

# ANTAR RASHTRIYA SAHAYOG PARISHAD BULLETIN

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## INTERNATIONAL ROMA CONFERENCE LINGUISTIC, CULTURAL AND GENETIC EVIDENCES ESTABLISH THE INDIAN ROOTS OF ROMA

Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad (ARSP), in collaboration with National Museum- New Delhi and with the support of Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), organized a two day International Roma Conference to Commemorate the Millennium of Migration of Roma from India, on 29-30 November at the National Museum- New Delhi. The event was graced by the participation of as many as 30 Roma scholars and activists representing 20 countries from around the globe. Several experts and scholars from India also took part in this conference. Major focus of the deliberation was on the historical, linguistic and cultural connection of Roma with their homeland, India.



*From L-R, Shri Shyam Parande, Prof. Marcel COURTHIADE, Dr. Krishna Gopal, Amb. Virendra Gupta, Dr. Shashi Bala and Dr. Vinay Sahasrabuddhe delivering inaugural speech*

In his inaugural address, Dr. Vinay Sahasrabuddhe, President- ICCR, said that holding of such conferences is extremely important, as it gives us an opportunity to understand Roma and study their commonalities with India. He maintained that Roma are the people who do not know the borders; therefore, they are the true followers of the Indian Philosophy of Vasudhaiva Kutumbkam (meaning the world is one family). He also opined that the Roma community is nature worshiper, and thus, subscribes to the Indian wisdom of "Saffron thinking- green living".

Dr. Krishna Gopal, joint general secretary- Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), in his keynote address, highlighted the challenges faced by

Roma; that on the one hand, they have achieved international fame in various fields; and on the other hand, they have suffered discrimination and persecutions. The unease and insensitivity with which they are treated in their respective countries is a matter of great concern. Dr. Gopal put forward various hypotheses about the Roma migration from India, and spoke at length about the linguistic, cultural and genetic evidences that have established the Indian roots of the Roma community. Lastly, he reiterated that it is the responsibility of India to establish connect with the community, which is scattered all over the world, but is still emotionally linked with India.

Amb. Virendra Gupta, President-ARSP, said that despite the hardships, Roma people have kept their connection with India alive. He stressed the need to create awareness among Indians about Roma. He also mentioned that ARSP with the support of ICCR had established a Centre for Roma Studies and Cultural Relations for conducting research on Roma and to promote cultural exchanges with them. Dr Rashmini Koparkar, Research Fellow-ARSP, read out citations about the pioneers of Roma studies in India, namely, Prof Raghuvir, Bhikhu Chaman Lal, and Veer Rajendra Rishi. Shri. Shyam Parande, Secretary-General-ARSP, delivered the Vote of Thanks for this session.



The conference proceedings were divided amongst five academic sessions. The first academic session was titled "History – Memories: Retracing Identity, Origin and Migration of Roma". In this session, Prof. Marcel Courthiade talked about his research on Romani language, which gives the scientific proof of their origin in India. He spoke about the migration from Kannauj. Diana Kirilova talked about similarities in customs and traditions between Roma and the Indian society. Alexandru Zamfir's paper particularly focused on linguistic commonalities between Hindi and Roma.

The second academic session was called 'Roma - Cultural Heritage and Syncretism, facing prejudice with pride'. In this session, Nedzmedin Neziri talked

about the linguistic and cultural connections between Roma and Indians. Ana Dalia discussed the identity issues and women's problems within the Roma in Europe; and talked about Croatia's efforts in this regard. Nicolás Gonzalez argued that the European countries have been intentionally trying to institutionalize racism, because of which Roma are severely suffering, especially from the police and administration. Dr. Shyam Bihari Lal tried to prove links between the Indian Banjara community and Roma.

The third academic session was focused on 'Roma – Political and Socio-Economic Integration while Overcoming Stereotypes'. In this, Iovanca Gasper talked about the Roma in Germany and their migrations to other parts of the world after the Second World War. Mr. Normunds Rudeviès highlighted the significance of the Indo-Romani link in terms of recognition, dignity and social harmony. Dr. Bajram Haliti spoke about the constitutional-legal status of Roma and their integration into the EU. Prof. Prasannanshu claimed that Roma is nothing but extended Indian diaspora. Rajesh Ghogna spoke about the poverty, life expectancy and literacy conditions of Roma in various part of world.

The fourth academic session was titled



*L-R, Shri Shyam Parande, Dr. B.R. Mani, Shri Dnyaneshwar Mulay, Amb. Virendra Gupta, Prof. Lokesh Chandra, Editor Narayan Kumar, Releasing the Book Entitled Roma in Search of Identity.*

'Romani Youth: Settling the Past and Prospecting the Future'. In this session, Maja Familjæ spoke about how the Ethnic Identity of the Roma is based on inter-culturalism, roots of which can be found in their Indian origins. Sonia Styrcaasz mentioned about the problem of education amongst Roma, and maintained that this can only be tackled through active cooperation between students, teachers and parents. Ibraim Džemail opined that the Roma writers and poets have to take up the cultural as well as linguistic responsibility. Mariyana Seslavinskaya said that the Indian origins of Roma are reflected in their political culture. Md. Zameer Anwar pointed out that the mystery of origin and the distant history of Roma have been penetrated linguistically, historically and culturally. The findings of linguistic and cultural anthropology as well as ethnological study of Roma community substantiated Roma's Indian connection.

The fifth academic session, named 'Narratives in Academic Research: Case



*Roma Delegates & dignitaries at National Museum*



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Studies', was chaired by Prof. Shyam Singh Shashi, Padma Shri awardee and a well-known expert on Roma. In the session, Emanuela Gombar made a presentation about condition of Sinti and Roma in Germany and their links in India. Prof Trajko Petrovski raised the need for recognition of Roma from Indian side. Gheorghe Sarău highlighted the importance of education in Romani to keep the language alive. Shri Narayan Kumar spoke about the pioneers of Roma studies in India and stressed the need for further research.

In the Valedictory session, Amb Rajesh Sachdeva presented the Report of conference proceedings. Dr B.R. Mani, Director General of National Museum, spoke about the historical underpinning of Roma- India connections. Amb Dnyaneshwar Muley, Secretary- MEA, emphasized the need for in-depth research on Roma in India and

applauded the work of ARSP. Prof Lokesh Chandra, former President of ICCR, in his valedictory address, highlighted the emotional attachment Roma have with India. He also called for greater engagements between the Roma and various stakeholders in India, including the government. In his concluding remarks, Amb Virendra Gupta noted that the conference was extremely useful in ARSP's continuing outreach with Roma. He also summarized the recommendations of the conference including the urgent need to recognize Roma community as PIO in view of convincing evidence of their Indian origin. Mr. Amit Gupta, Joint Secretary-ARSP, delivered the Vote of Thanks.

During the Valedictory Session, a book 'Roma: In Search of Identity', edited by Shri Narayan Kumar and published by the ARSP, was released. It compiled the

proceedings and papers from the International Roma Conference and Cultural Festival, organized jointly by ARSP and ICCR in New Delhi in February 2016.

The two-day Roma Conference was a successful academic endeavor in various respects. It threw light on the current status of Roma in various countries and their issues and challenges. It also highlighted the cultural and linguistic similarities between Roma and India; and re-emphasized their roots in northern parts of India. It also succeeded in creating sensitization about Roma in Indian academic and policy circles. A well-structured exhibition of about 46 panels was also put up in the Ajanta Exhibition Hall in the National Museum, to enhance understanding about Romani language, their traditions and practices and their connections with India.

## KEY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL ROMA CONFERENCE HELD AT NEW DELHI FROM 29 - 30 NOVEMBER, 2018

1. In view of the conclusive evidence with regard to Roma having originated from India, it was imperative for Roma to be formally recognized by the Government of India as People of Indian Origin (PIOs).
2. Momentum of expanded outreach with Roma community achieved through two International Roma Conferences organized by ARSP to be continued—Academic Conference and Cultural Festival to be held every year alternate year. -Accordingly a Roma cultural festival to be held in India in 2019.
3. Award of scholarships to Roma students.
4. Special Cultural fellowships by ICCR for Roma students keeping in view their traditional interest in dance and music.
5. Training of Roma youth in IT sector under ITEC and other programmes.
6. Encouraging self help groups and NGOs in India to work with Roma communities overseas.
7. There is a large concentration of Roma communities in several countries. Our Embassies in those countries should maintain close contacts and networking with them.
8. Roma youth delegations to be sponsored for visit to India on the lines of KIP.
9. A memorial in Kannauj in a public place to commemorate the millennium of Roma exodus from India. Separately a section, in the newly set up museum in Kannauj, to be devoted to display Roma related material.
10. Need for more extensive research on Roma issues including the historical circumstance of their exodus from India and to examine the continued prejudices and the persecution suffered by them.
11. Need for continuing support by Government of India for the Centre for Roma Studies & Cultural Relations set up in ARSP with ICCR assistance.
12. New Chairs/Centres for Roma Studies to be set up in select Indian universities.
13. Need to work with Roma scholars to develop a standard format for Roma language and identification of Sanskrit—Hindi words already in use.



## JOURNEY TO ROMA'S ANCESTRAL LAND – KANNAUJ

-Md. Zameer Anwar

Showering rose petals on them, they were warmly received by people of Kannauj.

