DIALOGUE

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The views expressed by the contributors do not necessarily represent the view-point of the journal.

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Editorial Perspective

COVID-19 Dealing with Unknowns

Covid-19 seems to the defining moment for the 21st Century. Besides being the worst pandemic in last hundred years, the loss of lives, economic downturn and societal consequences are going to be substantial. Dimensions of its impact are yet not clear and most countries are battling many unknowns and so is India. Till June 20, 2020 there are known to be 8.30 million confirmed cases world over with the death count of 4,50,137. The USA has been its worst victim with over 2.2 million cases and 1.16 lakh deaths and still counting. Perhaps the largest casualties for USA since the World War II. Western affluent countries were seriously affected.

With no vaccine or medicine likely to be available in immediate future, course and impact of Covid-19 on economy and society is yet to unfold. It is evident that we are going to live with it for sometime. The scientific and technological advances in the last one hundred years have conquered the earth, the space and time, yet a tiny fat-encased protein virus has brought the whole world to its knees. It only underlines that the science does not know everything, yet like Ebola, SARS/H1N1 epidemics its scientists who will find the vaccine & medicine against it. Till then we will have to manage under speculations and the unpredictables. The difference is that Covid-19 has inflected far more casualties than the earlier ones.

India a late starter is catching up fast. The spread of the covid-19 was arrested by three phases of an effective lockdown from March 24. It helped the govt. to put requisite infrastructure in place to meet the looming threat by way of testing, tracing and treatment. By and large it succeeded in doing so especially in epicenters of the pandemic, Maharashtra (Mumbai), Tamilnadu, Delhi and Gujarat. However, we are still in midst of it. As far as Covid-19 itself is concerned the surge continues with unlockdown-1, from June 1. In the absence of a vaccine and medicine anytime soon, all the statistics and forecasts, are a guesswork and subject to lot of unknowns. India has reached number four in the world after the USA, Brazil and Russia in number of infected.

According to ICMR the peak in India will come later in the years. eg. July to November. Meanwhile the number of cases in May, 2020 were 1.5 Lakh with 4267 deaths. By June 20, the number of cases were over 2 lakhs with 7484 deaths for the month in a total of 4,00,412 cases with 12,888 deaths overall. Some noteworthy trends in this regard is that majority of cases are concentrated in major urban Centres, with Maharashtra (1,20,504), Tamilnadu (52,334) Delhi (49979) and Gujarat (25,601) leading. It is clear that as the un-lockdown expands, things are going to worsen before it improves.

However on the flip side, the sudden declaration of lockdown (March 24) cuased terrible suffering to the migrant workers, daily wagers and small businesses, as economic activities came to a grinding halt. It set in motion an unprecedented migration of workers from metropolitan and industrial Centres, perhaps biggest since the partition. The govt. faced a difficult choice and did not expect the mighty exodus which took place. Perhaps a three-day notice like New Zealand would have been better. But that would have placed unprecedented pressure on rail, road and air transport. In the absence of any means of transport due to lockdown and loss of jobs for some it was a trudge of hundreds/ thousands of miles on foot with families in tow. Heart rending scenes and reports of their sufferings, including deaths, became the dominent discourse even more than the Covid itself. By the time govt. woke up to the dimensions of the problem and ran hundreds of special trains and claims to hase ferried over 60 Lakhs the damage had been done. About the rest there is no reliable estimate and its all guess work. What is the overwhelming fact is the unprecedented misery caused will be difficult to erase from memory for quite sometime. Tragedy is that in due course as the economy revives most of them are likely to return back in the absence of any means of livelihood at home. Meanwhile, the govt. has initiated a major Rs. 20 lakh crore package for revival and Rs. 2500 crore Garib Kalyan Rozgar Yogana for migrant workers, which would help shore up the economy.

Large tracts of India, particularly the rural areas, remain untouched by the Covid. Fears of spike due to return of migrants to the villages has not been real. But the infection surge in metropolitan towns has started another kind of unnoticed migration. Families fearing being caught in surge have started shifting to the safety of their villages, despite quarantine measures. This is also happening as the revival of jobs etc. is not happening and individual and street businesses are not taking off due to surge fears and social distancing etc.

Another noteworthy feature was that even during the lockdown, the harvesting operations were not affected and we have a bumper crop with the wheat procurement exceeding expectations. This is an exception to the deep and widespread impact of Covid-19 on our economy. Over crore jobs have been lost (according to estimates) besides, small businesses of all kinds are not reviving causing a ripple impact due to lack of any income to spend. The economic impact is yet to unfold despite efforts of the govt. to help economy revive by a range of initiatives.

Beyond statistics, the Covid-19 has brought forth a number of fallouts both good and worse in our personal and social discourse. These need to be taken note of as these very much exposed our social faultlines. Following the vast exodus of migrant workers and families besides, the govt. a number individuals, NGO's, religious groups came forward to feed them in large numbers. Later many provided rail, road and air transport to the stranded, following wide publicity of their sufferings. Infact this spirit of help was widely appreciated and made us look good.

This Samaritan image was spoiled by the exposure of our ugly social underbelly. The Prime Minster's lockdown speech honouring front line medical workers as warriors, and showering flowers on them was masked by the housing societies barring medical staff returning to their homes due to fears of infection. Such sentiments were there and noticeable till suppressed. ASHA workers in villages faced resistance in their duties. Similarly unruly queues before liquour shops violating all the norms of social distancing etc. juxtaposed with the pictures of migrant sufferings including children & women, in a way defined the kind people we are. There are a section of people in new generation of do-well's for whom self-gratification is everything. It is regretful in the light of so many seen feeding and helping migrants, poor and the needy.

Another significant fall out has to do with our health infrastructure. Earlier we had lot of people lobbying for the privatisation of health services leading to mushrooming of tertiary-super-specialty hospitals in metropolitan cities and even in 'B' & 'C' grade towns. During the Covid pandemic private sector warriors were seen on TV screens offering advice but still persisting with their expensive beds et al. An overwhelming number of patients could neither afford them or even access these hospitals. I do not blame these hospitals as they are commercially driven with heavy investments. Govt's efforts to cap the

rates or subsidise them had little impact considering the huge numbers. As a result all the heavy lifting and real service was rendered, and is being rendered, by the public health hospitals, doctors, nurses and paramedics etc. Away from the TV screens of the big cities it is these anonymous warriors who are holding the fort in smaller towns and rural areas in very difficult circumstances. Before it improved there were serious shortages of essential equipments like masks, PPE's, oxygen etc. I know several govt. doctors in smaller towns who gave their all risking infections. It is these govt. doctors and hospitals who fought the real war against Covid-19 and need recognition than the strong lobby of money-bag/rich private sector. They will continue to serve the elite and rich from here and abroad but they can never serve the "INDIAN" like the district hospitals, AIIMS's, Safdarjang's, RML, and LNJP's. A time has come when we must give a second look to our health services and priortise the public health services and fund them adequately to serve the overwhelming number of ordinary Indians. This is the loudest message of Covid-19 in India. Revival of public health infrastructure ought to be our mission as the pandemic peters out. It is clear the private sector can only serve the well-heeled and not ordinary Indians. It is the latter, who need viable public health structure and govt. support to it.

In conclusion, we have to wait for the curve of the pandemic to peak and flatten. Its presence and its pervading fear is the new normal of everyday life in the cities. Its long term impact will seriously challenge our resilience and determination of the govt.. In the end the human spirit will prevail, but the Covid-19 has extracted a terrible human cost in terms of suffering of crores of citizens.

—J.N. Roy

North-East Scan

We Are All In This Together

Patricia Mukhim*

Suddenly the pandemic caused by a tiny virus, whether manufactured or otherwise, has sent the world into a tizzy. Governments are responding with the resources they have at their command, but its all trial and error. We know so little as to how this virus manages to lodge itself on to a human host despite all precautions. And knowing how all of us humans are so susceptible to this virus the fear is palpable. On the part of the State governments, while some like Assam are informing the public all details about every person testing Covid positive, other States like Meghalaya are trying to keep the names under wraps on the pleas of patient privacy. Perhaps the government is wary about the social stigma that the Covid positive person would be subjected to. After what happened to the first Covid positive patient, a renowned medical doctor of many decades, who died within two days of detection and the aftermath of that death where locals protested against his cremation and burial until his body was finally laid to rest after 48 hours in a cemetery offered by a particular religious denomination, the government is treading very cautiously. Ignorance, fear and paranoia are social disorders that are difficult to tackle, if carefully laid out strategies and action plans are not in place. These are in fact, reasons why doctors everywhere are stigmatised and those who die of Covid19 are not being allowed to be cremated with full honours due to them.

In Meghalaya, the worst case scenario happened on April 13 when the doctor mentioned above, who also owns a popular hospital and health outreach centres at several places became a victim of Covid -19. Most people are led to believe that the dead body of a Covid victim is still capable of spreading the virus. Of course, there is as yet no clear-cut scientific evidence that the virus does not jump from a dead person's body to another living host. A single case of a doctor in Thailand who is believed to have been infected by the dead body of a Covid patient is doing the rounds on social media. What is not told is that the doctor who died was working in a forensic laboratory and it is possible that he might have handled some body parts of the patient

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while conducting an autopsy. Whatever be the case, the fears are genuine and should not be brushed aside as misplaced but should be handled with better communication strategies.

The above case became Meghalaya's worst case scenario because the State had taken optimum precautions to ensure that the Covid19 virus did not find its way to Meghalaya. When it did arrive here, it was from very unexpected quarters. The sudden turn of events shocked the citizenry of Shillong. Doctors meet several patients besides other persons for various purposes on a daily basis. To carry out contact tracing by doing a back-check was a monumental task. It was made worse by the fact that some family members of the doctor including his wife and domestic helpers, tested positive. The hospital was sealed; the doctors, nurses and other caregivers had to be quarantined. The inmates of the hospital also had to be tested and removed elsewhere for quarantine. It took all the resources of the government to tackle the crises.

But Meghalaya is not the only State to be afflicted by the conundrum of a Covid casualty being denied burial or cremation. Dr. Simon Hercules, a neuro-surgeon who ran the New Hope private hospital in Chetpet, Tamilnadu who expired on Sunday last, faced similar stigmatization. He was refused cremation and those who accompanied his body for the last rites were attacked. Dr. Simon had battled Covid for 15 days at the Apollo Hospital in Chennai before succumbing to it. The Indian Medical Association (IMA) has taken a very dim view of the manner in which the medical fraternity was being subjected to such stigmatization when they are at the frontline of providing healthcare to Covid patients.

Covid19 is not just a health emergency. The unknown factor about the virus requires a huge social mobilisation. This is also where risk management communication becomes imperative. Indeed the fear and paranoia surrounding Covid 19 is worse than the disease. It springs from the perception that the disease is incurable and has the potential to jump from the dead body of a deceased to infect others. Tackling public perception should have been the first task of not just the government but other institutions such as universities and societal stakeholders as well. Perceptions are rooted in the sub-conscious and are not always logical. Many of the perceptions people carry are influenced by culture and coloured by emotions. Risk management communication also involves managing public fear and outrage. In fact, fear management should have gone alongside the awareness creation on hygiene.

What is also visible at this time is that public seem to believe that the fight against Covid19 is between the government with all its resources and paraphernalia including the medical fraternity and the virus. That's not true at all. This is a fight between Covid19 and the entire humanity. The lockdown requires that the public cooperate. Thus far we are told that the only way to flatten the curve is to maintain the physical distance of three feet between humans. While the government has given a clarion call for all of us to follow these procedures, unless we respect the protocols laid out by the government, our fight against the virus will remain futile.

It is therefore important for all State governments to widely communicate that, "We Are All In This Together." Covid 19 has to be fought by the government and public together. It has to be all of us against Covid-19. The government is just one of the stakeholders in the system with resources at its command. A prudent government would have involved members of the public as partners to take up tasks they are professionally competent at in the fight against this X factor.

What is lacking as of now is a volunteer force to fan out in all directions to create awareness about Covid19, beyond the hand-washing, mask wearing and use of sanitizers. While this public health education protocol is extremely important, what people need to know is (a) not all that test Covid-positive will die. This is important, communication (b) the elderly who are pre-disposed to the disease because of their reduced immunity and other pre-existing ailments such as diabetes and heart ailments are more vulnerable, hence they should remain indoors and not be exposed to chances of contracting the virus (c) many more Covid-positive patients have recovered than have died of it (d) strict quarantine of those who test positive is important.

At this point there is a controversy raging in Meghalaya as to whether the names of those contacts of the first Covid patient, who test positive, should be revealed or be kept a State secret. People are anxious and want to know the names so that they can get themselves tested if in case they have been in contact with a Covid-positive person. This need to know is causing a lot of anxiety; much more in fact than anxiety about the virus. What is necessary at this time is that the governments inform their citizens the names of those that have tested positive while simultaneously carrying out a massive awareness campaign using multiple communication strategies. Knowledge indeed its power and secrecy at this point is self-defeating.

The battle against Covid19 has to be fought on multiple fronts!

Some Less-Noted Shoots that Sprouted in the Economy of Assam

M.P. Bezbaruah*

The story of Assam's economy in the post-independent period is often told in terms of the State falling behind the rest of India in growth rate, its stagnating or declining industrial output and under-utilization of its agricultural potential. The State's geographical isolation and the frequent social tensions arising from identity issues are generally identified as the two main constraints in economic uplift of the State. This write-up is aimed at informing the readers that the above stereotype is somewhat one sided and that several positive strands emerged from time to time in the last four decades in Assam. A look at these positive developments will make us understand that impressive rate of growth of the economy of Assam in the last decade or so is not a matter of surprise or fluke.

In the late 1970's, the State run Assam State Road Transport Corporation first started night bus service from Guwahati to Dibrugarh. Soon many local entrepreneurs started similar services connecting distant towns of not only Assam but the entire northeast region of India. This is a significant event for a number of reasons. This region colonially exploited under the British Raj is thought to be deficient in local entrepreneurial talent. In this context it is noteworthy that the night bus service crisscrossing the northeast almost entirely developed and successfully operated till date by local entrepreneurs. Further, in facilitating mobility of people through the region, these long distance bus services must have contributed to the growth of many more supporting enterprises and mentally prepared the local youth for newer economic opportunities to take advantage of.

Tea industry developed in the colonial period made Assam famous all over the world. Yet, participation of local Assamese people, especially as planters, in this world famous industry used to be limited. In the late 1970's itself, a movement was started to grow tea outside the estates owned by corporates. By 1990's it became a movement in the Upper Assam districts. Small tea growers today contribute about one third of the total tea leaves produced in Assam. Apart from contributing to production, this activity has been contributing handsomely towards

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enhancing household income besides generating employment opportunities for members of the tea worker community all of who can no longer be absorbed in the estates. The rubber plantation that emerged as a new income augmenting activity in the western part of Assam is an example of positive development in the same vein.

That a large part of Assam's agricultural land used to be cultivated only for one crop in a year was often thought to be a reflection of laziness of the farmers here. There was not enough appreciation of the fact that for growing a second crop after harvesting winter rice, which is mostly watered by monsoon rain, there was hardly enough irrigation facilities. Development of irrigation capacity through development of shallow tube wells in the 1980's and 1990's was followed by increase in the practice of multiple cropping in different parts of the State. When Assam arrived at the brink of a green revolution, with a spurt in the production of summer rice in the late 1990s, the failure to procure and market the second rice crop resulted in a great deal of losses to the enterprising farmers who used their new found irrigation access to cultivate the second rice crop. Even after burning their fingers, the farmers in Assam did not shy away for long from innovating and moving forward. In the last two decades, farmers have diversified into horticulture, livestock and fishery. Local fish production has expanded so much that the large-scale import of fish from Andhra Pradesh and other parts of India has now become a thing of the past.

During the 1980's and 1990's, government policies for creating employment especially for the youth who return from insurgent organisations created some wrong incentives among the students and young people in the State. For example, there are reports of school teachers jobs being literally auctioned away, Even the image of the Assam Public Service Commission was so tarnished that job seekers tended to gather money for bribing job-fixers than to prepare hard for the competitive examinations. Fortunately, such distortions of practices and incentives have been largely corrected as a result of which the priority of the youth now is back on the right track. When school teachers started to be recruited through very transparently and fairly conducted Teachers' Eligibility Test (TET) and the State Public Service Commission has also been put through a cleaning up process, the legitimacy of appointment for government jobs have been restored. Although this has not been widely discussed in public forum, the effect it had on job seekers in shifting from gathering money for bribes to

serious academic preparations for competition has a significant impact in moralizing the society.

An age old negative impression about indigenous people in Assam used to be their reluctance to move out of their native places. In the last couple of decades this idea has been completely demolished. In the post-liberalization period, though Assam could not directly participated in the ICT driven boom, youth from Assam migrated in hordes to the happening places of Bangalore, Hyderabad, Pune etc. Assamese youth today are found in large numbers taking up employment in far flung places like Kerala and Gujarat too. This shows that the Assamese youth today is prepared to explore other avenues and area if opportunities are not coming their way in their natïve places. The remittances of migrant workers have contributed to economic uplift of their families left behind in Assam.

These positive developments in plantation, agriculture, migration and the youth returning to the path of righteous priorities have silently brought under-currents of positive changes in the economy of Assam. Moreover, there has been a discernable expansion in the service sector activities of hospitality, healthcare and trading, which have benefitted not only from revival of growth of the Assam economy but also from the growth in all these surrounding hill States due to Assam's central location in the northeast region of India. The connectivity improvement of recent years in the form of strengthening of railways, highways and road networks, including completion of couple of major bridges, has no doubt contributed to the growth potential of Assam and the northeast by integrating the markets in the region.

Government policies now need to concentrate on removing institutional hurdles like anachronistic tenancy laws and strengthening enabling institutions and facilities such as the value chains from production to marketing and financial accesses to farm and non-farm enterprises rather than going back to failed policies such as transport subsidies. Right incentive structure for enabling the people of Assam to sustain and strengthen the economic revival of the State arising in the first two decades of the twenty first century is the need of the hour. Along with the governments at the local, State and Central levels, the civil society in the State has a role in delivering this structure. The civil society organisations need to realise the adverse economic consequences of perpetuation of social tensions and should work towards amicable resolution of contentious issues.

Crushed Spirit of Law in Manipur Disqualification Cases

Pradip Phanjoubam*

A dark and ambiguous shadow has fallen between the letter and the spirit of law in Manipur. On one hand, the government has been on a spree of silencing dissent in media under cover of COVID-19 emergency, arresting at least five people for remarks on social media deemed critical of it. Much has been written about these atrocious arrests, including for a Facebook post querying how much the CM has contributed to the CM Covid-19 Relief Fund he initiated, prompting a coalition of nine human right organisations to jointly appeal to the National Human Rights Commission to intervene. On the other hand, beyond these immediate knee-jerk responses, there has also been a more sustained and systematic crushing of the spirit of law by deliberate misinter- pretation of its letters.

Hence, more than three years after seven Congress MLAs defected to the ruling BJP, the case of their disqualification still remains unresolved. On May 8, the matter came up again before the tribunal of Manipur Legislative Assembly Speaker, Y. Khemchand Singh, but the Speaker reserved his "preliminary observations" ruling that there are more to be heard from both sides. The matter then reached the Manipur High Court and on May 14, the court has asked the MLAs to respond by May 28, in what seems a repeat of an earlier order. On March 28, the Speaker has had to disqualify the first of eight Congress defectors, former forest minister, Thounaojam Shyamkumar, after the Supreme Court intervened and banned the latter from continuing as minister or entering the premises of the Manipur Legislative Assembly. The SC also urged the Speaker to do the needful before the court's next review of the case on March 30.

Manipur's March 2017 Assembly elections saw a hung verdict, with Congress emerging as the single largest party with 28 MLAs in the house of 60. BJP was second with 21 MLAs, however immediately after the election results were declared, Shyamkumar defected to the BJP. For reasons inadequately explained, the Governor, Najma Heptullah, broke tradition and invited not the party with the most MLAs but BJP to stake claim to form the next government. BJP managed this, enlisting the support of all non-Congress MLAs, leaving the Congress licking its wounds with 27 left in its camp.

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For his help, Shyamkumar, was rewarded with a cabinet berth and given the Environment and Forest portfolio. In the weeks that followed, seven more Congress MLAs followed Shyamkumar's footsteps, and joined the BJP. Unlike Syamkumar however, the seven continued to sit in the Opposition benches but voted with the Ruling in Assembly motions, including a Rajya Sabha election.

The Congress filed for action, first against Shyamkumar and then against the seven other deserters, under the 10th Schedule. In Shyamkumar's case too, no tangible action was forthcoming even after the Manipur High Court in a verdict reprimanded the Speaker, calling his inaction shameful.

The Opposition then took the matter to the SC. In a January ruling, the SC tried prodding the Speaker to dispose off the case. However, three months later, when it became apparent the Speaker had no intention of heeding the advice, the apex court dropped its bombshell on March 18, putting a ban on Shyamkumar, using its extraordinary power under Article 142. Is the case of the seven other Congress defectors also headed for a similar conclusion?

Few have explained this relationship between the letter and the spirit of law better than mythologist, Devdutt Pattanaik, author of several books. Pattanaik uses the Ramayana and Mahabharat to illustrate this equation. In the age of innocence and truth that Ram belonged, it was possible for Ram to insist on strict adherence to the letter of the law in the faith this will guarantee the spirit of the law. By contrast, in the age of experience and lost innocence that the Mahabharat was set in, crafty interpretations of the letter of law often created dichotomy between it and its spirit.

Duryadhana is cited as an example. This prince is not known for breaking law but often crushed its spirit using the law. After winning Draupadi in a dice game from the Pandava brothers, he for instance decided to exercise his right of possession to vengefully humiliate her and his rival cousins by disrobing her in public. When this dichotomy becomes the norm, God manifest as one who would even break the letter of law to leave its spirit intact. Hence, Krishna intervened to make sure Draupadi's humiliation never happened. Krishna is known for similar breaches of the letters of many more laws, but always for the end of preserving their spirit.

There is also another kind of law breaker. These are people in power for whom what they say or do becomes law, both in letter and spirit. In Pattanaik's own analogy, Ravana qualifies to be in this category. In the current imbroglio in Manipur, it would indeed be difficult to decide which of these analogies is closest. The fear is, the understanding of power by those in power is closer to what Pattanaik's Ravana understood power to be.

Prof. Kumar: An Intellectual, Editor and Gentleman Par Excellence

Utpal Kumar*

At seventy-eight, he was convinced that he had at least a decade more to live. He would discuss ideas, books and more which he would want to do. In fact, whenever he would ignore his health, we would remind him of the work he had to initiate and complete. And the ploy would invariably work, at least for the next few days, when he would look after himself. Till he would again go back to his workaholic schedule at the cost of his health.

Such was his commitment towards work that during the last few days of his life, whenever we would find him lost and in pain, we would remind him about the books he had just finished editing. "*Pitaji*, the books should be out within a month. The publishers called up to inform." In no time, he would be out of the slumber. Pain would vanish. And a smile would appear on his face. For a moment he would forget everything and try to sit on the bed. But his frail body would fail him each time. He just won't even move an inch. His spirits still intact, he would turn his head towards me. "*Yeh kya ho gaya, Utpal. Maine aisa kabhi socha nahin tha* (What has happened to me, Utpal? I never thought this would happen to me)," he would say in an almost inaudible voice with eyes moist. Those eyes still haunt me. I can still hear his voice in a whisper.

Dr. Braj Bihari Kumar – his friends endearingly called him Kumar Saab, and I would refer to him in the same way to keep the discourse dispassionate – is no more. He died the way he lived – like a true *karmayogi* – working till the very end. Even during the last days, he would be busy proofreading the four books he was editing. And this "semi-literate Sanghi", as writer Ramachandra Guha derisively called

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him when he was made the Chairperson of the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) in 2017, was a voracious reader and writer. He had more than hundred books to his credit, some of them, especially in the Northeastern languages, being truly pioneering. For, his was the first work that connected several languages of the region with Hindi.

I still remember the day I informed him about Guha's misinformed and abusive tweet. He smiled: "He thinks I am a Sanghi?" This was followed by silence. I was startled. Why isn't he angry? I would have raged with fury for being called "semi-literate" by someone who had not done even a quarter of his work and whose understanding of India's Northeast was confined mostly to Verrier Elwin!

Probed further, Kumar Saab opened up. "It's not about me, Utpal. They target everyone who doesn't belong to the circle." what Circle? "You can call it 'Lutyens' Club' or what's now a popular term: 'Khan Market Gang'. Ironically, both sides of the ideological divide are uncomfortable with an outsider like me. They believe I can disturb the consensus, the equilibrium. Or, maybe they think who is this outsider to get this kind of recognition."

Whenever he would talk about this, the name of the late Dinanath Mishra would inevitably come in the discourse (The other persons he would talk with similar veneration are J.N. Roy, with whom he built Astha Bharati from the scratch, and former IB Director P. C. Halder). "Dinanthjee was made of a different mould. He always put the nation above everything else. He believed in creating an intellectual ecosystem

that would challenge the existing cabal. Had he not been there, it wouldn't have been so easy for *Dialogue* (a quarterly research magazine edited by Kumar Saab) to gain intellectual legitimacy so soon. He was an institution builder. He, too, didn't get the support he needed."

Kumar Saab, too, was an institution builder. He went to Kohima, Nagaland, in the early 1960s and taught at Kohima Science College for almost three decades, while simultaneously bringing out several books and editing a magazine called *Thinker*, besides being actively associated with Nagaland Bhasha Parishad. In 1990, he was transferred to Tuensanga as Principal of Sao Chang College. His arrival wasn't a smooth affair, as most students flunked the examinations that year. The new Principal didn't allow them to cheat, after all! I still remember an evening when four of his students came home. They were angry and drunk. Petrified, I, a Class VII student then, was in the other room holding a kitchen knife in my hand. For days I remained in shock but what helped calm me down was Kumar Saab's calm demeanour. A year later, when he was transferred back to Science College Kohima, as Principal, the students of Sao Chang College took to the streets protesting against the move.

