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Soft Power Diplomacy : India's REAL STRENGTH

External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj delivered the first Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay Memorial International Oration on Soft Power Diplomacy: Strength of India; organized by Indian Council of Cultural Relations in Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra on 21st May, 2018. Smt. Sushma Swaraj elaborated 6 key components of India's soft power diplomacy, and said Indian culture encompassing yoga, classical dance, movies, cuisine and Information Technology, is a treasure trove of soft power.

Articulating the fad and fancy of Indian films abroad, the external affairs minister said the craze is not only confined to Hindi cinema but also extended to Indian regional films like 'Bahubali'.

She narrated; Chinese President Xi Jinping showed keen desire for screening of the movie 'Dangal' at the BRICS Summit at Xiamen. The Indian ambassador to Mongolia manifested his strong eagerness for dubbing of

the movie 'Dangal' in Mongolian language, as wrestling is the national sport of that country. She told, when she met Prime Minister Ukhnaagiin Khurelsukh of Mongolia, he disclosed his wish for becoming an actor in Bollywood. Quipping to him, she said,

command the respect for India in the world.

Smt. Swaraj said that Jana Sangh leader Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyay's philosophy of integral humanism should be leveraged to expand the cultural footprint in other countries. Smt. Swaraj quoted "Upadhyaya believed that if one wanted to understand the soul of India, one has to understand it through the prism of culture, and not through politics or economics."

Smt. Swaraj said, there is a wave of protectionism at the international level



On the dias (From Left to Right)

M J Akbar, Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Vinay Sahasrabuddhe and Riva Ganguly Das

we need handsome leaders in politics too.

Smt. Swaraj pointed out, India has an approach of 'Vasudev Kutumbakam' (the whole world is one family) from time immemorial, so universal love and brotherhood is the center to India's diplomacy. She said, Indian culture, envisaged by Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyay, could lead to economic prosperity, political attainment and

Think it Over

A New World

We must discover the power of love, the redemptive power of love. And when we discover that, we will be able to make of this old world a new world. Love is the only way. There's power in Love. Do not underestimate it. Don't even over-sentimentalise it.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

that is fixed to the concept of I, Me and Myself but India believes in the concept of We, Us and Ourselves. If everybody sees the other as equal then there is no room for protectionism in the world."

She referred to the speech of President Trump in the UN General Assembly in September last year, where he said, "As President of the United States, I would always put America first, just like you, as the leaders of your countries would always, and should always, put your countries first." Subsequent to Trump's speech, Smt. Swaraj said,

she had a meeting with ministers of Latin America and Caribbean States, meanwhile foreign minister of a small country remarked on President Trump's speech of 'me first', if every country follows the policy of 'me first' how will my country sustain ? Responding to minister's comment, Smt. Swaraj pointed out that India had a different approach. She said India does not believe in the tradition of 'me first', but in the concept of "Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah," this sloka of the Vedas means "May everyone be happy". "When everyone is happy, everyone will have the provision of food and security."

countries will continue to be under-developed. So the economic disparity will remain intact.

Smt. Swaraj also shared an adage on how leaders in the lately held India-ASEAN Commemorative Summit demanded for a song from the Shah Rukh Khan-starrer 'Kuch Kuch Hota Hai' and for 'Bol Radha Bol Sangam Hoga Ki Nahin' from Raj Kapoor-starrer 'Sangam'. Swaraj said during bilateral meetings, foreign delegations urged for the shootings of Bollywood movies in their countries as it would boost tourism.

Addressing the gathering, ICCR President Vinay Sahasrabudhe said, "India enjoys goodwill across the world and a need is felt to further consolidate it by adopting a more focused approach for spreading understanding about Indian culture, civilization and the people." □

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SUSHMA SWARAJ'S VISIT TO MYANMAR

Ministry of External Affairs Sushma Swaraj's two-day visit to Myanmar concluded on 11th May with a range of bilateral issues discussions and signing seven agreements. During the visit, Swaraj called on H.E U Win Myint, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and met H.E. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs.

During the bilateral meetings, boundary, and border-related issues, peace & security matters, developments in the Rakhine State, including the return of displaced persons, Bharat's development assistance to Myanmar, on going projects, and other issues of mutual interest were discussed. The Minister

also met the Commander in Chief of the Myanmar Defense Services, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, during the visit.

Seven Agreements/MOUs were signed during the visit. The Agreement on Land Border Crossing is a landmark in bilateral relations between the two countries as it will enable people from both countries to cross the land border with passport and visa, including for accessing health and education services, pilgrimage and tourism. The MoU on the restoration of pagodas at Bagan underlines the enduring cultural and historical links between the two countries. □

Bridging the Gap Between the Diaspora and India

✍ Shastri Boodan

The Indian Diaspora consists of approximately 30 million people who have deep ties with India. The organisation bridging the gap between the Diaspora and India is Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad-Bharat (ARSP). It is headed by ambassador Virendra Gupta, who was also the Indian High Commissioner to Trinidad and Tobago in 2005.

Gopal Arora, Secretary of The ARSP, paid special tribute to veteran Journalist Baleshwar Agrawal, the former Secretary General of the ARSP, who took

up the cause of Indian Diaspora by sensitising the Indian Government about the importance of engaging with the Indian Diaspora. He played an important role in highlighting the Diaspora issues and bringing them to the fore in India's Foreign Policy. Agrawal served as the Secretary general from 1983 to 2013 when he passed from this life.

The Trinidad Guardian had the opportunity to speak with members of the ARSP is a non-profit organisation devoted to the promotion of universal brotherhood and harmony embodied into the ARSP's motto 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' meaning 'The whole world is one family'. The organisation has 19 branches in various states of

India with over 2200 members from all spheres of society. Over the years the ARSP has launched a number of sustained initiatives and activities to promote interactions and connectivity with the Diaspora that include PIO Parliamentarian (People of Indian



From left, Gopal Arora, Amb. Virendra Gupta, Amb. Anup Mudgal, and Narayan Kumar. The picture on the wall is of Late Shri Baleshwar Agrawal, former Secretary General of ARSP.

Origin) conferences, Know Your Roots programmes and Engagement with Diaspora Youth. The ARSP has constantly interacted with leadership and the people in countries where the Indian Diaspora is present such as Trinidad and Tobago, Mauritius, South Africa, Guyana, Suriname, Nepal, Malaysia and Fiji.

One of the best known events of engagement with Indian Diaspora is the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD), which is celebrated on January 9th annually marking the return of India's greatest Pravasi, Mohandas K. Gandhi. The idea of the PBD celebrations was conceived by the high level committee on Indian Diaspora of which Agrawal was a key

member. This committee was formed by then Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee in the year 2000 and its recommendations led to several initiatives by the Indian Government to connect with Indian Diaspora in substantive manner.

Another flagship initiative of Diaspora engagement is the 'Know India Programme' in which persons of the Diaspora between the ages of 18 and 30 are sponsored by the Indian Government to visit India for 25 days to familiarise them with their Indian roots and various

facets of contemporary India. About 1500 Indian Diaspora youth have so far benefitted from this novel initiative. Arora said the ARSP makes special arrangements for these delegates to acquaint them with Indian culture and also to facilitate their interaction with University students.

