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AFTER THE WAR Back to TRANSVAAL

(Continued from the previous issue)



The most important phase of the war was over in 1900. Ladysmith, Kimberley and Mafeking had been relieved. General Cronje had surrendered at Paardeburg. Parts of the British colonies occupied by the Boers had been wrested from their hands and Lord Kitchener had conquered the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. Only guerilla warfare was left.

I thought that my work in South Africa was now over. I had stayed there six years instead of one month as originally intended. The outlines of the work before us were fairly fixed. Still I could not leave South Africa without the willing consent of the Indian community. I informed my colleagues that I intended taking up public work in India. I had learnt in South Africa the lesson of service instead of self-

interest, and was longing for opportunities of such work. Shri Mansukhlal Nazar was there and so was Mr. Khan. Some Indian youths born and bred in South Africa had returned from England as barristers. In these circumstances, it would not be improper if I returned to India. When I had urged all these arguments, I was permitted to return only on the condition that if an unexpected situation arose in South Africa requiring my presence there, the community might recall me any day and I should at once go back. They undertook in such a case to bear my travelling expenses and the expenses incurred during my stay in South Africa. I agreed to this arrangement and returned to India.

I decided to practice in Bombay as a barrister, primarily with a view to public work under the advice and guidance of Gokhale and secondarily in order to make a living for myself side by side with public work. I rented chambers accordingly and began to get some work. Thanks to my close connection with South Africa, clients who had returned from that country alone gave



M. K. Gandhi

me work which more than sufficed for my necessities. But peace was never to be my portion in this life. I had been in Bombay hardly three or four months when I received an urgent cablegram from South Africa stating that the situation there was serious, that Mr. Chamberlain was expected shortly, and that my presence was necessary.

I wound up my Bombay office and house and started for South Africa by the first available steamer. This was near the end of 1902. I had returned to India towards the close of 1901 and had opened my office at Bombay about March 1902. The cablegram did not contain full details. I guessed that



there was trouble in the Transvaal. But I went to South Africa without my family as I thought I would be able to return to India in four or six months. I was however simply amazed when I reached Durban and heard everything. Many of us had hoped that the position of Indians throughout South Africa would improve after the war. We did not anticipate trouble in the Transvaal and the Free State at any rate, as Lord Lansdowne, Lord Selborne and other high functionaries had declared when the war broke out that the treatment accorded to the Indians by the Boers was one of the

causes of the war. The British Agent at Pretoria had often told me that if the Transvaal became a British Colony, all the grievances under which the Indians laboured would be instantly redressed. The Europeans too believed that as the Transvaal was now under the British flag, the old laws of the Boer republic directed against the Indians could not be enforced. This principle was so widely accepted that the auctioneers who before the war did not accept bids from Indians for the purchase of land now openly accepted such bids. Many Indians thus purchased lands at public auctions, but when they tendered the deeds of transfer to the revenue officer for registration, the officer in charge refused to register the deeds quoting Act 3 of 1885! All this I learnt on landing at Durban. The readers said that Mr. Chamberlain would first come to Durban and we must first acquaint him with the situation in Natal. This done, I was to follow him to the Transvaal.

A deputation waited upon Mr. Chamberlain in Natal. He gave it a courteous hearing and promised to confer with the Natal Government on the subject of its representations. Personally I did not expect that the laws which had been promulgated in Natal before the war would be modified very soon.

Any Indian could at any time enter the Transvaal before the war. I observed that this was not the case now any longer. The restrictions however, equally applied to all - Europeans as

well as Indians. The condition of the country was still such, that if a large number of people entered the Transvaal all at once, there would not be sufficient food and clothing to go round, as all the shops had not reopened after the war. The goods stocked in shops been unceremoniously appropriated by the late Boer Government. I therefore thought, that if the restrictions were only temporary, there was no reason for apprehension. But then there was a difference in the procedure by which a European and an Indian could obtain a permit, and this afforded ground for misgiving and alarm. Permit offices were opened in the various ports of South Africa. For all practical purposes a European could obtain permit for the mere asking, while an Asiatic Department was created in the Transvaal for dealing with Indians. The creation of this special department was a new departure. Indians were required to apply to the head of that department in the first instance. After he had granted their applications, they could generally obtain permits at Durban or any other port.

If I had to go through all these formalities there was no hope of my getting a permit before Mr. Chamberlain left the Transvaal. The Indians in the Transvaal could not procure a permit for me. It was more than they could do. They had therefore relied upon my connections in Durban for obtaining a permit for me. I did not know the permit officer, but as I knew the Police Superintendent of Durban, I

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asked him to accompany me to the permit office. He consented and gave the necessary assurances. I obtained a permit on the strength of the fact that I had stayed in the Transvaal for a year in 1893 and thus reached Pretoria.

The atmosphere in Pretoria was decidedly ominous. I could see that the Asiatic Department was merely a frightful engine of oppression for the Indians. The officers in charge were some of the adventurers who had accompanied the army from India to South Africa during the war and had settled there in order to try their luck. Some of them were corrupt. Two officers were even prosecuted for bribery. The jury declared them not guilty, but as really there was no doubt entertained as to their guilt, they were subsequently dismissed from service. Partiality was the order of the day. When a separate department is thus created and when restricting existing rights is the sole reason for its existence, officers are naturally inclined to devise fresh restrictions from time to time in order to justify their existence and in order to show that they are efficient in the discharge of their duties. This is exactly what happened in the present case.

I saw that I had to begin my work from the very beginning. The Asiatic Department could not at once make out how I had managed to enter the Transvaal. They did not venture to ask me directly. I imagine they thought me above smuggling myself into the country. They indirectly obtained information as to how I secured a

permit. A deputation from Pretoria prepared to wait upon Mr. Chamberlain. I drafted the memorial for submission to him but the Asiatic Department excluded me from the deputation. It appeared to the Indian leaders that they should not see Mr. Chamberlain if I was prevented from going with them. But I did not countenance this idea. I said that I should not mind the insult to me and advised them to ignore it too. The memorial was there and it was essential that it should be presented to Mr. Chamberlain. Mr. George Godfrey, an Indian barrister, who was present at the time, was charged with the task of reading the memorial. The deputation waited upon Mr. Chamberlain. My name being mentioned in course of the interview, he said, "I have already seen Mr. Gandhi in Durban. I therefore refused to see him here, in order that I might learn about the situation in the Transvaal at first hand from local residents." In my view this remark only added fuel to the fire. Mr. Chamberlain spoke out as he had been tutored by the Asiatic Department, which thus tried to import into the Transvaal the atmosphere which pervades India. Everyone knows how British officers consider Bombay men as foreigners, in, say, Champaran. At that rate how could I who lived in Durban know anything about the situation in the Transvaal? Thus did the Asiatic Department coach Mr. Chamberlain. Little did he know that I had lived in the Transvaal, and that even if I had not, I was fully conversant with the Indian situation there. There was only one pertinent question in the present case:

Who possessed the best knowledge of the situation in the Transvaal? The Indians had already answered it for themselves by asking me to go there all the way from India. But it is no new experience to find that arguments based on reason do not always appeal to men in authority. Mr. Chamberlain was then so much under the influence of the men on the spot and so anxious was he to humour the Europeans that there was little or no hope of his doing us justice. Still the deputation waited upon him, only in order that no legitimate step for obtaining redress might be omitted whether by oversight or through a sense of wounded self-respect.

I was now confronted by a dilemma even more difficult than the one which faced me in 1894. From one standpoint, it seemed I could return to India as soon as Mr. Chamberlain left in South Africa. On the other hand I could clearly see that if I returned with the vain fancy of serving on a larger field in India while I was fully aware of the great danger which started the South African Indians in the face, the spirit of service which I had acquired would be stultified. I thought that even if that meant living in South Africa all my life, I must remain there until the gathering clouds were dispersed or until they broke upon and swept us all away, all our counteracting efforts notwithstanding. This is how I spoke to the Indian leaders. Now, as in 1894, I declared my intention to maintain myself by legal practice. As for community, this was precisely what they wanted. □

To be continued

CELEBRATION OF INTERNATIONAL ROMA DAY

✍ Md. Zameer Anwar



Mr. Orhan Galjus presenting Roma Flag to Dr. Shyam Singh Shashi, Shri Shyam Parande

pointed out that Roma children in Europe face different forms of segregation at schools. They are even denied access to school. Even if they attend the regular schools, they are placed in separate classrooms, away from other children. Roma children are categorized as mentally retarded, therefore the special schools for Roma children with different curricula are designed in several countries of Europe. That brings about/creates impediment to/for the adaptation of Roma children to a normal social life and their inclusion in the mainstream societies.