This trip created an incredibly immersive experience and a sense of belonging to their ancestral homeland.

The delegates visited the archaeological museum of Kannauj that put on an exhibition; showcasing Romani historical paintings as well as arranged a laser light show for them, giving an account of historical heritage and cultural richness of Kannauj.

The delegates pilgrimaged Ancient Kali Temple where they performed Pooja with Shri Ramesh Tiwari Viram, followed by their visitation to Fragrance & Flavour Development Centre under the guidance of Shri Shakti Vinay Shukla – Director of F.F. Department, where delegates saw Herbal Garden and caught on to samples of various essential oils and flavours.

Subsequently, the Roma delegates attended the interactive session, organized by Center for Roma Studies & Cultural Relations (ARSP), on the theme of millennium of migration of Roma from Kannauj. The session was presided over by Amb. Virendra Gupta who talked about historical link of Roma with Kannauj and coming back to their roots after a millennium. The chief guest was Shri Ramesh Tiwari Viram and guests of honor were Mr. Normund Rudevics, Dr. Bajram Haliti and Shri Ravindra Kumar, IAS, District Magistrate, Kannauj, besides that a great number of local people, journalists and dignitaries attended the session and graced the occasion. On the occasion, Mr. Bajram Haliti said, India, "our homeland", should be taking care of us and represent our interests at the international level.

Prof. Jeevan Shukla made concluding remarks by drawing analogy between Romani language and Sanskrit as well as their culture, traditions and life style resembling to those of India. The session concluded with expression of gratitude by Amb. Virendra Gupta.



From L to R, Prof. Marcel COURTHIADE, Mr. Normunds RUDEVIČS, Amb. Virendra Gupta, Hon'ble Hriday Narayan Dixit, Smt. Sanyukta Bhatia and Dr. Bajram Haliti with Roma Delegates

Reckoning on the long history of cultural, historical and civilizational affinities of Roma with India, ANTAR-RASHTRIYA SAHAYOG PARISHAD has organized its second International Roma Conference from 28 November to 2 December 2018. Subsequent to the inaugural event along with two-day Academic Sessions held at National Museum in New Delhi on 29-30 November, a group of thirty two International Roma representatives and scholars from 18 different countries, consisted of Mr. Normunds RUDEVIČS, president of International Romani Union, Mr. Orhan GALJUŠ, president of Euro-Asia Roma Network, Prof. Marcel COURTHIADE, Professor of Romani studies at INALCO in Paris, Ms. Ana Dalila de Gómez Baos, Lawyer and Author, Dr. Bajram Haliti, Ex Minister of Information and Communication in Bosnia, Dr. Marianna SESLAVINSKAYA, Culturologist, Ethnographer and specialist on Romani culture and society, journeyed to Lucknow - the capital city of Uttar Pradesh on 1st December, 2018.

Center for Roma Studies & Cultural Relations (ARSP) organized a symposium at Mahamana Malviya Sabhagar, University of Lucknow, UP, that was presided by Amb. Virendra

Gupta, President- ARSP, who reiterated the historical connectivity of Roma with India. Shri Hriday Narayan Dixit, Hon'ble Speaker, Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly was the chief guest and Smt. Sanyukta Bhatia, Hon'ble Mayor of Lucknow were the Guests of Honour. A number of members of parliament and legislative assembly, academicians, journalists, social activists and students were present in the programme which began with lighting of lamp and wonderful classical dance performance. After presentation of bouquets to the dignitaries, the light on the migration of Roma from Kannauj was cast by Dr. Bajram Haliti and Prof. Marcel COURTHIADE who pointed out that it took two centuries to the identification of Kannauj as the cradle city of Proto-Roms. A foray, spearheaded by sultan Mahmūd of Ghazni, was the cause of their deracination and departure from Kannauj. Hon'ble Mayor of Lucknow hosted dinner for Roma delegates and appreciated the trailblazing initiative taken by ARSP.

On 2nd December, the Roma Delegates paid a visit to their ancestral land – Kannauj, where they were accorded impressive welcome with garlanding and Saraswati chanting at Asha Hotel.

# THE ROLE OF INDIAN DIASPORA IN STRENGTHENING INDIA-UNITED STATES RELATIONSHIP

- Rajiv Nayan

Antar-Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad (ARSP), Delhi and The Center for International Relations, Delhi organized the seminar on “The Role of Indian Diaspora in strengthening India-United States Relationship” on Saturday 17th November 2018 at Pravasi Bhawan, New Delhi.

The partnership between India and the United States (US) is of enormous significance and play a critical role in determining the 21st century international system. The Indian Diaspora in America, which is becoming increasingly influential, has the potential to reorient and reshape the bilateral relationship in an unprecedented way. In the light of this, the seminar explored and examined the role of the Diaspora as a catalyst in the US-India relations.

The Inaugural session with Ambassador Virendra Gupta, President ARSP as the chair, included Prof Ashwin Mahapatra, Shri Shyam Parande, Secretary General ARSP along with the chief guest Shri Sunil Ambekar. Dr Manan Dwivedi explained the objective behind the seminar while Ambassador VirendraGupta pointed out that the US and its ways were politically and diplomatically divergent from India yet, the relationship has progressed in all the conjoined spheres of military, economic and strategic partnership. Shyam Parande briefly described the mandate of ARSP along with the impact of the 'Diasporic moment' on the “Bilaterals” and stressed that the 3 million Indian Diaspora in the US are the most vibrant Diaspora in the world and upwardly mobile right from working at gas stations to working as top notch executives in the Silicon valley. He also discussed the role of Seva International that saved innumerable lives in the recent Houston flooding.

Shri Ambekar elaborated upon the



L-R, Amb. Virendra Gupta, Shri Shyam Parande, Prof. Manand Trivedi, Shri Sunil Ambekar at the Podium

significance of symbolism in the practice and formulation of India's foreign policy along with the role of Diaspora in strengthening the “bilaterals”. He dwelt on the soft power potential of India and insisted that Bharat does not militate against the idea of India. It's a land which is historically and culturally rich and has a well delineated civilizational quality about itself and it is no wonder that yoga is widely being accepted as the greatest Indian gift to the world. He emphasized the need to translate the regional or vernacular understanding of international politics and concluded that contemporary international system is a network society and that India should rekindle strongly its relations with its old friends like Russia.

Prof. Ashwini contextualized and problematized IR and examined it briefly from various schools of thought and underlined the fact that Diaspora is not all about economics and investment but importantly human capital with deep rooted values. “Sarva Dharma Sukhina” expresses the uniqueness of identity, self pride and self esteem against territoriality.

The second session on the Diaspora in US from India was chaired by Prof. Ajay

Dubey who categorized the waves of Diaspora movement. Munish Gupta's anecdotal account of his experience in the US since in 1987 was fascinating. Munish Gupta elaborated that when he landed in US in 1987, the Indian Diaspora was there but was not very influential. They were not a well organized lobby in Washington DC. India was reflected the bad books and Pakistan was considered as a true blue friend. The early period of inwardness and awkwardness gave way to a realization of fear and being an alien led them to be more part of the system as contributing and thus gradually becoming a force to reckon with.

Robindra Sachdeva elaborated upon the Diaspora mobility. He made an important point that Diaspora is dispersed and divergent and very regional, for example the Indian Diaspora in New York is quite separate from the Indian Diaspora in the Silicon Valley. He gave a great deal of Statistical information related to the rubric of STEM and STEMM groups in the Indian Diaspora. Dr. Sanjeev Srivastava elaborated upon the phases and waves of Indian emigration into US since the beginning of the 19th century. He

stressed that the Indian Diaspora in the South East Asia and in the US can play a crucial role in the Indo-Pacific.

The Third Session discussed the Cultural and Education aspects of the India-US Relations. Ravindra Srivastava, first secretary in the US Embassy gave an interesting statistical presentation on the growth of Indian students pursuing science and technology research in the US. Science and scientific and technological research has drawn Indians to the US and this has helped to create a powerful knowledge commune that adds strength to the relationship. He made it remember that many Indian Faculty are educated in US and have shown their presence in the IITs, IIMs and other Institutions of Learning in the Indian nation. Most of the people bring with them a variegated instance.

Trithesh Nandan, gave a detailed account of Sanskrit and Indic language in the universities in the US.

Trithesh Nandan explicated upon the relevance of Sanskrit and Indic language while furnishing the detail that in 1841 Yale University initiated started the Sanskrit classes. It was initiated by Professor Salisbury. Also, Atharva Veda Samhita was edited in United States for the first time which emphasized the "Connect" between both the nations.

Dr. Vijay Kumar emphasized upon the role of Community Colleges in training the Indian American students as part of a larger bilateral trust. Dr. Manan Dwivedi, the Coordinator of the America chapter of CIRS, explained symbols and myths as a commonality between the largest and the oldest democracies in the world. He drew a picture of IR myths and IR traditions from IR and Cultural theory. He emphasized upon the myth and lore element including the World War II constructs of comic superheroes such as Superman which involves the dominant strain of the American nation.