The ARSP has been able to address a number of issues facing the Diaspora including political discrimination, rights to equality and economic opportunities (as in the case of Fiji, Guyana and Mauritius). The ARSP also draws attention of the government of India to the grievances and expectations of the Diaspora with a view to bring about necessary policy changes. □

GENESIS OF INDIAN ARRIVAL

 **Paras Ramoutar**
(Trinidad and Tobago)

After 150 years of Indian Arrival, it was only in 1995, that the Government of Trinidad and Tobago opted to announce a day marking the first arrival of over East Indians here, May 30, 1845.

The Patrick Manning Government had announced that May 30, 1995 would be called Arrival Day. In 1996, when Basdeo Panday came to the political throne he feverishly announced that May 30 will be Indian Arrival Day which was to be etched in our national calendar. Despite earlier attempts by the Indian Revival and Reform Committee led by Ramdath Jagessar, the Hindu Seva Sangh with Dool Hanooman Singh and others, the Indian Review Committee led by Kamal Persad and Ashram Maharaj, the Sanatan Dharma Maha Sabha, it was former Member of Parliament for Oropouche, Trevor Sudama who moved a motion in Parliament on October 28, 1994 to have Indian Arrival Day declared a national holiday annually.

And despite stiff opposition within the corridors of Parliament and in public opinion, Sudama successfully moved the motion which was ably seconded by then MP for Caroni Central, Raymond Pallackdharrysingh. Sudama in his presentation made a strong plea which was buttressed by philosophical and sociological data and facts so that he would have left no

stone unturned. This he did with great clarity and maturity, and it was passed with contributions from Members of Parliament. One would imagine that the debate was a very emotional issue, and one had to look at the historical antecedents of the whole question of Indian Arrival, as was the case of the Chinese, Syrians, Africans and Europeans coming here, that each group singularly would have called for similar treatment.

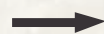
Sudama moaned that the Motion to declare Indian Arrival Day a national holiday was on the Order Paper since 1989, but was only afforded the light of the day on October 28, 1994. Notwithstanding the fact the then Prime Minister Dr Eric Williams had announced that both Divali and Eid would be public holidays from 1966, which was an election year. Later, then Prime Minister George Chambers announced in 1982 that Discovery Day, which was celebrated on the first Monday in August, was to be replaced by Emancipation Day August 1. Both Prime Ministers had ignored the presence of the East Indians in Trinidad and Tobago.

It is worth remembering spirited tone of Sudama when he piloted the motion saying that it must be accepted in the "spirit of light, in that spirit of seeking what is best for the nation, what is best for the people of Trinidad and Tobago, and indeed, of acknowledging the

cultural and plural diversity of our society and where are as a nation today". "Madam Speaker (Occah Seepaul) we do not want to put the systems of indentureship and African slavery as counterposed; they are different systems; they are different historical experiences. The conditions under which the African slaves were brought in."

Sudama must be congratulated for his incisive and straight forward presentation, which would serve as a reference point for any dialogue today or in the coming decades about the relevance of a public holiday to mark Indian Arrival Day in Trinidad and Tobago. Just in March 2017, the world community observed the centenary of the abolition of Indian indentureship, and Trinidad and Tobago was the venue for this historical observance as scores of notably former Prime Ministers, Presidents, Government Ministers, legislators, East Indian leaders, professionals among others gathered to discuss the past and the future role of the 33 million Indian diaspora membership in over 100 countries.

A nation is marked as to how it shows respects for its ethnic groups, and this means equal treatment for everyone, and one is reminded to paraphrase Dr Williams' address to the nation on Independence Day August 1962 that



there is No Mother India, No Mother Africa, No Mother China, No Mother Lebanon, but the only Mother is Mother Trinidad and Tobago. And that a Mother cannot discriminate among its children. I think that it was in this vein that Sudama so brilliantly proposed that Indian Arrival Day becomes a national holiday.

The East Indians were brought here between the period 1845 to 1917, when in excess of 347,000, most of whom were devout Hindus who brought with the Ramayana, Gita, Mahabharat, the Puranas, Hanuman Chalisa, among several others, principally from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, to rescue a dying agricultural economy, and their presence brought new hope and aspirations for the planters, and by extension the national economy. They brought with them new cuisine, jewelry, customs, habits, religion, culture, thought and way of life.

Today, the East Indian community has contributed significantly to the national well-being, prosperity as they are leaders in the professions, corporate sector, business, culture and politics. And the rest is history for we have had two Prime Ministers of East Indian extraction, namely Basdeo Panday and Kamla Persad-Bissessar.

The East Indian labourers ignited friendship between India and Trinidad and Tobago, despite their geographical distance. The East Indian labourers were brought here to contribute to British capitalism, and they worked hard, very hard and

struggled with other ethnic groups for this country's prosperity, and as well for political freedom and independence. Independence was not a one-party or one ethnic group affair, but rather it was a people's consciousness blended with the different ethnic groups and peoples that made it happen. Today friendship between India and Trinidad and Tobago continues to escalate to greater heights at the clock ticks, and one could decipher that it would continue to escalate in the coming years and decades, and even centuries.

As we observe the 173rd anniversary of Indian Arrival Day, 71st anniversary of India's Independence, and our own 56th anniversary of our Independence, all of these factors make it compulsory for our both countries to continue in this trend of friendship, of growth, and support in all the councils of the world's geopolitical and economic groups. Trinidad and Tobago have benefitted from India's graciousness in terms of ITEC, consultancies in various endeavours of economic, agricultural, cultural co-operation. Aside to these initiatives, religion and culture continue to dominate the calendar of both countries. The Mahatma Gandhi Centre for Cultural Co-operation which was inked when India's Indira Gandhi came here in October 1968, after 50 years, has now taken shape.

This is a first for any diplomat, more so, an Indian diplomat. Incumbent Indian High Commissioner, Shri Bishwadip Dey, has embarked on an

unique foray of cultural diplomacy by visiting descendants of indentured labourers at their homes and presenting hampers. This must be viewed as a micro engagement initiative, and His Excellency must be publicly commended. Usually, diplomats are noted for presenting or promoting macro issues. Dey told the media these elderly citizens have contributed not only to the development of Trinidad and Tobago, but have played an important role in keeping family values alive and passing on cultural and religious practices from one generation to the next. He continued that there are also, "strong family ties in the homes visited where witnessed that love and devotion for the elderly."

Dey added that as "senior members of society, the elderly have had an important guiding role for the local communities and form an historical link for Indian nationals of East Indian origin". The High Commission of India shares in the pride of the Indo-Trinidadian community which remains justly proud of these elders who have carved out their lives through initial struggles in their adopted country.

