

ANTAR RASHTRIYA SAHAYOG PARISHAD BULLETIN



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Workshop on Indian Diaspora in Reunion Island, FRANCE

✍ Amb. Manju Seth



ARSP Delegates at Trinity Park in Reunion Island after paying homage to Mahatma Gandhi

Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad (ARSP) has been undertaking a wide range of activities in order to engage with and expand its outreach to Indian diaspora worldwide. However, contacts and interaction with the Francophone diaspora has been quite limited. ARSP for the first time, organised a one-day workshop in Reunion Island on 7th July 2018, at the prestigious MOCA venue with enthusiastic participation by the diaspora as well as by the local

administration. At the inaugural session Consul General welcomed the holding of this first ever interaction with the diaspora in Reunion Island, by the ARSP, and hoped that this would go a long way in removing the feeling of neglect in the minds of the diaspora. **Amb Virendra Gupta**, in his inaugural address, spoke of this first endeavour by ARSP to connect with the Francophone Diaspora, especially with the 280,000 strong diaspora of Reunion Island who contribute to the

economic, social, cultural and political life of Reunion Island, adding that this interaction would lead to creating

Think it Over

Blind Faith

Blind faith is belief in a thing or person without any reasoning or basis. Unquestioned allegiance-if you don't you follow someone unquestioningly-can be dangerous. Faith, on the other hand, is based on logic and rational thinking.

Jaya Row



interlinkages for mutual benefit and enhance people to people contacts.

The Mayor of the capital city of St Denis, **Mr Gilbert Annette** spoke of the strong cultural connect with India and that the classes for Tamil, Hindi and Gujarati languages, besides Yoga lessons were commenced in schools. **Mr Jean Hughes Ratenon**, Hon'ble Member of Parliament, in his keynote remarks welcomed and appreciated this first ever visit by a delegation from India adding that the Reunionnise Indian diaspora has for long kept India in their hearts; they looked to India for issue of OCI cards and hoped that

both the Indian and French governments would resolve the matter as the records were destroyed; he said he would take up the matter with the French government in Paris. **Ms Lynda Lee Mow Sim**, Vice President of the Regional Council, spoke of the contribution of the diaspora to the vibrant culture of Reunion Island which had a mix of diaspora from amongst others, Africa and China, and the intermixing had led to a Creole culture but with Indian culture as the predominant one. All three expressed appreciation for this initiative by ARSP and hoped that this would mark the beginning of many more such interactions.

"The afternoon session was chaired by **Amb Manju Seth** which was on the combined themes of:

1. Diaspora Connect : Enhancement of cultural and educational linkages between India and Reunion Island; &
2. Promotion of Tourism between India and Reunion Island.

In her opening remarks **Amb Manju Seth** spoke of the importance of this outreach effort by ARSP to interact with, and listen to, the Francophone diaspora in Reunion Island with a view to better understanding their concerns and expectations and enhancing two-way engagement/dialogue. The Indian delegation made brief interventions: **Mr Shyam Parande**, Secretary General, ARSP, said that the greater two-way interaction between India and Reunion was needed adding that it was interesting to observe that the Reunion people had adopted both Indian values and ethos and elements of France in their lifestyles, clothes and cuisine. **Amb Dayakar**, Sr Vice President of ARSP, highlighted the emphasis given by

Indian diaspora to culture and education, which helped them to transform their lives and move from the margins to mainstream life in their host countries adding that multiculturalism and tolerance are inherent in Indians.

Prof Ajay Dubey of JNU, stated that Reunionnise diaspora constituted 5% of all Indian Diaspora and despite French policy of integration, they are the only Francophone Diaspora to retain Indian culture and customs while being French in their lifestyles; he made three proposals for mutual benefit : i) Reunion is like Europe in Africa and could be a gateway for India to connect with Francophone Africa; ii) MOUs have been signed for Educational exchanges, including between JNU & Reunion University but flow of students/Professors low due to visa and language issues & recognition of degrees which need to be addressed; iii) huge potential of Heritage tourism which needs to be tapped.

From the Reunion side, **Mr Jean Regis Ramasamy**, Historian / journalist proposed that Reunion could be a gateway for India to Europe; it could help connect with the Francophone Indian diaspora in the Caribbean; he would like an Indian Institute to be set up in Reunion on the lines of the Confucius Institute; Reunion needs help and expertise from India in some fields like urban violence, etc. **Dr Selvam Chanemougame**, president of the Tamij Sangam, welcomed the visit of the largest ever Indian delegation to Reunion Island stating that they had waited for 30 years for India to use and leverage their strengths but both India and Paris had ignored Reunion but a beginning has been made now; he



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also stressed on the need for mutual recognition of degrees. **Ms Sabine Paulic Armoudom**, President of ARRCC, briefly outlined three projects that were being pursued and requested support for their implementation viz i) recognition of classical Indian Dance degrees by the French Government (Indian dance is taught at the conservatory but the teachers's degree from India is not recognised at par with the degrees for "western dances); ii) raining in Yoga at three levels needed and recognition request required to be made to the French government and by AYUSH of the Centre and certificates issued by ARRCC; iii) support requested for the visit of a CHU (Centre Hospitalier Universitaire, Reunion) delegation to India to discuss with Ministry of AYUSH for signing an MOU to introduce Ayurveda as alternative medicine therapy in CHU and conduct joint research; and to get Ayurveda experts to work in Reunion Island. **Ms Rabia Badat**, Vice President of Association Musalman, requested that business visas be facilitated and given for longer periods to enable frequent and easy business travel to India; Students from Reunion could be facilitated to study in the Indian Engineering colleges and more cultural troupes need to perform in Reunion Island.

Mr Mahen Utchanah, President GOPIO International, made a number of suggestions viz. OCI cards to be given more liberally for Francophone countries; separate group for KIP from Francophone countries; Francophone session in PBD 2019; Exrernal Affairs Ministry could come to Reunion Island from Mauritius when she comes for the World Hindi Conference; Ayush Ministry to set up Ayurveda Centres/

hospitals in PIO countries including Reunion Island; Indian Universities toast up campuses abroad; more cultural troupes, including Tamil, Hindi, Gujarati, every year to be sent from India and Reunion Island could be a wedding destination for Indians. **Prof R K Bhatia**, conveyed that PIOCCI would facilitate businessmen to come to India and also promote two way tourism. **Mr Mukesh Aggarwal** stated that faculty exchanges between the Universities would be beneficial; **Ms Sarita Budhoo** from Mauritius said that today the cultural connect was strong and difficulties faced by the first migrants had been overcome; pioneering work had been done by Mr Paul Canuguy and Yogesh Bonne in trying to trace roots. **Mr Henri Amogon Poule**, President GOPIO Reunion, stressed that rejuvenating existing links was important; requested support for signing an MOU for twinning between Pudduchery and St Pierre & Karaikal with another city.

In the open house session, interventions were made by **Mr Joel Naraynin**, CEO, Akoya hotel, hoped that Indians would give a boost to ecotourism and visit Reunion Island; **Dr Guy Pignolet**, Scientific Advisor, suggested that autobiography of former president, Abdul Kalam, could be distributed to schools in Reunion Island and proposed cooperation in study of outer space; **Mr Tartrist**, of Reunion University, stated that the University would like to set up an India Institute on similar lines as the Confucius Institute, funded by both sides; under the EU's Erasmus programme, funding of 1 Million Euros is available and any problems would be resolved with the assistance of the Prefet of Reunion Island; **Mr Yogesh**

Bonne, President ACTIR, said that the problem of finding roots of the Francophone diaspora could be resolved and OCI cards issued if access to archives in India (in Chennai and Kolkata) could be facilitated; **Prof Sheetal Sharma**, JNU, stated that the existing channels should be utilised for student and faculty exchanges, including "GIAN; **Prof Atanu Mohapatra** proposed direct links in cultural, technological, design and fashion fields; **Mr Jean Regis Ramasamy** suggested joint research in education and culture and historical research, access to information on trade fairs in India, and possibly Heritage tours; **Mr. Armoudom**, President France-India group, said the main problem of OCI and visas for Reunion people needed to be resolved at the earliest; **Dr Lena Armoudom**, President, Committee for indentured Indian labour, suggested that India use and leverage its diaspora as Reunion is essentially Europe in the Indian Ocean; **Mr Ludovic**, President Chinmaya Mission, said that an Institute for Indian Ocean studies should be set up ; an IIM and IIT campus can be set up in Reunion Island and can be utilised to help students from Francophone Africa; he suggested setting up a Chamber or Business Club in Reunion to export to the African markets.

