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HERITAGE EXPLORER

"LET KNOWLEDGE COME FROM ALL THE SIDES"

A Monthly News Bulletin

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Human excellence depends on development of culture

World's first culture (Yajurveda 7/14: Sa Prathama Sanskriti Vishwara)

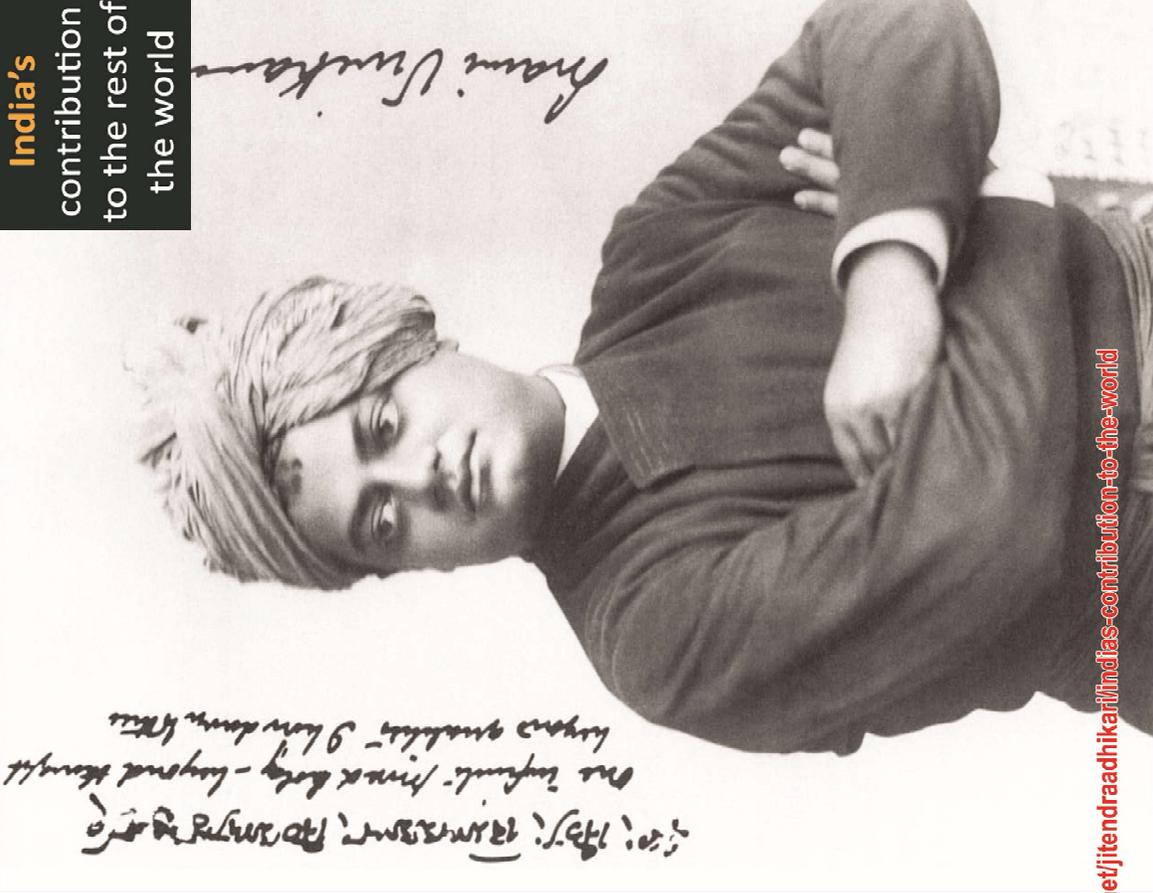
Many small civilizations were formed but were confined to small regions.

Only Indian culture can be called as first world culture.

Indian Culture = Human Culture

Culture that focuses on inculcating human values in a man

India's
contribution
to the rest of
the world



Courtesy : <http://www.slidehare.net/jitendraadhikari/indias-contribution-to-the-world>

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NAGALIM- an utopian fantasy

Recently, I had the good fortune of visiting Changlang and could see for myself the ground realities of the stymied and lacklustre growth of the district. The place is abundantly picturesque, clean air, beautiful lush green hill sides, scattered houses and stray domestic animals roaming lazily, here and there. But despite this heavenly ambience, it looked as if the life here is in a limbo and the activities of the residents are more mechanical than natural. There is no hustle bustle or spontaneity among the people moving around as also the youthful banter that are natural in a locality inhabited by about 1.50 lakhs of people belonging to different tribes and communities. As per legend the name Changlang owes its origin to the local word CHANGLANGKAN which means a hilltop where people discovered the poisonous herb, which is used for poisoning fish in the river. The present reality however is near about similar but the poison they discovered now appears to be of different kind. It is not so innocent as fish poison but is much more than it.

Looking for the cause behind the disquiet and the subdued life style of the locals, only thing that comes to mind is the unjust demand of the NSCN (IM) for 'Nagalim' or greater Nagaland, encompassing all Naga-inhabited areas of Myanmar and the north-eastern states bordering Nagaland which includes Tirap, Changlang, Longding, Anjaw, Lohit and Namsai districts of Arunachal Pradesh. The NSCN (IM) is also demanding sovereign structure for 'Nagalim', separate flag and separate Constitution, which means the people of the proposed Nagalim will not be Indians in effect anymore and will be ruled by the gun-trotting NSCN(IM) cadres. The people of these districts are therefore afraid of being a part of the Angami dominated Nagalim and prefer to live as they are living now.

For long 23 years, the government of India is relentlessly trying to settle the Naga dispute peacefully but no tangible success could be achieved till now. Every time the peace process is being scuttled by Th. Muiva through cunning, threats and mischievous manoeuvres. Currently, Muivah has nearly 2,000 people carrying weapons sitting in a place called Camp Hebron, which is on the gate-way to Nagaland. From there, he is running his empire as its chief and collects "taxes", which is essentially extortion. He is well aware of the fact that if a settlement is reached, it is the end of his road and he will become irrelevant in the new dispensation. He also realises that he will have zero hope of getting power in Nagaland so long as it is within Indian dominion. He is therefore trying to delay this settlement for as long as he can, because the status quo suits him perfectly. The proof of his dilatory tactics is reflected in his signing the Framework Agreement of 2015, and then refusing to honour it now on the ground that the Government of India is trying to shift the goalpost.

The situation as it stands today is very puzzling. NSCN (IM) demand for a sovereign 'Nagalim', separate flag and separate constitution are absurd propositions. A self respecting, universally respected democratic nation like India cannot ever agree to such an utopian idea.. In the name of integration how a petty organisation like NSCN (IM) can demand a part of Myanmar, an independent country and parts of other Indian states. Except land grabber China and Islamic fanatic Pakistan, nobody is going to back Th. Muiva. The only solution therefore to such a vexed issue is perhaps lie in waiting for normal death of Muiva or he must be killed politically so that he can do no harm to us.

There are several other ways we can peacefully

combat the NSCN(IM), essentially a terrorist group, who are playing with the emotions of the Naga people. It is apparent that most of the saner elements amongst the Naga tribes are fed up with the never ending peace process with no peace in sight. They must have understood why Muiva, a Myanmar national, has chosen India, a giant nation, to fight his 'Nagalim' battle. Because India is peace loving and do not believe in harsh retaliation whereas the Myanmar Government has no such compunctions and will crush such elements to dust like they did with the Islamic fundamentalist insurgent groups of their country.

The best way for us is therefore to win the confidence of the peace loving Naga majority living in the contiguous areas of present day Nagaland by developing them as model areas with good schools, colleges, hospitals and promote employment avenues by setting up industries and labour intensive production units. These developments will motivate them to peacefully co-exist with other communities of the districts they are living with now and resist fake integration war of Th. Muiva. The people of the areas should be given to understand that Muiva cannot give them anything except dreams, whereas our democratic and peace loving Government can give them much more in real terms. Little or greater Nagaland means very little to them. They only crave for development and peace. Our government and the people must be firm and strong enough to give them what they deservedly need.

Chief Editor

Perspectives on the Tribal-Christian Interaction in British North East

K Raka Sudhakar Rao

In the colonial era, the spread of Christianity was in close conjunction with the commercial, political and military expansion of the European powers. As a corollary, freedom movement world over, along with social, political and economic struggles, had to militate against the Church. Several such encounters have attained historic salience. The refusal of the Christian converts to participate in the ancestral cults and their negative attitude towards the liberation struggles undermined the very basis of morality and society in Indo-China, Korea, Japan and India. In Japan, Christianity was dubbed Yaso – Jakyō i.e., perverse religion of Jesus Christ. The Japanese royalty issued several edicts to fight off Christians who supported the Spanish domination. Taikosama (1597 CE) and Daifusama (1614 CE) can be cited as examples. Similarly, the bloodbath of Tientsin (1870 CE) and Bosers' Rising (1900-1901 CE) against the clergy and the neo-converts, who supported the European expansionists, also constitute important historical events in China's fight against foreigners. In 1880, Vietnam saw the issuance of a series of edicts which were against the Christians. Vietnam also criticised the role of Christianity in establishing European hegemony over its land. They blame the colonial legacy for the present ethnic divide in their countries.¹ Jomo Kenyatta is credited to have said the following about Christianity.

