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श्री बालेश्वर अग्रवाल जन्मशताब्दी के अवसर पर

Baleshwar Agrawal: His DREAM TO UNITE INDIAN DIASPORA

✍ - Prof. Mohan K. Gautam

It will be befitting to say that Shri Baleshwar Agrawal was an institution in the service of humanity, having dedicated and devoted his life as a selfless person.

In 1984, I met him for the first time at the 150th anniversary of Indian Emigration in Mauritius. During the reception at the residence of the Mauritius President, Shri Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, I found a person who was looking at me smilingly. I just went to him, introduced myself and in return during our short conversation he told me about his work and activities. He wore a white shirt, Indian closed-collar dark jacket and trousers. In the course of our conversation, he told me that he had heard about me. Over tea sips, we talked about Indians overseas and Indian politics. I got an impression that it was his wish that Indians, wherever they live, should be united and feel "Indian".

Whenever I visited India I met Agrawalji in his small office at Bhagat Singh Market, New Delhi. We always discussed issues concerning Indians overseas. Since there were two groups of Indians, one belonging to old colonial era and the other new immigrants after Independence, we created a term to address both Indian communities as "Bharatvanshi". When Pravasi Bhartiya Diwas started in New Delhi, Dr. Singhvi also used the same term to address the Indian Diaspora.

A majority of Indians in The Netherlands are from the Dutch plantation colony of Suriname, whose forefathers migrated from Uttar



Pradesh, Bihar, Bengal and other states of North India. In 1863, when Netherlands abolished slavery, many plantations of sugar, coffee, cocoa, etc. were deserted by the black slaves. To restore the supply of labour, Indians were recruited by arkatiyas (recruiters) and sent to the Dutch colony of Suriname (was also known as Dutch Guiana) on a five-year indentured labour contract system.

The Indians were called girmitiyas (who have agreed to the contract). The new Indian immigrants living in Netherlands, on the other hand, left India either to pursue higher education or to get training in industrial concerns. Many commercial firms were already working in India such as Philips, Shell, Fokker and Unilever. In Netherlands, unfortunately, these Indian communities were living in their own encapsulated world. However, the feeling of being Indian was a common emotional factor.

In 1989, an international organisation, the Global Organisation of the People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) was created and its first convention was held in New York from 28 August to 3 September. The long-awaited dream of Baleshwar Agrawal for a united transnational Indian community became visible. Unfortunately, GOPIO split into two groups. One was perceived as NRI dominated and the other was perceived as PIO dominated. Baleshwarji did not like this split. He tried his best but could not persuade the two GOPIOs to be united.

In November 1998, Agrawalji organized the first conference of Parliamentarians of Indian Origin in New Delhi. Again in February 2000, he organized another conference on the subject of PIOs' contribution to the development of the countries where they live. Both conferences were represented by 40 countries, inaugurated by Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee. In 2000, the third conference was a big celebration under the banner of the sixth GOPIO convention in Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi. Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the Prime Minister, again inaugurated and Overseas Indians were given recognition by the Minister of External Affairs, Shri Jaswant Singh. In that conference, the idea of PIO Card was also mooted. The proposal was that Indians could have a sort of dual nationality. The PIO card will give right to the Indian Diaspora to come to India without the visa formalities.

Mr. Baleshwar Agrawal published a

book called, Pioneers of Prosperity, which was edited by Mr. Sudarshan Kumar and released in 2000. The bulletin of Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad was already in circulation since 1987. ARSP also published a few books under the title of Mother India: Children Abroad. Some of the books were on South Africa and Fiji (1987), Guyana (1988), Sri Lanka (1989), Indonesia (1990), Suriname (1991), Malaysia (1992), Thailand (1994), Trinidad and Tobago (1995), Myanmar (1996), East Africa (1997) and Australia and New Zealand (2002), and so on. One of my papers which I read in the Ramayan Conference in Mauritius (1990) was published in the book on Focus on Suriname.

As it is known, Shri Baleshwar Agrawalji hailed from Bihar, the state

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from where thousands of emigrants were sent to the Dutch, French and British plantation colonies. He was always interested in finding whereabouts of these Indians. He dreamt of linking them with India, the land of their forefathers. With this idea he published the series Mother India: Children Abroad. Fortunately, together with Dr. Singhvi he got help from Government of India in recognizing the identity of the Indian Diaspora. After the economic liberalization (1992), the new policy of the Government of India focused on involving the Indian Diaspora to help India by investing their capital, technology and know-how.

In September 2000, with the approval of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of External Affairs formed a High-Level Committee. The idea was to review the issues and the role of the Indian Diaspora. The Indian Diaspora was divided into two categories, NRI (Non-Resident Indians, who left India after 26 Jan. 1950) and PIO (People of Indian Origin, whose forefathers left India as emigrants between 1834 to 1916). The committee members were Dr. L.M. Singhvi (Chairman), Member of Parliament and former High Commission of United Kingdom, Shri R.L. Bhatia, Member of Parliament and former Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri J.R. Hiremath, Indian Foreign Service (Retd.) and Shri Baleshwar Agrawal, General Secretary of the Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad and Shri J.C. Sharma, Secretary Ministry of External Affairs (also worked as Member Secretary of the HLC). In 2002, the High-Level Committee after visiting and talking to the Indian Diaspora communities in different countries submitted the report to the Prime Minister.

The HLC report recommended observing the Pravasi Bhartiya Divas (PBD) on January 9 each year to mark the return of Mahatma Gandhi to India from South Africa and to invite the members of Indian Diaspora from many countries; to organize a three-day conference on various issues related to Indian Diaspora and their roots in India; to recognize the eminent PIOs and NRIs, who have contributed to the welfare of the Indian communities in their respective countries.

In 2003, the first PBD was organized in New Delhi amidst enormous commotion. In 2006, a new Ministry of Overseas Indians was established. Since then PBD has taken place in New Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Chennai and Jaipur. Together with the celebrations, a two-day pre-PBD conference of New York-GOPIO and a one-day symposium of PIO-GOPIO (mostly on 10 January) have taken place. Agrawalji always participated in such meetings. He felt immensely proud when he found out that many Indian members of the Indian Diaspora were working on the political canvas of their countries. In 2003, he was very happy to see a number of Indians involved in the political climate of their countries. There were 300 Members of Parliament, 65 Ministers and three Prime Ministers and three Presidents of Indian origin in the Indian Diaspora countries.

Baleshwarji was very proud of the 5000-year old Indian civilization. He maintained that India can help the world through its cultural ideas, norms and values. He was secular in his thinking. He was an honest person and straight forward. When he visited Netherlands with his big Indian contingent after the World Hindi Conference in London, the PIO community (Hindustanis) received him with warmth and affection in Amsterdam. Still PIOs talk about him and his generous affection. Since he was connected to Hindi language of many PIOs, he also wanted that Netherlands should have one of the International World Hindi Conference.

Baleshwarji had always been a loving and nice person. He wanted to unite the Indian communities. In a way his dream has been realized but it still has to be strengthened. It is necessary to learn from his work and create a globalized world of co-existence; a Vasudhaiva Kutumbakama, a global family, as mentioned in the Rigveda, where there are no discriminating boundaries and all can live with respect and love.

I pay my humble homage to the noble soul.

DEMOCRACY CAN DELIVER - DEMOCRACY HAS DELIVERED : PM NARENDRA MODI

(English translation of the Prime Minister's address at the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly on September 25, 2021)

His Excellency Abdullah Shahid, Hearty congratulations to you on taking over the Presidency. It is a matter of great pride for all the developing countries and especially the small Island developing states to have you as the President. For the last one and a half years, the whole world has been facing the biggest ever pandemic in 100 years. I pay tribute to all those who lost their lives in such a terrible pandemic and express my condolences to the families.

I am representing a country which has the distinction of being named as the 'Mother of Democracy'. We have had a great tradition of democracy for thousands of years. On this 15th August, India entered its 75th year of independence. Our diversity is the hallmark of our strong democracy. A country that has dozens of languages, hundreds of dialects, different lifestyles, cuisines. This is the best example of a 'Vibrant Democracy'. It is the strength of India's democracy that a small child who once helped his father at a 'Tea stall' at a railway station, is addressing UNGA for the fourth time today as the Prime Minister of India. As the Chief Minister of Gujarat for the longest time and then as the Prime Minister of India for the last 7 years, I have been serving the countrymen in the role of Head of Government for 20 years.

