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DELHI G-20 SUMMIT : INDIA'S CROWNING ACHIEVEMENT

Successful conclusion of Delhi G-20 summit could well be summed up as a proud 'Bharat' moment for all the Indians. In terms of symbolism and messaging as well as overall impact, it heralded the arrival of India on the world stage. Timing was just right since it coincided with India's emergence as a rising economic power and growing worldwide interest in India's rich cultural legacy, much of which was also on display at the summit.

It was heartening that India was able to accomplish a consensus on a whole range of issues from Ukraine war to climate change. This was, of course, a testimony to the diplomatic skills and leadership of PM Modi and our entire team but it is equally important to note that India was able to steer the agreement only because of its aversion to bloc politics and consistent adherence to an objective and principled approach to international relations.

The inclusive manner in which India discharged its responsibility as the President of G-20 was also commended widely. Hundreds of official meetings spread throughout the country, supplemented by thousands of meetings organized by various engagement groups created an unprecedented momentum and people's involvement at large in G-20. Antar Rashtriya Sahyog Parishad (ARSP) was also privileged to have been involved in undertaking these activities as an active member of the core working group on Vasudhaiv Kutumbkam, which was designated by PM Modi as the underlying theme of our presidency.

The phrase Vasudhaiva

Kutumbakam comes from a verse in the ancient Hindu scripture Maha Upanishad (ayaA bandhur ayaA neti ga Ga n â la gh u ce ta s â m / udâra caritânâ tu vasudhaiva kumumbakam), which means: "This one is my relative and that one is not: this is the calculation of small-minded people. But for noble-minded people, the whole world itself is a family." It essentially signifies the eternal truth – oneness of the universe – 'One World, One Family, One Future.'

With conventional narratives such as power balance, clash of civilizations, realistic conflict theory, etc. dominating our worldview, we have not been able to find any solution to conflicts raging in our world. We continue to ignore the eternal truth that our universe is inherently interconnected and interdependent. Human society therefore needs to develop alternative approaches as a way out of this quagmire and align with the truth of oneness of existence, embodied in the principle of Vasudhaiva Kutumbkam which resonates deeply within India's multicultural and diverse society.

Indeed, many cultures have similar ethical framework that has served as the underpinning of building inclusive and peaceful societies. While these ideas are articulated in various languages, they ultimately recognize the same ideals: that we, as human beings, share a common humanity and oneness on the basis of our aspiration to strive towards the universal good and harmony.

There is nothing wrong in pursuing national interest. But if it is perceived in a broader context keeping long term perspective in mind, there would

appear to be hardly any contradiction with the global good. In fact, the wellbeing of others and the world at large would appear to reinforce our own welfare.



✉ **Amb Virendra Gupta**
President,
Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad

Above point can be explained through several practical examples. It is accepted that protection of environment is world's collective responsibility since no single nation, howsoever resourceful, has the capacity to handle it on its own. Likewise, the fight against deadly viruses, as we have seen in the last three years, can also not be undertaken by any country alone since the spread of virus transcends national boundaries. The scourge of international terrorism which continues to afflict our world also similarly needs a concerted global action requiring all countries to put aside their short-term political compulsions and expediency. These examples are merely illustrative and are by no means exhaustive.

Under PM Modi, India has consistently followed the approach of Vasudhaiv Kutumbkam in the conduct of its foreign affairs. Supply of covid vaccines to developing countries even in the midst of vaccine shortages within India, supply of foodgrains to affected countries in the wake of food shortages resulting from

Ukraine conflict and prompt action in despatching emergency relief to Turkey after massive earthquake there despite our indifferent relations with that country are just few of the several instances which could be cited in this regard.

Entry of African Union as a full fledged member of G-20 was perhaps one of the most important decisions taken at Delhi summit. India's initiative was, no doubt, in keeping with her special relations with Africa. India's shared history and empathy resulting from our colonial past and subjugation is particularly noteworthy in this regard. This lends a particular uniqueness to our relations with Africa, unmatched by others who might be able to provide much greater financial resources.



G20 Summit Bharat Mandap, New Delhi

India has for long championed the cause of global South. Indeed, one of the first major activities to be undertaken by India at the onset of its G-20 presidency was a virtual summit of 'Voice of Global South' in January this year with a view to providing a 'common platform' to deliberate on issues of priority concern to the developing countries and channelizing the relevant inputs into G-20 discussions. India believes that due attention needs to be given to these issues on the global stage particularly since recent global developments, such as Covid pandemic, ongoing Ukraine conflict, mounting debt, challenges of food and energy security etc. have severely impacted the developing world.

G-20 has, so far, been primarily dealing with global economic and financial issues. But these issues, as many world leaders asserted, cannot be completely divorced from political and security issues. Strengthened presence of developing countries in the grouping would lend this grouping greater credibility in dealing with wide range of global issues and enable it to function as an effective bridge between North and South. In the coming years, it also appears well placed to probe more deeply into political issues and conflicts raging in the world. In fact, seen in the light of reluctance of UN security Council to reform itself and make it duly representative which has rendered it ineffective and irrelevant, G-20 beginning to fill in the void seems even more likely.

We are well aware that China has been quite active in preventing the expansion of Security Council and thereby denying India an opportunity of playing requisite role in

international affairs. Quite naturally, our aspiration to be part of the global high table and to play due role in world affairs, commensurate with our growing credentials and weight in the world, can only be realized in the present circumstances through G-20. It would thus be in our own interest to help G-20 evolve into a global high table capable and willing to deal with all-encompassing global agenda.

Launch of 'Global Bio-fuel Alliance' on the lines of Solar Alliance and its quick endorsement by world leaders, is demonstrative of India's growing ability in driving global agenda. The fact that PM Modi has moderated national interest with concern for global good as epitomized in the embrace of the principle of Vasudhaiva Kutumbkam, has obviously helped this process.

India's growing stature and visibility would result in considerable economic dividends for the country in the coming years. Last few years have seen serious disruption in the global supply chain and realization by world leaders that over reliance on China was hugely detrimental to their long-term interests. Some of the manufacturing facilities to be relocated out of China could well be diverted to India. The announcement of India-Middle East-Europe shipping and transport corridor on the margins of G-20 summit also holds considerable promise for India.

Lastly, from the standpoint of ARSP, which has undertaken pioneering work in expanding India's outreach to its vast diaspora spread across the world during the last sixty years, it was heartening to see people of Indian origin including British PM Sunak and World Bank President Ajay Banga attend this gathering of important world leaders. ■

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Civil 20 Summit Concluded with Policy Recommendations That Face Global Challenges

As Chair of Civil 20 India 2023, Amma officially handed over the leadership of C20 to Brazil after a successful conclusion of its three-day Summit. One thousand ninety attendees from 140 countries were present at the event in Jaipur, Rajasthan, including civil society organisations from around the globe, distinguished experts with renowned institutions, and G20 India officials.

The C20 Summit witnessed the presentations of policy recommendations that contain a vision for volunteer actions based on compassion as a driving force. At the Valedictory Function, the Civil 20 Policy Pack and Communique were given to the G20 India Secretariat and representatives of Brazil, the country that will hold the next G20 Presidency.

“Amma served as our sole inspiration and guiding light for the remarkable success of C20 in India. This was possible only because of her divine leadership and guidance. As we draw the final curtains on the C20 final summit, we thank all the people and organisations whose unwavering commitment and collective support made this possible,” said Swami Amritaswarupananda Puri as Troika, C20 & Vice Chairman, Mata Amritanandamayi Math.

“A special word of thanks to civil society organizations for their commitment for promoting social justice, human rights, and sustainable development. Together, as a global community, we have taken a step forward in building a more equitable, sustainable and compassionate world as we leave this C20 Summit with new ideas and renewed determination. But let us remember that our work has only just begun.”