In his concluding remarks, **Amb Anup Mudgal**, while appreciating the frank interaction and the many suggestions made, said that the ARSP would cull out the doable core issues and take these up and forward concrete proposals with outcomes, to the government and other agencies for implementation. □

PEOPLE OF INDIAN ORIGIN CONSTITUTE THE MOST PROSPEROUS ETHNIC GROUP IN AMERICA

India and USA, as you know, are the leading democracies in the world. If you trace the evolution of relationship between our two countries at the people's level - because I think given our democratic traditions our relationship must be primarily defined by people - one finds a great resonance and positivity. There has been a great admiration in India for USA. Almost everyone admires the great value of liberty, enterprise and freedom in America and everybody aspires to send his children to this country. There is also considerable goodwill in USA towards India. I was reading somewhere that according to the gallop poll last year, 74% people in USA are positively disposed towards India.

Ironically, despite enormous amount of goodwill in both countries our relationship at the government level during good part of the cold war era was very erratic. It continued to face rough weather because of widespread suspicions in USA with regard to India's close proximity with Soviet Union which led a lot of people in the State Department and the Pentagon to favour Pakistan. Pakistan was supported financially and also provided military supplies in the hope that it would somehow help US accomplish its strategic objectives in the region.

But these legacy issues, fortunately, are behind us and today I can confidently say, there is a bi-partisan support for India in USA, leave aside few elements here and there. Such elements are in India as well who harbour suspicious against USA and ascribe unjustified motives to it. But

happily, they are a small minority. Large number of people, both in India and USA, are now solidly supportive of good relationship. This sentiment is also evident at the political level. If Clinton brought a new phase of relationship between USA and India, Bush took it forward and in Obama's time the relationship advanced even further. Current administration has no doubt taken tough stand on H1B visa issue which has rankled a lot of people in India but I believe this would only have a short term impact on our interests, since Indian IT companies are essentially price competitive with a credible performance record. In overall terms, however, Pres. Trump has a positive vision of strategic convergence between India and USA and fully appreciates the need for two countries to work together not only for mutual benefit but also for the sake of global peace. I have absolutely no doubt that our relationship would scale newer heights during Trump administration.

Today, the relationship does not appear to be dependent on personal whims and fancies of certain individuals. What is the reason? Answer is two-fold: first, there is an evolving geo-political convergence; and secondly, the rising stature of India on the global stage. India has emerged as the third largest economy in the world, as you are aware, in the purchasing power parity terms. India's economy today roughly aggregates 10 trillion US dollars which creates excitement and opportunities in different countries.

Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee had very famously described India-

America relationship as being that amongst natural allies, but even if you accept that maxim there is a lot of work that needs to be done. In fact, President Trump has himself talked about it, that the relationship is not something that can be taken for granted; lot of hard work is required to move it forward which is indeed happily underway. Today, there are multiple dialogue mechanisms covering almost all important areas - many at the ministerial level.

We have a huge amount of trade with USA, which is India's largest trading partner. If you count the trade in services as well, it reaches up to 130 billion US dollars. And yet it is believed that our trade has not realized its full potential.

We have growing defence cooperation as well. We signed LEMOA in August 2016, which allows us to cooperate and provide logistic support to each other. But there is certain coyness, a sort of reluctance in India to be seen as part of any military alliance. What needs to be understood in America that even though there is natural alliance situation and the geo-political dynamics is pushing our two countries ever closer together, India is still not ready to be seen as a military ally of America or for that matter any other country. There is an overriding concern in India to fully safeguard our strategic autonomy. Situation might



Amb. Virendra Gupta



change in the next few years since there are obvious advantages for India in working more closely with USA but for the present USA has to approach the evolving relations with a lot of tact and subtlety.

India may not fully measure up to the benchmark of expectations set up by USA. But I do not think it should be regarded as a negativity or drawback in the relationship. In fact, both the countries need to show greater understanding to each others sensitivities. That is something that I find lacking at the moment.

Our relationship has already moved forward in a very tangible manner. We have a huge ongoing defence cooperation as I mentioned earlier. India has also started acquiring lot of defence equipment from America and this is a recent phenomenon. Until about 10-15 years, defence acquisition from America was rather limited. It has already reached 10 billion US dollar mark. If nuclear cooperation develops further, there is an opportunity of substantial trade between America and India in the nuclear field as well.

The reason I am bringing up this issue of sensitivity and the need for creating better understanding is that the People of Indian Origin in USA can contribute a lot in this area. They are highly accomplished and well respected. They are doing exceedingly well in their respective professional fields and it is not without reason that the people of Indian origin constitute the most prosperous ethnic group in America with the average household income having crossed the 100,000 US dollars mark. It is their Indian values which distinguish them from the others. Interestingly, the next ethnic group in the list is that of the Chinese with just about half the

average income of the Indian Americans. Those who are in politics, particularly, as Congressmen, Senators and Mayors are already contributing greatly to stronger relationship between US and India. Indeed they are best placed to work for creation of better understanding between India and USA.

When we consider the evolving geopolitical dynamics in Indo-Pacific region or indeed globally, the China factor is of primary importance. China is impacting on USA's geo-political interests in different parts of the world and as far as we are concerned China is impacting on our core security and economic interests. Since both our countries are getting negatively impacted by Chinese policies and actions, we need to work together in dealing with increasing Chinese assertiveness and aggressiveness. China has conflicts and border claims with most of its neighbors and it has been bullying countries in its neighbourhood, including us.

In Asia, the common wisdom was that both India and China would grow simultaneously. While we do not have any difficulty in accepting China's rise, China is very resentful of accepting India's rise and persists in creating obstacles in India playing the rightful role in Indo-Pacific region and on the global stage. It is quite well known that China has been actively lobbying against India's candidature for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council. Their approach is to contain India by building a string of pearls around us in the form of military bases and other facilities which could be used against us, causing an understandable consternation and suspicion in India.

If you look at the South-East Asian countries they too appear quite

uncomfortable with overwhelming Chinese influence in the region and it seems to me that they would like USA and India to play a role in neutralizing the Chinese presence. Question to ask is why should America and India do it ? Should we do it for others only? What about our national interests since we must examine our available options based only on the litmus test of our respective national interests?

If we were to take the medium to long term perspective, it will be in USA's interest to ensure that its geo-political interests are safeguarded in Indo-Pacific region. India's interests would be safeguarded if China is made to feel that its actions will not go uncontested. If we leave the field clear for China, its aggressiveness will only increase further and this will have a very debilitating impact on the world stage. Apart from Indo-Pacific you see that play out in Africa also. Many African economists have expressed apprehensions about the predatory economic policies being followed by China. In fact, during my postings in Africa, several African leaders privately confessed to me that they were concerned at undue aggressiveness on the part of China and wanted me to work on getting Indian footprint expanded in their countries in order to balance the increasing Chinese presence.

The other big problem that the world is facing is that of international terrorism as mentioned by Prime Minister Modi when he addressed the Joint Session of Parliament in USA. This is a problem which affects both the countries in a big way. USA has already witnessed a dastardly terrorist attack in Sept 2011. In India, we face the depredations of the terrorist activities, on a daily basis. It is no secret that many of those activities are

supported and even executed from across our borders in Pakistan which has emerged as home to a vast terrorist network.

It is extremely important from the security perspective, that India and America come closer together to fight the menace of terrorism - not only in terms of exchange of information which our countries are already doing but we have to go beyond that. Even though we may be uncomfortable about joining any military alliance, we can cooperate in many other ways. Today, we are not living in all or nothing world. That mindset characterized cold-war politics when there were two very water-tight camps and you had to be either in this or the other camp. Today, every country is trying to optimize its relations with the whole set of other countries. Fact of the matter is that India and USA need to work together closely for their own good and for the good of this world. I believe very strongly that the good of the world will somehow in the long run, promote our own interest.

