमीन नहीं मिलेगी।

जमीन के बदले जमीन दिया जाना इसलिये भी आवश्यक हो जाता है क्योंकि यह सब जानते हैं कि देश का किसान-आदिवासी परंपरागत रूप से बड़ी धन-राशि का प्रबंध-उसका पैसा, कमाने में उपयोग-बिनियोग करने में बहुत कुशल नहीं है। इस कारण मुआवजे की हाथ में आई बहुत बड़ी धन-राशि कुछ ही वर्षों में उड़ जाती है। जबकि जमीन पीढ़ियों तक उसके परिवार का गुजारा करती है।

दिल्ली के आसपास नोएडा, गुडगाव, यू.पी., पंजाब, हरियाणा में जहाँ जमीन का बड़ी मात्रा में अधिग्रहण हुआ है वहाँ एक साथ बहुत बड़ी राशि किसानों के परिवारों में आई वहाँ सभी तरह के अपराधों और इस राशि को हड़पने के लिये परिवार के लोगों में खूनी

कलह भी इसके गवाह हैं।

इन्हीं कारणों से कुछ राजनैतिक दल और किसानों के प्रतिनिधि यह मांग कर रहे हैं कि जमीन अधिग्रहण के स्थान पर 25-30 वर्ष के लिये लीज-पट्टे-किराए पर ली जाए ताकि जमीन पर किसानों की मालिकियत बरकरार रहें और प्रतिमाह निश्चित आय कि गारन्टी रहें। इस स्थिति में भी उन्हें पुनर्वास - पैकेज और अन्य सुविधाएं तो देनी ही होंगी? हालांकि इस सुझाव पर और अधिक मंथन-विचार करने की आवश्यकता है।

5. भूमि अधिग्रहण एवं पुनर्वास से संबंधित विवादों की सुनवाई सामान्य न्यायालयों के क्षेत्राधिकार से निकाल कर विशेष न्यायालयों को दिया जाना प्रस्तावित है जिन्हें प्राधिकारी कहा गया है। प्राधिकारियों के रूप में सेवारत या सेवानिवृत्त किसी भी जिला-जज अथवा 7 वर्षों का अनुभव रखनेवाले वकील को नियुक्त किया जा सकेगा। प्रांतों में उनकी संख्या कितनी होगी - प्रत्येक जिले में ये न्यायालय होंगे या नहीं स्पष्ट नहीं है। इन विशेष न्यायालय से रिटायर होने के बाद ये न्यायिक अधिकारी उन्ही निजी कम्पनियों में नौकरी-सलाहकार के पद पर काम कर सकते हैं जिनके मामलों कि इन्होंने सुनवाई की थी - न कानूनन रोक, न कोई कूलिंग ऑफ समय दिया कि कम से कम पांच वर्ष वे ऐसा नहीं कर सकेंगे। इनकी नियुक्ति-चयन-नियंत्रण-वेतन भुगतान सब सरकार करेगी। सीपीसी भी इन विशेष न्यायालयों के लिए लागू नहीं होगी। इसके कारण न केवल न्यायपालिका का की स्वतंत्रता व निष्पक्षता प्रभावित होगी बल्कि पीड़ित-विस्थापित लोगों को न्याय के लिए अपने जिले से बाहर भी भटकना पड़ेगा और न्याय दुर्लभ व और महंगा हो जाएगा।

6. वन अधिकार कानून, 2006 के अन्तर्गत आदिवासियों या अन्य निर्धन ग्रामिणों को जिस वन भूमि के पट्टे दिये गये या जिस वनभूमि पर सामुदायिक अधिकार मान्य किये जा चुके हैं जिस पर वे सैंकड़ों वर्षों से अपनी आजीविका कमा रहे हैं, उस भूमि का भी अधिग्रहण करने की व्यवस्था इस बिल ने कर दी है जो कि अवैध है। स्वयं भारत सरकार का वन एवं पर्यावरण मंत्रालय ओडीसा में वेदान्ता कम्पनी

के मामले में इसकी घोषणा कर चुका है। डॉ. एन. सी. सक्सेना समिति की रिपोर्ट दि. 03.08.2009 इसका प्रमाण है। यह आदिवासियों-गरीब ग्रामीण लोगों के साथ घोर अन्याय है। इसके कारण यदि उनमें असंतोष फैला तो सरकार को लेने के देने पर जाएंगे।

7. बिल की दूसरी एवं तीसरी अनुसूची में क्रमशः राहत पैकेज एवं ढांचागत सुविधाओं की सूची दी गई है जो भूमि अधिग्रहण से प्रभावित लोगों-परिवारों को दी जाएगी। परन्तु इन्ही अनुसूचीयों के अंत में एक टिप्पणी दी गई है कि यदि अधिग्रहण करनेवाले एजेंसी (सरकार या निजी कंपनियां) इनमें से कोई पैकेज सुविधा नहीं दे रही हैं तो वह उसका कारणों सहित विवरण दें। अर्थात् अनिवार्य पैकेज/सुविधा नहीं दिये जाने की परीक्षा रूप से छूट दे दी गई है।