The policies developed by C20's 16 working groups address crucial challenges, including health and wellbeing, women's empowerment, community resilience in the face of disaster, access to education, water

management, representing the voices of people with disabilities, and the positive and negative implications of technology as it rapidly advances.

Shri Kalraj Mishra, Hon'ble Governor of Rajasthan, emphasised the need for environmental conservation and drew attention to India's tradition of worshipping trees and connecting them with the divine. He proposed four strategic pillars, including People, Prosperity, Planet, and Participation, focusing on critical result areas such as Health & Wellbeing, Economic Development & Decent Work, and Environmental Sustainability.

“Civil society organizations can play a huge role in shaping India's development plans and policies according to the aspirations of the common people. We must connect the modern generation with the traditions of love and care for animals within the framework of environmental balance. We have to focus on involving the younger generation in the development of skills and values that align with Indian culture,” said the Minister.

Smt. Vasundhara Raje, Vice President, BJP and ex-Chief Minister of Rajasthan, also addressed the gathering. She urged collective responsibility in tackling the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and environmental issues. She emphasised the importance of sustainable practices, conservation, and renewable energy to safeguard the planet. She said humankind must accept collective responsibility, as this situation is of our own making.



The documents contain a vision for volunteer actions that are based on compassion as a driving force for the relationship between civil society organisations and governments.

“The COVID pandemic was a testament to both the unpreparedness of nation states and the resilience of humanity. Together, governments, civil society, and science successfully combated the disease and vaccinated the majority of the adult population. The spirit of cooperative federalism flourished.

“However, amidst all our triumphs, we must heed the warning from Mother Nature, as our relentless pursuit of physical comfort is leading to reckless depletion of natural wealth. Our thirst for energy poses a grave threat to the very planet that sustains us,” said Smt. Varsundhara Raje.

The 16 Working Groups of C20 have proposed a wide array of policy recommendations on each of their thematic areas. They have also come up with specific examples of successful work that has already been done by civil society organisations in each area of focus which could be replicated elsewhere in the world.

Other prominent dignitaries who attended the valedictory function included Shri Vijay Nambiar, Sherpa C20 India; Shri Athayde Motta, Executive Director, Abong; and Ms. Elisabeth Moreno, ex-Minister Delegate in France for Equality Between Women & Men, Diversity & Equal Opportunities.

ON 151 BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF MAHARISHI AUROBINDO :

HIS STAND AGAINST CASTE DISCRIMINATION AND INCLUSIVE HINDUISM

✍ Guru Prakash Paswan and Sudarshan Ramabadrans

From writings throughout his life, it is clear that Sri Aurobindo was firmly against any man-made divisions, exclusion and “caste arrogance” based on birth. Social cohesion and a strong, united India were his goals

Bengal has produced several seminal thinkers who have set up the foundations of our progress as a civilisational nation-state. Celebrating 76 years of Independence this year, India is taking nascent but steady steps towards enabling social cohesion and is contributing to enabling diversity, equity, and inclusion. Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Swami Vivekananda, Rabindranath Tagore, Jogendra Nath Mandal, Sri Aurobindo and Khudiram Bose, are some of the many revolutionary thinkers who continue to have an impact on Indian thought today, both nationally and globally.

Aurobindo was a multifaceted personality. He was an original thinker, writer, poet, playwright, teacher and freedom fighter. He was a voracious reader who learnt the best of western philosophies and returned to India to create something uniquely Indian for spiritual transformation through his “Integral Yoga”. It is befitting that India is marking 151 years of his birth anniversary this year.

Aurobindo was inspired by the persona of Sri Krishna, the Yadava king, who was multifaceted

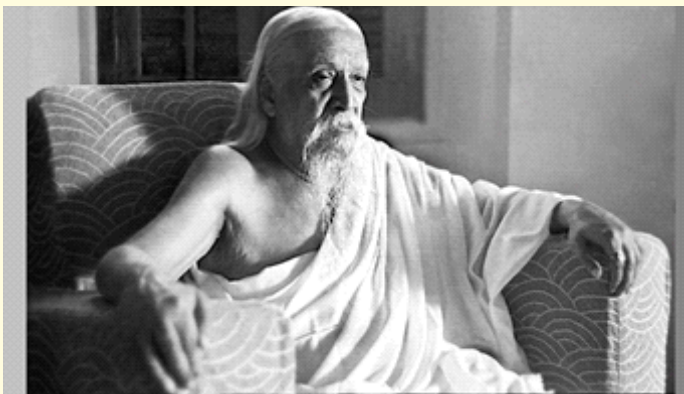
Maharishi Aurobindo “We must educate every Indian, man, woman and child, in the ideals of our religion and philosophy before we can rationally expect our society to reshape itself in the full and perfect spirit of the Vedantic gospel of equality”.

a king, diplomat, strategist, friend, advisor. Some of Aurobindo’s writings in Karmayogin, his weekly journal in English that he brought out after the Alipore Bomb Case, had Krishna and

Arjuna in the Kurukshetra being pictorially represented on the cover. After being released in the Alipore Bomb Case, he was committed to his studies, and integral yoga. Aurobindo was also committed to taking forward the essence of the teachings of Krishna through his works, especially the Bhagavad Gita, amongst many others.

One perhaps under-analysed aspect of Aurobindo’s persona is his views on caste-based discrimination. Today, the ashram in Puducherry inspired by him does not cater to any man-made divisions. Perhaps the genesis of this was how Sri Aurobindo viewed the social evil of caste-based discrimination. This is discernible in some of his writings, Caste and Democracy, Un-Hindu Spirit of Caste Rigidity and Caste and Representation. These were written in 1907 for Bande Mataram, an English newspaper he edited then. A footnote is necessary because these were views of Aurobindo Ghose prior to his transformation, but it would be safe to say this continued to be his life-long guiding philosophy as Sri Aurobindo.

Sri Aurobindo was also inspired by Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak. His exchanges with Tilak set him on the path of revolutionary activity and to act against British rule and aspire for complete independence. However, this inspiration was not just restricted to revolutionary activities alone, but to the social fabric of the country. In the Un-Hindu Spirit of Caste Rigidity, Sri Aurobindo writes: “The Bengalee reports Srijut Bal Gangadhar Tilak to



have made a definite pronouncement on the caste system. ‘The prevailing idea of social inequality is working immense evil’, says the Nationalist leader of the Deccan. This pronouncement is only natural from an earnest Hindu and a sincere Nationalist like Srijut Tilak.”

Aurobindo held all individuals as one and equal and this notion is for India to set before the world. He affirmed that education in India should be armed with the focus of the “Vedantic gospel of equality”. According to him, the British used caste as a political instrument.

Sri Aurobindo goes on to explain, “Nationalism is simply the passionate aspiration for the realisation of that Divine Unity in the nation. In the ideal of Nationalism which India will set before the world, there will be an essential equality between man and man, between caste and caste, between class and class.”

He also did not shy away from pointing out what the real problems were in “caste rigidity” and was committed to persuading everyone to remove all “unreasoning and arbitrary distinctions and inequalities”.

In and through these articles, Sri Aurobindo writes how caste in India is “peculiar” to our nation and the “spiritual vision of oneness” was

lacking. He also states how caste-based discrimination was “accidental” and “external” and it furthered “social degradation”.

Sri Aurobindo also mentions examples of Chokhamela and Adi Shankaracharya to drive home to the reader his core point of accepting all as one and equal. He writes, “Chokhamela, the Maratha Pariah, became the guru of Brahmins, proud of their caste purity; the Chandala taught Shankaracharya: For the Brahman was revealed in the body of the Pariah and in the Chandala there was the utter presence of Shiva, the Almighty.”