With this trend of co-operation at several levels of governance, the foundation has been established for co-operation in future issues which face the world society, which India continues to play a dominant role, and for which Trinidad and Tobago would fully endorse. □

Source: World Hindu News (WHN)

CROATIA AND INDIA—THE PEOPLE OF RIVERS

Croatia looking like a crescent of moon and India – the two countries are located more than 6000 kilometers away from each other but have a few common features. One is in south-eastern Europe and the other in Asia. The fertile plains of India have a number of rivers flowing in the north and south, east and the west. And Croatia lies between the Denube, Drava and Sava rivers. Both are primarily agricultural countries. Croats are agricultural people and cattle breeders. Till 1919 its peasant population was 82% which gradually fell down. Only during the post WW II era industrial development led exploitation of natural resources.

The people—Croats migrated in the sixth century from White Croatia, a region which is now Ukraine, between the southern Bug and Denieper rivers to the lower Denube valley. Thence they continued towards the Adriatic, where they conquered the Roman stronghold Salona in 614 AD. Soon after, they were converted to Christianity in the 7th century. They were Pagans in the Pre-Christian era.

The People of Rivers

The cultures that developed on the banks of rivers are in contradistinction with those which arose in desert environment. The ideas rising on the banks of flowing rivers are fluid while that those in the deserts are static. That gave movement of thought changing constantly for progression in life.

We the Indians moved along the rivers in the fourth millennium BC or earlier

towards west. The names of rivers in Europe bear its testimony. Hans Krahe (7 February 1898 – 25 June 1965) a German philologist and linguist, has pointed out that the Old European names of the rivers – Don, Donets, Dnieper, Dniester all are derived from the Rigvedic word for river—Danu. The names of rivers in the Baltic region are— Indura, Indus, Indra. They come from the Sanskrit word Indu for a drop.

Paganism

Our polytheistic ethos brings us close to Croatia. We believe in the divine hidden in the hearts of each human being. Paganism is also human centric. It supports spiritual advancement, meditation, awakening of consciousness, and transcendence of humanity through uplifting divinity within himself through inner search. For Croats life and nature both are divine. According to them humanity, animal world and nature share sanctity of totality of life.

Ringing of bells is a common feature of Indian life. As a tradition in Croatia it is related to awakening of nature, fertility and expression of strength against the evil spirits. They used bells to do away with evil spirits or forces from their animals. Wearing animal shaped costumes (zoomorphic) masks with horns and dig bells on necks by Croats is not new to Indians. When Tatar and Turks invaded them they wore masks to induce massiveness to chase the enemy away.

By 11th century Croats reached the peak of power. They spread southwards along the Adriatic coast-

from the river of Rasa in Istria to the rivers of Tara and Piva in Montenegro and eastward to D r i n a and northwards to Drava and to Denube.



Prof. Shashibala

Patriotic Zeal

Croats became Christians but struggled to use their national language in Church services. In 18th century when Hungary began to give their language the official status- the Croats reacted forcefully and it awakened their national consciousness. They never accepted to renounce their nationality or accept any kind of violation of their autonomy in the National interest of the Hungarians. In 19th century they rejected the Hungarian law and accepted a series of national law of revolutionary character.

Sanskrit Elements in Croatian Language

The Croatian language like all other European languages is saturated with Sanskrit terms. Like vach menaing to speak is Zvuk in Croatian. Uda meaning water is Voda; Udara meaning high, lofty, noble and stomach is utroba like uterus in English and utroba meaning womb in Bulgarian. Tanu in Sanskrit means thin is Tanak in Croatian.; tap = to be hot, warming, give out heat and to purify is topao; Tapta meaning heated has become O-topljen and madhu meaning honey is pronounced as med; nabha = sky is Nebo; sadas = seat is Sjedalo. □

DIPLOMATIC POSTINGS



Shri Munu Mahawar (IFS: 1996), presently Joint Secretary at Headquarters, has been appointed as the

Amb. Munu Mahawar **Ambassador of India to the Sultanate of Oman.**



Shri Mahender Singh Kanyal (IFS: 2003), presently Director at Headquarters, has been appointed as the

Amb. Mahender Singh Kanyal **Ambassador of India to the Republic of Suriname.**



Ms. Madhu Sethi (YOA : 2004), presently Counsellor in the High Commission of India, London, has been

Amb. Madhu Sethi appointed as the **next Ambassador of India to the Republic of Cuba.** □

PANKAJ SARAN APPOINTED DEPUTY NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR

Senior Diplomat **Pankaj Saran** has been appointed as Deputy National Security Advisor. Shri Saran is currently India's Ambassador to Russia.

The 1982 batch officer of Indian Foreign Service (IFS) was in November 2015 appointed as the India's envoy to Russia. He had held various positions in India and abroad including the country's High Commissioner to Bangladesh. He also served as the joint secretary in the Prime Minister's Office between 2007 and 2012. Former chief of the Intelligence Bureau, Ajit Doval is the National Security Adviser. □



DAYS TO REMEMBER

in July, 2018

July 01 : Canada Day
(National Day of Canada)

July 04 : U.S.A. : National Day

July 05 : Venezuela : National Day

July 11 : Mongolia : National Day

July 11 : World Population Day
(The population of our country and the world is on the increase. More population requires; more resources-like more milk, more baby food, more schools, colleges, hospitals,

houses and jobs. It is not possible to match the population growth with economic development.

July 13 : Amavasya ●

July 14 : France : National Day

July 21 : Belgium : National Day

July 26 : Maldives : Independence Day

July 27 : Guru Purnima ●

PIO LEGAL EAGLE is Malaysia's ATTORNEY GENERAL

Tommy Thomas, a top ethnic Indian lawyer was today appointed Malaysia's new Attorney General by the king, who appealed to Malaysians to not to "create



Tommy Thomas

religious or racial conflict" over the decision, amid protests from Islamic groups against his nomination.

A palace statement said Sultan Muhammad V has approved terminating the current Attorney

General Mohamad Apandi Ali and replacing him with Thomas, the first from the minority community to hold the post in 55 years in the Muslim-majority nation. Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad had recently proposed to nominate Thomas, 66, as the Attorney-General, the official Bernama news agency said.

The king called on all Malaysians to accept that the appointment of the Attorney-General should "not create religious or racial conflict".

INDIAN-AMERICAN WOMAN APPOINTED INTERIM CIVIL COURT JUDGE IN US



Deepa Ambekar

41-year old Indian-American Deepa Ambekar has been appointed as the interim judge to a US civil court of New York City. She has become the second Indian-American woman judge in the city after Chennai-born Raja Rajeswari. Ms Ambekar previously worked for three years with the New York City Council. □

MALAYSIA'S FIRST INDIAN-ORIGIN SIKH CABINET MINISTER

Gobind Singh Deo, an Indian-origin Sikh politician in Malaysia, has become a cabinet minister, the first member of the minority community in the country's history to be appointed as a minister.



Gobind Singh Deo

Deo, 45, who has been given the communications and multimedia portfolio, is among the two politicians of Indian descent included in the PakatanHarapan coalition's Cabinet.

The other Indian-origin lawmaker is M Kulasegaran from the Democratic

Action Party, who has been made the human resource minister.