In the concluding session, Ambassador Arun K. Singh emphasized about the diplomatic development of India-US relations through anecdotal references. Ambassador Arun Kumar highlighted the growing political relevance of the Indian diaspora in American politics. He informed that the symbol of India and the India-US relationship are being increasingly used in American politics by even prominent American leaders during Senate and Presidential elections leave alone state and local elections. Dr. Raghuwansh Prasad Sinha highlighted the complexity of global politics, the emergence of China and the role Indian diaspora may play in strengthening the relationship of two currently engaged democracies. Vivek Gupta discussed the role the Indian diaspora is playing in advancing the relationship in new economy and the new fields of trade and entrepreneurship. Ambassador Virendra Gupta concluded the entire seminar by combining various insights through the realist framework. □

## KAMALA HARRIS is 'GLAMOUR WOMAN of the YEAR 2018'

An Indo-American Senator Kamala Harris took the stage Glamour's 2018 was selected for Women of the Year Awards on November 12th in New York City.

Senator Harris (D-Calif.) directed her acceptance speech at the women in the room, explaining the importance of speaking up in a nation that's becoming increasingly divided in the face of political polarization. In her address, Harris pleaded with those watching to take their frustration to the polls, inspiring the room to take action and ultimately leaving the ball in the voters' court. "The truth and speaking it is a powerful thing. And speaking truth can often make people quite uncomfortable. But if we are going to be a country that engages in honest conversations with the point of getting beyond where we are and seeing what we can be unburdened by what we have been, we must speak

truth—and speak the truth uncomfortable and difficult though it may be to hear," Glamour quoted her as saying. "You speak the truth, the honorees tonight, about the need for women—particularly women of color—to be seen and heard and for their stories to be told, from the Senate floor to movie sets to concert stages... You speak the truth about gun violence... (about what) tears our communities apart and takes away our children, from Parkland to Chicago to South Los Angeles... You speak the truth about America's history—in all of its greatness and in all of its complexity."

Harris said that this is an "inflection" moment in the history of America. "This is a moment where there are powerful forces trying to sew hate and division among us. And if we're going to deal with where we are in this inflection moment, we must speak all these truths," she



*Kamala Harris*

said. "...And years from now, people are going to look in our eyes, each one of us, and they will ask us, 'Where were you at that inflection moment?' And what we're all going to be able to say is we were here together and we were fighting for the best of who we are."

# 48TH AND 49TH KNOW INDIA PROGRAM (KIP): YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

*Aman D. Singh*

Diaspora Research and Resource Centre (DRRC) – Antar- Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad (ARSP) hosted interactive sessions and workshops for the 48th and 49th KIP participants, at the Pravasi Bhawan on 15th November and 11th December 2018.

The 48th KIP comprises 39 delegates from nine countries: Mauritius, Guyana, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Myanmar, Israel, Sri Lanka, South Africa, and Fiji.

Prof. Gopal Arora, Secretary –ARSP delivered welcome address, deliberating on the theme 'Vision of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam in the 21st Century'. He stated that the Indian diaspora is more than just an economic asset. He emphasised that elements such as, social, cultural, and religion should also be taken into consideration in building a strong dynamic relationship between India and its diaspora.

Dr. Mansi Khanna conducted the feedback session; the participants put forward four important questions which are as follows 1. What, in India, would you like to get actively involved in? 2. Your expectations from India in achieving the objective of building strong networks and link with India. 3. Your ideas about how you can build a network and establish a lasting link with India. 4. What were your expectations from the Know India Program?

Some of the suggestions given by participants were:

- Creating social media platforms for regular contact
- Annual meeting of the KIP participants at various other forums



*L-R: 1st Secretary of South Africa, Ms. Zipho Mgadle, H.E. Aashna Kanhai - High Commissioner of Suriname, Amb. Virendra Gupta, H.E. Dr. David Goldwin Pollard and 1st Sec. Nilesh Kumar*

- to strengthen the diaspora network
- Scholarships at the higher level to the Indian diaspora
- Involve Indian diaspora in 'Make in India' and 'Skill India' program
- KIP should be linked with the Girmitya states.

The plenary session, was chaired by President ARSP, Amb. Virendra Gupta and the guests of honour included the Guyanese High Commissioner H.E. Dr. David Goldwin Pollard, the Surinamese Ambassador H.E. Aashna Kanhai, the Fijian High Commissioner H.E. Yogesh Punja, the consular of Fiji High Commission- Nilesh Kumar, the 1st secretary of the republic of South Africa Zipho Mgadle and Representative of Overseas Indians Division II (MEA) Aman Narula. Some of the ideas occurred during discussion were connectivity, history, roots, language, awareness, celebration of diversity, and the recognition and respect of the Indian Diaspora by the Indian government. Shortly after the conference, the participants had a chance to interact with the dignitaries and ambassadors of their respective countries.

The last leg of the event was a workshop on 'Building Diaspora Network' by Vision India Foundation(VIF). Shobhit Mathur

and his team started off the workshop by revisiting the question of the feedback session. Within the workshop, the topics related to trade and commerce, health sector, tracing back the roots, and the stark contrast of Delhi pollution and the cleanliness of Mizoram and Manipur states, came up. At the end of the workshop, the VIF team talked about their organisation that includes youth programs such as Good Governance Yatra, Youth for Sewa, and India delegation program. Apart from this, VIF trains and mentors bright young minds to make them agents of change. Dr. Mansi Khanna gave the vote of thanks.

49th KIP was composed of 40 delegates from eight countries: Guyana, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Myanmar, Netherlands, Sri Lanka,



*H.E. Yogesh Punja - High Commissioner of Fiji*

South Africa, and Fiji.

In the first session, the welcome address delivered by Amb. Anup K. Mudgal who introduced the theme of programme. Amb. Mudgal accentuated the significance of Diaspora and its strong engagement with India and of how the Indian diaspora around the world has helped develop nations in different fields. He also said that Indian diaspora is the biggest across the world and its remittance is the highest.

The consular of the Fiji High Commission, Mr. Nilesh Kumar and the first secretary of the embassy of Suriname, Ms. Sandra Williams shared some insights in the context of the Indian diaspora. She talked about the theme of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam in the 21st century, and encouraged the participants to actively engage in this global family building concept. The second secretary of the high commission of the Republic of Fiji, Mr. Elia Sevutia said that the Indian diaspora in Fiji has contributed significantly to development and prosperity of the republic of Fiji.

Mr. Shayam Parande, Secretary General of ARSP pointed out that ARSP has been arduously serving the cause of Indian Diaspora for the last five decades. He further explained the humble beginnings of the organization to recent widespread outreach and extensive engagement with Youth Indian Diaspora. He welcomed the participants to actively engage with their heritage.

Dr. Mansi Khanna conducted the feedback session; the participants had a group discussion wherein the questions such as getting involvement with India, networking and about their expectation from India came up.

The concluding part of the event was a workshop on 'Connect India' by Vision India Foundation. Shobhit Mathur and his team started off the workshop by introducing what various programs they conduct and how would the VIF assist them in the various fields.

## OUR DECISIONS IN GOVT REFLECT OUR CULTURAL SENSITIVITY: ICCR CHIEF

*Since he took charge as ICCR chairman Vinay Sahasrabuddhe has worked to highlight Indian icons and ethos he feels have not been portrayed adequately and is working on a comprehensive vision document. He speaks to TOI's Akhilesh Kumar Singh about the political hues of the project as well as the need to make India's soft power count for more than it does. Excerpts :*



Vinay Sahasrabuddhe

What are the changes you have attempted to bring about in ICCR's functioning?

The organisation is very vital so far as our soft power is concerned. But there was confusion, lack of clarity or inertia about how to enhance our soft power. I felt it was required to revisit the vision and mission of the ICCR and now we have a fairly defined draft vision and mission statement. There is a receptivity and welcoming approach towards India. But when we talk about soft power we have to convert this goodwill into an idea of India. I find several instances when Mahatma Gandhi, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, or several of icons have not been portrayed as they should. People are putting Ganesha pictures on slippers and toilet sheets. There are mischievous elements but then it is also likely that they don't understand. So what are the elements of our soft power strategy?

There is classical dance, music, fine arts, performing arts...but we have to ensure all sections of society, regions of India, represent India. Mizo dance, Chhattisgarhi metal art, Warli paintings or some remote areas in Tamil Nadu need to be showcased. This will give our soft power a broad base because India is not just Sufi and Bharanatyam. Our diversity needs to be presented properly. In a brainstorming with Niti Aayog we considered how Indian cultural relations can strengthen out strategic and economic interests. The Khadi commission chairman told me it is doing brisk business in South Africa...then this is the time for ICCR to hold seminars on Gandhian philosophy and cottage industry. You talked about goodwill that India enjoys but what prevents adequate returns?

I think three things: academically, the presentation of India has to be far more powerful than it has been due to a Left leaning bias that India is a conglomeration of nations being held together forcibly. So there are books that Chhattisgarh is a nation, Chottanagpur is a nation. This we have to contest. In 1995, the year UN announced its International Year of Indigenous People, P V Narsimha Rao, as PM, stoutly refused to celebrate this saying in India, everybody is indigenous. We have ensure that our decisions in government reflect our cultural sensitivities. A request was made to external affairs ministry that only hand-made carpets be used in embassies as this will encourage the industry. Immediately the suggestion was accepted. There was a question whether governance and democracy is part of ICCR agenda. I said yes as we are a spiritual democracy and a political democracy. If you look at democracy ratings (Freedom House survey) where does India stand? Not where it should due to lack of awareness about the success of Indian democracy.