Examples are galore in Indian history: Sri Ramanujacharya, whose teachings Aurobindo also mirrors foresaw, a thousand years ago, the

unspoken aspirations of the downtrodden. All his life, Ramanujacharya stood for including the “outcaste” to make Hindu religion more holistic. According to B R Ambedkar, Ramanujacharya accepting a Dalit as his guru sent a strong message of social cohesion to society and the country at large. In fact, there is another connection between Ambedkar and Sri Aurobindo — Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad III. The then ruler of Baroda (today Vadodara), helped Ambedkar study abroad at Columbia and Aurobindo get a suitable job at today's MS University after his return from London.

In and through these important excerpts from his writings, it is clear that Sri Aurobindo was firmly against any man-made divisions, exclusion

and “caste arrogance” based on birth. Social cohesion and a strong, united India were his goals. His 151th birth anniversary could be the best occasion to revive and relook at his teachings, read his works and strive towards a holistic, inclusive model that India can present to the world as he envisioned.

(Paswan is the National Spokesperson of the BJP and Advisor, Dalit Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Sudarshan is an author and researcher, currently studying at the University of Southern California. Both are writers of the book, *Makers of Modern Dalit History*. Views expressed are their own.) *The article's credence goes to *The Indian Express* (December 5, 2022). * Some changes by Editor

G20 DELEGATES ATTENDED GANGA AARTI AT DASHASHWAMEDH GHAT IN VARANASI

The G20 delegates from different countries took part in a traditional ritual called Ganga Aarti at the Dashashwamedh Ghat in Varanasi. They also enjoyed seeing cultural artists dance and even joined in themselves. The delegates attended the G20 Development Ministers' Meeting, held in Varanasi. The meeting cast focus on developing agriculture in 20 developing countries, including India. Agricultural scientists from different nations



G20 Development Ministers participated in Ganga Aarti at the Dashashwamedh Ghat, Varanasi

discussed issues like research, education, and more. The delegates

from Brazil, Germany, Japan, Indonesia, and China were welcomed in a grand way at the Varanasi Airport. The meeting was chaired by External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and included a special video address by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The goal of the meeting was to figure out how to achieve Sustainable Development Goals and to help developing countries progress while avoiding costly trade-offs.

UK PM RISHI SUNAK ATTENDED RAM KATHA AT CAMBRIDGE

The Indian-origin British Prime Minister said that for him, faith was very personal, and it guides him in every aspect of his life. In a video of the event, Sunak was also seen making salutations of 'Jai Siya Ram'.

The British Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak, attended a spiritual event at Cambridge University. The event was a 'Ram Katha' by a well-known preacher called Morari Bapu. Sunak attended as a Hindu, not as a prime minister. He spoke about his pride in being both British and Hindu and shared childhood memories of visiting a temple with his siblings in South Hampton. Sunak found Lord Ram to be an inspirational figure,



Rishi Sunak and Morar Bapu exchanged greetings with each other at a Cambridge University event.

something he learned more about during the event. At the end of the event, Sunak participated in an “Aarti” on stage and received a sacred offering from the Jyotirlinga Ram Katha Yatra.

Rishi Sunak and Wife Akshata Perform 'Aarti' at Akshardham Temple, Displaying their Proud Hindu Roots"

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and his wife visited the Akshardham temple in Delhi to offer prayers during their trip to India for the G20 Summit. Sunak had expressed his desire to visit a temple during his stay in Delhi as he proudly identifies as Hindu. The couple spent an hour at the temple, where Sunak went barefoot as is customary for Hindu visitors. They performed aarti, met with the saints, and offered flowers to the idols in the



Rishi Sunak and Wife Akshata Perform 'Aarti' at Akshardham Temple

temple. The director of the temple, Jyotindra Dave, said

that Sunak seemed to be very close to the Sanatana tradition. The couple was gifted a model of the temple and enjoyed their time there. Security around the temple was heightened due to the ongoing G20 Summit, and police officials were deployed in the area. Prime Minister Narendra Modi also met with Sunak on the sidelines of the summit to discuss ways to deepen trade linkages and boost investment. ■

INDIAN-ORIGIN THARMAN SHANMUGARATNAM ELECTED PRESIDENT OF SINGAPORE

In Singapore's recent presidential election, Tharman Shanmugaratnam, a 66-year-old economist of Indian origin, won by a large margin, receiving more than 70% of the 2.48 million votes cast. This was Singapore's first contested presidential poll since 2011. Tharman has become the third Indian-origin President of Singapore. His rivals, Ng Kok Song and Tan Kin Lian, of Chinese origin, received 15.72% and 13.88%, respectively. Singapore's



Newly elected Singaporean President of Indian origin, Tharman Shanmugaratnam, pictured with fans.

Prime Minister, Lee Hsien Loong, congratulated Tharman on his victory and expressed confidence in his ability to carry out his duties as President. The election showed that both voters and candidates understood the roles and duties of the President, which is a good sign for Singapore's future. ■

INDIAN DIASPORA IN THE US ERUPTED IN JOY AS CHANDRAYAAN-3 REACHED THE LUNAR SOUTH POLE

People across the globe are celebrating India's incredible achievement of landing on the Moon's southern polar region. In New York City's Times Square, the Indian community danced and cheered as they witnessed history being made. India has become the first country to successfully land on this unexplored part of the Moon, which is a matter of pride for not just India, but for the entire world. By achieving this, India has taken a significant leap in scientific progress, joining an elite club of nations and opening up new



People are celebrating the successful soft landing of Chandrayaan-3 on the South Pole of the Moon.

horizons for humanity. The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) shared this fantastic

news on their social media handle, and people from all over the world congratulated the ISRO chief and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The Indian community in London also celebrated this remarkable feat and chanted slogans of 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai' and 'Vande Mataram'. With the successful landing, India has become the fourth country to land on the Moon's surface, and they have earned a place in the record books as the first nation to land on the Moon's south side. ■

PRIME MINISTER MODI INTERACTED WITH INDIAN DIASPORA IN GREECE AND SOUTH AFRICA

The Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, was greeted with a warm reception from the Indian diaspora upon his arrival in Greece. A large crowd of Indians gathered outside his hotel in Athens, holding up the Indian tricolour and posters that read 'Modi is our pride'. PM Modi took selfies and shook hands with members of the Indian community. It is worth noting that this visit marked the first time an Indian Prime Minister had visited Greece in four decades.



Prime Minister, Narendra Modi with the Indian diaspora community in Greece



Prime Minister, Narendra Modi with the Indian diaspora community in South Africa

The Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, arrived in South Africa to attend the 15th BRICS Summit. As he stepped out of the

aircraft, he was greeted with great enthusiasm by hundreds of Indian diaspora members, who had gathered at the airport to welcome him. Two women stepped forward

and tied Rakhis on his wrist, a

traditional Indian custom symbolizing protection and brotherhood. The Prime Minister, visibly delighted by the warm reception, expressed his excitement for the upcoming meetings and discussions with other world leaders.

INDEPENDENCE DAY 2023: INDIANS ACROSS THE GLOBE CELEBRATED THE DAY WITH NATIONAL PRIDE

On August 15, people of Indian origin around the world joyfully observed the 77th Independence Day of India.

People from the Indian community around the world celebrated India's 77th Independence Day with great enthusiasm. They gathered at diplomatic missions to exchange greetings and sing patriotic songs and the national anthem. The US Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, celebrated with Indian Americans, saying that the relationship between the US and India is stronger than ever. The Indian Community in the US gathered in large numbers at Times Square in New York to celebrate Independence Day by exchanging greetings and rendering the national anthem and patriotic songs.