He was first elected as an MP in the 2008 general elections. Deo was re-elected to the lower house, with an increased margin, in 2013 and he again won

this year's election with a margin of 47,635 votes.

The Punjabi community in the country has hailed the appointment of Deo as the minister. Malaysia has nearly 1,00,000 Sikh population. □

INDIANS AMONG FAVOURED MIGRANTS IN UK : SURVEY

The YouGov poll, conducted during April 2018 among 1,668 British citizens, asked a series of questions about the kind of contribution immigrants from various parts of the world make to British life. Immigrants from Indias received a strong figure of +25 on the question about making a positive contribution to British life. In comparison, other South Asian counterparts were in negative territory.

Pakistanis scored a negative figure of -4 and Bangladeshis -3.

Net figures are calculated by taking away the figure for "negative contribution" from the figure for "positive contribution". □

INDIAN-AMERICAN WINS DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY IN TEXAS

Indian-American Sri Preston Kulkarni has won the Democratic primary for the 22nd congressional district of Texas. Kulkarni, 39, a former US diplomat, won the Democratic primary runoff for Texas by defeating his only rival Letitia Plummer on Tuesday. Kulkarni received 9,466 votes (nearly 32%) while his fellow Democrat Letitia Plummer got 7,230 votes (24.3%). He will now face Republican incumbent Pete Olson in November.

Thanking the voters after the poll Kulkarni said "On May 22nd, we made history in District 22. Our movement, uniting diverse communities through

shared values, took us across the finish line and helped me become your Democratic nominee for US Congress. If elected, Kulkarni will be representing District 22 which makes up an ethnically diverse community, a mosaic of many cultures from all over the world. The runoff was required after no candidate was able to secure the 50% threshold in the primary held in March.

Kulkarni is a native Houstonian with degrees from University of Texas and Harvard. He spent 14 years in the state department as a foreign service officer. □

AMI BERA, RO KHANNA WIN CONGRESSIONAL PRIMARIES IN CALIFORNIA



Ami Bera

Indian-American irrespective of their party affiliation in the open primary, respective head for the general elections in California



Ro Khanna

Wednesday and will run for the Congressional elections on November 6. The three other Indian-Americans - Hirsh Singh, Goutam Jois and Peter Jacob - running for Congress in New Jersey lost their Congressional bid at the primary level. New Jersey has a sizeable Indian American population.

Three-time Congressman from Seventh Congressional District of California, Bera bagged more than 51 per cent of the votes in the open primary. His nearest rival Andrew Grant from the Republican party received 32.9 per cent of the votes. In California, the top two candidates,

for the House of Representatives.

Khanna, who entered the House of Representatives for the first time in 2017, received an overwhelming 58.9 per cent of the votes in the open primary for the 17th Congressional District of California. His nearest rival Ron Cohen from the Republican Party received nearly 25 per cent of the votes.

Coming from a strong Democratic bastion, both Bera and Khanna are expected to win the Congressional elections in November. □

PTI

'KOINONIA' : A PIO PIPS ANOTHER PIO IN SPELLING CONTEST IN US



Karthik Nemmani

Karthik Nemmani, a 14-year-old Indian-American boy, won the Scripps National Spelling Bee by correctly spelling "koinonia", maintaining the dominance of the community in the prestigious competition for the 11 consecutive year.

An eighth-grader from McKinney, Texas, Karthik won the spelling competition after numerous rounds against Naysa Modi, another Indian-American student.

Karthik and Naysa were the last two standing of the initial 516 spellers. "I had confidence, but I didn't think it would really happen," Karthik said, adding that he knew he would correctly spell the word meaning Christian fellowship or communion as soon as he heard it.

Karthik received \$40,000 and a trophy from the Scripps Bee, a \$2,500 cash prize (and a complete reference library) from Merriam-Webster, trips to New York and Hollywood as part of a media tour, and a pizza party for their school, the Washington Post reported.

Forty-one spellers advanced to the finals yesterday out of a field of 516 by far the largest in the 93-year history of the competition at the Gaylord National Resort & Convention Center in Maryland to battle it out for the title of champion

The National Bee is a high-profile, high-pressure endurance test as much as a nerd spelling match and spellers spend months preparing for it.

— PTI □

FIRST HINDU WOMAN TO FIGHT POLLS FROM PAK'S THARPARKAR

Sunita Parmar Menghwar, the first Hindu woman to contest the upcoming provincial assembly elections from Tharparkar in



Sunita Parmar

Pakistan's southern Sindh province, has refused to bow down to political pressure and withdraw her candidature.

Sunita, a woman from Hindu Meghwar community, has been facing

increasing pressure from the male-dominated feudal landlords in the impoverished Tharparkar district not to contest the elections on July 25. But Sunita insisted she wanted to challenge the status quo based on the feudal-electoral system in Tharparkar and has filed her nomination papers as an independent candidate.

The 30-year old insisted she is contesting the elections because no political party had done anything to improve the lives and facilities for the people of Thar. "Thari women are even ready to fight the lion now after so many disappointments," she said.

Tharparkar has the highest number of Hindus minorities in Pakistan. According to census 2017, the population of Tharparkar is 1.6 million out of which around half of the population is Hindus.

In March, another Hindu woman, Krishna Kumari Kolhi, became the first-ever Hindu Dalit woman senator in the Muslim-majority country after she was nominated by the Pakistan Peoples Party for the polls to the reserve women's seat in the Senate. □

PTI

INDIANS WAITING FOR GREEN CARDS

Indians account for more than three-fourths of those highly skilled professionals waiting in queue to obtain legal permanent residence status in the US, popularly known as green card, according to the latest official figures.

As of May 2018, there were 395,025 foreign nationals waiting for green cards under the employment-based preference category. of these,

306,601 were Indians, according to the latest figures released by US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). This does not include counts of dependent beneficiaries associated with the approved immigrant petitions, it said.

Under the existing law, no more than 7% of green cards may be issued to natives of any one independent country in a fiscal year. Indian-

Americans, most of whom are highly skilled and come to the US mainly on H-1B work visas, are the worst sufferers due to the per country quota. The current wait period for Indians for green card can be as long as 70 years. According to a newly launched group, GCReforms.org, skilled immigrants from India need to wait anywhere between 25 to 92 years for a green card. □

PTI

SAD DEMISE OF DR. MARTIN BOODHOO



Dr. Martin Boodhoo, BSoc. Sc MA PhD ACIS, born in Guyana on June 20, 1930 passed away on December 25, 2017 in the UK. His father, an indentured labourer, arrived in then British Guiana in 1893 on the "M.V. Sheila". Dr. Boodhoo had an extraordinary career highlighted by many notable achievements. He attended University of Guyana and in 1971 obtained his PhD from Leeds University, UK. He served in many notable positions in Caribbean and UK, and as Pro-Chancellor of University of Guyana in 1995 until 1999. In 1993 the University of Guyana Guild of Graduated presented 'Medals of Merit' to him. "He had a rich, mellow baritone singing voice. He spiced it with Hindi words and phrases and sometimes threw in a verse or two from the Ramayan or Gita. □

His Majesty The King INAUGURATES 77 km Gyalpozhing–Nganglam Highway



His Majesty The King graced the inauguration of the 77 km Gyalpozhing–Nganglam Highway on 10 May 2018. His Majesty was accompanied by His Royal Highness the *Gyaltshab* Jigme Dorji Wangchuck. The inauguration was attended by the Prime Minister, the Indian Ambassador to Bhutan, Cabinet Ministers, senior government officials, and members of parliament.