“When they (Christian preachers) came, we had the land and they had the Bible. They asked us to close our eyes and pray! When we opened our eyes, the Bible was in our hands and the land was in their hands.”

African Christians have also begun to create the concept of a black Christ as against a 'racist' and 'imperialist' image of a fair-complexioned Caucasian Christ. Remnants of the Red India race have also

begun to document their struggle against the Spanish and other Europea marauders.

In our country too, extensive study has been done on how the Hindu society weathered the attacks by the proselytisers. The reactions of Brahmabandhav Upadhyaya, Raja Rammohan Roy, Keshav Chandra Sen etc are well-known. Swami Dayananda and Swami Vivekananda also blunted the Christian attacks. Owing to the resilience and grit of the society, the euphoria of foreign preachers that all the ‘heathens’ of India would eventually embrace Christianity, vanished and only a minuscule minority followed the missionaries. The missionaries were so dejected that they were forced to concede that “the whole country is as hard as the flint rocks, and prejudice and superstition are like mighty bulwarks against the truth.”² Another foreign missionary lamented thus: “they think thus as I urge them to Christ, “who will leave this village? Is not the village life of much more importance?”³ However, the missionaries have since concentrated their efforts on the tribal and other underprivileged communities. Their most impressive success stories emanate from these areas. India’s North East registered a great progress for their wish with Nagaland, Meghalaa and Mizoram practically becoming Christian states and the tribal areas of Manipur and Tripura also showing promise. Arunachal is their most recent prize catch.

However, not much is known as to how the tribal societies fought the missionary onslaught against heavy odds. This forms an important aspect of the freedom movement in the North East. However, the source material is scanty and written records are either not available or don’t simply exist. Further, the mass conversions of a vast majority complicate the study of this neglected aspect of India’s freedom movement.

In the following pages, an attempt is made to touch this rarely touched aspect. However, deeper studies and more intensive research are needed to develop this subject further.

Indomitable spirit of Independence

The pre-Christian tribal societies of North East India with ‘their simple beliefs, loyalty to the chiefs and economic self-sufficiency which constituted the village life of the people’ had their own charms, strengths and contented past⁴ and an indomitable

sense of independence. They ferociously guarded their cherished freedom and engaged the Britishers in constant battles and succumbed only after long drawn out military expeditions.

For instance, Kuki Rebellion of 1917-19, which was localised only to a few areas of Manipur, took more than 5000 armed men and two years to be subdued. The flash points in the British-Tribal conflict were the curtailment of tribal revenue, restrictions of tribal movements and migrations and forcible recruitment of tribal youths and women as labourers. The famous Kuki Rebellion was the result of the forcible recruitment of conscripts for service in the labour corps of the British Army.⁵ The Naga war against the British, spearheaded by Jadonang and Rani Gaidinliu, was also due to this factor. Tribals of Arunachal, particularly the Akas (Apatanis) resented the deprival of Posa revenue. NE Parry records three Mizo songs belonging to the Lakher (Mara) tribe which stand testimony to the sentiments and feelings of the tribal society against the British perpetrators.

A raw vepi pen a chhua tlei
Da ei khua li then ra pa cha la
Hre zong e tan pe me aw vei

(The Government has taken all our country. We shall always have to work for the government. It was better have we never been born.)

A ngong taka e chei tah ta
A pa nawng chua chei la en a ti
Tle kua pe la che khai aw vie e

(We have to pay Rs 2 as house tax. And not content with that, they now tell us to send fowls in for sale. It was better if we were never a part of Lushai Hills (now Mizoram).

The Kala thang thang rapadaita
Hrat lai chu na salu ti cha langlei
Ra pa nawhlen sai pina

(The government has hemmed in on the north, south, east and west. Henceforth, none of our young warriors will drink the waters of the Salu river where we always used to ride.)⁶

Due to these reasons, the early missionaries who made forays into Naga, Mizo, Manipur and NEFA (now Arunachal) areas were suspected of being British spies. Thus, when Khamptis of Arunachal

attacked the British outpost in Sadiya in 1839, they killed Col. White and forced the missionaries to flee.⁷ Godhula, an Assamese Christian, who pioneered the proselytisation efforts in Naga Hills in 1871, was also considered to be a British spy and was kept in a village jail for 2-3 days.⁸ When Rev. Clark went on to visit Dekahaimang village in Ao area of Nagaland, the non-Christians told the converted, “You will find, sooner or later, that this great Rajay preacher is a disguised agent of the company (the British, as they were known then).”⁹

Edward Payson Scott was a pioneering missionary who visited the Mikirs (now called Karbis of Assam) around 1863, the village chief and the villagers came down with spears saying: “We know who you are — You are Maharani’s (English queen’s) men. You have come to steal our children to carry them away to bondage.”¹⁰ The Kukis also opposed Christianity as converted Nagas actively colluded and cooperated with British perpetrators during Kuki wars.

“People in general looked upon Christianity as the religion of the conquerors being forced upon the conquered. The missionary efforts were but further attempts to fasten more securely the foreign yoke upon them. The behaviour of converted tribals and the soft corner of the British administrators had for the neophytes was reason enough for this belief.”¹¹

Interestingly, several tribes had their own prophecies that the British would be driven away by a war hero or a messiah. For generations, Nagas had a prophecy that one day a Naga king would arise, drive out the British and rule over “all those who eat from a wooden platter” i.e., Nagas.¹² Similarly the Zeliangrong Movement for religious and socio-political emancipation was propelled by a similar prophecy and Jadonand, the founder of Harekka (Pure Naga) religion, proclaimed himself a messiah who would liberate Nagas from the foreign yoke.

Defence Mechanisms

When Christian missionaries preached to the tribals, their initial response was one of a magnanimous nature and they exhibited true tolerance. They believed that all religions were equal. The counter argument went like this:

“Yes Sahib, your words are all true, they are just

what our Sastras teach. Your religion is good for you and ours for us. All religions are true, given by gods to different people according to their capabilities and they will be saved by believing these religions, just as men of different countries are nourished by different foods.”¹³

The Garos of Meghalaya also had a broad religious outlook. Same was the case of most of the tribals of the North East. BN Choudhury quotes a Garo man on the Garo religious outlook.:

“Christian dhorma ba nama
Songsarik ba nama
Gimik Manderang isolni fisa”

(The Christian faith is also good, Sangsarik (the original religion of the Garos) is also good. All are creations of the God.)

But, conversion to Christianity meant threat to solidarity and unity of traditional experiences and cultural expressions. The converts violated and disrespected socio-religious laws, customs and festivals.¹⁴ The Missionaries encouraged the converts to disregard tribal laws. The public stand taken by them (converts) aroused suspicion and hatred towards them as well as Christianity.

The new converts were not allowed to enter their parental houses or to mingle within the tribe. Thus, when the new converts re-entered their homes and villages, they were made to realise what they had lost by accepting a new religion and culture. They were regarded as traitors to the tribe endangering the very unity and life of it. The converts were ostracised and disinherited from positions and properties. In some cases, they were physically punished and even exterminated. Taxes were levied on them. In 1855, two Konyaks were converted at Sibsagar in Assam. When they went to Namsang (their village in Tirap district of present day Arunachal Pradesh) to preach, the leaders of the village thought that this would create confusion and turn the village upside down. Therefore, for peace and order, they were exterminated.¹⁵

The 92nd Annual Report of the Baptist Missions says: “the non Christians tried to compel the Christian minority to observe non-Christian festivals and genna

(Contd. to Page 11)

Exploring positive and negative

Ranga Ranjan Das

The nexus of positive and negative is not new. It has been going on since time immemorial. There are two ways to interpret positive and negative, while one signifies well in a positive sense, and other takes into negative in a bad sense. We, aspect always well being by embracing positive energies to proceed but at the same time, negative energy misguides us. In recent times, the meaning is completely reverse in the sense that corona positive is literally corona affected and corona negative has the smile in their faces, they are yet to be infected. There are lots of other meanings. While positive shows bright at the same time negative infuses dark power or evil power. In mental set up of human being and life, there exist binary oppositions. Our mental strength and thought process guide us where and which direction we proceed. Anxiety, lack of proper guidance, motivation, confidence sometimes adversely impacts our progress. This essay is an attempt to examine the context of positive and negative to assert an individual approach of understanding its' life, child and youth, surroundings, pre-covid, covid and estimated post-covid experiences, mythology in the form of narrative discourse.