India and USA need to show greater maturity and confidence in dealing with each other. We have to get rid of insecurities which have dogged our relations in the past. There are elements in both our countries which maintain old prejudices. Some people in India allege that India is mortgaging its independence on economic and foreign policy to America. It is argued by them that we cannot get strategically close to America without for saking our independence. I think, that is a complete distortion of the facts and one has to see how our relationship has evolved and how it is structured at present. We can be very close without compromising our independence and strategic autonomy. We do not have to worry about what those detractors say and

remain resolutely focused on our national interests alone.

There are certain elements in America, who continue to advocate that USA keeps on engaging Pakistan. I have nothing against that since every country must explore all available options, but engaging Pakistan, which has been a bedrock of USA's foreign policy in our region does not appear to have served USA's interests. Pakistan has unabashedly continued to support terrorism as a state policy to the overall detriment of American interests. In Afghanistan, I think both India and America have to come together.

We have to get rid of the past prejudices and move with confidence in taking our relations forward. There are occasional issues which feed our insecurities but we have to look at those incidents and 'issues' in the context of our overall relations, the level of our relations and our strategic connect in the geo-political perspective. It must be clearly understood that both countries need each other and that it is not a one-sided relationship.

Thus, for instance, recent reports of India buying missiles and defence equipment from Russia have triggered adverse comments in USA and suggestion by some US law-makers that this should invite sanctions against India. America made the mistake during the cold war era by regarding India as a Soviet satellite, which it never was. India is a very large country and has always had a rational approach to international relations. Even in those days, India had very clear independent foreign policy. It is quite natural for India to acquire certain defence equipment from Russia, which has been India's main traditional supplier of defence

equipment over last several decades and because of our continued dependence on Russia for our spare parts needs. I do not think that that takes away from the strength of India-USA relationship.

Likewise, in the case of India's oil imports from Iran, USA must understand that Iran is one of the largest suppliers of crude oil to India - about 15% of our crude supply comes from Iran. It is a matter of our critical energy security interest. We cannot just shut off that supply merely because USA has decided to re-open the nuclear deal with Iran. We are not questioning America's decision. America has sovereign right to do whatever it wants to do with Iran based obviously on its own national interests. But, USA must also understand that just because it decides to disengage Iran, it cannot expect India also to simultaneously disengage from Iran particularly given our civilizational linkages with Iran. Those of you who have some sense of history will appreciate that India's relationship with Persia goes back to hundreds of years. It is not something like a tap which you can open or shut off at the press of a button.

To conclude, I would once again urge for greater understanding and trust between India and USA – the kind of maturity and confidence which should characterize relations between two close friends. We don't begin to mistrust each other just because one of us has a friend that the other is a bit uncomfortable with. We must remember that the world today has discarded the cold war construct and every country is trying to optimize its relations with a host of other countries which may often be opposed to each other. □

Presentation by Amb. Virendra Gupta, President ARSP on India-US relations at Foundation for India and Indian Diaspora Studies (FIIDS), USA

DELIBERATION ON THE ONGOING POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN NEPAL



L to R : Dr. Nihar Nayak, Amb. K V Rajan, Amb. Virendra Gupta, Ajeet Kumar, Prof. Rajesh Kharat, Shyam Parande and Deepak Adhikari at the Podium

Antar-Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad (ARSP) organized a roundtable discussion on 'Recent Political Developments in Nepal in the Context of the Evolving India-Nepal Relationship' on 28 July, 2018 at Pravasi Bhawan. The roundtable was moderated by **Amb (retd.) Virendra Gupta**, President, ARSP and the panelists were **Ambassador K V Rajan, Shri Ajeet Kumar, Prof Rajesh Kharat, and Dr Nihar Nayak.**

In his welcome address **Shri Shyam Parande** highlighted the deep association between ARSP's founder **Shri Baleshwar Aggarwal** and Nepal's political and social fabric. He talked about various initiative of ARSP - such as organising seminars and talks on Nepal and hosting Nepali students and dignitaries - for keeping the closeness and goodwill as well as strengthening the relationship between the two countries. He also

informed about the two books published on Nepal by ARSP- namely, **Bharat-Nepal Relations : Socio-Cultural and Civilization Linkages & Nepal-Bhart Relations : Economic Development and Cooperation.**

Dr Nihar Nayak evaluated the recent developments in Nepal that can be classified into 4 parts: first, formation of new government under the new constitution. Secondly, the merger of two left parties - Moist and Communist, that has led to the emergence of a new party which is largest, strongest and richest with two third party members being anti-India reflecting China's success in its decade long efforts of uniting communists in Nepal. Thirdly, joining of Bhupendra Yadav is related to political, economic and personal factors. Finally, there is phenomenal rise in anti-government protests. He also underlined that anti-India rhetoric

is used for public vote and that Nepal still suffers from small state syndrome.

Shri. Ajit Kumar opined that for the communist mushrooming, China is not the only factor. He linked the 1968 Naxal movement of Nepal to the support of Church. The Church support is maintained and is flourishing with the money coming from Switzerland to the NGO's in Nepal. He recounted the events between 1989 and 1992 in Europe and linked it to Nepal Andolan and formation of Parliamentary constitution under the monarch. According to him, the Koirala government fell in 1994 with the help of outside support.

Shri Ajit Kumar related the Nepali communist support and the triumph of developmental challenges as socialist communist ideas which breed in a

socially fragmented society. In addition to this, he talked about Nepal's twin pillar diplomacy spinning between India and China. Shri Kumar also talked about a few transformations in Nepal. These are: it is no more a Bahadur State, there is societal transformation, political transformation and economic transformation. He cautioned that India may have to continuously engage with and institutionalise its relationship with Nepal otherwise Church and China will get a strong hold against India.

Dr. Deepak Adhikari was of the opinion that India and Nepal's historical and cultural relations cannot be challenged but need positive and constructive engagement. He brought to attention the role of media in damaging the relations between the two countries. He focused on the grassroots support of the communists that controls media and academics which have studied abroad and don't feel connected to India. The only exception to the communist sphere of influence is casinos and land. He suggested India to take Nepal more seriously. For this, he exhorted that the students who come under scholarship should be attached to proper Indian organisations. Moreover, he was of the view that India's developmental and charitable works need to be publicised.

Professor Rajesh Kharat blamed policy-makers, ethos and academics for India's losing its political, economic, and social image in Nepal. He talked about the myth created by the communist in Nepal that India is responsible for political instability of

Nepal between 1996 and 2006. He believed that India had mishandled Madhesi issue and India's inaction had led to political and ideological vacuum in Nepal that ended up as the communist control in Nepal. He also drew attention to the high Christian conversion rate. Now Indians are being identified as merely Hindus. He suggested the engagement of Youth. Unlike other speakers he took the Chinese factor seriously and advised that India needs to be ready to manage China's encirclement in Nepal.

Ambassador K.V. Rajan was of the opinion that the reason for the deterioration of relationship between India and Nepal is due to India's inefficiency to comprehend the psyche of Nepal that had led to India's efforts to over assert itself. Ambassador Rajan talked about the contradictions, perceptions and expectations within Nepal due to India's way of handling the former. In this regard, he talked about a few incidences related to Koirala's closeness to India, Mahakali Treaty and Gujral doctrine that had acted against India's image. He told the general perception in Nepal is that India has some hidden agenda. This led to the creation of space for China. At present, Beijing is warming up with Kathmandu by pumping money and unifying communists in Nepal.

He suggested that:

- the need to understand Nepal's psyche, expectations and fear.
- the need to use India's leverages and create economic interdependence for Nepal to feel secured.

- the need to have people to people contact at all levels-political, business community, universities and schools.

- the need to manage border trade more efficiently.

- the need to share new technologies with Nepal so that they do not waste time to develop any new technology.

- the need to have research and dialogue institutions on the border.