Centre for Roma Studies and Cultural Relations (CRSCR)- ARSP organized a programme to celebrate International Roma Day at Pravasi Bhavan, New Delhi on 11th April, 2019. The event was graced by a number of scholars, diplomats, social workers, journalists, professors and students. Main highlight of the programme was a special lecture on the status of Roma community in different countries of Europe, delivered by the chief guest, Mr. Orhan Galjus, President – Eurasia Roma Academic Network.

In his introductory remarks, Amb. Rajesh Sachdeva, Chairman - CRSCR said that International Roma Day is celebrated around the world to cherish the Romani culture and raise awareness about the issues affecting Roma community. He also stated the objective and function of CRSCR which was set up in ARSP in support with Indian Council for Cultural Relations.

Roma children's education: Mr. Orhan Galjus said that Romas were

the first Indians to have gone out of India around a thousand years back. He asserted that the democracy and right to equality before the law can be ensured only through the creation of institutions which can cater to the changing needs of individual **Rom (?)**. He noted that the representation of

Attacks on the Roma camps: He also talked about the killings of Roma and attack on their camps in Ukraine which are the order of the day. But the media spreads fake news about Romani population and endorses stereotypes against them. He remembered the mass-murder of the Roma by Hitler during the second



Mr. Orhan Galjus addressing the gathering at Pravasi Bhawan

International Romani Union (IRU) in Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of UNO has the same identity as Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). Mr. Galjus

world-war. Mr. Galjus also stated that Roma are not trouble-makers or a source of problems for countries in which they live. Still, they are faced



with entrenched discrimination and abuse in day-to-day lives and living in grinding poverty.

Anthropologist and writer Padmashree Dr. Shyam Singh Shashi said that Roma are culturally similar, that is unanimously accepted, but politically there are problems. He talked about the self-help that is the best help and Roma should help themselves as other Diaspora of India like Girmitya who migrated from India as indentured labourers and lived in inflicting hardship. But they worked hard and carved out sterling places for themselves in the countries where they reside. Roma need to show unity with the NRI's in their countries. He also said that they should have more literary and cultural interaction with India, for which, they need to learn Hindi, and resort to translation to and from Hindi.

Delivering concluding remarks, Shri Shyam Parande, Secretary General

societies in different periods of time vanished because of inhuman atrocities and persecution, but the Roma community survived in spite of perennial persecution, oppression, discrimination and injustice owing to the strength of Indian spirit and ancient Indian wisdom. He also said that the Indians visiting abroad would like to interact with the Roma people in those countries.

During the questions and answers session, Dr. Punita Singh, Ex Commissioner for women at International Romani Union, opined that International Romani Union is splintered in three parts which are at loggerheads with one another. That is causing enormous harm to the representation of Roma community in the international for a.

Researcher and author Dr. Shashi Bala noted that if the Indian Government can offer scholarship to 1000 Afghan students every year, why can it not offer scholarship to Romani

Concurring with Dr. Shashi's opinion, author & linguist Prof. Vimlesh Kanti Verma gave the example of Girmityas and other NRIs who succeeded in every respect including politics, achieving the highest position as prime ministers and presidents in their respective countries. He told that there should be an exchange of students and NGOs and NPOs should urge the Romani students to study in India. He further suggested that the Romas should have interaction with the NRI's and Indian settlers in their own countries, besides sending their children to India to learn Hindi.

Prof. Gopal Arora, Secretary – ARSP, extended thanks to chief guest and other participants for their kind presence in the programme. He pointed out that the efforts were made earlier also to strengthen the relationship between India and Roma community, but the continuity of engagement was disrupted. Now ARSP has set up CRSCR that would forge consistency in expanding and reinforcing the cultural relations between Romani community and India. Appreciating Mr. Galjus of his enthusiasm reflecting an ardor for carrying forward the relations to the next level, Prof. Arora affirmed that the centre is resolved to engage with all sections of Roma community throughout the world.

He further added that the Romani people should not only completely depend on the governments of their countries but also make endeavours for improving their conditions. The community should also come forward to motivate the youth to spearhead the struggle for their emancipation. □

(With inputs from Anil Goel)



Mr. Orhan Galjus being blessed by renowned famous Indologist Prof. Satyavrat Shastri

–ARSP, stated that Romani scholars should come together to guide and lead Roma community to their emancipation from poverty and illiteracy. He further said, a number of

students. For this, ARSP can play an instrumental role in ensuring them of scholarship in Indian universities and colleges.

SOUTH EAST ASIA: ROOTS LIE IN BHARAT

✍ Dr. Ruchi Verma

Hindu Heritage foundation in association with Centre for Chinese and Southeast Asian Studies, SLL & CS, Jawaharlal Nehru University and

Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) organized an International symposium on "South East Asia: Roots Lie in Bharat" at Convention Centre, Jawaharlal Nehru University on 23 April, 2019. Inaugural session was chaired by Prof.

Ajay Dubey, JNU. Introduction of the conference was given by Dr. Gautam K. Jha, JNU. H.E Aashna Kanhai, Ambassador of Suriname, H.E Nilambar Acharya, Ambassador of Nepal in India, Mr. Thirapath, Minister Counselor, Thailand Embassy, Amb. Amarendra Khatua, Ex. DG-ICCR and Former Secretary MEA, Mr. Santosh Taneja, Founder Samkalp and Shri Prashant Hartalkar, Chairman, Hindu Heritage Foundation, were among the dignitaries present in the inaugural session. More than 200 scholars, research students, eminent dignitaries were present. In this symposium, under three technical sessions around 21 papers were presented. Several important issues based on the historical, cultural and contemporary relations between Southeast Asia and India were highlighted, debated and discussed along with the major issues of mutual development and opportunities.

Amb. Khatua emphasized that India must recognize itself politically, economically and culturally. India has such rich and vast tradition and culture

food etc between India and Thailand. He pressed that Thailand embassy is working towards revitalization of these relations and always supports these

kinds of activities which emphasizes on strengthening the relations between the two nations.

Amb. Kanhai told that Suriname has roots of India, Indonesia and Africa. She highlighted the importance of sacred books and plays like Ramayana and



HE Nilambar Acharya addressing to the audience. From (L to R) on the dias HE Aashna Kanhai, Prashant Hartalkar, Amb. Amarendra Khatua, Santosh Taneja and Prof. Ajay Dubey

but India has never tried to impose it on others. He accentuated that Bharat does not believe in patronizing. He also stressed on the point that Southeast Asia relation with India is and will depends on people to people contact and historical continuity. Thus, India must create awareness for people to people contact culturally.

Amb. Acharya spoke that India has friendly attitude towards all communities. India's philosophy is "Vasudheva Kutumbakam". This philosophy is very much needed as interdependence has increased. India has so much to offer to the world. He also told that our common heritage will help in developing mutual relations and good will between Nepal and India.

Mr. Thirapath highlighted that India and Thailand share historical, language and cultural linkages. Many similarities can be seen in language,

Mahabharata. How are these influences are been implemented in Southeast Asia and how religion has amalgamated in civilization was the centre topic of her discussion. She at the end concluded by saying, that it is important to look at these relations as two way traffic.

Mr. Taneja stressed on the comprehensive commonness between Southeast Asia and India, which can be realized by observance. He emphasized that we have connection of souls among themselves. Mr. Hartalkar elaborated on this further and added that no other nation except Bharat has this privilege to say that its roots lie in other nations. We Indians are very privileged and we need to preserve this identity.

The inaugural session was concluded by vote of thanks given by Dr. Pranav Kumar, JNU. □

PROMOTING INDIAN BRANDS CAN BE THE NEXT TARGET

"India has firmed up its position globally and yet we do not find the demand for Indian brands in global market. India should try to establish Indian brands globally," said Amb. (Retd) Dnyaneshwar Mulay, Ex-Secretary in External Affairs Ministry, while releasing a coffee-table book in Delhi. Based on his long tenure in MEA and his regular interaction with Indian Diaspora abroad, Dr. Mulay analysed in brief how the Diaspora Indian thinks and acts.

