

ANTAR RASHTRIYA SAHAYOG PARISHAD BULLETIN

Monthly Newsletter of Indian Council for International Co-operation

Vol. 31 No. 4

APRIL, 2018

(16 Pages including Cover)

HISTORIC STRUGGLES OF GIRMITIYAS AND CONTEMPORARY ENGAGEMENT OPTIONS FOR INDIA

Organisation for Diaspora Initiatives (ODI) organized a two day International Conference on **A Century of Abolition of Indentureship of Indian Diasporas: Historic struggles of Girmitiyas and contemporary Engagement Options for India** on 20-21 March, 2018 at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.



(R to L) Amb. R. Dayakar, Prof. S. N. Malakar, Amb. Virendra Gupta, Prof. Ajay Dubey, Amb.D. Mulay, Dr. Kavita Sharma and Shyam Parande

Welcoming the guests **Amb. Virendra Gupta** Co-Chair, ODI International and President of Antar-Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad said that the year 2017 has great significance as it is the centenary year of abolition of indentureship. On 20th March 1917 the migration of Indian indentured workers formally discontinued and this conference is being held to mark the conclusion of year long commemoration of abolition of this inhuman practice. In the introductory remarks **Prof. Ajay Dubey, President ODI & Chair, CAS –JNU**, gave the overview of the Organisation for Diaspora Initiatives (ODI) and said that diaspora should be considered a strategic asset of India and there is a need to move ahead and disassociate from designating considering it as a victim diaspora.

High Commissioner of Trinidad & Tobago **Amb. Dave Prasad**, referred to the distinction between the 'Boat Diaspora' and 'Plane Diaspora' and highlighted the role of PIOs in Trinidad & Tobago in preserving and promoting Indian culture and traditions and overriding caste, class and gender discrimination.

Ambassador of Suriname **H.E. Aashna Kanhai** touched upon the 'Retro Dimension' and mentioned how World War I played an important role in Suriname, as it was the period when Indian indentured labour was empowered enough to own land, sell crops, and could send their children to school.

ODI Chairperson **Prof. Kavita Sharma**, President of South Asian University, New Delhi focused on

the indentured women and their sufferings and expressed the need for more discussion and debate on this issue. She also mentioned the lack of study on Indian Diaspora in French speaking countries.

In his key note address Ministry of External Affairs Secretary **Amb. D. M. Mulay** elaborated on the variables and dynamism of the Indian diaspora. He mentioned

that Diaspora as a concept has been overlooked by government and by the academicians for a long time and addressed the conference as a new beginning in academic work. He further mentioned that the

Think it Over

Clean & Happy
Whether it is made up of believers or non-believers, society should be clean, transparent; when everybody is happy, a nation can be build more rapidly. Where there is a lot of corruption and injustice, poor people suffer the most.

The XIV Dalai Lama

Government can't work in isolation and collaboration and cooperation amongst the NGOs, civil societies groups, and academician is needed for a fruitful result. He also highlighted the need to study and analyze the heterogeneity of diaspora and the various issues they face.

The preliminary session on Abolition of Indentureship and Contemporary Engagement Options for India was chaired by Prof. Ajay Dubey. Dr. Sushmita Rajwar, Dr. Nivedita Ray, Prof. Binod Kjadaria discussed engagement options for India. The second preliminary session was chaired by **ARSP Secretary General Shri Shyam Parande**.

Sr. Vice President ARSP Ambassador R. Dayakar,

highlighted the Legacies of the Indentured System and said that the indentured workers were extremely hardworking and diligent despite the plethora of challenges they faced and sent onto occupy key roles in economic and political fields in their countries of adoption. Amb. Dayakar also spoke about the leaders who led important freedom struggles and left a lasting legacy.

Dr. Jyoti Tyagi outlined the evolving diaspora policy under the various governments in India Shri Shyam Parande highlighted the role of ARSP in bringing the focus of the Indian Governments and Civil Society on the issues of Indian diaspora and the contribution of ARSP in the policy inputs.

The session on **The struggles of Indentured Diaspora** was chaired by **Amb. Paramjit Sahai**. **Dr. Bashabi Gupta**, **Dr. Bijay Ketan Pratihari** gave a historical perspective to the struggles of indentured diaspora in Africa and other countries. ARSP Secretary **Shri Gopal Arora** spoke on **'Girmitya Diaspora in a globalized world-the way forward'**. He emphasized on the changing profile of Girmitya's and the need to connect with the youth diaspora in a more substantive manner. He advocated for the need to form a new High Level Committee on diaspora in the light of the context of a globalised world.

Dr. Bindeshwar Ram explained in depth the labour migration in the context of their social, cultural and economic independence, as well as their assimilation in the host country. **Dr. Amit Singh**, presented his paper on "From Girmitya to Sahily in the parallel session.

The session on **The New face of Indentured Diasporas and its Role and Achievements** was chaired by Prof. V.Suryanarayan. Prof. C.S.Bhat, spoke on the journey of **'Girmityas to PIO Diaspora and the initiatives for building Indian community beyond**

Borders'. He highlighted the issue of 'twice migrants' from Girmitya landscape to advanced destinations and their efforts to form a transnational community of Indians globally dispersed. **Prof. Aparajita Biswas**, presented her paper on the Indian Indenture labour and their contribution towards the development of East Africa in the economic sphere.

The session on the theme "**Identity Issue of Indentured diaspora**" which was chaired by **Dr. Shefali Roy**. **Prof. V. Suryanarayan** focused on the factors which led to the differences in potentials and problems faced by the Indian diaspora in Sri Lanka.

Dr. Binod Kumar Mishra presented his paper on the same theme in the parallel session "**Struggle for Identity articulation among Malaysian Indians**" and **Dr. Gautam Kumar Jha** spoke on **Indian Diaspora: Identity Establishment in Malaysia and Singapore**".

Another session on **Identity Issues of Indentured Diaspora** was chaired by **Prof. Anu Uniyal**. **Dr. Darini Rajasingham Senanayake**, focused on continuing and new forms of social, political and economic marginalization, as well as, on activism and cyber nationalism of diasporic descendants.

Dr. Bobby Luthra Sinha, presented his paper on "Revisiting the agency of Indentured Indians: Festivals, mainstream voices and the dramatization of protest."

Prof. S.N. Malakar presented his paper on "Indian Diaspora in Seychelles: Engagement option for India." Prof. Vivek Kumar presented his paper on "From Iconography to University: Ethnography of Dalit diaspora in Canada." **Dr. Markandey Rai** focused on Indian diaspora engagement options and said that Girmityas wish to have a close ties with India.

A.R.S.P. Bulletin

A NEWS & VIEWS MONTHLY
Published Since 1987

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(M): 98113 92777

PRINTER

Avon Printers

D-6, Ranjit Nagar Comm. Complex,
New Delhi-110008

(M): 93123 05230

E-mail: a1printers@gmail.com

PUBLISHER

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50, Deendayal Upadhyay Marg,
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PRICE

Rs. 5/- per copy

Rs. 500/- for Life

The session on “Comparing engagement policy of New and Old Diaspora.” **Prof. Aparajita Biswas**, **Dr. Carsten Butsch**, from University of Cologne, Germany, speaking on the “The Indian diaspora in Germany: Emerging Networks and New Homes”. **Dr. Sheetal Sharma** focused on the diaspora communities of the European colonies who have managed to carve out their own niche and continue to carry the Indian legacy. **Dr. Rajneesh Kumar Gupta presented his paper on 'Indian Girmitya Diaspora in East Africa: Opportunities and Challenges for Mutual Engagements.'**

Dr. Rajiv Nayan suggested that the government should evolve a strategy to properly engage the entire old diaspora having a mutually Assured Development programme. **Shri Ajay Kumar Sahoo**, spoke on 'Religion, Diaspora and Identity: A study of old Indian Indentured Diaspora.'