(a)

We, are always been advised to retain positive as grown up. It never happens all the time. It is being associated with the upbringing process of an individual. How a child is developed in the midst of a family? How is it being educated? Who are the parents' and teachers? Whether parents' and teachers' really aware of such things? Who are the inmates, classmates, friends during the entire process of education from school to university at different age grade associated with different periods like child, adolescent and adult? Physical food controls our growth and development, likewise, mental food provide much needed mental strength. Failure is the pillar of

success. At certain age, it is often seen that one try to give up. Mind is engulfed with negative thoughts and emotions. Transforming negative, into positive is very hard nut to crack but it is possible. It is an act to follow by the parents during the development process of child. They should not abuse their kids if they are unable to fetch expected yields. There are innumerable suicidal cases relating failure of better result and out of depression. To a certain age, one has to adjust with the tremendous mental pressure. Earlier it is found that parents' set the aim for their children. They do not have the time to explore the potential of their children. It makes confusion among the growing up children. It stays till adulthood. Literally, it delayed in the entire decision making process.

(b)

The initial months of the contemporary situation is really a nightmare for the parents to handle their kids confined in the home instead of the school. As time passes, the situation is nicely tackled by the concerned government by introducing online classes where they can engage their kids in learning process. Later on there are lots of debates on the issue of introducing online classes and attempt is made to exploring the negative impacts of online classes. No doubt, there are vast differences between physical class room classes than online classes. There are technical issues that come up during online classes: one economic access and two network access. Economic access is in the sense of parents' income level whether they are capable to procure an android phone for their children or not. It is seen that children enrolled in the English medium schools are in a better position than government schools. There are a few cases of suicides due to failure of parents of procuring latest gadget. The economic scenario at the larger perspectives is not at all satisfactory. People have to travel hundreds and hundreds miles on foot.

They have to quite their jobs and remained jobless for a longer period until lifting of lockdown. Changing of their profession is common. Under such circumstances they prefer to suffice the need of kitchen by any means rather than going to other requirement. Let us think about their children and their online classes. Network access, at the same time denotes how communication network works in the far-flung remote areas. Quality of mobile internet services varies from one place to another. The process is affected due to technical reasons. People reserve their opinion. Nevertheless, in a situation, where there is no any feasibility of class room classes, we have to accept online classes as positive steps. Online classes maintained from primary to university level. One of the senior convent teachers is my good friend. She used to teach primary sections. Being work at private sector, her salary has marginal difference from those engaged in the government schools. During the start on online process, it is difficult to handle such technical wizards. It is somehow managed. There is health concern while looking the cellular screen at a stretch forcing to switch on laptop for convenient use. A laptop is procured on the basis of EMI. After some days, the laptop stops functioning smoothly and re-choice to mobile with no options. Parents', as seems explore the situation in two ways- in a positive way or negative way. Earlier time is set where parents' finds time to execute other works after sending their kids to schools. There is a set of readjustment of time. Classroom teaching in the school invites the direct relationship between teacher and students-achieving the goal of bipolar relationship of education. On the other end, online classes establish the tri-polar relationship involving teacher, students and parents directly. It also encompasses positive and negative impacts enriching differences of students' self belief in classroom and home environment guided by their parents. Pattern of online exam also invites serious questions not for the higher section but for the primary one. At the beginning one (specific case) of the schools (may be many) that I found that parents are allowed to be examiner of their first unit test. Under the new national education policy and also shifting of school calendar year, half yearly exam is delayed than earlier. They have no option to switch over to the new syllabus of annual

exam. Finally, exam is scheduled from the last of September to first week of October. In order to prepare their students, they arrange trial online test where they have to select correct answer from multiple choice. Entire subject is prepared in this way where students have little scope to write. No doubt, by doing this one can measure the knowledge of their students, teacher also can evaluate answer script online, but what about the writing skill-where students are still in the process of inception and formation. The positive thing is as rightly said 'half a loaf is better than no loaf'.

The technological innovation like Google meet, of course solve our problems to a certain extent- a positive technological revolution where we can save our travel through virtual conferences. One the other hand, the negative wind is echoed in the expression of a college teacher of my locality that has pointed out important observations. He teaches Chemistry in a local college of our neighbourhood. We are from the same school. He is two years senior from me and always enthusiastic and also engaged in social service of the locality. We usually come in contact in the market area of our locality. On asking his views on online classes, he asserts, "When we come to the normal situation? I used to visit the college for other official works. Executing our classes is online. No options. Earlier, our time was specified. We have to teach within college hours. Now, I have to work upto 2 am even at the night. All the times I have to prepare power point presentation. Doing practical in the laboratory is part and parcel of our syllabus. How to accomplish practical on the online?" In Assam, government allow opening of schools from 21st September maintaining all the related health protocol and directives under standard operating procedure. Re-transformation from virtual to real world and it's impact on the students is to be examined in positive as well as negative discourse.

(c)

The present situation acts a double edged sword. There are many things which emerged as positive, while many that emerge as negative. The jobless situation, scarcity of food, economic and global health scenario, and tense situation is some of negative consequences. People's confinement in the

houses has changes certain behavioral attitude of the individual. Earlier people have hardly any time for the family. They don't even remember when they sit together to take food and also makes time to play with their kids. The Indian scenario witnesses certain innovative arrangements for re-telecasting certain popular mythological TV serials in the past. There are certain mythological serials that present generation have availed the opportunity to view. People get time developing reading habits apart from movement of finger in their cell phones. Increasing readers of newspaper is also a positive impact. Like online classes there are also differences of reading virtual and books. Still there are individual apart from professionals who not only loves reading books but also pave the way for others for studying book. In the state of Arunachal Pradesh, there is a wonderful work by a girl- Nurang Mina (30) of Nirjuli, Papum Pare district. Nirjuli is an area inhabited by fifteen thousand populations. The government library is located 10 km away at Naharlagun. Mina developed a library at her own initiative for the interested readers. It becomes quite popular where local people shows great interest. Books cannot be replaced. *The Discomfort of the Evening*, written a very young Ulandaj girl (29) fetches great achievement in the global context. Reading and writing has no replacement irrespective of time and period.

(d)

There are negative consequences from the other areas too. According to World Wildlife Fund ¹ (WWF's) Living Planet Report (LPI) 2020, the global populations of mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles and fish have suffered an average two-thirds decline in less than half a century due in large parts to the very same environmental destruction which is contributing to the emergence of zoonotic diseases such as Covid 19. The report shows that factors believed to increase the planet's vulnerability to pandemics – including land-use change and the use and trade of wildlife-were also some of the drivers behind the 68 per cent average decline in global vertebrate species populations between 1970 and 2016. It shows how humanity's increasing destruction of nature is having catastrophic impacts not only on

wildlife populations but also on human health and all aspects of our lives. From the fish in our oceans and rivers to bees which play a crucial role in our agricultural production, the decline of wildlife directly affects nutrition, food security and the livelihoods of billions of people. In the midst of a global pandemic, it is now more important than ever to take unprecedented and coordinated global action to halt and start to reverse the loss of biodiversity and wildlife population across the globe by the end of the decade, and protect our future health and livelihoods. Our own survival increasingly depends on it.

The covid 19 pandemic has cast its dark shadow on almost every sphere of human life including mental health. For many after staying confined indoor, adjusting to the new lifestyle in the unlock phase has resulted in a spectrum of mental illness issues ranging from depression to the fatal step-suicide. The lurking fear of contracting the deadly disease combined with the realization that instead of slowing down, the Covid-19 infection has gathered speed with almost every passing day increasing the stress level of a significant number of persons. There has been a spurt in cases of people inflicting injuries on themselves, several ending their lives and many complaining of depression and severe anxiety ².

(e)

Amidst all the negatives, there are a few positives. India is a country of traditional knowledge that has been going on since time immemorial. Our ethnic diversity has its' own system of knowledge for different plants that are useful for curing various diseases and ailments. Our ancient treatise Ayurveda enriches our heritage that acknowledges the usefulness of various plants as medicine for curing diseases. In order to empower our age-old system, government under the Atmanirbhar Bharat, has approved Rs 4000 crore for cultivation of medicinal plants and supporting farmers, emphasis on Ayurveda and its usefulness for the society and also for strengthening health care systems of the world.

It is the high time to overpower negative by

positive thought and energy. There has been always war between positive and negative energies. Our great epic shows wars between Ram-Ravana, Pandava-Kaurava and others. Our mythology depicts emergence of various evil or dark power in its' various narratives and transforming it to some occasion where we celebrate the victory of good forces over evil. Durga, Kali are some of the various forms of Shakti whose emergence and worship is realized by various such acts. The ongoing puja season will definitely sensitize people the real worship of positive-truth over evil-negative. The most important aspect is that we have to learn to survive in a positive atmosphere leaving behind our personal differences across the world community. Ongoing situation is the final wake up call. United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres while addressing the 75th Session of the UN General

Assembly rightly pointed out that characterized the Covid-19 pandemic as 'not only a wake-up call' but 'a dress rehearsal' for challenges to come. In an interconnected world, it was high time to recognize the simple truth that 'solidarity was self-interest' and if we failed to grasp this salient fact everyone, in fact, loses³. ■

End Notes

1."Environmental destruction leading to decline in species population", (2020, September 13), *The Assam Tribune*, Guwahati, p.11

2. 'Mental Health', (2020, September 16), Editorial, *The Assam Tribune*, Guwahati

3. 'Dress rehearsal' (2020, September 25), *The Assam Tribune*, Guwahati, p .6

(Contd. from Page 7)

Perspectives on the Tribal-Christian Interaction in British North East

and pay for the expenses." Similarly, crises arose over the celebrations of traditional festivals in the Ao Naga area. For nstance, on the occasion of the Amung festivals, the new Christians were compelled to observe the festival and pay for the sacrifices. This caused anxiety and tension among the believers and they delayed baptism.¹⁶ In both cases, the administration intervened to help the converts. Among the Chakhesang Nagas of Phek district, the opposition to conversion was equally severe.