The kitchen knife experience recurred again in 1994 when Kumar Saab was the Principal of Science College Kohima. One evening almost half a dozen men in military dress entered the house. For me, it wasn't unusual as he was a well-known and well-respected person in Nagaland.

Father with Vice President of India

Father with Prime Minister Modi

We had an early dinner that night and Kumar Saab retired to his room soon after. Alone, I ventured into the drawing room and found a chit on the side table that read: "Rs 10,000 or life!"

Anxious, I pushed myself into his room. Kumar Saab was reading a book, but seeing me holding the chit he said: "Oh! It's nothing. They were NSCN(K) men." The NSCN(K) was one of the two prominent insurgent groups in Nagaland. He continued: "They want my college to pay Rs. 10,000 as protection money. It's normal. They ask each and every institution in the State to pay such amount." A few days later, he put in his papers.

Almost a decade later, when I asked him why he submitted his resignation when everyone else were readily paying the "protection money"? Kumar Saab merely said that he was not comfortable doing that. Interestingly, he refused to take back his papers even when he received a message from the outfit saying there was no need to pay the money. "When I resigned, those men apologised for their mistake. They were under pressure from the locals who were very angry after hearing this news. By then, however, I had realised that my stint in Nagaland was over. I didn't want to stay there any longer."

The same institution-building instinct was evident when he, with J.N. Roy, set up Astha Bharati, a Delhi-based organisation established to "promote unity and integrity of the country amongst its people", in

1999. Under its umbrella, they organised several seminars and workshops, but more importantly it saw the birth of two well-respected journals, *Dialogue* and *Chintan Srijan*. Kumar Saab, the editor of the two journals, is no more but the magazines are still alive and kicking.

The other predominant quality about Kumar Saab was his honesty to the extent of being politically incorrect. And all through, his love for the nation remained paramount. In the Northeast when it was fashionable to be seen pedalling for more money from the Centre, he never dithered in saying that the problem was the other way round; the problem was not that the region was not getting enough money, but that the money was not being utilised properly.

It was this no-nonsense approach which turned him away from Vinoba Bhave. Kumar Saab would often recount this story. "Vinoba would walk very fast. One had to run to catch up with him," he said. During the 1962 India-China war, Kumar Saab met the Gandhian in Bihar wherein the latter pushed for peaceful relations between the two neighbours. After a public meeting, when he met Vinoba Bhave and asked why, if he were so sure about China's good intentions, he wasn't sending his followers on the borders? Vinoba was stumped. "He promised that he would answer him the next day." The Gandhian never met him thereafter. Kumar Saab would recall another incident. In the late 1960s and the early 1970s, noted economist Gyan Chand and his wife would visit Nagaland every year for a month and invariably they would be Kumar Saab's guest. A very polite and well-meaning couple, they would endearingly call my mother "Durga". My mother never asked the reason but she loved being called so. One day the late economist asked Kumar Saab about the religion of the Nagas. "Those who have not converted to Christianity, among them quite a substantial number is that of Hindus," Kumar Saab said matter-of-factly. "You are a fanatic, Kumar," pat came the reply.

The 'fanatic' was, however, vindicated soon. "It so happened that a few days later a Naga from the nearby village came to our house. He had a long *shikha*, so I asked him about his religion. And lo and behold, he said he was a Hindu. Gyan Chand turned red. But being a gentleman, he conceded his mistake without any grudge."

One finds a similar non-conformist streak in Kumar Saab's writing on caste and tribe, Islam, Maoism, *et al*. He never sacrificed truth at the altar of political correctness. Maybe because he never eyed a position, even when he might have desired to have one. While his work on caste and tribe took him to classical Sanskrit texts – from Ramayana

and Mahabharata to Vedas, Upanishads and Puranas – his book on Islam made him read the *Quran* and the *Hadis*, among many others. On his deathbed, he still was thinking about the second volume of his proposed book on Islam. "I have written more than 100 pages. Can you complete that book for me?"

He would rarely be disappointed for personal reasons. Among the rare few occasions was the day when a Rajya Sabha member of Parliament came to meet him and showed his desire to recommend his name for the Padma award. Kumar Saab refused. Later, in the evening, when I asked the reason, the pain was perceptible. "The Nagaland government had recommended a Padma award for me in 1981, if I remember the year correctly. That recommendation, by sheer bad luck or ill intention, remained stuck in the drawer of a top *babu* in the State for almost two months, and when he finally forwarded it to the Centre, the selection procedure in Delhi was over by then. There's a provision in the Padma rules, asking if the individual was ever recommended in the past. If that's the case, then the recommendation, thereafter, automatically gets ignored, provided there's a mighty push. I missed a Padma because one senior bureaucrat forgot to send my name on time!"

During his last days, I sensed another pain in his eyes. The pain, probably, of not doing enough for his family, especially wife. Those days, at the Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, he would often ask about her. He would suddenly wake up and his eyes would look for her. "*Kaisi hai woh*? (How is she?)," He would often ask. And when my mother would be around, he would look at her with soggy eyes but say nothing. Maybe the silence spoke what his words couldn't express. I knew he was sorry. He felt guilty for not giving enough time and attention to her.

Kumar Saab stopped talking a day before he breathed his last. On the last day he even refused to open his eyes. Only his breathing was on, heavy and irregular. That night when he breathed his last, I was alone in the room with him. His face in the ventilator looked in pain. I held his hands tightly. Then putting my head on his chest, I said what I wanted to tell him for long: "I love you, *Pitaji*. We are so proud of you. I wish I am again born as your child." Tears rolled through my cheeks. And as I looked up, I saw his face beaming. Maybe that was just an illusion. But I could see tears. An hour later, time stopped. A part of me was dead. Kumar Saab was no more.

Goodbye *Pitaji*! We will miss you.

Rights Talk by NGOs in the States of Northeast India

Dr. Binod Kumar Agarwala*

We get a wrong picture of the State in the Northeast India, if we have only a formal institutional view of the State. To understand the State in the Northeast India, we must understand the complexity of power relations inherent in 'governmentality', to use Michel Foucault's expression, and see the State as rooted in its social actuality taking into account its historicity. However, with this perspective, one finds that while the State is securely rooted in the actualities of life in North-East India, it certainly does take some very particular form, which may be described as 'rhizome state' to use Bayart's phrase or 'shadow state' to use William Reno's phrase.

I characterize the States in the Northeast India as rhizome States because they have metaphorical resemblance to a tangled underground root system. The origin of the rhizome States lies in their colonial predecessor. The insecurity of the colonizers and the relative weakness of their resources have shaped the States in the region in such a way that relationships, institutions and people, most prominently expected in public view to be powerful, are not always powerful. Elements, which at first sight appear to be obstacles to the functioning of the State, may turn out, on closer inspection, actually to belong to the State. Such is the case with many ethnic insurgent groups and ethnic student organizations. They actually form part of the informal State structure (or more accurately, of the ensemble formed by the formal State and its informal shadow) via a web of informal concessions – notably including impunity for breaking the law or taking law in their own hands – and personal and political relationships.[1]

The tensions in the Northeast India arise not because the emancipated and reinvigorated civil society faces an enfeebled state,

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rather it simply reveals the absence of homogeneity in a rhizome-like States. There is multiplicity of factions in most underground movements and insurgencies. This multiplicity of factions makes dialogue difficult. Parallel power centres in the underground not only complicate the process of negotiations, but also interfere with the very modalities of the dialogue. To demonstrate their own clout, insurgent leaders get involved in competitive radicalism, trying to out do each other in challenging the regular State. As in any organization, bouts of dissidence, tension and negotiations are a fact of life. This fragmentation of power is the source of constant new conflicts such as bitter inter-faction disputes over privatization of power, and is marked by periodic campaigns against illegalities like smuggling and corruption, which target very specific groups. Episodes such as these reveal to public gaze the balance of forces and the alliances of the moment. When opportunities or situations arise for making money or enhancing power to gain command over resources, these can frequently result in crises, open conflicts, break-up of coalitions and the renegotiation of alliances. State intervention is some times very subtle like tolerance of the public authorities in the face of every form of illegality, the State's turning a blind eye to illegal sources of revenue, and the indulgence with which justice is sometimes administered.

Although the State in the Northeast have deep roots, and yet the formal public administration and institutions in the Northeast are weak, because of the rhizome-like nature of the State and of the organization of public power in general. Administrative procedures and legislative or institutional rules are only one channel among many which the public authorities use to manage the State's affairs. Personal relations and personal networks, whether of an economic, political, religious or regional nature, frequently offer effective instruments of public management. No doubt institutional weaknesses and administrative shortcomings are present in the Northeast States.

Ever since the start of the colonial period, access to the State has been turned more or less into a source of private benefit. Today, the simultaneous weakness of formal government and the delegitimization of public authority have led further, to the usurpation of power by private actors.

The disorganized or even anarchic condition of public administration is conducive to the development of informal networks. These in turn become a means by which public authority, in fact lying in private hands, is actually exercised. This then emphasizes those aspects of the State, which can be described as existing in a shadow

world. At every level and in every sector, this mode of operation in parallel is acquiring ever more durable roots.

The end result is the emergence of a parallel government, but without the official or formal government ceasing to exist. In fact, this element of duality has become an integral part of the system. Whether it is uranium mining or establishment of cement factory or a power plant or appointment of a vice-chancellor in a central university one is obliged to negotiate in two areas at the same time. The official negotiations appear to be pure form and lead to no concrete result. The parallel negotiations with the informal sector are those, which bring results. However, it is quite unthinkable to negotiate in the informal sphere alone. Both formal and informal negotiations are organically linked to each other.

The major reason for such development is the promotion of associations and other non-governmental organizations (NGOs), which are held to be representative of civil society. The concept of civil society, difficult to define at the best of times, is infinitely manipulable. The promotion of NGOs leads to an erosion of official administrative and institutional capacity, reinforcement of the power of elites, particularly at the local level, or of certain factions, and sometimes a stronger ethnic character in the destination of flows from the centre. In many cases, these NGOs are established with a view to capturing external resources, which pass through these channels. Areas where there is greater disturbance NGOs are set up by conflicting factions. Even in relatively peaceful regions NGOs are active. This happens because of the philosophy that ordinary people should be associated with development projects. But development projects are used to favour certain groups whom those in formal power want to conciliate. In a way, NGOs have less to do with civil society but represent the demand for privatization of funds for aid and development. Many NGOs indulge in illegal activities like taking the law into its own hands and enforcing the law selectively to target some groups by using violence. States in the region tolerate and some times collude with such NGOs on the plea that they are articulating the aspiration of the local civil society. A State, which thus acquiesces in the renunciation of its claim to uphold a monopoly of legitimate power, opens the way to the privatization of power and loss of legitimacy of public order. When the government is prepared to tolerate as it happens in some States like Manipur and Nagaland a practice of paying protection taxes by all salaried employees including the police personnel to some so called underground NGOs then struggle against economic crime is no more than a pretense in these States. This amounts to confiscation

of public powers by private persons. The climate of total impunity is one of the stimuli to the proliferation of insurgency and economic crime. Hardly any administrative steps are taken to halt the tendency for illegal forms of activity, or at least activities marginal to the rule of law to grow. Such illegal activities have been integrated into the functioning of civil society through the tolerance of government. Many local NGOs reserve to themselves, with complete impunity, the possibility of disobeying rules and laws for satisfying so called local aspiration that lies outside the law.

NGOs have become, therefore, a form of indirect rule as they mobilize the so-called native culture to control the so-called natives – also the non-natives – via the central finance. Civil society where these NGOs claim to operate is now less a vehicle of democratization or social justice and is more a form of control or administration to maintain ethnic hegemony. It is a way of privatization of the State as claimed above.

In the Northeast States NGOs play two deliberate and conscious instrumental roles. On the one hand, they allow those who oppose or are independent of the official circles of State power to mobilize symbolic, political and material resources so as to assert themselves as interlocutors of the latter, to build up their own influence or to accumulate wealth from central support and their position as intermediaries between their society and the external environment. They thus offer tangible opportunities for self-empowerment. It is neither the 'people' nor their 'communities' that take control of their destinies, but well-defined individuals or groups that invoke the manes of the 'people' or the 'community' to legitimize their social and economic ascent. To run an NGO is to turn oneself into an advocate for collective ideals or interests, sometimes at the risk of one's liberty or one's life, but it can also in some circumstances, mean receiving gifts of funds.

On the other hand, the supporters of State power, themselves conscious of the financial and ideological transformations our nation has seen, have drawn support from NGOs, or have quite simply created them, so as to make of them the instruments of political intervention and mobilization of resources, particularly in the areas of development aid, pressure diplomacy and even intelligence and police operations.

Crucial role played by NGOs in the Northeast India goes back to even the colonial period. The religious institutions, which are, it must be remembered, transnational institutions, tended to form all by themselves the 'only' civil society, at the start of colonization. They were one of the seedbeds for both ethnocenticism and the State, in

particular thanks to their work in health and education. The institutions of the religious establishment are these days flanked by various other forces, which are their offsprings, direct heirs or competitors. These several different associations, organizations, sects or religious institutions, all purportedly 'independent', have joined in the confused task of governmentality. Religious institutions helped in this process by reform of the body and mind of the ethnos through their school system.

NGOs have helped in the instigation of a logic of retrenchment of ethnic identities by way of political culturalism. They helped and promoted the processes of closure of ethnic territories, ethnic cultures and ethnic identities as a way of appropriation of the State and its power. These principles were used to forge specific ethnic identities not in the heart of ethnic communities but in the open arena of modernity.[2]

NGOs in the Northeast India are very vociferous in advocating all sorts of rights, human rights, civil rights, group rights, rights of indigenous people, cultural rights, etc. The 'rights' talk and demand for rights and complaints of rights violation and rights abuse in this region is much higher compared to any other region of India. But this rights talk in the region follows logic, which is different from what one would expect in a serious discussion of rights. A right to be significant necessarily requires a way of securing whatever it is that one has a right to.

The institutions for securing and enforcing rights require an allocation of certain obligations to specified others. There is no right to security without effective rule of law. There can be no effective rule of law without law enforcement, and law enforcement needs law enforcers who are assigned specific tasks; there is no effective accountability of public administration without institutions that allocate the tasks and responsibilities and hold specified office-holders to account. So, the claim that rights must have counterpart obligations asserts the exception-less logical point that where anyone is to have a right there must be identifiable others (either all others or specified others) with accurately corresponding obligations. From a normative view of rights, obligations and claimable rights are two perspectives on a single normative pattern: without the obligations there are no rights. But in the Northeast obligations have dropped out of sight completely in the rights talk. Since protagonists of rights talk in the region offer no serious account of the allocation of obligations that correspond to all human rights and yet complain of rights violation and rights abuse the rights talk follows a curious logic. Let me emphasize that the full

realization of rights is evidently not merely a matter of respecting the rights recognized in some declaration. It is a matter of ensuring that others – both individuals and institutions – carry out the obligations that correspond to those rights.

Given the actualities of Northeast India, it may be worth reconsidering whether all obligations corresponding to human rights lie with States as many take it for granted and hence feel no need to give any account of allocation of obligations. Many of such obligations lay with powerful non-State actors, such as powerful non-governmental organizations, or major religious, cultural, and professional and educational bodies. The *assumption that States and States alone hold all the relevant obligations* does not reflect the actuality of State power in the region where state is a 'rhizome state', and also this assumption fails to give solution to the problem of allocating obligations to provide goods and services effectively required by various rights. The assumption, that States and States alone hold all the relevant obligations, accounts for total silence as far as allocation of obligations corresponding to rights are concerned. Non-State actors like powerful NGOs know that they themselves are part of the problem of rights violation and rights abuse and they themselves prevent the State from allocating and discharging obligations corresponding to rights. Still they continue vociferously to complain regarding rights violation. This develops a logic of rights talk of its own kind.

The best outcome of the voicing of rights violation and rights abuse without a desire to share the obligations corresponding to rights implementation is that those who take on the role of victim or complainant achieve no redress of and compensation for rights violation or rights abuse but achieve only some opportunity for the dubious pleasures of casting blame. Redress of rights violation clearly puts NGOs in the ambit of obligations, which they do not want to discharge. Blaming by contrast gives a readily available and cheap pleasure to the complainant NGOs. Those who cast blame can appropriate, enjoy and prolong their role and status as victims, can enjoy indignation and a feeling of superiority, even if they cannot quite identify or demonstrate the failings of others. If it proves impossible to identify a blameworthy culprit, they can at least blame the system, that is to say the institutional framework that is failing to achieve the full realisation of the rights recognized. There is a dark and tempting undercurrent of pleasure in blaming. Nobody has written about the psychology of blaming, or about its murky appeal and insidious psychological effects, more brilliantly and darkly than Nietzsche. Some of his comments are particularly apt

to the actualities of the Northeast India: "Suffering people all have a horrible willingness and capacity for inventing pretexts for painful emotional feelings. They already enjoy their suspicions; they're brooding over bad actions and apparent damage. They ransack the entrails of their past and present, looking for dark and dubious stories, in which they are free to feast on an agonizing suspicion and to get intoxicated on their own poisonous anger. They rip open the oldest wounds; they bleed themselves to death from long-healed scars. They turn friends, wives, children, and anyone else who is closest to them into criminals. 'I am suffering. Someone or other must be to blame for that'."[3]

The culture of excessive talk of rights has promoted this rancorous approach to public life in the Northeast India. The rights talk in the Northeast India is not about respect for persons and treating others as agents. Much of it is indeed about protecting the ethnic hegemonies in specific States through pleasures of blame. It is also about extending the power of specific ethnos in States over other individuals who do not belong to that ethnicity, whom they blame. Blame is the characteristic reaction of the morality system in which rights have become the sole ethical currency without any concern for bearing and discharging of obligations. Modernity has been adopted in Northeast emptying it out of all its great ideals: there is progress in consumption, but the Idea of Progress is shunned, there is faster and faster hankering after wealth, but the Idea of Production as a source of wealth has disappeared.[4] Democracy is paid lip service, but public sphere of free and frank discussion of political issues by citizens is not allowed to develop, while the electoral process is reduced to legitimization of ethnic hegemony. All great ideals of modernity in Northeast India have met with such banal destiny due to its refusal to entertain any theoretical and critical foundation. We can hardly doubt that rights are a central ruling idea of modern age. The idea of rights has also suffered the same banal fate in the region. Public discourse is for the most part admiring of human rights, and often represents human rights as unquestionable truth and progress: we may question anything except human rights. Indeed, the human rights movement in Northeast has acquired the beguiling feature of being an ideology not only of and for the ruling classes, but an ideology for-and increasingly of-the masses. And yet there is a total absence of careful and critical discussion about the internal structure of human rights claims, while there is a great urgency for trying to be less gestural about their basis and their limits, and for being more explicit about their costs as well as their benefits.

What is indispensable is work and commitment as the key to securing a decent standard of life for all. People's and their spokesmen NGOs' active enthusiasm, efforts and diligent discharge of obligations are more valuable than their resentment and protest and complaint and blame. People and their NGOs refusal to bear and discharge obligations is the hardest obstacle in the way of realizing human rights in the region.

Notes

[1.] The Asom Gana Parishad regime that came to power in 1985 was reportedly "hand in glove" with ULFA (Hazarika, Sanjoy. 1994. Strangers in the Mist: Tales of War and Peace from India's Northeast. New Delhi Viking:175), and "most of the ULFA cadres were drawn from the ranks of AASU" (Mishra, Udayon. 2000a. The Periphery Strikes Back: Challenges to the Nation-State in Assam and Nagaland, Shimla: Indian IAS:134). Bhadreswar Gohain, the first Chairman of ULFA, was actively associated with the Assam movement and became deputy speaker of the Assam Legislative Assembly as an AGP nominee. In many cases, ULFA's penetration into the State police was almost complete, so much so that a police officer then serving admitted that "ULFA cadres are un-uniformed policemen and the policemen are the uniformed ULFA cadres." (Prakash Singh – the then Director General of Assam Police, made the point. Singh quoted in Das, Samir Kumar. 2007. Conflict and Peace in India's Northeast: The role of Civil Society. The East-West Center Wasshington:12). The State and insurgent nexus operated in Assam almost uninterruptedly during the first ten years of ULFA's existence. This close relationship was in part due to the fact that AGP, AASGP, and ULFA owe their common origin to the Assam movement. Many of the ULFA cadres were personally close to a section of ministers and leaders – sometimes across partylines – and were indirectly instrumental in bringing them to power in both the 1985 and 1996 elections (Das, Samir Kumar. 1998. "Community goes to polls: An interpretation of the Assam elections of 1996." In Phukon, Girin, and Adil-ul-Yasin, eds. 1998. Working of Parliamentary Democracy and Electoral Politics in Northeast India. New Delhi: South Asian: 1-18). ULFA in 1980s provided instant justice to accused "offenders" and "criminals" and undertook rural development woks beyond the government's sphere of influence. ULFA served as the para-state in the more remote areas of Assam along with the regular State. Most of the political parties tried to derive maximum political mileage from the organization's presence without trying to crack down on it. The nexus was beneficial for both ULFA and the political parties till 1990. In Mizoram, the so-called most peaceful State of the North-East, the shadow state has turned Mizoram into an illiberal society within a liberal constitution of India. Individual dissent is more or less throttled

and dissenters are forced to give way to the commands of the dominant organizations. In Mizo society underground and legal forces act in unison. MNF's internal discipline, coupled with the predominance of the ethnic and other faith-based organizations, helped in laying the foundation of a highly illiberal society in which the commands of these organizations prevail over those of the government, and the communities other than the Mizos find it difficult to enjoy their rights to distinct language and culture. In the North-East States there linkages have grown between regular political parties and the underground rebel factions or those who have gained State patronage after surrender. Meitei rebel group, the Kanglei Kana Yan Lup (KYKL) in Manipur plays the moral cop to "cleanse the ills of Manipuri society" by periodically shooting so-called corrupt officials, school teachers who allegedly help students cheat or alleged drug traffickers who peddle heroin into the State from Myanmar's infamous "golden triangle. In Nagaland the NNC created an armed wing and a parrllel government, the Federal Government of Nagaland (FGN). But in 1968, the Sema leaders defected from the NNC to form the Revolutionary Government of Nagaland (RGN), which co-operated with Indian security forces.

2. Regarding agitation in Assam over Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) Meghnad Desai writes in the Indian Express, Lucknow, December 29, 2019, p. 13, column 3-4: "The Assamese agitation is much more radical. It is to establish a citizenship of Assam for the Assamese alone. This does not mean those born in Assam or long resident there. Assamese are to be defined much more narrowly than that. This was the demand in the 1980s which Rajiv Gandhi was forced to concede…This way of defining nationality is not based on religion but on rootedness in local/ national culture from birth and by ancestry."

3. Friedrich Nietzsche, The genealogy of morals, Third Essay 'What do ascetic ideals mean?', Section 5. This translation, which draws on earlier received versions, can be found at http://www.solargeneral.com/library/ on-the-genealogy-of-morals-friedrich-neitzsche.pdf. (accessed on April 1, 2011 at 6.00am)

4. Nothing highlights the irony better than what the then home minister S. B. Chavan was told by Mizos in 1994 and what they do (or what they do not do). Mizos are reported to have said that "the need for tribal people is survival as tribal and development is our secondary issue". Jayanta Madhab, "North-East: Crisis of Identity, Security and Underdevelopment," Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. 34, No. 6 (Feb. 6-12, 1999), p. 320. And yet it wants the modern products to reach Mizoram through outsider traders. Because of the contradiction the Mizoram government did not levy sales tax at that time, the most productive of State taxes. If sales tax is levied, registration certificate will have to be given to outside traders which will enable them to establish residency.

Maritime Strategic Partnerships in the Indo-Pacific Region with Focus on India and Indonesia

Pradeep Tandon*

Abstract

This paper examines the manner in which the strategic partnership has evolved among the major players of the Indo-Pacific region. In all, there are 12 States in the region but the paper focuses only on some of them with special emphasis on India and Indonesia, because they are close maritime neighbours and the maritime emerging economies in the region. They are very closely connected with soft power diplomacy because of symmetrical cultural linkages and historical roots. The 'idea' of Indo-Pacific brings the stakeholders of the region together towards a maritime strategic partnership.

Conceptually, the term 'Indo-Pacific' consists of a vast intersection of the tropical waters. This region is known as a 'bio-geographic' region. It comprises tropical waters of the Indian Ocean, the Western and Central Pacific Ocean and the seas connecting the two in the general area of Indonesia. This bio-geographic region consists of the Indonesian Archipelago, Bay of Bengal, Andaman Sea, Marshall Islands and Hawaii, the South China Sea, the Philippine Sea, east coast of Africa, the north coast of Australia, the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea. The confluence of the interconnected waterways governs the strategic thinking and policies of the region. We focus on a few key indicators such as diplomatic engagement, economic ties and military exercises. From the politico-strategic viewpoint, the term Indo-Pacific

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is increasingly used for the maritime space, stretching from the littorals of east Africa and West Asia across the Indian Ocean and Western Pacific Ocean to the littorals of East Asia (Scott, 2019). The Indo-Pacific term is gaining currency in the recent time, but in the past several other terms were used to define the region like the Asia Pacific, East Asia, Far East, Pacific Rim, etc. Since late 1960s, the term Asia Pacific came to dominate the conception of Asia as a region connecting the north-east and the south-east Asia with Oceania (Australia) and the Americas. This region used to reflect the strategy of the US, its economic role in Asia and the success of the East Asian industrialised countries as US trade partners. The policy proposals outlined here can be broadly grouped under: (1) Politics and diplomacy, (2) Defence and security, (3) Economy and sustainable development, and (4) Maritime domain.