The session on Girmitya Diaspora Across the World, Emancipation Struggle and Indian Engagement Options'

was chaired by **Amb. Virendra Gupta**. **Prof. Rama Karan** from Fiji National University spoke on 'Life After the Death of Indentured System'. He mentioned that in Fiji, the descendents of indentured labourers remain unskilled and continue to work on the cane farms.

Dr. Suresh Kumar Pandey from College of Business Hospitality and Tourism Studies, Fiji discussed the cultural changes and achievements which came about due to the indentured system in Fiji.

Shri Narayan Kumar Hon. Director, Indian Council of International Co

-operation (ARSP), New Delhi, speaking on the 'Indian Indentured Diaspora in Guyana: Their Exploitation and Struggles 'focussed on the problems of the workers, their struggle and also on the system of recruitment of indentured labourer slaves. The living and working condition of these Indians on the plantations were full of atrocity and attracted widespread criticism from Indian nationalist leaders, which eventually led to the abolition of labourer recruitment in 1917. Shri Kumar paid high tribute to Dr. Chedi Jagan, Former President of Guyana and said that the year 2018 marks the 100th birth anniversary of Dr. Chedi Jagan, who was born on March 22, 1918 in a rural village in Guyana.



The High Commissioner of Guyana H.E. Dr. David G. Pollard said that there has been immense contribution by Indian indentured workers and their descendents in the development of Guyana. The Indo Guyanese and the Afro Guyanese struggled together for the independence of Guyana. In 1953 Dr. Chedi Jagan formed the first independent Government in Guyana with the support of Afro Guyanese leader Burnham. The legacy of that co-operation continues and the relationship between India and Guyana are very warm and cordial.

In his concluding remarks Amb. Virendra Gupta mentioned that the

thirty million strong Indian diaspora spread through out the world is an important bridge between India and their adopted countries. Our diaspora in the 'girmitya' countries has continued to maintain deep emotional and cultural ties with India. In fact, several cultural practices which have begun to get extinct in UP and Bihar, are still in vogue in these countries.

The eight parallel session on 'Girmitya Diaspora across the world emancipation struggle and Indian engagement option' of the conference was chaired by Dr. J.M.Moosa, CAS School of International Studies, JNU, New Delhi.

Dr. Santosh Kumar Singh, highlighted on Policies and Practices to engage Diaspora: in the context of India and South Africa Relations. **Prof. Tanuja Singh**, presented her paper on the 'Role of Mahatma Gandhi in Abolishing Indentureship for Indian Diaspora in South Africa', She mentioned about the struggle the Indian Diaspora in South Africa and a lasting impact on South Africa by Mahatma Gandhi.

The valedictory session was **Chaired by Prof. Ajay Dubey** in which Rapporteurs presented their report based on the conference proceedings. Prof. V.Suryanarayan delivered the Valedictory Address wherein he discussed the various problems of Indian Diaspora such as their citizenship and identity issues. He highlighted the difference in Diaspora policies of the Indian government towards the Tamil Diaspora in Sri Lanka in contrast to the Indian diasporic community in other countries. The seminar concluded with a formal vote of thanks by **Prof. J.M. Moosa**. □

RAMAYANA—AN INDO—ASEAN CULTURAL BRIDGE

We in India have celebrated 25 years of Indo-ASEAN relations but they go deep down the historical lane of two millennia. Among other cultural aspects permeation of the epic stories Ramayana and Mahabharata in the lives of millions of men and women in ASEAN countries plays a key role in building cultural bridges of everlasting friendship. Ramayana does not belong to India only because over the centuries it has become the lyric of Asia and our common cultural heritage. Indonesia had celebrated the first Ramayana Festival in 1971.

Ramayana itself speaks about Bali and Java islands. But the history of its first reaching the ASEAN countries is shrouded in mystery in spite of its widespread popularity, publication of various versions created by these countries over the past centuries, discovery of a large number of panels based on the stories of Ramayana decorating the walls of temples instilling moral and social values in the minds of the people or for celebrating certain occasions.

Ramayana is adopted in a number of spheres of society as a source of leading an ideal life. It is not just a book of beautiful poetry, it is a Dharma Shastra expounding lofty ethical ideal. Episodes taken from them are played in the forms of shadow plays and dance dramas in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Burma. Ramayana ballets in these countries are mesmerizing. The artists become one with the characters playing their roles. They feel sad for the agony of Devi Sita and find it difficult to act as Lord Rama because of their feelings

honoring him as a lord. Most of the artists in Indonesia are Muslims but they find a great joy in performing it because it is their own culture.

All over ASEAN countries there are many versions of Ramayana. Kumaradasa composed Janaki-harana in Srilanka in 7th century CE; the Malaysians call it Hikayet Seri Rama; when was it adopted in Cambodia is not known but they call it Ramakerti; in Phillipines it is popular as Maharadia Lawana. Indonesia had several Ramayana texts composed by the Indonesians themselves. The best known is Ramayana Kakawin written in 8th century which is compared to Bhattikavya. Its author seems to be a genius trans-creating the story in an amazingly simple structure and limpid flow of words. They also wrote Kakavin Janaki and Ravana-vadha etc. The earliest engraved Ramayana can be seen on the walls of a 9th century Shiva temple - Prambanan. The best performance that I have seen is at the court yard of this temple where more than a hundred dance together with thrilling movements. There are some variations as well in the story like when Devi Sita enters fire to prove her sanctity, the God of Fire appears and bows to her saying - it is not an ordeal for her but by her entry into fire Agni Deva itself is purified. The scene is really moving when hundreds of dancers come to the stage with fluttering garments where audience can feel the flames of fire full of sadnenss.

Ramayana has a very strong influence on the Thai way of life, from Royalty to commoners. All the kings of the Chakri



Prof. Shashibala

Dynasty are given the title of "Rama" because Rama was an incarnation of Vishnu - the sustainer of the world. The former King Bhumipol Adulyadej, ruled as Rama 9th. People of all classes and education levels know the stories from their childhood. King Rama 2nd translated the Indian version of Ramayana into Thai and it is included in school and university curricula. It has become part of Thai literature and has been adapted to suit Thai culture. Ramayana story has been painted on the walls of the Royal temple. Statues of enormous Asuras stand around the temple with their clubs to protect the place. Beautiful pictures of the main characters can be often seen printed on a variety of objects like skirts and shirts. Dolls representing these characters are quite popular with the tourists. Two of their cities are Ayuttya and Lobpuri from Ayodhya and Lavapuri.

Hindu religion and culture was practiced during the Khmer Empire in Cambodia. Indian immigrants may be traders, mainly from South India going to Indo-China before 3rd Century B.C. might have carried it with them. It is mentioned in Cambodian Sanskrit inscriptions that copies of Ramayana,





Mahabharata, Puranas and Manusmriti were brought by the Cambodians for recitation in temples.

When and how Ramayana occupied a place of pride in Myanmar's heart is a topic for academic debate. But the oral tradition of the Rama story can be traced as far back as the reign of King Anawrahta (A.D.1044-77), the founder of the first Myanmar Empire. In later periods there are ample archaeological, historical and literary evidence to show that Ramayana entered into Myanmar culture at an early date. At old Bagan is a Vishnu Temple known as Nat Hlaung Kyaung which is adorned with some stone figures of Rama and Parasu Rama. The Rama story is depicted in the Jataka series of terra-cotta plaques on the panels of Petlcik Pagoda in Bagan.

In a stone inscription in the Mon language, King Kyanzittha (A.D.1084

-1113) of Bagan dynasty proclaimed that in his previous existence he was a close relative of Rama of Ayodhya. Rama has been continuously present in the cultures of the post-Bagan periods. In all media of visual arts and all forms of literary art, Ramayana was the favourite theme. Contacts with neighbouring countries with Hindu cultural influence such as Linzin (Laos), Zimme (Chiengmei), Ayuthia (Thailand) and Malayu (Malasia) further contributed to the development of Ramayana as the popular theme in Myanmar performing arts.