Rev RF Denalo in his report at the 5th Session of the American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society and Council of Baptist Churches of Assam and Manipur (ABFMS/CBCAM) 1954 referred to a major persecution in a Phek village during 1952 said the following:

"At Phek, practically all of them who were those recent converts have come to Christ under the hardship of active persecutin from non-Christians. Some 40 houses became Christians. They were driven out of the village to the distant new site."¹⁷

Phuvei Dozo, who studied the growth of the Baptist Church in Chakhesang Naga tribes, notes that Christianity was severely opposed in Losami, Luzaphuhu, Chizami, Phiusachodu villages. Same is the case with the Phalomi village in Phek district. In Lekromi village, Christians were opposed by an organised force of seven villages and were fined Rs 50.¹⁸ Religious rules were imposed on converts. For instance, 16 rules were imposed in Thipizumi village and 28 rules were imporsed in the Lekromi village of the Chakhesang area.

One more method employed was to drive away converts from the villages. Normally, the early converts were forced to form new villages. Several villages were constituted this way. Angami Nagas called the Christians Nuokrako. Plain Karbis derisively called the converts Chomang. Many a time, the converts complained to the British authorities, who almost always decided against the non-Christians.

(Contd. to Next Issue)

Oak tree symbolizes Sanatan culture

Major Surendra Mathur (Retd.)

Oak tree is the most popular and revered tree in Europe and other continents and is deeply associated with their culture and beliefs. In Hindi it is called Shahbatul, Batul or Banj. Present days, we seldom find mention of this tree being found in India. Many books are available on it in Europe, especially because this tree has been the center of religious feelings and beliefs there. It is definitely mentioned in Ayurveda, that too because of being of medicinal value and not because of any religious beliefs. This tree is found in Himalayas in India. From Akhand Bharat point of view, it is abundantly available in Hindukush region. No mention of its worship is found in our scriptures. We worship many trees in the places of worship, such as Kalpavriksh, Ashok, Bambu, Banana, Hemp, Coconut, Lotus, Mango, Neem, Sandalwood, Tulsi, Vatvriksha, Peepal, Bell, Dhatura etc. for performing religious rituals of Sanatan Dharma. Many temples and religious places are located in clumps of trees like Vatavriksha or Peepal etc. In many religious rituals, festivals, there is a method of worshipping these trees. But nowhere the Oak tree finds any mention.

In Europe, Oak is the most sacred and revered tree. The Ashrams of the elders (Gurus) are located in clumps of (Oak) and this practice is legendary. Why this tree is the most worshiped in Europe and what are the beliefs is a matter of consideration. In the biological language it is known as Quercus. It has many characteristics. This tree comes amongst the tallest trees and its height can reach more than one hundred feet. Its age can also be more than thousand years. It is a very dense and its root stem is huge. This tree gives shelter to many birds, insects and animals. The tree starts giving fruit only after about fifty years. From this we can estimate how huge, dense and useful this tree is. We can compare this tree with the Vatvriksha tree worshipped by the Hindu. Its fruit is known as Manjunphalam in

Ayurveda and is very useful in making medicines. Its flower is small and has no special smell. Many species of this tree are found in Europe. It is believed that more than six hundred species of this tree have been found so far. The fruit has different names. It is called (Quercus infectoria) in Latin. In English it is called (Oak Galls) and different names are prevalent in different regions.

Oak tree has many utilities, such as its wood is used in Europe for making furniture. Its wood is considered to be very strong and durable. It's importance is also prevalent in the society from the cultural point of view. This tree is also considered a symbol of fertility. Many examples of this tree are found in the compositions of poets in Europe. An orchid on this tree, know as Asrohini / Akash Bell / Amar Bell and called Mistletoe in English, is considered very auspicious for lovers to stand under this tree. Orchid Mistletoe and Oak are auspicious for lovers. Very interesting and beautiful details of Oak tree are found in the compositions and fantasies of European poets. This vine Mistletoe is fully cultivated by Oak, her roots takes full diet from the tree and it seems as if they are for each other. This is mentioned in many poems of Shakespeare. Oak is considered as a sign of love, affection and fertility. This tree is the king of the jungle in Europe and is so huge that it is considered a symbol of patience, strength, perseverance. There is a Guru-disciple tradition in Europe too. In Ashrams of the Guru, disciples lived in clumps of Oak trees. It was considered a holy place. Indian social traditions, in which society was based on Panch tradition, similar traditions were also prevalent in Europe. The Panchayat in Europe used to address public interest litigation and problems under the Oak tree. The society used to accept the decision of the panchayat taken under this tree. This whole process was similar to that, followed in India. In India too, most of the

religious ashrams have been in the clumps of the tree. At ashram, Guru used to teach his students. These Ashrams used to be the focal points of faith, education and social order of Sanatan Dharma and Samaj. Knowing such a parallel process, assumptions are made that Oak's faith has remained similar to that of Vatavriksha in India. We have come to the conclusion that this tree is the hallmark not only of the vastness but also of a strong, sustenance of animals, useful medicinal, symbol of nature, masculinity, religion and culture. That is, we can fully compare it with the Vatavriksha associated with the Sanatan culture. The only difference is in trees, however imagination and beliefs are the same.

Despite the mythological cultural similarities of Europeans and Indians, why Oak is not mentioned in our religious texts. Oak is more popularly known for its furniture. Foreign invasions and encroachments destroyed Oak groves in Europe, like in India. The ashram system in India was also destroyed. Religious, cultural and educational systems, which were based and organized in most ashrams, were severed. All social systems and beliefs had almost disappeared. All this happened due to foreign invasions. The same happened with European communities. Religious ashrams were destroyed. Restrictions were imposed to change and destroy beliefs. Ashrams and faith centers which were in clumps of Oak trees were also banned. Even orders were given to cut those trees. But the society of Europe awakened and they revolted. This rebellion was so vast and widespread that the invaders had to retreat. The Church did not think good in destroying these trees and decided not to destroy them, but started using this tree and its religious insignia in its own propaganda. Vatvriksha is also as big as Oak and the root stem is also very strong. More than the original stem, the roots originating from the branches spread to the ground and make the tree strong and large in its own form. Vatavrksha is also a symbol of fertility and the tree of Lord Brahma. Lord Brahma is the creator and the subject seems to be associated with fertility. It seems that both have similarities in every respect but why the tree is different. Another example of the

importance of this tree appears in European countries. Its symbol is also used as a national symbol of many countries, including the United Kingdom and America. The national flag of many countries, the national emblem in military dress, etc. have also been popular. This tree is also the national tree of many countries. Keeping in mind all these, it can be concluded that the culture, civilization in Europe, Oak has been a very important symbol of religion. Just as we connect the Vatavriksha to Lord Brahma, in Europe, the Celts associate Oak tree with their god Lugh.

Features of Lugh: - The Celts consider this deity to be a mythical hero and an emperor. He is praised to save them from other world spirits. He is considered full of all virtues. He is considered a great warrior god of thunder, lightning, and rain. This deity is also considered as a trickster. They also consider him the god of Indra Dhanush and Akash Ganga. I think Lugh as Indra or the Sun god. I likewise marked the characteristics of the god Indra.

Characteristics of Indra Devta: - Lord Indra is considered to be the presiding deity of other gods and resides in heaven. Indra is the king of gods and ruler of heaven. He leads the gods who build and maintain heaven. He leads elements such as Agni, Water and Surya and constantly battle against the opponents of the gods. Indra is the god of Vajra and Varsha and the great warrior, the symbol of courage and power and the god of war. The weapon of Indra is the Vajra. He also use bows, nets and hooks. He rides a white elephant named Airavat. He drives a chariot drawn by four horses capable of passing through the air. Indra also appears as a trickster in mythological folklore. In Hindu mythology, the rainbow is called the "Bow of Indra". Indra is the god of light, thunder and rain.