And I am saying this from my experience- Yes, Democracy Can Deliver. Yes, Democracy Has Delivered. Mr President,

Today is the birth anniversary of



Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay ji, the father of 'Ekatm Manavdarshan' . 'Ekatm Manavdarshan' i.e. Integral Humanism. That is, the co-journey of development and expansion from self to collective. Expansion of the self, moving from individual to the society, the nation and entire humanity and this contemplation is dedicated to Antyodaya. Antyodaya is called where no one is left behind, in today's definition.

With this spirit, India today is moving ahead on the path of Integrated, Equitable Development. Development must be all-inclusive, all-reaching, all-pervading, all-inclusive, this is our priority. In the last seven years, more than 430 million people in India have been connected to the banking system, who were so far deprived of it. Today, more than 360 million people who could not have thought of it earlier have also got insurance coverage. By providing free treatment to more than 50 crore people, India has connected them with quality health service. India has

made 30 million pucca houses, homeless families are now home-owners.

Polluted water is a big problem not only in India but in the whole world and especially for poor and developing countries. To tackle this challenge in India, we are running a huge campaign to provide piped clean water to more than 170 million households. Big organizations of the world have recognized that for the development of any country, it is very important for its citizens to have property rights of land and house, that is, a record of ownership. In the large countries of the world, there are a large number of people who do not have property rights of land and houses. Today we are engaged in providing digital records of their homes and land to millions of people by mapping them with drones in more than 60000 villages of India.

This digital record is facilitating the access of people to access to credit – bank loans, while reducing property disputes. Today, every sixth person in the world is an Indian. When Indians progress, the development of the world also gets a boost. When India grows, the world grows. When India reforms, the world transforms. Science and technology based Innovations in India can greatly help the world. Both the scale of our Tech-Solutions and their low cost are unparalleled. With our Unified Payment Interface UPI, more than 3.5 billion transactions are taking place every month in India today. India's vaccine delivery

platform Co-WIN, is providing digital support for millions of vaccine doses in a single day.

सेवा परमोधर्म : (Sewa Parmo Dharma) India, which lives on the principle of 'Sewa Parmo Dharma', is dedicated to vaccination development and manufacturing despite limited resources. I want to inform UNGA that, India has developed the world's first, the world's first DNA based vaccine, which can be administered to all people above the age of 12 years. Another m-RNA vaccine is in the final stages of its development. Scientists of India are also engaged in the development of a nasal vaccine for corona. Realizing its responsibility towards humanity, India has once again started distributing the vaccine to the needy people of the world. I also invite vaccine manufacturers from all over the world today. Come! Make Vaccine in India. Today we all know that in human life, how important is technology. But in the changing world, Technology with Democratic Values, it is also necessary to ensure this. Indian-origin doctors, innovators, engineers, managers, be it in any country, our democratic values, keep inspiring them to be engaged in the service of humanity. And we have seen this even during this corona period.

The corona pandemic has also taught a lesson to the world that the global economy must be diversified more now. For this, expansion of Global Value Chains is necessary. Our Atmanirbhar Bharat (Self-reliant India) campaign is inspired by this spirit. India is becoming a democratic and trustworthy partner of the world for Global Industrial Diversification. And in this campaign, India has established a better balance in both economy and ecology. You will definitely be proud to see India's efforts on climate action as compared to big and developed countries.

Today, India is moving very fast towards the target of 450 GW of renewable energy. We are also in the campaign to make India the world's largest Green Hydrogen Hub.

We have to answer to our future generations that when it was time to take decisions, what were they doing when they were responsible for guiding the world? Today, the danger of Regressive Thinking and Extremism is increasing in front of the world. Under these circumstances, the whole world has to make Science-Based, Rational and Progressive Thinking the basis of development. To strengthen the science-based approach, India is promoting Experience Based Learning. We have opened thousands of Atal Tinkering Labs in schools, built incubators and developed a strong start-up ecosystem. To commemorate the 75th year of its independence, India is going to launch 75 such satellites into space, which Indian students are developing in schools and colleges.

On the other hand, with Regressive Thinking, countries that are using terrorism as a political tool have to understand that terrorism is an equally big threat to them. It is very important to ensure that the soil of Afghanistan is not used for spreading terrorism and terrorist attacks. We also have to be careful that no country tries to use the delicate situation there as a tool for its selfishness motives. At present, the people of Afghanistan, the women and children there, the minorities there, need help, and we have to discharge our responsibility.

Our oceans are also our common heritage. That's why we have to keep in mind that we use the ocean resources, and not abuse them. Our oceans are also the life-line of international trade. We have to safeguard them from the race of expansion and exclusion. In order to

strengthen the rule-based world order, the international community must speak in unison. The broad consensus reached during India's Presidency in the Security Council shows the world the way forward as far as Maritime Security is concerned. India's great philosopher, Acharya Chanakya said centuries ago-Kalati kramat kaal and phalam pibatti. When the right work is not done at the right time, time itself destroys the success of that work. If the United Nations has to keep itself relevant, it has to improve its effectiveness, increase its reliability. A number of questions are being raised on UN today. We have seen this during the Climate and Covid crisis. The ongoing proxy war in many parts of the world- terrorism and the crisis in Afghanistan have deepened these questions. In the context of the Origin of COVID and with regard to Ease of Doing Business Rankings, global governance institutions have damaged their credibility built up by decades of hard work.

It is essential that we constantly strengthen the UN for the protection of Global Order, Global Laws and Global Values. I am concluding with the words of Nobel Laureate, Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore ji शुभो कौरमो-पौथे/धौरो निर्बाहो गान, शोन दुर्बोल शौशौय/होक अबौशौन (Shubho Kormo-Pothe/ Dhoro nirbhayo gaan, shon durbol Saunshoy/hok auboshan) That is, move forward fearlessly on your auspicious path of action. May all weaknesses and doubts be eliminated. This message is as relevant to the United Nations in today's context as it is to every responsible country. I am confident that all of us will strive to enhance peace and harmony in the world, make the world healthy, safe and prosperous.



SEPARATE & UNEQUAL: MALAYSIAN INDIAN TAMIL PROLETARIAT

Prof. V Suryanarayan

The Malaysian government should realise that if one part is afflicted with a serious ailment, the whole body would wither away unless it is immediately cured

There is hardly any country in the world that does not have an Indian element in its population. It could be rightly said that the sun never sets on the Indian diaspora. Among them, Tamils form a substantial number: 8 million. They constitute an overwhelming majority of the Indian population in Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Singapore; they are in good numbers in Myanmar, Mauritius, South Africa, Seychelles, Reunion Islands, Fiji, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Suriname, Australia, New Zealand, Gulf countries, the US and Canada, England, and European countries.

The Tamils try to retain their traditions while at the same time adjusting to the life of the host countries. Cultural persistence and adaptation to new surroundings are twin facets of these dynamic groups. The achievements of the Tamils are commendable. In every sphere of life, they have excelled, bringing fame to themselves, their country of adoption, Tamil Nadu and India. A few names come to mind—Dr S Chandrasekhar, Monty Naicker, S R Nathan, Kamala Harris, Muthiah Muralitharan, Indra Nooyi and Sundar Pichai. As Prime Minister Vajpayee pointed out, “Few people who have entered foreign lands can claim such testimony.” It would be simplistic to assume that the hopes they entertain and the problems they face are similar. It is closely intertwined with the nature of their migration, their numerical

numbers, their educational status and above all, the majority-minority syndrome in the host countries. August 31 is Merdeka day (independence day) in Malaysia. During recent years, the country has undergone a transformation. From an agricultural country, it has transformed itself into a manufacturing hub. The social and economic status of the indigenous people, Malays, have risen high due to affirmative action. The economically powerful and culturally exclusive Chinese retain their identity and self-respect due to self-help measures. But the same cannot be said of the Indian Tamil community. While the educated middle class—Indian Tamils, Sri Lankan Tamils, Malayalis, Punjabis and Gujaratis—excel in their chosen fields of medicine, engineering, business and teaching, the conditions of the Indian Tamil proletariat are deplorable. It is drifting from bad to worse. The Malay share of corporate capital has gone up to 19.2%, Chinese 46.8% and the Indians only 1.5%, the balance being owned by foreigners. On the 64th anniversary of the independence day, when a stock-taking generally takes place, the Malaysian government should realise that if one part of the body is afflicted with a serious ailment, the whole body would wither away unless it is immediately cured. The large-scale migration of Tamil