The coffee table book "Uniting the Indian Diaspora Around the World", which has compilation of successful Indians all over the world and who have been awarded "Pravasi Bharatiya Samman" award since 2003, was released at the Constitution Club. Diaspora Indians are awarded the



(L to R) Vilas Burde, Rajat Kapur, Dr. Dnyaneshwar Mulay, Mukund Purohit & Shyam Parande

PBS Award for their achievements in some particular field or service to the society in India or abroad, during the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas conference.

Shri Shyam Parande, Secretary General of Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad while speaking on the occasion, eulogized the contribution of the Diaspora Indians to the development of the countries of adoption

as well as the mother country they love the most and feel for the development of Bharat. He appreciated the efforts of Indian Diaspora Club in compiling and publishing the coffee-table book that provides a fair idea of what and how the Diaspora Indians have succeeded in their area of activity and are well respected in their countries of adoption.

Shri Mukund Purohit from Canada, a successful businessman and a PBS Award recipient of 2017, also spoke at the occasion. He exclaimed that Indians abroad should join hands with Govt. of India for making schemes like Swatch Bharat and Namami Gange successful. Shri Vilas Burde was the other speaker at the program that was organized by Indian Diaspora Club. □

LAO BUDDHISTS VISIT THE LAND OF LORD BUDDHA

Dr. Amarjiva Lochan



Sathou Onekeo Sithivong being honoured by Shyam Parande

A high profile delegation of Lao Buddhist Sangh was received at Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad (ARSP) on the invitation of the International Centre for Cultural Studies (ICCS), ARSP Delhi. They were visiting Buddhist places of pilgrimage in India, with support from ICCS, ARSP.

The delegation was headed by the most venerable Sathou Onekeo Sithivong, President of the Lao Buddhist Fellowship Organization (LBFO). Ven. Sathou Onekeo was accompanied by ven. Khamlar Inthavongsack, Director of the Office of the Lao Buddhist Fellowship Organization, ven. Sombath Bouttasith, Vice-president of the Buddhist Fellowship Organization, ven. Khamphanh Dasavong, Executive Member of the Buddhist Fellowship Organization, Ven. Tiem Kinouvong, Teacher of the Buddhist Secondary school of Vat Pa Pha O, Luang

Prabang, and Mr. Sisavath Nyilatchay, Director of the Culture Division, Department of Information, Culture and Tourism of Luang Prabang.

They were felicitated and honoured by Shri Shyam Parande, Secretary General, ARSP, Mukeshji, Vice President, Shri Gopal Arora, Shri Narayan Kumar, Director, ARSP, Prof. Shashibala, Shri Sanjay Ganjoo and Amb. Anup Mudgal, ex-Diplomat.

ICCS General Secretary Dr Amarjiva Lochan, life-member of ARSP, described the details of this visit, saying that such a visit was a long-cherished dream of the Lao Buddhist Sangh community. They had never had a chance to visit Bharat, Dr Amarjiva added. On the advice of Suresh Soni ji, Patron of ICCS, they were sponsored and supported for the entire journey starting from Luang Prabang, Laos.

The Head of the Delegation Sathou Onkeo Sithivong expressed sincerest gratitude for the arrangements made and thanked the luminaries of the ARSP for honouring and listening to them. Starting journey from Kolkata to Gaya, Bodh Gaya, Rajgir, Nalanda, Varanasi, Ganga Darshan,

Saranath, Vaisali and Kushinagar and finally to Delhi, he narrated his great fortune of getting this opportunity to visit Buddha Bhumi, the sacred land of Buddha. Mr Sisavath Nilatchay (Confirm the spelling of his name) also spoke on this occasion and added on behalf of the delegation the happiness to be able to add Lumbini, Nepal in this trip as it is the birth-place of Bhagavan Buddha. He also informed the ARSP office bearers and members that recently Wat Pak-Ou, the oldest Buddhist Temple of Laos, was



Dr. Amarjiva Lochan introducing the Lao delegates

restored with the assistance of the ICCS. The monk Sathou Khamlar also thanked the participants on that occasion who came to listen to them and invited the members of ARSP to visit Laos in near future. Shri Shyam Parande added to his joy of seeing the Lao Buddhist fraternity in India. He told the audience about his visits to Laos and meeting Sathou Onkeo before in the Luang Prabang Buddhist Temple. □

GEET GAWAI PROGRAMME AT PRAVASI BHAWAN

Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad (ARSP) and Diaspora Research and Resource Centre (DRRC) in collaboration with Bhojpuri Speaking Union, Mauritius had organized Geet Gawai programme on 16 April, 2019 at Pravasi Bhawan. Twenty five member delegation under the leadership of Dr. Sarita Boodhoo, President, Bhojpuri Speaking Union Mauritius presented different flavors of Geet Gawai. More than 50 eminent personalities along with students and researchers attended the programme.

Delegation was welcomed by Secretary General of ARSP, Shri Shyam Parande and Hon. Director of ARSP, Shri Narayan Kumar. Delegation was greeted by presenting them the holy book of Ramayana and angvastram. Prof. Kamal Kishore



Shyam Parande, Secretary General ARSP felicitating Sarita Boodhoo and Dhundevi Poonuth (Reeta)

Goyanka, Vice President of Hindi Shikshan Mandal Agra, Ministry of HRD congratulated ARSP for organizing the Geet Gawai programme by the Mauritian artists which reflects the traditions and values of Indian Diaspora.

'Geet Gawai', is a musical ensemble that encapsulates the cultural heritage in the Girmitias nations. It was

recognised by UNESCO as "The Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Humanity" in 2016. It is a collection of traditional Bhojpuri folk songs, which are performed in the families during various ceremonies. It could be purely singing or combined with traditional dances. Indian diaspora in Mauritius has preserved this traditional art form for more than a century in its pure form.

Through their song and performance, these artists showed the arduous journey of 'girmitias', their exploitation, their struggles and how they survived and rose to prominence amidst those sufferings.

The programme ended with discussion about the artistic form and high tea. □

BHOJPURI FOLK SONGS IN MAURITIUS—GEET GAWAI

Bhojpuri Folk Songs in Mauritius—Geet Gawai Our National Heritage

Geet-Gawai is a pre-wedding ceremony performed one or two days before the wedding ceremony and comes as a precursor to other rituals and practices involved in a wedding in a Hindu family. In early days, Geet-Gawai was performed for a whole week. It is a combination of rituals, prayers, songs, music and dance which is also a living means of expression of the Bhojpuri language and oral traditions. It is spontaneous and melodious and is rooted in the lives of the performers and tradition bearers. There is usually one lead singer followed by the group of ten to twelve other women singers.

The Geet Gawai is a musical ensemble that vehicles and encapsulates the

intangible cultural heritage brought to Mauritius by Indian indentured immigrants 182 years ago from the Bhojpuri belt of



Geet Gawai Delegation with ARSP Office-Bearers

India and forms part of the mosaic of Mauritian Cultural intangible heritage.

The tradition bearers who have preserved this rich oral musical performance are known as Geetharines. The Geetharines have safeguarded the transmission of

Geet Gawai from generation to generation till the present time. They learn Geet Gawai in their tender age from their mothers, mothers-in-law, grandmothers and aunts such as phouphous and mowsis. It is an intrinsic part of their lives as they breathe and live it. The Geet Gawai depicts a harmonious blending of the different aspects of the cycle of life and rites of passage.

There are several steps in Geet Gawai performance which starts where women of the family and neighbourhood dressed in traditional dresses come together in the groom's or bride's house to be seated in a semi circular fashion.

The first ritual is 'Lagan-kholna' where five married women, with their veil (dupatta) on their head sit on their feet in circle or semi circle. They sort out turmeric pieces, unhusked rice grass and money contained in a piece of cloth, while women sing songs called 'Lagan Geet. It is followed by 'Sumiran' and 'Sandhya' in honour of gods and goddesses.

The above is followed by sanctification of the performance place and house called 'dharti bandhal'. It symbolizes purification of the place. The ritual is followed by 'dholak puja' as a sign of paying respect to the musical instruments and is a ritual between the mother of the groom or bride and the leading drum player.

After the above rituals, the songs are accompanied by dholak (two headed drum) and household items as the 'thali (brass plate), spoons (chamach) struck against the run of a 'lota' (brass container) and two wooden pieces Jhanjh to produce rhythmic beats. The performance continues with several wedding songs such as 'Suhaag Geet' songs, Mahadev song and finally leading to the climax of the evening, the 'Jhumar'.