In Beijing, the Indian diaspora and officials of the Indian embassy celebrated Independence Day together. Children also performed a play called *Unsung*, which explored the bravery and righteousness of four of India's unsung heroes. The play used many different elements of theatre to tell the stories of ordinary Indians doing extraordinary things. A video was also played about India's presidency of the G20, which talked about the different initiatives and

themes that India is working on. Celebrations also took place in Australia, where the Indian High Commissioner hoisted the tricolour flag and shared President Murmu's address. Indian diaspora members from different corners of India shared stories of growing up in India and presented beautiful performances in Indian regional languages. The Australian Prime Minister sent his best wishes to communities across Australia celebrating India's Independence Day.

In Singapore, more than 1,000 people of Indian diaspora, along with crew members visiting INS Kulish, celebrated Independence Day at the chancery. The INS Kulish band played musical numbers and band members sang patriotic songs with



As India is celebrating its 77th Independence Day, the Burj Khalifa in Dubai on Tuesday evening was illuminated in colours of the Indian flag (Tiranga) to honour the country.

student s from local Indian schools. Indian Independence Day was celebrated in Dubai as the world's tallest building, the Burj Khalifa, was lit up with the India's national flag.

Foreign Minister of Nepal, NP Saud, conveyed greetings on India's 77th Independence Day. In Sri Lanka, the Indian High Commissioner and officers paid homage to the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) Memorial, which is a monument for Indian soldiers who lost their lives defending peace and unity in Sri Lanka.

BALANCING CULTURAL EQUATION

Dr. Balachandra Adkoli is a Consultant in Health Professions Education and a freelancer, based at Bangalore. His areas of interest include soft-skills training, leadership, life-style management and spirituality.

'Life is a balancing act', holds good even for resolving cultural conflicts in a fast moving and migrating world. With the forces of globalization and free market economy, migration to a country with a different culture has become inevitable. This has resulted in a clash between the old and the new, Eastern and Western cultures. The Indian diaspora living in the USA is a glaring example. The identification of cultural challenges faced by the immigrants is the first step in finding out solutions.

What is culture? Culture is what the society acquires and perpetuates from one generation to other. It includes food habit, language, dress code, family relationship, religious customs, festivals, art and music, and subtle ways of living. Culture is mainly formed through parental influence, it is shaped up through formal education and informal experience, from the society. When the people are alienated from their mother tongue and motherland, their culture clashes with a new culture. This results in the synthesis of cultures, through selective absorption.

The Indian diaspora living in the USA, is a large contingent of 4.9 million immigrants, only next to China (5.4 million). Thanks to IT revolution, and software industry growth in India, more and more techies have landed in USA. More than 25 big firms are led by the Indian CEOs. India has a strong community of doctors besides scientists and student community.

The Indian diaspora in the USA, reflects the phenomenon of 'unity in diversity', that is found in India, in terms of language and religion. They belong to all major religions, Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, and Sikhism. They speak several languages, Hindi, Punjabi, Gujarati,

Bengali, Marathi, and all South Indian languages. Interestingly, Telugu is now the fastest growing language in the USA, spoken by more than 400,000 people, owing to the huge migration of IT professionals from Andhra Pradesh. Though the Indian community in the USA is widely scattered, at the same time, each group has strong bond with its native culture. For example, Bengalis celebrate Durga Pooja, so also Maharashtrians observe Ganesh festival. Diwali is even recognized by the White House, if not as the official festival, notwithstanding the criticism by the environmentalists on the negative impact of fire work. More than the festivals, the biggest challenge for the Indian immigrants is perhaps, to guard their kids who are schooling. The basic problem is that the immigrants, having born and brought up in India, still expect their children to follow the Indian way of food habit, dress code and cultural practices, amidst American way of life, which is an uphill task. The kids are sandwiched between American way of freedom on one hand, and Indian way of parental control on the other hand. The parental control may even extend, to decide what kids should eat, what they should wear, how they should behave, and what career goals they should aspire.

The kids, having tasted the new freedom, rebel at home, and switch over to western culture quickly, in order to gain acceptance from their peers. In the process, they may think of Indian culture as 'out of fashion', which becomes a bone of contention. For example, the parents insist their girl child to sport 'Bindi' while going to school. The girl resists it under peer pressure. Further, she switches over to jeans and shorts, leading to more fire work at home.

In India, the parents can, restrict their kids from using mobile phone and internet. But in the USA, it is mandatory for the teenagers to possess their own mobile and e-mail account for registration to avail medical facility. The freedom and privilege to possess mobile and

internet at such vulnerable teenage, creates a lot of fear and anxiety for the parents. If they oppose and punish their children by chance, the kids can call the cops and get them arrested!



Dr. Balachandra Adkoli

Though, mischievous behavior like bullying and temper tantrum are common in schools in all societies, the American kids are further vulnerable to the growing rate of violence and gun culture. This is a threat to the peace loving population of immigrants.

The children entering teenage, encounter additional problems such as dating which is the general norm in the USA. This is a source of anxiety to the parents who believe in the sanctity of arranged marriage as opposed to the love marriage. The increasing rate of divorce cases in the USA is a matter of concern to most.

Even perception of success by the Indian immigrants and their counterpart in the USA is different. Indian parents want their children to pursue hard career such as science, technology and medicine, while the Americans prefer careers that bring financial reward and work-life balance.

Even after weighing the pros and cons of both the cultures, the Indian immigrants, at the end of the day want to settle down in the USA. They value the rich infrastructure, facilities and comfortable living, in contrast with the hard realities of Indian society, such as overpopulation, poor infrastructure, too few well paid jobs, limited scope for merit and talent, corruption, bureaucracy and red tape. They don't mind waiting patiently for the green card and subsequently American citizenship. They fear that returning to India

means, facing tough competition in the Indian job market, and missing a cozy and comfortable American life.

Thinking positively, the cultural integration of Indian diaspora with the American society is just possible with a balancing act. We can learn lessons and tips from the successful individuals, communities and organizations who have set examples for others to follow.

In the previous episode, we discussed some of the cultural challenges faced by the Indian diaspora (referred to as Indian Americans) living in the USA. They feel alienated from Indian culture and not yet willing to accept American culture. They face value conflicts between Indian tradition of parental control, and the excessive freedom given by the American society in deciding everything including one's own gender.

A national survey called 'Indian Americans Attitude Survey (IAAS)' covering 1200 Indian Americans was conducted by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace during 2020. It reveals interesting findings.

Indian Americans are highly educated, well placed and even earn more, compared with the average American workforce. They prefer to live in places heavily populated by other people of Indian origin. They also report very high rates of marriage within their community (8 out of 10) and low rates of divorce. In general, their social networks are grouped according to religions, rather than region (State) or caste. Their religious practices vary. The Muslims and Christians pray more frequently than Hindus. The survey also reveals that Indian Americans regularly encounter discrimination mostly based on skin colour. They also report low participation in civic responsibility, social service, and protests, though the American born report a higher rate.

Considering the present trend of migration, the USA is likely to receive more immigrants from many

countries across the world, such as Mexico, China, India, Philippines, Vietnam, Middle East, Africa, and Europe who are likely to bring diverse cultures. The Indian Americans will have to navigate among multicultural environments.

A common ground for Americans and Indians is their commitment and respect for democracy, and acceptance of religious and cultural differences. Indian Sanatana Dharma which is the oldest, worshipped God in the form of nature called 'Panch Mahabhoota' (Air, Water, Fire, Earth, and Ether), devoid of religious practices and rituals. This later led to the birth of Hinduism with religious practices. Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity thrived in the Indian soil, thanks to the Indian philosophy of peace, harmony and universal brotherhood (Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam).

Thinking positively, Indian Americans can serve as ambassadors of change, bringing Indian values, which are universal, viz., Truth (Sathya), Righteousness (Dharma), Peace (Shanti), Love (Prema) and Non-violence (Ahimsa). Respect to elders, holding on to democratic values, freedom of speech and expression, and all-inclusiveness are ingrained in the Indian mindset.