Prof. V. Suryanarayan

workers took place during colonial rule. Since the indigenous people would not do the hard work of clearing the forests, the colonialists turned to Madras Presidency for cheap labor. The Tamils were considered to be docile, hard-working, cheap and not troublesome. Their movement to Malaya and other parts of the British Empire was a saga of suffering. Initially, the workers were birds of passage, but gradually they became permanent settlers. The British policy led to the transplantation of a Tamil Nadu village to Malaya. In his book, *The Return*, the well-known Malaysian Indian writer K S Maniam has mentioned: During festivals, they will decorate their houses with mango leaves; during Thaipusam, they will pray in the Murugan temple; they will paint the bull horns on Thai Pongal. When they go out on visits they will not say “I am going”, but “I am

coming". The life of the plantation workers had a rhythm; they were like creepers around a tree, depending on the management from birth to death. With the disintegration of the plantations and their conversion into hotels, multi-storeyed buildings and golf courses, the workers were uprooted and had to migrate to urban areas. They became urban squatters. There was hardly any upward mobility among them because they never studied beyond the primary level, where the medium was Tamil. More tragic, they became lumpenised and criminalised. Aliran, the well-known Malaysian journal, provided statistical details that make for alarming reading. About 40% of serious crimes in Malaysia are committed by Indians; there are 38 Indian-based gangs with 1,800 active members. During the last few years, there has been a 100% increase in the number of Indian gangsters; Indians recorded the highest number of those detained under Emergency Regulations and banished to the Simpang Renggam prison. In the field of social woes, it is the same story. In Kuala Lumpur, 14% of the squatters are Indians. They have the highest

suicide rates; 41% of the vagrants and beggars are Indians; 20% of the child abusers are Indians, as are 14% of the juvenile delinquents. The worst tragedy of the community is the fact that their political leadership has not been able to protect their interests. The history of the Malaysian Indian Congress from 1946 to the present is a story of infighting among leaders. Starting with Thivy and Devaser, Devaser and Sambanthan, Sambanthan and Manickavasagam, Manickavasagam and Subrahmanyam, it makes for tragic reading. Dr Mahathir, who was Prime Minister of Malaysia for the longest spell, is of Indian (Malayali) origin, but it was during his stewardship that the Tamil community suffered the most. The only silver lining on the horizon was the unprecedented rise of the Hindu Rights Action Force (Hindraf) to protest against the desecration of Hindu temples. It was able to demonstrate Makkal Shakti, adopted Gandhian forms of struggle, brought Kuala Lumpur to a standstill and inflicted reverses on the Barisan Nasional at federal and state levels in the 2008 elections. Sections of the Hindraf are now extending support to

the government, but according to perceptive observers, it has not been able to do much for the upliftment of the community. The living conditions of the Indian Tamil proletariat should be a matter of serious concern to the government and people of Tamil Nadu. In the famous film Parasakthi, the script of which was written by N Karunanidhi, Gunasekharan, the hero, acted by Sivaji Ganesan, asks the question: "Why are the waters of Bay of Bengal saltish? It is because of the tears of overseas Tamils". There are limitations to what Tamil Nadu can do to influence Malaysia's domestic politics, but we still can play a benign role, especially in the field of education and provision of technical skills. As a first step, the Department for the Welfare of NonResident Tamils should prepare an in-depth study and submit positive recommendations.

(V Suryanarayan, Senior Professor (Retd), Centre for South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Madras. The author was the Founding Director of the Centre in the University of Madras.



A LOSS of ANOTHER NATIONAL ICON : TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF AL RAMSAWAK, STROY TELLER, FOLKLORIST AND AUTHOR OF TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

On behalf of the Bissessarsingh family and our extended ABVMOTT family, I wish to extend deepest condolences to the family and friends of one of T&T's well known National Icon AL RAMSAWAK who left this earthly world on 25th September, 2021 . He was 91 years . A life well lived. Al Ramsawak was best known for his folklore stories of Trinidad and Tobago. A talented son of the soil he wore many caps. Al was a teacher,

stroyteller , artist, folklorist, author and recipient of the Media Award 1997 for the best television documentary. In 2004 he received the Humming Bird Silver Medal National Award for folklore/culture,. He was also the story time columnist for the Sunday Guardian Newspaper in the Sun Shine Children's Magazine. Though he is gone his legacy lives on forever. May God grant unto him eternal peace and rest.



MAJORITY/MINORITY INTERFACE: THE CASE OF THE RROMANI DISPERSED DIASPORA

✍️ - Prof. Marcel Courthiade
(Distinguished Romani Scholar; 1953-2021)

Last year during the celebrations of (Commemoration of Millennium of Roma's Migration from North India, 2018), we expressed the wish that "at the turn of the second Millennium of our life outside India as a Diaspora, we will hopefully start a new era in our relationships with majority populations of the countries where we are citizens and/or residents". This conference is a sign that it could be the case and I want to welcome this initiative. A major prerequisite for such a new start is to build it on solid and reliable grounds, in terms of concepts and methods, but also of real empowerment.

Any majority/minority interface is by definition asymmetric but this asymmetry should not be a cover-story for inequality, injustice and domination. We observe that it has been the case for centuries so far in the Rromani case, but also for most people geographically scattered, and called "with no compact territory".

I would like to suggest a new word for the notion of "Peoples with no compact territory". Another formula, "Distinct multi state based people", was used in the '90's. We have also on hand the words of *nation, people, community, diaspora, ethnic group* (from Yugoslav vocabulary after Stalin's approach), minority etc. Most are not appropriate: for example "minority in Europe". Even if we take the lowest estimate of twelve million, the Rroms would be at the 8th place out of some 35 nations in the 28 member states of Europe... So I suggest the Rromani coining "Somdiv nation". Somdiv means archipelago in Rromani. Each of these peoples is like a Somdiv – a word reminding Indians their word *DvipSamuh* (द्वीपसमूह), just the other way around,

since *Som = Samuh* (समूह) and *Div = Dvip* (द्वीप, the real form being as in Bhojpuri दीप closer to Rromani; cf. also *diva* in Elu Prakrt)... So I would say there are ten "Somdiv nations" or "archipelago nations" in Europe.

I would like to add a few considerations about the word "interface", which has been quite properly chosen. Rroms, as all Somdiv nations, are characterized by a double belonging: their trans-frontier identity (sometimes reaching to India) but also their attachment, not only administrative, but also emotional, to the country where they are citizens. As such there is no real barrier between them and other citizens because they embody also the "other citizen". They have, and enjoy, both heritages, two souls in one person, in harmony and complementarity. The barrier between them is a political fabrication by non-Rroms. So since "interface" evokes rather exchanges, dialogue and osmosis than separation, in this respect I deem it was well chosen. Rroms have never been communitarianists or confessionalists but always open-minded toward others, all others, after the Indian tradition, and this was the first justification used by Westerners to persecute them.

Back to the majority/minority interface: there are several obstacles to its improvement and the most pernicious ones are related to the fact that observations and decisions about the Rroms, and their majority/minority interface, are left exclusively to people who are not involved, namely to Ga'e, and in addition who are not realistically acquainted to Rromani issues. From the back of their office, most of them



are even not aware of their lack of information. Their mentions of Rromani empowerment are but a pious anthem, with no practical impact. Their approach is strictly one of outsiders – *sometimes in good faith* but not always.

I focus my argument on the last hundred years, the situation prior to World War 1 can be summarized as follows: at the Rroms' arrival in Europe, its inhabitants were locked in their rigid vision of the world, they were not able to acquaint a new culture, so that their lack of open-mindedness led them to a false perception of the Rroms and they did not understand, due to the mentality of the time, the alternative culture conveyed by these newcomers. Almost all scholars in the past concentrated on the misdeeds of a minority of Rroms (in a very wild Europe anyway, much more delinquent and even dangerous as a whole, than the Rroms at that time) and they embedded their accusations into the fake cliché of nomadic way of life and lack of religion, while creating a fabricated wrong image of the Rroms, a detrimental stereotype which is still prevailing and very active today. They turned a dignified diaspora into a marginalized social group, allegedly generating problems.

So improvement in the perception of the Rroms, not only by policy makers

and other stake-holders but also by general public (*out of whom stakeholders emerge anyway*) is a key to changes and progress. Nevertheless the venture is not easy since at least two stages are requested:

a) We need to appeal to a critical mass of people to Rromani issues, but we can observe every day that it is very difficult. The disparaging feelings of the masses about the Rroms, due to the heritage of slanders about them, prevent most citizens to feel involved in any search of justice in their favour. Even brilliant politicians like the former French Prime Minister Lionel Jospin, a real humanist, expressed this view in an euphemism "Rroms are not a priority for France". Accordingly, if half a million of French citizens are not a priority, is this a reason to let thrive injustice against them ? How to become a priority ? Terrorism is excluded because it was never a part of Rromani culture. So education of the majority ? It is said that education reduces prejudices. But how can presumed wrongdoers take part in educating or even informing the self-satisfied majority ? When I was appointed professor at INALCO university, some people around me told with bitter irony "Now *Manouches* will teach us school !" (*Manouche* is derogative for Rrom in the slang of French police).

b) even in the case a number of people get involved in the search of truth and justice, while fighting to replace slanders with realistic views among laymen, the question of capable, honest and active Rromani involvement is still pending – mainly due to the wide and deep distrust that Rroms feel due to rampant corruption, financial but also political, prevailing in Rromani matters. So the next step would be to interest a critical mass of Rroms in getting rid of the overall clichés about this famous majority/minority interface.