Jhumar is a lively vibrating performance of song, dance and music performance. Young women and girls and other family members join in the dance, moved by the rhythm, swaying with the beats of the drum and clapping of hands as they move around with short steps and enact the lyrics and the dance in an electrifying atmosphere. Eventually the climax is reached in the singing when the geetharines bring out several lilting jhumars one after the other from their rich repertoire, accompanied by women dancing rhythmically in circular forms to the beat of dholak, lota, chimta, lakritaal and clapping of hands. The atmosphere is electrifying. No one can resist but join in when the rhythm peaks. And this goes for the family members and the younger generations who are mesmerized by the fast beats of the music and pulled in by the force of the rhythm. The Geet Gawai performance is a lively and vibrant social and cultural performance where dressing, rituals, music, songs and dance are further enriched by serving traditional snacks, drinks, ginger powder and 'paan' (betel leaves with lime, cloves and cardamom). The performance ends with the distribution of soaked black chickpeas. Formerly performed by women only, the Geet Gawai songs have been adapted by several public artists both male and female and have been taken to public performances by men too in the genre known as Gamat singing.

During the consultations, a number of people, who were previously depressed either due to death in family or some unfortunate events, confessed to reaching a state of happiness or non depression after Geet Gawai performance.

The Ministry of Arts and Culture ensures that this intangible cultural heritage is safeguarded. The safeguarding measures are promoted through the running of Geet Gawai Schools of which there are twelve branches by the Bhojpuri Speaking Union which operates under the Ministry of Arts and Culture to ensure the preservation of this rich oral tradition into modernity.

Several types of songs form part of the Geet Gawai

Some of them :

Lagan Geet - When the women present at the pre-wedding ceremony declare that this auspicious date of marriage has been selected and ask those gathered to bless the bride and the groom.

Sumiran also Known as Debi-Debta ke Geet (songs of divinities)-Sumiran is a collective devotional singing and natural human expression of love and joy for god or the Divinity.

Sandhya - Songs to invoke the Goddess of Dusk to come and give her blessings.

Dharti bandhal - Songs invoking deities and they are requested to stay and purify (sanctify) the place.

Dholak Puja - The dholak puja is symbolical and it pays respect to the instrument which will be resonating on this auspicious occasion till the end to create a joyful atmosphere.

Suhag Geet - Suhag is sung for gods and goddesses, acknowledging their presence and calling them by their names and to give their blessings to the bride/bridegroom.

Jhoomar/Jhumar- Bhojpuri Jhoomar or Jhumar is a lively vigorous form of music, song and dance.

Sanskar Geet Originated in the Gathas of the Rig Veda

Sanskar geet are an invariable cultural custom accompanying Hindu marriages in all regions and linguistic groups of India. In Mauritius, the Bhojpuri people have preserved beautifully and remarkably well the sanskar geet associated with each and every rite and custom performed on the occasion of Hindu weddings.

These folkloric songs have their origin in the gathas by sutas or folk singers since the early vedic period. In the Rig Veda, gathas are ritual songs and are mentioned regularly not only to create an atmosphere of gaiety but to conjure charm, a spell and

auspiciousness at the time of weddings.

During a ritual known as Indrani-Karma, women singers were enjoined to sing and dance to keep the Goddess of Earth and therefore fertility, Indrani who descends to bless the bride, happy. The Kathaka Samhita says that eight women whose husbands are alive should sing appropriate songs to the tune of the drum and the veena known in Vedic period as vana and four women may also dance. Thus the geet gawai sessions at Hindu marriages in Mauritius trace their origin to the Rig Vedic period, but have taken a distinct Mauritian colouring in the way they are organised, which makes them unique in the world.

The Geetharines : Soulful Performers of Feminine Sentiments

The Geetharines are the ones who have preserved and transmitted the Geet Gawai from generation to generation. It is an oral tradition par excellence. Homage is hereby paid to them.

The Geetharines have invariably kept the rich nuances of Geet Gawai alive and safeguarded its pristine quality, originality and aesthetics of the style of singing. They have ensured its transmission individually and collectively.

Togetherness in Melody

There is usually one lead singer, followed in chorus by the group of singers. There is a complicity of shared camaraderie among them, a togetherness in melody as they warm up to their rich repertoire song after song.

The Uniqueness of the Genres

The genres include a multitude of beautiful Bhojpuri folk songs depicting the moods, moments, stories and myths from the hoary past, depicting romance of the coming together of man and women in the different stages of life. As well as the love, affecting and auspiciousness that pervade the ceremonies and bind the family together.

The proper Geet Gawai sung at pre-wedding and wedding occasions start with invocations such as sandhya, devi devta geet, mahadev, shaadi geet, followed by sumirans, mandar puja, dharti bandhal. Other wedding songs accompany each and every wedding rite and tradition such as matkor, tilak, chumawal, lawamilai, kanyadan, sindurdan etc. There are other varieties that accompany festivals such as holi, harvest, drought (harparawri) or rainy season or grinding (jatsar), or godna (tattooing) etc. □

FORMER MALDIVES PREZ NASHEED BACK WITH A LANDSLIDE WIN

The former Maldives president vowed sweeping reforms and an end to government corruption after leading his party to a record landslide victory just five months since returning from exile.

Mohamed Nasheed, 51, made a dramatic return to the top of the national parliament, with his Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) securing more than two-third in the seats 87-member assembly. Nasheed promised to use his party's mandate to usher in a new era of stability and democracy in the Indian Ocean archipelago, as it emerges from years of strongman rule, political crisis and corruption scandals miring the government and judiciary. "Our foremost duty is to bring peace to the government", Nasheed told supporters in the capital on Sunday.

Provisional results from the Elections Commission showed Nasheed's party won 68 seats, with the Jamhooree Party a distant second, securing just seven. The party of former president Abudulla Yameen trailed with only four.



Nasheed's comprehensive victory was another rebuke for his arch-rival Yameen, who was dumped in a shock election defeat in September 2018 under a cloud of corruption and embezzlement allegations. Yameen did not run, but his party - the Progressive Party of Maldives - finished third. The remaining seats were collected by minor parties and independents.

Nasheed was barred from running in the presidential election but his former deputy, President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, emerged triumphant over Yameen. The former leader declared the days of "Rolex watches and Kohinoor are over", referring to high-profile scandals in the Maldives where

MPs have allegedly been bought with luxury gifts, including gems.

The thumping MDP victory caps a remarkable comeback for Nasheed, who until November 2018 was a fugitive in exile. Nasheed was sentenced to 13 years prison in 2015 but left the Maldives a year later, after being granted prison leave for medical treatment in Britain. The charges were dropped by the Supreme Court after Solih toppled Yameen, with judges saying there was no basis for the charges.

Rights groups had decried the terrorism conviction, imposed while Yameen was in power, as politically motivated and unjustified. □

(Source : Time of India-8/4/19)

15-YEAR-OLD INDIAN-ORIGIN BOY LAUDED AS BRITAIN'S YOUNGEST ACCOUNTANT

15-year-old Indian-origin boy has been lauded as Britain's youngest accountant after setting up a successful accountancy firm while still at school. After he set up his first business when he was just 12 years old, Ranveer Singh Sandhu, based in south London, has set himself a goal of becoming a millionaire by the time he turns 25!



The teenager completed an online accounting course to achieve a requisite Level 3 CPD Basic Accounting certificate when he was only 12 and went on to set up his business **Digital Accounts** in June 2016. Two years later, he launched a second company Ranveer Singh Sandhu which is still under development.

Sandhu, who has also created his own software to keep track of his clients' accounts, was the winner of the Tech Business of the Year prize at the Ultra Education Kids Business Awards a few years ago. He attributes his entrepreneurial zeal to his Indian-origin family's interest in the field of finance but says his real passion is to help other young entrepreneurs. □

FIRST INDIAN WOMAN SCIENTIST FELLOW OF ROYAL SOCIETY

Gagandeep Kang, executive director of the Translational Health Science and Technology Institute (THSTI), Faridabad has been made a Fellow of the Royal Society (FRS), London. She is the first Indian woman scientist to have been selected as FRS in the 359-year history of the prestigious scientific academy.

Known for her inter-disciplinary research and work in prevention of enteric infections and their sequelae in children in India, Kang has built national rotavirus and typhoid surveillance networks, established laboratories to support vaccine trials and conducted phase 1-3 clinical trials of vaccines.