The highway connects Monggar Districts to Nganglam bypassing Samdrup Jongkhar District, and

is expected to reduce travel time to Phuentsholing via India as a result. It will also connect to the Bongdeyma industrial estate in Monggar. The project was funded by Government of India. □

INDIAN EMBASSY CELEBRATED THE LAYING OF FOUNDATION STONE



The Embassy of India in Bhutan celebrated the laying of the foundation stone of the Indian Embassy Estate as part of the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Bhutan and India on 4 May 2018.

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi laid the Foundation stone of the India House Estate in May 1968.

Her Majesty the Queen Mother Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck and Her

Majesty the Queen Mother Ashi Tshering Yangdon Wangchuck, Prime Minister, Cabinet Ministers, members of the armed forces, senior government officials and former Indian Ambassadors to Bhutan attended the event marked with lighting of lamps, dances, and a feast. □

PICTURE STORIES:



On 5 May 2018, His Majesty The King granted an Audience to 13 former IMTRAT Commandants and 2 former DANTAK Chief Engineers who were invited to Bhutan as part of the celebrations commemorating 50 years of diplomatic ties between Bhutan and India. His Majesty thanked the officials for their service in Bhutan and their contribution towards strengthening the friendship between Bhutan and India. □



His Majesty The King and Her Majesty The Gyaltsuen graced the Teachers' Day celebrations at Changlimithang, Thimphu and interacted with more than 1,500 teachers who were honoured by the Ministry of Education for their valuable contributions to the education system in Bhutan. 43 teachers from India who taught in Bhutan in the 1960's were specially invited from India as guests of honour, as this year also marks the 50th anniversary of Bhutan-India Friendship. Indian teachers have

played an important part in contributing to the education system in Bhutan, and many have served in the country for over 3 decades. □



His Majesty The King granted Dhar (ceremonial scarf) to the newly elected members of the National Council (Upper House) in Tashichhodzong, Thimphu on 29 May 2018. The ceremony was also graced by Her Majesty The Gyaltsuen. The National Council election was held on 20 April 2018. □

स्व. बालेश्वर अग्रवाल 5वीं पुण्यतिथि

अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद के पूर्व महासचिव स्व. बालेश्वर अग्रवाल जी की 5वीं पुण्यतिथि पर प्रवासी भवन में आयोजित भजनसंध्या में अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय ख्याति के संगीतमर्मज्ञ श्री अजय याज्ञनिक ने रामचरित मानस के सुंदरकांड का पाठ किया। सुंदरकांड के पाठ से पूर्व बालेश्वर अग्रवाल जी को श्रद्धांजलि अर्पित करते हुए श्री अजय याज्ञनिक ने कहा कि उनका व्यक्तित्व विराट था। उन्होंने जीवनपर्यंत समाज को शाश्वत दिशा प्रदान करने का प्रयास किया। यही कारण है कि आज के युग में जब हमारे सभी सामाजिक मूल्य विघटित हो रहे हैं हम आज भी बालेश्वर जी को श्रद्धा और सम्मान के साथ स्मरण करते हैं।



कुटुम्बकम' के आदर्श को सुदृढ़ करना उनके प्रति हमारी सच्ची श्रद्धांजलि होगी। भजन संध्या का संचालन करते हुए श्रीमती सुषमा अग्रवाल ने बालेश्वर अग्रवाल के प्रति भावभीनी श्रद्धांजलि अर्पित की। भजन संध्या में संसद सदस्य श्री रवीन्द्र किशोर सिन्हा, दूधेश्वर मठ के स्वामी महंत नारायण गिरि महाराज, स्वामी गोवत्स महामंडलेश्वर के अतिरिक्त अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद के अनेक वरिष्ठ सदस्य उपस्थित थे।

भजन संध्या से पूर्व अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद के सदस्यों ने स्व. बालेश्वर अग्रवाल जी की प्रतिमा पर माल्यापण कर उनके प्रति श्रद्धासुमन अर्पित किया।

अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद के महासचिव श्री श्याम परांडे ने बालेश्वर जी की उपलब्धियों का उल्लेख करते हुए कहा कि उन्होंने अनेक महत्वपूर्ण कार्य किये परंतु भारतीय भाषाओं की प्रथम संवाद एजेंसी 'हिन्दुस्थान समाचार' और प्रवासी भारतीयों के हितों की रक्षा के लिये स्थापित अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद उनकी उपलब्धियों में सर्वोपरि है। श्री श्यामपरांडे ने अपनी ओर से तथा अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद की ओर से स्व. बालेश्वर अग्रवाल जी को श्रद्धांजलि देते हुए कहा कि निष्पक्ष पत्रकारिता के उनके आदर्शों को पूरा करना और अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद के लक्ष्यों पर 'वसुधैव



पाकिस्तान में कृष्ण मंदिर के लिए दो करोड़ रुपये का अनुदान

पाकिस्तान के पंजाब प्रांत की सरकार ने रावलपिंडी में स्थित कृष्ण मंदिर के सौंदर्यीकरण एवं इसके विस्तार के लिए दो करोड़ रुपये की राशि जारी की है। रावलपिंडी और इस्लामाबाद शहरों में केवल कृष्ण मंदिर ही ऐसा एकमात्र मंदिर है जो श्रद्धालुओं के लिए खुला है।



रावलपिंडी स्थित कृष्ण मंदिर

मंदिर में हर दिन सुबह और शाम दो बार आरती की जाती है जिसमें छह से सात लोग उपस्थित रहते हैं।

इवैक्यूई ट्रस्ट प्रॉपर्टी बोर्ड (ईटीपीबी) उप प्रशासक मोहम्मद आसिफ ने बताया कि प्रांतीय एसेंबली के एक सदस्य के आग्रह पर सरकार ने दो करोड़ रुपये जारी किए हैं। सौंदर्यीकरण कार्य शीघ्र शुरू होगा। इसके बाद मंदिर में जगह बढ़ेगी और अधिक श्रद्धालु आ सकेंगे। कांजी मल व उजागर मल राचपाल ने 1897 में मंदिर को बनवाया था। □

ये हैं पाकिस्तान की पहली महिला, सिख रिपोर्टर

ख्वाहिश तो थी पाकिस्तान की पहली सिख महिला मॉडल बनने की मगर बन गई पहली महिला सिख पत्रकार। पेशावर की रहने वाली 24 साल की मनमीत कौर एक प्राइवेट टीवी न्यूज चैनल में रिपोर्टर है। पाकिस्तान के इतिहास में यह पहली बार हुआ है जब कोई सिख लड़की वर्किंग वुमन के रूप में सामने आई है।