Barack Obama and Bill Clinton were impressed by India. It is the Modi regime that has taken leaders to cities other than Delhi. So are you also pulled into cultural battles with the Left and allegations of a right-wing revision of culture?

Naturally we have an imprint of ICCR functioning. For example we had an Indology conference and now three conferences organised in last three-four years. There was a seminar on yoga studies. But there are people who may not want it to happen, who still adhere to old outdated thinking. What Cho Ramaswamy had once said "If Left has any future in India, India has no future left" is true about views on Indian culture.

You recently talked about "cultural antyodaya". What exactly does it mean in ICCR context?

I was giving an example of empanelment of groups and artists. There are 4,000 groups and individuals registered with ICCR. Countries used to write to us that send this group or that based mostly on their popularity. In Rajasthan we have 150 groups registered of which 127 have gone abroad in last 20 years. But in Chhattisgarh we have 15 groups but not a single group was invited. We will ensure that a more diverse selection of culture is presented abroad.



## PETER BHEDDAH HONORED WITH BHARAT SAMMAN AWARD IN HOUSE OF LORDS, UK

New York-based well-known community leader and philanthropist Peter Bheddah received the prestigious Bharat Samman Award at the 30th annual NRI Pravasi Divas on October 26, 2018 for being a successful businessman turned outstanding humanitarian helping the needy in India and the United States. The award was conferred on Bheddah in the presence of Lord Swraj Paul, Lord Karan Bilimoria, Commissioner of Canada to India Mr.

Nasir Patel, and many other dignitaries at the House of Lords in London, United Kingdom.

The Bharat Samman Award is bestowed upon a group of select People of Indian Origin living in India or abroad for their outstanding achievements in their respective fields. The award is confirmed by the NRI Institute, a non-profit NGO that is a registered body of PIOs connecting the Indian diaspora since 1989 as a platform to honor

exceptional overseas Indians. The recipient of the Bharat Samman Award demonstrates an understanding of a community's needs through exemplary selfless volunteer service.



Peter Bheddah



## MALLA REDDY BOKKA ELECTED PRESIDENT, INDIAN ASSOCIATION OF GREATER CHICAGO



Malla Reddy Bokka

Malla Reddy Bokka, President-Elect & Founder, Indian Association of Greater Chicago. The Annual Board Meeting of Indian Association of Greater Chicago was held at 1228

Tiffany Ct, Indian elected as President-Elect of Indian Association of Greater Chicago unanimously by the Board of Directors and It's great privilege to serve Indian community and my mission to preserve and maintain the heritage of all American Indians in Chicago and it's suburbs; to promote literary, cultural, educational, religious, social and economic activities of the Indian community" said by Malla Reddy Bokka, President-Elect & Founder, IAGC.

Independence Day, Ganesh Utsav, Holi, Diwali, Pongal and Batukamma. This term IAGC will also host Winter Coat Drive, Food Drive, Toys of Kids, Will & Trust, and Conducting yoga camp etc.. IAGC Youth wing is a subsidiary allied front of IAGC this is formed in order to rally support for IAGC from members and potential members of a younger age, as well as to focus on subjects and issues more widely relevant among IAGC youth. IAGC Youth Wing plans to take on projects like Job Fair, Cricket Tournament, Indoor Game competition and Youth Leadership Development Skill Camps etc.

Creek on November 9, 2018 and unanimously elected its new leader Malla Reddy Bokka and the new board under the guidance of KK Reddy from Advisory Board. "I am honored to be

The President Malla Reddy plans to take the organization to new heights with events planned for celebrating New Year Celebration, India



## THOMAS KURIAN APPOINTED HEAD OF GOOGLE'S CLOUD BUSINESS

Former Oracle Corp. product chief Thomas Kurian has replaced Diane Greene as head of the cloud division at Alphabet Inc's Google. Kurian, who spent 22 years at Oracle and had been a close confidante of its founder Larry Ellison, resigned in September after struggling to expand its cloud business. "I'm looking forward to building on the success of recent years as it enters its next phase of growth," the Indian American executive said in a statement of Google's Cloud business, adding he is excited to join the team "at this important and promising time." Greene has served as chief executive of Google Cloud;

Kurian will be senior vice president for Google Cloud, a company spokesman said, according to multiple reports.

Steve Koenig, a financial analyst following Oracle for Wedbush Securities, said Kurian is better positioned at Google to drive business sales growth than at his former employer, the reports said. "Like Diane



Thomas Kurian

Greene, Kurian has serious enterprise chops," Koenig said in a statement. "Google clearly remains serious about scaling up its enterprise business." Greene said Kurian interviewed with her, Google CEO Sundar Pichai and long-time infrastructure chief Urs Hölzle and will join Google on Nov. 26. "We're really excited to welcome Thomas, whose product vision, customer focus and deep expertise will be a huge asset to our growing Cloud business," Pichai said in a statement.



## PREETI SARAN ELECTED TO UN'S Socio-Economic, CULTURAL PANEL

Preeti Saran, a former Secretary Ministry External Affairs, has been elected unopposed to an Asia Pacific seat on the UN's Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR). Preeti Saran, joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1982 and retired in September this year. During her career, she served in Indian missions at Moscow, Dhaka and Geneva. Saran was also the Consul General of India at Toronto and the Indian Ambassador to Vietnam.

Saran was elected to the CESCR for a term beginning on January 1, 2019 and expiring on December 31, 2022. She has been elected by acclamation the 18-member committee of experts that

monitors the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESR).

The UN Economic and Social Council voted to fill regular and outstanding vacancies in 11 of its subsidiary bodies, including the Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights.

Members of the CESCR serve in their personal capacities as experts and do not represent their countries even though they may have been nominated by their own nation.

All States parties are obliged to submit regular reports to the committee on how the rights are being implemented. States

must report initially within two years of accepting the Covenant and thereafter every five years. The committee examines each report and addresses its concerns and recommendations to the State party in the form of "concluding observations".

The committee meets in Geneva and normally holds two sessions per year, consisting of a three-week plenary and a one-week pre-session working group.



Preeti Saran

## Tulsi Gabbard May Run for the Presidency of USA



Tulsi Gabbard

Tulsi Gabbard, the first Hindu lawmaker in the US Congress, is seriously considering running for the White House in 2020. This is for the first time that

the four-time Democratic lawmaker in the US house of Representatives from Hawaii has indicated that she may run for the presidency. She would be the first Hindu ever to be running for the presidency in the United States. And if elected in 2020, she could be the youngest ever and first woman to be elected as the US president.

Before challenging President Donald Trump in the November 2020 elections, she would have to fight it against her own Democratic party colleagues in primary elections beginning early that year. In the last few weeks, Gabbard has been talking to her party leaders and reaching out to Indian-Americans to get their feedback on the issue.

## INDIAN PROJECT ON FLOWER RECYCLING BAGS UN AWARD

An Indian project, HelpUsGreen, which collects flowers from temples and mosques across many cities/towns in Uttar Pradesh and recycles them to produce natural incense, organic fertilizers and biodegradable packaging material, is one of 15 ground-breaking projects from around the world that has won this year's UN climate action award.

Developed as the world's first profitable

solution to the monumental temple waste problem, the HelpUsGreen's products are handcrafted by women who earlier used to be manual scavengers. The HelpUsGreen aims to provide livelihoods to 5,100 women and recycle 51 tonnes of temple waste daily by 2021. Over 11,000 tonnes of temple waster has been recycled under the project so far.

Citing the initiative as one of the key

ground-breaking projects, the UN climate change body has shared that the HelpUsGreen can easily be replicated in any city. It currently works in Uttar Pradesh, with plans to expand to Bangladesh, and Nepal. New products are in the works (including a biodegradable Styrofoam alternative) and they are in talks with the government of India to scale up across the country.

## DIPLOMATIC POSTINGS

**Shri Sanjay Kumar Verma** (IFS:1988), presently Additional Secretary at Headquarter has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to Japan.

**Ms Suchitra Durai** (IFS:1988), High Commissioner of India to Kenya, has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to the Kingdom of Thailand.

**Shri Saurabh Kumar** (IFS: 1989), presently Ambassador of India to Iran has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to the Republic of Union of Myanmar.

**Shri Gaddam Dharmendra** (IFS:1990), presently Additional Secretary at Headquarters has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

**Shri Abhay Thakur** (IFS:1992), presently High Commissioner of India to Mauritius has been appointed as the next High Commissioner of India to the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

**Shri Abhay Kumar** (IFS:2003), presently DCM, EOI, Brasilia has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to the Republic of Madagascar.

## **His Holiness the 70th Je Khenpo visits Rajgir and Bodh Gaya**

His Holiness the 70th Je Khenpo Trulku Jigme Choedra visited Rajgir from 9-23 November 2018. His Holiness was accompanied by Gyaltrul Rinpoche, Lopens and monks from Zhung Dratshang and senior officials of the Royal Government of Bhutan.

Coinciding with the Birth Anniversary of His Majesty the Fourth King, His Holiness the Je Khenpo presided over the ground-breaking ceremony for the construction of the Bhutanese temple at Rajgir on 11th November 2018. The foundation stone for the Bhutanese temple was laid by H.E. Shri Nitish Kumar, Chief Minister of Bihar, who was also the Chief Guest for the Event.