"She is investigating the complex relationships between infection, gut

function and physical and cognitive development, and seeking to build a stronger human immunology research in India," a statement on her biography by the Royal Society said while announcing the names of 51 distinguished scientists chosen as fellows of the oldest scientific academy of the world.



The list of Fellows of FRS includes Canadian-American mathematician Manjul Bhargava who is R Brandon Fradd Professor of Mathematics at Princeton University, US. □

Amish Tripathi Tipped As Next Director of Nehru Centre, London

Author Amish Tripathi has been selected as the next director of the Nehru Centre, the cultural wing of the Indian high commission in London, according to two people with knowledge of the developments.

Considered a flagship centre of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), the Nehru Centre has previously been directed by actor-director-playwright Girish Karnad and diplomats such as Gopalkrishna Gandhi and Pawan Varma.

Author of several bestsellers, Tripathi is

among individuals with similar profiles that are in the process of being appointed directors of Indian cultural centres in various countries, one of the people quoted above said.

The Nehru Centre two important anniversaries: the 550th birth anniversary of the first Sikh Guru, Shri Guru Nanak Devji and the 150th birth anniversary of



Father of the Indian Nation, Mahatma Gandhi".

Nehru Centre organises a busy schedule of activities, showcasing Indian music, dance and theatre, besides exhibitions, lectures, illustrated talks, book launches, film screenings, seminars and round-tables.

It also serves as a catalyst and facilitator in promoting interaction among cultural bodies in the two countries. □

Indian National Wins Election in Japan

Forty-one years old Indian-origin Japanese Yogendra Puranik has been elected to Tokyo's Edogawa Ward assembly, becoming the first Indian-origin person to win an election in Japan. A naturalised Japanese, Yogendra Puranik, who goes by the nick name 'Yogi', secured 6,477 votes, the fifth highest of the 2,26,561 valid ballots cast, in the April 21 poll, part of unified local elections held across Japan.

"I want to be a bridge between Japanese and foreigners," said Yogi, who was backed by the Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan. Edogawa Ward has the highest number of Indian residents among

Tokyo's 23 wards, with 4,300 or so Indian nationals registered, accounting for more than 12 percent of Indians living in Japan. Over 34,000 Indians live in Japan.

The Edogawa Ward also has a large number of Chinese and Koreans.

Yogi first arrived in Japan in 1997 as a university student. He returned back to India two years later to study, and in 2001 again came to Japan to work as an engineer. He later worked for a bank and



other companies, and has resided in Edogawa Ward since 2005.

Yogi felt his ties with Japan strengthen after the 2011 earthquake and tsunami disaster while visiting affected areas on weekends to cook curry with Indian friends from Edogawa Ward to share with victims, the paper said. It was during these trips and chatting with Japanese while preparing food dishes that Yogi felt a strong affinity with this country. He acquired Japanese nationality the following year and pursued a career in politics. □

NASA TO LAUNCH PIO-LED TEAM'S CUBE SAT – A MINI RESEARCH SATELLITE TO DETECT COSMIC RAYS

CubeSats are built from a modular structure of 10x10x10cm cubes, and feature a wide variety of commercially available off-the-shelf components designed to fit the structure from various manufacturers.

A team led by an Indian American student has been chosen by NASA to have their CubeSat - a mini research satellite to detect cosmic rays - flown into space on future missions of the US space agency. The researchers from the Yale Undergraduate Aerospace Association (YUAA), led by 21-year-old Keshav Raghavan, are among the 16 teams across the country whose CubeSats will be flown into space on missions planned to launch in 2020, 2021 and 2022. The team's CubeSat BLAST (Bouchet Low-Earth Alpha/Beta Space Telescope) is named for physicist Edward A Bouchet - the first African American to receive a PhD in America.

Students designed the satellite over the course of four years, and received the launch grant through NASA's CubeSat

Launch Initiative competition. According to the NASA, BLAST is a scientific investigation mission to map the distribution of galactic cosmic radiation across the night sky. The satellite will identify and count alpha particles and beta particles in the rays, and measure the radiation energy around Earth. BLAST will contribute to the ongoing search for the origins and nature of these rays, which will provide insight into the origins of the universe.

Typical CubeSat projects cost about USD 30,000, while the one developed by the team will cost around USD 13,000 to USD 20,000, according to Andrew Krzywosz, co-president of YUAA. Once BLAST, a cosmic ray detector, goes into orbit, it will collect data about particles travelling to earth from distant supernovae, Raghavan

said. "Building a CubeSat and launching it into space is an ambition YUAA has had for quite a while.

The team said that as the satellite is 'smaller than a loaf of bread,' it costs orders of magnitude less than large-scale satellites.

The work, so far, has culminated in a viable prototype that the team anticipates will be ready for launch in slightly over a year. CubeSats are miniature satellites intended as a standard, inexpensive design that can easily fit alongside larger satellites aboard launch vehicles. The CubeSat model has given student groups, hobbyist organizations, and research teams operating with limited funding or experience unprecedented access to space. □

(Source : The Economic Times -15 /4/19)

His Majesty The King and Her Majesty The Gyaltsuen of Bhutan Offered Prayers for Sri Lanka

On behalf of the people of Bhutan, His Majesty The King of Bhutan and Her Majesty The Gyaltsuen offered prayers at the Kuenrey of the Tashichhodzong, and offered a thousand butter lamps, in memory of those who lost their lives in a series of bomb attacks in Sri Lanka on 21 April 2019. The Prime Minister and government officials also joined in the prayer ceremony.



Dratshang in Lhuentse. Prayers and butter lamps were also offered in Simtokha Dzong, Changangkha Lhakhang and Kyichu Lhakhang.

Bhutan and Sri Lanka have close relations due to a shared spiritual heritage, and as co-members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). Bhutan continues to send a number of students to study medicine in Sri Lanka each year, and a large number of Bhutanese doctors have a special connection to Sri Lanka, having lived and studied there. □

His Majesty sent a message of condolence to the President of Sri Lanka, Maithripala Sirisena, expressing the solidarity of the people of Bhutan with the people of Sri Lanka. Along with a prayer ceremony at the

Tashichhodzong, special prayers were also held in other important temples, on the Command of His Majesty The King of Bhutan. His Holiness the Je Khenpo presided over prayers at Namdroling Goenzin

Bhutan and India Hold The First Bhutan-India Development Cooperation Talks for the 12th Five Year Plan



The first Bhutan-India Development Cooperation Talks for the 12th Five Year Plan (FYP) between the Royal Government of Bhutan (RGoB) and the Government of India (GoI) was held on Friday, 26th April 2019, in Thimphu. The Bhutanese delegation was led by Mr. SonamTshong, Foreign Secretary, and the Indian delegation by H.E. Mr. A. GiteshSarma, Secretary (West), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.

During the State Visit to India by Lyonchhen (Dr.) LotayTshering from 27-29 December 2018, Prime Minister Modi had announced that GoI would provide Nu. 45 billion for Bhutan's 12th FYP. During the talks on 26th April, the two sides discussed and finalized various components of the

assistance. It was agreed that the break-up of Nu. 45,000 million committed by GoI for the 12th FYP would be as follows: Program Grant (PG): Nu. 8,500 million; Project Tied Assistance (PTA): Nu. 28,000 million; and Small Development Projects (SDP): Nu. 8,500 million.

The Bhutanese side provided a brief on the objectives and priorities of the 12th FYP, and presented project proposals to be implemented under PTA during the ongoing Plan period. The Talks approved 51 projects under



PTA, which includes 31 new projects in the 12th Plan, and 20 Multiplan projects initiated in the 11th Plan. The delegations also reviewed the importance of the ongoing areas of

cooperation and other project proposals that are being taken up outside the Plan purview. The Bhutanese side expressed appreciation to the Government of India for its generous support to Bhutan's 12th FYP. The Indian side reiterated its commitment to support Bhutan's 12th FYP.

The two sides agreed to hold the next Development Cooperation Talks in New Delhi, India at a mutually convenient date later this year. The first Bhutan-India Development Cooperation Talks for the 12th FYP was successfully held in a friendly atmosphere in keeping with the excellent ties of friendship existing between the two countries.

During the visit, the Secretary (West) received an Audience with His Majesty The King of Bhutan. Secretary (West) also paid a courtesy call on Hon'ble Lyonchhen (Dr.) LotayTshering on 25th April, and Hon'ble Foreign Minister, (Dr.) TandiDorji, on 26th April 2019. □

BHUTAN AND INDIA SIGNED THE PROTOCOL TO THE BILATERAL AGREEMENT REGARDING MANGDECHHU HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT

The Royal Government of Bhutan and the Government of India on 23rd April, 2019 signed the Protocol to the Bilateral Agreement regarding Mangdechhu Hydroelectric Project.