The main obstacle is that active involvement is needed but youngsters are severely disappointed. At least in my

generation, many Rroms got committed for this noble cause, spending time, health and money, but most remained ignored, and even denigrated or mocked. The ones who achieved some recognition had to adopt the mainstream ideology – and this is the reason why I never achieved any sound career. This is what I call *political corruption*, namely to be forced to utter some statements about which *you know they are erroneous*, just to make sure you are not losing your job and advantages.

The question of the majority/minority interface was a crucial topic of the 4th Rromani World Congress in Warsaw 30 years ago. I would like to stress that the very first Congress in London in nineteen seventy one had been organised by Rromani activists, mainly from Yugoslavia and Switzerland, while the 2nd and 3rd were run by non-Rromani NGOs. The 4th one relied only on Rromani forces, being in addition politically supported by the highest officials of UNESCO. In this Congress appeared the question of the interaction between majority and Rromani minority – I should say Rromani Somdiv nation. It was reported in an article published in Chandigarh the following year by late Wajendra Rishi.

One of the main discussions during this Congress was devoted to the need to give up continuous laments about the Rroms' misfortune. Such a condolence is a typical attitude of majorities, involved in "favour" of the unfortunate Rroms. The idea was to replace this attitude by a much more constructive one, namely to spread a brotherly hand of cooperation with majorities, in dignity, mutual respect and Rromanipen. One may summarize this U-turn with Rajko Đuriæ's words, newly elected president of the IRU : *o drom e Rromenqo nakhel and-i phuv e ga'enqi, naceti te ovel jekhenqi emancipacia bi te ovel vi e averenqi emancipacia* "The Rroms' route crosses the land of the Ga'e; there can be no emancipation of the ones without the emancipation of the others". This emancipation means to get free from xenophobic mindset,

accumulation of ethnic slanders, acceptance of false debates aimed at covering primitive responses to ancestral fears, imprisonment in nationalism and territorial belonging, submission to destructive ideologies aimed at reinforcing the power of the "happy few" – I am quoting in annex a very poetical text sent by the poet Rajko Đuriæ, then president of the International Romani Union, in reply to the invitation to the celebrations in Caen, for the fiftieth anniversary of the Normandy Landings (02.06.1994) – he could not attend because he was then a political refugee in Germany.

All the History demonstrates that the Rromani people has always been an exemplary model of constructive integration, living as equal among equals but keeping their heritage alive – provided they are not rejected, excluded, chased, literally hunted as wild beasts, hung, burnt, gassed and slaughtered – mainly during the nazi genocide but also to a lesser extent in other contexts. Such treatment turned some Rroms into marginalized social groups, and these groups are used by racists to stigmatize the entire Rromani Somdiv nation. Objectively speaking, the fact to speak about lack of integration of the Rroms is a racist untruth, a fabrication, and as such it should be punished by law. However the so-called freedom of speech (freedom of lies) appears to be stronger than justice – at least when the Rroms' fate is at stake, because when exerted against most other minorities, such freedom is qualified "hate speech" and condemned by penal courts, as well as public opinion.

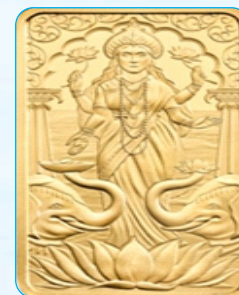
In this respect we have to promote a realistic, but by no means angelic, picture of the Rroms as partners in European societies and our studies about the majority/minority interface should tackle the various fields where interactions were constructive. Facts are the best weapon to combat the biased statements of politically inspired researchers or racist activists – including crypto-racists of all kinds. ■

UK Royal Mint launches first-ever gold bar featuring Hindu deity to celebrate Diwali

As the British-Indian diaspora gear up to buy gold on the auspicious occasion of Dhanteras, the UK's Royal Mint has launched its first ever gold bullion bar to celebrate Diwali. The bar is engraved with an image of the Hindu goddess Lakshmi. The Lakshmi bar — which contains 20g of 999.9 fine gold with Lakshmi engraved into the precious metal — has been designed by Royal Mint product designer Emma Noble, through close collaboration with the Shree Swaminarayan Temple in Cardiff to ensure cultural accuracy. The bar, the Royal Mint's first ever bar

featuring a Hindu deity or Indian design, follows the success of henna-inspired packaging launched for 1g and 5g regular gold bars last year.

The bar will be blessed at the Shree Swaminarayan Temple's Diwali ceremony as part of their Lakshmi Puja on November 4, with Royal Mint officials in attendance. Andrew Dickey, divisional director for precious metals at the Royal Mint, said: "With gold being a traditional and auspicious gift during the Diwali festival, we wanted to develop a product that incorporates both beauty and tradition, but with a modern



twist." The design features the goddess standing on a lotus with a lotus in each hand. The symbol Om is inscribed on the packaging.

UK NRIs protest Pakistan's 'violence on minorities'

British Indians took part in a silent vigil across 40 towns and cities of the UK as part of an appeal to end violence against minorities in Pakistan, especially Hindu girls.

Crowds gathered in cities like in Leicester, Edinburgh, Leeds and Slough, distributing pamphlets about the allegedly forced conversion of Hindu, Sikh and Christian girls in Pakistan.

"The situation of Hindus and other minorities in Pakistan is increasingly dire," the organisers, Insight UK, a movement of British Hindu and Indian

communities, told TOI. "They face regular kidnappings, forceful conversion, attacks and persecution. Each year over 1,000 minor Hindu girls are abducted, forced to convert, married to people twice or thrice of their age or pushed into the sex trade. Some seminaries teach that forcibly converting Hindu girls is equivalent to the greatest religious duty. Minorities in Pakistan face the threat of blasphemy law's."

In 1947, Pakistan had a minority population of about 31%. Of these, around 24% — or 7.5 million — were

Hindus. In 75 years, the minority population has dwindled to 4%, of which Hindus account for 1.6% or 2.5 million people, Insight UK said.

The organisation is lobbying with British MPs to raise its concerns with Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, Minister for South Asia. It wants the UK government to raise the issue with Pakistan and urge the Indian government to ensure that citizenship applications of minorities from Pakistan who've taken refuge in India are expedited.

Why discriminate against OCIs when there's CAA: Supreme Court

"India is known for its inclusiveness," observed the Supreme Court as it allowed overseas citizens of India (OCI) to be considered for admissions to all open category undergraduate medical seats for the academic year 2021-22, on a par with Indian citizens.

"When you (government) can bring non-citizens from neighbouring countries to India and make them citizens, except for one community, these (OCIs) are very much Indians. India is known for its inclusiveness. Look at what your CAA (Citizenship Amendment Act) does. It makes even non-citizens as citizens of this country," a bench of justices SA Nazeer and Krishna Murari told

additional solicitor general Aishwarya Bhati.

Bhati, appearing for the Centre, sought to defend the government's March 4 notification, issued by the ministry of home affairs, that put OCIs on a par with NRIs (non-resident Indians) with regard to all-India entrance examinations such as National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET), Joint Entrance Examination (JEE), etc. It ensured that OCIs would compete with NRIs for the limited number of seats in technical and medical education, paying the same amount of fee as NRIs. Several OCI students challenged this notification on the ground of arbitrariness. They alleged it is also discriminatory

because like other Indian students, many OCI students have had several years of schooling in India and their families also work in India.

It pointed out that the main plank of contention was the timing of the notification since the government abruptly withdrew the benefits available to the OCIs in the middle of the examination process.

Issuing an interim order in favour of the OCI students, the bench said that the petitioners will be considered eligible to all the medical seats where OCIs were eligible before the March 4 notification and that the National Testing Agency will declare the results of NEET(UG) -2021 accordingly.

BHUTAN UNGA

In one of the first events of this year's participation in the United Nations General Assembly, Prime Minister Dr. Lotay Tshering participated in the Leaders Roundtable on Climate Change held by UN Secretary-General António Guterres and UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson. Lyonchhen spoke on behalf of Bhutan as well as the 46 Least Developed Countries in the capacity of the group's chair.