Speaking on the occasion Chief Minister Shri Nitish Kumar said "The work on the temple starts at a time when India and Bhutan are jointly celebrating the golden jubilee year of formal diplomatic relations. Its construction will further strengthen the mutual relations between the two countries." He also said that Rajgir is a very sacred place for the followers of Lord Buddha who had spent 12 years in Rajgir and delivered many of his sermons. Recalling his visit to Bhutan in May 2011, the Chief Minister said he had promised the Royal Government a plot of land in Rajgir for construction of the Bhutanese temple which he has finally fulfilled. He mentioned that the relations between the two countries draw strength from the rich and shared cultural and historical heritage and hoped that India would learn the secret of happiness from Bhutan and that people to people ties would now flourish with many more Bhutanese visiting India.

The ground-breaking ceremony was attended by Gyaltrul Rinpoche, Ambassador of Bhutan to India Major General V. Namgyel, Joint Secretary North, Ministry of External Affairs, former Indian Ambassador to Bhutan Shri Pavan K. Varma, senior officials from the Royal Government of Bhutan and the



Government of India.

As part of the Rajgir Project, a temple, hostel and guesthouse will be constructed on an area of 2.8 acres for Bhutanese pilgrims.

During the visit, His Holiness the Je Khenpo presided over a Moenlam Chhenmo (Grand World Peace Prayers) at the temple site at Rajgir, from 12 to 18 November 2018. The Grand World Peace Prayers ceremony was attended by thousands of monks, nuns and devotees from Bhutan and all over India. This is the first time that His Holiness the Je Khenpo has presided over the Grand World Peace Prayers ceremony in India.



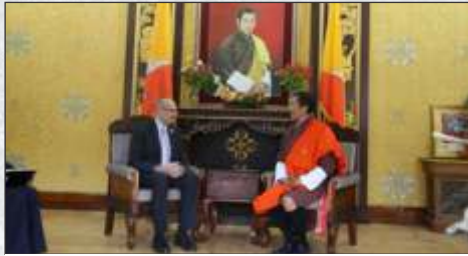
On 18 November 2018, coinciding with the final day of the Grand World Peace

Prayers ceremony, His Holiness had blessed the spiritual gathering with the official name of the soon to be built Bhutanese Temple at Rajgir as Drukgoen Wogmin Nipa. During the week-long Grand World Peace Prayers ceremony, His Holiness also arranged a week-long break to more than 100 horses that runs chariot at Rajgir town. His Holiness requested the horse owners (charioteer) to give them break on condition of paying them daily wages they earn in a day. His Holiness, out of his compassionate heart wanted to let the horses enjoy their physical comfort during the week-long Grand World Peace Prayers ceremony.

His Holiness and the entourage also visited the Bodh Gaya Stupa on 20th November 2018 and consecrated the Bhutan temple on 21st November 2018. His Holiness also conducted Goenpoi Tongshog (thanksgiving offering) to the protecting deities near the famous Bodhi tree.

Both the ground-breaking and Grand World Peace Prayers ceremonies were two major events to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations.

## Visit of Foreign Secretary of India to Bhutan



*Indian Foreign Secretary Shri Vijay Keshav Gokhale with Hon'ble Prime Minister of Bhutan Dr. Lotay Tshering*

Foreign Secretary, Shri Vijay Keshav Gokhale, paid an official visit to Bhutan from 18-20 November 2018.

On 19th November 2018, Shri Vijay Gokhale, called on the Prime Minister of Bhutan, Lyonchhen Dr. Lotay Tshering. He conveyed the warm wishes of the Prime Minister of India and on behalf of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he extended an invitation to Lyonchhen Dr. Lotay Tshering to visit India. Lyonchhen Dr. Lotay Tshering expressed his appreciation to Prime Minister Narendra

Modi for the telephonic call to felicitate him on his election victory and said that he is committed to strengthening the special bonds of friendship and cooperation shared by the two countries. He also called on Foreign Minister Dr. Tandi Dorji and met with Ambassador Sonam Tshong, Foreign Secretary of Bhutan.

During the visit, Shri Vijay Gokhale also received an audience with His Majesty The King and His Majesty the Fourth King.

In his interactions, Shri Vijay Gokhale conveyed that India attaches the highest priority to further expanding its unique ties of friendship and cooperation with Bhutan, based on the priorities of the Royal Government of Bhutan. The two sides discussed all aspects of bilateral relations, including high-level exchanges, 12th Five Year Plan, hydro-power cooperation, people-to-people



*Indian Foreign Secretary Shri Vijay Keshav Gokhale with Hon'ble Foreign Minister of Bhutan Dr. Tandi Dorji*

ties, and commemorative activities that were jointly organized for the Golden Jubilee celebration. The two sides also shared their views on regional matters and other issues of mutual interest.

The Foreign Secretary was in Bhutan to convey to Prime Minister Dr. Lotay Tshering the invitation extended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to visit India. The visit of Foreign Secretary was in keeping with the tradition of regular high-level exchanges between the two countries.

### DAYS TO REMEMBER

#### IN JANUARY, 2019

**January 01 : New Year Begins**

**January 04 : Myanmar- Independence Day**

**January 05 : Amavasya**

**January 12 : National Youth Day**

(National Youth Day is celebrated every year in India since 1984 on the birthday of Swami Vivekananda, whose teachings dealt with religion, character building and social issues. He believed that your was the best period of a person's life, and the way in which this period was utilised would shape his or her future.)

**January 13 : Lohri**

**January 14 : Makar Sankranti**

(The winter harvest festival celebrated throughout India) + **Pongal** (A Tamil Harvest Festival mainly celebrated to convey appreciation to the Sun God for providing energy for agriculture.)

**January 15 : Army Day**

(On Jan 15, 1949, the Indian Army became independent of British control. Field Marshall KM Cariappa took over as the first Indian Commander in Chief.

**January 21 : Paush Purnima**

**January 23 : Birth Anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose**

**January 25 : National Tourism Day**

("The Incredible India" is one of the most fascination places a

tourist can visit. From the Sun-kissed beaches to snow-capped mountains, India offers a breath taking variety of landscapes. Cultural heritage, colourful history, its art, mountains, cuisine all make it a dream destination. Tourism as an industry contributes to the growth story. This day highlights its importance.)

**January 26 : Republic Day of India**

(January 26 is a day dear to the heart of every Indian, because it was on this day in 1950 that India declared herself to be a sovereign independent republic. India celebrates this day showcasing its military might, cultural diversity, economic growth and social progress.)

**January 26 : Australia- Australia Day**

**January 27 : International Holocaust Day**

(It is the remembrances day of the sufferings, courage and determination of millions of people who died in the death camps run by the Nazis some 77 years ago. The Soviet Army had liberated the biggest death camp of the Nazis on January 27, 1945. This day is therefore important.)

**January 28 : Birth Anniversary of Lala Lajpat Rai**

**January 30 : Martyrs' Day**

(Mahatma Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Father of the Nation, was assassinated on January 30, 1948. To pay tribute to Mahatma Gandhi and to other martyrs this day is observed as Martyrs Day. Great solemnity and silent tributes and bhajan singing make the day.)

## इजरायल का भाषायी संकल्प

वेदों में अनेक स्थलों पर संकल्प शक्ति का बखान किया गया है। यजुर्वेद का संकल्प सूक्त तो इसका एक भण्डार ही है। संकल्प की शक्ति कैसी होती है और यदि संकल्प कर लिया जाए तो कैसे, कैसे चमत्कार किए जा सकते हैं—इसी का एक उदाहरण यहां प्रस्तुत है।

इजरायल देश से आप परिचित ही हैं, जो द्वितीय विश्व युद्ध के बाद 1948 में विश्व भर में फैले यहूदियों को एक स्थान पर बसाने के लिए बनाया गया। आज वहां की मुख्य राजभाषा हिब्रू है और सहयोगी भाषाएं अंग्रेजी एवं अरबी हैं। अंग्रेजी और अरबी तो आज विश्व के अनेक देशों में बोली जाती है, पर हिब्रू ऐसी भाषा है जो दुनिया के नक्शे से लगभग गायब ही हो गई थी। इसके बावजूद यदि आज वह जीवित है और एक देश की राजभाषा के प्रतिष्ठित पद पर आसीन है, तो इसके पीछे एक व्यक्ति का, केवल एक व्यक्ति का, विश्वास कीजिए केवल एक व्यक्ति का संकल्प है, संघर्ष है, जुनून है, स्वाभिमान के साथ जीने की अदम्य इच्छाशक्ति है। जानना चाहेंगे कि वह एक व्यक्ति कौन था, हिब्रू कैसे नष्ट हुई और उसने उसे अपने संकल्प के बल पर पुनर्जीवित कैसे किया?