पाकिस्तान में महिला रिपोर्टर होना कैसा महसूस कराता है, इस बारे में मनमीत ने बताया कि जब से

टीवी रिपोर्टर बनी हूँ, कई धार्मिक, राजनीतिक और सांस्कृतिक आयोजनों की रिपोर्टिंग कर चुकी हूँ। इस दौरान कभी भी भेदभाव होता नहीं देखा। पाकिस्तानी अवाम बदल चुकी हैं। मैंने कभी नहीं सोचा की बुरका पहनकर रिपोर्टिंग करूंगी। मैं जहां भी जाती हूँ, लोग मुझे मेरी कम्युनिटी के चेहरे के तौर पर ही देखते हैं। मनमीत की ख्वाहिश है कि वह अमृतसर एक रिपोर्टर के तौर पर आएंगे।

पेशावर के जिन्ना कॉलेज फॉर विमिन से सोशल

साइंस में पोस्ट ग्रेजुएट मनमीत ने बताया कि मीडिया मेरा क्षेत्र नहीं था लेकिन एक प्राइवेट चैनल ने मुझे सोशल रिपोर्टर की नौकरी दी तो मैं इस तरफ आ गई। टाइम्स ऑफ

इंडिया को दिए इंटरव्यू से मनमीत ने बताया कि पाक में सिखों की बड़ी आबादी है पर सिख लड़किया पढ़ाई के बाद अमूमन घरों में बैठ जाती है। □



मनमीत कौर

दुनिया का पहला सिख सेंटर

गुरुद्वारा रकाबगंज साहिब में जहां कोई भी व्यक्ति श्री गुरुग्रंथ साहिब जी पर रिसर्च कर सकेगा। लोगों को ऐसी सुविधाएं मिलेंगी जिससे कि वह सिख इतिहास के बारे में कोई भी जानकारी आसानी से हासिल कर सकेंगे। इस सेंटर का नाम 'इंटरनैशनल सेंटर फॉर सिख स्टडीज' है। यह सेंटर अपने आप में देश-विदेश का पहला रिसर्च सेंटर होगा। रिसर्च सेंटर के दो पार्ट होंगे। पहला पार्ट साहित्यिक जबकि दूसरा मल्टीमीडिया का होगा। सेंटर का काम काफी स्पीड से चल रहा है। दिल्ली सिख गुरुद्वारा प्रबंधक कमिटी ने कहा कि सेंटर का काम पूरा कर जल्द से जल्द लोगों के हवाले कर दिया जाएगा।

डीएसजीएमसी की ओर से सिख धर्म और इतिहास की एक छत के तले जानकारी देने के लिए बनाया जा रहा यह सेंटर अपनी अनूठी दिखावाट के कारण टूरिस्टों के लिए आकर्षण का केन्द्र बनेगा। यह दावा

कमिटी के जनरल सेक्रेटरी मनजिंदर सिंह सिरसा ने किया है। सिरसा ने बताया कि नई मल्टीमीडिया टेक्नॉलजी द्वारा सिख इतिहास की जानकारी नए तरीके के साथ देने वाला सिख कौम का यह गौरवशाली संस्थान होगा। सिरसा ने कहा कि इससे सिखों का इतिहास गुरु घर की चारदीवारी से बाहर निकाल कर दूसरे धर्मों के लोगों तक पहुंचाने में इससे कामयाबी मिलेगी। सिरसा ने कहा कि जिसे तेजी के साथ इस प्रोजेक्ट पर काम चल रहा है, उस हिसाब से अगले कुछ महीनों में यह प्रोजेक्ट पूरा होने की उम्मीद है।

इसके लिए डिजिटल लाइब्रेरी बनाई जाएगी। इसमें लोगों के लिए सिख धर्म से जुड़ी हर जानकारी को अपलोड किया जाएगा। इसमें सिख गुरुओं के नाम, लीडर्स के नाम, देश-विदेश में जाने-माने सिखों के नाम और वह हर चीज डिजिटल फॉर्म में मुहैया कराई

जाएगी जो सिखों से जुड़ी हुई है। इसमें इंटरनैशनल डेटा के लिए बाहर बने गुरुद्वारों से मदद ली जाएगी। इस सेक्शन में एक हिस्सा रिसर्च का भी होगा। स्टूडेंट्स, स्कॉलर्स, मास्टर्स, बीए या फिर जो लोग गुरु ग्रंथ साहिब पर शॉर्ट टर्म कोर्स करते हैं, वे यहां आकर श्री गुरु ग्रंथ साहिब को जानने में दिलचस्पी रखता है कि वह कैसे बनी या फिर किन-किन गुरुओं की बाणी को कैसे इकट्ठा किया गया, वह जानकारी जुटा सकता है। सेंटर में बने बड़े से हॉल को यूज किया जाएगा। हॉल में ऑडिटोरियम बनाया जाएगा, जिसमें करीब 200 लोगों के बैठने की जगह होगी। वहीं एलईडी स्क्रीन भी लगाई जाएगी। यहां पर डॉक्यूमेंट्री फिल्म के साथ-साथ धार्मिक फिल्मों या कार्यक्रमों का आयोजन हुआ करेगा। इसके अलावा हॉल के साइड में सिख हिस्ट्री को भी डिस्प्ले किया जाएगा। □

अमेरिका में भारतवंशी गुरसोच कौर पहली पगड़ीधारी महिला सिख सहायक पुलिस अधिकारी के तौर पर नियुक्त की गई

न्यूयॉर्क पुलिस में पहली पगड़ीधारी महिला अधिकारी शामिल

अमेरिका के न्यूयॉर्क पुलिस विभाग (एनवाईपीडी) में पहली पगड़ीधारी महिला सिख सहायक पुलिस अधिकारी को शामिल किया गया है। गुरसोच कौर की आग्लिल्यरी पुलिस अधिकारी (एपीओ) के तौर पर नियुक्ती की गई है। वह पिछले हफ्ते न्यूयॉर्क सिटी पुलिस अकादमी से स्नातक हुई है।



गुरसोच कौर

सिख ऑफिसर्स एसोसिएशन ने ट्वीट कर कहा कि हम न्यूयॉर्क पुलिस विभाग में पहली सिख पगड़ीधारी आग्लिल्यरी पुलिस अधिकारी का स्वागत करने में गौरवान्वित महसूस कर रहे हैं। एपी ओर गुरसोच कौर और अन्य आग्लिल्यरी पुलिस ऑफिसर्स अकादमी से स्नातक हुए हैं। हमें आप पर गर्व है। उम्मीद जताई जा रही है कि गुरसोच की नियुक्ति से अन्य महिलाओं को भी एनवाईपीडी में शामिल होने की प्रेरणा मिलेगी और देश में सिख धर्म के बारे में जागरूकता बढ़ेगी।