8. पुनर्वास पैकेज के मामलों में इस कानून को वर्ष 2007 की उस तिथि से लागू किया जाये जिस दिन प्रथम बार यह विधेयक संसद में प्रस्तुत किया गया था।

9. सम्पूर्ण देश के जनजाति क्षेत्र में एक समयबद्ध अभियान चलाकर भूमि सुधारों को लागू किया जाये और लोगों को उनके भूमि अधिकार पत्र-पट्टे दिये जायें। जनजाति लोगों के पास अपनी पुश्तौनी खेती की जमीन के कोई दस्तावेज नहीं, उसके अभाव में उसे न कोई मुआवजा मिल सकता है, न कोई राहत पैकेज।

10. इस बिल के मूल प्रारूप में देश की खाद्य-सुरक्षा की थोड़ी चिंता की गई थी। इसमें बहु-फसली सींचित जमीन के अधिग्रहण को नियंत्रित किया गया था। देश की बढ़ती हुई आबादी का पेट भरने के लिये देस के वार्षिक खाद्य उत्पादनों में 1/3 बढ़ोतरी करनी होगी। आज प्रति व्यक्ति प्रति वर्ष 200 किलो सकल खाद्यान्न मिल रहा है जो पड़ोसी देश नेपाल व श्रीलंका से भी कम है- विकसित देशों की तो बात ही छोड़ दें। सरकार एकतरफ तो 1.5 लाख करोड़ सालाना खर्चवाले खाद्यान्न बिल को लाने का झुनझुना बजा रही है तो दूसरी तरफ इस बिल पर बनी संसद की स्थाई समिति की सिफारिशों के विपरीत अब सिंचित बहु-फसली जमीन के अधिग्रहण का भी रास्ता

साफ कर दिया है। यह न केवल किसानों-आदिवासियों के लिये बल्कि पूरे देश के लिये खतरे के घंटी है। हम फिर से 1960 की स्थिति में पहुंच जाएंगे जब हमें अमेरिका से PL-480 योजना ने सड़ा-गला गेहूँ आयात करना पड़ता था।

11. इस बिल में एक और महत्वपूर्ण बात है-जमीन के बदले दी गई जमीन या जहां बेदखल लोगों को बसाया गया है, भविष्य में जरूरत हुई तो उसका भी अधिग्रहण किया जा सकेगा। इसके विरुद्ध कोई कानूनी सुरक्षा-रोक नहीं है। इसलिये जोरों से एक मांग यह भी हो रही है कि जीवन में दूसरी बेदखली कभी न हो No Second Displacement. क्या

एक बार अपनी भूमि से बेदखल होने वाला किसान-उसकी आने वाली पीढ़ियां जीवनभर विस्थापन भोगती रहेंगी ?

लब्बों-लुवाब यह है कि भूमि अधिग्रहण के जिस बिल को किसानों-आदिवासियों के लिये राम बाण कहा जा रहा है, वह वास्तव में चासनी-शक्कर चढ़ी जहर की गोली है जो उनके लिये 1894 के कानून से भी ज्यादा घातक है। केन्द्र सरकार ने इस पर फिर से विचार नहीं किया-इसके आधार पर चुनावी वैतरणी पार करने की योजना बनाई तो उसका बेड़ा पार होना मुश्किल होगा।

इसलिए इस बिल में आवश्यक बदलाव करके ही इसे पारित किया जाए। शायद इसीलिए

यूपीए सरकार खाद्य सुरक्षा बिल पारित करने को उतावली हो रही है पर भूमि अधिग्रहण बिल नहीं। सरकार किसानों-आदिवासियों की इतनी ही हितैषी है तो विशेष अधिवेशन में इन दोनों विधेयकों सहित खान एवं खनिज विधेयक -MMDR Bill 2010 (जिसमें खनन कम्पनियों को अपने लाभों/रॉयल्टी का 26 % हिस्सा विस्थापित-प्रभावित आदिवासियों-जमीन मालिकों को देने का प्रावधान है, उसे पारित करवाना चाहिए। खनन बिल को तो सरकार पिछले तीन वर्षों से दबाए बैठी है।)