Dasho Yeshi Wangdi, Secretary, Ministry of Economic Affairs, RGoB and Shri Ajay Kumar Bhalla, Secretary, Ministry of Power, Gol signed the Protocol.

The Protocol in keeping with the Article 9.3 of the Inter-Governmental Agreement for Mangdechhu Hydroelectric Project formalizes the starting tariff of Nu. 4.12 per unit with tariff schedule for 35 years. The tariff schedule, which is a part of Protocol mentions that the tariff will increase by 10% every 5 years till the loan is repaid and 5% thereafter. The Protocol also appoints two designate agencies, DGPC from RGoB and PTC from Gol,



for trading Mangdechhu Power through formalizing the Power Purchase Agreement. During the signing, Hon'ble Minister for Economic Affairs reiterated his appreciation to the Gol and its people for their generous assistance. He mentioned that the revenue from Mangdechhu power sale will be a key resource for funding the 12th FYP. He also commended the negotiation committees of both governments for the joint effort made for timely finalization of the mutually beneficial tariff to coincide with the final commissioning of the project. The first unit is planned to be commissioned by

1st week of May 2019 and all the four units by mid-June 2019. The signing was attended by senior government officials from both sides. □

PICTURE STORY:



His Majesty The King of Bhutan granted an Audience to Lt. General Anil Chauhan, the Director General of Military Operations of the Indian Army on 22 April 2019. Lt. General Anil Chauhan was on an official visit to Bhutan. □

DAYS TO REMEMBER

IN JUNE, 2019

June 01 : **Global Day of Parents**

(This day is observed with the purpose of honouring parents throughout the world. It gives people an opportunity to appreciate the vital role parents play in the development of families)

June 03 : **Amavasya** ●

June 05 : **World Environment Day**

(Programmes concerning environment are observed throughout the year and they reach a climax on this day. The U.N. creates awareness and encourages political attention to protect the environment.)

June 12 : **Russia : The day of Russia**

June 12 : **World Day Against Child Labour**

(Childhood should be a period of learning and also of physical growth. Yet, a large number of children are engaged in domestic work or as labourers in agriculture and small industries or even in dangerous activities.

This problem is world over, Nobel Laureate Kailash Satyarthi, a life member of ARSP and a crusader against child labour had started the "Bachpan Bachao Aandolan" (Save Child campaign) to fight against the evil. The focus on this day is on the extent of this evil and the action

and efforts needed to eliminate it.)

June 14 : **World Blood Donor Day**

(Blood donation saves lives. But many people are still reluctant to donate blood, thinking it will make them weak. This is just ignorance. The body replaces the blood that is donated very quickly.

This day is used to encourage voluntary blood donation, honour blood donors and appreciate their life-saving role for their fellow citizens.)

June 17 : **Purnima** ●

June 20 : **World Refugee Day**

(This day was established to honour the courage, strength and determination of men, women and children who are forced to flee their homes under threat of persecution, conflict and violence.)

June 21 : **International Yoga Day**

(Promoted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and approved by the United Nations, the World started Observing the International Yoga Day from 2015.) This Day is Also Served as World Music Day.

June 25 : **Croatia - Statehood Day**

(National Day of Croatia)

June 26 : **Madagaskar : National Day**

पंजाबी प्रवासी कहानीकार : नये विषय-नये रंग

साहित्य को किसी भी नाम या सीमा में बांधकर सीमित नहीं किया जा सकता। साहित्य का क्षेत्र जितना मुक्त हो, वह उतना ही व्यापक और संभावना से भरपूर रहता है। पिछले कुछ वर्षों से सभी भाषाओं के साहित्य में 'प्रवासी साहित्य' ने अपना स्थान अलग से निश्चित किया है। पंजाबी में भी प्रवासी साहित्य प्रचुरता से उपलब्ध है, जिसे मात्रात्मक व गुणात्मक दोनों ही आधार पर रेखांकित किया जा सकता है।

अपनी जन्मभूमि से दूर जाकर किसी अन्य स्थान को अपनी कर्मभूमि बनाना, मानवीय स्वभाव का एक गुण रहा है। कालांतर में पौराणिक समय से ऐसी प्रवृत्ति रही है कि साधारण जन और व्यक्ति विशेष को अपना घर-द्वार छोड़कर जीविका के लिये परदेशों की ओर प्रस्थान करना पड़ा। लंबे समय के प्रवास के उपरांत मूल-स्थान की ओर व्यक्ति या सौदागर सदा धन-धान्य से लबालब होकर लौटते रहे। पुनश्च: उनके पास सुनाने के लिये बेहद मजेदार, रोमांचक व आश्चर्यजनक किस्से होते थे। इसमें उनके संघर्ष की गाथा, परिस्थितियों से लड़ने व जूझने का सामर्थ्य और अंततः सफलता प्राप्ति का लौमहर्षक उदीयन्मुख्यतः उपलब्धि होता था। अपने जाने-पहचाने स्थान से वस्तुतः दूर जाने पर ही व्यक्ति को अपने द्वारा 'क्या खोया-क्या पाया' का ज्ञान प्राप्त होता है। उसे अपने सामर्थ्य और शक्ति का एहसास होता है, अपनी सहनशक्ति को चिन्हित करने, दबाव को बर्दाश्त कर, उनसे ऊपर निकलने की क्षमता और जूझने की जिजीविषा को जानने का सुअवसर प्राप्त होता है। ये सारे अनुभव रचनाओं के माध्यम से साहित्य का हिस्सा बन, सदा से पाठकों का मार्गदर्शन करते रहे हैं।

भले समकालीन समय में प्रवासी साहित्य में ऊपर लिखित अनुभव ही शामिल नहीं होते, इनके अलावा भी बहुत कुछ शामिल है लेकिन इस बात से कदाचित् इन्कार नहीं किया जा सकता कि अभी भी प्रवास के लिये कर्मभूमि सर्वोपरि कारण है। रोजी-रोटी व्यक्ति को परदेश ले जाने के लिये आज भी सबसे बड़ा कारण है। इसके साथ परिस्थितियों का भी अहम स्थान है। आरंभ से पंजाब से हस्त-शिल्पी, कारीगर और किसान बड़ी संख्या में विदेशों की रूख करते रहे। अस्सी के दशक में आये पंजाब संकट के बाद पंजाबियों ने प्रवास की ओर जो जाना शुरु किया तो फिर यह सिलसिला अब तक रुका नहीं। इंग्लैंड, कनाडा, अमेरिका के साथ जापान में भी पंजाबी

जा बसे। जब उन्होंने अपने पैर वहां अच्छे से जमा लिये, तदुपरांत वह अपनी रचनाओं के साथ साहित्य से भी जुड़ने लगे।

पंजाबी साहित्य में पिछले कुछ वर्षों में प्रवासी साहित्यकारों ने महत्वपूर्ण योगदान दिया है। साहित्य की विविध विधाओं उपन्यास, कविता व कहानी में भरपूर साहित्य रचा गया। आरंभ में प्रवासियों द्वारा रची रचनाओं में अपने देश, पीछे रह गये परिवार, अपनी सभ्यता व संस्कृति के प्रति गर्व और मोह का एहसास होने के साथ उससे दूर होने की उदासी और अकेलापन सताता था। एक ओर ऐसी एकांतता तो दूसरी, ओर परदेशों में अपने पैरों के लिये टोस जमीन की तलाश के लिये कई प्रकार की मुश्किलों, समस्याओं और संकटों का सामना करना पड़ा। अत्यंत कठिन परिश्रम और आधे पेट रहकर भी वे लोग दिन के 18-20 घंटे काम करते रहे। हालांकि ऐसे समय पर उन्हें नकारने वाले कार्यों में भी खुद को झोंकना पड़ा। जिसके पीछे एकमात्र कारण प्रवासी धरती पर खुद के खड़े होने के लिये जमीन को पाना प्रमुख था। परन्तु धीरे-धीरे जब वे लोग प्रवासी धरती पर कमाने-खाने लगे, उन्होंने अपनी आर्थिक स्थिति को काफी हद तक सुधार लिया तब वे भारत से अपने परिवारवालों, सगे-संबंधियों और मित्रों को विदेशों में बुलाने लगे। वास्तव में परिवार वालों का दबाव भी उन पर भारी पड़ने लगा। सगे-संबंधी भी अपना अधिकार जमाने लगे। जिनमें उनके द्वारा समय-समय पर की गयी सहायता के ताने व उपालंभ भी शामिल होने लगे। परिवार वालों की मांगें बढ़ने लगी। पौंड और डॉलर की चकाचौंध ने पीछे रहे परिवार वालों की नजरों को अधिक चुंधिया दिया, लेकिन उनकी प्राप्ति के लिये किया गया सख्त परिश्रम अदृश्य रहा। ऐसे हालातों में प्रवासियों का अपने परिवार व सगे-संबंधियों से मोह भंग होने लगा। प्रवास में पूरी तरह से स्थापित होने के बाद प्रवासियों की रचनाओं में भी ऐसे परिवर्तन दृष्टिगोचर होने लगे। इस प्रकार प्रवासी साहित्य में बहुत कुछ परिवर्तित रूप में सामने आने लगा।