The Asia Pacific reached new levels of relevance and institutionalization by the late 1980s with the establishment of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). The economic growth in East Asia in the 1980s gave rise to the use of the term Pacific Rim but the rise of China, its growing reliance on Indian ocean, India's economic growth and strategic interest have now led the increasing use of the term Indo-Pacific. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for the Indo-Pacific region is to ensure a "secure, open and prosperous Indo-Pacific" promoting peace, stability and prosperity. The Indo-Pacific is marked by regional uncertainty and the existing multilateral institutions and bilateral partnerships are facing a variety of limitations. A strong partnership must be supported by equally strong bilateral relationships amongst the countries. Countries have demonstrated large gaps between rhetoric and reality when it comes to their foreign policy with respect to the Indo-Pacific region.

US interests existed in the maritime space of the region for a long time but now it is in a flux. The intersection of the maritime interests of the rising China and the fast-growing global economies of India and Indonesia has not only given rise to an increasing usage of the term Indo-Pacific but also to a distinctive character to the term representing the region. In recent years, each country has proposed its own "vision" for the Indo-Pacific region. India views the Indo-Pacific as a geographic and strategic expanse with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) connecting the two great oceans. To promote its strategic interests in the Indian Ocean, India launched the Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) vision. Moreover, its "Act East Policy"

is similarly geared towards deepening economic engagement with Southeast Asia and broader cooperation with East Asia and the Pacific Island countries. In the ASEAN Summit held in Bangkok, Thailand on November 3, 2019, Prime Minister Narendra Modi proposed an "Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative" for the safety, security and stability of the maritime domain. Indonesia, too, has turned its attention to the maritime domain and the broader Indo-Pacific. Indonesian President Joko Widodo's first term, the "Global Maritime Fulcrum" doctrine was meant to lay the foundation for Indonesia's broader regional engagement. Unfortunately, Widodo's government failed to build on the initial idea. Since 2018, Indonesia had been advocating its Indo-Pacific vision; in 2019, it led the process to have it adopted as the "ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific" (AOIP). While the AOIP is not without its flaws, Indonesia's vision aligns with India's own Indo-Pacific conceptions. Both countries want to uphold a rules-based maritime order and balance of power in the Indo-Pacific, as well as address the broader Indo-Pacific challenges such as energy, technology, regional connectivity and trade ties.

Unites States' policy with respect to Asia appears to be in a flux. However, India has extended a clear viewpoint that the Asian security architecture needs to be 'transparent, balanced and inclusive' in character. Indian Prime Minister while speaking at the 'Raisina Dialogue' in New Delhi said that the Indo-Pacific must be governed by the international norms including freedom of navigation. Indo-Pacific region should have rules-based multi-polar regional order to prevent any single power from dominating the region or the waterways. The growth of one can act as a tail-wind to bring growth to the others, through complementary trade and investment. At the same time, the security and economic risk to one will also likely to impact the others. This shows that India is propelling its firm stand into an area where China considers its own sphere of influence. The rise of China and the re-focusing of the US' influence in the region have forced all other countries to re-assess their long-term strategic outlook and their role in the changing regional diplomatic geometry.

As the global power structure is shifting away from the Pacific-Atlantic to the Indo-Pacific, the new power alliances are emerging in the region. Japan's high stakes are involved in this region. The key question is, can you build a security structure in the Indo-Pacific that maintains equilibrium without a single hegemony? To do so, we will need to leverage the economic and military strength of others. Strategic

issues need to be addressed by shifting the focus to the Indian Ocean or to the broader Indo-Pacific region under the changing geopolitics of Asia. Japan is interested to expand its strategic horizon from its earlier focus on East Asia and the Western Pacific into the South Pacific, South China Sea and the Indian Ocean (Akiyama, 2014; Oba, 2018; Scott, 2019; Wallace, 2018). This shift is mainly because of three major interests of Japan. Firstly, Japan is interested to expand its economic, military and diplomatic presence in the Indo-pacific region. Secondly, Japan is interested in securing greater security and exploring new energy sources in the region. Thirdly, Japan is interested to deal diplomatically with the expanding influence of China in the region. Similarly, India is interested to play a relatively greater role in shaping the region with rapid expansion of trade, investment and production linkages in the area, spanning the Indian and Pacific Ocean regions. This has given rise to what is known as the Indo-Pacific Geostrategic Arc. Geospatially, the Indo-Pacific, spanning from India to the Western Pacific, is the home of over 3.5 billion people, the combined GDP of over $ 20 trillion.

The Indian Ocean holds two maritime trade gateways: the Strait of Hormuz and the Strait of Malacca. Indian Ocean is strategically important because around 85 per cent of the global maritime trade is passing through it. Also, 65 per cent of the total oil reserve of the world belongs to the Indian Ocean littoral States. China is expanding its influence not only in Asia but also in the Indian Ocean due to the strategic importance of the region. Although China has not formally adopted the term Indo-Pacific in its discourses and policies but the Chinese naval presence in the eastern edge of the region shows Beijing's intentions in the Indo-Pacific. Beijing's proposed Maritime Silk Road is planning to expand the connection of the sea space till the ports in the Southeast Asia in order to reduce its dependency on maritime trade passing through the congested and potentially insecure 'choke point' of the Straits of Malacca. India needs to look sea-wards to redefine its maritime strategies due to China's increasing influence in the maritime space. The rising influence of China has caused, not only the security concern in the Sea Lines of Communications but also in the thinking of the major role-players (US, Japan, India, Australia and Indonesia) of the region. Australia's Indo-Pacific vision was articulated in its 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper. Australia reaffirmed its alliance commitment with the US in order to maintain peace, stability and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region. However, it is also committed to expanding its

strategic partnerships with India and Indonesia across the maritime, economic and security realms. Australia and Indonesia have signed a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Agreement. Australia also shares geostrategic concerns over the Indian Ocean with India. Australia is interested in shaping the increasingly multi-polar Indo-Pacific order and ensuring that no single power dominates it. As a result, new pattern of strategic diplomacy and partnerships among the major players is emerging and converging in the Indo-Pacific security architecture. United States is interested to rebalance its Asia strategy. Japan, Indonesia, Singapore and Australia have also been formulating new strategies to secure their own interest in the region. Interests of these countries vary from each other, making the Indo-Pacific region as a new theatre of rivalry between China and the other players.

Japanese Prime Minister said: 'the Pacific and the Indian Oceans are now bringing a dynamic coupling as the seas of freedom and prosperity' (Abe, 2007). This has undermined the antagonistic relationships among the players of the region. He states further in his speech on *The Confluence of the Two Seas* that 'a broader Asia that broke away geographical boundaries is now beginning to take on a distinct form.' It is due to positive geo-political and geo-economic reasons, the ASEAN has adopted the idea of the Indo-Pacific for the peaceful engagements on the issues related to economy, geo-politics, defence, security, freedom, stability and prosperity in the region. The idea of Indo-Pacific has come at the time when India has made significant progress with what is known as India's Act East Policy, which was set in motion in the East Asia Summit in 2014 in Myanmar. The Act East Policy has promoted multi-dimensional ties of India with ASEAN. The Policy has broadened India's relations with ASEAN in order to encompass multiple issues related to security, defence, strategy, economy, politics and terrorism. The Policy has also improved the defence partnerships among several ASEAN States, particularly Singapore and Vietnam. India has reached the most dynamic partnership with Japan, because of the enthusiastic orientation shown by the Japanese Prime Minister towards maritime security cooperation which can act as the stabilizing force in Asia, particularly in a situation of growing power disequilibrium in the Indo-Pacific region. India and Japan as the two major Asian maritime democracies and partners in the region are keenly interested to work together to promote peace, security and stability in the region. Japan has been accorded by India a high degree of importance in the Act East agenda. The growing menace of sea

piracy in the region has adversely affected the region. The bilateral strategic and global partnership between India and Japan would be able to check, not only the adverse effect of the sea piracy but also promote their bilateral interests of sea-base transport, safe passage of energy resources from the Persian Gulf, security to energy supply routes, security to freedom of navigation and the protection to maritime commons. India considers Japan as the key maritime security partner and protector of peace and freedom in the region.

India has firmly articulated its principled position about freedom of navigation, maritime security and expeditious resolution of disputes by peaceful means and dialogue in the large track of the South China Sea claimed by China. This articulation is in accordance with the UN Convention on Law of the Sea, 1982. India is concerned about the South China Sea because more than 40 per cent of India's trade traverses through this sea space. New Delhi is also concerned about the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement between the US and other 11 nations of the Pacific Rim. The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement of 2016 and the Free Trade Agreement between India and the ASEAN are important because these agreements would boost the economic development of all the 12 nations of the Pacific Rim. This shows India's common interest, manoeuvrability and region-centric maritime space strategy. In addition to strengthen economic ties among the members of the Pacific Rim, India has also given priority to technology transfer, civilian nuclear cooperation, defence and innovation. The biggest ever multi-nation field training exercise (Exercise Force-18) has been hosted by India in collaboration with the Association of Southeast Asia Nations and eight other member countries of the Forum of ASEAN Defence. The exercise was aimed at enhancing the coordination among the armed forces to deal with the natural disasters, military standoff and security challenges. Such exercises have added substance to India's Act East Policy and have projected India's soft, as well as, hard power capabilities and diplomacy. China has agreed to participate in such exercises like the US and Russia despite her difference over the South and East China Seas. India being member of the East Asia Summit took the opportunity to focus more on regional cooperation in maritime security, counter-terrorism, humanitarian assistance, disaster management, peacekeeping operations and military services.

India's Act East Policy has now entered its new phase. The first phase that is, Look East Policy (1991-2000) revolved around the sole purpose of enforcing institutional linkages and strengthening the

economic ties between India and the ASEAN. The trade between India and the ASEAN countries has increased manifold since 1991 and now India is ASEAN's ninth largest trading partner, whereas ASEAN is India's fourth larger trading partner. The two-way annual trade has already reached the US $ 80 billion mark. The second phase of the Act East Policy (2000-2014) focused mainly on politico-strategic, institutional and regional integration arrangements.

The success in hosting the Exercise Force-18 by India facilitated India in establishing itself as a credible major power in the Indo-Pacific region. The allocation of $ 1 billion for the promotion of connectivity between India and the ASEAN countries would bring them closer. The future of Act East Policy is interwoven with stronger economic and security ties between India and other countries of the region. For example, stronger security cooperation between India and Myanmar and the smooth connectivity and economic partnership between North East India and the ASEAN States are working successfully. India is determined to reach out to other countries in the East Asia in order to create greater strategic space and provide impetus to several initiatives like Make in India, Skill India, Digital India, Smart Cities, etc. for enhancing economic cooperation. The countries of the South East Asia want India to play an active countervailing role in the region. After the NDA government came into power, India's strategic relationships and global image among the countries of the world in general and the countries of the Indo-Pacific region in particular has improved significantly.

The momentous upswing in India's relation with Japan as indicated in the first bilateral visit to Japan made by Prime Minister Modi outside the South Asia neighbourhood. This resulted into an investment of $ 35 billion, made by Japan in India over the last five years, in addition to some flagship initiatives like the Smart Cities, Delhi-Mumbai industrial corridor, *shinkansen* bullet train, etc. The Japanese PM Shinzo Abe's reciprocal visit to India concluded the bilateral civilian nuclear deal. As referred to earlier, he considers the Indo-Pacific region as the region of peace, freedom and prosperity.

India attaches importance to its ties with Australia. Given India's energy intensive growth model, diversification in energy resources is need of the hour. Uranium reserves in Australia could be used as source of nuclear energy. Jakarta has recognised India's growing popularity in the Indo-Pacific region after the visit of PM Narendra Modi to Indonesia.

Indonesian coordinating minister of Maritime Affairs has said that India would have full access to the strategic island of *Sabang* at the northern tip of Sumatra and close to the Strait of Malacca. India and Indonesia are the two fast-growing large global economies in the Indo-Pacific region. The partnership between the two countries has not been given adequate importance. However, the mutual visits of the leadership from both the countries, has not only revived their relationship but also has elevated India and Indonesia bilateral ties to a comprehensive strategic partnership (Pant, 2018). This is vital for balancing the power structure in the region. Both the countries have common agenda to counter aggression in the region and resolve contentious issues through dialogue and peaceful measures as per the international laws. Indian PM Narendra Modi and Indonesian President Joko Widodo want to ensure stability in the Indo-Pacific region. India is concerned about the security of the Sea Line of Communication in the region while Indonesia is concerned about the maritime intrusions by China near the *Natuna* Islands. China claims that these islands are part of their exclusive economic zone. India and Indonesia are committed to combat and eliminate illegal fishing activities and focus in enhancing cooperation in the areas of natural and renewable energy, science and technology and bilateral trade and commerce. Both the countries are determined to increase their trade up to $ 60 billion over the next decade. The joint defence exercises and patrolling in the region has become a regular feature between the two countries. The location of Indonesia works well with India to ensure security in the Sea Lines of Communication between the Indian Ocean, the Bay of Bengal, the Strait of Malacca, the Southeast Asia, the Middle East and Europe.

India and Indonesia are close maritime neighbours with shared cultural and historical links. Those links are centuries old but have not been channelized to their potentials for mutual partnership. The Hindu scriptures like the *Vedas*, *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* form the basic cultural roots which the two countries share. In Indonesia, the Indian epics are introduced through Indian type culturally oriented shadow-play performances known in the local Indonesian language as the *wayang* (Foley, 1979). This is an Indian art form of *puppetry* which is very popular even today in Indonesia. Similarly, the *kite-flying* festival which depicts the feature tales of Indian epics is the manifestation of Indian culture and tradition in Indonesia. One may find that the Hindu cultural impact has systematically reconstructed the Indonesian society. The

Indian system of caste, marriage, kinship, magic and rituals are glorified and institutionalised in Indonesia. The Hindu culture brought both the societies much closer to each other (Tas, 1974). The Hindu and the Buddhist cultures jointly impacted the Indonesian society in the areas of cosmology, literature, architecture and in various other cultural forms. The Hindu-Buddhist impact was so crucial that the Hindu and Buddhist empires ruled much of Indonesia till the collapse of the *Majapahit* empire of the fifteenth century (Geertz,1969). The Buddhist impact can be seen even today in the form of the oldest and the most durable Buddhist kingdom of Indian origin established at *Palembang* in South eastern Sumatra. It was a great centre of learning of*Mahayana Buddhism* and its importance continue even today (Hall, 1981 and Sardesai,1981).

Prime Minister Modi expressed his desire to attend some of the rich cultural festivals of Indian origin like the *kite-flying* festival during his visit to Indonesia. The culture is a potential component of partnership between the two countries what we can call as the soft power strategic partnership because of the ancient historical and cultural links between the two countries. The soft power cultural diplomacy would lay a stronger foundation for strategic partnership between the two countries. The emerging strategic scenario in the Indo-Pacific region calls for the revival of historical links to meet the present challenges. The strategic partnership in the maritime domain is emerging between both the countries. The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership is gaining strong momentum towards closer economic and cultural ties and towards establishing a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between India and Indonesia. However, within the framework of the growing geostrategic importance of the idea of Indo-Pacific region, the two maritime neighbours share their visions of the Indo-Indonesia Maritime Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.

The maritime partnership between India, Indonesia and all the countries of the Indo-Pacific region, particularly the major stakeholders of the region, has reached a high level of strategic and diplomatic relationships within the conceptual framework of the 'idea' of Indo-Pacific. The use of this notion has brought about, not only the changes in India's foreign policy but has also reshaped the economic and security architecture of the region and brought India closer to the stakeholders of the region.

India's strategic goals in the region can best be served through mutual partnership, dialogue and engagements with the countries of the region and with forums, such as, the East Asia Summit and the ASEAN.

This will help in establishing Indo-Pacific region as architecture, characterised by plurality, openness, freedom, inclusivity, security and stability. The Indo-Pacific architecture is not built on a top-down structure but on the bottom-up structure, on mutual alliances and on the institution of bilateral and multilateral partnerships. The Indo-Pacific architecture is not a regional architecture guided by structured set of rules and regulations about trade, investment, intellectual property rights and labour standards which manifest into the scheme like the Trans-Pacific Partnership. Such scheme would undercut India's strategic autonomy and of other stakeholders of the region because it would potentially have the negative impact on the economic development of each member of the Indo-Pacific region.

The ASEAN-centric, issue-driven, bottom-up and regional-cooperation with strategic autonomy and partnership with individual countries of the Indo-Pacific region is a suitable approach to be adopted by India and other stakeholders to facilitate their growing economic linkages and national security. For instance, the regional initiative like the Regional Cooperative Agreement is important to secure sea lanes to facilitate maritime trade of resources across India and western Pacific Oceans and to control Piracy and armed robbery of the ships on the water space. It is through regional cooperation, India has been assisting the African Union Mission in Somalia in identifying the link between the piracy and the State and pointed out that the weak capacity of the State is closely linked with the problem of piracy and suggested regular bilateral and trilateral naval cooperation and patrolling among the Asian countries at the regional level to tackle the situation. The deeper understanding of the regional and domestic dynamics of the countries of the Indo-Pacific region is needed in order to make the architecture of the region inclusive and plural, free from exclusivity and domination.

Asia's Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) plays an important role in Indo-Pacific region. It contained like-minded democracies in Asia-Pacific including US, Japan, India and Australia. After a 10 year hiatus, the QUAD has made a comeback since 2006-07 to play a major role in containing China. Over the past few years, military engagements involving the US, Japan, India and Australia have broken new ground. Today, the four enjoy unprecedented levels of cooperation in sharing information and intelligence, personnel interactions and interoperable equipment. QUAD is more a matrix of trilateral and bilateral relationships. Trilaterally, US-Japan-Australia engagement is the most advanced, given the legacy of US alliances and the recently unveiled

trilateral infrastructure agreement. Meanwhile, the US-India-Japan trilateral dialogue, Japan has been permanently included in India-US naval exercises, and a trilateral infrastructure working group has been established. A Japan-India-Australia trilateral dialogue was also recently initiated. India-Australia's Pitch Black exercise has been able to improve collective maritime domain awareness, anti-submarine contingencies and adds another element of interoperability.

QUAD has enabled cooperation within the group of four, involving the US, Japan, India and Australia. Strategic partnerships between all four countries are steadily deepening and accelerating. The growing number of military exercises, strategic dialogues, technical agreements and coordinated activities are manifestations of the shared strategic vision. These are the trends that will matter much more for the balance of power and the prospects of a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific than any amount of loaded commentary about the official quadrilateral dialogue.

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Comparative Philosophy: Recent Indian Philosophical Trend

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Abstract

It is truism to state that any deliberation upon Indian and Western philosophy is grounded not on logical patterns of philosophy but cultural patterns. Comparative philosophy is a recent academic enterprise in which both Indian and Western philosophers have joined hands together. It is a distinct trend of modern Indian philosophy. The scope of comparative philosophy is universal history and cosmos. It should place the cohesion of humanity and harmony of life as an ideal before men. It must also enlarge our philosophical understanding of two traditions – Orient and Occident. Hence, the future of philosophy lies in faithful articulation of comparative philosophy.

I

Indian philosophy today is standing almost at a crossroad. It is anxious to retain the forces of its tradition through which it has grown, yet it cannot afford to overlook the 'scientific facts' and the 'empirical attitude' of the present world. It is in such a state of inner tension or conflict that the recent Indian thinker develops his system of thought. He tries to escape this predicament by asserting the values of tradition with a renewed vigour emphasizing that it is not against the scientific temper of the present age. Professor J.L. Mehta furnishes a systematic analysis of seminal concepts like modernization, westernization and tradition, and their interlinkages. Mehta refers to Edward Shils' famous work *The Intellectual between Tradition and Modernity: The Indian Situation,*

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Milton Singer's *When a Great Tradition Modernizes* and W.C. Smith's *Modernization of a Traditional Society'* in his serious research paper *Modernity and Tradition.* Smith criticises Westerners for value judgments on non-Western cultures, without any attempt to understand them from within and ignoring their specific religious traditions, from a position of superiority. Modernity begins with a revolt against the authority of church, refers to rational scientific spirit, and it finally culminates into secularism and secularization of nature. Singer pointed out that the traditionalism of Indian civilization is not opposed to innovation and change, to modernity. The only difference in this two-sided, mutual participation is that from the Western end it is in the nature of supplementing the substance of their mainstream culture, an assimilation of the alien and subordinating it within more widely based totality, whereas from the non-Western, including Indian, the participation is an appropriation of substance itself, not peripheral as in the Western case. For Smith, to modernize, need not mean adopting a Western model at all. There are genuine reasons, he says, why India cannot just copy the West: because it is culturally, religiously and linguistically different from West. Professor Mehta has rightly pointed out that to be modern means to move in the direction of an increase in our awareness, so that possibilities open up, alternatives of choice emerge, where as formerly we lived within a relatively closed horizon.[1]

Indian philosophy is generally described as 'spiritual'; by this is meant that it lays emphasis on values that are supra-natural and other-worldly. It is pertinent to note that Professor Daya Krishna, in his remarkable research paper, *Three Myths about Indian Philosophy*, has considered the spiritual nature of Indian philosophy as one of the myths of Indian philosophy. The description of Indian philosophy as being spiritual is not an adequate one because it gives the impression that Indian philosophy is least concerned with this worldly (secular) values. *Puruṣārtha* is rightly considered as Indian value system and which includes *Dharma, Artha, Kāma* and *Mokṣa.* It is truly speaking a perfect amalgamation of spiritualism and materialism. The recent Indian philosophy tries to reconcile spiritual and secular values. It explicitly states that spiritual awakening cannot take place in a void – that for spiritual growth the physical nature is not rejected but perfected.[2] Indian philosophy has been seriously engaged in discovering certain holy power of nature and also a capacity of self-transcendence within man himself. The method of Indian philosophy can be easily contrasted with Western

one, as Western methodology is 'ratiocinative' in nature, while Indian philosophical method is of 'meditative speculation'. Indian philosophy meditates upon experience of those powers and makes speculation about the self-transcending nature of man. The traditional conception of Indian philosophy is designated as vision *(darśana)*. It is believed that philosophy is capable of giving a vision of Reality. The contemporary Indian philosophical conception about philosophy is that it is an attitude-a way of looking at things. Philosophical knowledge enables us to cultivate an attitude that can adopt an entirely different perspective from the normal (ordinary) one. Even though life's situations remain the same (whether tragic or pleasant), the individual who is able to cultivate the attitude of equanimity or perfect calmness is not affected by life-situation in the manner in which he used to be affected previously.

It is truism to state that when we talk of Indian or Western philosophy, then the ground of such deliberation is not to be the logical patterns of philosophy but cultural patterns. It is possible to think that there could be varieties of philosophy even in one cultural pattern and similarities of philosophy in different cultural patterns, because no two men might be alike in the same cultural pattern, while two men of different cultures could be alike in thinking and may have common sympathy and understanding.[3] Indian philosophical systems or schools *(sampradāya)* should not be considered as monolithic structures. Possibilities of re-interpretation, re-structuring and of introducing new system are always here. Daya Krishna treats Indian schools not to be completely finished or frozen in nature. We must learn to separate what is living and what is dead in Indian philosophy. We have to bear in our mind that a philosophical system, by its very nature, must have components that are historically dated, concerns that are no longer alive, and some other components that are of supra-historical value and relevance.[4] Indian philosophical tradition has to be re-examined from the Western standpoint and similarly there is a pressing need to examine and evaluate Western philosophy from Indian perspective. Such a critical stance-mutual critique between the West and India- presupposes that there is a common, universal rationality operative in both the thought-worlds. We should learn to think in self-conscious continuity with the great Indian philosophical tradition. We also further need to extend it to the new realities facing the Indian mind: socio-political, ethical and legal amongst others.

II

Modern Indian philosophy can be seen as an encounter with Western philosophy in different ways:

1. There was a tendency to welcome enthusiastically Western philosophy and culture and the motive behind such a move was to adopt them in Indian context or situation. The representative thinker of this approach is Raja Rammohun Roy.

2. We also witness the tendency of outright rejection or condemnation of Western culture and the feeling of deep reverence towards Indian philosophy and culture. Swami Dayanand Saraswati, Swami Vivekananda and others have dedicated their lives to profess, practice and propogate Indian culture.

3. There was also serious attempt made by contemporary Indian philsophers to identify the points of convergence and divergence between Indian and Western philosophical traditions. This has led to the recent trends of Indian philosophy designated as comparative philosophy. Professor A.C. Mukerji is considered as the champion of comparative philosophy, although several other Indian scholars have substantially contributed in this field.

4. We also find that some Indian scholars engaged themselves in presenting classical (traditional) Indian philosophy into established idioms and prevalent terminologies of Western philosophy and they also employ Western arguments in support of Indian philosophical theories. Professor S. Radhakrishnan can be considered as a representative philosopher of this group, and his contribution lies in promoting and popularizing Indian philosophy in the West.

5. There has been a tendency in contemporary Indian philosophy to demonstrate that classical Indian philosophy is academically superior to Western philosophy through rigorous technique of argumentation. Professor K.C. Bhattacharya has made attempt to logically refute some philosophical tenets of Western philosophy.

6. The serious effort is made by few thinkers to explain and elucidate Indian philosophy from Western philosophical perspectives. This unique trait can be easily gleaned in the writings of Rahul Sanskritayan.