- the need to resolve the two border disputes due to non demarcation

- the need to resolve flood issue

Ambassador Virendra Gupta thanked the speakers and audience. He talked about the mission of ARSP to create goodwill and better relations in the neighbourhood, with which India shares its civilisational linkages. He raised a few points: first, India's familiarity hurts the sensitivity of its neighbours. Secondly, we need to engage with Nepal keeping the present circumstances in mind and find ways to better our relations. Thirdly, twin pillar diplomacy is constructive. Fourthly, India's influence in the ruling elites, in the past, cannot be celebrated. Fifthly, we need to be rational in blaming China for everything that goes wrong in India's international relations. Sixthly, India needs to be self-assured in its dealing due to India's global economic standing. Finally, if Nepal needs peace and prosperity, it needs to work along with India. □

V.S. NAIPAUL, THE NOBEL LAUREATE, HAS DIED AT 85

V.S. Naipaul, the Nobel laureate who documented the migrations of peoples, the unraveling of the British Empire, the ironies of exile and the clash between belief and unbelief in more than a dozen unsparing novels and as many works of nonfiction, died on at his home in London. He was 85. Mr. Naipaul was born of Indian ancestry in Trinidad, went to Oxford University on a scholarship and lived the rest of his life in England, where he forged one of the most illustrious literary careers of the last half century. He was knighted in 1990.

Within hours of Mr. Naipaul's death, tributes flowed in from around the world, remembering a towering figure in letters as well as something of a lightning rod. **Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India on Twitter called the author's death "a major loss to the world of literature."**

Author Salman Rushdie tweeted, "We disagreed all our lives, about politics, about literature, and I feel as sad as if I just lost a beloved older brother. RIP Vidia."

An Ancestry in India

Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul was born on Aug. 17, 1932, in Chaguanas, Trinidad, where his paternal grandfather had emigrated from India in the 1880s as an indentured servant to work on the sugar plantations. His father, Seepersad, was a newspaper reporter for The Trinidad Guardian and an aspiring fiction writer who as a child was luckily allowed to go to school; his older brother was sent to work in the cane fields for eight cents a day and his sister remained illiterate. His mother, Droapatie Capildeo, was from a large, prosperous family, and when Mr. Naipaul was 6 the family moved in with them in a big house in Port of Spain. The second of seven children, he was particularly close to his older sister, Kamla. His younger and only brother, Shiva, who was also a novelist, died in 1985.

Educated in English schools in Trinidad, Mr. Naipaul said he owed his

writing ambitions to his father, who read to him, among other things, from Booker T. Washington's "Up From Slavery."

Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul left the West Indies as a young man to be educated at Oxford. He adopted England as his home but moved around the world for months at a time, plumbing questions of identity and



immigration. Mr. Naipaul was an unapologetic maverick who resisted sentimentality yet prized history. Although withering when recalling the Trinidad where he grew up, he mined the region and his parents' experiences for some of his most celebrated works. His 1975 novel, "Guerrillas," contains savage descriptions of life in a Caribbean nation convulsed by political and moral mayhem.

With "A House for Mr. Biswas," Mr. Naipaul cemented his name as a novelist for the ages. While working on the book, "for the first time I felt I was a writer," he said in an interview with the Swedish Academy when receiving his Nobel. The novel, published before the author had turned 30, gave Mr. Naipaul "confidence in the handling of language," he said. For the book's hapless protagonist, Mr. Mohun Biswas, Mr. Naipaul drew on his father's life and largely unrealized literary aspirations. Mr. Biswas is plagued by every imaginable setback in his quest to secure a dignified dwelling in Trinidad.

The title character sees a home representing far more than a roof over

his head. Mr. Naipaul wrote in the novel: "And there was his hope that living in a new house in the new year might bring about a new state of mind. He would not have moved if he had been alone, for he feared solitude more than people."

Mr. Naipaul's writing often blends menace and dark wit, a literary cocktail that he discovered while a teenager in the work of Evelyn Waugh, the author of "Decline and Fall," "A Handful of Dust" and other novels. Although hopelessness pervades Mr. Biswas's existence, Mr. Naipaul also exposes the humor in his character's misfortune. In addition to writing novels such as "A Bend in the River" and "The Enigma of Arrival," Mr. Naipaul delved into journalism and essays. Travel often inspired his work, such as the 1980 book, "A Congo Diary,"

and his Asian travelogue, "Among the Believers: An Islamic Journey," the following year. In 1990, he published a work of nonfiction on his ancestral country, "India: A Million Mutinies Now." Mr. Naipaul's unvarnished gaze could be scalding: He didn't shrink from detailing shortcomings and perceived shortcomings during his travels. But his writing also reveals a reverence and fascination for the worlds that drew him far from home.

In 1964 Naipaul published the first of his three travelogues about India "An Area of Darkness and be found that in spite of his Indian origins he did not belong there at all. However he developed liking for Indian life style mythology and Indian culture and treated Indian classical like Gita and Ramayan as great epics.

Mr. Naipaul practiced yoga until his back grew too weak, and often lamented that writing took a physical toll. He would spend months cogitating at home in London or more often in his book-filled cottage in the Wiltshire countryside, outside Salisbury. □

Akshay Venkatesh Earned Distinguished Fields Medal

Akshay Venkatesh, an eminent Indian-Australian mathematician, is one of four winners of mathematics' prestigious Fields medal, known as the Nobel Prize for maths.



Akshay Venkatesh

New Delhi-born Venkatesh, is currently teaching at Stanford University, has won the Fields Medal for his phenomenal contributions to an exceptionally broad array of subjects in mathematics. The Fields medals are awarded every four years to the most

promising mathematicians under the age of 40.

The other three winners are: Caucher Birkar, a Cambridge University professor of Iranian Kurdish origin; Germany's Peter Scholze, who teaches at the University of Bonn and Alessio Figalli, an Italian mathematician at ETH Zurich.

From being a prodigy to becoming one of the most renowned researchers in the field of mathematics, Venkatesh's journey has been full of achievements and accolades. He moved to Perth, Australia, with his parents when he was two year old.

He participated in physics and math Olympiads - the premier international

competitions for high school students - and won medals in the two subjects at ages 11 and 12, respectively. He finished high school when he was 13 and went to the University of Western Australia, graduating with first class honours in mathematics in 1997, at the age of 16. In 2002, he earned his PhD at the age of 20. Since then, he has gone from holding a post-doctoral position at MIT to becoming a Clay Research Fellow and, now a professor at Stanford University. Venkatesh has worked at the highest level in number theory, arithmetic geometry, topology, automorphic forms and ergodic theory. His research has been recognized with many awards, including the Ostrowski Prize, the Infosys Prize, the Salem Prize and Sastra Ramanujan Prize. □

PM Addresses Indian Community in Uganda

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, addressed the Indian Community in Uganda which was attended by President Museveni of Uganda.

In his address, the Prime Minister said he felt a sense of belonging with the Indian Community in Uganda. He said the presence of President Museveni at the event shows his love for the people of India, and the Indian Community in Uganda. He also thanked President Museveni and the people of Uganda, for the honour to address the Parliament of Uganda.

Prime Minister Modi said that the relationship between India and

Uganda is centuries old. He recalled the historical links between the two countries, including the struggle against colonialism, and the railway construction work in Uganda. He said several Indians have played a key role in Uganda's politics, and complimented them for retaining their senses of Indian-ness, as reflected in the cultural performances on this occasion.

The Prime Minister asserted that all countries of Africa, including Uganda, are important for India. He said, a shared history of struggle against colonialism, presence of a large Indian diaspora, and common development challenges, are all reasons for this.

The Prime Minister spoke of the significance of Africa in India's foreign policy. In this context, he mentioned the India-Africa Forum Summit in New Delhi in 2015. He also mentioned other high level bilateral engagements between India and other African nations.

The Prime Minister mentioned other initiatives taken, such as projects with lines of credit worth more than 3 billion dollars; scholarships; and e-visa arrangements. He said about half of all member nations of the International Solar Alliance are from Africa.