जब विश्व की प्राचीनतम भाषाओं की चर्चा होती है तो सबसे पहला नाम तो संस्कृत का लिया जाता है, क्योंकि संस्कृत में लिखा ऋग्वेद विश्व साहित्य में अब तब उपलब्ध प्राचीनतम ग्रन्थ है, पर विश्व के अन्य भागों में जो भाषाएं विकसित हुईं, उनमें एक प्राचीन भाषा है हिब्रू। यह शब्द मूलतः मिस्र की भाषा के एपिरू शब्द से बना है जिसका शाब्दिक अर्थ है—मिस्री समाज के कुछ ऐसे वर्ग जो खास तरह के काम करते थे, पर कालान्तर में यह शब्द उस भाषा के लिए रूढ़ हो गया जिसे अरब वाले इब्रानी कहते थे। इस भाषा की कतिपय विशेषताएं आरमाइक और अरबी भाषा से मिलती-जुलती हैं। यों तो हिब्रू भाषा के लिखित रूप का सबसे प्राचीन उदाहरण अब से लगभग तीन हजार वर्ष पूर्व के इजरायल में मिलता है जो सम्राट डेविड और उसके बेटे सोलोमन के समय का बताया जाता है, पर प्राचीन हिब्रू में लिखी हुई सबसे प्रसिद्ध रचना बाइबिल है।

बाइबिल शब्द का मूल अर्थ यद्यपि पुस्तक है, पर पाठक जानते ही हैं कि अब इस शब्द का प्रयोग यहूदियों और ईसाइयों के उस पवित्र ग्रन्थ के लिए होता है, जो स्वयं अनेक पुस्तकों का संग्रह है। यह तो निश्चित है कि इन पुस्तकों की रचना अलग-अलग समय पर और अलग-अलग लोगों ने की, पर वह कब हुई, और जो बाइबिल आज हमारे सामने है उसमें

उन्हें कब संकलित किया गया—इस सम्बन्ध में विद्वान एकमत नहीं है। यहीं कारण है कि बाइबिल के विभिन्न संस्करणों में संकलित पुस्तकों की संख्या 66 से लेकर 81 तक है। बाइबिल से संबंधित सात ऐसी पुस्तकें भी हैं जो पहले बाइबिल में संकलित की जाती थीं, पर बाद में जिन्हें ईसाई पंथ को मानने वाले विद्वानों ने स्वयं अप्रामाणिक मानकर खारिज कर दिया है। हाँ, यह ऐतिहासिक तथ्य है कि 17वीं शताब्दी के शुरू में (1607 से 1611) इंग्लैण्ड में किंग जेम्स ने बाइबिल का जो अनुवाद अंग्रेजी में 47 अनुवादाकों से कराया और बाद में उसमें कुछ संशोधन कराकर जो संस्करण ऑक्सफोर्ड ने 1769 में प्रकाशित किया, आज उसे ही लगभग पूरे विश्व में अंग्रेजी का प्रामाणिक संस्करण माना जाता है। बाइबिल के सामान्यतया दो भाग किए जाते हैं—ओल्ड टेस्टामेंट और न्यू टेस्टामेंट। ओल्ड टेस्टामेंट में 39 और न्यू टेस्टामेंट में 27 अर्थात् कुल 66 पुस्तकें हैं।

भाषा की दृष्टि से देखें तो ओल्ड टेस्टामेंट की प्रारम्भिक पांच पुस्तकें हिब्रू में लिखी हुई थीं जिन्हें पेट-ट्यूक अथवा तोरा कहा जाता है। ओल्ड टेस्टामेंट की शेष पुस्तकें लैटिन में और न्यू टेस्टामेंट की सभी पुस्तकें ग्रीक में लिखी हुई थी। पेटा-ट्यूक के बारे में ऐसा माना जाता है कि ईसा से लगभग पांच शताब्दी पूर्व इन्हें बाइबिल में शामिल किया गया जबकि इनकी रचना काफी पहले, लगभग नौ शताब्दी ईसा पूर्व हो गई थी। इस प्रकार हिब्रू भाषा बाइबिल में तो सुरक्षित हो गई, पर बाद में कई कारणों से वह सामाजिक जीवन से गायब होती चली गई। इनमें सबसे प्रमुख कारण था राजनीतिक। उस समय फारस (वर्तमान ईरान) साम्राज्य का विस्तार होता जा रहा था। ईसा पूर्व छठी शताब्दी में तो ईरानी आर्य सम्राट क्रूश(साइरस) का शासन मध्य एशिया से लेकर भूमध्य सागर तक फैल चुका था। (आर्य भट्ट शब्द से चौकें नहीं, ईरान भी अतीत में वेद, वैदिक साहित्य और वैदिक परम्पराओं से अनुप्राणित रहा है और ईरान के शासक आर्य सम्राट ही कहलाते थे। बाद में, जब ईरान में इस्लाम मजहब फैल गया तब भी शासकों की यह उपाधि आर्य मेहर के रूप में बरकरार रहीं। हाँ, अब लगभग तीस वर्ष पूर्व हुई इस्लामी क्रांति के बाद यह परम्परा समाप्त हो गई है।) हम बात कर रहे थे ईरानी साम्राज्य की। क्रूश के पुत्र कम्बीसस और उसके बाद दारा(डेरियस) ने साम्राज्य का विस्तार करके मिस्र, श्रास(वर्तमान बुल्गारिया), मेरिडोनिया आदि स्थानों को भी जीत लिया। इस साम्राज्य में रहने वाले यहूदियों को आरमाइक भाषा( जो बेबीलोन में बोली जाती थी) अपनाने के लिए विवश किया गया(कुछ वैसे ही जैसे भारत में लोग पिछली कुछ

शताब्दियों से अंग्रेजी अपनाने के लिए मजबूत हो रहे हैं)। इससे हिब्रू पृष्ठभूमि में चली गई।

हिब्रू को एक और जबरदस्त झटका तब लगा जब ईसा से 586 वर्ष बेबीलोन के

शासक नाबुचाडनजर ने यरूशलम पर कब्जा कर लिया और यहूदियों पर तरह-तरह के अत्याचार किए। अतः यहूदियों को अपना वतन छोड़कर विश्व के अन्य भागों में पलायन करना पड़ा। इसे ही डायस्पोरा कहा जाता है। बाद में ईसा के जन्म के 70 वर्ष बाद यरूशलम के नष्ट हो जाने पर तो बचे-खुचे यहूदी भी वहां से अन्यत्र जाने के लिए मजबूर हो गए। इस सबका परिणाम यह हुआ कि सैकड़ों वर्षों तक मेसिपोटामिया के यहूदियों की बोलचाल की भाषा आरमाइक ही बनी रही। जो यहूदी मध्य पूर्व में जा बसे थे, उन्होंने अरबी को अपना लिया। इस प्रकार वे जिस देश में गए, उसी देश की भाषा को अपनाते चले गए। अतः हिब्रू भाषा विस्मृति के गर्त में समाती चली गई।

आधुनिक युग में जिस व्यक्ति के मन में इस भूली-बिसरी हिब्रू भाषा को पुनः जीवित करने की इच्छा जागी, उसका नाम था—एलिजर बेन यहूदा। उसका जन्म 1858 में एक सामान्य परिवार में लिथुवानिया(रूस) के एक गांव में हुआ था। रूस में तब जार का शासन था, यहूदी उसमें खुद को अपेक्षित अनुभव करते थे। अतः यहूदियों की अस्मिता को सम्मान दिलाने के लिए एक राष्ट्रव्यापी आन्दोलन शुरू हुआ और बेन यहूदा भी उस आन्दोलन से जुड़ गया। अपने जीवित, न्याय के लिए संघर्ष करने की उत्कट भावना और यहूदियों के सम्मान को सर्वोपरि मानने के कारण, वह शीघ्र ही उस आन्दोलन का प्रमुख कार्यकर्ता बन गया। इन्हीं दिनों उसके मन में अपनी मूल भाषा हिब्रू के प्रति विशेष प्रेम जागा, बाइबिल में तो हिब्रू सुरक्षित थी ही और इसलिए सिनेगाग(यहूदी प्रार्थना भवन) में उसका प्रयोग होता ही था। बेन यहूदा ने हिब्रू को यहूदियों के आपसी संवाद की भाषा बनाने का विचार लोगों के सामने रखा, पर शुरू में लोगों ने उसके इस विचार का उपहास उड़ाया और कुछ लोगों ने तो उसे पागल तक कह दिया। उन्हें लगता था कि यहूदी जिस भाषा को भूल चुके हैं, उसमें संवाद कैसे कर सकते हैं।



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बाइबिल के जिस अंश में हिब्रू सुरक्षित थी, सामान्य यहूदी तो अब न उसका अर्थ समझते थे और न उसका ठीक से उच्चारण कर सकते थे, तो फिर उसके प्रयोग की बात कैसे सोच सकते थे? स्थिति कुछ-कुछ वैसी ही थी जैसी आज हमारे समाज में अंग्रेजी माध्यम से शिक्षा पाने वाले बच्चों की संस्कृत के संदर्भ में होती जा रही है।

बेन यहूदा इन आलोचनाओं और प्रतिक्रियाओं से हताश नहीं हुआ, बल्कि इन आलोचनाओं ने उसकी इच्छा को दृढ़ संकल्प का रूप दे दिया जिसे साकार करने के लिए उसने जो प्रयास किए उन्हें अपनी सुविधा के लिए हम तीन वर्गों में बांट सकते हैं - (1) घर में हिब्रू का प्रयोग (2) शिक्षा के माध्यम के रूप में हिब्रू का प्रयोग (3) विभिन्न आवश्यकताओं के लिए हिब्रू में नए शब्दों का निर्माण।