7. The attempt is also made to explain Western philosophy on the basis of Indian philosophy. Professor R.D. Ranade has contributed immensely in this direction.

8. Finally, there can be the possibility of entirely new world philosophy or civilization just after serious thought or deliberation upon Indian and Western philosophy. Sri Aurobindo can be considered as specimen thinker of this tradition.

The comparative philosophy is a distinct trend of modern Indian philosophy. Around the mid-nineteenth century and onwards some scholars have started an investigative probe into the common ideas of the philosophies of the East and West in a systematic manner and perceived in them the seeds of the future world philosophy. The scope of comparative philosophy is universal history and cosmos. Philosophy has to explain man and his universe; the nature of man is expressed in history; and so the domain of philosophy is universal history and cosmos. The subject matter of comparative philosophy is undoubtedly different philosophical traditions. The Western tradition is towards naturalism and outwardness. We witness the humanistic, rationalistic and secular worldview to be the prominent characteristics of Western philosophies. The Indian philosophical tradition, on the contrary, upholds the reality of inwardness and its spiritualistic value theme, irrespective of philosophical system being pluralistic or monistic, realistic or idealistic. It is truism to state that any philosophy that gives excessive emphasis to outwardness or inwardness tends to underemphasize the importance of human life; but again a philosophy that ignores the depths of inwardness or the expanse of outwardness fails to be an adequate guide to life. The Chinese tradition upholds the values of man and society in this world. If human life is essentially the same everywhere, if all values of life are to be made accessible to all men, then every culture will develop philosophies that bear essential similarities in thought, aim and outlook. The aim of comparative philosophy is such cultural synthesis, which implies not dominance but development, not imposition but assimilation, not narrowing of outlook but broadening, and not limitation of life but its expansion.[5] A comparative philosopher has to bring all traditions together and study all problems in their conspicuous forms. It is pertinent to note that both differences and similarities are valuable to the comparative philosopher if he aims of building up a philosophy that is to do full justice to the whole life of man. It should

place the cohesion of humanity and harmony of life as ideal before men. Hence, comparative philosophy should revive the original integral outlook, but in a richer and more articulated form, thereby leading to world perspective in philosophy.

III

There are eight different approaches to comparative philosophy:

1. The philological approach is a study of the terms and concepts of the different philosophical traditions and sometimes gives a clue to the interrelations among the concepts, particularly if the language used belongs to the same group. Maxmuller, Bloomfield and Jespersen did highly creditable work in this direction.

2. Historical approach makes an attempt to reconstruct histories of different traditions. New ideas imported from another tradition give fresh impetus to development and thereby leading to the recognition of new aspects of life and problems. The reconstruction of historical traditions is of great significance in the domain of comparative philosophy for twin reasons: the development of worldview *(weltanschauung)* and at the same time the perfection of life in completeness.

3. Comparative approach is not really a new kind of approach, but a stage that follows the reconstruction of histories. After reconstruction, we have to see how the philosophies of the tradition are framed and how they solve the problems of reflective life: logical, ethical, epistemological aesthetic, socio-political and metaphysical. Comparison involves the observation not only of similarities but also of differences. This approach leads to conceptual enlargement as here the way is cleared for a more comprehensive philosophy of life.

4. The total integrative approach refers to the world perspective in which we take into consideration all aspects of life as forming integral parts of man and will furnish the standard by which any tradition or philosophy can be judged. Attempts at constructing world perspective have already been begun by thinkers like Northrop, Sheldon and others.

5. The formal evaluative approach attempts to study the consistency of the systems, without raising directly the question

of their agreement with life. This approach may lead to classification of different philosophical traditions like that of materialism, spiritualism, idealism, realism, naturalism etc., and then judging how they can respond to problems of life.

6. The phenomenological approach enquires into the correlation between a particular philosopher and his socio-cultural environment, between a concept and the system, or a system and the tradition, without caring to raise questions about philosophical foundations themselves. Masson- Oursel has distinctly employed this approach in a comparative study of different philosophico-cultural traditions. Buckle makes an attempt to analyse the correlation between a philosophical trend and the geographical environment.

7. The psychological approach attempts to explain the individual and sociological behaviour through psychological analysis. Freud, Jung and Adler are representatives of this approach. They have not only explained the individual and social behaviour through psycho-analysis, rather offer explanations of abnormalities and perversities, ethics and religion. It is further stated that a philosophy may be evaluated and explained in terms of the individual psychology of the philosopher who expounds it. Herzberg, in *'Psychology of Philosophers',* enables to explain the relationship between the mental framework or psyche of philosopher and his philosophical formulations.

8. The sociological approach enables us to understand how the sociological conditions existing at the beginning of the tradition and its spurt of growth presented the philosophical problems.[6] It is further pointed out that at later periods of its history, new changes may be added to change in socio-cultural patterns. The patterns themselves may owe their change to the birth of a new religion. Talcott Parsons and other sociologist have made ample use of this approach in comparative philosophy.

The comparative philosophy has avowed purpose of comparing three prominent traditions of the world, namely Indian, Western and Chinese. The spiritual life must have its autonomy, and its reality does not depend upon our success or failure to explain the relation of spirit to mind, life and matter. This is the contribution of Indian philosophy. The contribution of the West lies in its teaching that life is not merely

inward, not merely social, but also has its root in physical nature. Because of the West's great contribution to our understanding of the outward, it has wrongly been called materialistic. But it has not lost its spiritual and ethical leaven, though its recent dominant philosophies keep that in the background and are puzzled to explain its relation to outwardness. If philosophy is necessarily a philosophy of life, the ethics should be given an autonomy of its own. This is the peculiar contribution that Chinese tradition can make to world philosophy. Comparative philosophy should recognize the complementary nature of each of the three dominant traditions; and there is much common to all the three, though developed in varying degrees. They can be brought together and studied only as philosophies of life with man as a common denominator.

Comparative philosophy is a recent academic enterprise in which both Western and Indian philsophers have joined hands together. J.L. Mehta, in his serious research paper *Heidegger and the Comparison of Indian and Western Philosophy*, points out the valuable contributions of Western scholars namely Daniel Ingalls, Paul Deussen, R.G. Collingwood and Martin Heidegger in comparative philosophy. Ingalls has questioned the quest of similarity between Western and Indian philosophical doctrines as initiated by Deussen. The similarity which he (Deussen) found between the philosophy of Śamkarācārya and that of Kant is artistic (superficial) similarity ignorning the difference of cultural perspectives. Heidegger has pointed out that 'Being' is the ground-word of the Western tradition reflecting reality disclosing itself, and in similar fashion one may say that *'Brahman'* and *'Ātman'* are the ground-words of the Indian tradition exhibiting its spiritual destiny. Like the Western philosophical tradition, the development of the Indian tradition has been characterized by an energetic preoccpation with questions of ultimate reality, of the nature and criteria of knowledge, of man and world and of basic categories through which we think about them.[7] Hence, comparative philosophy must enlarge our philosophical understanding of two different traditions – Orient and Occident.

The champions of comparative philosophy in recent Indian philosophical senario are S.Radhakrishnan, P.T. Raju, R.D. Ranade, A.C. Mukerji, D.M. Datta, J.L. Mehta, C.D. Sharma, R.K. Tripathi, S.L. Pandey and others. It is not only a critical and comparative account between Indian and Western philosophy, rather a comparison can be

made within the same tradition either Indian or Western parlance. The purpose is to draw parallels and divergences between the two. It is no surprise that there can be striking similarities between Indian and Western philosophy like Śamkarācārya and Bradley, Râmânuja and Hegel and many more, but at the same glaring differences of cultural perspectives too. The ideal of comparative philosophy should be the mutual supplementation and better understanding of each other. Professor S. Radhakrishnan has made a serious effort to present Indian philosophy in Western idioms and terminology, and he makes an attempt to reformulate it in Western methodology and perspective. The significant contributions of him are *Eastern Religion and Western Thought* and *Indian Philsophy* in two volumes. Professor P.T. Raju is known for combining the traditional (classical) Indian philosophy with creative (new) philosophical insights. The modern analysis of Indian philosophy can be easily discerned in his philosophical writings such as *Idealistic Thought of India, Thought and Reality* and *Indian Idealism and Modern Thought.* Professor Raju's *Introduction to Comparative Philosophy* is acknowledged by intellectual community as a serious and foundational work in the field of comparative philosophy. Professor Ranade is against this methodological approach that East is East and West is West and therefore there canot be any point of convergence between the two. He advocated a definite correlative study of Indian and European philosophy. Hence, the future of philosophy lies in faithful articulation of comparative philosophy.

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Eighteenth-Century North India: Some Reflections on the Writings of French Traveller Modave

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I

India remained a favourite destination for foreign travellers since ancient times. We find that travellers from China, Arab, and European countries visited India in different epochs. Travellers and their accounts have a special place in our attempts to understand the past. As we see, travellers emerge as pivotal figures in historical narratives. More importantly, their writings help us not only in supplementing and augmenting our understanding of the past, but they also, in crucial ways, historicize the past. What may appear to an insider as an accepted and nothing different, from the established norms, would be found strange and worth noting by a foreign traveller. Furthermore, the information provided by them fill important historical interstices and help in building a comprehensive understanding of the past. Despite the fact that they all were travellers to a foreign land, their writings cannot be graded as same even if they ventured into the same region. Their own background, predilections, and motivations certainly influenced the textualisation of their observations. However, the voyagers' accounts form an important body of literature in reconstructing the past, *for they provide perspectives*. Notwithstanding that such texts were not free from fallibility; they are at least reflective of the general ethos of the time they were written in. Those writings become even more insightful where the travellers became part of the State apparatus in various ways. Narrativized from various vantage points, travelogues also help us in comparing different societies, cities, and even state systems. The accounts of Bernier, Tavernier,

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Francisco Pelsaert, Barbosa, Nikitin, Nuniz, Nicolo Conti, and Abdur Razzak are relevant in this regard. Thus, travel literature are certainly important in widening our historical canvas to understand the past, even if they are not infallible.

Eighteenth century India witnessed the arrival of many English and French travellers. Some of the important travellers who visited India during this period were George Forester, William Hodges, Pierre Sonnerat, Claude Francois Lambert, and of course, Modave. When their works are gleaned into, it can be found that their subject matter varies quite significantly.

George Forester's account titled as *A Journey from Bengal to England through the Northern part of India, Kashmir, Afghanistan, and Persia, and into Russia by the Caspian Sea* (2 Vols) is an important eighteenth century travel text about northern India. Forester undertook his Indian journey in 1782, starting from Calcutta, passing through Kashmir, Afghanistan, Herat, and Khurasan. From Khurasan, Forester, crossed Caspian Sea, and travelled to St. Petersberg. Finally, he reached London by ship. His second voyage came as part of an embassy to the Marathas in 1792. It proved to be his last journey of India as he died at Nagpur during this visit. He was the first British to have travelled from India through central Asia to Russia. Forester who travelled to India a decade before Modave, furnishes important details about events in north India. He provides important insights into the post-Buxar negotiations and consequent signing of the treaty of Allahabad by the Nawab of Awadh Shuja-ud-Daula. Not many would know that it was French adventurer Jean Baptiste Joseph Gentil, as one of the representatives of the Nawab of Awadh, played an instrumental role in the negotiations.[1] According to Forester, Gentil brought the British to the negotiating table and concluded the peace treaty for the Nawab. Thus, Forester's account provides important information on the rise of Gentil as an important figure in Awadh politics.[2] Forester also elaborates on the Nawab's efforts to militarize his forces to be able to handle the British preponderance.[3] Thus, for Forester, the Nawab was a different man, a man of grit and determination, clear on his politico-military goals despite the defeat at Buxar.

Hodges, on the other hand, who journeyed into India after Modave, gave a vivid survey of various facets of life in northern India in his text titled *Travels in India During the Years 1781, 1782, 1783*. He remained in India for 6 years and returned in 1783. Hodges appears to be quite

perceptive in noting that India was changing fast. He mentions, albeit passingly, about quick militarization of Indian armies that was underway where the changeover was from cavalry-oriented forces to that of infantry and artillery-based outfits. He was also observant enough to note the militarization of various indigenous groups whom he found to be wielding newer guns (muskets, flintlock muskets, matchlock muskets etc.).[4] Thus, Hodges' text is insightful in bringing to the fore the transitional character of the country.

Hodges pointed out that whereas a lot was known about Indian religion and culture, and also about Mughal Empire, not much was still known to the world about its arts, the country in general, and its natural productions. So, he stated that his aim was to fill in such gaps in the hitherto written travel documents.[5] Hodges also stated: "it is not my business to enter into the question respecting the rights of the government in different countries and those of the governed. Facts are my object, and such alone as fell within the limited and confined sphere of my notice."[6]

Pierre Sonnerat (1748-1814), Claude Francois Lambert (1705-68), and Anquetil Duperron were French travellers. Whereas Sonnerat combined the description of state of Indian technology and medicinal practices, Lambert focused primarily on Indian physicians and practices of cure and medicine. Sonnerat differentiated between the culture of European and Indian medicines. But he did not remain free of European biases when he noted the development of medicine and surgery in India. Whereas, he called French medicinal practices revolutionary, which was registering incremental growth in the domain of surgery, he called the Indians conservative and traditional, relying largely on herbs and ointments. On the other hand, Lambert also dwelt on Indian medicines. But his take was subtely different from that of Sonnerat. He mentioned that though Indian physicians were traditional, they were experts of their trade. He particularly mentioned about Indian physicians' mastery on feeling the pulse, which he found most impressive.

Another Frenchman, named, Anquetil Duperron, had another motivation to come to India. He spelt it out clearly that he came to India to study about Indian culture and civilization. His compatriots in India were surprised to discover that he had come to the country only with the zeal to know about the land and had no other motive. During his stay from 1755 to 1762, Duperron accumulated a huge quantum of material on India in the form of books and manuscripts.[7] He collected

no less than 180 manuscripts, which he listed as *Apportés de l'Inde* in Appendix III of his translated work of Zend Avesta.[8] Duperron was fascinated by the number of languages spoken in India. He wrote that in order to know India better one should know at least nine of them. He further stated that even if we live with Indians, we largely remain strangers here without knowing the languages.[9] His passion for learning about India finds expression in his works *Legislation Oriental* (1778) (Laws of the East), *Recherches Historiques et Geographique sur l'Inde* (1786-1789) (Historical and Geographical Research on India), *Dignité du Commerce* (1789) (Grandeur of Commerce), and *l'Inde en Rapport avec l'Europe* (1798) (India in Relation with Europe).[10] The last work is particularly worth-mentioning for Duperron's encomium on the greatness of Indian civilization, and attempts to bridge the gulf between the Orient and the Occident.

II

Modave and his Work *Voyage en Inde*

Modave, the subject of the present paper, was an important traveller who journeyed through northern India between 1773 and 1776 which also happened to be his last journey. Born as Louis Laurent de Féderbe, Comte de Modave on 25 June 1725 in Grenoble in France, Modave came from a military family. His father was Colonel in army, therefore, he also joined army. He participated in nearly all French campaigns from 1743 to 1748 as the military subordinate of the Prince of Conti. He was also honoured with the Order of Saint Louis. He first came to India in the military entourage of Lally in 1757. Soon after, he was raised to the rank of Colonel. He was present in the siege of Madras and the capture of Fort Saint David. He was recalled in 1759. He returned and landed at the Coromandel Coast in April 1762. He could not stay in India for long and travelled back to Ile de France in 1764. In Madagascar he became a planter. But it brought financial ruin for him. The loss in the business motivated him to sail to India to seek his fortune. He landed at Balasore on 2 October 1773 from where he moved up to Chandernagore. He later entred Awadh and joined Nawab Shuja-ud-Daula at the recommendation of Colonel Gentil. After the death of the Nawab Shuja-ud-Daula, when the English forced the deportation of all Frenchmen from Awadh, Modave along with some other Frenchmen went to Delhi. There he was employed by the Mughal

emperor Shah Alam II. He played a crucial role while in the Mughal service when he initiated diplomatic enterprise for the emperor which was about the formation of a grand alliance between the Mughals, the Marathas, and the French to arrest the growing power of the British in India. Modave finally quit Hindustan in 1776. In December 1777 when he was at Masulipatam, he suddenly had a fever and died soon after.[11]

Modave's perception of India is particularly important from the politico-military point of view which is greatly elaborated in his work *Le Voyage dans l'Hindustan or Voyage en Inde*. It can perhaps be said that since he had the military background, he comes across as a voyager having an eye for detail more for Indian military systems. However, he also wrote important accounts related to history, polity, culture, and religion of India. Some of his notable works are:[12]

- *Le Voyage dans l'Hindustan or Voyage en Inde (1773-1776)* (The Journey in Hindustan, 1773-1776);
- *Voyage du Bengal a Delhi* (Journey from Bengal to Delhi);
- *Journal d'un voyage dans l'Inde enterpris en 1774 (Federbe Modave,* Diary of a voyage in India in 1774);
- *Mémoire sur la situation actuelle de l'Empire mogul, Octobre 1759* (Memoir on the actual condition of the Mughal Empire, October 1759);
- *Fragments sur l'Empire Mogol, les Marates, les Rachepoutres (Rajput), les Patanes, les Rajas, les soubedars* (Fragments on the Mughal Empire, the Marathas, the Rajputs, the Pathans, the Rajas, the Subedars).

Modave at Awadh

His work *Voyage en Inde* gives important insights into the military dynamism that Awadh witnessed under Shuja-ud-Daula in the post-Buxar phase. Modave who was in Awadh from 1774 to 1775, mentions that in the post-Buxar phase, Shuja-ud-Daula employed a number of French adventurers with the aim to modernize his army. It was his unorganized and unwieldy army which had been the cause of his defeat at Buxar. A French adventurer Gentil was given the task of reorganizing and training the army on the model adopted by the English Company in Bengal. Modave writes that Gentil was also asked to simultaneously constitute an exclusive French corps which has been called as *partis français.*[13]

Modave informs that, over a period of time, the *partis français* shaped up as an efficient military body whose prowess was further enhanced by attaching a well-trained and equipped Indian infantry. It was trained to function as a self-sufficient unit which could impart it greater mobility and independence during military operations. Modave noted that the officers of *partis français* were dedicated to their profession. He particularly praised the building work of Charles de Canaple who was a French architect.[14] It is mentioned that the Nawab undertook the task of erecting fortified buildings. In 1772, he started building a strong, new fort north of Faizabad. It was designed with the aim of architecturally matching the strength of Fort William of Calcutta. It was an example of the Nawab's subtle defiance of the British and their stronghold in Calcutta. Canaple, a French engineer, was entrusted with the task of designing and building the fort, as well as that of overseeing the work. Canaple started building a formidable hexagonal fortress with six bastions for which 30,000 workers were hired. The work of building the ramparts and bastions of the massive fort continued night and day under his direction.[15] Modave noted that the hexagonal structure, once it had been completed, would undoubtedly become the best architectural specimen in Hindustan.[16]

Shuja-ud-Daula's aim to raise *partis français* was to become militarily independent of the English. The Nawab had dreamt of rising against the English with the help of *partis français*. Modave wrote that had the Nawab not died suddenly he would have continued to work on his plan to force the English Company back to Bengal, and, would have, thus, freed himself from the obligation of going to the British for various necessities. Modave went on to say that in that case Gentil and he would have stayed in the Nawab's court free from the English fetters.[17] Shuja-ud-Daula's seriousness regarding the overhauling of the army could also be seen from the fact that the Nawab would himself inspect regularly his forces to assess the capabilities of the army.[18]

More importantly, Modave provides the list of the members of *partis français* and, thus, enriches our knowledge about the French presence in Awadh in the post-Buxar era.

Gentil, Sonson, Pedrose, and Delamarr were key figures in Awadh's military modernization. Modave furnishes the most comprehensive list as of now of the *partis français* which included Dr. Calvé, Dr. Macarty, and Dr. Visage who were surgeons in the *partis français*. Dr. Visage tried to cure Shuja-ud-Daula when the Nawab was suffering from a

venereal tumour. Other members were: Baronet, Dieu, Sauvagère, Sourd, Moncelet, Martinière, Le Chevalier de Crécy, De Berville, Jean Pillet, and Dubocage. Delsier, who was brother of Chevalier, commanded a platoon (*paltan*) of the Nawab Shuja-ud-Daula.[19]

Awadh, according to Modave, not only quickly (in less than a decade) overhauled its army, but also made remarkable progress in arms manufacturing. Awadh's growing proficiency in the casting of quality weapons also did not miss the eye of Modave. Modave compared the military equipments cast at Awadh with those produced in Europe, and stated that the standards of the guns and bayonets made in Faizabad were as high as those manufactured in Europe.[20]

Modave writes that such a military posturing by the Nawab generated strong British response also. From 1772, the Company began keeping lists of Frenchmen in the service of the Nawab. The officials from London wrote sternly to the Calcutta Council about Shuja-ud-Daula's efforts to seek military assistance from the French government.

The Calcutta Council was ordered from London to demand strongly the immediate expulsion of Gentil from Awadh. But Shuja-ud-Daula never submitted to such demands and kept evading them under one pretext or the other. Writing about Shuja-ud-Daula's liking for Gentil, Modave wrote that the Nawab held Gentil in very high esteem for the quality of his services, and any mention of the Calcutta Council regarding the dismissal of Gentil annoyed him greatly.[21]

By 1774, the Company had set up check points at important nodal centres to stop the influx of Europeans, particularly the French, into north India. Modave wrote that the English Company's hunger for power and fear of intervention by other European countries had risen to the extent that they began preventing people of other European nations from entering north India. They constructed check points at Calcutta, Qasim Bazar and Patna for all Europeans who were to go beyond these cities. Modave emphasised that it was above all intended to hinder the movement of the French.[22]

Modave's account of his sojourn in Awadh is also insightful regarding the debate whether the French officers present in the Nawab's service were on a certain mission. Whereas some modern historians tried to see a connect between the Frenchmen present in Awadh and the French Company, and, thus, argued that they were 'spies' or French Company's interlocutors active in Awadh, Modave's writing dispels any such notion. Thus, Modave provides another perspective on this particular issue.

Modave, who was a traveller-observer and had himself been part of the State apparatus in Awadh did not use the phrase *partis français* for Gentil's troops. The phrase *partis français* was used in the context of French troops at Hyderabad where the French were in direct communication with the French Company officers and had agreed to help and work for the cause of the French nation.[23] However, the French in Awadh were not in a direct communication with the French Company. Modave states clearly that Gentil's indiscriminate manner of induction of the French who had presented themselves to him in Awadh precludes any idea of 'planned selection' on his part. He categorically mentions that Gentil employed them more out of compassion and to save them from misery and starvation.[24]

Thus, Modave's account of Awadh focuses on the role of French adventurers in upgrading the Nawab's army, and also, at the same time, how the Nawab was equally enthusiastic and determined to bring in military changes. In the writings of Modave, the Nawab comes across not as an 'inert' or 'luxury-prone' potentate, rather a passionate man who was willing to synchronise himself with the changing times. Modave's writings also throw light on the rapport Nawab had with his French officers and the level of trust that he reposed in them. These sets of information are crucial, one, they are not documented elsewhere as comprehensively, two, it comes from a traveller-observer who himself was part of the militarization process and no longer a stranger despite being a foreigner.

Modave in Delhi: The Facet of Diplomatic Enterprise

Another perspective which emerges from Modave's writings is about the attempts on the part of the Mughal emperor Shah Alam II to form an alliance with France. After the death of Nawab Shuja-ud-Daula in 1775, Modave and many other Frenchmen entered into Delhi. Modave was employed by the emperor with the intention to impart new military techniques to his military contingents.

But Modave's information is especially significant regarding the diplomatic enterprise which was undertaken by the emperor around 1775-1776.

Diplomatic enterprise was primarily the initiative of Jean Baptiste Chevalier, the Governor of Chandernagore, who enthused French adventurers present in north India to work for an alliance with the Mughals. Chevalier particularly exhorted René Madec to orient Indian

States, particularly, the Mughals for the realization of such an alliance. Modave also became part of it as a trusted foreigner in the service of the Mughals.

Carried out in the 1770s, Chevalier's correspondence with home authorities in France indicates that the creation of the grand alliance was attempted at the highest levels and with utmost passion. Madec and Daniel Du Jarday emerged pivotal figures in this new scheme, and did try to persuade Indian princes to enter into the proposed alliance. However, the French government busy in its own internal conflicts at home did not take up the proposal with enough conviction.[25]

It was after the employment of Modave with the Mughals in 1775 that the plan was revived with fresh perspective. It was also the phase when Chevalier's letters to the French authorities had remained unanswered. The Mughal emperor who himself had shown keen interest in the alliance intervened and decided to write directly to the French government. The emperor's initiative was an important break with the past. Hereafter, not only did the emperor involve himself directly in the negotiations, but had the proposal changed considerably to make it more feasible. He consulted Modave, who was in Delhi, and took suggestions from him about possible ways of forming an alliance speedily. Modave, with whose services the monarch was particularly impressed, suggested that merely writing a letter of friendship would not suffice; instead, if an offer or promise were to be made more desirable results could be achieved. Modave, went on to suggest that ceding the territory of Thatta in Sind to France would be most suitable for entering into a friendly alliance with the French King. He reasoned that apart from the city of Thatta, the Mughals had nothing to offer in Surat, or on the Malabar Coast, or on the Coromandal coast, nor had they anything to offer in Bengal. If the emperor could grant all rights over Thatta, the offer might motivate the French King to enter into a direct union with him. Modave also emphasised that the proposal would be taken seriously in France only if it were initiated by someone in authority, as otherwise it would be taken as a sign of lack of seriousness on the part of the emperor. Therefore, he very strongly advised that the emperor should write directly to the King, and at the same time, his minister Abdullah Khan should write to his counterpart, the Minister of the Navy.[26]

Both the emperor and the minister approved the proposal and Modave was given the responsibility of drafting their letters. Modave

drafted letters on behalf of the emperor. He also drafted the letter and memoir of Madec that Madec wanted to send to the Minister of the Navy, Monsieur De Sartine, in support of the emperor's letter.[27] Thus, on the advice of Modave, Thatta project was given shape which included the ceding of the province of Thatta in the Sind region to France in return for its military support.