The Prime Minister said nations from Asia and Africa are playing a stronger role in the new world order. □

17th World Sanskrit Conference Held in Vancouver

The conference was inaugurated by Human Resource Development Minister Prakash Javadekar in Canada from 9th to 13th July. The purpose of this conference was to promote, preserve and practice Sanskrit language all over world. The World Sanskrit Conference is being held in various countries across the globe once in every three years under the auspices of the International

Association of Sanskrit Studies. So far it has been held thrice in India. This year, more than 500 scholars and delegates from over 40 countries participated in this conference and exchanged their knowledge by presenting papers on various aspects of Sanskrit language followed by discussions from amongst the members.

Special panel discussion was held on over dozen topics like History & Education of Women in Vedic Literature, Mimamsa Beyond the Yagasala, Sanskrit Buddhist Manuscripts, The Yuktidipika Forging Place for Sankhya, Research on Gargiya jyotisa and Introducing Bhagavata Purana Commentaries. Over 500 papers on various themes were presented during the 5-day conference. □

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF A.R.S.P.

Dear Member,

The Annual General Meeting of the Antar-Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad, will be held at 4.00 p.m. on Saturday, 15th September, 2018 at 'Pravasi Bhawan', 50, Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg, New Delhi -110002

You are requested to attend the meeting.

Yours Sincerely
(Shyam Parande)

Agenda :-

1. Confirmation of minutes of the last AGM held on 16th September 2017.
2. Report on the activities of ARSP since the last AGM
3. Consideration and adoption of Annual Income & Expenditure Account & Balance Sheet for the year 2017-18.
4. Appointment of auditors for the year 2018-19.
- 5 Matters related to Pravasi Bhawan.
6. Discussion on roadmap for year 2018-2019
7. Election of President of ARSP for the next two year term.
8. Any other matter with the permission of the Chair.

O B I T U A R Y



Dr. R. B. L. Goswami

Subsequently, he became a Vice Chancellor of Meerut University.

His philosophy to live a life to the fullest and his dedicated service in the field of education made him win a position of honour and reverence in educational institutions. His charismatic personality and commitment to the cause of education kept him engaged till his last breath. □

Dr. R. B. L. Goswami, a senior life member and president of Ghaziabad Chapter of Antar-Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad, left for his heavenly abode peacefully on 26th July, 2018. He was the Founder Principal of S. D. Degree College from 1962 to 1990. His expertise and experience, vision and dynamism raised the college to the new heights of glory.

We in ARSP express our sincere condolences to his family.



Shri Vijay Sachdev

children from slum areas as a part of teaching projects initiated by the Times of India Group.

ARSP offers heartfelt condolence to his family. □

Being a senior spirited member of Antar-Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad, **Shri Vijay Sachdev**, an epitome of simple living and high thinking, passed away on 9th July, 2018. He was actively engaged in a variety of social service activities like conducting Yoga and Pranayama classes, besides teaching Spoken English to

H.E. DASHO TSHERING TOBGAY, HON'BLE PRIME MINISTER OF BHUTAN VISITS INDIA

Dasho Tshering Tobgay, Hon'ble Prime Minister of Bhutan, was on an official visit to India from 5 to 7 July 2018, at the invitation of His Excellency Shri Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India. He was accompanied by Lyonpo Namgay Dorji, Finance Minister, and senior officials of the Royal Government of Bhutan. The visit took place in the tradition of regular high-level exchange of visits between India and Bhutan that greatly contributes to further strengthen the excellent bilateral relations. The visit was also being undertaken as one of the important exchange of visits as part of the ongoing golden jubilee celebrations on the establishment of formal diplomatic relations between two neighbouring countries bound by shared spiritual heritage and enduring ties of friendship.

During the visit, *Dasho Tshering Tobgay* called on the His Excellency Shri Ram Nath Kovind, Hon'ble President of India, and conveyed the warmest greetings of His Majesty The King to the friendly people of India. *Dasho Tshering Tobgay* also conveyed the appreciation of the Bhutanese people to the people and Government of India for the warm reception accorded to His Majesty The King, Her Majesty The *Gyaltsuen* and His Royal Highness The *Gyalsey* during the Royal visit to India last year. The Royal visit was special as it was the first visit of His Royal Highness The *Gyalsey* to India.



Dasho Tshering Tobgay PM Shri Narendra Modi



Dasho Tshering Tobgay with President Ram Nath Kovind

Dasho Tshering Tobgay held fruitful discussions with the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India. The Hon'ble Prime Minister of India also hosted a lunch in honour of *Dasho Tshering Tobgay* at Hyderabad House. His program also included meetings with the Ministers

for External Affairs, Finance & Railways, Power and the National Security Adviser.

Dasho Tshering Tobgay thanked His Excellency Shri Narendra Modi for the invitation for an official visit to India and for the warm reception accorded to his delegation and to him. *Dasho Tshering Tobgay* conveyed to His Excellency Shri Narendra Modi the deep appreciation of the people and the Royal Government of Bhutan for the generous assistance provided by the people and Government of India for Bhutan's 11th Five Year Plan, which began in 2013 and concluded by mid-2018. During the discussions between the

two Prime Ministers, other areas of mutual interest and cooperation were also discussed. The meetings between *Dasho Tshering Tobgay* and all the Indian leaders were held in a warm and friendly atmosphere, reflecting the spirit of trust, cooperation and understanding that characterize the special and mutually beneficial nature of the relations between the two countries.

Dasho Tshering Tobgay conveyed that the people and the Royal Government of Bhutan fondly recall that the first country

His Excellency Shri Narendra Modi visited soon after assuming office was Bhutan, and look forward to receiving him later this year while the two countries are celebrating 50 years of formal diplomatic relations.

HER MAJESTY THE GYALTSUEN GRACED THE INAUGURAL SESSION OF THE ANNUAL ENVIRONMENT OFFICERS CONFERENCE

Her Majesty The Gyaltshen Jetsun Pema Wangchuck graced the inaugural session of the Annual Environment Officers' Conference in Thimphu on 3 July 2018. The conference marks the culmination of a number of events, activities and initiatives commemorating World Environment Day, from June 5.

Addressing the gathering, Her Majesty said, "Everyone can make a difference through dedication and consistency and our actions on the World Environment Day should not remain symbolic standalone activities, but instead must be practiced every day." Her Majesty also highlighted that although Bhutan is known for its efforts towards environmental conservation, "yet the increase in plastic waste and litter is clearly evident especially in urban spaces such as Thimphu. It is visible along the footpaths of our morning and evening walks."

Her Majesty The Gyaltshen emphasized on the urgent need to address plastic pollution in the country. "I encourage you all to be more mindful, more involved and to take this year's theme to beat plastic pollution back to our homes and to remember it long after we are done with this programme. For any initiative to be successful, dedication and



consistency are essential. We must all remind ourselves that our actions on the World Environment Day should not remain symbolic standalone activities, but instead must be practiced every day. It is a personal commitment that we must make for the future of our children and our children's children."

Her Majesty also encouraged districts and thromdes (Municipal) to eliminate use of plastics with greener alternatives, utilizing natural materials and reusable products. Fourteen schools in the country were also awarded the certificate of recognition for their active involvement in Reducing, Recycling and Rethinking on waste management.

The three-day conference discussed and resolved prominent issues and challenges related to environment conservation. The conference was aimed to foster greater public understanding of environmental laws, and strengthen their implementation and enforcement.