सिख धर्म की समझ बढ़ाने में मदद करेगी

गुरसोच कौर का उद्देश्य विभाग से जुड़कर दूसरे लोगों

को कानून व्यवस्था लागू करने के लिए प्रेरित करना है। सिख ऑफिसर्स एसोसिएशन ने फेसबुक पोस्ट में कहा कि आपकी सेवा अन्य को पुलिस बल में शामिल होने के लिए प्रेरित करेगी। भारत के आवास और शहरी कार्य राज्यमंत्री हरदीप सिंह पुरी ने उम्मीद जताई कि इससे अमेरिका में सिख धर्म और सिखों के बारे में बेहतर समझ पैदा होगी। उन्होंने कहा कि इससे सिख के प्रति धारणा ठीक करने में मदद मिलेगी और 2010 में मेरे साथ और हाल में कनाडा

के मंत्री नवदीन बैस के साथ जो हुआ है उसकी पुररावृति नहीं होगी।

न्यूयॉर्क के पुलिस कमिश्नर जेम्स ओ नील ने 2016 में बताया था कि विभिन्न रैकों पर अभी 160 सिख अफसर काम कर रहे हैं। उन्होंने कहा था कि वह इस संख्या को और बढ़ाना चाहते हैं।

दिसम्बर 2016 में न्यूयॉर्क पुलिस विभाग ने सिख अफसरों को पगड़ी और दाढ़ी रखने की इजाजत दी थी। साथ ही समान नीति को बढ़ावा दिया ताकि सिख पुलिस में आने के लिये प्रोत्साहित हों।

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नंदन नीलेकणि समेत 4 भारतीय कारोबारी अपनी आधी संपत्ति करेंगे दान

इन्फोसिस के सह-संस्थापक व चेरयमैन नंदन नीलेकणि, उनकी पत्नी रोहिणी नीलेकणि और भारतीय मूल के तीन अरबपतियों ने अपनी आधी संपत्ति दान करने की घोषणा की है। दरअसल, इन्होंने बिल व मेलिंडा गेट्स और वॉरेन बफेट द्वारा शुरू की गई परोपकारी पहल को जॉइन किया है, जो अपनी संपत्ति का आधे से ज्यादा हिस्सा चैरिटी के लिए देने को प्रतिबद्ध करता है।



गिविंग प्लेज संस्था की ओर से बुधवार को बताया गया कि नीलेकणि, अनील व एलिसन भुसरी, शमशेर व शबीना वायालिल, बीआर शेटी और उनकी पत्नी चंद्रकुमारी रघुराम शेटी उन 14 परोपकारी लोगों में से एक हैं, जो पिछले सालभर में इसमें शामिल हुए हैं। साल 2010 में 40 अमेरिकी परोपकारियों के साथ इसकी शुरुआत की गई थी और अब यह 22 देशों के 183 लोगों तक पहुंच गया है। इस 8 साल में परोपकार का यह प्रयास अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर बढ़ता गया है और इससे कनाडा, भारत, यूई व यूएस के परोपकारी लोग जुड़ रहे हैं।

नीलेकणि 'एक स्टेप' संस्था के सह-संस्थापक भी है, जो शुरुआत के वर्षों में 200 मिलियन यानी 20 करोड़ से ज्यादा बच्चों को पढ़ने का मौका देता है। भारत में आधार कार्ड का पूरा इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर तैयार करने में नंदन ने बड़ी भूमिका निभाई है। रोहिणी नीलेकणि अर्धम संस्था की संस्थापक-अध्यक्ष है। यह संस्था पूरे भारत में पानी और स्वच्छता के लिए काम करती है। वही, अमेरिका में रहने वाले भुसरी बिजनेस सॉफ्टवेयर फर्म वर्कडे के सह-संस्थापक और सीईओ हैं। उनका नेट वर्थ 1.8 बिलियन डॉलर है। इससे पहले आईटी कंपनी विप्रो के प्रमुख अजीम प्रेमजी भी अपनी 25 फीसरी संपत्ति दान करने की चेष्टा कर चुके हैं। □

अमेरिका ने अपनी कमान का नाम बदल बताई भारत से करीबी की अहमियत

हिंदू और प्रशांत महासागरों के बीच बढ़ते संपर्क को देखते हुए ट्रंप प्रशासन ने अमेरिका प्रशांत कमान का नाम बदलकर अमेरिका हिंद-प्रशांत कर दिया है। दरअसल, अमेरिका अपनी स्ट्रेटजिक प्लानिंग में भारत को एक प्रमुख साझेदार के रूप में देखता है। यह कदम अमेरिकी रणनीतिक सोच में हिंद महासागर के बढ़ते महत्व को भी दर्शाता है। सेकंड वर्ल्ड वॉर के बाद गठित अमेरिका प्रशांत कमान या पीएसीओएम को अब से हिंद-प्रशांत कमान के नाम से जाना जाएगा। सत्ता में आने के तुरंत बाद ट्रंप प्रशासन ने एशिया प्रशांत का नाम बदल कर भारत-प्रशांत कर दिया था और क्षेत्र में भारत को एक विशिष्ट दर्जा दिया था। अमेरिका के रक्षा मंत्री मिज मैटिस ने जॉईंट बेस पर्ल हार्बर में चेंज ऑफ गार्ड सेरेमनी के दौरान इस फैसले की घोषणा की। कार्यक्रम के दौरान एडमिरल फिल डेविडसन ने अमेरिका हिंद-प्रशांत कमान या हिंद पीएसीओएम के कमांडर के रूप में हैरी हैरिस का स्थान लिया। □

श्रद्धांजलि

अभिमन्यु अनत

हिन्दी के शीर्षक कथाकार और कालजयी साहित्यकार अभिमन्यु अनत का देहावसान 4 जून 2018 को हो गया उनके देहावसान से हिन्दी कथा साहित्य के एक युग का अन्त हो गया है। उनका जन्म 01 अगस्त, 1937 को मॉरीशस के त्रिओले गांव में हुआ था। स्व. अनत को मॉरीशस एवं भारत के अनेक शीर्ष सम्मानों एवं पुरस्कारों से अलंकृत किया गया था। 26 अगस्त, 1914 को उन्हें भारत की साहित्य अकादमी ने महत्तर सदस्यता (भवदमतंतल थमससवैपच) प्रदान कर हिन्दी लेखन के प्रति उनके महत्वपूर्ण योगदान को स्वीकृति प्रदान की। इस अवसर पर उनके व्यक्तित्व और कृतित्व को उजागर करते हुए अकादमी के प्रशस्ति पत्र में कहा कि-मॉरीशस द्वीप के एक छोटे से नगर त्रिओले में जन्में अभिमन्यु अनत ने एक मजदूर, एक शिक्षक, एक नाट्य शिक्षक और प्रायः 24 वर्षों तक वरिष्ठ व्याख्याता के रूप में कार्य किया है। आपने भारतीय भाषाओं के कार्यप्रभारी और सृजनात्मक लेखन एवं प्रकाशन के प्रमुख के रूप में महात्मा गाँधी संस्थान, मोका में योगदान किया।