Modave mentions that with his and Madec's presence in the court, the emperor found hope of getting friendly with the foreign power. Moreover, the news of the death of Louis XV (May 1774) and coming to power of a new ruler further motivated the emperor to open fresh communication channels for a friendly alliance. In this manner, Modave's presence was pivotal in the emperor's attempts to open diplomatic channels with the French government.[28]

The diplomatic enterprise on the part of the Mughal emperor, Governor of Chandernagore, Chevalier, and Modave has been one of the least presented historical developments in the eighteenth century India history narrative. It is largely because most of the information on the issue can be had from the correspondence between Chevalier and Madec which is in French, and from the textual rendition of the episode by Modave himself. In this sense, Modave's account becomes especially significant as other forms of evidence appear quite subdued on this historical development. This piece of information helps us understand about the kind of politico-military orientation that was emerging in north India during this period, and the attempts of Indian rulers to check the growing British influence.

Modave on Indian Culture and Civilization

Modave also touched upon the description of Indian culture and civilization. However, it is not as elaborate in this particular work as his politico-military observations are. Nonetheless, in his description of Indian culture and civilization, Modave comes across as a man of acute perception who was passionate about knowing and exploring India. He in fact wrote that most of the accounts available in Europe on the religion of the Hindus were inadequate and that its true tenets were still unknown to the Europeans. He pointed out that though Alexander Dow, a British administrator (1735-1779), wrote about such topics as Indian customs, culture, and language, he did not write anything on the religion of the Hindus. He further wrote that the religion of the Hindus was not uniform and varied from region to region which had

created confusion among many voyagers, and therefore, lack of clarity and ambiguity existed. Modave said that his aim was to present a true picture, as well as less known facts, about India which might serve in providing a just overview of its religion, customs, and manners.[29]

Modave wrote that the knowledge on the religion of the Hindus was embedded in their books and manuscripts. But the collection of manuscripts and their compilation were painstaking exercises, and therefore, it was not easy to obtain information on the 'religion of the Hindus.' He cites the attempts of Gentil in this regard. He writes that Gentil was of the same view and said that once he had planned to procure important manuscripts of the Hindus from Benaras. However, when he realised that it would take at least five to six years to accomplish the task along with heavy expenses, he abandoned his ambitious plan.[30]

Thus, Modave's India was a land of opportunities where foreigners pursued successful careers. He largely looks at changing India by focusing on the European military presence which became an important catalyst of change. Even Modave who had originally been a traveller, became part of Indian State system. Modave's India, in this sense, was far from inert, in fact, in a state of all kinds of churning; responding and reacting to the changes happening across the globe, and trying to synchronize with that. His focus on military aspect was one dimension of this transition which he found particularly appealing, and gave it more textual space in his work 'Voyage en Inde'.

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[2] Forster, A Journey from Bengal to England, Vol. I, p. 151.

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11. See Louis-Laurent de Féderbe, Comte de Modave, Voyage en Inde du Comte de Modave, 1773-1776 (The Voyage of Count Modave in India, 1773-1776), (ed.) Jean Deloche, Paris: Ecole Française d'Extr ēme-Orient (EFEO), 1971, Introduction.

12. Modave, Voyage en Inde, pp. 8-10.

13. Modave, Voyage en Inde, p. 155.

14. Modave, Voyage en Inde, pp. 145, 155; Letter from Gentil, Microfilm no. 241 MIOM 224, Centre Des Archives d'Outre Mer, CAOM, Aix-en-Provence, France, pp. 287-90.

15. Letter from Gentil (undated), French Nouvelle Acquisition (Fr. Nouv. Acq.), Départements des Manuscrits, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Microfilm no. 9366, pp. 430–1, (available at National Archives of India, New Delhi).

16. Modave, however, did not mention the name of the engineer. Modave, Voyage en Inde, p. 145.

17. Modave, Voyage en Inde, pp. 155, 168.

18. Letter from Gentil, Microfilm no. 241 MIOM 224, pp. 287-90.

19. See Modave, Voyage en Inde, pp. 156, 171, 181-2, 182, 451, 532-3, 540, 542.

20. Modave, Voyage en Inde, p. 155.

21. Modave, Voyage en Inde, p. 162.

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23. Letter from Chevalier (without address), 28 February 1773, Fr. Nouv. Acq., (Microfilm) 9366, pp. 139-40.

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25. Uma Shanker Pandey, European Adventurer in North India, 1750-1803, London & New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis, 2020, see chapter 4.

26. Modave, Voyage en Inde, pp. 222-4.

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Impact of New Media on Online Radicalization in India

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Abstract

'Jihadism' (also known as the jihadi movement) is a popular term that signifies the Islamic terror movement, which thrives on extremist ideologies and violence. In addition to the conventional practices, the online medium is currently being employed for disseminating the extremist ideologies across the globe. Radicalization and recruitment of geographically dispersed individuals as 'jihadists' for supporting Islamic terror activities tend to be the primary intent for using the digital platforms as the medium of communication in this context. Earlier, India has been relatively impervious to this terror propaganda due to the constraining factors such as cultural and linguistic differences. But of late, the occurrence of Indians being radicalized to support terror groups such as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) are reported periodically.

In such a state of affairs, it is crucial to analyze and understand the nature of such radicalization cases in order to curb and counter such incidences at its initial phase. For this purpose, the present study aims to examine the online radicalization cases that have been reported and filed by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) for the past four years. The study has revealed that there has been a significant growth in the number of online radicalization process targeting the Indian youth population post-2015, primarily through social media platforms such as Telegram, Whatsapp and Facebook.

1. Literature Review

Terror organizations are resource intensive enterprise that continuously seek manpower and new recruits for replacing those lost in terror

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operations, such as fighting, suicide bombings and arrests (Bloom, 2012) and to expand their future missions. Over the last decade, groups such as ISIS and Al-Qaeda have turned to the Internet for recruitment activities by publishing their ideology in fairly slick packaging online (Stern 2010). For instance, ISIS members and their supporters are observed to use a variety of social media apps and file-sharing platforms, from Facebook and Ask.fm to kik and YouTube (Klausen 2015). Within these spaces, they provide radical content in forms of rap videos, online magazines and others with messages aimed directly at disaffected youth. Radical Videos on YouTube were discovered to accentuate idealistic notions of brotherhood, revolution and sacrifice in pursuit of an Islamist utopia (Payne 2009).

Among social media and file sharing platforms used by Islamic radicals and their supporters, Twitter is seen to be among the most popular (Klausen 2015). Interaction through online communication channels gives a sense of belonging and common cause. In social media sites like Twitter, individuals are observed to be highly involved in the dissemination of pro-jihadist propaganda embedded within pictures or video clips or comments, if not directly engaged in physical or material support of the ISIS (Huey, 2015).

The severe effect of online jihadist propaganda was clearly witnessed in the case of a violent female Islamist radicalization in the United Kingdom of a female British university student – Roshonara Choudhry. On May 14, 2010, she stabbed a Member of Parliament (MP), Stephen Timms in his constituency office as a "punishment" for his parliamentary vote in favour of the 2003 Iraq War (BBC News, 2010). Though Choudhry failed to kill Stephen Timms, she did succeed in gaining a reputation as the first would-be assassin linked to Al Qaeda-inspired ideology in the United Kingdom (The Guardian, 2010). Under investigation, it was found that the Internet had played an important factor in her self-radicalization process, as the attack was motivated by watching extremist material online, months together (Simcox, Stuart, Ahmed, & Muray, 2011; Brown & Saeed, 2015).

Choudhry's actions altered the mainstream conceptualization of violent radicalization as she was a woman, in a world where Jihadi violence is monopolized by men (Bloom, 2011; Lahoud, 2014). Also, her attack on Timms appeared to be the result of a solitary online radicalization, contrasting with understandings of radicalization as a collective real-world phenomenon (Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2010). The incident was therefore categorized under the rare "pure lone-wolf" attack, the result of indoctrination by the online preacher Anwar Al Awlaki,

whose video sermons she had watched online (Neumann, 2012; Pearson, 2016).

Similar to Al-Qaeda, which exploited the Internet for terrorist propaganda (Bodansky, 2002; Aly et al, 2017), the ISIS also exploited the explosive speed and increasing reach of global social media platforms in luring the hearts and minds of younger generation individuals and westerners to fight with its multi-ethnic force in Syria and Iraq to extend the political power and dominance of the "Islamic State" worldwide (Chatfield et al, 2015). The Islamic State (IS) has demonstrated its capacity to efficiently use the Internet for a variety of purposes including radicalization.

Instances of the youth being bombarded with radical ideologies online are gaining ground not only in the West but also in India. While the Indian official records claiming almost 80-100 of its citizens affiliated with the ISIS, the number of those getting influenced and indoctrinated through online content remains a blind spot and could be much higher. As the incidences of online radicalization are on the rise, it requires a sustained, systematic and innovative approach to meet the challenge (D'Souza, 2015). As a matter of fact, since June 2014, ISIS has been stepping up its propaganda efforts to reach a transnational audience. This can be observed through ISIS' use of the Internet and social media tools to convey their messages in a number of Indian regional languages, which include Hindi, Tamil and Urdu (India Today 2014; Rajakumar, 2015). Hence, the Government of India needs to look beyond its own known levels of competence to involve professionals and experts in the non-governmental sectors for developing collaborative and comprehensive counter radicalization measures on a regional and global level for eradicating extremist content entering the nation.

2. Methodology

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) is a central agency established by the Government of India on 31st December 2008. With the primary aim of combating terror against the nation, the NIA was set up as a result of the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks. The NIA has registered a total of 185 cases till date in connection to terror-related activities such as jihadism, terror funding, the supply of fake Indian currency, to mention a few (IANS, 2018). For the present study, the NIA database was thoroughly surveyed to collect data pertaining to online radicalization that has been registered during the last six years (2014-2019).

3. Analysis

According to the NIA database, a total of twenty cases have been filed across the nation related to several online radicalization incidences within the year 2014 – 2019. From the graph below (Figure 1) it can be inferred that the highest amount of online radicalization cases has been reported in the year 2016. The graph also depicts the significant growth in the number of online radicalization process targeting the Indian youth population post-2015. Though depletion in the number of cases filed was observed in the year 2017, India witnessed a considerable number of news reports relating to the radical use of the online medium for terror recruitment process during January 2018, reassuring the intensification of online radical activities targeting the youth of India. The case of Mannan Wani, a studious research scholar belonging to a reputed institution in Uttar Pradesh, who is alleged to have joined the Hizb-ul-Mujahideen terror group on the basis of his Facebook post (Sahu, 2018) can be cited as an example.
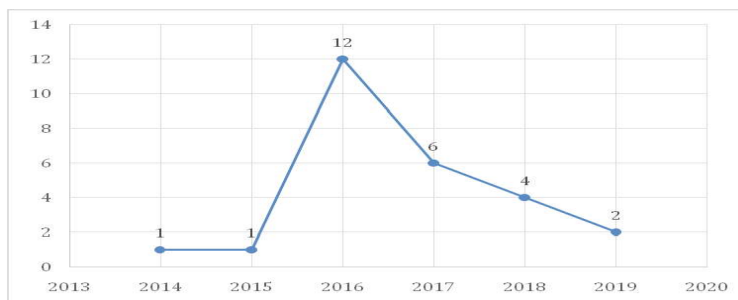
Figure 1. Number of online radicalization cases filed in India

Having its headquarters in New Delhi (the capital of India), the NIA has eight branch offices – serving the nook and corners of the nation. On analyzing the cases filed in terms of location, it is evident from the below figure (Figure 2) that Delhi (9 cases), Kerala (4 cases) and Mumbai (4 cases) are the three most vulnerable areas prone to online radicalization. Based on the table data, it can be inferred that Delhi (4 cases) and Uttar Pradesh (2 cases) were the most active zones in this context. With the above cited recent incident of Mannan Wani also taking place in Uttar Pradesh, it can be rightly pointed out that Delhi, Kerala, Mumbai and Uttar Pradesh are the four States that require prime focus in terms of online radicalization.

Figure 2. Online radicalization cases filed by the NIA based on Location

In terms of terror organizations that were involved in the process of disseminating radical ideologies through the online medium, the ISIS/ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria/ Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant) tops the list (Figure 3). The ISIS is observed to have a continuous presence in the NIA radar since 2014. Though ISIS/ISIL holds a clear dominance in using new media technologies for radicalization activities targeting the Indian youth, other terror groups including Hizb-ut-Tahrir and Miscellaneous Terrorist groups are also witnessed to enter the online terrain in the recent years.
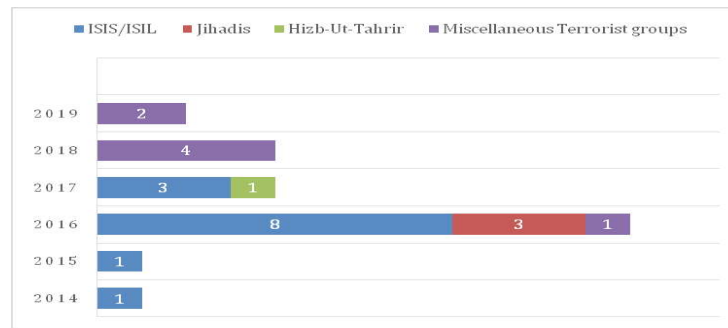
Figure 3. Terror organizations involved using the online medium for radicalization

The World Wide Web (WWW) comprises of a vast and diverse set of online tools that fosters information dissemination and social

communication. The advent of social web technologies further facilitated the instant one-to-one and one-to-many communication process devoid of any geographical constraints. The increasing use of the social web by the Indian youth makes it the ideal place for terror organizations to propagate radical content with ease. Based on the below pie-chart (Figure 4), it can be inferred that Telegram (28%) – a cloud-based instant messaging application – is observed to be the most frequently used online tool for radicalization. Following Telegram; Facebook (20%), WhatsApp (16%) and Twitter (12%) are other online applications which are being popularly employed in this context.
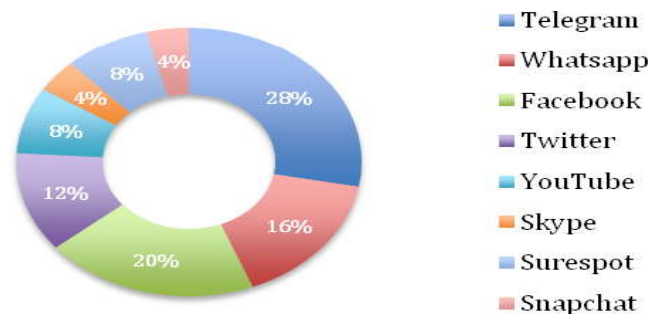
Figure 4. Online tools employed for radicalization

4. Conclusion

The NIA has vigorously investigated a variety of terror attacks that has happened in various parts of the country. The increase in the number of cases poses a serious threat to the safety and integrity of the nation. The law makers need to tighten the law while the law enforcing agencies such as the National Investigation Agency need to have a constant monitoring of the use of social media check the spread and penetration of terrorism in the nation.

Acknowledgment

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Cinematic Imagination of 'Nuclear Iconography' in Cold War Hollywood Movies: An Overview

Manu Sharma*

Introduction[1]

Nuclear weapons have drastically transformed the world in which we live. The horrifying nuclear bombing of the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki had left an unforgettable mark that led to severe deliberations for an end to nuclear weapons. In a larger theoretical discourse of International Relations and Security Studies, much of the literature about nuclear arms and energy has been embedded in what Abraham called "constraints of structural realism and nonproliferation policy" (Abraham 2009: 3). Most of the contemporary nuclear discourse and literature had its roots in the Cold War. It was an era defined by constant and intense anxiety about the nuclear arms race and fears about apocalyptic destruction of the world by the competing superpowers.

The dawn of atomic age had its most profound impact on the ordinary lives of citizens in countries such as the USA (which was the first to discover nuclear technology) and Japan (being the sole victim of an actual nuclear bombing) and later other countries where nuclear technology proliferated. The impact of nuclear technology on the daily lives of ordinary people in Cold War America was enormous. People of all age groups and from different professions struggled in arriving at the precise impact of nuclear technology in their everyday life. This struggle was most evidently reflected in the realm of popular culture. It provided a much needed cultural vocabulary to articulate nuclear imagery and make a common sense out of it. During the Cold War,

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American popular culture manifested nuclear imagery through popular movies, comics, magazines, documentaries, toys, photography, songs, lyrics, science fiction novels, etc. One can argue that American people lived and survived the Cold War through popular culture, which shaped their everyday perceptions, fears, anxieties, and hopes.

For popular filmmakers of that time, the most challenging aspect in representing nuclear iconography lies in fact as to how to visualize something for which there has been no direct experience by the audiences. Canaday (2010: 12) argues that most of the research scholars who write about nuclear issues are often "paralyzed" by the lack of any direct experience with nuclear technology. And most of the literature which exists deem to be secondary and not primary. This difficulty correlates with the fact that nuclear technology is often considered as sublime. It led to an impasse as to how to represent something for which no direct experience exists. Exceptions exist for scientists, the military personnel who had developed and deployed nuclear technologies, weapons, and the actual survivors of the atomic bombing of Japan or the people living close to nuclear test sites. For other ordinary citizens who never had any direct experience with nuclear technology, the sublime nature of this technology often led to "contradictory responses".

One of the most common methods to articulate these sets of different responses is through the use of "metaphors", which act as "linkages between symbols". Metaphors thus create a web of meanings, which can also be termed as "semiotic mapping" of a different set of definitions. Therefore, the most crucial role of 'metaphor' lies in its ability to convey an understanding of any unfamiliar object or phenomenon and to link it with something familiar to arrive at nuanced understanding (Canaday 2010: 14-17). It is with the help of "metaphors" that ordinary people try to express their imagination and perceptions for a particular phenomenon. And last but not the least, any usage of "metaphor" should always be supplemented by the use of adequate narrative foundations (Canaday 2010: 20-23). Therefore, this article makes use of a metaphoric representation of nuclear imagery in the popular cinema of Hollywood during the Cold War.

Nuclear History of Cold War America – An Overview

The end of the Second World War brought about tremendous socio-cultural and political change in America. This era is marked by one of the most important events of human history i.e., the dawn of nuclear

age with the devastating atomic bombing of Japan in 1945. The post-war America found itself in a whole new era, which was going to be a defining feature of the Cold War (Johnson 2012: 49). Ordinary Americans struggled to understand the implications of newfound nuclear technology. It is important to note here that the quest to unleash the hidden powers of the atom had started much before the end of the Second World War. The impact of the nuclear age was so massive that voices from every part of American culture struggled to come up with a set of explanations for the newfound technology. People and individuals from all walks of life, such as politicians, activists, news editors, writers, artists, musicians, film directors, psychologists, etc. struggled to grasp this new phenomenon. Each of an individual tried in his or her capacity to enlightening American people about nuclear technology. Perrine (1998: 10) notes that the end of the Second World War was marked by both the high jubilation over the surrender of Japan as well as the "awe" over witnessing the massive destructive capability of nuclear technology in 1945. Immediately after the end of World War and with the dawn of atomic age, ordinary American people struggled to understand the implications of nuclear technology in their everyday life. Highlighting this dilemma, Boyer (1985) argued that since the dawn of nuclear age, there had been a plethora of studies that study the political and diplomatic consequences of nuclear technology (whether atomic weapons or the use of nuclear energy). However, very few studies have been conducted to articulate the "cultural manifestation" of the Nuclear Age in everyday life of common Americans (Boyer 1985: xvii).

Since August 1945, nuclear reality had a profound effect on American thought and culture. This impact was most widely evident in the form of various "cultural evidence" in the American popular culture, which in a way, became one of a primary source for speculation, imagination, and articulation of a different set of emotions by American people (Wright 2015: 7).

Visuals and graphics played one of the essential roles in disseminating and explaining the power of nuclear technology to ordinary citizens (Szasz 2012: 46). In the words of Raminder Kaur, the advent of the atomic bomb was met with "extreme loathing and intense loving" (Kaur 2013: 85).

It was an era filled with astonishment and high hopes for nuclear technology. At the same time, it created a feeling of anxiety and fear about the nuclear "fallout", i.e., fear of invisible radiation. Throughout

the Cold War, atomic culture penetrated in every aspect of American society and it was reflected in the multiple vistas of American popular culture i.e., from print, visual media, magazines, popular literature, movies, comics, toys, etc. (Wright 2015: 2-4) and various other "naïve souvenirs" like drinks, cocktails with atomic names, different radium-based tonics promoted to cure illness, toys, etc. (Delgado 2011: 175).

Nuclear iconography has been one of the most integral parts of Cold War American culture despite the fact that ordinary people never had any direct experience. For ordinary Americans, the discovery of nuclear weapons and energy was a sublime invention. And people struggled to fully grasp the implication of such majestic power in their everyday life. In such a scenario, popular culture became one of the most important media for people to both express and feel a different set of emotions such as shock, fantasy, fear, anxiety, optimism, etc. concerning nuclear technology. Throughout the Cold War decades, popular culture helped in normalizing the nuclear discourse in everyday life of ordinary Americans.

Nuclear radiation constitutes one of the "most paradoxical iconography of Cold War American culture" (Jacobs 2012). The fallout from atomic testing i.e., from 1945 till the year 1963, becomes one of most talked about features of the early Cold War period. Until the banning of atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons, the USA tested around hundreds of atomic weapons in the atmosphere in both the Nevada test site as well in the Pacific Ocean region of the Marshall Islands, which led to popularising of the term radiation "fallout". It was the first time American people became aware of the dangers of nuclear testing and radiation due to its invisible, odourless, and tasteless properties. Radiation became the cause of concern for ordinary people who soon started to associate it with the dangers of genetic mutation and other deadly diseases.

The impact of radiation fear was so widespread that, for example, between 1945 and 1965, there was a release of an estimated five hundred science fiction themed movies across America. Most of these science fiction movies had a plot depicting "mutation" of animals, insects, or humans. The metaphor was to illustrate the dangers of radiation. Interestingly, for most of the Americans, science fiction movies become an efficient source for launching a critique of Cold War politics and mutually assured destruction scenario as well. But with the signing of

a treaty to ban atmospheric nuclear weapons in 1963, the anxiety on radiation's fallout reduced drastically in popular culture.

It is hence essential to emphasize here that the popular culture helped in articulating narratives that were used to inform the common public about the merits and demerits of a new set of technology. It further establishes the stage for a widespread debate for the ethical and socio-political implications within American society. Nuclear Age, therefore, no doubt initiated one of the most strong popular culture wave in American society (Vargolici 2011: 31). But most importantly, this representation was not steady, with the passing of years, many political and social changes took place along with the advancement of technology. Therefore, popular culture's articulation of nuclear iconography was instead "cyclical", which kept on changing the course with each decade of the Cold War (Bryan 1997), (Boyer 1985). And last but not the least, it is crucial to understand that during this period, the American government had a profound influence in shaping the nuclear narratives in popular culture.

Within the first decade of the post-Second World War, the American government implemented a series of effective propaganda campaigns which was aimed at creating a "flawed" understanding of nuclear technologies. For example, American agencies had a direct influence in various Hollywood studios where the government's ideology and propaganda were promoted through mainstream movies. The overall objective was to normalize the nuclear discourse in the everyday life of ordinary Americans. Therefore, the American government, along with the print and visual media, aggressively promoted pro-government policies such as civil defense mechanisms and peaceful uses of nuclear technologies by dismissing the fears of the fallout of radiation (Wright 2015: 46-55).

Four Phases of American Nuclear Culture in Hollywood Movies

Since this article is a snapshot study of Cold War nuclear culture, therefore, this subsection will briefly discuss some of the main phases and critical events that shaped the American nuclear culture during the Cold War. Akin to the other popular genres around, the nuclear iconography in famous Hollywood movies developed gradually over the decades in different stages. Right from the year 1945 till the saturation of nuclear discourse in the late 1960s, the ordinary Americans

depended heavily on the various means of popular culture to arrive at some logical understanding of nuclear reality in which they were living. Hollywood films proved to be one of the best sources of such endeavour.

Phase I: Dawn of Nuclear Age (1945-1955)

The year 1945 was the beginning of the nuclear age in America. It was the time when the world's first atomic test was conducted, which was followed the conclusion of the Second World War by the atomic bombing of the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This phase reflects the American people's both the initial euphoria and the later feelings of fears and anxieties. In the immediate year of the atomic bombing of Japan, the initial perception of American people was marked by the impression that the bomb led to the early conclusion of the bloody war. Both media and the American government's propaganda portrayed the atomic bomb to be a necessary evil in ending the war, and at the same time, nuclear energy was promoted as the future of human race and prosperity. US government created propaganda to convince the ordinary American public that nuclear technology is safe, clean, and efficient. Hence, efforts were made to "embrace" the nuclear technology into the everyday life of American people. Consequently, in the immediate years following the end of the Second World War, nuclear technology (the synonymous term for a nuclear weapon and nuclear energy) became a prominent feature of American popular culture, making its presence felt in both the print and popular visual culture (Johnson 2012: 52).