जनजाति हितरक्षा प्रमुख

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वंदे मातरम

हाल ही में सदन में सत्र समाप्ति के समय बजने वाले राष्ट्र गान के समय बसपा के एक सांसद शफीउर रहमान 'बर्क' जिस तरह से सदन से उठकर बाहर चले गए इसे सदन की अवमानना के तौर पर ही देखा जाएगा। देश में पहले से ही 'वंदे मातरम' को लेकर अनावश्यक विवाद होता ही रहता है पर किसी भी देश के सर्वोच्च सदन में जाने से पहले सदस्य को राष्ट्र, संविधान और विधि को बनाए रखने की शपथ दिलाई जाती है और सभी नए पुराने सदस्यों को संसदीय नियमों की पूरी जानकारी भी दी जाती है। ऐसी परिस्थिति में किसी भी व्यक्ति को इन सामान्य नियमों से छूट कैसे दी जा सकती है यह सोचने का विषय है। बहुत पहले से ही सांसदों को सदन की परंपरा को निभाने की बात कही जा रही है लेकिन अब भी अधिकांश सांसद ऐसे हैं जिन्हें संसदीय गरिमा को बचाने की फिक्र ही नहीं। ऐसे में शफीउर रहमान जैसे सांसद यदि गैर जिम्मेदाराना हरकत करें तो वह कहीं से भी क्षम्य नहीं है। जबकि इस तरह की किसी भी घटना को धर्म के चश्मे से देखने के स्थान पर राष्ट्र के नियमों के अनुसार देखा जाना चाहिए। क्योंकि देश का संविधान राजनीति में धर्म के घालमेल का किसी भी स्तर पर समर्थन नहीं करता। ऐसे में यदि राजनैतिक दलों के नेता धर्म के बारे में बिना गहराई से पड़ताल किए सांप्रदायिक रुख अख्तियार करे तो उसे उसका धर्म भी इस बात की इजाजत नहीं देता। लेकिन दुखद स्थिति है

कि अधिकांशतः इस तरह के इस्तेमाल से परहेज नहीं करते हैं ? इस तरह की किसी भी घटना पर किसी भी दशा में लीपा पोती नहीं की जानी चाहिए और संबन्धित संसदीय दल के नेता को भी सदन में बुलाकर स्पष्ट रूप से चेतावनी जारी कर देनी चाहिए। साथ ही देश में वंदे मातरम को लेकर जिस तरह की अनावश्यक राजनीति को आगे लाया जाने लगा है उस परिस्थिति में कभी भी कोई भी व्यक्ति इस तरह की हरकत कर सकता है।

राष्ट्रगीत 'वंदे मातरम' में दो पंक्तियों ऐसी हैं जो कहती हैं कि सभी भारतीयों को वतनरूपी मां के आगे झुकना चाहिए। अब इसमें भी गर कोई कोताही बरते तो यह युक्तिसंगत प्रतीत नहीं होता। साथ ही 'वंदे मातरम' राष्ट्रगीत को संघ से जोड़ने की कवायद निरा मूर्खता है। मौलानाओं की एक हजूम इसे जिस तरीके से सांप्रदायिक तूल देने में लगी है उस पर रोक जरूरी है। क्योंकि इसमें किसी का कुछ भला हो या न हो मगर मुस्लिम कट्टरपंथियों की फिर चांदी हो रही है। सांप्रदायिक देश को बढ़ावा देने के लिए 'वंदे मातरम' को मुद्दा बनाया जाना कहीं से भी ठीक नहीं है। हालांकि इस गीत को गाने या न गाने से देशभक्ति या देशद्रोह का प्रमाण नहीं मिलता। लेकिन हम जिस देश में रहते हैं उस देश का सम्मान तो होना ही चाहिए। हमें अपनी मातृभूमि की अस्मिता को बचाकर रखनी ही होगी। और यह हर भारतीय का राष्ट्रधर्म है।

ऐसे में मुस्लिम कट्टरपंथियों द्वारा बार-बार इस बात को समझाया जाना कि 'वंदे मातरम' उनके लिए एक अधार्मिक गीत है इसलिए हम नहीं गा सकते हमारा मजहब इसकी इजाजत नहीं देता समझ से परे है।

जबकि 'वंदे मातरम' को तात्विक-दृष्टि से देखा जाए तो यह कोई मुद्दा सिरे से ही नहीं है। भारत के ऋषियों ने प्राचीन काल में ही बता दिया था कि वंदना का अर्थ क्या है और वंदना का वास्तविक अधिकारी कौन है ? कुरआन भी कोई नई बात नहीं सिखाता। कुरआन इल्म ही नहीं देता बल्कि हिकमत यानी तत्वदर्शिता भी सिखाता है। सही मायने में देखा जाए तो मुसलमानों का रिश्ता कुरआन से कमजोर पड़ गया है। इसी वजह से अधिकतर मुसलमान तत्वदर्शिता से भी दूर हो चुके हैं। जब इल्म कम होगा तो उसमें तत्वदर्शिता होगी ही नहीं और समस्याएं जरूर खड़ी होंगी। संभवतः यही बात शफीउर रहमान पर भी लागू होती है। और उन्होंने अपने गलत आचरण को प्रदर्शित किया। भारतीय संसद की अपनी गरिमामय संसदीय परंपरा है और जो व्यक्ति इस परंपरा से इत्तेफाक नहीं रखता है उसे चुनाव लड़कर सदन में जाना ही नहीं चाहिए। क्योंकि जो परंपराओं का सम्मान नहीं कर सकता है वह सार्वजनिक जीवन में रहकर देश और समाज की क्या सेवा कर पाएगा यह सभी जानते हैं।

(दैनिक पूर्वोदय- 20.05.13)



A programme of Plantation organised by Akhil Bharatiya Kalyan Ashram in various places of Bharat on it's 60th Year of Foundation Day .



Seminars on the topic "Women – Indian concept, Thoughts and Present Day scenario" organized by Kalyan Ashram Mahila Samiti at Tezpur, Dibrugarh, Diphu and Kokrajhar during the month of May.