आर्थिक व सामाजिक स्तर की मजबूती के पश्चात प्रवासी साहित्यकारों की रचनाओं में भारतीय पंजाबी परिवेश, यहां के पात्रों व चरित्रों के प्रति मोह की बजाय अब विदेशी लोग उनकी रचनाओं में पात्रों व चरित्रों के रूप में जगह बनाने लगे। यूरोपियन और विदेशी सभ्यता को आत्मसात् करने और अपने इर्द-गिर्द फैली जीवनशैली के कारण उन्हें वहां के मूल

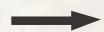
निवासियों को जानने-समझने में आसानी हुयी। नजदीक से उन्हें देखने व ग्रहण करने का अवसर मिलने पर वे परिस्थितियां कथानक व विषय-वस्तु के रूप में उनकी रचनाओं में प्रगट होने लगे। इसी कारण प्रवासी कहानियों के विषयों में नवीनता और व्यापकता दिखायी देने लगी।



डॉ. जसविन्दर कौर बिन्दा

प्रवासी कथा साहित्य में नये विषयों पर विचार करने के उद्देश्य से इस आलेख में चार कहानी-संग्रहों को केन्द्र में रखा है, जिनमें जरनैल सिंह का 'टॉवर्ज', निंदर गिल का 'सहमति के बाद', हरजीत अटवाल का 'नये गीत का मुखड़ा' और वीना वर्मा का संग्रह 'फिरंगियों दी बहु' शामिल किये गये हैं। प्रवासी कहानीकार के तौर पर ये चारों ही लेखक अत्यन्त चर्चित हैं।

इन चार कहानी संग्रहों के विषयों से एक बात सुस्पष्ट है कि ये कहानियां मोहपाश व हेरवे के बंधन से एकदम मुक्त हैं। उन्होंने अपने दर पेश आती समस्याओं और कठिनाइयों का वर्णन अत्यंत सूक्ष्मता से और स्पष्टता से किया, जिससे पाठकों को इस बात की जानकारी हो सके कि विदेशी धरती पर नौकरी या अन्य काम-धंधे तश्तरी में परोसकर नहीं मिलता। उसके लिये हड़ड-तोड़ मेहनत करनी पड़ती है। छोटी से छोटी नौकरी या रोजगार पाने के लिये कई प्रकार की खुशामद, यत्न व जद्दोजहद करनी पड़ती है। वक्त-बेवक्त की ड्यूटी करनी पड़ती है। जबकि देश में रहने वालों को विदेशी मुद्रा पौंड और डॉलर के रूप में अत्यन्त लुभावना प्रतीत होती है। वे भी इस मुद्रा को पाने के लिये जल्द से जल्द विदेशों में पहुंचने के लिये लायायित रहते हैं। सभी कहानीकार इस बात से एकमत हैं कि प्रवास में यदि सगे-संबंधियों को स्पोसरशिप ना भेजी जाये तो लोग नाजायज और गैरकानूनी ढंग से एजेंटों के कूचक्रों में फंसकर, अपनी संपत्ति को बेच या गिरवी रखकर, बस विदेशों में पहुंच जाने के लिये उतावले रहते हैं। जबकि गैरकानूनी ढंग से प्रवासी जाने के लालच में वे बहुत बुरी तरह से फंस जाते हैं। अनेक देशों में लुक-छिपकर



रहने और रात-बिरात सीमा पार करने के चक्कर में वे अक्सर गोली का शिकार हो जाते हैं या बंदी बनाकर विदेशों की जेलों में पहुंच जाते हैं। इसके बावजूद विदेशों में जाने, रहने और बसने का लोभ भारतीय विशेषकर पंजाबी लोग छोड़ नहीं पाते।

इस विषय से संबंधित अनेक कहानियां पंजाबी में उपलब्ध हैं। प्रवासी साहित्य में यह विषय प्रमुख माना जा सकता है। इन चार संग्रहों में से भी निंदर गिल की कहानियां 'दरका ग्लोब' व 'सैंट होने के लिये' और वीना वर्मा की 'गलत औरत' का जिक्र किया जा सकता है। इन कहानियों में एजेंटों के हथ्थे चढ़े व्यक्तियों की दुर्दशा का बयान विस्तार से किया गया है।

वीना वर्मा की 'गलत औरत' में प्रवास में गये अपने पति के पास जाने के लिये तैयार बैठी पत्नी को अब आवश्यक सरकारी दस्तावेजों की प्रतीक्षा करने में लंबा समय बीत गया तो दुख-सुख के साथी भाई के लिये ब्याहता बहन बोज बन गयी। भाभी की नजरों से कटुता झलकने लगी तो बाप ने अपनी संपत्ति में से बेटी के नाम का हिस्सा बेचकर, उसे पति के पास भेजने के लिये एजेंट के कहने पर भारी रकम देकर टिकट खरीद दिया। उसके मन में हर हाल में अपनी बेटी को सुखी देखने की साध थी। परंतु एजेंटों ने उस मासूम स्त्री का, छोटे बच्चे के साथ इतना बुरा हाल किया कि कई देशों में लुक-छिपकर रहने व अधिकारियों द्वारा

शोषित होकर अपना असल सूरत ही गंवा बैठी। कई महीनों के पश्चात जब वह आखिरकार अपने पति के पास पहुंची तो उसने उसे पहचानने से साफ इन्कार करते हुये कहा, 'वे लोग किसी गलत औरत को ले आये हैं। उसकी पत्नी की यह सूरत ही नहीं है।' वास्तव में उसके पास पत्नी की विवाह के समय की तस्वीर थी, जिससे मिलान करते हुए पति को दूर-दूर तक तस्वीर वाली स्त्री कहीं दिखायी नहीं दे रही थी। उस समय उस औरत को समझ में नहीं आता, वह क्या करें। सही होने के बावजूद भी वह 'गलत' कैसे हो गयी? □

(शेष अगले अंक में)

गूगल द्वारा सऊदी अरब में शिक्षित भारतीय को सवा करोड़ का वार्षिक वेतन

गूगल के लंदन ऑफिस में सवा करोड़ सालाना के पैकेज पर मुंबई के रहने वाले अब्दुल्ला खान को नौकरी मिल गई है। उसकी बेसिक सैलरी चबबन लाख से अधिक है। अब्दुल्ला को हैरानी तब हुई उसे गूगल से मेल आया। हालांकि उसने इस नौकरी के लिए आवेदन भी नहीं किया था। वह तो आईआईटी परीक्षा में प्रवेश की तैयारी कर रहा था। गूगल को प्रोग्रामिंग से संबंधित साइट पर अब्दुल्ला खान का बायोडेटा

नजर आया। गूगल की ओर से उसे कुछ सवाल पूछे गए। अब्दुल्ला ने सोचा कि यह भी ऑनलाइन प्रतियोगिता की परीक्षा होगी, इसलिए उसने उत्तर दे दिया। जब गूगल से उसे मेल मिला कि उसे नौकरी के लिए चुन लिया गया है तो वह हैरान रह गया। इसे भाग्य ही कहा जाएगा कि जो लड़का आईआईटी की परीक्षा पास न कर पाया हो और उसे ऐसी नौकरी मिल जाए। मुंबई के इक्कीस वर्षीय