The immediate phase of the atomic bombing of Japan in 1945 was followed by a race within various Hollywood studios to harness the growing public interest in nuclear technology. Some of the early Hollywood movies of this era tried to justify the positive aspects of nuclear technology. Few of the popular movies of this era were *The Beginning or the End?* in 1947 and *Atomic Kid* in 1954. Interestingly, in these early Cold War movies, the narrative of "atom" was added to the film's script at a later stage to enhance the commercial value of the film. For example in 1945, after the atomic bombing of Japan, the post production script of a movie named *The House on 92nd Street* was altered and the atomic narrative was added to it. The film's director was quick to incorporate the actual military footage of atomic bombing of Japan. The logic was to make a commercial profit by marketing the movie as the first movie to showcase atomic bombing (Evans 1998: 23-24). These early Cold War movies had to mould their scripts keeping

in mind both the public's taste as well as government's ideology. The aim was to avoid any external scrutiny. These early movies adopted government's rhetoric in justifying the use of a nuclear weapon on Japan (Evans 1998: 26). For example, the movie *Above and Beyond* in 1952, defended the American nuclear programme and projected atomic bomb as both deterrence and necessity for national defence, the idea aggressively promoted by the American government (Evans 1998: 47).

In the early 1950s, the scenario changed with the Soviet detonation of its nuclear device as well as American testing of its first hydrogen bomb resulting in an escalation of fear of "radiation fallout". These events correlated with an attempt by Hollywood studios to "experiment" with their film scripts to avoid direct government scrutiny and inject more flexibility in their film scripts. These efforts resulted in the birth of the genre of "science fiction" in Hollywood. The most famous of these science fiction films on the nuclear theme was *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* in 1953 and *Monster from the Ocean Floor* in 1954 (Evans 1998: 63). The metaphor here suggests that continuing atomic testing both underwater and in the atmosphere led to the waking of ugly monsters from the depth of the oceans. These mutant monsters resonate with public anxiety over radiation. The mutant monsters also represent the consequences when technology tries to hinder the working of nature (Evans 1998: 66-67).

Phase II: Radiation Fallout and Birth of Science Fiction (1956-1960)

The decade from 1953 onward was dominated by the heightened anxieties around radiation's "fallout". American government conducted a series of nuclear tests during this decade, most of which were an atmospheric test. American people's attitude started to change drastically right after the test of America's first "fusion" test at Bikini atoll in 1954.

This test was named "Bravo" tests, and unlike the first nuclear test of 1945, the Bravo test was massive in its magnitude and radiation fallout (Weart 1989: 155).

The impact and anxiety around the fallout were quick to be depicted in popular culture. The American popular culture struggled to arrive at a particular set of meanings when it comes to describing the radiation's fallout and instead come up with various imaginative ideas to portray the radiation's fallout. For example, most of the American movies and

comics experimented with the radiation's fallout fear by incorporating plots of radiated monsters and superheroes that drive their power from radiation (Borremans n.d).

An estimated five hundred popular films were produced between the year 1948, 1962 under the genre of "science fiction" (Evans 1998: 74). Radiation was one of the critical concerns of this era. The fear of radiation reflected American society to be helpless against mutant monsters and aliens in science fiction movies. The genre of atomic science fiction movies developed in three distinct forms i.e. First with movies depicting radiation infected mutant monsters. The narrative in these films reflects the radiation's fallout fears, which led to the mutation of insects, animals, and humans alike. Interestingly, in all these movies, military technology and scientists are given paramount importance, for the fact that in the film, it is the scientists who ultimately save people from radiated monsters in the end (Evans 1998: 98) (Weart 1989: 191).

The second form of science fiction movies deals with the plot of aliens. The films of this genre mixed the fear and apprehension of nuclear technologies with the hypothetical scenario of the alien threat to human civilization. Some of the movie plots were linked to atomic espionage in a veiled reference to Soviet Union (Evans 1998: 115). For example, *First Man into Space* in 1959 (Evans 1998: 111).

And the third genre of atomic science fiction deals with the depiction of post-apocalyptic scenario either on earth or alien planets. It was an attempt by Hollywood studios to bring forth more authentic and realistic scripts to address nuclear concerns. Interestingly, the movies of this genre promoted the idea that in an apocalyptic atomic environment, humans can survive (Evans 1998: 113). The idea was that a nuclear confrontation would wipe out the evil Soviet empire forever, and ordinary Americans can survive a nuclear war by hiding in shelters for some time. And the aftermath environment of a nuclear war, the USA will emerge as a sole survivor.

Some of the popular movies of this genre were *The Day the World Ended* in 1956 and *The World, the Flesh and Devil* in 1959 (Evans 1998: 136-137).

Phase III: Pessimistic Future (1960-1970)

The Atomic movies from the early 1960s to the beginning of the 1970s portrayed a gloomy scenario of nuclear technology for human future amidst contradictory imagery of atomic technology of being good and

bad overlapping each other in popular culture (Evans 1998: 143). Few of the popular movies of this era were *Last woman on earth* in 1960 with a plot of the love triangle between three post-nuclear holocaust scenario and *Panic in the Year Zero* in 1962 with a plot of a middle-class American family surviving the atomic attack aftermath (Evans 1998: 144). The unique aspect of movies in the 1960s was the fact that in a post-nuclear apocalyptic world, humans were perceived to survive, but due to excessive radiation exposure, they are now turned into mutant beings (Evans 1998: 150).

By the mid-1960s, the nuclear tensions between the Soviet Union and the USA started to cool down, which continued till the late 1970s. During this decade, there was a sharp decline in nuclear imagery in American popular culture owing to several domestic and international factors such as the signing of the partial test ban treaty and Vietnam War crisis. But in the late 1970s, a series of radioactive contamination accident in USA fuelled the fears of contamination which were represented through films like *The Spawn of the Slithis* in 1978, *Red Alter* in 1977, *Uranium Conspiracy* in 1987 and *China Syndrome* in 1979 (Evans 1998: 173-174).

Phase IV: Rekindling of Nuclear Tensions (1980s)

The 1980s witnessed rekindled nuclear escalations owing to the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and the election of Ronald Regan as the new President of USA. There was a renewed arms race scenario with the looming threat of a nuclear war. The Hollywood studies followed suit in depicting the nuclear imagery on the screen with movies like *Invasion U.S.A.* in 1983, *Not of this earth* in 1985 and *War Games* in 1983. The films of this era draw inspiration from the movie narratives of the 1950s in repeating the "heroic survivor formula" in movies like *Terminator* in 1984 (Evans 1998: 175). Hollywood movies during this time faced the problem of coming up with new formulas, therefore, to sustain audience interest in nuclear theme movies, this lack of new imagination and ideas resulted in Hollywood studios to replicate nuclear script films on the already established set of narratives (Evans 1998: 176).

Conclusion

This study started with a simple premise for a socio-cultural analysis of nuclear technology. For an exploration of the cultural iconography

of atomic technology, this study uses popular culture as an independent variable. How ordinary people perceive and contextualize nuclear imagery in their daily life is the dependent variable for this study. Films or movies are considered to be one of the most popular forms of entertainment. Films with the help of cinematic visual metaphors and imaginative story plots help in reflecting the widespread anxieties of a given period. This was clearly illustrated in the survey mentioned above of Hollywood films. Among all the other popular culture forms, films are considered to have a maximum commercial value among the audience. This brief survey demonstrates how popular culture text in the way of popular movies provided a cultural vocabulary to ordinary Americans during the Cold War. Hollywood films reflected the variety set of emotions such as confusion, anxiety, terror, and optimism surrounding. These popular Hollywood films had played an important role in normalizing the nuclear reality for ordinary American citizens during the Cold War. Ordinary citizens had to confront nuclear reality in their everyday life, which on one side, promised a bright future for humans and, at the same time, dreaded the people with its destructive powers. Popular culture, especially the films during the Cold War, provided people an "imaginative space" in which nuclear technology was met with both the "extreme loathing and intense loving" (Kaur 2013: 85).

Therefore, it is beyond any doubt that Hollywood movies shaped the contours of American nuclear history during the Cold War. Popular films as texts provided unique, creative, and whole new different perspectives of the Cold War, which has been different from the discourse, dominated by realpolitik, security studies, and nuclear disarmament studies.

Notes

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Notes

[1.] The Article is based on the author's M.Phil dissertation: *Nuclear Iconography in Indian Popular Culture* (unpublished) submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University in 2016.

Confucianism, Democratic Values and Making of South Korean Political Culture: Exploring Shift in Debate on Incompatibility Theses

Hemant Dubey*

Abstract

The essentially contested debate on culture and its impact in the making of politics of any nation-state has utility in the case of South Korea. Being a historically deep-rooted value and belief system confucianism, and its incompatibility or compatibility with democracy has become instrumental for inquiry into South Korean politics. In the early phase of post-independent South Korea, several studies find out that confucianism is necessarily contradictory with the notion of democracy. However, the successful experiment with democracy and subsequent peaceful transfer of power has widened the scope of the debate, making few to conclude that confucian ideas are compatible with democracy. The present paper finds out the background and conditions for such paradigm shift within this debate itself. To find out the grounds on which confucianism and its role in the making of South Korean political culture are being re-assessed differently are the main objective of the study.

Introduction

Culture has become one of the most important tool among others for the purpose of making inquiry into the different dimensions of socio-political development of any society. The debate on 'culture matters,' although indecisive, is both of contemporary relevance and rewarding, in order to have a knowledge of socio-political transformations in any society. The research in the field of culture and its interplay with politics has significant utility as well as application in the politics of asian

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countries. The astonishing successful economic development, particularly in east asian countries including South Korea has intimated the conceptualisation of 'asian value.' It is in reaction to the role played by a specific set of values representing from confucianism in the political and economic progress of the asian countries, particularly, East Asia. Han Sung has precisely defined it as a consensual approach which is communitarian, not individual; for harmonious social order and respect for elders. Although it lacks proper deductive definition, the States are viewed as a paternalistic State within the perspective of 'asian value.' Moreover, 'asian value' distincts itself from others with its prime concern on functions of education and family as an institution, societal intersects for communitarian sense as sole supreme attainable goal as well as respect for authority.

Confucianism and its Core Values

Confucianism, as an embodiment of the teachings of Confucius, represents the art and science of good government.[1] Its legitimacy is derived from a specific set of ethical and moral principles which states that the prince and monarch must learn to command and rule in full capacity for the benefits of the people. Since it envisages the nature of State and attributes of its ruler in line with such State, confucianism can be regarded as a political theory. Confucianism may also be regarded as a distinct political ideology, a dominant ideal specially during chosen dynasty, based on conservative doctrine with promotion of moral and ethical principles and status quo for social institutions in order to maintain enduring peace and harmony. The ideology of confucianism also reflects a hierarchical society in which authority is tempered by benevolence downward and reciprocal loyalty and submissiveness to the State from below.[2] It perceives and prescribes the State a sting as a 'moral hand' in the self-cultivation of education and harmony for its people. Hyon Sang-yun has rightly assessed that confucianism "gave direction to South Korean philosophy and character to the nation and it wrought important national changes, politically, culturally, and economically."[3] The positive and negative legacies of confucianism in ordering and shaping South Korean society with respect to key ideas of the contemporary period such as modernisation, globalisation, economic development and democracy has been an issue of intense debate ever since South Korea became a republic in 1948. The desirable influence of it remains, for example, encouragement for learning with the aspirations for the attainment of higher social status; respect for ethics and morality, probity, loyalty, and righteousness.

Confucianism and Politics

Politics and society are inseparable and complementary to each other in confucianism. Unlike the general notion of 'politics' in the form of 'power politics' confucianism advocates for 'harmonisation of political activities by the means of strict adherence to ethical norms. Confucianism was not a dynamic system having scope for reforms entailing changes. For example, filial piety and loyalty being its core values has fostered a unified social ethos as a prerequisite for higher degree of harmony in the society. Therefore, this ideology advocates for a centralised State that is ruled by a benevolent ruler with the aid of loyal ministers.

The various type of ideologies provides different meaning to the realm of politics and these differences generally stem from their distinct view on 'human nature' as well as politics itself. Confucianism as an ideology provides a bright and optimistic view of human nature and considers politics as a key transformative tool to harmonise people. It regards the world as 'good and transformative' to moral and ethical code of conduct' through education where legitimacy of rule is based on the ethically rational aspect of human. While contrasting it with western liberal traditions and preference by confucianism over corresponding western liberal tradition. Huntington notes that confucian societies in Asia emphasise the group over the individual, authority over liberty, and responsibilities over rights.[4]

Thus, western societies celebrate the triumphs of liberalism and within it a person is regarded as a sole individual in abstract term with dignity, autonomy and liberty. This is obvious that within the liberal framework communitarian goal of common goods is not totally neglected altogether. However, it has been less prioritised than the consent of an individual with respect to their autonomy and liberty in the process of social interaction. In this respect, the ideas behind the need of democracy in confucian society is different from the play field of 'liberalism in the west'. The State in later traditions is created out of 'social contract' for the promotion of rule of law for the goal of protecting the intrinsic values such as liberty and rights of an individuals. An ideal image of the confucian State is of family-writ-large, where the emperor or monarch is regarded as the father of the State, and the subjects are considered as their children. However, conception of democracy in confucian society necessarily evolves from the latter's ultimate goal of creating and maintaining social harmony and righteous rule.

The Debate: Compatibility and Incompatibility Thesis

In the case of South Korea, assessment of confucianism has been closely linked to the background of the prevailing socio-political context and its success as well as failure in the attainment of national goal of the same period. For example, not surprisingly, South Koreans have lamented over deep penetration of confucian ideals in almost all spheres of human relations as the main reason for the event of annexation and colonisation by Japan. Similarly, confucianism and values derived from it used to be considered as the main factor behind the authoritative rule by the President of the Republic as well as poor economic performance in the early phase of the post-independence period, specifically until the period of 1970s. However, as South Korean State transformed itself to 'developmental state', it adopted several decisive measures and policies such as export promotion industrialisation, labour and land reforms. Its consequences such as remarkable economic progress with the significant rise in the living standards made South Koreans cherish and rather celebrate the most of the ethos of confucianism. It is obvious that an outstanding economic progress made the entire debate on confucianism and its compatibility with economic development a final closure. However, within the lens of political liberalism and several associated ideas such as democratisation of the public sphere, rule of law etc. confucianism has regained critical attention not only by the democracy enthusiasts worldwide including South Korea itself. In the early years of the formation of the Republic and South Koreas failure to successfully experiment with democracy made many scholars to study the incompatibility of confucianism with political liberal democracy. Since then the confucian or asian value in general in the context of hindrance or favourable ground for democratisation. Much scholarship on east Asia and on confucian claim that Western-style liberal democracy is not compatible with confucianism and advocates an Asian-style democracy that prioritises communitarian values and the welfare of the family and community.[5] Conversely, other scholars argue that confucianism and Western-style liberal democracy are indeed compatible.[6]

In addition, the later category of scholars do not only make the case of confucianism and its compatibility with the democracy a valid ground, but they also put emphasis that confucianism's quest for the communitarian sense, social harmony, and education are, in fact, the core ideas of democracy, also. In the contemporary period, such essential values of democracy have been weakened in several liberal democracies, thus, the confucianism as a value system fundamentally serves to the ideals and goals of democracy.

The incompatibility thesis or the Asian Value Thesis, as it is widely known, contends that confucian traditions are not fit for the cultivation of democratic values and rather it gives birth and legitimises the authoritarian type rule.[7]

Such arguments derive its persuasiveness from the core confucian values of social hierarchy; group primacy, but not individuals, unchallenged obligation to authority etc. which are regarded as contradictory to the critical attributes of democracy in terms of liberty of individual, and equality.

However, competing and contradictory to above views of incompatibility theorists the scholarships on the promise of confucianism for democracy is neither less significant nor less relevant. The group of scholars who support confucianism as a convergence with democratic ideals argue that the various fundamental aspect of the former are necessarily consistent with democracy. As no culture and belief system is static in a complete sense, confucianism too, has adopted to diverse changes caused by the social and political transformation in South Korea, and likewise the former has also served as a catalyst for such transformations.

The striking evidence for this can be provided by the case of South Korea being one of the most perfect example of 'the third wave of democratisation,'[8] especially among the east-asian countries. The way the South Korean democracy was desired by its people since 1960 and finally its formal democratisation during the period of 1980s has impressed this group of scholars to provide the precise compatibility of confucianism with democracy.

Conclusion: The Confucian Democracy

In addition to this, diverse arguments regarding Confucianism as 'value addition to democracy' has acquired the form of new debate. Liberal democracy in many parts of the world has suffered major shocks and there has been underperformance of such democratic ideas with the rise of illiberal democracy in different parts of the world. In this situation, confucian value system has inherent potential to provide the ultimate political and social goals that are desired and prioritised by liberal democracy, however, not often attained. For instance, confucian values of social hierarchy and harmony, benevolence, communality, and education etc. adds qualitatively to the working of democracy and democracy strives to attain such essential values.

However, both mutually contending views on the effects of South Korean confucianism with democracy is not conclusive. Since

confucianism has many core values and few can exclude democratic ideas, yet few of its ideas can complement to the norms of democracy. In early studies, while exploring the relation of culture with the promotion of democracy, scholars tend to treat culture as an unified composite culture. In recent times, there has been a shift form viewing culture as composite unit to the acknowledgement of 'fragmentation within culture' in several mutually contradictory or complementary values. Thus, the focus has shifted to the study of individual components within a value system as an independent variable in the shaping of political development. This new approach of considering each different components within culture as an abstract and independent from others is more viable in the case of South Korea as confucianism, too has never been monolithic-static type value system.

Moreover, since confucianism has multi-faceted characteristics it necessarily created varying effects on people's attitude towards democracy and politics, in general. Many of confucian doctrines can be assessed on the basis of one's fundamental concern over the essential nature of the democracy that has acquired the nature of subjectivity. Therefore, it depends on the subjective preference and prioritisation setting for a set of particular values over others while evaluating the contribution of the confucianism in the promotion of democratic ideals. For example, social hierarchy being an essential and defining feature of confucianism provides reason for the authoritarian nature of governments in South Korea, however, hierarchical order does contributes to social and political stability in times of drastic change like that of South Korea in its post independence phase. Similarly, with the notion of benevolent paternalism vertical accountability can be achieved that has become a desperate goal for the achievement of representativeness in a democracy. Although confucian philosophy does not support atomistic nature and materialist needs of human, it strongly prescribes that benefits of all people should be the sole task of the ruler. Democracy too, in general, is concerned with the welfare of the people. Thus, as per both confucianism and democracy government is accountable for well being of the citizens.

Further, confucian ideas of 'great unity' and 'harmony' are prerequisite for the promotion of diversity, tolerance and social cohesiveness. In contemporary time, the need of tolerance due to inevitable diversity, especially in multicultural democratic polity, has been an important constituent of a democratic polity. The political theory of confucianism also set norms for the tolerance along with diversity to be achieved with social harmonisation in society.

Moreover, high emphasis on education in confucian system saves the very purpose of democracy as it provides individuals with equal opportunity for political participation and functions for the individual's political socialisation. In democratic polity, education remains the only important means by which individual's aspirations for the upward mobility and their fundamental right to attain their full potential are made possible.

As people were made familiar to the 'cost of dictatorship', they aspired for the 'benefits of democracy'. Thus, the students, other masses, political oppositions, and eventually the ruling elite pursued the path of democracy implementation in order to eliminate the evils of decades long authoritarian rule. Despite the possibility of debate and contestation over the level of democratic consolidation and its quality, South Korea undoubtedly, remains the representative and successful case for third wave of democratisation.

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Notes

[1.] The core ideas within confucianism operated along with 'Three guidelines and Five Virtue' (3G 5V). The filial piety, human generosity and ritual are the three guiding forces behind every act whereas benevolence, righteousness, propriety, knowledge and integrity are the five key values of human.

[2.] Robinson, Michael. (1991). 'Perception of Confucianism in Twentieth-Century South Korea." In The East Asian Region: Confucian Heritage and Its Modern Adaptation, ed. Gilbert Rozman. Princeton: Princeton University Press. p.205.

[3.] Hyon Sang Yun claims in his celebrated work Chason Yuhaksa (The History of South Korean Confucianism) as cited in Kihl, Young W. (2015). Transforming South Korean Politics. New York: Routledge.

[4.] Huntington, Samuel P. (1991). The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press. p. 304.

[5.] Neher (1994), Roy (1994), Woo-Cumings (1994), Zakaria and Lee 1(994) subscribes to such views.

[6.] Collins (2008), Hood (1998), Kim (1994), Nuyen (2000) subscribes to this perspective on confucianism.

[7.] This view is argued by many early as well as contemporary scholars on Confucianism like Chan (1999), Huntington (1991), Kang (2006) and Shin (2011) to cite the few of them.

[8.] The Third Wave of democratisation thesis, advanced by Huntington, is related to introduction of democratic regime that began in 1974 with Carnation Revolution, Portugal and included the historic democratic transitions in Latin America in the 1980s, Asia Pacific countries and regions (Philippines, South Korea, and Taiwan) from 1986 to 1988. See Huntington, Samuel P. (1991). The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.

Mines, Mineral Laws in India: Analysis in the Light of National Mineral Policy 2019

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Abstract

Mining is an activity prevailing since beginning of the human civilization. Minerals have a large contribution in Indian economy. After independence, the development of the mineral industries of India has been more rapid than that of the counties economy as a whole. During the British regime, minerals were exported to Britain and other countries. The British India adopted the policy of maximum exploitation of national resources. In 1956, the Indian Parliament first time tried to regulate the mineral sector through Mines Mineral and Regulation Development Act 1957 (MMRD). The Act provides for "the grant of permits, licenses, leases etc. for exploration of minerals". The Parliament amended the 1957 Act in 2015 with a view to increase investment from private sector and establish the liability of mining stakeholders in case of illegal mining.

The paper analyses the MMRD ACT 2015 and new National Mineral Policy 2019 and its impact on the mining sector.

Historical Background

The extraction of mineral resources in India harks back to the days of the Harappan civilization (Ministry of Mines, 2016). The Ministry of Mines (MoM), Government of India (GoI), is accountable for the overall

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mining and minerals of the nation, which also comprises legislations, policy planning and administration. GoI, classified the minerals in two divisions, namely major minerals and minor minerals. Section 3(e) MMRD Act, 1957 deals with the minor mineral division which incorporates clay, sand, gravel, pebbles, cobbles, stones, boulders, limestone, kankar, brick earth, bentonite, slate, marble used for construction. The other minerals which are not defined under this act are treated as major minerals. From the initial years after independence, the government policy in India has always considered minerals to be of 'basic' and 'strategic' importance for the country. Accordingly, the Industrial Policy Resolution of 1948 provided that coal and mineral oils would be two of the six industries where establishment of new undertakings would be the exclusive responsibility of the public sector. Additionally, other minerals were also treated as 'basic industries' requiring planning, regulation and control of the Central government.

The landmark Industrial Policy Resolution (IPR) of 1956 went a step further in pursuance of its objective of realizing a 'socialistic pattern of society' in India and put major minerals such as coal and lignite, mineral oils, iron ore, manganese ore, chrome ore, copper, lead, zinc, atomic minerals and a few others in its Schedule A, which was exclusively reserved for the public sector. These minerals were described as belonging to the group of industries which were of 'basic and strategic importance' for the country's economy and development. All other minerals except minor minerals were put in Schedule B, which included industries where private sector participation was allowed along with increasing participation of the State in establishing new undertakings.[1]

The restrictive approach of IPR 1956 was reflected in the Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) (MMRD) Act 1957, meant for the regulation and development of minerals in public interest, as well as in the Mineral Concession Rules (MCR) 1960 and the Mineral Conservation and Development Rules (MCRD) 1988 framed under it. Further, the MMRD Act 1957 was amended in order to enhance government control over mining including the power to reserve areas for the public sector enterprises. In 1988, the MCDR was also revised in order to enable the Central government's technical agency IBM (Indian Bureau of Mines) to monitor and regulate mining activity.[2] The severe regulatory regime of IPR and the MMRD Act 1957 and its Rules continued till the early 1990s. As late as August 1990, the National Mineral Policy, announced by the Government of India conferred on

the State the exclusive or predominant responsibility for the development of mining and processing of specified minerals of basic and strategic importance. The public sector companies dominated the mining sector during the period. After sometime, there was an overlap of the government's powers to regulate the mining activity and its assumed responsibility to develop mines through government undertakings. It was basically the consequence of a public policy, existing in many developing countries in the 1960s and 1970s, that was concerned with retaining sovereignty over natural resources and, therefore, developing the mineral sector primarily through the public sector. In the limited area where private investment was allowed, the insistence was on retaining majority local ownership, with minimum (not more than 40 per cent) of foreign participation.[3]

MMRD Act 1957 and MMRD Amendment Act 2019 Comparative Analysis

The doctrine legislation that directs the mineral and mining division in India is Mines and Minerals (Development & Regulation) Act (MMDR), 1957. The minor minerals under section 15 (1) of MMDR Act, 1957, are regulated by respective states, as per the directions of Central government. Before 1994, no precise laws and regulations related to mining activity were enacted. For the first time in India, Ministry of Environment and Forest (MoEF), issued notification on 27th January, 1994, under the umbrella act of EPA (1986) Sub-Rule (3) of Rule 5 of the Rules of 1986 and Sub Section (1) and Clause (v) of Sub-Section (2) of Section 3, specified the prerequisite and procedure for the Environmental Clearance (EC) for the projects enlisted in Schedule I. The minor mineral mining projects were however, not listed in the Schedule I of this notification. The mining projects (major mineral) with leases more than 5ha were enlisted in Section 20 of Schedule I of the notification. This notification constituted expert committees for the preparation of Environmental Impact Assessment Report. To overcome the lacunes of 1994 EIA notification, the Central government on 14th September, 2006, issued a new notification, i.e., Environment Impact Assessment Notification, 2006. In 2006, EIA notification, prior environment clearance was necessary for the projects listed in Schedule of this notification. The developmental projects have been grouped into two classes, i.e., Category 'A' and Category 'B' under Clause 2 of the EIA, 2006, notification. Projects enlisted in Category 'A' require

prior EC from MoEF, whereas Category 'B' projects, seek EC from State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA).