In spite of the mod and pop cultures through entertainment media, Ramayana remains to stay. New generations adopt Ramayana as the theme of their artistic creations and means of expressing their inner feelings. One modern novelist pen-named Chit Oo Nyo of Myanmar wrote

a fiction entitled Achit Shone Thama, Dasagiri (Ravan the Loser of Love) based on Ramayana. With the same title a pop song appeared and it was first sung by a note vocalist Accordion Ohn Kyaw and later by a pop-star Hlwan Moe. It is still the favourite of the young. There are yet other novels, short stories and songs with the trappings of Ramayana.

Looking at the scale of insightful bearing of Ramayana on the lives of the people of ASEAN countries it comes to my mind extemporaneously

यावत् स्थास्यन्ति गिरयः सरितश्च महीतले ।
तावत् रामायणी कथा लोकेषु प्रचरिष्यति ॥

Meaning - the story of Ramayana will remain popular in the world as far as there are mountains and rivers on the earth. □

Asia's Largest Tulip Garden in Srinagar Open to Public

Situated on the eastern border of the central Kashmir Valley, the Zabarwan Range is home to Asia's largest Tulip Garden.

The Tulip Garden located on the foothills of the Zabarwan mountains in J&K's Srinagar was thrown open to the public on 25 March 2018.

The Tribune reported that over 12 lakh flowers are set to bloom in the garden in 2018.

The garden, which is credited with having extended the tourism season in Kashmir, usually attracts over 1.5 lakh visitors every year, The Tribune report adds.

The Zabarwan range is the area that overlooks the Dal Lake and holds the Mughal gardens of Srinagar. The north end of the range lies in Ganderbal, while the south end lies in Pampore.

The central part of the Zabarwan Range is also home to the Shankaracharya Temple. The highest peak of this range is Mahadev Peak at 13,013 feet (3,966 m), which forms the distant background of the eastern mountain wall.



Last year, over 50,000 tourists visited the Tulip Garden in the first two weeks since it opened in 2017, according to a Greater Kashmir report.

The Tulip Festival 2018 is a "must-attend" event for flower lovers, nature lovers, and tourists from across the world, according to tourism website, TripScam.

Types of Tulips

- Standard Tulips – Normal tulips available across the Valley, from florists to local gardens.

- Double-Flowered Tulips– Instead of a single bud, or single layer of petals, a double-flowered tulip has several layers.
- Parrot Tulips – They appear as ruffled petals in various hues akin to the plumage of a tropical parrot.
- Fringed Tulips – Fringed Tulips are frilly with fringed petals and buds.
- Bi-Color Tulips – Bi-color tulips display a variety of colors as compared to standard tulips.

Greater Kashmir quoted the tourism department as saying that the garden drew a large number of visitors, both local and tourists, despite several shutdowns in the days leading up to its opening in 2017.

"In fact, the garden drew over 8,000 people in just one day, on Baisakhi 2017," an official from the tourism department told Greater Kashmir.

(With inputs from Greater Kashmir, TripScam, and Jammu and Kashmir Tourism) □

CELEBRATING THE DIVERSITY, STRENGTH, ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE INDIAN DIASPORA

The Indian Diaspora Council International (IDC), USA held a very successful program starting on March 18, 2018 on “Celebrating the diversity, strength, achievements and contributions of the Indian Diaspora marking the 100th Anniversary of Abolition of Indian Indentureship” at Martin Van Buren High School in Queens, New York, USA.

The event was a celebration with cultural performances and foods from countries impacted by Indian Indentureship (Guyana, Trinidad & Tobago, Jamaica, Suriname, St Vincent & the Grenadines, Belize, St. Lucia, Grenada, South Africa, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Mauritius and Fiji) marking the 100th anniversary of the abolition of Indian Indentureship labour. Persons of Indian origin (PIOs) have made tremendous progress and outstanding achievements all segments of society in their countries of birth and residence, contributing to the respective countries' economic, political, cultural and social development. A significant number of persons of Indian origin reside in the Tri-State New York-New Jersey-Connecticut regions.

The program included a special tribute by US elected officials in honor of the life and legacy of Dr. Cheddi Jagan (b. 22 March 1918; d. 6 March 1997).



Ashook Ramsaran & Dr. Mahin Gosine

Several prominent US elected officials and their representatives presented proclamations, citations and letters of recognition of the late Dr. Cheddi B. Jagan marking the 100th birth anniversary on March 22, 2018. These were presented to Vrinda Jagan Esq., granddaughter of the late Dr. Jagan. These included: NYS Governor Andrew Cuomo; NYC Mayor Bill De Blasio; US Congress Member Grace Meng; Queens Borough Pres. Melinda Katz; NYS Sen. Roxanne Persaud; NYS Assembly Member Alicia Hyndman; NYS Sen. Leroy Comrie; NYS Assembly Member David Weprin; NYC Council Member Barry Grodenchik; NYC Council Member Daneek Miller. Also in

attendance: Also participating: Malini Shah, Comm & Cultural Affairs Liaison, NYC Council Member Paul A. Vallone, and Ed Aulman, Community Affairs, US Congressman Tom Suozzi.

Guyana's Consul General in New York, Hon. Barbara Atherly, spoke about the many contributions of Indian indentured laborers in Guyana and read a message from Amb. Riyad Insanally, Guyana's ambassador to USA.

Keynote speaker Dr. Mahin Gosine, Prof. of Sociology and Anthropology at Suffolk Comm. College of the State University of NY for last 30 years. Spoke on the second migration of Indians from Caribbean countries and remarkable progress being made, yet more advances can be achieved in academia, entrepreneurship and politics.

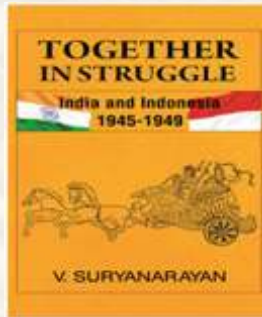
A delightful and melodious rendition of assortment of chutney and popular songs by Seeta Panday and Soni Persaud (Son Son), followed by dinner primarily foods from the Caribbean. There were historic photos and documents of Indian Indentureship as well as books on display tables and information from various New York City agencies. □

BRINGING TOGETHER TWO ASIAN DEMOCRACIES

Prof. V. Suryanarayan's latest book - 'Together in Struggle: India and Indonesia, 1945-1949', which was released at a function at Teen Murti Bhawan, New Delhi on 21st February, 2018. The book release function was organized by Antar-Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad-Bharat in collaboration with Nehru Memorial Museum & Library. Shri Shakti Sinha-Director of NMML, chairing the session, spoke about the encouragement Indonesia got from India was immense during its freedom struggle and said that the book would help in reviving the historical and cultural relation between two countries.

Ambassador Virendra Gupta-President of ARSP, reminisced about the Sukarno- the first President of free Indonesia, who was invited by India on its first Republic Day ceremony as the chief guest. Which symbolizes how strong cultural and historical ties India nurtures with Indonesia. Amb. Gupta said Indonesia has always stood like rock behind India, both countries share various attributes in their strategic outlooks and have established many bilateral agreements and exchanges with an aim to cementing strategic cooperation. His strong submission was to bring Indonesia into BRICS Grouping in order to neutralize the Chinese influence.

Introducing the book to the audience and potential readers, Prof. V. Suryanarayan expressed the objective of writing this book for educating the younger generation of both countries about the golden era of Indo-Indonesia's relation spanning from 1945 to 1949. He said, Indonesia is very close to India physically, distance between Indira Point in India and Island in Sumatra is less than distance between Chennai and Tirupati, however we are intellectually very distant. Prof. Suryanarayan gave the snapshot of the book, quoting the famous line of Wordsworth on French Revolution "Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive, but to have been young was very heaven". He delineated



Indonesia.