"In a way, I am speaking on behalf of over one billion people who are the most impacted by climate change and suffer the most because of poor resilience and low adaptation capacity," he said.

Lyonchhen asserted the importance of supporting countries that are already affected on one hand and the need to assist and sustain countries that have made successful conservation efforts so far.



"Bhutan for instance, has made serious environmental efforts and sacrifices by maintaining high standards," he said. "Our King's vision is clearly reflected in our Constitution, which mandates 60% of the country to be under forest cover for all time and maintain intergenerational equity when it comes to natural resources." And then there was the principles of the Gross National Happiness, which ensured that the environment was not compromised for immediate economic and developmental gains.

"That is why we are carbon negative today, and yet we are not spared by the effects of climate change," he said. All LDCs faced similar dilemmas as they put in as much effort despite limited resources.

Therefore, Lyonchhen insisted on the delivery of the ambitious NDCs, Longterm Strategies in line with 1.5 degree of the Paris Agreement and delivery of USD 100 billion commitments.

"The LDC group is looking forward to a practical financing window at COP26," he said. "I would like to emphasize that the fund must be easily accessible and flexible for our needs."

About 27 heads of state and government attended the session. ■

15th Round Table Meeting

The 15th Round Table Meeting (RTM) between the Royal Government of Bhutan and Development Partners was held on 2 September 2021 in Thimphu to review the progress and implementation of the 12th Five Year Plan. The RTM is the highest forum for policy dialogue between the RGoB and its Development Partners. It is an opportunity to deepen understanding and partnership through sharing of development experiences including success, challenges and opportunities.

This year's RTM was held at a time when Bhutan is midway through its 12th Five-Year Plan and is set to graduate from the LDC category in 2023. This is an important milestone



in its development journey. The RTM provided updates on the progress of the 12th Five Year Plan and inform on the country's macroeconomic performance and outlook. The RTM also share challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and response measures of the RGoB.

The RTM convened in a hybrid format

(in-person and virtual) considering the restrictions posed by the pandemic. A total of 146 participants, of which 94 representatives of Development Partners and 52 national participants attended the RTM. Development Partners delivered statements on the areas of cooperation with the RGoB.

His Excellency Lyonpo Namgay Tshering, Vice Chair of the GNH Commission and Finance Minister of Bhutan delivered the Keynote Address during the inaugural session of the RTM. His Excellency Lyonpo (Dr). Tandi Dorji, Hon'ble Foreign Minister Chaired the 15th RTM.

The 14th RTM was held in March 2019 in Thimphu. ■

Signing of the Implementing Arrangement (IA) BETWEEN DITT & ISRO CONCERNING COOPERATION ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF A JOINT SMALL SATELLITE

A virtual signing ceremony was held on 24th September 2021 at the conference hall of the Ministry of Information and Communication (MoIC) to sign the Implementing Arrangement (IA) to jointly develop a small satellite for Bhutan. The IA was signed by Mr. Jigme Tenzing, Director, Department of

Information Technology and Telecom (DITT), Royal Government of Bhutan and Shri R. Umamaheshwaram, Scientific Secretary, Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO).

In accordance with the IA, the DITT and ISRO will cooperate on the development of a joint satellite to be launched sometime towards the end of this year. This is in line with the MoU signed on 19th November 2020



between Bhutan and India on Collaboration in Peaceful Uses of Outer Space under the purview of the Ministry of Information and Communications (MoIC).

The event was graced by H.E. Ambassador Ruchira Khamboj, Ambassador of India to Bhutan, Dasho Phuntsho Tobgay, Secretary, MoIC, Ambassador Pema Choden, Officiating Foreign Secretary and other officials of the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs and MoIC. Bhutan's Ambassador to India, H.E. Ambassador Major General Vetsop Namgyel, senior officials from the Ministry of External Affairs, GoI and the Royal Bhutanese Embassy in New Delhi also attended the event through Video Conferencing.

The Hon'ble Minister, MoIC highlighted the Royal Vision of His Majesty The King to harness space technology and its applications for the benefit of the country, and to use space related activities to create a greater sense of interest and passion in the students for science, technology and innovation, also adding that this partnership will help elevate Bhutan's space ambitions to great heights.

DAYS TO REMEMBER

in November, 2021

November 04 : **Amavasya** ●

November 09 : Cambodia - Independence Day

November 10 : World Science Day

November 11 : Poland- Independence Day

November 14 : Children's Day

November 15 : Belgium - Kings Day

November 15 : Brazil - Republic Day

November 15 : Brazil - Republic Day

November 16 : National Press Day

November 18 : **Purnima** ●

November 18 : Oman- National Day

November 20 : Universal Children's Day

November 21 : World Television Day

November 25 : Suriname - National Day

गांधी जयंती के अवसर पर :

प्रतिबंधित साहित्य में गांधी

आजादी के 75 साल बाद ही सही जो पुस्तक आयी है वह महात्मा गांधी की नेतृत्व क्षमता में एक नया पंख लगाती है। पुस्तक है— 'प्रतिबंधित साहित्य में गांधी।' इसका संचयन और संपादन राकेश पांडेय ने किया है। राष्ट्रीय अभिलेखागार के सहयोग से यह पुस्तक बनी है। इसके महानिदेशक चंदन सिन्हा इसे एक अद्भुत पुस्तक की संज्ञा देते हैं।

आजादी के अमृत महोत्सव की छटा निराली है। यह हर दिन अनुभव किया जा रहा है। कोई ऐसा दिन नहीं जाता जब आजादी के अमृत महोत्सव के नए आयाम से लोगबाग परिचित नहीं हो रहे होते हैं। कभी-कभी इस पर आश्चर्य भी होता है कि प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी आखिर अपनी तमाम व्यस्ताताओं के बावजूद कैसे और कब ऐसी पहल की सूझबूझ के लिए समय निकाल पाते हैं। कोई दूसरा प्रधानमंत्री होता तो घिसे-पिटे तरीके से आजादी के अमृत महोत्सव को 2022 में मनवाता और एक सरकारी रस्म पूरी कराता। इसके ठीक विपरीत हम देख रहे हैं कि पूरा देश महोत्सव के रंग बिरंगी और प्रेरणास्पद प्रयास में संलग्न हो गया है। पूरा देश नई ऊर्जा से भरता जा रहा है। स्वतंत्रता के संघर्ष, उसके नायक को और उसकी उन घटनाओं से परिचित हो रहा है जो विस्मृति के अंधेरे में खो गई थी। इससे आत्मनिर्भर भारत की अग्नि अवश्य पैदा होनी चाहिए।

कितने लोग जानते हैं कि गांधी ने एक जमाने में कवि, लोक कलाकारों और गीत-संगीत के रचनाकारों को कुर्बानी देने के लिए जगा दिया था। इस अवसर पर यह प्रमाण भी सामने आया है। 75 साल बाद ही सही जो पुस्तक आयी है वह महात्मा गांधी की नेतृत्व क्षमता में एक नया पंख लगाती है। पिछले दिनों इसके हम साक्षी बने। जिसे डायमंड बुक्स ने पुस्तक रूप में प्रकाशित किया है। पुस्तक है—'प्रतिबंधित साहित्य में गांधी' इसका संचयन और संपादन राकेश पांडेय ने किया है। उनकी यह दूसरी उल्लेखनीय पुस्तक है। पहली पुस्तक थी—'गांधी और हिन्दी।' तो दूसरी पुस्तक आई है यह सालों की मेहनत का परिणाम है। राष्ट्रीय अभिलेखागार में प्रतिबंधित साहित्य



-रामबहादुर शाय

रखा हुआ है। खासतौर पर 1919 से 1942 के दौरान जिन बातों से अंग्रेज खतरा महसूस करते थे उसे वे प्रतिबंधित कर देते थे। यह प्रतिबंध राष्ट्रीयता के प्रवासह पर बांध बनाने जैसा होता था। क्या किसी साम्राज्यवादी सरकार के रोक टोक से स्वाधीनता का संग्राम कभी रुकता है।

इस आलेख में पुस्तक का परिचय देने का प्रयास है। इसका ऐतिहासिक महत्व क्या है और ये संदर्भ क्या है, जो इसमें साहित्य के रूप में प्रकाशित हुए हैं। इस बात की उल्लेख पुस्तक की समीक्षा नहीं है। पुस्तक के राजनीतिक और ऐतिहासिक संदर्भ को ही इसमें प्रस्तुत करने का प्रयास है। राष्ट्रीय अभिलेखागार के सहयोग से यह पुस्तक बनी है। इसके महानिदेशक चंदन सिन्हा इसे एक अद्भुत पुस्तक की संज्ञा देते हैं। वे लिखते हैं कि 'गांधीजी पर लिखी गई इन सभी हिन्दी कविताओं और गजलों की एक विशेषता यह भी है कि यह सभी कविताएं और गजलें लोकशैली और आम बोलचाल की भाषा में लिखी गई हैं। इन सभी रचनाओं को रचने वाले रचनाकारों का एक मात्र उद्देश्य आमजन में स्वतंत्रता संग्राम और देशभक्ति की भावना के जगाना और जन-जन तक पहुंचाना