The way forward is therefore, adopting cultural duality – embracing the best of both American culture and Indian culture. It can result in amalgamating the strong family values of India with dignity of labour, honesty in public life, and empowerment of youth and women which are the healthy practices of USA culture. It can also eliminate some outmoded rituals practised in India, and the violence, gun culture, and excessive consumerism ailing the American way of life.

Education and awareness about all cultures is the foremost step in this journey. The individual families, parents, schools, community centres, cultural organisations, civil society leaders, service organisations, besides Governments and NGOs should all join hands together in this mission.

Homes are the incubators of cultural training. Many Indian American parents successfully train their kids, practice evening prayers, recite holy texts, shlokas, bhajans, and perform poojas on festival days in whatever best way possible on a foreign land. The cartoon films, and TV serials from Indian mythology can compete with popular local TV shows to which the kids are addicted. Further, the schools at all levels can fix dedicated time for projecting all cultures through the formal curriculum and extracurricular activities.

The community centres, which are a part of residential complexes, play a key role in promoting culture. Apart from exercises, sports and hobbies, they provide facilities such as party halls, venues for entertainment and performance of religious ceremonies, and cultural festivals like Ganesh, Durga Pooja, Diwali, Eid and Christmas. They can also function as a marriage hall and a hub for organising workshops, seminars, and interfaith dialogues while promoting Indian systems of healing, such as Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy.

Indian culture being diverse and varied, runs the risk of leading to 'groupism' in terms of regional and language divide. Though this has pros and cons, the leaders belonging to various groups can evolve consensus in striking a balance. Indian cinema, literature, Yoga, music, and performing arts have become popular, thanks to the efforts made by the respective communities, in sponsoring such events. A large number of talented artists from India visit the USA giving impetus to budding talents. The family members and relatives visiting the USA for a short duration also help in strengthening their cultural roots.

Language plays a crucial role in propagating culture. Indian Americans should learn (if not master) at least one foreign language such as Chinese, French, Korean or Spanish, besides one or two Indian languages to get connected with the Indian and local community.

Appreciation of cultural differences



and languages can result in minimising perceived discrimination. The support networks, and service organisations can play a proactive advocacy role. Thanks to the availability of social media, today, it is easier to raise the voice against such malpractices. The conflicts can be resolved through dialogue and open

communication rather than resorting to protests and violent methods.

The cultural tensions of the world are endless. Indian Americans are no exception. While the transformation into 'one world, one culture' is utopian, an attitude of self-inquiry combined with respect for

differences, and some kind of addition and subtraction on both sides can help in balancing the cultural equation.

(Courtesy : The Times of India 30 August, 2023 & 16 September 2023)

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON THE PRINCIPLES OF AN INDIA – MIDDLE EAST – EUROPE ECONOMIC CORRIDOR

Pursuant to this Memorandum of Understanding, the Governments of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the European Union, the Republic of India, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the French Republic, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Italian Republic, and the United States of America (the “Participants”) commit to work together to establish the India – Middle East – Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC). The IMEC is expected to stimulate economic development through enhanced connectivity and economic integration between Asia, the Arabian Gulf, and Europe.

The IMEC will be comprised of two separate corridors, the east corridor connecting India to the Arabian Gulf and the northern corridor connecting the Arabian Gulf to Europe. It will include a railway that, upon completion, will provide a reliable and cost-effective cross-border ship-to-rail transit network to supplement existing maritime and road transport routes – enabling goods and services to transit to, from, and between India,

the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Israel, and Europe.

Along the railway route, Participants intend to enable the laying of cable for electricity and digital connectivity, as well as pipe for clean hydrogen export. This corridor will secure regional supply chains, increase trade accessibility, improve trade facilitation, and support an increased emphasis on environmental social, and government impacts.

Participants intend that the corridor will increase efficiencies, reduce costs, enhance economic unity, generate jobs, and lower greenhouse gas emissions – resulting in a transformative integration of Asia, Europe and the Middle East.

In support of this initiative, Participants commit to work



collectively and expeditiously to arrange and implement all elements of these new transit 2 routes, and to establish coordinating entities to address the full range of technical, design, financing, legal and relevant regulatory standards.

The Memorandum of Understanding is the result of initial consultations. It sets forth political commitments of the Participants and does not create rights or obligations under international law. The Participants intend to meet within the sixty days to develop and commit to an action plan with relevant timetables.

DAYS TO REMEMBER

in October, 2023

October 01 : Nigeria- National Day

October 02 : Gandhi Jayanti-International Day of Non-violence

October 03 : Germany-Day of Unity

October 09 : Uganda- Independence Day

October 10 : Fiji -National Day

October 12 : Spain- National Day

October 14 : Amavasya

October 23 : Hungary- Republic Day

October 24 : Dussehra (Vijaya Dashami)

October 24 : United Nations Day

October 26 : Austria- National Day

October 28 : Purnima



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ANTAR-RASHTRIYA SAHAYOG PARISHAD, BHARAT
INDIAN COUNCIL FOR INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

President
AMB. VIRENDRA GUPTA

PRAVASI BHAWAN
50, DEEN DAYAL UPADHYAY MARG
NEW DELHI-110 002

Secretary-General
SHYAM (K.G.) PARANDE

Date : 05.09.2023

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 on Saturday, 07 October, 2023 at 4:00 pm at Pravasi Bhawan, 50, Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg, New Delhi-110002.

You are requested to kindly attend the meeting.

Yours Sincerely

(Shyam Parande)
Secretary General, ARSP

Agenda :-

1. Confirmation of minutes of the last AGM held on 28, October, 2022.
2. Report on the activities of ARSP including DRRC & CRSCR since the last AGM and follow up on 24 hours event 'Sun never sets on Indian Diaspora'.
3. Activity report by ARSP Chapters.
4. Consideration and adoption of Annual Income & Expenditure Account & Balance Sheet for the year 2022-23.
5. Appointment of auditors for the financial year 2023-24.
6. Matters related to Pravasi Bhawan.
7. Discussion on roadmap for year 2023-2024.
8. Any other matter with the permission of the Chair.

NOTE : "For quorum requirements, the meeting may be recalled after 30 minutes on the same day & at the same venue."

☞ Members are requested to send their mobile contact as well as e-mail id at the earliest, for smoother communication for the AGM, in case these are changed or not registered earlier. Those members unable to attend in person may avail Zoom facility by informing the office.

DIPLOMATIC POSTINGS

Shri Mridul Kumar (IFS: 1992), presently Ambassador of India to Switzerland, has been concurrently accredited as the **next Ambassador of India to the Principality of Liechtenstein, with residence in Berne.**

Shri Vishvas Vidu Sapkal (IFS: 1998), presently Ambassador of India to the Republic of Peru, has been concurrently accredited as the **next Ambassador of India to the Plurinational State of Bolivia, with residence in Lima.**

Shri Mayank Joshi (IFS:2003), presently Deputy Chief of Mission in the Embassy of India, Tokyo has been appointed as the **next High Commissioner of India to Jamaica.**

Dr. Pradeep Singh Rajpurohit (IFS:2004), presently Joint Secretary in the Ministry, has been appointed as the **next High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago.**

Dr. Amit S. Telang (IFS:2005), presently Consul General, Consulate General of India, Frankfurt, has been appointed as the **next High Commissioner of India to the Cooperative Republic of Guyana.**

Dr. Sumit Seth (IFS:2005), presently Ambassador of India to the Republic of Panama, has been concurrently accredited as the next Ambassador of India to the Republic of Nicaragua, with residence in Panama. ■

HRH ATTENDS NATIONAL LAW SCHOOL OF INDIA CONVOCATION

Her Royal Highness Princess Sonam Dechan Wangchuck was the Chief Guest at the 31st Annual Convocation of the National Law School of India University (NLSIU) in Bengaluru, India, on August 26.