हिन्दी साहित्यकाश में अभिमन्यु अनत की महत्वपूर्ण उपस्थिति केवल मॉरीशस के हिन्दी साहित्यकार के रूप में नहीं, बल्कि हिन्दी साहित्य संसार के शीर्ष व्यक्तित्व के रूप में भी है उनकी यह उपस्थिति पिछले चार दशकों से निरंतर बनी हुई है। अनत की प्रकाशित कृतियों में तीस उपन्यास, सात कहानी-संग्रह, पाँच नाटक, चार कविता-संग्रह, एक आत्मकथा और बड़ी संख्या में अन्य साहित्यिक कृतियाँ शामिल हैं। यह कहा जा सकता है कि अनत साहित्य के एक युग सरीखे हैं। अनत की विलक्षणता अपने कथ्य को महाकाव्यात्मक बना देने में है।

यद्यपि मॉरीशस में पहला हिन्दी उपन्यास 1960 में प्रकाशित हुआ, लेकिन आधुनिक हिन्दी उपन्यास यात्रा की शुरुआत अभिमन्यु अनत के पहले उपन्यास और नदी बहती रही के 1970 में प्रकाशन के साथ हुई। आपकी कृतियों का परिमाण ही नहीं, बल्कि उनकी विस्तृत व्याप्ति और पहुंच आपको

अनूठा साबित करती है, जिसमें मॉरीशस के जीवन ओर संस्कृति के अतीत, वर्तमान और भविष्य का चित्रण किया गया है। आपका पहला उपन्यास द्वीप के श्रमिक वर्ग की दुर्दशा, दमन, शोषण और उनकी असहायता का चित्रण किया गया है। आपका पहला

उपन्यास द्वीप के श्रमिक वर्ग की दुर्दशा, दमन, शोषण और उनकी असहायता का चित्रण करता है, लेकिन साथ ही इसमें प्यार, जीवन और सहजता के रंग भी हैं। आपके बाद के उपन्यास एक भीगा प्यार (1972), हड़ताल कब होगी (1979) और पर पगडंडी मरती नहीं (1983) में ग्रामीण जीवन के दुःख-तकलीफों के विभिन्न पक्षों, तथा अपने अस्तित्व के लिए भाग्य और व्यवस्था से लड़ी जाने वाली लड़ाई पर केंद्रित हैं। तीसरे किनारे पर (1976), जम गया सूरज (1983), मुड़िया पहाड़ बोल उठा (1987), लहरों की बेटी (1995) और चलती रहो अनुपमा (1998) समाज में स्त्रियों द्वारा पत्नी, बेटी, वेश्या अथवा स्त्री होने के कारण अपने जीवन में प्रतिदिन के संघर्षों को चित्रित किया गया है। मॉरीशस, वहां की भूमि और वहां का जीवन अनत की कृतियों का अखंडित पक्ष है। इसलिए नगरीय जीवन के केंद्रित आपके उपन्यासों में भी ग्रामीण जीवन के संघर्ष पृष्ठभूमि के रूप में दिखाई पड़ते हैं।

अभिमन्यु अनत अपने देश के इतिहास और पूर्वजों के अतीत को लेकर काफी सचेत हैं। आपकी कृतियाँ ऐसे इतिहास को आत्मसात करने के प्राथमिक उदाहरण हैं, जिन्हें विस्थापित होने पर हम प्रायः भूल जाते हैं। अनत ने अपने महाकाव्यात्मक उपन्यासत्रयी-लाल पसीना (1977), गांधीजी बोले थे (1984) तथा पसीना बहता रहा (1993) के माध्यम से मॉरीशस के अतीत को अमर बना दिया है। ये तीनों कृतियाँ एकसाथ मॉरीशस के मानस में मील के पत्थर के रूप में स्थापित हैं। लाल पसीना में मॉरीशस की भूमि पर पहली बार पहुंच गिरमिटिया लोगों पर हुई क्रूरता, शोषण और उनकी निस्सहायता का वर्णन है।

मॉरीशस और भारत की विभिन्न पत्र-पत्रिकाओं तथा संग्रहों में प्रकाशित अनत की कहानियाँ की संख्या 150 से भी अधिक है। आपका प्रथम कहानी-संग्रह खामोशी की चीत्कार (1976) प्रवासी मजदूरों के शोषण तथा उनकी धार्मिक एवं सांस्कृतिक पहचान को बचाए रखने के संघर्ष पर केंद्रित है। आपके साहित्यिक जीवन को विस्तृत करने वाला सूत्र अस्मिता, जीवन के सम्मान एवं गरिमा तथा इस दावे के लिसे व्यक्तित्व की मानसिक अंतः ग्रथिता की लड़ाई ही है। वो बीच का आदमी (1981) कहानी के नायक रामचरित का भूमि रक्षा

का संघर्ष हमें प्रेमचंद की रंगभूमि के सूरदास और गोदान के होरीराम की याद दिलाता है, साथ ही किसानों की जीवन पर शहरी संस्तुति के पड़ने वाले प्रभाव की भी। इंसान और मशीन (1976), एक थाली समंदर (1987), बवंडर बाहर भीतर (2002), अभिमन्यु अनत की आरंभिक कहानियाँ और कल जाएगा यमराज (2003) आपके अन्य कहानी-संग्रह हैं। अभिमन्यु अनत के लिए साहित्य एक माध्यम है-आदमीयत की रक्षा के लिए मनुष्य को बेहतर जीवन देने के लिए तथा समाज के सांस्कृतिक और मानसिक परिष्कार के लिए।

अभिमन्यु अनत के कार्यजीवन में त्रैमासिक पत्रिका वसंत के आपके संपादन काल में कहानी का विकास एक प्रमुख परिघटना है, जिसको न हिन्दी साहित्य की सराहना मिली और न ही भारतीय पाठकों की। ऐसी दुर्भाग्यपूर्ण परिस्थिति के बावजूद अनत ने वसंत का संपादन 1978 से 1997 तक किया, जिसके माध्यम से प्रायः 200 नए लेखकों को मंच प्राप्त हुआ। 1993 में आपने वसंत से चयनित 30 कहानियों का संकलन वसंत चयनिका प्रकाशित कराया। जनसामान्य के प्रति आपका प्यार सर्वविविध है, सामाजिक सरोकारों के प्रति आपकी निरंतर संलग्नता को देखते हुए किसी को भी ईर्ष्या हो सकती है। आप मुखर और निडर हैं, तथापि आप इस बात को लेकर भयभीत हैं कि एक देश अपने ही इतिहास और विलुप्तप्राय अतीत के प्रति बहरा बना हुआ है।

अभिमन्यु अनत की पहली कविता-संग्रह नागफनी में उलझी साँसे 1977 में प्रकाशित हुआ था। इसके बाद आपके तीन और कविता-संग्रह कैक्टस के दाँत (1982), एक डायरी बयान (1987) और गुलमोहन खिल उठा (1994) प्रकाशित हुए। इनके साथ-साथ नवीनतम कविता-संग्रह लरजते लम्हे कमल किशोर गोयनका द्वारा संपादित अभिमन्यु अनत : समग्र कविताएँ (1998) में शामिल है।

अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद, भारत उनके प्रति सादर श्रद्धांजलि अर्पित करती है। □