था।

इस पुस्तक की भूमिका चंद्रशेखर धर्माधिकारी ने लिखी है। वे दिवंगत हो गए हैं। उन्हें कौन नहीं जानता। उन्होंने इसे 'अनमोल ग्रंथ' लिखा था। महात्मा गांधी का एक कथन है कि वहीं साहित्य सार्थक होता है और उसे समाज की धरोहर माना जाता है जो जीवन में अपना स्थान बना पाता है। ऐसे ही साहित्य का संचयन इस पुस्तक में हुआ है। राकेश पांडेय ने अपनी भूमिका में अनेक कविताओं का उल्लेख किया है। अनेक लेखक गुमनाम हैं। लेकिन जो बात सबसे महत्वपूर्ण है वह यह कि उस जमाने में जब न सोशल मीडिया था और न 'अन सोशल मीडिया' था तब सिर्फ अखबार छपते थे और पर्वे छपते थे, वैसे समय में इन रचनाओं ने गांधीजी के संदेश को जन-जन तक पहुंचाया। इन रचनाओं की यही वह शक्ति थी जिससे ब्रिटिश साम्राज्य कांपता था। तभी तो वह उन्हें प्रतिबंधित कर अपनी चैन की नींद सुरक्षित कर पाता था। दूसरे शब्दों में अंग्रेजों ने प्रतिबंध के उपाय को अपने लिए नींद की गोली मान रखी थी।

इस पुस्तक की मुख्यतः दो विशेषताएं हैं। पहली यह कि 'गांधीजी पर केंद्रित प्रतिबंधित साहित्य का प्रकाशन संभवतः आजादी के बाद पहली बार हो रहा है।' दूसरी यह कि इसमें गीत की हर विधा है। भजनावली है। गजल है। आल्हा है। कजरी है। कबाली है। गायन के कई रूप हैं। यह पुस्तक 415 पन्नों की है। जिसमें ज्यादातर रचनाएं, 1931 की हैं। कुछ 1924 की भी हैं और कुछ 1930 की हैं। इस समय जब देश अमृत महोत्सव के जरिए स्वाधीनता संग्राम के अनाम नायकों और पात्रों को आदरपूर्वक याद कर रहा है तब इस पुस्तक का अपना एक विशेष और उल्लेखनीय

महत्व अपने आप सामने आता है। यह क्या है—इसे संकेतों में संपादक ने बताया है। ये संकेत सूत्र रूप में हैं। उन्हें समझने और समझाने की जरूरत है। जैसे—जैसे इसकी समझ बढ़ेगी वैसे—वैसे महात्मा गांधी के नेतृत्व का अनोखापन आज का समाज अनुभव कर सकेगा।

पुस्तक की ज्यादातर रचनाएं 1931 की ही क्यों हैं, इसमें तो स्वाधीनता संग्राम के उस साल का रहस्य छिपा है। उसे हासिल करने के लिए महात्मा गांधी ने नमक सत्याग्रह छोड़ा। पूरे सत्याग्रह का नेतृत्व महात्मा गांधी स्वयं कर रहे थे। जहां कांग्रेस का नेतृत्व आशंकाग्रस्त था कि क्या नमक सत्याग्रह से लोग जुड़ेंगे, उस समय गांधी जी ने दांडी मार्च कर जिस दिन समुद्र स्नान के बाद हाथ में नमक उठाकर सत्याग्रह के संघर्ष की शुरुआत कर दी उसी दिन यह संदेश दूर-दूर तक पहुंचा। पूरा देश सत्याग्रहमय हो गया। उसकी हर एक परिणाम गांधी—इरविन समझौते में हुआ। ब्रिटिश साम्राज्य को सत्याग्रह के सामने झुकना पड़ा। इसे मनोवैज्ञानिक दृष्टि से देखना चाहिए। गांधीजी ने साधारण लोगों के मन में अंग्रेजों का डर तो बहुत पहले ही समाप्त कर दिया था। नमक सत्याग्रह से पहली बार अंग्रेज डरने लगे।

यह भारत में देशभक्ति की प्रबल भावना का एक परिणाम था। जिसमें से स्वाधीनता का संकल्प प्रकट होता था। यह सब 1931 में घटित हुआ। यही साहित्य में प्रकट होने लगा। 1931 का महत्व बार-बार स्मरण प्रतिनिधि के रूप में महात्मा गांधी पहुंचे। वह दूसरा सम्मेलन था। पहले सम्मेलन में कांग्रेस नहीं थी और तीसरे में भी कांग्रेस नहीं गई। दूसरा सम्मेलन 14 सितम्बर, 1931 को शुरू हुआ। प्रधानमंत्री रैम्बो मैकडानलड अध्यक्षता कर रहे थे। उस दिन गांधीजी का मौन दिवस था। एक तरफ सम्मेलन की कार्यवाही चल रही थी तो दूसरी तरफ गांधीजी अपना चर्खा चला रहे थे। क्या कोई सोच सकता है कि वह छोटी सी घटना भी साहित्य का आधार बनेगी। पर ऐसा हुआ। इस पुस्तक में 'चर्खे से स्वराज्य' एक कविता है। जिसे अंग्रेजों ने 24 दिसम्बर, 1931 की प्रतिपादित किया।

यह बात अलग है कि गांधीजी चाहते थे उसे हासिल वहां नहीं कर सके। लेकिन ब्रिटिश साम्राज्य के अहंकार को उन्होंने जरूर धूल में मिला दिया। अपनी पोशाक में ही ब्रिटिश सम्राट के निमंत्रण पर चाय पीने गए। बंकिधम पैलेस की सीढ़ियां चढ़कर जब वे सम्राट से मिले तो चर्चिल ने उन्हें 'अधनंगा फकीर' बताकर मजाक उड़ाया। यही वह घटना थी

जो ब्रिटिश साम्राज्य का मजाक बन गई। उनके स्वदेश वापस से पहले ही 'चर्खे में स्वराज' कविता प्रतिबंधित कर दी गई थी। ये 28 दिसम्बर, 1931 को 'एस. एस. पिलखाना' जहाज से लौटे। बंबई के आजाद मैदान में विराट सभा हुई। उसमें गांधीजी ने कहा कि 'मैं खाली हाथ लौटा हूं। लेकिन मैंने अपने देश की इज्जत के साथ कोई सौदा नहीं किया।' वे कार्यवाही में उनका भाषण पूरा का पूरा दर्ज है। वह अलिखित भाषण था। 45 मिनट का वह भाषण इतना प्रभावी, तार्किक और मारक था कि पूरा सम्मेलन गांधीजी की वाकपटुता का लोहा मानने लगा। दांडी मार्च तथा नमक सत्याग्रह के दौरान भारत में नियुक्त अमेरिकी पत्रकार विलियम एन शाइरर ने उसे सुनने के बाद न केवल उस भाषण को गांधीजी के श्रेष्ठतम भाषणों में माना बल्कि अपनी नोटबुक में लिखा—'गांधी धार्मिक व्यक्ति नहीं है। न ही वे महात्मा है। वे तो राजनीतिक संघर्ष की आग में तपकर निखरे हुए एक गजब के राजनीतिक खिलाड़ी है'। अमेरिकी पत्रकार चाहे जो कहे और समझे लेकिन सच यह है कि गांधीजी महात्मा और धार्मिक तो थे, ही अपने समय के सबसे बड़े राजनीतिज्ञ थे। 'प्रतिबंधित साहित्य में गांधी' की यही झलक अमृत महोत्सव में नया आयाम जोड़ती है।



राकेश पांडेय द्वारा संचयित और संपादित पुस्तक 'प्रतिबंधित साहित्य में गांधी' का विमोचन 10 सितम्बर, 2021 को भारत सरकार के संसदीय कार्य एवं संस्कृति राज्यमंत्री अर्जुन राम मेघवाल ने स्मृति न्यास राजघाट के सत्याग्रह सभागार में किया। कार्यक्रम में विजय गोयल, गांधी स्मृति और दर्शन समिति के उपाध्यक्ष अरविंद मोहन, पत्रकार और गांधी फेलो दीपांकर, श्री ज्ञान प्रकाश गांधी स्मृति ट्रस्ट के निदेशक डॉ. एल दास महापात्रा, भारतीय राष्ट्रीय अभि लेखागार के उपनिदेशक अमलेश राजू वरिष्ठ पत्रकार आदि भी मौजूद थे।