The program saw the riveting interaction following the Question & Answer session. Shri Shakti Sinha put the question related to the role of the first elected president of Indonesia - Sukarno in nation building and dwindling of his popular support in late 1950. The author replied "Pakistan wanted to build solidarity with Indonesia on the basis of Islam, but Sukarno told Bhutto then foreign minister of Pakistan, I am Muslim by faith, but Hindu by cultural heritage." Prof. Suryanarayan affirmed that Sukarno never supported the unity on the basis of Islam and he was a unique nation builder. In response to the

nationalist leaders of Indonesia evolved strong bonds of respect and affection because of India's abiding cultural influences in



Prof. V. Suryanarayan's

does not have its own language and script, failed after Suharto in 1998, every president brought new loss to the country. Prof Baldas Ghosahal, Secretary General, Society for Ocean Studies and Former Professor of Centre for South and Southeast Asian studies.

Shri Shyam Parande, Secretary General - ARSP, said he travelled Indonesia a couple of times, during his visit he interacted not only with academic institutions but also with local people that left positive and mesmerizing impression on his mind and subsequently decided to spread this heartening and exhilarating



(L to R) Prof. V. Suryanarayan's, Sh. Shakti Sinha, Amb. Virendra Gupta & Sh. Shyam Parande

despite the old civilization and rich culture", posed by Shri Sushil Pandit, Tamalia Alisjahbana Said Indonesia has about 700 languages and dialects, Javanese language spoken by forty percent people, though Malay was a linguafranca in 1920s. Indonesia is one of the few countries in the world that engineered its own language and culture which unified the country, except these two, every institution question - "why Indonesia

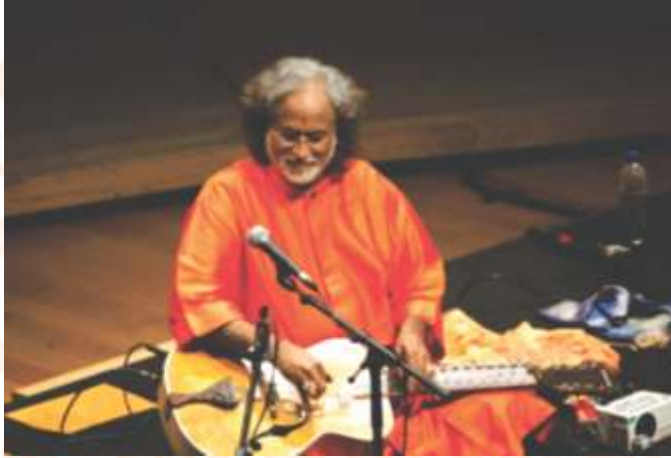
message about India across the country for strengthening the relationship between two Asian democracies. He added, Indonesia and India sustained a long history of interaction in the realm of culture and art which laid a profound impact on Indonesia. He also urges the academicians and scholars to come forward and write such books on all Asian countries. □

PANDIT VISHWA MOHAN BHATT AT ATLANTA

The Consulate General of India in Atlanta along with Sangeetayan presents Pandit Vishwa Mohan Bhatt live in concert.

Pandit Bhatt is a renowned Hindustani classical instrumentalist and a maestro of the Mohan Veena (slide guitar). He is best known for his Grammy Award-winning album A Meeting by the River with Ry Cooder released on the Water Lily Acoustics label.

He is also recognized for other fusion collaborations with Western artists such as Taj Mahal, Bela Fleck, and Jerry Douglas.



Aditya Kalyanpur is a tabla maestro who has worked with some of the most legendary individuals in the music industry. His playing can be heard on Katy Perry's "Legendary Lovers" from her multi-platinum album "Prism," he's recorded with The Rolling Stones' Keith Richards, and he's performed with Oscar- and GRAMMY-winning composer A.R. Rahman. □

MANKA DHINGRA WINS WASHINGTON STATE SENATE RACE

Manka Dhingra, the Indian-American Democratic candidate for the Washington 45th Legislative District State Senate seat, won the Nov. 7 general election and flipped the majority party of the state from Republican to Democrat.

About her win, Dhingra stated "I was proud of and excited about the result." She emphasized that her campaign was run on honesty, integrity and compassion and not on attack ads.

The importance of the election was evident with the number of statements released by various groups and dignitaries across the country, including Indian-American Congresswoman, Pramila Jayapal, D-Wash. Ms Jaypal stated that she was incredibly proud and excited to see strong and experienced women of color with progressive priorities, winning office"

The National Committee was also quick to congratulate Dhingra on her

victory in the Pacific Northwest and PTP executive director, Alex Morgan stated "Manka Dhingra is a breath of fresh air with a proven track record of standing up for domestic violence victims and marginalized communities."

He summed up Dhingra's win with "She will be a true progressive voice who will stand up for all Washingtonians when she arrives in Olympia." □

VIN GOPAL OUSTS REPUBLICAN TO WIN NJ STATE SENATE SEAT

Indian-American businessman, Vin Gopal emerged victorious election night Nov. 7, wresting away New Jersey's 11th district state Senate seat from long-time Republican incumbent, Jennifer Beck.

Democrat Gopal, is the owner of Community Magazine NJ, and the

nonprofit Direct Development LLC - an organization that helps local charities.

Gopal said he was running to tackle New Jersey's "grave fiscal problems" and noted the need to fight for lower property taxes, eliminate red tape imposed on small businesses, and

fund women's healthcare policies..

"As your senator, I will spend every day fighting against Trenton insiders and fighting for the needs of working people," he added. "That is my pledge to the residents of Monmouth County." □

RASHTRAPATIJI CONFERS 3RD ICCR DISTINGUISHED INDOLOGIST AWARD ON PROFESSOR HIROSHI MARUI

Rashtrapati, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, conferred the 3rd ICCR Distinguished Indologist Award on Professor Hiroshi Marui of Japan at a function held at Rashtrapati Bhavan. Speaking on the occasion, Rashtrapatiiji said that

Professor Marui has spent over 40 years working on Bharatiya philosophy and Buddhist studies. Many of his acclaimed publications and research papers are considered a final authority on several subjects the

world over. As President of the Japanese Association of Indian and Buddhist Studies, he has made a significant contribution to Indology in Japan. □

ANNA, JUGAAD, JAI HO AND 68 MORE DESI WORDS IN OXFORD NOW

From endearing words like 'Abba' and 'Anna' to Indian delicacies like 'gulab jamun' and 'vada' can now be found in the Oxford English Dictionary (OED).

As per the latest list of inclusions, 70 new Indian words from Telugu, Urdu, Tamil, Hindi and Gujarati languages have been added to the dictionary. Several commonly used words in India like 'jugaad', 'dadagiri', 'achcha', 'bapu' 'Jai ho' and 'surya namaskar' are now part of the Oxford dictionary, the OED said in a statement.

Many of the words describe food and relationships, such as 'anna' (elder brother), 'abba' (father), 'gulab jamun', 'mirch masala', 'keema', 'funda' and 'chamcha'.

Terms used often like 'timepass', 'natak' and 'chup' also find place in the dictionary now. The latest update adds to the 900 words already covered by the dictionary and "identified as distinctive to Indian English".

It is clear that the shared history between Britain and India has left behind a legacy of loan words and other lexical innovations that have greatly enriched the English word stock.

The seventy words newly added to the OED reflect not only the history of the country, but also the many and diverse cultural and linguistic influences which have shaped and changed the English language in India. □

COMMEMORATION OF WORLD ROMA DAY



Antar-Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad-Bharat celebrated World Roma Day at Pravasi Bhawan on Thursday 12th April. Conducting the program, Dr. Shashi Bala - Joint Secretary of ARSP said "Roma are a forgotten page of Indian history". They are brothers and sisters of India.

Welcoming the Serbian Roma Delegates, Sri Shyam Parande - Secretary General of ARSP spoke about the significant contribution of Dr. Bajram Haliti and Mr. Zlatomir Jovanovic to the Roma cause not only in Serbia but also across the world. Sri Parande pointed out since communication between Roma representatives and ARSP has been growing exponentially, we have been devising the strategy for facilitating the engagement in order to connect Roma with India. He called attention to the lack of awareness about Roma community and dearth of sensitizations amongst Indians. He further expounded his personal interaction, encounter and meeting with Roma, wherever he comes

look up to India for the support to their cause.