The opening ceremony was attended by the Prime Minister, Cabinet Ministers, and representatives from relevant agencies. As the Royal Patron for environment, Her Majesty works closely with environment agencies and NGOs. □



DAYS TO REMEMBER

IN SEPTEMBER, 2018

September 01 : Uzbekistan : Independence Day
 September 02 : Vietnam : National Day
 September 04 : Canonisation Ceremony of Mother Teresa in Vatican City
 September 05 : Teachers Day (Birthday of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, former President of India)
 September 08 : International : Literacy Day (To raise people's awareness and concern for Literacy issues in the world)
 September 09 : **Amavasya** ●
 September 09 : Tajikistan : National Day
 September 14 : Hindi Divas

September 15 : Indonesia : Independence Day (Proclamation of Independence Day.)
 September 15 : International Day of Democracy (To raise public awareness and strengthen the idea of democracy around the world)
 September 16 : Mexico : Independence Day
 September 23 : Saudi Arabia : National Day
 September 25 : **Purnima** ●
 September 26 : World Maritime Day (To focus attention on the importance of shipping safety)
 September 27 : World Tourism Day □

अमेरिकी धौंस और ब्रिक्स की भूमिका

दुनिया की अर्थव्यवस्था में ब्रिक्स देशों की भूमिका क्या बदलने वाली है? यह सवाल शुक्रवार को खत्म हुए ब्रिक्स के 10वें शिखर सम्मेलन के बाद कहीं ज्यादा प्रासंगिक हो गया है। इस संगठन के सभी सदस्य देशों (ब्राजील, रूस, भारत, चीन और दक्षिण अफ्रीका) की गिनती उभरती आर्थिक ताकतों में होती है और इन्हें आर्थिक उदारीकरण का खासा लाभ भी मिला है। मगर अब अमेरिका व अन्य पश्चिमी देशों की 'संरक्षणवादी नीतियों' का शिकार यही देश सबसे ज्यादा हो रहे हैं। संभवतः इसीलिए ब्रिक्स सम्मेलन में सभी सदस्य देश उदारीकरण से इतर नीतियां तलाशने और वैश्विक अर्थव्यवस्था में अपनी नई जगह बनाने पर राजी हुए हैं।

इस समय दुनिया के कारोबार को संरक्षणवाद और 'ट्रेड वार' खास प्रभावित कर रहे हैं। खासतौर से संरक्षणवाद कई देशों में जड़े जमाता जा रहा है। शरणार्थी समस्या के बाद यूरोप इन नीतियों की ओर बढ़ा था और अपने दरवाजे दूसरे देशों के लए बंद करने की वकालत की थी। बाद में, अमेरिका ने इसे भरपूर हवा दी, जबकि वह वैश्वीकरण और आर्थिक उदारीकरण का अगुवा देश रहा है। यह सच है कि अमेरिका में बेराजगारी बढ़ी है, लेकिन यह भी समझना होगा कि किन्हीं उदार आर्थिक नीतियों ने नहीं, बल्कि घरेलू नीतियों ने अमेरिका में रोजगार संकट को बढ़ाया है।

'ट्रेड वार' भी इसी दरम्यान पनपा है। अमेरिकी राष्ट्रपति डोनाल्ड ट्रंप ने अपने मुल्क को आर्थिक मुश्किलों से निकालने के लिए चीन के खिलाफ टैरिफ (अतिरिक्त शुल्क) लगाए हैं। चीन भी अपने तरह के जवाब दे रहे हैं और इस मसले को विश्व व्यापार संगठन में ले गया है। फिलहाल तो यह जंग अमेरिका और चीन के बीच सिमटी हुई है, लेकिन इससे हमारा व्यापार भी प्रभावित हो रहा है। चीन के मुकाबले विनिर्माण क्षेत्र (मैनुफैक्चरिंग) में हमारी भागीदारी कम होने के बाद भी इसकी आंच हम तक पहुंची है। नतीजतन, हमने भी जवाबी शुल्क लगाए हैं और विश्व व्यापार संगठन में अर्जी दी है।

ऐसे में ब्रिक्स देशों की जिम्मेदारी कहीं ज्यादा बढ़ जाती है। अभी तक ये देश वैश्वीकरण से मिलने वाले फायदों का ही गुणा-भाग कर रहे थे। मगर अब जब ब्रिटेन यूरोपीय संघ से बाहर निकल चुका है, यूरोप की आर्थिक प्रगति ठहर चुकी है, इटली-यूनान जैसे देश मुश्किल हालात में हैं और पश्चिमी देश तमाम तरह की कारोबारी बंधिशें लगा रहे हैं, तब यह जरूरी हो जाता है कि ब्रिक्स आगे बढ़कर इन चुनौतियों को स्वीकरें और अपने लिए नई राह



शशांक
पूर्व विदेश सचिव,
संरक्षक, अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद

तलाशें। जोहानिसबर्ग (दक्षिण अफ्रीका) में शुक्रवार को खत्म हुई बैठक में इसी पर सहमति बनी है कि किन-किन देशों में भरोसा करके ब्रिक्स देश आगे बढ़ें। इसमें सफलता की उम्मीद ज्यादा है, क्योंकि तमाम देशों की सहमति पूर्व में विश्व व्यापार संगठन को लेकर रही है। जलवायु परिवर्तन के मसले पर ही जिस तरह फ्रांस, यूरोप और ब्रिक्स देश आगे बढ़े थे, उससे लगता है कि इस बार भी बात बन जाएगी। हां, यूरोप को साथ लाने की कोशिश हमें छोड़नी नहीं चाहिए, चाहे वह अभी संरक्षणवाद की कितनी भी वकालत क्यों न कर रहा हो?

जरूरत जल्द से जल्द क्षेत्रीय व्यापक आर्थिक भागीदारी (आरसीईपी) को मूर्त रूप देने की है। यह 16 देशों (10 आसियान राष्ट्र और छह एशिया-पैसिफिक देश) के बीच एक प्रस्तावित मुक्त व्यापार समझौता है। इस पर सहमति मिलने के बाद न सिर्फ हमारे व्यापार को नई दिशा मिलेगी, बल्कि कुशल श्रमिक व पेशेवरों को भी रोजगार के नए अवसर हासिल होंगे। हमारी कोशिश मुक्त व्यापार की संकल्पना को एशिया में साकार करने की भी होनी चाहिए। इससे 'ट्रेड वार' के गति पकड़ने पर हम ज्यादा प्रभावित नहीं होंगे। हालांकि हमें यह काम चीन के साथ कोई गुट बनाए बिना करना होगा, वरना लंबी अवधि में यह हमारे लिए नुकसानदेह हो सकता है।

चीनी औद्योगिक क्रांति की चर्चा भी ब्रिक्स सम्मेलन की उपलब्धि मानी जाएगी। प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने इसकी चर्चा अपने भाषण में की। अगर ब्रिक्स देश इस दिशा में आगे बढ़ते हैं, तो हम आने वाले वर्षों में कई सारे बदलाव के गवाह बनेंगे। चौथी औद्योगिक क्रांति में कौशल व डिजिटल विकास का दिमागी शक्ति से मिलन होगा। इसका हमें काफी फायदा मिल सकता है, क्योंकि भारत सॉफ्टवेयर सर्विस में तेजी से आगे बढ़ा है। हमारी कई सेवाएं अमेरिकी और पश्चिमी देशों को मिलती रही हैं। मगर जिस तरह से हमारे पेशेवरों के सामने वीजा संबंधी

दुश्वारियां खड़ी की गई हैं, उसमें बेहतर विकल्प यही है कि ब्रिक्स के दूसरे सदस्य देशों या विकासशील मुल्कों के साथ साझेदारी करके हम आगे बढ़ें। ब्रिक्स में इसकी चर्चा होने से भारतीय कंपनियां इस दिशा में सक्रिय हो सकेंगी।

ब्रिक्स सम्मेलन में आतंकवाद भी एक बड़ा मसला था। वहां आतंकवाद के खिलाफ हरसंभव लड़ाई लड़ने पर भी सहमति बनी है। अभी तक चीन जैसे सदस्य देश पाकिस्तान को मदद देकर परोक्ष रूप से इस लड़ाई में अपनी पूरी भागीदारी नहीं निभा पा रहे थे। मगर जिस तरह से अब बीजिंग पर आतंकी जमातों के हिमायती होने का आरोप लगने लगा है, मौजूदा तस्वीर बदलने की उम्मीद बढ़ गई है। पाकिस्तान में भी सत्ता-परिवर्तन हुआ है। इमरान खान वहां के नए वजीर-ए-आजम बनने वाले हैं। उन्होंने अपने हालिया भाषणों में पाकिस्तान को एक स्वच्छ मुल्क बनाने की बात कही है, जिससे लगता है कि वह आतंकी जमातों के खिलाफ कुछ ठोस काम करेंगे। हालांकि उन्होंने सीधे-सीधे किसी का नाम नहीं लिया है, पर चीन व अन्य देशों से संबंध आगे बढ़ाने के लिए वह दहशतगर्दी पर नकेल लगा सकते हैं।