घर में हिब्रू के प्रयोग की शुरुआत उसने अपने घर से ही की, और इसे इतना विस्तार दे दिया कि जब भी वह किसी यहूदी से घर में या बाहर मिलता तो वार्तालाप में हिब्रू का ही प्रयोग करने का प्रयास करता। अपने इन प्रयासों के प्रति वह कितना गंभीर था, इसका अनुमान इन तथ्यों से लगाया जा सकता है कि जब उसके पहले बच्चे (बेटे) का जन्म हो चुका था और घर में कोई ऐसा व्यक्ति आता जो हिब्रू नहीं बोलता था, तो वह अपने बच्चे को दूसरे कमरे में भेज देता था ताकि बच्चे के कान में दूसरी भाषा का कोई शब्द तक न पड़े। उसकी (पहली) पत्नी रूस की थी और एक दिन जब यहूदा घर पर नहीं था, वह बच्चे को सुलाने के लिए लोरी गाने लगी। अपनी ममता में उसे ध्यान ही नहीं रहा कि लोरी रूसी भाषा में है। संयोग से तभी बेन यहूदा घर में प्रविष्ट हुआ और इसके बाद घर में जो हंगामा हुआ, उसका विवरण उसी बेटे ने अपनी आत्मकथा में दिया है।

स्कूल में हिब्रू के माध्यम से शिक्षा देने की कठिनाइयाँ और भी अधिक थीं। एक ओर तो हिब्रू में वर्तमान युग की आवश्यकताओं के अनुरूप शब्दों का अभाव था, तो दूसरी ओर ऐसे लोगों का अभाव था जो हिब्रू माध्यम से शिक्षा देने की जिम्मेदारी निभा सकें। बेन यहूदा ने शब्द निर्माता, शब्दकोश निर्माता, शिक्षक, नेता सभी प्रकार की भूमिकाएँ निभाईं। उसने आइसक्रीम, जेली, आमलेट, रूमाल, तौलिया, गुड़िया, साइकिल, समाचार पत्र, सम्पादक, सैनिक आदि के लिए हिब्रू में शब्द बनाए। अपने बनाए शब्द वह अपने समाचार पत्र, हल्त्वी में भी छापता था। यह सर्वज्ञात है कि यहूदी लोग सामान्यतया पढ़ने में रूचिशील होते हैं। अतः उसके प्रयासों की जानकारी केवल फिलिस्तीन में नहीं, विश्व में यहूदी जहाँ भी थे, वहाँ तक पहुँच गई।

उसकी निष्ठा रंग लाई। उसके संकल्प के आगे

अन्यमनस्क और उदासीन लोगों के मन में भी स्वभाषा प्रेम जागा। अब वे उसके आंदोलन से धीरे-धीरे जुड़ने लगे। हिब्रू भाषा को जीवित करने के लिए उसने दिसम्बर 1890 में हिब्रू लैंग्वेज काउन्सिल बनाई पर बाद में कार्य की गुरुता का अहसास होने पर उसे अकेडमी का रूप दिया, तब जाकर उसका स्वप्न साकार होता दिखाई देने लगा।

प्रारम्भ में बेन यहूदा ने बाइबिल वाली प्राचीन हिब्रू को ही पुनर्जीवित करने की कोशिश की थी, पर डायस्पोरा के बाद से यहूदी काफी लम्बे समय से विभिन्न स्थानों पर रह रहे थे, और उन्हीं स्थानों की भाषाओं का प्रयोग करते आ रहे थे, अतः उन्हीं भाषाओं के अभ्यासी बन चुके थे। ऐसी स्थिति में बेन यहूदा ने भी आधुनिक हिब्रू का जो रूप विकसित किया, उसमें रूसी, अरबी, अंग्रेजी आदि के भी अनेक शब्द एवं अन्य विशेषताएँ आ गईं। बेन यहूदा अपने समाचार पत्र में जो शब्द प्रकाशित करता रहा था, बाद में उन्हें संकलित करके तथा अन्य भी अनेक शब्द बनाकर उसने एक विशाल शब्दकोश ए कम्प्लीट डिक्शनरी ऑफ ऐन्शिअंट एंड मॉडर्न हिब्रू तैयार किया जो 12 खण्डों में है, पर इस कोशिका का काम उसके जीवन काल में पूरा नहीं हो पाया। इसे उसके देहांत के बाद उसकी दूसरी पत्नी और बेटे ने पूरा किया। यह शब्दकोश आज भी अद्वितीय माना जाता है। आधुनिक हिब्रू की लिपि भी आरमाइक भाषा की लिपि से ली गई और उसे स्क्वायर नाम दिया गया। इस लिपि को अपनाने का एक विशेष कारण यह था कि पिछले लगभग दो हजार वर्ष से इसी लिपि में हिब्रू भाषा वाले बाइबिल के अंश की नकल उतारी जाती रही थी। वे इसी लिपि में उसे पढ़ते आ रहे थे और इस प्रकार अब यह उनकी लिपि बन चुकी थी।

सन् 1948 में जब इजरायल राष्ट्र का उदय हुआ तो बेन यहूदा के संकल्प को एक नया आयाम मिल गया। उसका तो 64 वर्ष की आयु में सन् 1922 में क्षयरोग से निधन हो चुका था, पर उसके सत्प्रयासों से जीवित की गई हिब्रू भाषा इजरायल की राजभाषा बन गई। जरा ध्यान दीजिए कि इजरायल को बने लगभग उतना ही समय बीता है जितना हमें स्वतंत्र हुए, पर यह यहूदियों का स्वभाषा प्रेम और स्वाभिमान ही है जिसके बल पर वहाँ व्यापार, प्रशासन, शिक्षा, ज्ञान, विज्ञान, साहित्य, कला, राजनीति आदि जीवन के प्रत्येक क्षेत्र में हिब्रू का ही प्रयोग हो रहा है। पूरे विश्व में यहूदियों की कुल संख्या लगभग एक करोड़ है, जिनमें से लगभग आधे अर्थात् 50 लाख इजरायल में रहते हैं, पर हिब्रू भाषा केवल इजरायल में रहने वाले यहूदियों की नहीं, बल्कि पूरे विश्व में बिखरे सभी यहूदियों की भाषा बन चुकी है। यों तो हर यहूदी आज बहु-भाषाभाषी है, पर जीवन के विभिन्न क्षेत्रों से

संबंधित साहित्य की रचना हिब्रू में करना गौरव की बात समझता है।

यह इस बात की प्रमाण है कि अगर अपनी भाषा के प्रति अनुराग हो, अपनी भाषा को लेकर स्वाभिमान का भाव हो तो ऐसी भाषा को भी जीवित किया जा सकता है जिसे दूसरे लोग मृत समझते हैं। उस भाषा को नया रूप दिया जा सकता है, समाज को नए संस्कार दिए जा सकते हैं और हर बाधा को पार किया जा सकता है। क्या हम भी अपनी भाषाओं के लिए इससे कुछ प्रेरणा लेंगे? हमारी भाषाएँ तो मृत नहीं, जीवित हैं। हमें तो केवल इन भाषाओं के प्रयोग करने का संकल्प लेना है। अपने स्वभाषा प्रेम और स्वाभिमान को जगाना है। बेन यहूदा का उदाहरण क्या हमारे मन में ऊर्जा का संचार नहीं करता? अपने अन्दर झाँकियें और अपनी संकल्प शक्ति का परिचय दीजिए।

## भाषा-प्रौद्योगिकी-प्रशिक्षण

वैश्विक हिन्दी सम्मेलन द्वारा विद्यार्थियों के लिए भाषा प्रौद्योगिकी प्रशिक्षण कार्यक्रम आयोजित किया गया। इस प्रशिक्षण कार्यक्रम में विद्यार्थियों को कम्प्यूटर और मोबाइल पर देवनागरी लिपि और अन्य भारतीय भाषाओं की लिपियों में काम करने का प्रशिक्षण दिया गया।

प्रशिक्षण कार्यक्रम में वैश्विक हिन्दी सम्मेलन के निदेशक डॉ. एम. एल. गुप्ता 'आदित्य' ने कहा कि यदि भारतीय भाषाएँ न बची तो भारतीय संस्कृति और भारतीयता को बचाना भी संभव न होगा। डॉ. आदित्य ने विद्यार्थियों को मोबाइल और कम्प्यूटर पर हिन्दी व अन्य भारतीय भाषाओं की लिपियों में काम करने की विभिन्न प्रकार की विधियों और संबंधित प्रौद्योगिकी की जानकारी देते हुए उनसे भारतीय भाषाओं की लिपियों में कार्य करने का अभ्यास करवाया।

कार्यक्रम में हिन्दी विभागाध्यक्ष डॉ. किरण सिंह तथा एसोसिएट प्रोफेसर उषा मिश्र द्वारा कॉलेज की प्रमुख भूमिका थी उन्होंने कहा कि वे देवनागरी में टाइपिंग को प्रोजेक्ट कार्य के रूप में करवाया गया ताकि विद्यार्थी अधिक से अधिक इसका अभ्यास करें। विद्यार्थियों ने इस प्रशिक्षण में अत्यधिक उत्साह दिखाया और सभी ने प्रारंभ से ही मोबाइल में और कम्प्यूटर पर टाइप करके और बोल कर काफी सामग्री देवनागरी लिपि और अन्य भारतीय लिपियों में तत्काल टाइप करनी प्रारंभ कर दी। अनेक विद्यार्थियों ने तत्काल व्हाट्सएप पर देवनागरी में अनेक संदेश भेजे।