Dr. Haliti - Secretary General of World Roma Organization-Romanipen, delivered the informative speech on Constitutional-Legal status and Integration of Roma in the European Member States and Beyond. He poignantly said, chronicles and texts which have been published since 1300 century to today manifest that Europe is soaked with tears and blood of Roma. Emperors, kings, prelates, courts, police, theologians, priests, writers and philosophers, all declared against Roma. Expressing his confidence and strong faith in India, Dr. Haliti stated "India—our Motherland, should be taking care of us and represent or interests at the international level.

across them whether in America, Australia or Europe, has been heartwarming and hopeful. Roma consider India their first and last resort and always

Mr. Zlatomir Jovanovic—President, The Association of World Roma Writers and Bookmakers, in his speech articulated, how we can convince Europe, if we are not recognized here in India as Indian Diaspora. He remarked on the identity of Roma in the world, Roma are not the children of an imaginary world but of India. Roma has not been recognized as European national minority by Europe but the minority without territory. Mr. Zlatomir exuberated his confidence in India as



well as the crucial role of ARSP and Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) in connecting Roma with India.

Dr. Shyam Singh Shashi informed the audience of the great work of Leksa Manush who translated Valmiki's Ramayana in Romani. Dr. Shashi also recited the poem of Roma, translated by him from English to Hindi.

O. P Goel said, ARSP is committed to improving engagement with Roma community and playing an important role in connecting Roma with India. □

Prof. C. Lakshamma : A PERSON of UNPARALLED WISDOM

Former Vice President of Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad Prof. C. Lakshamma, retired Professor and Head of the Department of Sociology at Osmania University, and later a Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) and former High Commissioner to Trinidad and Tobago and other Caribbean nations, was born on April 9, 1936.

Prof. Lakshamma was born in a farmer's family in Uravakonda in Anantapur District of Andhra Pradesh. He excelled in school and went on to Chennai for his Bachelor of Arts from the Loyola College. Subsequently he earned his Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy from the Lucknow University. He passed away in his sleep on November 6, 2017 after a brief illness.

He began his career as an Assistant Professor of Sociology at Lucknow University and was the Founder-Principal of the School for South Indian Languages run by the Motilal Nehru Memorial Trust in Lucknow. In July 1963, he joined the faculty of Agriculture at Osmania University in Hyderabad and was posted to the Extension Education Institute. When the Extension Education Institute was spun off as the Andhra Pradesh Agricultural University in 1968. Prof. Lakshamma reverted to Osmania University as the Reader and Head, Department of Sociology.

He helped establish the OU Department of Sociology as a leading center for excellence in the subject, even organizing the very successful All India Sociology Congress in December 1971. Early in 1972, Prof. Lakshamma became a full Professor. He went on to hold a series of important positions at Osmania University, including 4 years as the Principal of Osmania's iconic College of Arts and Sciences, Dean of the College Development Council and Director of the Academic Audit Cell.



*Prof.C. Lakshamma
(April 9, 1936- Nov. 6, 2017)*

In the early 1980s, the newly formed Telugu Desam Party led by Shri NT Rama Rao came to power in Andhra Pradesh. Prof. Lakshamma was requested by Shri Rama Rao to establish a training programme to help equip the newly elected legislators and parliamentarians, many of whom were first-timers, with the skills and knowledge of procedures needed to be effective. Prof. Lakshamma was then elected as Member of the Rajya Sabha, and in his 6 years there established himself as a thoughtful, objective and erudite parliamentarian whose speeches and submissions drew appreciation from leaders from all parties.

In 1990, Prof. Lakshamma was nominated to be India's High Commissioner to Trinidad and Tobago, and 7 other Caribbean nations. He emerged as an exemplary representative of India and earned loyalty and affection from the people of those parts that endured to the end of his life.

At the end of his term in the West Indies, Prof. Lakshamma was appointed as the Special Representative of the Government of Andhra Pradesh in New Delhi, a cabinet level posting. He was

instrumental in helping Shri Chandrababu Naidu, the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, steer many programmes and initiatives through the corridors of power in Delhi. Prof. Lakshamma established the Sulabh Institute of Action Sociology in Hyderabad to continue the work of enhancing programmes and social awareness.

In his later years Prof. Lakshamma was fascinated by his two granddaughters, Sananda and Maansi. On his passing, the two young ladies wrote a tribute to him, a sentence from which is worth repeating here.

"Most of all, from a very young age, both of us were able to recognize in Tatha a quality that we had not seen in many people, and that was wisdom. He wasn't just smart and hardworking, although he was those things too; he possessed a certain sense of empathy and morality that allowed him to understand the perspectives of those around him, and thus be a true leader."

Prof. Lakshamma's was a life well-lived. His impact lives on in the legion of students and sociologists who have gone on to achieve eminence in their own rights, in the effect he had through the parliament to support the cause of the country and his state, and his work in Trinidad and Tobago helping bring the people from the West Indies in closer contact with India.

Prof. Lakshamma was a person of unparalleled wisdom and unmatched intellect and a man with high wisdom and moral value. He was a man who gifted his moral creation with generosity to society and a man who impressed everybody. He was AJATSHATRU.

Prof. Lakshamma is survived by his wife of almost 53 years. Dr. Mamata Lakshamma, three children Devashish, Mridula and Manish, and three grandchildren, Sananda, Maanasi and Aarhan. □

DAYS TO REMEMBER

IN MAY, 2018

May 01 : International Worker's Day

(International Workers' Day commemorates the historic struggle of working people throughout the world.)

May 03 : World Press Freedom Day

(This day is used to highlight our faith in the freedom of press and to defend the media from attacks on their independence and pay tributes to journalists who have lost their lives in the line of duty.)

May 08 : Remembering World War II Victims

(May 8 is the anniversary of the date when the World War II Allies accepted the unconditional surrender of the armed forces of Germany, which marked the end of Adolf Hitler's Third Reich.)

May 08 : Red Cross Day

(It is the date of birth of the founder of the Red Cross, Henry Dunant who was awarded the first Nobel Peace Prize in 1901. The day is celebrated all over the world to honour the past, present and ongoing mission of the world's largest network which aims to alleviate human suffering, protect life and health and uphold human dignity, especially during armed conflicts and other emergencies.)

May 10 : First War of Independence

(10th May, 1857 was termed as mutiny by the Britishers but we, proud Indians, consider it as the first salvo wherefrom our struggle for independence picked up.)

May 11 : National Technology Day

(It was on this day in 1998 that India successfully carried out a nuclear test at Pokharan. This date is also significant because the Trishul missile was test fired.)

May 13 : World Migratory Birds Day

(It falls on the 2nd week-end of May every year. People around the world take cognizance of migratory birds' needs. Public

awareness is created for their protection and their habitats.)

May 15 : Amavasya ☉

May 15 : International Day of Families

May 01 : Mother Earth Day

(Our family is our world and it is said that families hold the world together. The day inspires a series of awareness-raising events, including national family day.)

May 17 : Norway-Constitution Day

May 18 : Museum Day

(Museums are important because they tell the story of man the world over and show how humanity has survived in its environment over the years.)

May 22 : Yeman- National Day

May 22 : International Day of Biological Diversity

(Bio-diversity or biological diversity is the term used to describe the variety of life found on Earth and all of the natural processes. We have only just started to understand the relationships between living beings and their environments. This year the theme will be 'Sustaining People and their Livelihoods.')

May 26 : Guyana : Independence Day

May 28 : Azerbaijan : Republic Day

May 28 : Ethiopia : National Day

May 29 : Purnima ●

May 29 : International Day of United Nations Peace Keepers

(It is a day to remember those who served in the United Nations Peace keeping operations and also to honour the memory of people who died in the name of peace.)