The Constitution of India confers the ownership rights over mines to State governments. However, the Central government retains the regulatory authority over all major minerals defined in the Schedule A of the Industrial Policy Resolution (IPR) 1956. The regulatory power over minor minerals enlisted under Schedule B has been left with the State governments. The jurisdictions of Central and State governments over minerals have been clearly defined in the Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) (MMRD) Act 1957. The Central government regulates the major minerals by controlling exploration, extraction and trade of minerals and determining the royalty rates. Section 2 provides an account of the institutional failure to safeguard environment and the interests of local communities.[4]

MMDR Act 1957 was the only law passed by the Indian Parliament to regulate mining activities in India. The Act provides two types of minerals i.e. major minerals and minor minerals. Environmental costs in the mining areas are enormous and accrue in many forms, namely, deforestation, loss of biodiversity, extinction of water bodies, pollution of water (groundwater and surface water), air and noise. Social costs of mining are witnessed through many ugly faces, namely, displacement of local communities, loss of livelihood, devastation of agricultural land, health problems, and other psychological trauma caused by the said activities.[5] Mining activities are regulated by a slew of environmental laws. Water (Prevention and Control and Control of Pollution) Act 1974; Conservation Act 1980; Air and Control of Pollution) Act Environment Protection Act the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) notification by ministry of mines.[6]

Mining activities are, thus, regulated by the Pollution Control Board (for air and water), Ministry of Environment and Forest, Indian Bureau of Mines and the State Mines and Geology Departments. However, due to poor monitoring and rent-seeking activities by these agencies, the present system has failed to safeguard the environment. Starting from the EIA to the adherence of EMP, mining companies seldom comply with the environmental regulations.[7]

The New Act 2015 i.e. The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act has been brought about to supplement the Modi government's agenda of economic development driven by industrial growth, by way of removing bottlenecks, technical and

otherwise, from certain legislations identified as key to such growth. The last few years have seen a fairly busy schedule for legislative and policy revision in the mining sector, and the government now aims to build upon this momentum to usher in further changes, the need for which arises because of the notoriously convoluted permit system that unnecessarily delays application processes, and loopholes that allow for sub-version of already lax safety standards, both of which have played a major part in inhibiting the maturation of mining practices in the country.[8]

The new Act aims to consolidate the State of the mining industry, and reorganize it, in order to fulfil its potential as a surge for the Indian economy. Important features that have been introduced include the classification of minerals as notified or non-notified, revision in lease periods and permission for their transfer, institutional set-ups, and a more stringent system of penalties. Also significant is the fact of growing competition amongst India's peers in economic and regional affiliations [the examples of BRICS and ASEAN come to mind]; shifts in investment patterns in favour of emerging markets have lead to the emergence of new challenges for the Indian mining sector that will come as a clarion call for it to step up its game if it is to survive amongst these rising giants.[9]

The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act (MMDRAA), 2015, which amended the parent Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act (MMDRA) of 1957, shows how the government has not only shunned an opportunity to impart clarity and vision to an otherwise blurred mineral policy but also created considerable scope for opacity and rent seeking in tapping the mineral wealth of the country. Section 11(2) of the MMDRA of 1957 required that reconnaissance/prospecting/ mining licensees be selected on a first-come-first-serve (FCFS) basis. The low royalty rates on minerals, coupled with a non-transparent FCFS, allowed licensees to capture the lion's share of the profit margins, giving scope for corruption.[10]

NMP2008 and NMP2019 Comparative Analysis

As early as in the 3rd century BC, Kautilya, in the *Arthashastra* emphasized "the need to conserve high-valued minerals as a matter of State policy"[11] It is ironic that neither the National Mineral Policy (NMP) of 2008 (Ministry of Mines 2008) nor any of the mining laws have addressed these concerns.

The policy reform in the mining sector is driven by the realization by the policy makers, that the past restrictive policies have stunted the growth of India's mineral sector compared to other mineral-rich countries like Australia, South Africa and South America which along with India formed a continuous landmass before the breaking-up of Gondwana land and therefore, have the similar geological and metallurgical history. Besides, most of the mineral deposits, which are found on the surface and easily extractable, have already been explored. Exploration now has to look for increasingly difficult terrain and search for minerals at greater depth. This requires huge capital resources, more sophisticated technology and large-scale operations. India's main (government) exploration agency, the Geological Survey of India (GSI), neither has the resources nor the up-to-date technology to undertake this task. This necessitates import of technology, capital and expertise from abroad. In order to attract foreign investment and technology into the mining sector, comprehensive liberalization is required. However, in the Indian context, it has been difficult to undertake bold reforms in one-go, mainly due to the hangover of the past 'socialistic' or 'restrictive' mindset. As in the case of many other areas, policy reforms in the mining sector over the past two decades has also been slow and gradual which has limited the benefits to be derived from such reforms.

Also, there are two issues that are relevant while considering the implications of a policy statement (like the National Mineral Policy) in respect of the mining sector which is a relatively small sector of the Indian economy. Firstly, the mineral policy is only a part of the overall policy framework and regulatory system that includes, among other things, the policies and legislations on environment, forest conservation, foreign investment and foreign exchange, industrial development, trade, company affairs, labour, etc. Secondly, a policy announcement in respect of an economic sector (like the National Mineral Policy) by itself is of little consequence unless its prescriptions are translated into legislative measures through the creation of new legislation and/or amendments to the existing laws governing the sector.

The NMP of 2008 states, to maximize gains from the comparative advantage which the country enjoys, intra se mineral development will be prioritized in terms of import substitution, value addition and export, in that order. Mineral areas lie largely in areas notified under the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution, where the local Adivasis have entitlements to land, minerals, etc. Clause 5 of that Schedule empowers the State to adapt any law, including the law relating to mining, to suit the interests of the Adivasis. The *Samatha* judgment of the Supreme Court stipulated

that no mining leases be granted to any person other than the government and the tribal's within such areas. In contrast, NMP states, "in grant of mineral concessions for small deposits in Scheduled Areas, *preference* shall be given to Scheduled Tribes singly or as cooperatives" (emphasis added) (Ministry of Mines 2008). This is not wholly consistent with the apex court's directive.[12]

National Mineral Policy 2019 replaces the extant National Mineral Policy 2008 ("NMP 2008"). The impetus to review NMP 2008 came about by way of a direction from the Supreme Court vide its judgment dated 02.08.2017 in Writ Petition (Civil) No. 114/2014 entitled Common Cause v/s Union of India & Others.[13]

The New National Mineral Policy will ensure more effective regulation. It will lead to sustainable mining sector development in future while addressing the issues of project affected persons especially those residing in tribal areas The aim of National Mineral Policy 2019 is to have a more effective, meaningful and implementable policy that brings in further transparency, better regulation and enforcement, balanced social and economic growth as well as sustainable mining practices. The National Mineral Policy 2019 includes provisions which will give boost to mining sector such as introduction of Right of First Refusal for RP/PL holders, encouraging the private sector to take up exploration, auctioning in virgin areas for composite RP cum PL cum ML on revenue share basis, encouragement of merger and acquisition of mining entities and transfer of mining leases and creation of dedicated mineral corridors to boost private sector mining areas. The 2019 Policy proposes to grant status of industry to mining activity to boost financing of mining for private sector and for acquisitions of mineral assets in other countries by private sector It also mentions that long-term import export policy for mineral will help private sector in better planning and stability in business The Policy also mentions rationalizing reserved areas given to PSUs which have not been used and to put these areas to auction, which will give more opportunity to private sector for participation.

The Policy also mentions to make efforts to harmonize taxes, levies and royalty with world benchmarks to help private sector.

"Among the changes introduced in the National Mineral Policy, 2019 include the focus on make in India initiative and Gender sensitivity in terms of the vision. In so far as the regulation in Minerals is concerned, E-Governance, IT enabled systems, awareness and information campaigns have been incorporated. Regarding the role of State in mineral development online public portal with provision for generating triggers

at higher level in the event of delay of clearances has been put in place. NMP 2019 aims to attract private investment through incentives while the efforts would be made to maintain a database of mineral resources and tenements under mining tenement systems. The new policy focuses on use of coastal waterways and inland shipping for evacuation and transportation of minerals and encourages dedicated mineral corridors to facilitate the transportation of minerals. The utilization of the district mineral fund for equitable development of project affected persons and areas provided. NMP 2019 proposes a long-term export import policy for the mineral sector to provide stability and as an incentive for investing in large-scale commercial mining activity."

Conclusion

Another serious problem is that of illegal mining. Weak governance and rampant corruption are facilitating illegal mining leading to depletion of natural resources and harm to the environment. The socio-economic factor of mining operations is often overlooked. There is a need to streamline the mining operations in order to bring it in consonance with the socio-economic exigencies of the area. Due to poor handling of resources, soil and sand mining cause negative impacts on the environment. The system of preparing an EMP Report for clearance from the Government of India, prior to implementation of mining project is one such step in the right direction in regulating mining operations and mitigating the adverse impacts of the mining operations.

The government should exercise prudence when it comes to leasing out the riverbed for mining activities and also demarcate areas clearly and monitor mining through a suitable institutional mechanism. A high level lobbying committee must be formed and laws need to be enforced in an efficient and unbiased way and decisive steps should be taken for right environmental solution.

The laws regulating mining activities i.e. Mines and Minerals (D&R) Act 1957 which is amended and replaced by MMRD Amendment 2015, provide method of grant of reconnaissance operation, reconnaissance permit, prospecting license, mining lease etc. The act also deals with the mining plan, forest clearance and closure of mines plan which are necessary for granting the mining lease. The MMRD Amendment 2015 and the Rules framed under this law are the basic legislation for the mining sector. The environmental and forest conservation laws also infringe on the sector. A multiplicity of Central and State bureaucracies play somewhat ineffective role in administering and managing the sector.

This has resulted in illegal mining across a number of States. The NMP should provide for strategic ceilings on annual mineral extraction levels. Decisions on mineral regulation should be entrusted to a statutory regulator. The socio-economic costs of mining call for regulating both local demand and exports. Mineral demand management should be given a high priority.

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Performance of Manufacturing Sector of Assam in the Post-Liberalization Period

Alok Ranjan Dutta[*]

Abstract

Based on secondary data, the article tries to explore the different dimensions of manufacturing sector performance in Assam, a northeastern state, in the post-liberalization period. Such a study merits attention because Assam is considered as one of the industrially backward states of India and the state has gained policy attention in the form of separate industrial policies in the post-reform period. The article reveals that Assam is still in a disadvantageous position compared to other States and except a few, it is lagging behind other major states of India in different parameters of manufacturing sector development. The underdevelopment of the micro and small manufacturing sector or the unregistered manufacturing sector relative to the registered sector of the state adds to disadvantage. Despite the presence of policy incentives in the post- liberalization period, the state has not yet achieved the desired level of development in the industrial sector.

Introduction

Industrialization is a vehicle of faster growth with its forward and backward linkage with other sectors of the economy. Although in recent years policy makers in India have recognized the importance of industries, particularly the manufacturing, to achieve the objective of sustained high growth balanced across regions manufacturing sector contributes a relatively smaller part to the economy of India. In the state of Assam, the share of manufacturing sector in the economy (in

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terms of contribution to Net State Domestic Product) is even less than that of the country as a whole despite the state having a history of modern industrial activity dating back to the 19th century, initiated and controlled by colonial capital (Ganguly 2006, Misra 1980). Partition of the country at the time of independence struck a serious blow to the industrialization process in Assam by creating geographical isolation. A brief revival of industrial processes in the 1970s via setting up of public sector industrial units received setback once again in the post liberalization period. To counter the disadvantage of the north eastern region including Assam, the North East Industrial Policy 1997 and North East Industrial and Investment Policy (NEIIP), 2007 were formulated. Have these policies rendered any visible impact on the industrial sector of Assam in general and the manufacturing sector in particular? Literature on industrial development and policy has paid little attention on this issue. Being the centre of attraction under 'Act East Policy', North East India, particularly Assam, should have been the economic hub through industrial development. But whether this is really happening is an issue that is open for debate. Keeping in view all these, the present article makes an attempt to review the status of the manufacturing sector in Assam particularly in the post-liberalization period. The paper is based on secondary data. Data from Central Statistical Organization, Directorate of Economics and statistics, Annual Survey of India, National Sample Survey Organization and Economic census data have been used in the study

2. Manufacturing Sector in Assam- Size and Contribution

For the purpose of collection of data relating to manufacturing activities through sample survey, all manufacturing units in India are classified into two broad sectors namely, registered[1] and unregistered sectors or organised and unorganised sectors- the terms being quite often used interchangeably. The state of Assam is also a service led economy like the country. The share of industry to NSDP has been consistently lower than those of services and agriculture. In the year 2015-16 industry (excluding the construction sector) contributed 11 per cent to NSDP against 51 per cent of services and 17 per cent of agriculture at current prices. Contribution of the manufacturing sector to the industry sector (without construction sector) was 88 percent in the same year and with construction sector included in industry sector then contribution of manufacturing to industry sector was 44 percent. This shows the importance of the manufacturing sector in the industrial map of Assam and manufacturing sector is quite representative of industrial sector of

the state. Figure 1 presents a relative comparison of Assam with the rest of country regarding the size and contribution of the manufacturing sector. In terms of contribution of manufacturing sector to NSDP, Assam is behind all India average. Same is also true for employment generated by the manufacturing sector and number of establishments. Table 1 shows that compared to pre reform period, output share of manufacturing and industry actually declined in the post-liberalization period.

Figure 1 : Size and contribution of the Manufacturing Sector of Assam (in percent)
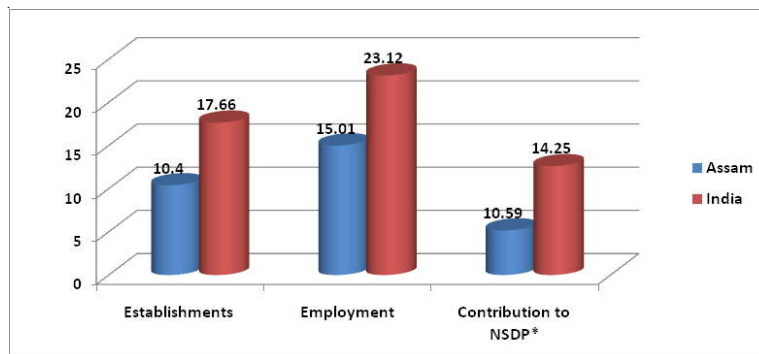
Source: Sixth Economic census
* Calculated from CSO data for the year 2015-16 at current price

Table 1: Average share of Industry and Manufacturing sector to NSDP in Assam (in percent) at 1999-00 price

Year	Industry* to NSDP	Manufacturing to NSDP
1982-1991	14.74	9.01
1992-2002	11.66	7.1
2003-2013	11.9	7.51

    *Industry excludes the construction sectorSource: Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Govt. of Assam

3. Assam's Position in the All India Map of Manufacturing

Table 2 reveals the share of Assam in the all-India total in different parameters of manufacturing sector during 2015-16, vis- a- vis some

other major states of India and the result is not encouraging. The year 2015-16 has been chosen because it is the latest year for which we get data for unregistered or unincorporated manufacturing enterprises. In addition to this, by the year 2016, we almost marked the end of two successive editions of industrial polices in Assam i.e. industrial policies of 1997 and 2007.So it makes sense to examine the position of the state among other states after these two policy interventions. In the unregistered manufacturing sector, Assam is placed at the bottom position (Table 2) except Jammu & Kashmir. In case of registered manufacturing, its performance is better than Bihar and Jammu Kashmir but worse than rest of the major states of India.

Table 2: Assam's share of the all-India total in different parameters of manufacturing vis –a vis some other major states (in percent)

States	Unregistered Manufacturing			Registered Manufacturing		
	GVA	Employment	Fixed Capital	GVA	Employment	Fixed Capital
Assam	1.5	1.63	0.41	0.92	1.46	1.14
	(0.58)	(0.63)	(0.16)	(0.36)	(0.57)	(0.44)
Gujarat	7	5.5	12.57	16.57	10.94	18.87
	(1.40)	(1.10)	(2.52)	(3.32)	(2.19)	(3.78)
Haryana	2.7	1.72	1.43	4.85	5.02	3.63
	(1.29)	(0.82)	(0.68)	(2.32)	(2.40)	(1.74)
Maharashtra	11.8	8.2	13.87	19.51	13.78	12.32
	(1.27)	(0.88)	(1.49)	(2.10)	(1.48)	(1.33)
Punjub	2.7	2.23	2.23	2.10	4.26	1.56
	(1.18)	(0.97)	(0.97)	(0.92)	(1.86)	(0.68)
Kerala	5.7	4.04	3.45	1.44	2.37	1.37
	(2.07)	(1.46)	(1.25)	(0.52)	(0.86)	(0.50)
Rajasthan	4.9	4.18	5.09	3.38	3.56	3.01
	(0.86)	(0.74)	(0.90)	(0.60)	(0.63)	(0.53)
Jammu-Kashmir	1.3	0.98	1.37	0.51	0.48	0.24
	(1.25)	(0.94)	(1.32)	(0.49)	(0.46)	(0.23)
Karnataka	8	6.42	6.51	6.18	7.03	6.18
	(1.58)	(1.27)	(1.29)	(1.22)	(1.39)	(1.22)
Tamil Nadu	9.2	8.7	9.56	10.32	16.27	8.47
	(1.54)	(1.46)	(1.60)	(1.73)	(2.73)	(1.42)
Bihar	4.5	4.77	2.00	0.48	0.84	0.35
	(0.52)	(0.56)	(0.23)	(0.06)	(0.10)	(0.04)
Uttar Pradesh	11	14.86	10.65	5.08	6.58	4.52
	(0.67)	(0.90)	(0.65)	(0.31)	(0.40)	(0.27)

Andhra Pradesh	3.9	5.05	3.09	3.05	3.64	5.99
	(0.96)	(1.24)	(0.76)	(0.75)	(0.89)	(1.47)
Madhya Pradesh	3.4	4.43	4.47	2.80	2.51	4.89
	(0.57)	(0.74)	(0.75)	(0.47)	(0.42)	(0.82)
Odisha	1.8	2.99	1.01	1.87	1.80	9.59
	(0.52)	(0.86)	(0.29)	(0.54)	(0.52)	(2.76)

Source: Extracted from NSSO 73rd (2015-16) Round Survey, and ASI data for the same year.Figures in the parentheses are States' share scaled by percentage share of population of the respective states to India according to 2011 population census.

Capital formation (shown by fixed capital) is the lowest in Assam in the unregistered sector. In the registered sector its position is better than that in Jammu Kashmir and Bihar. When population of the state is taken into consideration, Assam is found doing better than Odisha (in GVA) and Bihar (GVA and employment) in the unregistered manufacturing. In registered manufacturing, Assam is found doing better than Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and partly in some parameters it is doing better than Jammu & Kashmir. When compared with fixed capital scaled by population of the state, we have found that in the unregistered sector it is the lowest and in registered sector Jammu & Kashmir, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh are the states where capital formation is lower than Assam. Poor capital formation may indirectly point to the decreasing flow of investments particularly to small manufacturing sector in Assam even after the presence of industrial polices for North Eastern Region of India.

4. Growth in the Manufacturing sector of Assam in the Post-Liberalization Period.

Table 3 presents the growth rate[2] of relevant parameters in the manufacturing sector. During the reference period of 1995-2016, the sector has witnessed a negative annual growth rate of -1.14 percent in employment which seems to be mostly driven by high negative growth of employment in unregistered manufacturing or the micro and small enterprise sector. Negative employment elasticity[3] of the micro enterprise sector resembles with that of present agriculture sector of India. Low employment elasticity indicates slow employment growth in comparison to value addition. In terms of growth of establishments also manufacturing sector shows a negative growth rate which is again due to negative growth of establishments in the unregistered manufacturing sector.

Table 3: Growth rate (%) of some selected parameters of the Manufacturing sector (1995-2016)

Sector	Enterprises/ Establishments	Employment*	Gross Value Added (GVA)**	Employment elasticity
Unregistered Sector	-2.04	-2.36	6.25	-0.38
Registered Sector	4.83	2.60	7.80	0.33
Manufacturing sector of Assam	-1.98	-1.14	7.43	-0.15
Unregistered Sector	1.53	0.41	6.68	0.06
Registered Sector	3.25	2.21	7.68	0.29
Manufacturing sector of India	1.55	0.86	7.49	0.11

Source: Extracted from NSSO, 51st (1994-95) and 73rd (2015-16) Round Survey , And ASI data for the same years, Govt. of India* Employment means total persons engaged in the sector ** GVA at constant price of 2004-05

5. Structural Changes in the Manufacturing Sector of Assam in the Post-Liberalization Period (1995-2016)

For unregistered sector there are some differences[4] of coverage's of different industry groups in four NSS rounds. These differences between the rounds may not cause serious distortions as far as the entire unregistered manufacturing sector is concerned but may affect the comparison between different types of enterprises (Kathuria et al, 2010). Figure 2.1-2.4 shows the structural changes in the manufacturing sector, more particularly in the unregistered sector during 1994-95 to 2015-16 in terms of four important parameters, namely, number of units, number of workers, fixed capital and gross value added. Following are some of the major observations that can be extracted.

First manufacturing sector of Assam is dominated by the registered sector particularly through its contribution to gross value added and capital formation. Even in manufacturing employment though in the initial years unregistered manufacturing sector used to dominate, gradually it has been observed losing its importance in terms of generation of employment.

Secondly within the unregistered sector some interesting changes have been noticed during the reference period of 1995-2016.

Figure 2.1 :Percentage distribution Figure 2.2 : Percentage Distribution of total Persons engaged of Manufacturing units
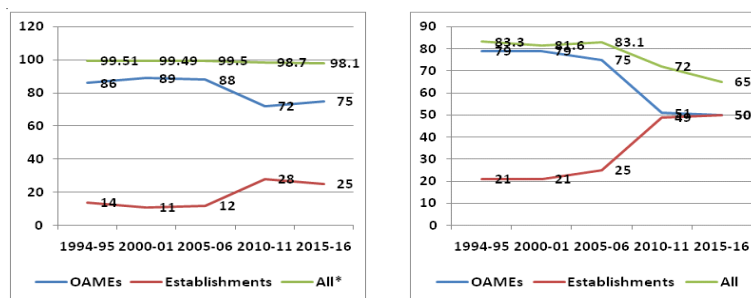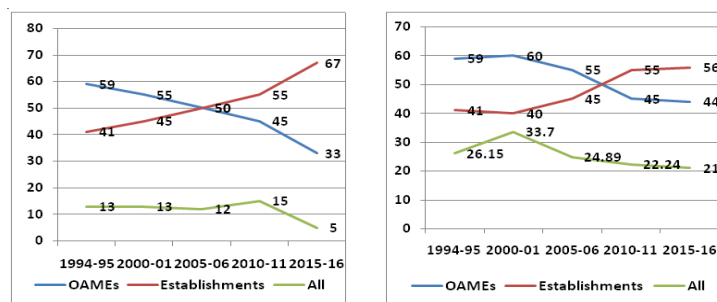

Figure 2.3: Percentage distribution of Fixed assets
Figure 2.4 : Percentage distribution GVA

Source : Extracted from NSSO, 51st (1994-1995), 56th (2000-01), 62nd (2005-06), 67th (2010-11) and 73rd (2015-16) round survey and ASI summary results for the same years*OAMEs and Establihments are expressed as percentage to the total unregistered manufacturing sector and unregistered manufacturing sector (All) to the total manufacturing sector.

It is obvious from (Figure 2.1-2.4) that a very large proportion of unorganized manufacturing industries in Assam have continued to be dominated by the OAMEs[5], which are the tiniest self-employing household enterprises. For example, in 1994-95, 86 per cent of the units, 79 per cent of workers and 59 per cent of gross value added in the unregistered manufacturing sector are concentrated in this segment. On the other hand, these percentages are only 14 percent 21percent and 41 percent respectively for the establishment segment, which is a dynamic sector in the unregistered segment. But gradual transformation has been noticed in the sector over time in terms of slowdown in OAMEs in all parameters and increasing importance of Establishments.

During 2015-16, Establishments had 25 percent share in units, 50 percent employment share and 56 percent value addition share whereas OAMEs have been seen losing its foot. OAMEs are the household run activities without any use of hired workers. So negative growth of employment in this segment offers reasonable scope to believe that this sector is not remunerative and hence people are leaving in search of alternative employment. Establishments are showing good performance in terms of both growth of units and employment. This means that units having high productivity are growing and it is a good sign.