The Convocation Ceremony, held for the nearly two thousand graduands of Class of 2023, was attended by the Chief Justice of India, Justices of the Supreme Court of India and Judges of the High Court of India, Chairperson of the Bar Council of India and its members, ministers and officials of the State Government of Karnataka and other dignitaries from India's legal fraternity.

In the convocation address, Her Royal Highness highlighted the important role legal professionals can play as “social engineers” in society and urged the graduating students to live by the values of Justice, Service and Wisdom in their professional lives. Her Royal Highness said, “Guided by GNH, our Majesties the Kings have demonstrated that justice, service, and wisdom are not



mere ideals but pillars that sustain a harmonious nation. Their profound wisdom, selfless service, and commitment to justice is what makes them the true “social engineers” of Bhutan.”

The National Law School of India University is considered a torchbearer in legal education in India and is one of the partner universities of the Jigme Singye Wangchuck School of Law.

The day before the convocation, Her Royal Highness delivered a special address to the students of NLSIU and held an interactive session with the students. Her Royal Highness and

the Chief Justice of India also inaugurated the university's new library.

Her Royal Highness was in India on a four-day visit at the invitation of the Government of India. During the visit, Her Royal Highness met senior officials of the Government of India and judiciary, and representatives of leading law firms and companies in India. Her Royal Highness also congratulated the Indian Space and Research Organization (ISRO) for the historic Chandrayan-3 soft landing, taking India to the moon.

Official Visit of Ms. PEMA CHODEN, FOREIGN SECRETARY, ROYAL GOVERNMENT OF BHUTAN TO NEW DELHI, INDIA (28-29 July, 2023)

H.E. Ms. Pema Choden, Foreign Secretary, paid an official visit to India from 27-30 July 2023 at the invitation of H.E. Mr. Vinay Kwatra, Foreign Secretary, Government of India. On 29 July 2023, Foreign Secretary Pema Choden co-chaired the Bhutan-India Development Cooperation Talks alongside Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra, during which the discussions on 13th Five Year Plan were held.

The two Foreign Secretaries reviewed the entire spectrum of bilateral cooperation in the energy sector, development partnership, cross-border connectivity, trade and economic ties, digital development, science and technology, skill development and furthering people to people ties. On 29 July 2023, Foreign Secretary Pema Choden called on the External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar.

India and Bhutan share an exemplary bilateral relationship characterized by utmost trust, goodwill and mutual understanding at all levels, strong bonds of friendship and close people-to-people ties. The visit is in keeping with the well-established tradition of regular exchange of high-level visits between Bhutan and India.



The India-BHUTAN FOUNDATION (IBF) held the 21st MEETING of its BOARD of DIRECTORS

The India-Bhutan Foundation (IBF) held its 21st meeting of its Board of Directors on 7 August 2023 in Thimphu.



IBF is a platform that supports India-Bhutan exchanges at the people-to-people level in the fields of education, arts and culture, science and technology, youth affairs and sports.



डॉयलोग विथ डायस्पोरा के अंतर्गत आयरलैंड के अभिषेक त्रिपाठी एवं श्रीलंका की अतिला कोतलावला से संवाद

अंतर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद एवं वैश्विक हिंदी परिवार के संयुक्त तत्वावधान में 'प्रवासी भारतीयों से संवाद' कार्यक्रम का आयोजन दिनांक 29 अगस्त 2023 को प्रवासी भवन में किया गया। इस कार्यक्रम में श्रीलंका की प्रख्यात हिंदी लेखिका एवं हिन्दी संस्थान की संस्थापक एवं अध्यापिका सुश्री अतिला कोतलावला एवं भारतीय मूल के आयरलैंड के प्रसिद्ध हिंदी कवि एवं लेखक श्री अभिषेक त्रिपाठी मुख्य वक्ता के रूप में शामिल हुए। इनके अलावा कार्यक्रम में विशिष्ट अतिथि के रूप में श्री श्याम परांडे (महासचिव-अंतर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद), श्री नारायण कुमार (मानद निदेशक-अंतर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद) एवं श्री अनिल जोशी (अध्यक्ष-वैश्विक हिन्दी परिवार) का सान्निध्य रहा। डॉ. राजेश कुमार (वरिष्ठ लेखक) ने कार्यक्रम का संचालन किया। उन्होंने दोनों अतिथि वक्ताओं, एवं विशिष्ट अतिथियों का संक्षिप्त परिचय देते हुए, सम्मान स्वरूप उन्हें अंगमवस्त्र प्रदान किया।

प्रारंभिक वक्तव्य में श्री अनिल जोशी ने कहा 'प्रवासी भारतीयों से संवाद' की इस कड़ी में दोनों वक्ताओं से बातचीत के दौरान श्रीलंका एवं आयरलैंड में हिन्दी की स्थिति एवं संभावना को समझने का प्रयास किया जाएगा तथा विजय कुमार मल्होत्रा (रेलमंत्रालय के पूर्व भाषा निदेशक) ने अपना परिचय देते हुए श्रीलंका एवं आयरलैंड में युवा पीढ़ी को हिन्दी के प्रति आकर्षित करने पर जोर दिया। उन्होंने अपने वक्तव्य में हिन्दी को रोचक तरीकों से स्कूली शिक्षा में कैसे शामिल किया जाये पर लोगों का ध्यान केन्द्रित किया।

कार्यक्रम के मुख्य अतिथि के रूप में आयरलैंड के अभिषेक त्रिपाठी ने बताया कि आयरलैंड में भारतीयों की आबादी लगभग 50,000 है।

गुरुदेव रविन्द्रनाथ टैगोर का आयरलैंड के लोग बहुत सम्मान करते हैं जब उन्होंने गीतांजलि लिखी थी तो वे आयरलैंड के साहित्यिक लोगों से मिलने-मिलाने के लिए गए थे। आयरलैंड में गुरुदेव टैगोर का सबसे



ज्यादा सहयोग डब्लू बी ईट्स (जो एक बहुत बड़े कवि थे) ने किया था। डब्लू बी ईट्स के पैतृक गाँव में उनके साथ गुरुदेव टैगोर की मूर्ति लगाई गई है। वहीं यहाँ दिल्ली में एक मार्ग का नाम 'ईमान दे वलेरा' है जो आयरलैंड के पहले प्रधानमंत्री एवं उसके बाद राष्ट्रपति के नाम पर रखा गया है। उन्होंने कहा कि आयरलैंड के बहुत सारे प्रख्यात साहित्यकार, कवि, लेखक हैं जिनकी रचनाओं का अभी तक हिन्दी में अनुवाद नहीं हो पाया है। हमें इन बहुमूल्य साहित्यों के अनुवाद की दिशा में भी विचार करना चाहिए।

आयरलैंड के किसी भी विश्वविद्यालयों में हिन्दी नहीं पढ़ाई जाती है, मात्र एक जॉन स्कॉट्स विद्यालय है, जिसमें संस्कृत की पढ़ाई होती है।

श्रीलंका की हिन्दी अध्यापिका सुश्री अतिला कोतलावला ने कहा कि श्रीलंका में हिन्दी की स्थिति बेहतर है वहाँ लगभग आठ विश्वविद्यालयों और 80 सरकारी विद्यालयों में हिन्दी पढ़ाई जाती है। उन्होंने कहाँ की जो संगीत व नृत्य सीखते हैं उनके लिए हिन्दी बहुत बड़ा आकर्षण है। सुश्री कोतलावला जी ने कहा कि हिन्दी की स्थिति में और सुधार किया जा सकता है। उनकी राय में वहाँ हिन्दी सिनेमा व गानों के बहुत सारे प्रशंसक भी हैं, मैं भी उनमें से एक हूँ जिसकी वजह से ही मेरी भी रुचि हिन्दी में बढ़ी है।