May 31 : World No - Tobacco Day

(It has been proved that cigarettes and all other forms of tobacco are harmful to our health. This day is celebrated with the aim of opening the eyes of the public to the dangers.) ☐

DIPLOMATIC POSTINGS

Shri Ashok Das (IFS: 1987), presently Additional Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs has been appointed as the **next Ambassador of India to the Federative Republic of Brazil.**



Amb. Ashok Das

Shri Thanglura Darlong (IFS: 1988), presently CLO, South Asian University, New Delhi has been appointed as the **next**



Amb. Thanglura Darlong

Ambassador of India to Romania.

Shri Ravi Thapar, currently Additional Secretary in Ministry of External Affairs, has been appointed as the **next Ambassador of India to Panama.**



Amb. Ravi Thapar

Shri Vinay Kumar (IFS: 1992), currently Joint Secretary in Ministry of External Affairs, has been



appointed as the **next Ambassador of India to the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.**

Shri Mandarapu Subbarayudu, (IFS: 1994), presently Ambassador of India to Lima, has been concurrently accredited as the **next Ambassador of India to Plurinational State of Bolivia, with residence in Lima.** ☐



Amb. Mandarapu Subbarayudu

INDO-BHUTAN FRIENDSHIP CAR RALLY ENDS



The sixth Indo-Bhutan friendship car rally 2018, themed 'connecting People', commemorating the golden jubilee of establishing formal diplomatic relations between India and Bhutan, ended on 11 March 2018 with the prize distribution ceremony for the winners in the four categories.

SK Ajgar Ali with MK Mohammed Musthafa came first in the overall category and was awarded cash prize of Nu 90,000. Deep Dutta with navigator Chandan Sen came second and won a cash prize of Nu 60,000. Yogesh Mullick with navigator Suvrajit Dutta, who came third, got a cash prize of Nu 40,000.

Jogendra Jaiswal with navigator T Nagarajan came fourth in the category.

Rajiv Sarkar with navigator Moulinath Ghosh, came fifth in the overall category and also claimed first in the stock category. Ankur Agarwal and navigator Rajkumar Munda came second in the stock category.

Sridevi Chupula and navigator Sanghamitra Rath were awarded the best all-women team and stood third in the stock category.

Gopa Karma and navigator Lieutenant Colonel Thinley Dorji won the armed forces' category and were awarded a cash prize of Nu 15,000. Major R PS Sandhu and navigator Vikas came second. Major Sandeep Chauhan with navigator Captain Ajay Antil stood third in the category.

There were three teams in the stock category.

Thirty teams participated in the rally competition of about 500 kilometres. However, two teams dropped out at the border due to mechanical failure.

The rally covered four Indian states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Sikkim, and West Bengal, and two districts of Bhutan, Chukha and Thimphu.

The rally which flagged off from Kolkata on March 4 with 22 teams

converged at Siliguri, India on 9 March 2018 and finished in Thimphu on 10 March 2018.

Speaker Jigme Zangpo, during the prize distribution ceremony, said that the golden jubilee celebration is an occasion for Bhutan and India not only to showcase, reflect and assess the extraordinary achievements of the past 50 years, but also to look forward for a future of deepening relationship, cooperation and partnership.

India's ambassador to Bhutan, Jaideep Sarkar, said that although the two countries have more differences than similarities, the two are joined in spirit by heart and mind, and physically by the rivers, roads, and pathways. "It was through this rally that we wanted to show how important it is for these arteries of communication between us to reverberate with traffic, with people, goods and ideas." □

PICTURE STORIES :



His Majesty The King JigmeKhesarNamgyel Wangchuck granted an Audience to Air Marshal Anil Khosla, PVSM, AVSM, VM, Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Air Command of India on 6 March 2018. He was on a 3-day visit to Bhutan.



Majesty The King JigmeKhesarNamgyelWangchuck granted an Audience to 154 undergraduate scholarship students from across the country on 12 March 2018, who will study abroad on government scholarships after excelling in their Class 12 examinations.

The undergraduate students, 77 male and 77 female, will be studying medicine and biological sciences, engineering, cultural studies, arts, humanities, education, and academics in India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Canada, United Kingdom, and the United States of America.



भारतीय उच्चायोग लंदन द्वारा हिन्दी विद्वानों का सम्मान



श्रीमति जय वर्मा को डॉ. हरिवंश राय बच्चन सम्मान



गीता शर्मा को जॉन गिलक्रिस्ट यू. के. हिन्दी शिक्षण सम्मान



श्री चमन लाल चमन को आचार्य महावीर प्रसाद द्विवेदी यू. के. हिन्दी पत्रकारिता सम्मान

भारतीय उच्चायोग लंदन ने 23 मार्च, 2018 को ब्रिटेन के लेखकों, अध्यापकों, पत्रकारों एवं संस्थाओं को हिन्दी सेवी सम्मानों से सम्मानित किया। 23 मार्च के इस कार्यक्रम का आयोजन भारतीय उच्चायोग के बाबा साहेब अम्बेडकर हॉल में किया गया। सम्मानित हिन्दी सेवियों को भारतीय उच्चायुक्त श्री यशवर्द्धन कुमार सिन्हा ने पुरस्कार प्रदान किए।

नॉटिंघम की वरिष्ठ कहानीकार एवं कवियत्री श्रीमती जया वर्मा को डॉ. हरिवंश राय बच्चन हिन्दी लेखन सम्मान से अलंकृत किया गया। जया जी काव्य रंग संस्था की अध्यक्ष भी हैं। नॉटिंघम को सिटी ऑफ लिटरेचर घोषित करवाने में भी जया जी की महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका रही है।

युवा हिन्दी अध्यापिका गीता शर्मा को हिन्दी के डिजिटल शिक्षण एवं ब्रिटिश पुलिस को हिन्दी एवं पंजाबी शिक्षा प्रदान करने के लिए जॉन गिलक्रिस्ट यू. के. हिन्दी शिक्षण सम्मान प्रदान किया गया।

ब्रिटेन की वरिष्ठतम मीडिया कर्मी एवं गजलकार/गीतकार श्री चमन लाल चमन को आचार्य महावीर प्रसाद द्विवेदी हिन्दी पत्रकारिता सम्मान से नवाजा गया।

फ्रेडरिक पिन्काट यू. के. हिन्दी प्रचार प्रसार सम्मान के लिए लंदन की संस्था साऊथ एशियन सिनेमा फाउण्डेशन को सम्मानित किया गया। संस्था के निर्देशक ललित मोहन जोशी ने फाउण्डेशन की ओर से पुरस्कार ग्रहण किया।

इस अवसर पर हिन्दी कवियत्री श्रीमती शोफाली फ्रॉस्ट को उनके कविता संग्रह के लिये दो सौ पचास पाऊण्ड का लक्ष्मीमल्ल सिंघवी अनुदान भी प्रदान किया गया। साथ ही उन विद्यार्थियों को भी सम्मानित किया गया जिन्होंने विश्व हिन्दी दिवस के अवसर पर आयोजित प्रतियोगिताओं में सफल रहे थे।

कार्यक्रम में अन्य लोगों के अतिरिक्त काउंसलर जकियी जुबैरी, काउंसलर अशोक कपूर, रवि शर्मा, अचला शर्मा, परवेज आलम, अरुणा अजितसरिया एम. बी. ई., जुगनू महाजन, कृष्ण कुमार, मोहन राणा, शिखा वाष्पाय, चन्द्रशेखर जैसी गणमान्य व्यक्ति भी उपस्थित थे। कार्यक्रम का संचालन श्री तरुण कुमार ने किया। □

भारत के करोड़पति विदेश में बस रहे हैं

2014 से अब तक चीन और फ्रांस की तुलना में भारत के ज्यादा मिलियनेयर्स ने दूसरे देशों की नागरिकता ली