अब्दुल्ला खान को स्वप्न में भी यह नौकरी मिलने की आशा नहीं थी। यह इंजीनियरिंग कॉलेज के स्नातक से मिलने वाले पैकेज से भी तीस गुणा अधिक है। अब्दुल्ला एलआर तिवारी इंजीनियरिंग कॉलेज मीरा रोड मुंबई का छात्र है। अब्दुल्ला खान ने सऊदी अरब में शिक्षा प्राप्त की थी और वह बारहवीं पास करने के बाद भारत आया था। □

प्रवासी संसार द्वारा गीत गवई के कलाकारों का सम्मान

सुप्रसिद्ध हिन्दी पत्रिका प्रवासी संसार ने दिनांक 23 अप्रैल, 2019 को राजपथ होटल में मॉरीशस के गीत गवई के 25 कलाकारों के स्वागत के लिए एक विशिष्ट समारोह का आयोजन किया, जिसमें मुख्य अतिथि के रूप में बोलते हुए मॉरीशस भोजपुरी स्पीकिंग यूनिनयन की अध्यक्ष डॉ. सरिता बुद्ध ने कहा कि हमारे देश के कलाकारों ने भोजपुरी-अवधी में प्राचीनकाल से गाये जाने वाले व्यवहार एवं संस्कार गीतों को सुरक्षित रखा है। यही कारण है कि यूनेस्को ने इसे मानवता की विशिष्ट धरोहर के रूप में मान्यता प्रदान किया है। उन्होंने प्रसन्नता व्यक्त की कि भारत में गीत गवई के कलाकार जहां भी गये उनका विशिष्ट स्वागत एवं अभिनंदन किया गया। इस अवसर पर गीत गवई के कलाकारों ने अनेक परंपरागत नृत्य और संगीत के कार्यक्रम प्रस्तुत की।



गीत गवई के कलाकारों के साथ प्रवासी संसार के संपादक डॉ. राकेश पाण्डेय और भोजपुरी स्पीकिंग यूनिनयन की अध्यक्ष डॉ. सरिता बुद्ध तथा अन्य विशिष्ट कलाप्रेमी

कार्यक्रम के प्रारंभ में प्रवासी संसार के संपादक श्री राकेश पाण्डेय ने गीत गवई के कलाकारों का स्वागत करते हुए कहा कि इन कलाकारों ने

भोजपुरी और अवधी की विस्मृत संस्कृति को बहुत ही यत्न से सहेज और संभाल कर रखा है, जिसके लिए हम उनके आभारी हैं। इस अवसर पर आकाशवाणी के भूतपूर्व निदेशक श्री लक्ष्मी शंकर वाजपेयी, बिड़ला फाउंडेशन के निदेशक

श्री सुरेश ऋतुपर्ण, सुप्रसिद्ध भाषाविद प्रो. विमलेश कांति वर्मा, अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद के मानद निदेशक श्री नारायण कुमार ने भी गीत गवई के कलाकारों की प्रस्तुति की सराहना की। □

प्रवासी साहित्यकार पूर्णिमा गुप्ता सम्मानित

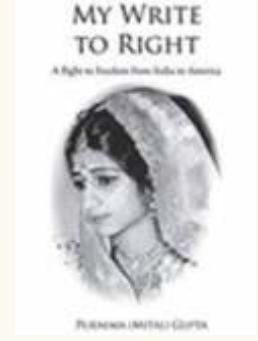


पूर्णमा गुप्ता

नागरी लिपि परिषद का प्रशस्ति पत्र और नागरी लिपि परिषद की अंतराष्ट्रीय अखिल भारतीय कवि सभा के संयुक्त तत्वाधान में राष्ट्रीय गांधी संग्रहालय सभागार में अमेरिकी प्रवासी हिन्दी साहित्यकार सुश्री पूर्णिमा गुप्ता को काव्य गौरव सम्मान में अलंकृत किया गया। समारोह की अध्यक्षता वरिष्ठ साहित्यकार डॉ. परमानंद पांचाल ने की। इस अवसर पर नार्वे प्रवासी साहित्यकार व सम्पादक सुरेशचन्द्र शुक्ल और कनाडा प्रवासी कवि गोपाल बघेल मधु विशिष्ट अतिथि के रूप में उपस्थित थे। अतिथियों का स्वागत पुष्पाहार से किया गया। नागरी लिपि परिषद के महामंत्री डॉ. हरिसिंह पाल के संचालन में कविसभा की ओर से पूर्णिमा गुप्ता को काव्य गौरव सम्मान

का प्रशस्ति पत्र और नागरी लिपि परिषद की ओर से अंगवस्त्र और नागरी साहित्य भेंट किया गया। कवि सभा के महासचिव डॉ. प्रदीप गुप्ता ने सम्मानित साहित्यकार का परिचय प्रस्तुत किया। इस अवसर पर पूर्णिमा गुप्ता की सद्य प्रकाशित पुस्तक 'माई राइट टू राइट'(आत्मकथा), सुरेशचन्द्र शुक्ल के काव्य संग्रह 'प्रवासी का अंतर्द्वन्द' और परिषद की मुख पत्रिका 'नागरी संगम' के त्रिपुरा सम्मेलन विशेषांक का लोकार्पण मंचस्थ अतिथियों द्वारा किया गया। इस अवसर पर सुरेशचन्द्र शुक्ल और सुषमा गुप्ता ने पूर्णिमा गुप्ता के व्यक्तित्व एवं कृतित्व पर प्रकाश डाला। अमेरिका प्रवासी पूर्णिमा गुप्ता ने अमेरिका में हिन्दी की और भारतीयों की स्थिति पर प्रकाश डाला और अपनी कुछ चुनिंदा कविताओं को पढ़कर

सुनाया तथा लोकार्पित पुस्तक के कुछ अंश भी पढ़े। कवि सभा के अध्यक्ष डॉ. इन्द्र सेंगर ने इस पुस्तक की डॉ. अशोक चक्रधर द्वारा लिखी समीक्षा का वाचन किया। समारोह में गोपाल बघेल मधु, सुरेशचन्द्र शुक्ल, डॉ. परमानंद पांचाल, डॉ. इन्द्र सेंगर, आचार्य ओमप्रकाश, डॉ. ब्रह्मपालीसिंह संत, छज्जूसिंह सुजान, पवन शर्मा परमार्थी, दिनेश छिम्बाल पथिक, अटल मुरादाबादी, एमडी तिवारी अवधेश निर्धर, संजू मिश्रा, रामविलास जायसवाल ने काव्य पाठ कर श्रोताओं को मंत्रमुग्ध कर दिया। धन्यवाद ज्ञापन कवि सभा के अध्यक्ष डॉ. इन्द्र सेंगर ने किया। □



रोमा समुदाय : भारत से जुड़ाव का लोकार्पण



आशुतोष कुमार (मध्य में) की पुस्तक का विमोचन करते हुए डॉ. श्याम सिंह शशि, श्याम परांडे, ओरहन गैलुअस एवं पूर्व राजदूत राजेश सचदेवा

अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद द्वारा 10 अप्रैल, 2019 को आयोजित रोमा दिवस के अवसर पर महात्मा गांधी अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय हिन्दी विश्वविद्यालय वर्ध के शोधार्थी श्री आशुतोष कुमार की पुस्तक 'रोमा समुदाय : भारत से जुड़ाव के विविध स्वरूप' का विमोचन ओरहन गैलुअस ने किया, उन्होंने इस बात पर प्रसन्नता प्रकट की

कि रोमानी समुदाय की प्रिय भाषा हिन्दी में उनके भारत से जुड़ाव के विविध स्वरूपों पर पुस्तक प्रकाशित की गई। यह पुस्तक अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय हिन्दी विश्वविद्यालय वर्ध द्वारा एम. फिल. की उपाधि के लिये स्वीकृत शोध कार्य का परिवर्तित और परिवर्धित रूप है। जिसमें रोमा समुदाय के ऐतिहासिक प्रवासन, भारतीय

संस्कृति से उनके जुड़ाव के साथ-साथ विश्व के विभिन्न देशों में रोमा समुदाय की उपस्थिति आदि का विस्तृत विश्लेषण किया गया है। पुस्तक के विमोचन के अवसर पर प्राच्य विद्या के वरिष्ठ विद्वान डॉ. सत्यव्रत शास्त्री, पद्मश्री श्याम सिंह शशि, प्रो. विमलेश कांति वर्मा आदि अनेक विद्वानों की उपस्थिति उल्लेखनीय है। □