कोतलावला जी ने आगे यह भी बताया कि हमें बोल-चाल की हिन्दी पर भी जोर देना चाहिए जिससे शायद हिन्दी की स्थिति में सुधार हो

सकता है। श्रीलंका में बहुत सारे शिक्षक हैं जिनके पास हिन्दी में उपाधि है पर आज भी हिन्दी बोलने से घबराते हैं, इसके साथ ही वक्ता ने अपनी स्वरचित कविता पाठ के साथ अपनी वक्तव्य को विराम दिया।

श्री अनिल जोशी जी ने बोल-चाल की हिन्दी से थोड़ी असहमति जताते हुए कहा कि बोल-चाल की हिन्दी तो ठीक है पर इसमें लिपि के खो जाने की संभावना बहुत ज्यादा होती है, जो किसी भी भाषा के लिए बहुत खतरनाक है। जब हम भारत की ज्ञान परंपरा की बात करते हैं जो सबसे समृद्ध परंपरा है। अगर हमारी लिपि नहीं रहेगी तो इस परंपरा की हमें 'क ख ग' का भी नहीं पता चलेगा।

औपचारिक अध्यक्षीय सम्बोधन में श्री नारायण कुमार जी ने मुख्य अतिथि अभिषेक जी एवं अतिला जी का स्वागत करते हुए सभी सहभागियों का अभिनंदन किया तथा प्रवासी शब्द की नई परिभाषा से अवगत कराया उन्होंने कहा-जो भारत मूल के हैं बाहर देशों में रहते हैं, जो बाहर देशों के ही हैं पर भारतीय संस्कृति को स्वीकार करते हैं उसे हम सांस्कृतिक प्रवासी (cultural diaspora) कहते हैं। उन्होंने कहा कि संस्कृति को ग्रहण किए बिना सांस्कृतिक डायस्पोरा नहीं हो सकता है। आयरलैंड पर बात करते हुए उन्होंने कहा कि जब राष्ट्र नायक ईमान दे वलेरा आजादी की संकल्पना की तो कहते हैं कि गैलीक भाषा लुप्त हो चुकी थी, जिसकी शिक्षा उन्होंने एक मोची से प्राप्त की और कहा कि जब हम अपनी भाषा सीख लेंगे तो आजादी भी प्राप्त कर लेंगे।

भारत की संविधान सभा में 14 सितम्बर 1949 को सभा के अध्यक्ष डॉ. राजेन्द्र प्रसाद का वक्तव्य

‘अब आज की कार्यवाही समाप्त होती है, किन्तु सदन को स्थगित करने से पूर्व मैं बधाई के रूप में कुछ शब्द कहना चाहता हूँ, मेरे विचार में हमने अपने संविधान में एक अध्याय स्वीकार किया है जिसका देश के निर्माण पर बहुत प्रभाव पड़ेगा हमारे इतिहास में अब तक कभी भी एक भाषा को शासन और प्रशासन की भाषा के रूप में मान्यता नहीं मिली थी, हमारा धार्मिक साहित्य और प्रकाशन संस्कृत में सन्निहित था। निस्संदेह उसका समस्त देश में अध्ययन किया जाता था, किन्तु वह भाषा भी कभी समूचे देश के प्रशासकीय प्रयोजनों के लिए प्रयुक्त होती थी, आज पहली बार ऐसा संविधान बना है, जबकि हमने अपने संविधान में एक भाषा लिखी है जो संघ के प्रशासन की भाषा होगी और उस भाषा का विकास समय की परिस्थितियों के अनुसार ही करना होगा।’

‘हमने आज संघ के प्रशासन की भाषा स्वीकार की है हिन्दी में विगत में कई-कई बार परिवर्तन हुए हैं और आज उसकी कई शैलियाँ हैं, पहले हमारा बहुत सा साहित्य ब्रजभाषा में लिखा गया था। अब हिन्दी में खड़ी बोली का प्रचलन है, मेरे विचार में देश की अन्य भाषाओं के सम्पर्क से उसका और भी विकास होगा। मुझे इसमें कोई संदेह नहीं है कि हिन्दी देश की अन्य भाषाओं से अच्छी-अच्छी बातें ग्रहण करेगी तो उससे उन्नति ही होगी।’

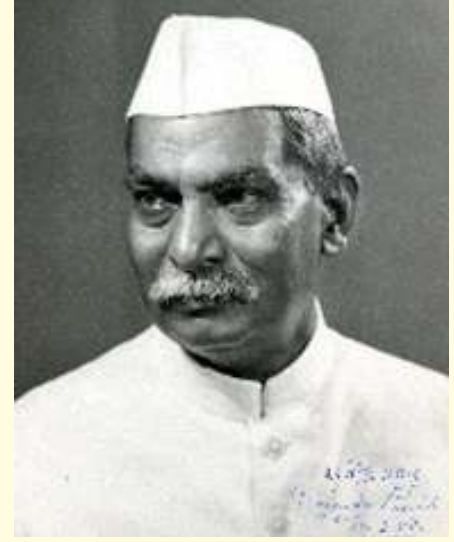
‘हमने अब देश का राजनैतिक एकीकरण कर लिया है, अब हम एक दूसरा जोड़ लगा रहे हैं जिससे हम सब एक सिरे से दूसरे सिरे तक एक हो जायेंगे, मुझे आशा है कि सब सदस्य संतोष की भावना लेकर घर जायेंगे और जो मतदान में हार भी गए हैं, वे भी इस पर बुरा नहीं मानेंगे तथा उस कार्य में सहायता देंगे जो संविधान के कारण संघ को भाषा के विषय में अब करना पड़ेगा।’

‘मैं दक्षिण भारत के विषय में एक शब्द कहना चाहता हूँ 1917 में जब महात्मा गांधी चम्पारन में थे और मुझे उनके साथ कार्य करने का सौभाग्य प्राप्त हुआ था तब उन्होंने दक्षिण में हिन्दी प्रचार का कार्य आरम्भ करने का विचार किया और उनके कहने पर स्वामी सत्यदेव और गांधी जी के प्रिय पुत्र देवदास गांधी ने

वहाँ जाकर यह कार्य आरम्भ किया। बाद में 1918 में हिन्दी साहित्य सम्मेलन के इन्दौर अधिवेशन में इस प्रचार कार्य को सम्मेलन का मुख्य कार्य स्वीकार किया गया और वहाँ कार्य चलता रहा। मेरा सौभाग्य है कि मैं गत 32 वर्षों में इस कार्य से सम्बद्ध रहा हूँ, यद्यपि मैं इसे घनिष्ठ संबंध का दावा नहीं कर सकता। मैं दक्षिण में एक सिरे से दूसरे सिरे को गया और मेरे हृदय में बहुत प्रसन्नता हुई कि दक्षिण के लोगों ने भाषा के संबंध में महात्मा गांधी के अनुरोध के अनुसार कैसा अच्छा कार्य किया है। मैं जानता हूँ कि उन्हें कितनी ही कठिनाइयों का सामना करना पड़ा किन्तु उनमें इस मामले में जो जोश था वह बहुत सराहनीय था। मैंने कई बार पारितोषिक वितरण भी किया है और सदस्यों को यह सुनकर मनोरंजन होगा कि मैंने एक ही समय पर दो पीढ़ियों को पारितोषिक दिए हैं। यह कार्य चलता रहा है और दक्षिण के लोगों ने इस अपनाया है उसके लिए उत्तर भारतीयों को उन्हें बधाई देनी चाहिए। मान्यता देनी चाहिए और धन्यवाद देना चाहिए।’