An analysis of Lugh and Indra makes it clear that Lugh is a synonym for Indra deity. Analyzing these two gods, it is concluded that there are many similarities between them. The question arises as to why Celts associate Oak with reproduction. Even in Sanatan culture, there is such a fantasy in which

Vatavriksha, the tree of Lord Shri Brahma, who created the universe, is considered as a tree of reproduction. Vatavriksha can also be considered as a symbol of fertility due to its being connected with the creation. This is why women worship this tree. When the clouds thunder and the arrival of the rain is intertwined with the lightning on the earth, then this huge tree of oak becomes the supreme means of bringing that strong lightning to the earth and absorbing it. Electricity is the medium to bring the power from the sky to the earth. Earth becomes fertile again due to this electricity and rain, we see greenery everywhere. For this very reason, it must have been considered as the medium of reproduction. It is the concept of “Prakrati “ and “Purush”. For this reason it may have been added for lovers as well, where it has been said that when lovers are under the Oak tree, on whose trunk Mistletoe is creeping, it is auspicious sign for them. Oak and Mistletoe also mark “Prakrati” and “Purush”. Mistletoe is completely dependent on Oak. Lord Brahma is the creator and his tree is the Vatvraksh tree. The difference is only in trees and gods but the imaginations are similar.

It is becoming clear that according to the Celts, the god of Oak is Lugh, same as god Indra. The tree of Brahma is the Vatvraksha . To end this dispute, our ancestors abandoned the Oak and granted the recognition of the tree of Brahma to the Vatavriksha.

The dispute was with the Brajwasi over god Indra since Lord Krishna advised not to worship god Indra. This topic is still effective in India. All the others, except for a few tribes, still do not celebrate any festival in the name of the god Indra. But it also becomes a controversial subject whether the Oak tree must have been worshiped in the mythological period. Indra was the supreme deity of the Vedic period. Why did this change happen in India. One reason may be that the Oak tree has disappeared from most of the forests in India, and the other is recognising a similar tree for creator god. Second, it may also be that in India during the Mahabharata period, it has been said that at the behest of Lord Krishna, the worship of the God of Indra was hindered because he tortured the Gokul dwellers and raged them. At that time Lord Krishna lifted the Govardhana mountain with his finger and gave protection. The worship of god Indra was terminated at the insistence of Lord Krishna.

Keeping all these subjects in mind, it can be said that the Oak tree symbolizing Lord Indra must have been in the Vedic period which is still the most revered in the whole of Europe and other continents and is also a symbol of Lugh. Oak tree is the symbol of eternal culture. This tree will prove to be the bridge to connect Europe and Indian eternal culture. ■



Systematic Enslavement of Common Masses through Derailment of Education System: Musing With Malice towards None

Ngasah Tangjang

“Education is the panacea for all that ails us in our society”

- Octavia Spencer

“If you want to enslave and rule the common masses with iron fists, first retard their learning capacity”, the good old saying. Yes, this is exactly what had been done, knowingly or unknowingly in the last few centuries. There has been an upgradation spree of schools to get their names (Politicians and top bureaucrats) imprinted in the pedestals of inaugural slabs. It however seems that, feasibility report with necessary criteria fulfilled and proper planning were not taken into consideration. Again to aggravate the ills, some (not all) recruited teachers seem to be below par in teaching and not in consonance with the acquired degrees. The upgraded schools are now without proper infrastructures and manpower. It also does not have teacher students ratio fulfilled. Most of the upgraded schools of Middle standard have some 20 to 50 odd students with 3 or 4 teachers assigned for them. Considering that there are eight classes to be taught simultaneously, there should be at least 8 teachers to cover all the eight classes at any given time. But again, when one goes by the prevailing teacher-student ratio of 1:40, these schools hardly qualifies to have more than 2 teachers. The secondary schools are no exception. The scenario of Higher Secondary Schools in Districts and Sub: Divisional headquarters are far worse from being conducive for educational environment due to influxes of students from rural areas and lack of classrooms as well as teachers. Most of the Higher Secondary schools are running without full strength of qualified subject teachers. The teacher- student ratio imbalance in the rural as well

as urban areas is really stark. The consequences are chaotic and catastrophic.

1. Most of the students from the interior villages migrate to the urban locations like district and sub-divisional headquarters without proper facilitations’.

2. The migrated students are housed in all the available catchment areas in temporary shed without proper care, food, security and guidance.

3. The schools meant to accommodate a certain numbers of students in a classroom are flooded with excessive numbers of students. Some classrooms meant to accommodate 40 to 50 students are compelled to house 130 plus in a section. One can very well paint a picture of the classroom being filled with 50 students and majority staying away from lack of space. Wonder, how one can expect good result from this scenario.

4. The students staying alone in unmonitored private temporary camps are gullible due to their age and are attracted to vices easily than restraint. Addictive drugs, alcohols and felony easily make en routes into their lives which again is detrimental to harmonious social growth.

5. The end result is- obvious.

a) It lowers the state educational standard from the national benchmark.

b) Increase in students’ failure index.

c) Produces below standard qualified workforce, which again shall be detrimental to growth and development.

d) Rise in school drop-outs in every hamlet, village and town.

e) Increase in demands for job placement with unqualified and untrained workforce.

f) Frustration sets in, in the vital youth force due to unemployment.

g) Increase in youths taking to vices, felony and corruption not by choice but by compulsion.

h) Increase in anti social, anti productive and anti development activities

i) The end result without saying is sure to spiral to chaos of unfathomable proportion.

According to the NITI Aayog School Education Quality Index, the report card on the state of education in India showed an overall performance score of a meager 28.4% for Arunachal Pradesh which was lowest amongst all the surveyed states and Kerala showing the highest performance score of 82.2%.

Now, the time has come, the governments of the

day really needs to pull up their socks and think for ways and means to correct the wrong and to elevate the despicable educational scenario of our beautiful state: Arunachal Pradesh. Here, the educationists, the top bureaucrats, the technocrats and above all, the political bosses of the state have to think out of the box to really bring the derailed education system to tract again. Pooling in of constructive ideas from every right thinking individual of Arunachal Pradesh through symposiums and seminars may also help. Some measures like the following procedures and means may of course be an option to be reckoned with.

1. Provide trained and qualified subject teachers to all the higher secondary and secondary level schools irrespective of its location.

2. Collect data on all the schools, numbers of students and teachers in each school, buildings and other infrastructures, distances from road, defunct schools(if any), hostel facilities etc.

3. Close down all the unfeasible schools and open inter-village schools in the central location of a group of villages by building complete infrastructures and by pooling in the human resources (teachers and other staff).

4. Provide high definition CCTV in all the classrooms to monitor the class proceedings. It may help check the quality of the teachers as well as the students.

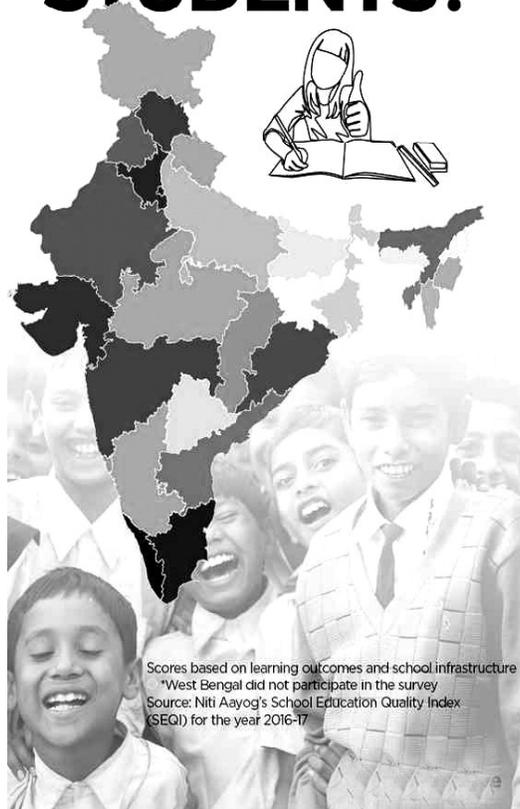
5. Establish an inspection team from public and government officials for all the schools as flying squad with an instruction to visit unannounced. However, the inspection team be instructed only to observe and report, and not disturb the classroom proceedings.

6. Construct bigger halls with public address system and other provisions in the school where required strength of a class or section exceeds the normal class strength.

7. Conduct crash course in the district headquarters for all the teachers who may be found inefficient during the school vacation time.

8. Establish a system of selection of best teacher from among the teachers of a

BEST STATE FOR STUDENTS?



Overall Score

Kerala	82.2%
Chandigarh	73.9%
Tamil Nadu	73.4%
Delhi	69.9%
Haryana	69.5%
Gujarat	63.0%
Himachal Pradesh	62.8%
Maharashtra	62.5%
Odisha	60.2%
Rajasthan	59.4%
Punjab	59.1%
Assam	56.1%
Andhra Pradesh	56.1%
Tripura	56.1%
Puducherry	55.1%
Chhattisgarh	54.9%
Goa	53.8%
Karnataka	52.9%
Daman & Diu	50.5%
Uttarakhand	48.1%
Madhya Pradesh	47.2%
Jammu & Kashmir	47.1%
Manipur	46.9%
Mizoram	46.5%
Uttar Pradesh	46.5%
D&N Haveli	44.9%
A&N Island	44.2%
Sikkim	43.0%
Lakshadweep	42.8%
Telangana	39.0%
Bihar	37.3%
Meghalaya	38.4%
Nagaland	35.9%
Jharkhand	30.6%
Arunachal Pradesh	28.4%

particular school by the students on teachers' day to foster better teachers.