पिछले साल देश छोड़कर जाने वाले भारतीय रईसों की संख्या 2014 के बाद सबसे ज्यादा रही। भारत के करोड़पति इस मामले में चीन और फ्रांस जैसे देशों से भी आगे रहे। रईसों के देश छोड़कर जाने की वजह काले धन पर सरकार की सख्ती को माना जा रहा है। 2014 से अब तक लगभग 23,000 मिलियनेयर्स भारत छोड़कर जा चुके हैं, जिनमें सबसे ज्यादा 7000 लोगों ने पिछले साल देश छोड़ा है।

इन आंकड़ों के हिसाब से विदेश जाने वाले करोड़पतियों की सूची में भारत का नाम सबसे ऊपर आ गया है। मॉर्गन स्टेनली इनवेस्टमेंट मैनेजमेंट के इमर्जिंग मार्केट्स हेड और चीफ ग्लोबल स्ट्रैटेजिस्ट रुचिर शर्मा के जुटाए गए आंकड़ों के मुताबिक, 2014 के बाद 2.1 पर्सेंट मिलियनेयर्स ने भारत छोड़ा है, जबकि फ्रांस के मामले में इनकी संख्या 1.3 प्रतिशत और चीन के मामले में 1.1 प्रतिशत रही

है। शर्मा ने ये डेटा पिछले हफ्ते हुए मीडिया इवेंट में पेश किए थे।

उन्होंने इकॉनॉमिक टाइम्स से बातचीत में कहा, 'देश में काले धन के खिलाफ सरकार की कार्यवाही के चलते कुछ मिलियनेयर्स का बाहर जाना स्वभाविक माना जा रहा है। ऐसे में ज्यादातियों को लेकर सावधानी बरतने की जरूरत है। रेगुलेशन ज्यादा सख्त होने से ऐसी दिक्कतें होती ही हैं। इन सुपरचिर के देश छोड़कर जाने से इनवेस्टमेंट और कंजम्पशन के इकॉनॉमिक फायदे हाथ से निकल रहे हैं।

शर्मा के डेटा से यह भी पता चला है सुपरचिर लोगों के लिए ऑकलैंड, दुबई, मॉन्ट्रियल, तेल अवीव और टोरंटो पॉपुलर डेस्टिनेशंस हैं। जहां तक इंडियन एचएनआई की बात है तो अंदाजे से कहा जा सकता है कि इनके फेवरिट डेस्टिनेशन ब्रिटेन, दुबई

और सिंगापुर हो सकते हैं। इन रईसों में उन लोगों को शामिल किया गया है, जो कम से कम छह महीने विदेश में रहे हैं। इसमें वे लोग नहीं हैं, जिनके विदेश में मकान हैं लेकिन वहां बसे नहीं हैं।

मिलियनेयर्स का मतलब उन लोगों से है, जिनके पास 10 लाख डॉलर से अधिक की नेट एसेट है। अगर समूची दुनिया की बात करें तो 2014 से अब तक डेढ़ लाख मिलियनेयर्स ने पलायन किया है। संख्या के हिसाब से सबसे ज्यादा चीन के 38,000 मिलियनेयर्स ने देश छोड़ा था, लेकिन पर्सेंटेज के हिसाब से इनका साइज भारत से कम है। जिन देशों से सबसे ज्यादा (पर्सेंटेज) मिलियनेयर्स ने पलायन किया है, उनमें फ्रांस दूसरे नंबर पर है। ऊंचे वेल्थ टैक्स रेट की वजह से फ्रांस के अमीर लोग देश छोड़कर जा रहे थे। हालांकि, फ्रांस के नए राष्ट्रपति इमैनुअल मैक्रॉन ने इस टैक्स रेट में कमी की है। □

भारत और फ्रांस दो समृद्ध विरासत का उत्तराधिकारी है

फ्रांस के राष्ट्रपति इमैनुएल मैक्रो से मुलाकात के बाद हैदराबाद हाऊस में संयुक्त प्रेस कान्फ्रेंस में भारत के प्रधानमंत्री श्री नरेन्द्र मोदी ने कहा कि हम दोनों सिर्फ दो लोकतंत्रों के ही नेता नहीं हैं बल्कि हम दो समृद्ध और समर्थ विरासतों के उत्तराधिकारी भी हैं। श्री मोदी ने कहा कि स्वतंत्रता, समानता और भाईचारा फ्रांस के ही मूल्य नहीं हैं बल्कि भारत के संविधान के मूलमंत्र हैं।

मोदी ने कहा कि हमारी रणनीतिक साझेदारी भले ही 20 साल पुरानी है, लेकिन हमारी सभ्यताओं की साझेदारी सदियों पुरानी है। 18वीं सदी से लेकर आज तक पंचतंत्र की कहानियों, महाभारत और रामायण के जरिए फ्रांसीसी विचारकों ने भारत को झांककर देखा है। रोम्यां रोला, विक्टर ह्यूगो जैसे लोगों ने भारत का गहन अध्ययन किया है।

श्री मोदी ने कहा कि यदि कोई दो देश कधे से कधा मिलाकर चल सकते हैं तो वे हैं, भारत और फ्रांस। उन्होंने बताया कि रक्षा, सुरक्षा, अंतरिक्ष और हाईटेक्नॉलजी में भारत और फ्रांस की दोस्ती का इतिहास लंबा है। सरकार कोई भी हो, लेकिन रिश्तों का सिलसिला लगातार ऊंचा उठा है।

ये फ्रांस के राष्ट्रपति इमैनुएल मैक्रो ने कहा कि फ्रांस, भारत का सबसे बेहतरीन साझेदार देश और यूरोप में भारत के प्रवेश का बिंदु होना चाहिए। मैक्रो ने कहा कि हमारा पहला उद्देश्य रक्षा, अनुसंधान एवं विज्ञान, विशेष रूप से युवा, उच्च शिक्षा और विज्ञान के क्षेत्र में भारत और फ्रांस की रणनीतिक साझेदारी का नया युग शुरू करना है। मैक्रो ने कहा, 'यह महत्वपूर्ण है कि क्योंकि आतंकवाद के संदर्भ में दोनों देशों के बीच कई सामान्य चुनौतियों और साझा जोखिम हैं। □

'रामकथा की सार्वभौमिकता' का लोकार्पण



शर्मा द्वारा व्यक्ति विचारों की प्रशंसा करते हुए कहा कि यह पुस्तक रामकथा के संदर्भ में एक पठनीय और संग्रहणीय प्रकाशन है, जिसमें डॉ. शर्मा ने रामकथा के विविध प्रसंगों को अत्यंत प्रभावी ढंग से प्रस्तुत किया है। डॉ. त्रिपाठी ने विश्व की विभिन्न भाषाओं में लिखी रामकथाओं का विवेचन और विश्लेषण करते हुए कहा कि रामायण न सिर्फ भारत की बल्कि वैश्विक

अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद के आजीवन सदस्य तथा दिल्ली विश्वविद्यालय के पूर्व प्राचार्य डॉ. रामअवतार शर्मा की पुस्तक 'रामकथा की सार्वभौमिकता' के लोकार्पण समारोह में मुख्य अतिथि के रूप में बोलते हुए श्री तरुण विजय, पूर्व संसद सदस्य ने कहा कि राम का चरित्र अत्यंत विराट, विलक्षण और उदात्त है। उनकी उदात्तता में सहृदयता भी समाहित है। रामचरितमानस में तुलसीदास ने उनके चरित्र का बहुत ही सूक्ष्म विवेचन किया है। भारत ही नहीं बल्कि विश्व के सभी महत्वपूर्ण भाषाओं में रामकथा का प्रणयन हुआ है। राम के जीवन के आदर्श युग-युग तक समाज को प्रेरणा प्रदान करते रहेंगे।

लोकार्पण समारोह में बीज वक्तव्य प्रस्तुत करते हुए साहित्य अकादमी के पूर्व सचिव तथा साहित्यायन संस्था के संस्थापक डॉ. बृजेन्द्र त्रिपाठी ने 'रामकथा की सार्वभौमिकता' नामक पुस्तक में डॉ. रामअवतार