यदि आज उन्होंने किसी विशेष बात पर हठ किया है तो हमें याद रखना चाहिए कि आखिर यदि हिन्दी को उन्हें स्वीकार करना है तो वे ही करेंगे, उनकी ओर से हम तो नहीं करेंगे, और आखिर यह क्या बात है जिस पर इतना वाद-विवाद हो गया है? मैं आश्चर्य कर रहा था कि हमें छोटे से मामले पर इतनी बहस करने की क्या आवश्यकता है? आखिर अंक हैं क्या? दस ही तो है, इन दस में, मुझे याद पड़ता है कि तीन तो ऐसे हैं जो अंग्रेजी में और हिन्दी में एक से है, मेरे विचार से मुद्रणालय की दृष्टि से हिन्दी और अंग्रेजी अंकों में कोई अंतर नहीं है।

‘हमारे संविधान में बहुत से विवाद उठ खड़े हुए हैं और बहुत से प्रश्न उठे हैं, जिन पर गंभीर मतभेद थे किन्तु हमने किसी न किसी प्रकार उनका निपटारा कर लिया। यह सबसे बड़ी खाई थी जिससे हम एक दूसरे से अलग हो सकते थे। हमें यह कल्पना करनी चाहिए कि यदि दक्षिण हिन्दी भाषा और देवनागरी लिपि को स्वीकार नहीं करता, तब क्या होता? स्विट्जरलैंड जैसे छोटे से, नन्हें से देश में तीन



भाषाएँ हैं जो संविधान में मान्य हैं और सबकुछ काम उन तीनों भाषाओं में होता है, क्या हम समझते हैं कि हम केन्द्रीय प्रशासकीय प्रयोजनों के लिए उन भाषाओं को रखने की सोचते जो भारत में प्रचलित हैं तो क्या हम सब प्रान्तों के साथ रख सकते थे, सभी में एकता करा सकते थे? प्रत्येक पृष्ठ को शायद पंद्रह-बीस भाषाओं में मुद्रित करना पड़ता।’

‘यह केवल व्यय का प्रश्न नहीं है, यह मानसिक दशा का भी प्रश्न है जिसका हमारे समस्त जीवन पर प्रभाव पड़ेगा, हम केन्द्र में जिस भाषा का प्रयोग करेंगे, उससे हम एक दूसरे के निकटतर आते जायेंगे, आखिर अंग्रेजी से हम निकटतर आए हैं, क्योंकि यह एक भाषा थी। अंग्रेजी के स्थान पर हमने एक भारतीय भाषा को अपनाया है, इससे अवश्यमेव हमारे सम्बन्ध घनिष्ठतर होंगे। विशेषतः इसलिए कि हमारे परम्पराएं एक ही हैं, हमारी संस्कृति एक ही है और हमारे सभ्यता में सब बातें एक ही हैं, अतःएव यदि हम इस सूत्र को स्वीकार नहीं करते तो परिणाम यह होता कि इस देश में बहुत सी भाषाओं का प्रयोग होता या वे प्रान्त पृथक हो जाते जो बाध्य होकर किसी भाषा विशेष को स्वीकार करना नहीं चाहते थे। हमने यथासंभव बुद्धिमाना का कार्य किया है। मुझे हर्ष है, मुझे प्रसन्नता है और मुझे आशा कि भावी सन्तति इसके लिए हमारी सराहना करेगी।।



भारतीय स्वाधीनता के अमृत महोत्सव के अवसर पर विशेष



आराधना झा श्रीवास्तव, सिंगापुर में प्रवास कर रही स्वतंत्र लेखन एवं पत्रकारिता से सम्बद्ध हैं। राजभाषा हिन्दी एवं मातृभाषा मैथिली में नियमित लेखन, प्रकाशन एवं सम्पादन-सहयोग कर रही आराधना भारतीय भाषा, साहित्य और संस्कृति के संरक्षण, संवर्धन एवं संप्रेषण हेतु प्रयासरत हैं। संवाद-नाटिकाओं के लेखन, निर्देशन एवं अभिनय के साथ ही ये आलेख, समीक्षा, व्यंग्य, गजल, भजन, गीत, हाइकु, जोगीरा, समेत विभिन्न काव्य-विधाओं में लिखती हैं जो देश-विदेश की कई प्रतिष्ठित पत्र-पत्रिकाओं में प्रकाशित हो चुकी हैं। अपने मंच-संचालन, सृजन-संसार एवं प्रस्तुति हेतु इन्हें विश्वभर की कई हिन्दी संस्थाओं से प्रशंसा प्राप्त हो चुकी है। 23 अगस्त 2023 को 'चन्द्रयान 3' से लैंडर विक्रम और रोवर प्रज्ञान के चाँद की सतह पर सफलतापूर्वक उतरने के साथ ही इसरो के वैज्ञानिकों की वर्षों की साधना सफल हुई। हम सभी भारतीयों और भारतवंशियों के लिए यह एक अविस्मरणीय क्षण था।



भारत के माननीय प्रधानमंत्री श्री नरेन्द्र मोदी जी ने इसे नए भारत का जयघोष और विकसित भारत का शंखनाद कहा। इस ऐतिहासिक क्षण को समस्त मानवता के लिए महत्त्वपूर्ण उपलब्धि के रूप में रेखांकित करते हुए उन्होंने 'चन्द्रयान अभियान' में दिन-रात एक करने वाले समस्त वैज्ञानिक समुदाय की भूरि भूरि प्रशंसा की। चाँद और चाँद पर शान से लहराने वाले तिरंगे के नाम लिखी आराधना झा श्रीवास्तव कविता :

चाँद पर तिरंगा

दादी नानी की कहानियों का सितारा था चाँद
उसे मुट्टी में भरने को मचलता रहा बचपन
पर चमकते चाँद को पाना आसान न था
माँ ने मनुहार कर उसे बाँधी थी राखी
चाँदी की कटोरी में दूध-भात लिए इतराता रहा चाँद
किसी इमारत के कोने से झाँकता
कभी बादलों संग लुकाछिपा खेलता
छत की मुँडेर पर ऊँघता रहा चाँद
मिश्री की तरह मिसरों में घुलता हुआ
हसीन चेहरों पर हँसी की चाँदनी लाने को
न जाने कितनी बार टूटने को राजी हुआ चाँद
कभी एक टुकड़ा तो कभी पूरी थाली
गुड़ से बनी मीठी पूरियाँ पकाता रहा चाँद
धरती बहना ने बाँधी थी प्यार की डोरी
भाई के सारे फर्ज निभाता रहा चाँद
स्याह रातों में सूरज की रोशनी लपेटे
टूटते तारों के बीच तन्हा गुमसुम रहा चाँद
मन की खुरदरी परतों में छिपाए कई राज
दक्षिणी ध्रुव पर ठंडी आहें भरता रहा चाँद

जिस धरा पर धारा था शिव ने शीश
उस सोमनाथ की परिक्रमा करता रहा चाँद
क्यों पहला संदेशा भारत से न आया
इस बात से भायद नाराज सा था चाँद
नीली पट्टी पर जगमगाते सितारों ने
नील के संग सबसे पहले चूमी उसकी जमीं
पर तिरंगे से लिपटने को तरसता रहा चाँद
रौ में बहकर इसरो की चिड़ी जमीं पर पटक दी
प्रज्ञान की प्रतीक्षा में मुँह फुलाए रहा चाँद
उसे यकीन दिलाने को जरुरी थी तीसरी कसम
और ऐसी जगह पर जाकर उससे मिलना
जहाँ आज तक नहीं पड़े थे किसी के कदम
उसी अनछुए कोने में प्यार से उतरा विक्रम
जिसे बाँहों में भरकर चाँद ने चुपके से कहा
आज बरसा है सावन मेरे आँगन
सोमनाथ की मिट्टी और बहन की चिड़ी
23 अगस्त को तू मेरे पास लाया है
अब जाकर पड़ी है कलेजे में टंडक
अमृतकाल में चाँद पर तिरंगा लहराया है।