बाइडेन ने मोदी को सौंपी 157 कलाकृतियां और पुरावशेष



प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी अमेरिका की यात्रा के दौरान अमेरिकी राष्ट्रपति जो बाइडेन ने उन्हें खास तोहफा देकर विदा किया। बाइडेन ने मोदी को 157 कलाकृति और पुरावशेष सौंपे। ये दूसरी से लेकर 18वीं सदी तक पुराने हैं।

इन कलाकृतियों की वापसी पर प्रधानमंत्री मोदी ने खुशी जाहिर करते हुए राष्ट्रपति बाइडेन का शुक्रिया अदा किया। मोदी ने कहा कि कलाकृति और पुरावशेष किसी भी देश की अमूल्य धरोहर होती हैं। इनको सुरक्षित और संरक्षित रखना अपने सांस्कृतिक विरासत की सुरक्षा है। इन 157 कलाकृतियों और पुरावशेष में 10वीं शताब्दी की बलुआ पत्थर से तैयार की गई डेढ़ मीटर की नक्काशी से लेकर 12वीं शताब्दी की उत्कृष्ट कांसे की 8.5 सेंटीमीटर ऊंची नटराज की मूर्ति शामिल है। इनमें से अधिकतर वस्तुएं 11वीं से लेकर 14वीं शताब्दी की हैं। ये सभी ऐतिहासिक हैं। इनमें

मानवरूपी तांबे की 2000 ईसा पूर्व वस्तु या दूसरी शताब्दी की टैराकोटा का फूलदान शामिल है।

लगभग 71 प्राचीन कलाकृतियां सांस्कृतिक हैं वहीं शेष छोटी मूर्तियां हैं जिनका संबंध हिन्दू, बौद्ध और जैन धर्म से है। यह सभी धातु, पत्थर और टैराकोटा से बनी हैं। कांसे की वस्तुओं में लक्ष्मी नारायण, बुद्ध, विष्णु, शिव-पार्वती और 24 जैन तीर्थंकरों की भंगिमाएं शामिल हैं। कई अन्य कलाकृतियां भी शामिल हैं जिनमें कनकलामूर्ति, ब्राह्मी और नंदीकेसा शामिल है।

पाकिस्तान में पहली बार हिंदू लड़की सना रामचंद्र गुलवानी प्रशासनिक सेवा के लिए चुनी गई

पाकिस्तान के इतिहास में पहली बार एक हिंदू लड़की सना रामचंद्र गुलवानी ने वहां की सर्वोच्च प्रशासनिक सेवा में सफलता प्राप्त किया है। 27 साल की डॉक्टर सना रामचंद्र गुलवानी ने सेंट्रल सुपीरियर सर्विसेस (CSS) की परीक्षा को मई में ही क्लियर कर लिया था, लेकिन अब उनकी नियुक्ति पर भी मुहर लग गई है।

पाकिस्तान में यह परीक्षा सबसे मुश्किल मानी जाती है और इसके जरिए ही वहां प्रशासनिक सेवाओं यानी एडमिनिस्ट्रेटिव सर्विसेस में नियुक्तियां होती हैं। इसे आप भारत के सिविल

सर्विसेस एग्जाम की तरह मान सकते हैं, जिसे यूनियन पब्लिक सर्विस कमीशन आयोजित करता है।

CSS एग्जाम को बेहद कठिन माना जाता है। इसमें इस साल कुल 2: कैंडिडेट्स ही कामयाबी हासिल कर पाए हैं। सना के मामले में सबसे खास बात यह रही कि उन्होंने इसे पहले प्रयास में ही हासिल कर लिया।

सना मूल रूप से शिकारपुर की रहने वाली हैं। 'द एक्सप्रेस ट्रिब्यून' की एक रिपोर्ट के मुताबिक, सना ने सिंध प्रांत की रूरल सीट से इस परीक्षा में हिस्सा लिया था। यह सीट



पाकिस्तान एडमिनिस्ट्रेटिव सर्विसेस के अंतर्गत आती है।

हिन्दी राइटर्स गिल्ड कॅनेडा ने हिन्दी दिवस मनाया

कार्यक्रम तीन सत्रों में किया गया—पहले सत्र में सभी अतिथियों और गणमान्य सदस्यों जैसे विदेश मंत्री भारत सरकार श्री जयशंकर और राज्य विदेश मंत्री श्रीमती मीनाक्षी लेखी का स्वागत, संदेश वीडियो और परिचय डॉ. शैलजा सक्सेना ने किया। इस संयोजन की सूत्रधार थीं— श्रीमती आशा बर्मन ने इनके वीडियो शुभांशा व निर्देशन नेतृत्व की दो वीडियो पूरे सदन सहभागी सदस्यों को दिखाई। काउंसलाधीश अपूर्वा श्रीवास्तव और श्री अनिल जोशी के परिचय व कर्मठ प्रतिबद्ध नेतृत्व के साथ—साथ उनका उद्बोधन व वक्तव्य भी रहा। दोनों वरिष्ठ प्रवक्ताओं ने हिंदी के प्रति अपनी श्रद्धा और संकल्प शक्ति को दोहराया और समूचे आयोजक मंडल व डॉ. शैलजा सक्सेना का प्रोत्साहन करते हुये कार्यक्रम की सफलता की शुभकामनाएँ दीं। इसके बाद डॉ. शैलजा सक्सेना ने अपने विशेष वक्ताओं का धन्यवाद ज्ञापन किया।

दूसरे सत्र में श्रीमती कृष्णा वर्मा ने सभी

प्रतिभागियों का प्रतियोगिता का और निर्णायक मंडल का परिचय सुधी—सदन से करवाया। बच्चों की इस अनूठी प्रतियोगिता में हर उम्र के बच्चों ने बहुत जोश व उत्साह से भाग लिया। गीत, कविता, हिंदी भाषा से जुड़े अपने अनूठे अनुभवों से प्रतिभागियों ने सदन का मन मोह लिया। सम्मानित निर्णायक मंडल में सुमन कुमार घई, आशा बर्मन, लता पांडे, डॉ. नरेंद्र ग्रावर जी रहे। लता जी ने सभी विजेताओं की पाँच वीडियो सबसे साझा कीं और सम्मान पुरस्कार और ट्रॉफी की सूचना दी।

तीसरे सत्र के संचालक रहे श्री संदीप कुमार। इस सत्र में साहित्य की विधाओं की प्रस्तुतियों से हिंदी भाषा के प्रति सम्मान व गौरव के पल सबने अनुभव किये। लघुकथा कृष्णा वर्मा और प्रीति अग्रवाल ने प्रस्तुत कीं। हिंदी की साहित्य अकादमी सम्मान से सम्मानित कवियित्री अनामिका की कविताओं का वाचन भारत से डॉ. सुधा उपाध्याय असोसिएट प्रोफेसर जानकी देवी मेमोरियल

कॉलेज दिल्ली विश्व विद्यालय ने किया। दिनकर की रश्मि रथी का बेहतरीन नाट्य संवाद कृष्णा संवाद श्री नैमेष नानावटी ने किया। सुमन कुमार घई की कहानी 'सुबह साढ़े सात से पहले' का वाचन गुरु गोपाल सिंह जी ने किया। आयोजन के शानदार आगाज का जानदार अंजाम डॉ. शैलजा सक्सेना जी की कहानी "चाह" का वाचन श्रीमती नीरजा आपटे, विवेक गुलावफि, सूफियाना आलम ने बेहद रोचक व जीवंत अंदाज से किया।

आयोजन की सफलता के लिये पूरी हिंदी राइटर्स गिल्ड कॅनेडा के निदेशक मंडल सक्रिय सदस्यों का धन्यवाद ज्ञापन श्री सुमन कुमार घई ने किया। इस आयोजन की सुखद स्मृतियों संवेदन और अनुभव के लिये वहाँ मौजूद सभी वृहद् हिंदी परिजनो ने एक दूसरे का धन्यवाद व आभार व्यक्त किया। इस तरह सार्थक शानदार हिंदी भाषा के प्रचार-प्रसार का संकल्प लिया गया।

प्रो. आई एस चौहान, डॉ. राजकुमार भाटिया, डॉ. अजीत सैगल, बी. एल गौड़ एवं राकेश पांडेय सम्मानित