अंत में हिन्दी विभागाध्यक्ष किरण सिंह ने मुख्य अतिथि को धन्यवाद ज्ञापन किया।

## फिजी संदेश का विमोचन

नई दिल्ली स्थित फिजी उच्चायोग ने 'फिजी संदेश' नामक नई हिन्दी पत्रिका का प्रकाशन प्रारंभ किया है। इसके प्रवेशांक का लोकार्पण 09 नवम्बर को फिजी उच्चायोग द्वारा आयोजित एक समारोह में किया गया। इस अवसर पर भारत में फिजी के उच्चायोग महामहिम श्री योगेश पुंजा ने कहा कि इस पत्रिका के प्रकाशन का उद्देश्य फिजी की सामाजिक एवं आर्थिक गतिविधियों से हिन्दी पाठकों को परिचित कराना और भारत के साथ फिजी के मैत्रीपूर्ण द्विपक्षीय संबंधों को मजबूत बनाना है।

श्री पुंजा ने यह भी कहा कि हिन्दी फिजी की राजभाषाओं में एक है तथा फिजी के सभी छात्रों को माध्यमिक स्तर तक अनिवार्य विषय के रूप में हिन्दी पढ़ाई जाती है। उन्होंने भारत सरकार के इस निर्णय का स्वागत किया कि अगला विश्व हिन्दी सम्मेलन फिजी में आयोजित किया जाएगा।

इस अवसर पर विदेश मंत्रालय में संयुक्त सचिव श्री



अशोक कुमार, केन्द्रीय हिन्दी संस्थान के उपाध्यक्ष डॉ. कमल किशोर गोयनका, सुप्रसिद्ध हिन्दी कवि प्रो. अशोक चक्रधर, अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद के मानद निदेशक श्री नारायण कुमार मीडिया विशेषज्ञ

श्री संदीप मारवाह सहित अनेक राजनयिक और सुप्रसिद्ध व्यक्ति उपस्थित थे।

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## ग्रीन कार्ड की वेटिंग लिस्ट में 3 लाख से ज्यादा भारतीय

अमेरिका में स्थायी निवासी का दर्जा प्राप्त करने के लिए प्रतीक्षा कर रहे फ्रेशनल्स में तीन चौथाई संख्या भारतीयों की है। अमेरिका में वैध स्थायी निवास के दर्जे को ग्रीन कार्ड कहा जाता है। अमेरिकी नागरिकता एवं आव्रजन सेवाओं (यूएससीआईएस) द्वारा जारी ताजा आंकड़ों के अनुसार, मई 2018 तक रोजगार

आधारित प्राथमिकता श्रेणी के तहत 3,95,025 विदेशी नागरिक ग्रीन कार्ड पाने की कतार में थे। जिनमें से 3,06,601 भारतीय थे। भारत के बाद इस सूची में चीन दूसरे नम्बर पर हैं।

अभी 67,031 चीनी नागरिक ग्रीन कार्ड पाने की

इंतजार कर रहे हैं। हालांकि, इसके अलावा किसी भी अन्य देश के ग्रीन कार्ड का इंतजार कर रहे लोगों की संख्या 10,000 से ज्यादा नहीं है। अन्य देशों में अल सल्वाडोर (7,252), ग्वाटेमाला (6,027), होंडुरास (5,402), फिलीपीन (1,491), मैक्सिको (700) और वियतनाम (521) है।

## हिन्दी में नॉलेज शेयर करने का सबसे बड़ा प्लैटफॉर्म होने जा रहा वोकल

हिन्दी में नॉलेज शेयर करने का सबसे बड़ा प्लैटफॉर्म 'वोकल' अब और भी यूजर फ्रेंडली होने जा रहा है। इस प्लैटफॉर्म पर यूजर्स हिन्दी के अलावा अन्य 10 भाषाओं में भी सवाल पूछकर उनका जवाब हासिल कर सकेंगे। वॉयस के अलावा विडियो के जरिए भी सवाल-जवाब का सिलसिला चलेगा। कंपनी के सीईओ अप्रमेय राधाकृष्ण और मयंक विदवाटका ने

कहा कि देश में सिर्फ 10 फीसदी लोग ही अंग्रेजी जानते हैं। न्यूज वेबसाइट छोड़ दें तो हिन्दी पाठकों के लिए अच्छी पठन पाठन सामग्री की कमी है। वोकल इसी कमी को पूरा करता है, वह भी ऑडियो और विडियो दोनों के जरिए। फिलहाल वोकल के साथ 500 एक्सपर्ट्स हैं, जो राजनीति, रोजगार और जिन्दगी से सम्बन्धित महत्वपूर्ण विषयों पर जवाब देते

हैं। वोकल के 5 लाख यूजर्स हैं, जिसे 18 महीने में 10 करोड़ तक ले जाना है। लाइव स्ट्रीमिंग पर भी काम हो रहा है। जल्द ही यह बड़े लेवल पर यूजर्स के लिए आएगा। अभी इस प्लैटफॉर्म पर ढाई लाख से ज्यादा सवाल और उनके जवाब तैयार हैं। हर रोज हजारों सवाल पूछे जा रहे हैं।

## A REVIEW OF THE GRIEVANCES

# THE TRANSVAAL AND OTHER COLONIES

In the Cape Colony, too, there was some newspaper agitation against Indians, and the treatment to which they were subjected was not free from humiliating features. For example, Indian children could not attend public schools, etc, and Indian travellers could hardly secure accommodation in hotels. But there were no restrictions as to trade and the purchase of land for a long time.

There were reasons for this state of things. As we have already seen, there was a fair proportion of the Malays in the population of the Cape Colony in general and of Cape Town in particular. As the Malays are Musalmans, they soon came in contact with their Indian co-religionists, and consequently with other Indians late on. Moreover, some Indian Musalmans married Malay women.

How could the Government of the Cape Colony legislate against the Malays? The Cape was their motherland, Dutch was their mother tongue, they had been living with the Dutch from the very first and therefore largely imitated them in their ways of life. The Cape Colony, therefore, has been the least affected by colour prejudice.

Again as the Cape Colony was the oldest settlement and the chief centre of culture in South Africa, it produced sober, gentlemanly and large hearted Europeans. In my opinion, there is no place on earth and no race, which is not capable of producing the finest types of humanity, given suitable opportunities and education. It has been my good fortune to come across this class of people in all parts of South Africa. In the Cape Colony, however, the proportion of such persons was very much the larger. Perhaps the best known and the most learned among them is Mr. Merriman, who was a member of the first and subsequent ministries that came in power after the grant of responsible government to the Cape Colony in 1872, was again the Premier in the last ministry when the Union was established in 1910, and was known as



the Gladstone of South Africa. Then there are the Moltenos and the Schreiners. Sir John Molteno was the first Premier of the Colony in 1872. Mr. W. P. Schreiner, was a well- known



advocate, for some time Attorney-General, and later on Premier. His sister, Olive Schreiner, was a gifted lady, popular in South Africa and well known wherever the English language is spoken. Even since she wrote the book she became famous as the authoress of *Dreams*. Her love for all mankind was unbounded. Love was written in her eyes.

Although she belonged to such a distinguished family and was a learned lady, she was so simple in habits that she cleaned utensils in her house herself. Mr. Merriman, the Moltenos and the Schreiners, had always espoused the cause of the Negroes. Whenever the rights of the Negroes were in danger, they stoutly stood up in their defence. They had kindly feelings for the Indians as well, though they made a distinction between Negroes and Indians. Their argument was that as the Negroes had

been the inhabitants of South Africa long before the European settlers, the latter could not deprive them of their natural rights. But as for the Indians it would not be unfair if laws calculated to remove the danger of their undue competition were enacted. All the same they had a warm corner in their hearts for Indians.

When Gokhale went to South Africa, Mr. Schreiner presided over the Townhall meeting in Cape Town, where he was accorded his first public reception in that country. Mr. Merriman also treated him with great courtesy and expressed his sympathy with the Indian cause. There were other Europeans of the type of Mr. Merriman. I have mentioned these well-known names as typical of their class.

The newspapers in Cape Town, too, were less hostile to Indians than in other parts of South Africa. While it is true that for these reasons there has always been less race hatred in the Cape Colony than in other parts, it is but natural that the anti- Indian feeling which constantly found expression in the other colonies also found its way to the Cape. There too two laws copied from Natal were passed, namely, the Immigration Restriction Act and the Dealers' Licenses Act.

It can be said that the door in South Africa, which was formerly wide open, had thus been almost closed against Indians at the time of the Boer War. In the Transvaal there was no restriction on immigration except the registration fee of three pounds. When Natal and the Cape Colony closed their ports to Indians, they had difficulty in landing on their way to the Transvaal which was in the interior. They could reach it via Delagoa Bay, a Portuguese port. But the a Portuguese also more or less imitated the British. It must be mentioned that some stray Indians were able to find their way to the Transvaal via Natal or Delagoa Bay by suffering great hardships or by bribing port officers.