साहित्य सम्पदा की अमूल्य धरोहर है। दिल्ली पब्लिक लाइब्रेरी के अध्यक्ष और हिन्दी के सुप्रसिद्ध विद्वान डॉ. रामशरण गौड़ ने रामकथा के सामाजिक, धार्मिक एवं आध्यात्मिक मूल्यों पर प्रकाश डाला और बताया कि राम अपनी महानता को कभी भी और कहीं भी किसी पर आरोपित नहीं करते थे। इसीलिये उन्हें मर्यादा पुरुषोत्तम कहा जाता है।

पुस्तक के लेखक डॉ. रामअवतार शर्मा ने कहा कि इस पुस्तक में राम को धार्मिक या आध्यात्मिक रूप में नहीं बल्कि एक आदर्श व्यक्ति के रूप में चित्रित करने का प्रयास किया गया है। उन्होंने यह भी बताया कि इस पुस्तक को लिखने की प्रेरणा उन्हें दिल्ली विश्वविद्यालय के प्रोफेसर रमानाथ अवस्थी से मिली, जिनका पूरा जीवन राममय था।

समापन वक्तव्य में अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद के महासचिव श्री श्याम परांडे ने बताया कि रामकथा

विदेशी छात्रों के लिए हिन्दी पाठशाला

ग्रेटर नोएडा के कॉलेजों और यूनिवर्सिटी में विदेशी छात्रों के दाखिले शुरू हो गए हैं। इन छात्रों के लिए हिन्दी की पाठशाला शुरू करने की तैयारी की जा रही है ताकि भारतीय छात्रों से उनके अच्छे संबंध विकसित हो सकें। यूनिवर्सिटी ने निर्देश दिए हैं कि विदेशी छात्रों को आम बोलचाल में ज्यादा इस्तेमाल होने वाले हिन्दी के शब्द सिखाए जाएं। इससे वे आसानी से माहौल में घुलमिल सकेंगे।

शारदा यूनिवर्सिटी के डिप्टी रजिस्ट्रार अजीत सिंह ने बताया कि यूनिवर्सिटी में अफगानिस्तान, भूटान के अलावा अफ्रीकी देशों समेत कई देशों के छात्र दाखिला ले रहे हैं। 250 से ज्यादा छात्रों का ऐडमिशन तय है। नए छात्रों को शहर में आम बोलचाल में इस्तेमाल होने वाली हिन्दी के शब्द सिखाए जाएंगे। अभी उनकी कक्षा शुरू नहीं हुई है। जो छात्र यहां आकर रहने लगे हैं, उन्हें हिन्दी सिखाने का प्रयास किया जा रहा है। इससे भारतीयों के बीच उनके सौहार्दपूर्ण संबंध बन सकें और वे भारतीय संस्कृति और रहन-सहन को समझे। नॉलेज पार्क स्थित गलगोटिया कॉलेज के पीआरओ श्रीशंत सिंह का कहना है कि उनके कॉलेज में भी नए ऐडमिशन के लिए आने वाले विदेशी छात्रों को हिन्दी सिखाने के लिए क्लास लगाने की योजना है। □

पर संसार में विभिन्न भागों में पुस्तकें लिखी गई हैं और उन कथाओं का मंचन भी विश्व में विभिन्न देशों में होता है। विभिन्न देशों में वर्णित कथाओं में थोड़ा बहुत अंतर आ जाना स्वाभाविक है लेकिन उन कथाओं का मूल तत्व मानव जाति का कल्याण है। उन्होंने विशेष रूप में कम्बोडिया, इंडोनेशिया, थाईलैंड, वियतनाम आदि देशों में रामकथा का उल्लेख करते हुए कहा कि राम वस्तुतः विश्व में सर्वत्रा व्याप्त है।

लोकार्पण समारोह का विषय प्रवर्तन करते हुए अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद के मानद निदेशक नारायण कुमार ने कहा कि बाल्मीकि से लेकर आधुनिक काल के कवियों ने अपनी-अपनी भाषाओं में राम के चरित्र का वर्णन किया है और विभिन्न धर्मों और देशों के लोग आज भी राम को अपने धर्म और अपने देश के देवता या महापुरुष मानते हैं। लेकिन राम मर्यादा पुरुषोत्तम थे जिन्हें महान भाषा वैज्ञानिक ग्रियर्सन ने भगवान बुध के बाद संसार का दूसरा लोकनायक माना था। यही कारण है कि रूसी, चीनी, जर्मनी आदि भाषाओं में राम कथा और रामकाव्य मौजूद हैं। □

INDIA VISIT FURTHER STRENGTHENED FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN INDIA AND NEPAL—PM OLI

Prime Minister of Nepal K. P. Sharma Oli has said that his India visit has further strengthened friendly relations between both the countries. Talking to media persons at Tribhuvan international airport in Kathmandu after returning from 3 day visit to India on 8th April, Oli said that discussion with Indian leaders was cordial and positive. He said that the visit has increased confidence between



India and Nepal and it will help in moving forward bilateral relations based on equality, mutual respect and interest and enhance cooperation in days to come.

During visit in India, PM Oli held delegation level talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and they comprehensively reviewed the entire spectrum of multifaceted bilateral ties.

Both sides agreed to further strengthen bilateral relations in key areas of border security, connectivity, trade and agriculture. The two countries also agreed to develop inland waterways and construct a rail line from Raxaul in India to Kathmandu in Nepal. The two Prime Ministers jointly inaugurated Integrated Check Post at Birgunj in Nepal and ground breaking ceremony

of Motihari-Amlekhgunj cross-border petroleum products pipeline at Motihari in India.

The two Prime Ministers agreed that the visit has imparted new dynamism to the multifaceted partnership between the two countries. Prime Minister Oli thanked Prime Minister Modi for the invitation and warm hospitality extended to him and his delegation.

Prime Minister Oli extended an invitation to Prime Minister Modi to pay an early visit to Nepal. Prime Minister Modi accepted the invitation; dates would be finalized through diplomatic channels.

This was the first foreign visit of Oli after assuming the office of Prime Minister in February. □

TIBETANS MARK 60TH YEAR OF DALAI LAMA'S ARRIVAL IN INDIA



Tibetan spiritual leader His Holiness the Dalai Lama presents a memento to Culture Minister of India Dr. Mahesh Sharma and BJP General Secretary Shri Ram Madhav

The Tibetan government-in-exile in India launched year-long celebrations on 31st March, 2018 to mark the 60th year of the Tibetan spiritual leader His Holiness the Dalai Lama's arrival in India, in the hill town of Dharamsala.

Accusing the Chinese of destroying the Tibetan civilization, culture and identity, the prime minister of the Tibetan government-in-exile, Lobsang Sangay, urged Tibetans to

strengthen efforts to make the return of the Dalai Lama to his native land a reality. He said "Thousands and thousands of Tibetans have been killed and have died for the cause of Tibet. Many have burned themselves alive".

His Holiness the Dalai Lama said that he had fled Tibet under difficult circumstances, it has been a time of mixed feelings of both sadness and happiness. "At the time, we had no idea what would happen in next 40 to 50 years. But today, we are commemorating 60 years in exile, so now we could see to a certain extent what would happen in the near future".

Culture Minister of India, Dr. Mahesh Sharma and General Secretary of the Bharatiya Janata Party, Shri Ram Madhav, attended The "Thank You India" function as the exile community sang songs thanking India for

providing a home to the more than 125,000 Tibetans that live in the country.

Shri Ram Madhav hoped that the Dalai Lama would be able to find a solution to the Tibetan issue "through peaceful and democratic means that will facilitate your honorable return to your homeland."

The Dalai Lama crossed into India from Lhasa on March 31, 1959, and has made India his home ever since. □



FILE PICTURE - An Indian official greets Tibetan spiritual leader Dalai Lama, on the border of Assam on 18th April, 1959 shortly after the Dalai Lama's arrival in India.