प्रो. आई. एस. चौहान

अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद के पूर्व वरिष्ठ उपाध्यक्ष और फीजी में भारत के पूर्व राजदूत प्रो. आई. एस. चौहान को आब्जर्वर पीस फाउण्डेशन वाराणसी द्वारा 'आब्जर्वर लाइफ टाइम अचीवमेंट अवॉर्ड' से सम्मानित किया गया है। अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद प्रो. आई. एस. चौहान को इस महत्वपूर्ण उपलब्धि के लिए सादर बधाई प्रदान करती है।



डॉ. राजकुमार भाटिया

अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद के पूर्व वरिष्ठ उपाध्यक्ष एवं पूर्व सचिव डॉ. राजकुमार भाटिया को केन्द्रीय हिन्दी संस्थान, आगरा के प्रतिष्ठित हिन्दी सेवी सम्मान के अंतर्गत वर्ष 2018 के 'पंडित मदन मोहन मालवीय पुरस्कार' के लिए चयनित किया गया है। अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद डॉ. राजकुमार भाटिया को इस महत्वपूर्ण उपलब्धि के लिए हार्दिक बधाई देती है।

अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद के वरिष्ठ सदस्य एवं वाराणसी चैप्टर के अध्यक्ष डॉ. अजीत सैगल (अस्थि रोग विशेषज्ञ) को चिकित्सा के क्षेत्र में पिछले 41 वर्षों से निरंतर सेवा कार्य करने के लिये काशी सेवा रत्न सम्मान प्रदान कर सम्मानित किया गया। अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद डॉ. अजीत सैगल को इस महत्वपूर्ण उपलब्धि के लिए हार्दिक बधाई देती है।



डॉ. अजीत सैगल
(अस्थि रोग विशेषज्ञ)



श्री बी. एल. गौड़

उत्तर प्रदेश हिन्दी संस्थान द्वारा अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद के पूर्व वरिष्ठ उपाध्यक्ष और हिन्दी के प्रसिद्ध साहित्यकार एवं संपादक श्री बी. एल. गौड़ को साहित्य भूषण-2020 का पुरस्कार से सम्मानित किया जायेगा।

प्रवासी संसार के संपादक और अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद के आजीवन सदस्य डॉ. राकेश पांडेय को बलभद्र प्रसाद दीक्षित पढ़ीस पुरस्कार प्रदान करने की घोषणा की गई है।

यह पुरस्कार नवम्बर मास में प्रस्तावित समारोह में प्रदान किया जायेगा। अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद श्री बी. एल. गौड़ और डॉ. राकेश पांडेय को इस महत्वपूर्ण उपलब्धि के लिए हार्दिक बधाई देती है।



डॉ. राकेश पांडेय



भारतीय स्वाधीनता के अमृत महोत्सव के अवसर पर विशेष

बंकिमचन्द्र चट्टोपाध्याय (27 जून, 1838–08 अप्रैल, 1894) बांग्ला भाषा के प्रख्यात उपन्यासकार, कवि, गद्यकार और पत्रकार थे। भारत का राष्ट्रीय गीत 'वन्दे मातरम्' उनकी ही रचना है जो भारतीय स्वतंत्रता संग्राम के काल में क्रान्तिकारियों का प्रेरणास्रोत बन गया था। रवीन्द्रनाथ ठाकुर के पूर्ववर्ती बांग्ला साहित्यकारों में उनका अन्तिम स्थान है। आधुनिक युग में बांग्ला साहित्य का उत्थान उन्नीसवीं सदी के मध्य से शुरू हुआ। इसमें राजा राममोहन राय, ईश्वर चन्द्र विद्यासागर, प्यारीचॉद मित्र, माइकल मधुसुदन दत्त, बंकिम चन्द्र चट्टोपाध्याय, रवीन्द्रनाथ ठाकुर ने अग्रणी भूमिका निभायी। इसके पहले बांग्ला के साहित्यकार बांग्ला की जगह संस्कृत या अंग्रेजी में लिखना पसन्द करते थे। बांग्ला साहित्य में जनमानस तक पैठ बनाने वालों में शायद बंकिम चन्द्र चट्टोपाध्याय पहले साहित्यकार थे।

बंकिम चन्द्र चट्टोपाध्याय का जन्म उत्तरी चौबीस परगना के कांठालपाड़ा, नैहाटी में एक परंपरागत और समृद्ध बांग्ला परिवार में हुआ था। उनकी शिक्षा हुगली कॉलेज और प्रेसीडेंसी कॉलेज में हुई। 1857 में उन्होंने बी. पास किया। प्रेसीडेंसी कालेज से बी. ए. की उपाधि लेनेवाले वे पहले भारतीय थे। शिक्षा समाप्ति के तुरंत बाद डिप्टी मजिस्ट्रेट पद पर इनकी नियुक्ति हो गई। कुछ काल तक बांग्ला सरकार के सचिव पद पर भी रहे। रायबहादुर और सी. आई. ई. की उपाधियाँ पाई और 1869 में कानून की डिग्री हासिल की। इसके बाद उन्होंने सरकारी नौकरी कर ली और 1891 में सेवानिवृत्त हुए। 8 अप्रैल 1894 को उनका निधन हुआ।



वन्दे मातरम्

सुजलां सुफलाम्
मलयजशीतलाम्
शस्यश्यामलाम्
मातरम्

शुभ्र ज्योत्स्ना पुलकित यामिनीम्
फुल्ल कुसुमित द्रुमदल शोभिनीम्
सुहासिनीं सुमधुर भाषिणीम्
सुखदां वरदां मातरम्

कोटि कोटि—कण्ठ—कल—कल—निनाद—कराले
कोटि—कोटि—भुजैर्धृत—खरकरवाले,
अबला केन मा एत बले।
बहुबलधारिणीं
नमामि तारिणीं
रिपुदलवारिणीं
मातरम्
वन्दे मातरम्



रचना की पृष्ठभूमि

सन् 1870–80 के दशक में ब्रिटिश शासकों ने सरकारी समारोहों में 'गॉड! सेव द क्वीन' गीत गाया जाना अनिवार्य कर दिया था। अंग्रेजों के इस आदेश से बंकिमचन्द्र चटर्जी को, जो उन दिनों एक सरकारी अधिकारी (डिप्टी कलेक्टर) थे) बहुत ठेस पहुँची और उन्होंने सम्भवतः 1876 में इसके विकल्प के तौर पर संस्कृत और बांग्ला के मिश्रण से एक नये गीत की रचना की और उसका शीर्षक दिया — 'वन्दे मातरम्'। शुरुआत में इसके केवल दो ही पद रचे गये थे जो संस्कृत में थे। इन दोनों पदों में केवल मातृभूमि की वन्दना थी। उन्होंने 1882 में जब आनन्दमठ नामक बांग्ला उपन्यास लिखा तब मातृभूमि के प्रेम से ओतप्रोत इस गीत को भी उसमें शामिल कर लिया। यह उपन्यास अंग्रेजी शासन, जमींदारों के शोषण व प्राकृतिक प्रकोप (अकाल) में मर रही जनता को जागृत करने हेतु अचानक उठ खड़े हुए संन्यासी विद्रोह पर आधारित था। इस तथ्यात्मक इतिहास का उल्लेख बंकिम बाबू ने 'आनन्द मठ' के तीसरे संस्करण में स्वयं ही कर दिया था। और मजे की बात यह है कि सारे तथ्य भी उन्होंने अंग्रेजी विद्वानों—ग्लेग व हण्टर(5) की पुस्तकों से दिये थे। उपन्यास में यह गीत भवानन्द नाम का एक संन्यासी विद्रोही गाता है। गीत का मुखड़ा विशुद्ध संस्कृत में इस प्रकार है — "वन्दे मातरम् ! सुजलां सुफलां मलयज शीतलाम् शस्य 'श्यामलाम् मातरम्।" मुखड़े के बाद वाला पद भी संस्कृत में ही है— "शुभ्र ज्योत्स्नां पुलकित यामिनीम् फुल्ल कुसुमित द्रुमदल शोभिनीम् य सुहासिनीं सुमधुर भाषिणीम् सुखदां वरदां मातरम्।" किन्तु उपन्यास में इस गीत के आगे जो पद लिखे गये थे वे उपन्यास की मूल भाषा अर्थात् बांग्ला में ही थे। बाद वाले इन सभी पदों में मातृभूमि की दुर्गा के रूप में स्तुति की गई है। यह गीत रविवार, कार्तिक सुदी नवमी को पूरा हुआ। कहा जाता है कि यह गीत उन्होंने सियालदह से नैहाटी आते वक्त ट्रेन में ही लिखी थी।