'बेस्ट प्रैक्टिस फॉलो' पर सहमति बनना भी गौर करने लायक है। इसके तहत एक-दूसरे देशों की अच्छी आदतों या कार्यक्रमों को अपने यहां उतारने की बात कही गई है। जैसे, भारत से निकला योग दुनिया के तमाम देशों में फैल गया है। अच्छी बात है कि 'नॉलेज शेयरिंग' (ज्ञान साझा करना) की तरफ ब्रिक्स देशों ने गंभीरता दिखाई है। इसकी वकालत भारत हमेशा से करता रहा है। □

न्यूयॉर्क के स्कूलों में होगी सिख धर्म की पढ़ाई

अमेरिका में ज्यादातर लोगों को सिख धर्म की जानकारी नहीं होने के बीच न्यूयॉर्क के स्कूलों में इस धर्म और इसकी परंपराओं के बारे में पढ़ाया जाएगा। फॉक्स 5 एनवाई की खबर के अनुसार, गैर सरकारी संगठन 'यूनाइटेड सिख्स' ने न्यूयॉर्क के शिक्षा विभाग के साथ इस मामले में गठजोड़ किया है। इसका मकसद अमेरिकी छात्रों को सिख धर्म के बारे में जानकारी देना है।

औपचारिक रूप से सिलेब्स शुक्रवार को घोषित किया गया। लेकिन वास्तव में इसकी शुरुआत सितम्बर 2016 में कुछ शहर की कक्षाओं से हुई थी। एक अनुमान के अनुसार, करीब पांच लाख सिख अमेरिका में रहते हैं। □

बालेश्वर अग्रवाल हिन्दी पत्रकारिता के शिखर पुरुष थे



बाएँ से दाएँ : सर्वश्री रामबहादुर राय, वीरेन्द्र गुप्ता, शशांक एवं श्याम परांडे

अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद के पूर्व महासचिव स्व. बालेश्वर अग्रवाल के 97वें जन्मदिवस पर अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद द्वारा 17 जुलाई, 2018 को आयोजित समारोह में बालेश्वर जी के व्यक्तित्व के बारे में अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद के पूर्व अध्यक्ष एवं भारत सरकार के पूर्व विदेश सचिव श्री शशांक ने बताया कि बालेश्वर अग्रवाल प्रवासी भारतीयों की समस्याओं को भारत सरकार और अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय मंचों पर निरन्तर उठाते रहते थे तथा उनकी समस्याओं के समाधान के लिए पूरी निष्ठा के साथ काम करते थे। उन्होंने कहा कि विदेश सचिव के पद से सेवानिवृत्ति के बाद मुझे बालेश्वर जी ने अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद के अध्यक्ष के रूप में कार्य करने के लिये कहा और उनके अनुभव का लाभ उठाकर हमने संसार भर के प्रवासी भारतीयों के साथ अपने रिश्ते को मजबूत किया। श्री शशांक ने यह भी बताया कि मुझे प्रसन्नता है कि इसी अवधि के दौरान प्रवासी भवन का निर्माण हुआ जिसके लिए बालेश्वर जी एक लम्बे समय से प्रयत्नशील थे।

सुप्रसिद्ध पत्रकार और इंदिरा गांधी राष्ट्रीय कलाकेंद्र के अध्यक्ष श्री रामबहादुर राय ने कहा कि मैं जब सोचता हूँ कि हमारे यहां हिन्दी पत्रकारिता की जो परंपरा है उसमें बालेश्वर जी कहा खड़े हैं, तो उन्हें हिन्दी पत्रकारिता के शिखर पर खड़ा पाता हूँ। भाषाई पत्रकारिता में जितने बड़े नाम हैं वे सब नवजागरण के अग्रदूत रहे हैं। बालेश्वर अग्रवाल ने 1950 से 1982 तक 32 साल भाषाई पत्रकारिता में नवजागरण की जो ज्योति जलाई वह अदभुत और अनोखी है। बालेश्वर अग्रवाल की एक दूसरी छवि समाज सुधारक की है। उन्होंने समाज सुधार की एक नई परिभाषा गढ़ी। कोई भी समाज सुधारक हो, यदि वह लोकसंग्रही नहीं हो तो समाज सुधारक भी नहीं हो सकता। एक पत्रकार के रूप में बालेश्वर अग्रवाल को किस रूप में देखें और समझें जब यह सवाल पूछा जाएगा तो मेरा तुरंत जवाब होगा कि वे समाज-सेवी पत्रकार माने जाएंगे।

जिनके लिए समाज-सेवा मुक्ति का साधन था, परोपकार का नहीं। समाज सेवा में कृतज्ञता का भाव मूल में होता है और परोपकार में दान की भावना काम करती है। बालेश्वर अग्रवाल के लिए पत्रकार का कार्य एक यज्ञ जैसा था, जिसमें समाज को जो हानि चाहे वह किसी तरह से हो गई हो उसे पूरा करने के लिए श्रम किया जाता है। बालेश्वर अग्रवाल उन दुर्लभ लोगों में थे जो औषधि गुण और मनुष्य के अंदर निहित क्षमता को पहचानते थे। इसीलिए वे हिन्दुस्थान समाचार को बुलंदी के शिखर तक पहुंचा सके। श्री राय ने कहा कि अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद के महासचिव के रूप में उन्होंने प्रवासी भारतीयों को एक सशक्त और संवेदनशील परिवार का निर्माण किया।

अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद के महासचिव श्री श्याम परांडे ने कहा कि बालेश्वर अग्रवाल जी एक निर्भीक और सिद्धांतों पर चलने वाले पत्रकार थे। उन्होंने हिन्दुस्थान समाचार के प्रधान सम्पादक के रूप में अनेक ऐसे महत्वपूर्ण समाचार जारी किए जिससे उस समय की मीडिया अपरिचित थी। उन्होंने कभी भी सरकार के दबाव और प्रभाव में न तो कोई समाचार जोड़ा और न ही हटाया। अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद के महासचिव के रूप में बालेश्वर अग्रवाल जी ने प्रवासी भारतीयों का एक ऐसा सशक्त समाज बनाया जो लगातार भारत से जुड़ते गये और जुड़ते रहेंगे।

श्री राजकुमार भाटिया ने कहा कि जब मैं परिषद में सचिव बना उनके साथ काम करने का ज्यादा अवसर मिला उनके अंदर इतनी सादगी थी कि वे हर चीज का जरूरत के अनुसार उपयोग करते थे। उन्होंने जिस काम को भी अपनाया, पूरा किया। वे धुनी और ध्येय समर्पित थे। श्री आर. डी. गुप्ता ने कहा कि वे जिसे भी किसी काम की जिम्मेदारी देते थे उससे काम में प्रगति की रोज की रिपोर्ट लेते थे तथा अपने अंतिम दिन तक अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग

परिषद के लिए कार्य करते रहे। श्री मुकेश अग्रवाल ने कहा कि बालेश्वर जी सिद्धांतों से समझौता नहीं करते थे। उनकी सोच को आगे ले जाने की आज बहुत जरूरत है।

अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद के अध्यक्ष श्री वीरेन्द्र गुप्ता ने अपने अध्यक्षीय उद्बोधन में कहा कि बालेश्वर जी से मेरा सम्पर्क तब बढ़ा जब मैं हाईकमिश्नर बनकर त्रिनिडाड गया। अन्य गिरमिटिया देशों की तरह ही त्रिनिडाड में उनकी गहरी रूचि थी। वे डायसपोरा के बहुत सारे लोगों के लिए एक सम्पर्क सूत्र थे। बालेश्वर जी विदेश में बसे भारतीयों को भी भारतीय परिवार का हिस्सा मानते थे। बालेश्वर जी ने अपना दायरा सिर्फ डायसपोरा तक ही सीमित नहीं रखा। बल्कि नेपाल और भूटान में भी उनकी रूचि थी। बालेश्वर जी केवल विचार नहीं करते थे, बल्कि उसे व्यवहार में लाने का प्रयास करते थे। जैसे गांधी जी ने जिन सिद्धांतों की बात की, उससे अधिक उसे व्यवहारिक बनाने का प्रयास किया। बालेश्वर जी में भी यह गुण था। जब भारत में कोई भी डायसपोरा की बात नहीं करता था तब उन्होंने अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद की स्थापना की और इस काम को आगे बढ़ाया। हमारे लिए बालेश्वर जी जो विरासत छोड़ गए हैं उसे हम आगे बढ़ाने का प्रयास करेंगे।