9. Provide extra increment in pay of a teacher when he/she is selected as best teacher in the particular school for three consecutive academic years.

10. Conduct remedial classes for all the weak students in single location in the district and sub:

divisional headquarters in the vacation time by pooling in all the subject teachers (who may be compensated with honorarium, leave or salary).

11. List out the names of school drop outs and train them through the programs of skill development department of the state.

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Deeper insights into Nagaland and diverse North East presented in the UK

Raga Sudha

Development cannot be sustainable unless culture is included, as culture is an important driver and dimension for economic development. Knowledge and information about indigenous communities lead to a greater understanding among peoples, and cross-cultural awareness increases respect, peace and cooperation among regions, communities, and nations of the world.

In line with this objective, and not deterred by the impact of COVID19 pandemic on physical, venue-based events, a fascinating session on Nagaland and diverse North-East India has been organised on the virtual platform by London-based Sanskruti Centre for Cultural Excellence recently. The session provided closer insights into heritage, cultural diversity and developmental aspects of the region home to 40 million people from diverse origins, tribes religions, and faiths. Viewed by more than 2000 people on FaceBook, it is the very first in the UK at such a greater depth though Sanskruti Centre has been in the forefront in highlighting tribal arts and has been showcasing tribal dance forms for the past 8 years. Attendees and viewers from different walks of life have benefited from the presentation made by esteemed speaker Lt. Gen. Shokin Chauhan, currently Chairman of Cease-Fire Monitoring Group in Nagaland and former Director-General of Assam Rifles, the oldest and largest Para Military Force in India.

Through an interesting PowerPoint presentation,

the former Director General has covered the historical perspective of the North-East from about 1500 BC, to the invasion of the Ahom Kingdom by Mughals, the Burmese Kingdom, and British influence and administration. Information such as the movement of people from Vietnam, Thailand, Laos, Myanmar, Bangladesh into the North East, diversity and demography of seven sisters, and Indo Myanmar Border (IMB) and McMahon Line has been captivating for the attendees. The General then gave an account of the Hornbill Festival during which all the tribal dances of Nagaland and their varied costumes are showcased. He explained about the Battle of Kohima that took place around the Second World War and the Kohima War Memorial. Opportunities in medical tourism, trade and commerce were also highlighted and possible areas of improvement mentioned, including border management, insurgency, and other challenges. The session concluded with an engrossing Question & Answer round curated by Sushil Rapatwar, followed by Vote of Thanks by Ragasudha Vinjamuri, Founder of Sanskruti Centre.

It is interesting to note that Sanskruti Centre has been able to present Rongmei dance of Manipur with the help of Kalyan Ashram- Manipur, Garo dance of Meghalaya & Miji dance of Arunachal Pradesh working alongside the karyakartas and members of the said tribal groups, and Hojagiri dance with the help of Tribal Research Institute in Tripura. ■

Minadai and Phidri: A study on Different Spirits among the Tiwa

Dr. Raktim Patar

Mindai or the spirit plays a significant part in the socio-cultural life of the Tiwa people. Their religion is the expression of experiences like history, folklore, myth and way of life. Their belief system relates to the existence, nature, worship of deities and day to day activities. Their religion has little direct approach to the high god. It was chiefly connected with the worship of spirits both good and evil and hordes of clan gods and various manifestations of nature. It is also associated with festivals, rites of passage, birth, marriage, death, agricultural activities, sickness, natural phenomena, magic and sorcery, sin and taboo. Tiwa religion is not a code of organized theological doctrine or messianic teaching. It revolves around their reverence to their ancestors and nature in the form of sacrifice. It fulfils all the conditions that are necessary to satisfy the human mind. Durkheim placed all religions however primitive in the equal rank as it fulfils given conditions of human existences though in different ways. He writes,

“Fundamentally there are no religions that are false. All are true after their own fashion. Some can be said to be superior to others, in the sense that they bring higher mental faculties in to play, that they are richer in ideas and feelings, that they contain proportionately more concepts than sensations and images and that they are more elaborately systematized. But, greater complexity and higher ideal content, however real, not sufficient to place the corresponding religions into separate genera. All are equally religious, just as all living beings are equally living beings, from the humblest plastid to man.”

This article highlights the existence of different spirits among the Tiwa belief system.

Traditional Tiwa concepts of reality and destiny

are deeply rooted in the spirit world. The activities and the actions of the spirit beings govern all social and spiritual phenomena. The spirit world can be divided into two broad categories: 1) non-human spirits (*mindai*) and 2) the spirits of the dead (*phidri*). Non-human spirits are regarded in hierarchical order in accordance with their importance and the role they play in the religious beliefs of the Tiwa. First in the hierarchy, is the creator, then the deities, spirit embodied objects, ancestors' spirits and other spirits that are non-human, and comprising of both benevolent/harmless and malevolent spirits. Men stand between this array of spiritual hosts in the spirit world and the world of nature.

The Tiwa believe in a deity which is considered to be the creator of the universe, human being, and animals. According to Tiwa traditional belief the supreme of all the deities is Sharipahai. He controls all the four directions of the earth. It is the Sharipahai who created the earth and all other natural objects and animals. The Tiwa call the Earth as the *Sharipahai ne mathi*, meaning Sharipahai's land. It is believed that he looks after the welfare of the people in the Earth and has control over the human being. In every prayer (*mindai songa*) the invocation of Sharipahai is essential. Generally no sacrifices are made for him during the religious ceremonies.

The Village Deities:

The Tiwa do not have any shrine or temple. Iconolatry is absent in their religion. According to them, every spirit and deity has specific area where they live and control humans and animals. A deity of a particular area does not go to others territory. The Tiwa deities vary from place to place so as the rituals and sacrifices associated with the deities.

Every Tiwa village has common deities which look after the well being of men and domestic animals. They called these deities as *mindai*. The principal deity of the village is called *matbi-ney-giri* or the master of the area/village.

Root Village Deities:

Root Village	Deities/Spirits
Amsai -	Sharipahai, Moramuji, Palakhongor, Mahadeo, Hulawma, Bodolmaji, Hatja and Yangli
Marjong-	Thaliya Thokoriya, Palakhongor, Bodolmaji, Maslang, Sabri Makha, Somphreng.
Amni -	Bura Ramsha, Jakor Bura, Bokola Bura
Rongkhoi-	Nurshing, Makha, Kamta Poroi, Khona Baula, Silikhongor, Nengorbala, Purimoshor,
Lumphoi-	Mohon Phador, Bodol Maji, Luki Poroi
Amjong-	Khatboroi, Nashuni-Baguni, Athar Baula
Makro-	Yangli and Kabla
Ligra-	Yangli, Bodolmaji
Amri-	Bodolmaji, Silikhongor
Amkha-	Palakhongor, Thalia-Thokoria

Sagra-

Bodolmaji

Mayong-

Bodolmaji

Every Tiwa village reserves a patch of forest land for their principal deity where sacrifices are offered at the beginning of the annual agricultural cycle.

Besides the principal deity of village there are many spirits that look after the people and protect them from evil spirits. They believe that these spirits live in natural objects such as the large rocks, water bodies, deep forest and caves. The natural objects that are big in size or potentially hazardous are believed to have life that is not usually perceptible to human eye.

Ancestor worship was a universal form of religious expression, which emphasized the influence of deceased relatives on the living. Among the Tiwa, ancestor-worship is a form of religious expression. They believe in the immortality of human soul. From cradle to grave, life of a Tiwa individual is centered upon his great ancestors and all virtues and failures of its life are attributed to the intervention of their spirits. Tiwa religious life begins with the invocation of their ancestors or the *phidri*. They play the most important role in the day-to-day life of a Tiwa individual as well as the society. Incantations of ancestral spirits are part and parcel of every Tiwa family. Every new thing, be it the beginning of agriculture, welcoming of new born or while having the new rice after the harvest, invocation of their ancestors is essential. In the community or village level, they perform *Phidri-Chongkbong* ritual to offer respect to their ancestors before the agricultural cycle takes off. They strongly believe that their ancestors have greatly contributed for their survival and taught them about cultivation. They look after the wellbeing of the village as spirits in the periphery of the village. Therefore it is the duty of the surviving member of the tribe to confer due honour to their ancestors and offer sacrifices to receive blessings on the eve of the agricultural cycle. They further believe that there will be bumper crop if their ancestors are satisfied with

the appropriate sacrifices. In the individual family level, the dead ancestors are adequately offered sacrifices on different occasions. They believe that the dead ancestors visit their former abode during special occasions such as the *Nuwan* ceremony which is performed while having the new rice after harvest. They also perform different kind of divinations at the time of sickness and accidental deaths to pacify their ancestors as they strongly believe that any untoward happenings can be inflicted upon the surviving members if their ancestors are not pleased with the sacrifices. Sacrifices are also offered to the dead ancestors to protect the living members from evil spirits and to obtain material prosperity. The Tiwa consider their house as an important place of worship and great care is taken in order to keep the sanctity of the house. No footwear and other goods like TV, sofa, etc. bought from the market are allowed to be taken inside the house. Whenever new things like utensils or essential goods are brought to the house they need to take permission from the clan deity. It is perhaps because of this factor that the Tiwa *Nobaro*

or the traditional house is considered to be not only a dwelling house but also a place of worship and sacrifice. During our fieldwork we have observed that all the household religious ceremonies associated with death and birth as well as divinations is performed at the *Nobaro* under the *Thuna* the sacred pillar.

Profound belief in different deities and spirits among the Tiwa suggest about their fear for the spirits and impersonal powers which always manifested in various forms, omens and signs. They consider that the spirits and deities have power to inflict harm if they are not given proper respect in the form of offerings and sacrifices. As a result of the power attributed to their deities, it is necessary to harbor friendly relation with them. The intimate relationship between the people and their deities is manifested in their seasonal rites and festivals which mark every stage of their agricultural circle. ■

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Indigenization-The Third Way

Pankaj Deka

The world must acknowledge the power of religion, as acknowledged by even the Communist analysts as no more than an 'opium'. Pointedly, on the other hand, we have to delve deeper into the philosophical underpinnings of 'dharma' thereby stepping onto the Third way beyond the ideas of Communism and Capitalism. Therefore understanding the vision of Third way could help combat this pandemic and its deleterious consequences and realize the actual philosophical value of PM Modi's call for 'Aatma Nirbhar Bharat'.

COVID-19 global pandemic has revealed a tragic tableau of the world exposing failures of health infrastructure, governance systems, and geopolitical conflicts across the world which have triggered new frictions within and between nations. In this situation, India was able to limit its adverse impacts to a great extent. Yet India's population is beset by the fall of economic growth and by the unprecedented migration of labourers and workers in the unorganized sector today, but, as many economic experts have argued, it would be wrong to aver that India will not restore its economic growth rate of previous years.

In this situation, it is clear that dealing effectively with this pandemic is possible only through the collective exertions of all Indians from north to south, from east to west, all Indians will have to fight collectively against COVID-19, and thus all Indians must multiply their efforts focusing on indigenous resources and self-reliance."When the world is in crisis, we have to make a pledge which is perhaps bigger than this global crisis. We must make every possible effort to make the 21st century a the India's century and the way to do so is by making the nation more self-reliant". "Today, India is moving towards self-reliance, but it does

not mean that India is talking about being self-centred which is a different concept" PM Modi insisted.

The "Swadeshi" or Indigenouslyness in "Aatma-Nirbhar Bharat" is the need of the most persuasive economic theory today. The spirit of Swadeshi is the outward and practical manifestation of patriotism. Patriotism is in no way against internationalism. Patriotic entreaties for national self-reliance are not incompatible with international cooperation, provided that the latter is on equal footing- with due regard for the self-respect of every country. It is an alternative path to revitalize economic growth which has no, overt or covert, relation with the pre-existent theories of capitalism and communism and today world communism had virtually collapsed and that capitalism was on the decline. But its demise was being delayed. So the World is acknowledging the circles and have started their search for 'a third alternative'. "No material objective transformation can be efficacious unless it is preceded and escorted by an appropriate subjective, psychological transformation".

Third way is a path to sustainable economic growth and is neither rooted in the individualistic ethos of capitalism nor in the collectivist urge of communism, rather did it outline a vision in which society acts collectively to maintain a balance between material and non-material needs. "It is inevitable to abandon the current version of Eurocentric history, which is devoid of a sense of proportion, and initiate a new phase of historical investigation...a new framework, new terms of reference, a new scale of values, which would facilitate globalization". So, the Third way principle of Dharma could serve as the best guide to design an economy emphasizing on the ideal of collective happiness and not just relentless, competitive race to material prosperity.

Every nation has an inherent nature. China has an expansionist propensity while the US has a global policing instinct. India has a tendency to maintain the status quo. Ever since independence, India as a nation has always strived to maintain status-quo. While India doesn't like to interfere in the internal affairs of its neighbours, nor covet their territories, it expects all neighbours to reciprocate this attitude. The former was amply demonstrated in the 1971 war when India liberated East Pakistan and gracefully recognised its independence.

The urge and need to maintain a status quo is tenable only if the neighbours also think alike. In matters of governance and legislation, ideals and principles are important but pragmatism and a practical approach are even more important. Over the years, successive Indian Governments seemed to have forgotten the difference between Vyakthi-dharma and Rashtra-dharma. This confusion manifested time and time again in India's unrealistic 'all is well' approach towards its neighbourhood.

This wisdom was not followed by Prithviraj Chauhan who pardoned Mohammad Ghori in all the battles they fought before he ultimately lost to him. Mohammad Ghori didn't return the favour and after treating Prithviraj Chouhan with the utmost brutality, Ghori finally killed him. He didn't even respect the support and friendship of Raja Jaichand and killed him as well. This mistake of Prithviraj Chouhan and Jaichand in not following Rajadharma and replacing it with their individual opinions or Vyakthi-dharma cost this nation dearly and enslaved it for the next thousand years.

When Alexander invaded north-western Bharat, King Dhanananda of the Magadha Empire decided not to interfere until Alexander's army threatened his borders. As a result, Alexander could annex the North-west kingdom. Chanakya had advised Dhanananda to intervene and help the border states to fight Alexander. Dhananand's non-interference and Alexander's conquests at the borders of the Magadha Empire resulted in the collapse of the Nanda dynasty.

Similar events played out even after the British

left the country. This confusion of imposing personal beliefs on the nation's moral compass was seen repeatedly under successive Indian Governments which consistently avoided making hard decisions for the security of the nation. The leaders ended up looking as if they were mainly interested in getting a Nobel Peace Prize. Be it the unwillingness to drive a hard bargain at Shimla 1972, Sharm-el-sheikh 2009, and India made this very same mistake of supplanting Vyakthi-dharma with Rashtra-dharma.

When the PLA marched into Tibet and forcefully occupied it, Indian leadership did the same mistake. India has never made serious attempts at taking back what it claims to be its legal territories. Contrast this with the actions of Pakistan and China. Pakistan annexed Balochistan and illegally occupied Gilgit-Baltistan. Similarly, China occupied Tibet and parts of Ladakh including Aksai-chin. India must not emulate expansionist ambitions of China and Pakistan, but must actively safeguard its national interests at all costs.

The spirit of Bhagwan Shri Krishna's teachings in his ultimate message to Arjuna in the statement "uttishtanthu kounteya, yudhhaya krutha nishchaya" advising Arjuna to fight and not be timid had been lost on modern India for decades.

India needs to unshackle itself from its status-quo mindset, non-violence and non-interference policy to that of Dharmika Kshatram, in certain circumstances implying rightful aggression.

We don't need to look at lessons and experiences from across the globe. We need to sincerely tap the universal and timeless wisdom bestowed on us by our ancient civilization. As military tensions go up in Eastern Ladakh, India is reclaiming its true civilisation. India is taking up offensive defence as the fulcrum of our military strategy and giving up the age-old policy of being magnanimous towards your enemy.

India has activated the Lalitaditya Muktapida mode in Eastern Ladakh and given up on the

Prithviraj Chauhan syndrome and dictating matters on the de facto Indo-Tibetan border, rather than mirroring Chinese deployment. And the Chinese have been taken by surprise when SFF, (the Establishment 22) a covert paramilitary commando force that recruits heavily from the Tibetan exiles living in India seized a Chinese camp in the surrounding hills of Pangong Tso lake. The Chinese troops were suddenly confronted by the Indian troops outflanking them from dominating heights in the Southern Pangong Tso Lake, merely hundreds of metres away.

The Chinese are considerably shaken. The Chinese Embassy claims that India illegally violated the consensus reached in multiple, bilateral talks and that India transgressed the Line of Actual Control (LAC) on 31st August.

But the Indian Army maintains that the heights taken over by the Indian soldiers are Indian Territory. If Chinese soldiers want to assert their so-called territorial rights, they are welcome to come and fight it out with the rugged SFF troops that mostly consist of tough Tibetan highlanders.

Till not very long ago, Indian policymakers and so-called strategists used to weight the practicality of a military manoeuvre in terms of its likeability in China. If it was believed that a particular move would ‘annoy’ China, it was given up. But things have changed. This is the new India that has no qualms about asserting itself, even if it means hurting China’s sentiments.

Over the past six years, India has time and again gone behind enemy lines in Pakistan to inflict damage on terror infrastructure considering Bidur niti “Shatthe Shaatthym Samaacharet”. Which means tit for tat or eye for an eye “.Whether it was the Surgical Strikes in 2016 or the Balakot airstrikes last year, India doesn’t shy away from hitting hard and deep into the enemy territory, if provoked?