धन्यवाद ज्ञापन करते हुए गोपाल अरोड़ा ने कहा कि बालेश्वर जी के बारे में जब हम इस प्रकार की बातें सुनते हैं तो उससे एक प्रकार की ऊर्जा मिलती है। उन्होंने तीन दशक से अधिक पत्रकारिता और तीन दशक से अधिक डायसपोरा के लिए काम किया। वह अपने प्रभाव के प्रवाह में सब लोगों को साथ लेकर चले। लेकिन उन्होंने कभी उसे सीमा नहीं बनने दिया। उन्होंने हर व्यक्ति को उसकी क्षमता के अनुसार काम करने का मौका दिया जो वस्तुतः बहुत महत्वपूर्ण बात है। □

मॉरीशस में 11 वां विश्व हिन्दी सम्मेलन

11 वें विश्व हिन्दी सम्मेलन का आयोजन 18-20 अगस्त, 2018 को मॉरीशस में होने जा रहा है। सम्मेलन में हिस्सा लेने के लिए हर राज्य के कम से कम दो प्रतिनिधियों के साथ विदेश मंत्री सुषमा स्वराज 17 अगस्त, 2018 को मॉरीशस पहुंचेंगी। सम्मेलन के बारे में जानकारी देने के लिए आयोजित प्रेस कॉन्फ्रेंस में सुषमा स्वराज ने बताया कि इस बार का आयोजन इस लिहाज से अलग

होगा कि पहली बार हम यह रिपोर्ट देंगे कि वर्ष 2015 में हुए 10वें सम्मेलन के सुझावों का कितना अनुपालन हुआ है। विश्व हिन्दी सम्मेलन का उद्घाटन मॉरीशस के प्रधानमंत्री परविंद जगन्नाथ करेंगे।

भारत सरकार के आमंत्रण पर हिन्दी के 47 विदेशी विद्वान भी सम्मेलन में हिस्सा लेंगे। श्रीमती स्वराज एक विशेष विमान से 290 प्रतिनिधियों के साथ

मॉरीशस पहुंचेंगी। वैसे भारत सरकार की तरफ से 377 लोगों का दल इसमें हिस्सा लेगा। उन्होंने बताया कि सरकार की तरफ से हिन्दी को संयुक्त राष्ट्र की भाषा बनाने की कोशिश जारी है, लेकिन इसमें कुछ नियमगत अड़चने आ रही हैं। बहरहाल, भारत की कोशिशों की वजह से संयुक्त राष्ट्र में हिन्दी में साप्ताहिक समाचार बुलेटिन और हिन्दी में यूएन के ट्विटर हैंडल की शुरुआत हो चुकी है। □

विश्व हिन्दी सचिवालय के पुस्तकालय का नाम 'बालेश्वर अग्रवाल पुस्तकालय'

अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद के सम्मानीय आजीवन सदस्य और हिन्दुस्थान समाचार के संरक्षक श्री आर. के. सिन्हा, संसद सदस्य, राज्यसभा के अनुरोध पर भारत की विदेश मंत्री श्रीमती सुषमा स्वराज ने फोन पर उन्हें सूचित किया है कि विश्व हिन्दी सचिवालय का पुस्तकालय बालेश्वर अग्रवाल

को समर्पित किया जायेगा। श्री सिन्हा ने मॉरीशस के ह्यूमन सर्विस ट्रस्ट के पूर्व अध्यक्ष श्री प्रेमचन्द बूझाबन का एक पत्र विदेश मंत्री को प्रेषित किया था, जिसमें श्री बूझाबन ने यह अनुरोध किया था कि विश्व हिन्दी सचिवालय का नामकरण अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद के संस्थापक एंव पूर्व महासचिव

बालेश्वर अग्रवाल की स्मृति में किया जाये। जिसकी अनुशंसा श्री आर. के. सिन्हा ने विदेश मंत्री श्रीमती सुषमा स्वराज से की थी। बालेश्वर अग्रवाल के नाम पर विश्व हिन्दी सचिवालय पुस्तकालय की स्थापना से मॉरीशस और भारत के संबंध और अधिक सुदृढ़ होंगे। □

एक शाम : उपनिषद के नाम

इला कुमार की नई पुस्तक स्टोरीज ऑफ़ उपनिषद का विमोचन कार्यक्रम 14 जुलाई, शनिवार को ऑक्सफोर्ड बुक स्टोर में संपन्न हुआ, अंग्रेजी की पुस्तकों से पटी दीवारों के बीच भारतीय वांग्मय की उपनिषद कहानियों की गहन सुगंध एक घंटे तक उस शाम वहां छाई रही। उपनिषद से सम्बन्धित वाक्यों और उत्सर्जित भावों के कारण एक अलग किस्म की ऊष्मित ऊर्जा का प्रवाह श्रोताओं से भरे स्पेस में के बीच बना रहा। कार्यक्रम की शुरुआत नीता श्रीधरन ने उपस्थित जनों के स्वागत से किया और



इला कुमार की पुस्तक का विमोचन करते हुए मार्कंडेय राय और गणमान्य अतिथिगण

लेखिका इला कुमार का विस्तृत परिचय दिया—उनके छह कविता संग्रह, एक उपन्यास, एक कहानी संग्रह, दो अनुवाद पुस्तकें एवं तीन उपनिषद पुस्तकों के बारे में बताया।

मुख्य अतिथि के रूप में श्री मार्कंडेय राय अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद में विदेश कार्य समिति के सभापति ने बहुत प्रभावशाली ढंग से विमोचित पुस्तक 'स्टोरीज; ऑफ़ उपनिषद/उपनिषद

कहानियाँ' के बारे में विस्तारपूर्वक बताया कि अपने ढंग की यह अनूठी एवं उच्चस्तरीय पुस्तक है, उन्होंने यह भी कहा कि युवा पीढ़ी के लिये यह किताब एक ऐसी भेंट है जिसके द्वारा वे बहुत लाभान्वित हो सकते हैं।

कवि राजेश्वर वशिष्ठ ने उपस्थित श्रोताओं ने उपनिषद की महत्ता पर प्रकाश डाला एवं बहुत ही कुशलतापूर्वक मंच का संचालन किया और

लेखिका से कई प्रश्न पूछे, जिनके उत्तर इला कुमार ने विद्वतापूर्वक बहुत गहराई में जाकर दिए, उन्होंने उपनिषद में संचित ज्ञान की व्याख्या करते हुए कहा कि उपनिषद कहानियां ज्ञान को, आत्म-आत्मा और ब्रह्म को तो इंगित करती ही हैं, इनकी पैठ विज्ञान में भी है, उन्होंने गर्भोपनिषद का उदाहरण देते हुए शिशु जन्म से सम्बन्धित आधुनिक विज्ञान के तथ्य को उपनिषद वर्णित कथ्य के समकक्ष रखा। इला कुमार ने ब्राह्मण के सही शब्दार्थ एवं कर्म, व्यवहार तथा ज्ञान के आधार पर ब्राह्मण के पहचान को भी बताया और वेदांत से

सम्बन्धित अपने पठन-पाठन को जगन्नाथ पुरी के नैगटा बाबा के आश्रम से जोड़ते हुए याद किया। उन्होंने इन कहानियों के लेखन को समाज के ऋण से उद्धार होने की बात कही।

दैनिक भास्कर के प्रधान सम्पादक दीपक द्विवेदी ने इला कुमार के सरल तरीके से उपनिषद कहानियों को लिखने की तारीफ की और अंत में दैनिक भास्कर परिवार की ओर से लेखिका को बधाई दी। □