Economy of Pakistan will be destroyed, Imran Khan cries out as India gets set to reveal money trail of Pulwama attack to FATF and Pakistan is staring at an imminent coup, and while on most

occasions the country’s 111th infantry brigade, also called the ‘Coup Brigade’ of Pakistan marches on the roads of Islamabad to oust a civilian government, this time around, the intricate details of the same are being scripted in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf. Also, a coup this time around is likely to be executed by the current Pakistani Chief of Army Staff, General Qamar Javed Bajwa to install his predecessor – General Raheel Sharif as the leader of the country.

China is no exception and it is now being given the Pakistan treatment by the Indian forces. India will fight China, but on its own terms and not China’s preferences.

Discovery, innovation, invention and make in India is very important expect to achieve the target of ‘Aatm Nirbhar Bharat’. According to World Intellectual Property Organization-WIPO 2019 reports India’s GDP investment on R&D just less only 0.7% compared to South Korea 4.3%, Israel 4.2%, Japan 3.4%, Finland 3.2%, Switzerland 3.2%, China 2+ %, Malaysia 1.3%. Till 2017 new patent application China-13 lakh, America-6 lakh, whereas India’s is just 47000 only. India climbed four spots on the Global Innovation Index 2020 and is now at 48th position in the list of top 50 innovative countries in the World. Switzerland, Sweden, US, UK and Netherlands are in the top spots of this year’s ranking. India occupied the 52nd position in 2019 and was ranked 81st in the year 2015.

Decentralization of innovation across all the states of India Working together with the different institutions including private universities. Hope The New Self reliant- ‘Aatm Nirbhar Bharat’...the local with the vocal will act as India’s strength, a global force multiplier by spending more on R&D. Technologies developed with capabilities where academics-knowledge capital, the vibrant start-up ecosystem and technologies work hand in hand developing for Missile systems like Agni, Dhanush, Akash Astra, Brahmos etc. Radars from small to large electronic warfare system in our Air Force and Naval force like Torpedoes, Anti-Ship/Anti-Sub marine with Computer designed capabilities. Aircraft

like Tejas, Tank-Arjun, Helicopter-HAL, Nuclear-powered submarines-INS, BMD-ballistic missile defence system-Prithvi, Agni, Nirbhay, Anti satellite missile system-Shakti etc. Industries will develop from building to print to building to specifications.

Make India from largest importer of defence system to largest exporter that means we have an opportunity to produce lots here to catch up to the world investing on R&D. Creating own State of Art Air defence missiles system like Russian S-400, first of its kind system, Snow huts especially in the Mountain range with cloths for the winter seasons, Hypersonic missiles system ,state of Art Air Linear electronic accelerator system and making Indigenization and becoming the larger exporter of everything including Defence System.

Reviving and reinventing on Biodefence technologies/systems, nuclear, biological defence systems is the need of the hour. Equipments and systems have large domestic and global markets and including them in WHO compendium of list of globally recommend technologies will help us

immensely.

Incorporating lessons on the indigenous defence technologies in the school text books, good videos will encourage the younger generation to strive for achieving greater heights. Preparing ourselves for the 5th generation warfare including Cyber Electronic Warfare will definitely boost our time tested capabilities.

Agratah Chaturo Vedah

Pristhtah Sasharam Dhanuh,

Idam Bramham Idam Kshatram

Shapadapi Sharadapi !

Parashuram who is well-versed with the four Vedas and sports the bow and arrows upon his back (that is the one who has the radiance of both the Brahman and the Kshatriya) will destroy evildoers either with a curse or with an arrow.

Such clarity of thoughts I am sure will give boost and positivity to the entire project from Aatm Suraksha to Aatm Nirbhar Bharat'. ■



Licence Raj Vs Farmer Raj

Partha Pratim Mazumder

“Unfortunately, most state APMC laws today permit first sale of farm produce to take place only in notified mandis within the particular tehsils or talukas. Buyers, too, need to obtain individual licenses from each APMC in order to transact. Effectively, then, there is no national market for agricultural commodities.”

(“End of a monopoly”, Indian Express, editorial May 20, 2020)

The country ended its “Licence Raj” and has pushed a growth agenda since to unleash the potential of various sectors of the economy, barring one — agriculture. Three bills in Parliament are the first attempt to unshackle the sector. These are the Farmers Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020, The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020, and the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill 2020.

The Farming Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020: The Farming Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020 aims at creating additional trading opportunities outside the An Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) market yards to help farmers get remunerative prices due to additional competition. Farmers can now sell their agricultural produce in a market of their choice at better prices. The newly law will allow intra-state and inter-state trade of farmers’ produce beyond the physical premises of APMC markets thus giving freedom for the farmers and traders to sell or purchase farm products anywhere. The law also provides buyers with the freedom to buy farmers’ produce outside the APMC markets without having

any license or paying any fees to APMCs. The Bill prohibits state governments from levying any market fee, cess or levy on farmers, traders for the trade conducted on farmers’ produce conducted in an ‘outside trade area’. Under the law, electronic trading in transaction platform has been for ensuring a seamless trade electronically.

The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020: The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020 creates a framework for contract farming through an agreement between a farmer and a buyer prior to the production or rearing of any farm produce. The law provides for a farming agreement between a farmer and a buyer prior to the production or rearing of any farm produce. The law also states that the price of farming produce negotiated between the trader and the farmer should be mentioned in the agreement. The buyer will be responsible for providing necessary means or inputs for good crop yield. Under the bill, it is the responsibility of the buyer to provide agricultural equipment to the farmer. The farmers want profitable sales in the form of minimum support prices. MSPs to be a legal right.

The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, 2020: The amendments to the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 allows the central government to regulate the supply of certain food items only under extraordinary circumstances. Under the legislation, the central government may regulate or prohibit the production, supply, distribution, trade, and commerce of such essential commodities. The bill provides for the central government to

regulate the supply of certain food items including cereals, pulses, potatoes, onions, edible oilseeds, and oils, only under extraordinary circumstances. The legislation requires that imposition of any stock limit on agricultural produce must be based on price rise. The bill amends the Essential Commodities Act to provide that stock limits for agricultural products can be imposed only when retail prices increase sharply and exempts value chain participants and exporters from any stock limit.

Indian farmers have battled poor returns because the terms of trade have shifted away from farmers. They pay way more than they receive. The three bills will distinctly attack inefficiencies. The bill allowing freer inter-state and intra-state trade rightly ends licence raj in agricultural trade. The contract farming legislation will create an environment where agribusinesses can invest in cultivation without farmers being worried about prices or adverse effects on their land titles. The legislation to use the draconian Essential Commodities Act more sparingly, only when inflation rises beyond a pre-defined threshold, will make India a reliable supplier of agri-exports. But at the same time, the government ought to have agreed to the Opposition's demand to send the bills to select committees for greater scrutiny of the reforms. This would have reassured agitating farmers, satisfied critics and made regulatory oversight more robust. The legislation seeks to free up agricultural trade from all restrictions. It provides for opening up the farm sector to more competition, modernisation of supply chains by enabling bigger agribusinesses to engage with farmers more directly and creating seamless access to fragmented markets. The Farming Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill seeks to allow barrier-free inter-state and intra-state trade of primary agricultural commodities. Farm produce has been for decades sold mainly in notified wholesale markets run by Agricultural Produce Marketing Committees

(APMCs). The APMCs require farmers to only sell to licensed middlemen in these notified markets, usually in the same area where the farmers reside, rather than in open markets, which economists say scuttles price discovery, and hurt farm profits. The Farming Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill seeks to enable farmers and buyers of their produce to trade outside these tax-free markets and open up APMCs to competition. It will enable food traders to buy farmers' produce from any market, rather than bind them to the specific markets where they are licensed to operate. The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill lays down a new architecture for contract farming. It provides for a national framework on farming agreements, enabling a farmer to engage with agribusiness firms, processors, wholesalers, exporters, or large retailers for the sale of future farming produce at a mutually pre-agreed price. Farmers have been given new independence in agriculture.

The laws will provide more choices for the farmer and lessen the marketing costs for the farmers thus helping them to get better prices. It will also help farmers of regions with surplus produce to get better prices and consumers of regions with shortages, lower prices. The laws will enable the farmer to make use of modern technology and better inputs to enhance their farm produce and its trade. It will reduce the cost of marketing and improve the income of farmers. These new laws will encourage large companies, food processing firms, exporters, etc, to invest in the farm sector and source good-quality farm produce. The announced amendment to the Essential Commodities Act is expected to help both farmers and consumers while bringing in price stability. The changes will also create a competitive market environment and prevent wastage of agri-produce that happens due to lack of storage facilities.

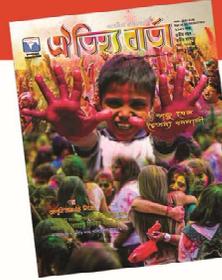
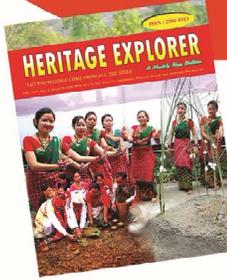
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