6. Gross Value Added (GVA) and Emoluments per person in the Manufacturing Sector of Assam vis-à-vis Rest of India

Except West Bengal, Bihar and Kerala, GVA per person engaged (also known as labour productivity) in the manufacturing sector in the registered sector is lower than that in other states and India as a whole (figure 3.2). Labour productivity in the unregistered manufacturing in Assam is higher than that in India (figure 3.1), and this can be understood because employment in this sector is shrinking as seen in figure 3.6. But then there is a huge gap in labour productivity between registered and unregistered manufacturing sectors in Assam. Labour productivity

Figure 3.1: Annual GVA per person (Rs) in the unregistered manufacturing sector (2015-16) in the major states of India

Figure 3.2: Annual GVA per person (Rs) in the registered sector (2015-16) in the major states of India
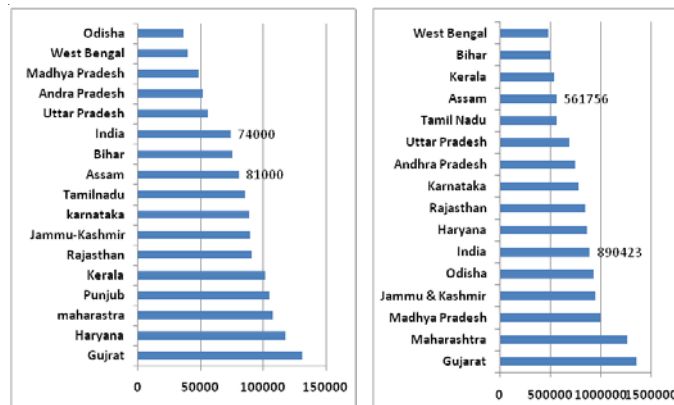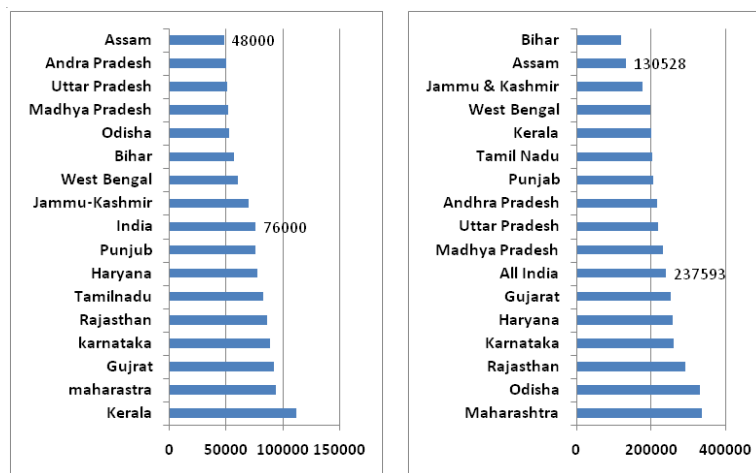

Source: Extracted from NSSO 73rd (2015-16) Round Survey, and ASI data for the same year.

level in registered manufacturing has been found substantially higher (fourteen times higher) than that of the unregistered counterparts of the state (figure 3.1-3.2). The higher productivity gap of the unregistered manufacturing sector of Assam with that of registered manufacturing relative to other states of India has been found in some other studies also (Kathuria et al. 2010).

This indicates the presence of a strong manufacturing dualism in the state. Studies have found that there is no long run relationship between registered and unregistered manufacturing outputs in Assam (Dutta, 2017). Any development in the registered or organised sector is not transmitted to the small manufacturing sector in the state. Annual Emoluments per person also shows that for unregistered manufacturing sector, it is the lowest among all the major states of India whereas for the registered sector same holds true except Bihar (figure 4.1-4.2). From the available evidence in can be deducted that manufacturing sector of Assam is a low wage sector.

Figure 4.1:Annual emoluments to per person engaged in the unregistered manufacturing sector in 2015-16 in some of the major states of India
Figure 4.2: Annual emoluments to per person engaged in the registered manufacturing sector in 2015-16 in some of the major states of India

Source: Extracted from NSSO 73rd (2015-16) Round Survey, and ASI data for the same year.

Summing Up

The article examines the performance of the manufacturing sector in different parameters. Findings can be summed up as follows. Manufacturing sector performance in Assam in terms of contribution to value addition and employment is lower than that of all India average. Except a few, Assam is still lagging behind her fellow major states of India in manufacturing sector. The underdevelopment of the micro and small manufacturing sector or the unregistered manufacturing sector relative to the registered sector of the state added the source of disadvantage more. Both value addition and employment generation in the unregistered manufacturing have experienced a downturn in the post-liberalization period. Capital formation, particularly in the micro and small manufacturing sector in the state is the lowest in Assam among all the major states of India. This is despite the fact that, Assam along with other north eastern states of India has traversed two decades of post reform period blessed with separate industrial policies i.e. the North East Industrial Policy 1997 and North East Industrial and Investment Policy (NEIIP) 2007. This means post reform industrial policy approach has not fully successful to give the required dynamism to the industrial sector of Assam. This warrants changes in perspectives in industrial policy approach. Manufacturing dualism in the state in terms of huge productivity gap between registered and unregistered sector is another issue that deserves due attention in the policy formulations. It may be noted here that Assam being located in a highly seismic and ecologically sensitive zone; expansion of large scale manufacturing units in the state may not always be a feasible choice. The third edition of the industrial policies i.e. North East Industrial Development Scheme (2017), which has recently been brought on table, rightly emphasized on Small and medium industries which are expected to add significantly to the job creation opportunities in the state. Whether this renewed policy will help to remove the long standing stigma of industrial underdevelopment in the state is a question that will find answer in the years to come.

Notes

Registered manufacturing sector in Indian national accounting system includes all the manufacturing units those registered under (a) section 2m(i) and 2m(ii) of Factories Act, 1948 and Bidi and Cigar Workers (conditions of employment) Act, 1966 and (b) those run by Government (Central

Government, State Governments, Local Bodies)/Public Sector Enterprises. The unregistered manufacturing sector covers all residual manufacturing units. In Indian context these unregistered enterprises are also called unincorporated enterprises as they generally don't form company form of organization.

Where growth rate is computed (Table 3), it is the compound annual growth rate (CAGR) for the period. The CAGR is calculated as $[(Yt/Yo)\,(1/t)-1]x100$, where Yt and Yo are the terminal and initial values of the variable and "t" is the time over which CAGR has to be calculated.

Employment elasticity is a measure of the percentage change in employment associated with a one percent change in economic growth.

Some industrial categories such as repair services, repair of capital services, etc., are included in the 51st round, but excluded in the 56th and 62nd rounds; again repair and installation of Machinery and Equipment are included in the 67th and 73rd round. Industrial categories such as cotton ginning, cleaning and baling, recycling, etc., are included in the 56th, 62nd, 67th and 73rd rounds, but excluded in the 51st round. The electricity units not registered with the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) are included in the manufacturing category in the 73rd round but excluded in the previous rounds.

NSSO categorizes the unregistered or the unincorporated enterprises under two groups. Own Account Manufacturing Enterprises (OAMEs) and Establishments. OAMEs are those enterprises that don't use any hired labour and Establishments are those who use hired labour.

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Diaspora and Challenged Ethnicity: Theory and Performance in Bharati Mukherjee's Fiction

Rajib Bhaumik*

Abstract

Bharati Mukherjee with her peculiar sensibility for the cross-cultural crisis in the era of globalization endeavoured to dive deep into such 'slippage' and 'splitting' and the distorted psyche of those immigrants who had been surviving in the conflict of traditional Indian values, inherent in their personality. The uprooted immigrants and their fascination for Western mode of living that they had chosen out of their professional compulsions or for their urge to achieve a greater freedom in liberal and dynamic society of America is also an area of Mukherjee's interest. In her fiction she has sincerely dealt with multiplicities of home and the recurrence of splitting and slippages in the process of identity construction in an alien country under a specific situation of social transformation. Home in a diasporic condition is either disintegrating or being radically redefined. In her personal life Bharati Mukherjee witnessed the anguish of Indians both as expatriates and immigrants and in that given situation, Indian life, Indian values, rituals, fidelity to traditions and the grace of human relationship in social and religious modes of existence constantly stirred her imagination and moulded her creative sensibility. The preservation of Indian cultural ethos is neither a sole sentimental quest in her life nor a photographic representation made by an 'outsider.' It is endowed with deep emotional and psychological significance. It endows her vision with a rare humanitarian quality and universal appeal. The literature of Diaspora deals with such challenged ethnicity and provides sufficient evidence of the fact that diasporic space is pressing on the space of the home

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country. It is not that the centre has shifted alone; the margins have also been expanded to push the home cultures further to outer space. This inevitably demands the need to realize the significance of the cultural encounter which takes place in diasporic writing, the bicultural mechanics as well as the construction of a new culture born out of the transparent translation in a diasporic space. Thus, the textual mapping of the colonial encounter concludes with the new 'migrant' novel, a form which is explicit in its commitment to hybridity. Such trans-cultural narrative possesses a serious challenge to the cultural stability of the metropolitan centres. In its transformational quality, Diaspora is typically a site of hybridity which questions fixed identities based on mono-centric essentialisms. In reaction to the literature and myth of expatriation Mukherjee endorses the literature of immigration, representing the neo-national sprit of America.

KEY WORDS: Diaspora, ethnicity, space, margins, cultures, bicultural mechanics, transparent translation, hybridity, mono-centric essentialisms, expatriation, immigration.

Bharati Mukherjee is a postmodern English diaspora novelist and non-fiction writer. Born (27 July 1940), in a Bengali Brahmin family of Calcutta. She spent her first eight years as a member of a large extended family. After Independence, she lived with her parents and two sisters in London for about three years. In 1951 the family returned to Calcutta. Bharati Mukherjee did her B.A (Honours) in English at the University of Calcutta in 1959 and got her M.A. degree in English from the University of Baroda in 1961. Her father encouraged her to join the Creative Writing Programme in the United States. She went to the University of Iowa where she obtained an MFA in creative writing in 1963 and a Ph.D in 1969.

At the University of Iowa Mukherjee met Clark Blaise, the Canadian writer and married him in September 1963. In 1966 the couple moved to Canada and lived there as Canadian citizen till 1980. Her fourteen years in Canada were some of the hardest of her life, as she found herself discriminated as a member of visible minority. Although those years were challenging, she was able to write her first two novels-*The Tiger's Daughter* (1971) and *Wife* (1975). Finally, she and her family moved to the United States in 1980, as a permanent US resident. From 1966 to 1980 her position was that of an expatriate. She was writing in the manner of V.S. Naipaul, but then her literary models came to be

like Bernard Malamud, Henry Roth and Isaac Babel. Because her displacement was not forced, it was her own choice for career that she had rejected her hyphenated identity. She questions, 'why it is that hyphenation is imposed only on non-white Americans? Rejecting hyphenation is my refusal to categorize the cultural landscape into a centre and its peripheries; it is to demand that the American nation delivered the promises of its dream.'[1]

She is the voice of the immigrants from all over the world, writing about them in tradition of immigrant experience rather than expatriation and nostalgia. To avoid 'otherness' she strongly opposes hyphenation in her national identity as Indo-American or Asian-American writer. Hence it is necessary to interrogate the nature of her work. It is also to examine the strategies she adopts in order to negotiate the boundaries. Kellie Holzer remarks: 'Mukherjee considers herself a pioneer, an immigrant writer; she adamantly does not identify as "hyphenated" American or a diasporic, or post-colonial writer. To be a "post-colonial" is to identify India as home, a move analogous to passport classifications and a proposition entirely too limiting for Mukherjee.'[2]

Canada's hostility to Indians and the non-recognition of her writing in Canada are the twin recurring themes which appear with almost obsessive regularity in Mukherjee's early works. She experienced herself as a psychological expatriate in Canada and clung to her ethnic identity — 'I remember how bracing it was to cloak myself in my own Brahminical elegance.'[3] She became a Civil Rights activist in Canada and wrote about the crippling effect of racism on the individuals. Both in the personal and political writings and her Canadian fiction, her experience of expatriation is poignantly manifested. Her essay *Invisible Woman* is a blistering reflection on those years. She writes: 'Many including myself left (Canada) unable to keep our twin halves together.'[4]

Viewing herself as a writer with two novels to her credit, Bharati Mukherjee identified V.S. Naipaul as her model in 1977. In *Days and Nights in Calcutta,* she says: 'In myself I detect a pale and immature reflection of Naipaul; it is he who has written most movingly about the pain and absurdity of art and exile, of 'third world art' and exile among the former colonizers; the tolerant incomprehension of hosts, the absolute impossibility of ever having a home, a 'desh.'[5]

Identification with Naipaul at this stage evidences that Mukherjee treated herself as an expatriate writer on the basis of her first two novels. The process of change from expatriation to immigration got off during Mukherjee's stay in India in 1973-74. She recalls: 'The year in

India had forced me to view myself more as an immigrant than an exile.'[6]

In the Introduction to *Darkness,* she says that until the spring of 1984, 'I had thought of myself, in spite of a white husband and two assimilated sons as an expatriate.'[7] She defines expatriates as conscious knower of their fates and immigrants — in particular to Canada — as lost souls subdued and pathetic. In respect of the stylistic devices of an expatriate writer, she referred to irony, so tellingly employed by Naipaul:

> Like V.S. Naipaul, in whom I imagined a model, I tried to explore state-of-the-art expatriation. Like Naipaul, I used a mordant and self-protective irony in describing my character's pain. Irony promised both detachment from, and superiority over, those well-bred post-colonials much like myself, adrift in the new world, wondering if they would ever belong.[8] .

In her first phase of literary career, being an expatriate writer, Bharati Mukherjee tries to find her identity in her Indian heritage. The very first novel, *The Tiger's Daughter* (1971), is the exposure of her own married life and her return from America with her husband. The heroine's return to India exposes Mukherjee's personal difficulties as she feels alienated in Calcutta and doesn't seem to be a part of her Bengali family. Her second novel *Wife* (1975) is also a novel of expatriation. But it deals with the psychological problem of an immigrant woman. Here Dimple migrates from India to the USA with her husband, Amit Basu, who doesn't satisfy her dreamy desires. She has drawn her husband's image from TV ads and magazines, which does not exist in him. It turns her neurotic and she murders her own husband.

Jasmine, Bharati Mukherjee's *magnum opus* came out in 1989. The protagonist Jasmine in contrast to Dimple, is a widow who gets uprooted and re-rooted severally in the New World and establishes a new identity in a new location of culture. It is the story of Jyoti who becomes Jasmine, then Jase and finally Jane. There is transformation of an individual, her displacement, dislocation and finally, quest for identity. In fact, it is the phase of Mukherjee's transformation from expatriation to immigration. Jasmine is an illegal immigrant in the USA, where she is raped by captain Half Face who has brought her. So to avenge, she murders him, changes her name and identities. As a caretaker of Mr. Taylor's baby she is Jase, with Bud in Iowa, she is Jane. She has tried new identities to survive in the new country.

Bharati Mukherjee's other fictional works are *The Holder of the World* (1993), *Leave it to Me* (1997), *Desirable Daughters* (2002), *The Tree Bride* (2004) and *The New Miss India* (2011). Her *Darkness* (1985), and *The Middleman and other stories* (1988) are her collection of short stories. In these works also she shows the search for her roots and resultant transnational identities in the process of globalization.

In the context of diaspora there is a process of structuring the shared identities in the making of a new subjectivity. Instead of being seen as fixed, becomes a dynamic and polyphonic construction that adjusts continually to the changes experienced within and surrounding the self. This is the same kind of assertiveness that is present in Brah's use of the term 'homing desire,'[9] simultaneously expressing a desire to construct a home in the new diasporic location and leaving the whole concept of 'home' open to analysis and criticism.

This process of a 'homing diaspora' does not imply a nostalgic desire for 'roots,' nor 'is it the same as the desire for a 'homeland'; it is realized instead as a construction of '*multi-locationality* within and across territorial, cultural and psychic boundaries.'[10] Questions of origin and Diaspora come up with particular surface-tensions between internationalism and nationalism; the relationship between place and identity; and the ways cultures and literatures interact. In the process of diasporic cross-over new patterns of mobility are being drawn on the familiar landscape of migration and exilic exclusions. Bhabha projects culture as hybrid from the side of migrant and subaltern.

Bhabha's disjunctive temporality is analogical to Salman Rushdie's notion of 'broken mirror'[11] about the migrant. Rushdie even generalizes the excitement of the 'homeless' when he says: 'But human beings do not perceive things whole. We are not gods but wounded creatures, cracked lenses, capable of fractured perceptions.'[12] The migrant's or expatriate's cracked and fractured self have been indicated by Bhabha, using Lacan's notion as 'the twilight existence of the aesthetic images.'[13]

Refashioning of self is a dire disciplinary struggle in Bharati Mukherjee's fictions. The immigrants in an inevitable cultural politics transform their self to emerge with a new identity like Jasmine, Tara Cartwright, Dimple and Tara Chatterjee. The process of reincarnation once started, through dislocations and re-locations, the women in Bharati Mukherjee's fictions cannot regress back nor can they stop it. The only thing they resort to, is to be re-placed into the New World with violence, rupturing the body, mind and soul in a strategy of sequential and ongoing illumination or resort to root search. Mukherjee's comments on her works sums up it all:

Violence is very connected with Diaspora and the trans-planting from one's original culture into a new country, no matter for what reason we've come to the new country, implies or necessitates death of one's former self or mutilation of one's former self and so I want to think that the physical violence in my metaphorical or artistic way of showing the psychic damage that takes place.[14]

Bharati Mukherjee is not a feminist as such. Her characters flaunt general feminism, a paradigm celebrating fluid identities, centred and focused on the transcendence of soul. Feminism presents a very different sort of connotation for Bharati Mukherjee: 'It's certainly not a conscious decision to write as a woman writer but I find that quite naturally my main protagonists are rather strong woman who avert themselves sometimes physically and always very emotionally.'[15] Mukherjee here prefers to go for an emphatic positioning of herself as a female writer. She sounds little harsh, though her anger and attitude can be justified. She goes for multiple time frames, the multiple spaces, the present location and the space of the past. She also envisions the cultural displacement and the space of the 'cultural relativism'[16] in 'the perplexity of the living.'[17] With the traumas of Canada fresh in mind, she lashes out at the traditional patriarchal dominance of male-oriented environment of India where, in spite of being highly educated, women succumb to their passive roles in a stressed environment.

The existence in servility of women even in af-fluent families, disgusts Bharati Mukherjee and she finds the freedom of the West friendlier to the restraining and exasperating existence in India and that sets the demand for re-historicize oneself who . Uprooted in Montreal, the racist attitude of the Western world seems less dreadful, as she undergoes a drastic change, with violent attack on her sensibilities. Worried about the hostilities in Montreal and being attacked in the subways seems a lesser evil than the evil rampant in India. Mukherjee's novels are virtual discourse on the same transnational lives and bi or multicultural sub-stream of America dealing with nostalgia and disillusionment. She writes on the dialectic of immigrations, expatriation, exile and repatriation through dislocation and resettlement.

The Tiger's Daughter depicts nostalgia and disillusionment both, she also has created here the myth of the nomad adrift in favour of an affirmation of belonging and the theme of the successful conquest of the New World. Mukherjee, however, rejects the nostalgia of this early book. The immigrant of the Middleman, she describes as a pioneer;

and the eponymous character of Jasmine, 'a conqueror, a minor hero.'[18] In rejecting the experience of expatriation figured in *The Tiger's Daughter* she takes on the myth of the immigrant in its place. In reaction to the literature and myth of expatriation Mukherjee endorses the literature of immigration, representing the neo-national sprit of America.

She figures this transformation in geographic terms. In Canada she was a psychological expatriate, in the United States an immigrant and citizen. Not undergoing this conversion from expatriation to immigration is in Mukherjee's eyes, evidence of nostalgia and a refusal to participate in the New World and embrace its citizenship and nationalism.[19] She claims and treats Rushdie among a number of writers who choose 'exile' and dispossession rather than psychological citizenship.[20]

Brewster remarks that 'Mukherjee's conversion narrative invests India with the status of the 'old world' which is repressive and where opportunities are closed by caste, gender, or family. The process of abandoning the old order is explored fully in the novel, *The Tiger's Daughter* and her first non-fiction co-authored with Clark Blaise, *Days and Nights in Calcutta.*

In the U.S.A. Bharati Mukherjee sees herself as an immigrant writer. In her works which were either completed or fully written, she explores the immigrant sensibility, and dislocation recognizing its duality and flexible identity besides taking into cognizance alternate realities. In the Introduction to *Darkness* she lays bare her position and creative priorities: 'The transformation as writer and as resident of the new world, occurred with the act of immigration to the U.S.A [....] For me it is movement away from the aloofness of expatriation, to the exuberance of immigration.'[21]

The movement from expatriation to immigrating is also reflected in the choice of the writers who shaped Mukherjee's creative sensibility. After outgrowing and discarding the posture of an expatriate she rejected Naipaul as a model and chose Bernard Malamud whose central concern was life of minorities and its agonies. Though partially influenced by Isaac Babel, Conrad and Chekhov, she followed Malamud — as his writings instilled unusual confidence in her:

> Like Malamud, I write about a minority community which escapes the ghetto, adapts itself to the patterns of the dominant American culture. Like Malamud's my work seems to find quite naturally a moral centre. Isaac Babel is another author who is a literary ancestor for me. I also feel a kinship with Joseph Conrad and Anton Chekhov. But Malamud most

of all speaks to me as a writer and I admire his work a great deal. Immersing myself in his work gave me the self-confidence to write about my own community.[22]

Malamud taught Mukherjee how to overcome being viewed as the 'Other' in a diagonally different cultural milieu. While Malamud's characters are from poor classes, humble shoemakers, tailors and bakers, Mukherjee's immigrants are doctors, university professors, businessmen and women married to upwardly mobile professionals. Both address themselves to the diasporic experience of cultural alienation. Entering Malamud's literary space enabled Mukherjee to move her fiction from the constantly shifting margin to the unstable and shifting centre which has no fixed place.

Thus, Mukherjee's approach to life and its problems is deeply moored in her Indian upbringing. Maya Manju Sharma refers to this aspect of her creative personality: 'In her fiction Mukherjee handles Western themes and settings as well as characters who are westernized or bicultural. Yet she is forced to admit that the very structure of her imagination is essentially Hindu, and essentially moral.'[23]

Despite being grouped with other Indian writers albeit those who largely foreground their diasporic status, Bharati Mukherjee has asserted Americanness: 'I left India by choice to settle in the U.S. I have adopted this country as my home. I view myself as an American author in the tradition of other American authors whose ancestors arrived at Ellis Island.'[24]

Thus, the textual mapping of the colonial encounter concludes with the new 'migrant' novel, a form which is explicit in its commitment to hybridity. Such trans-cultural narrative possesses a serious challenge to the cultural stability of the metropolitan centres. In its transformational quality, Diaspora is typically a site of hybridity which questions fixed identities based on mono-centric essentialisms. Specifically in the context of Caribbean Diaspora, Stuart Hall talks about 'imaginative rediscovery' of 'Caribbeanness.'[25] Furthermore, Hall explicitly connects this imaginative effort with the concept of hybridity:

> The diaspora experience as I intend it here is defined, not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of "identity" which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by hybridity. Diaspora identities are those which are constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and difference.[26]

One of the major concepts of Diaspora is the celebrative expression of a sense of this twilight zone of *in-betweenness*, which includes connotations of hybridity, *heteroglossia,* mimicry,[27] acculturation, cultural shock, and loss of identity as nationals. In the essay "Mimicry and Man" Bhabha quotes Lacan while unfolding mimicry as 'an ironic compromise'[28] and a 'desire for a reformed, recognizable Other'[29]: 'The effect of mimicry is camouflage…. It is not a question of harmonizing with the background, but against a mottled background, of becoming mottled-exactly like the technique of camouflage practiced in human warfare.'[30]

This speckled and 'mottled' environment of the polyphonic transnational character is accompanied by enduring ordeal of dislocations and slippages. Thus, trauma is another key concept of Diaspora. The metaphor of trauma draws attention to the ways that extremes of violence break bodies and minds, leaving indelible marks even after healing and recovery. The whole process involves splitting and slippages. But the notion of trauma has been extended to cover a vast array of situations of extremity and equally varied individual and collective responses. Trauma can be seen at once as a socio-political event, a psychological process, a physical and emotional experience and a narrative theme in explanations of individual trauma and social suffering. Bharati Mukherjee asserts that in the process of splitting and cultural dislocation man seems to lose his meaning and purpose in life. In the process of migration, the immigrants can neither adopt alien culture nor can leave their culture of 'home' and finally a new hybrid culture comes to flourish.

The general tendency of the people in the diasporic space is to be centric to primary identities –religious, ethnic, territorial and national. Interestingly, all are involved with the same hybrid phenomena before the reconstruction. Most of Mukherjee's novels deal with the question of such hybridity and the crisis of such identities along with transmission of ethnic traits. She takes in account the borderline condition of cultural translation in the post-colonial location of past present and future. In Mukherjee's fictions the two geographical entities, the home and location thus support, and to an extent reflect each other.

Notes

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10. *Ibid*., p.197.

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12. *Ibid*., p.12.

13. Homi K. Bhabha. The Location of Culture .NY: Routledge, 1994. p.15.

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15. Her Story /BBC World Service "Being a Woman writer" 1 of 1 http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/arts/features/womenwrites mukherjeework.shtml

16. Homi K. Bhabha. The Location of Culture. op.cit.,p. 225.

17. Ibid.

18. *Ibid.*

19. *Ibid.,* p.4.

20. *Ibid.*

21. Bharati Mukherjee. Darkness. New Delhi: Penguin, 1975. p.2-3.

22. Alison B. Carb. 'An Interview with Bharati Mukherjee,' *The Massachusetts Review,* Winter 1988, p. 650.

23. Maya Manju Sharma. "The Inner World of Bharati Mukherjee: From Expatriate to Immigrant." Bharati Mukherjee: Critical Perspectives. Ed. Emmanuel S. Nelson, New York: Garland, 1993. p.18.

24. Alison B. Carb. 'An Interview with Bharati Mukherjee.' *op.cit*. p. 654.

25. Stuart Hall. "Cultural Identity and Diaspora." Identity, Community Culture, and Difference. Ed. Jonathan Rutherford. London: Lawrence & Wishert, 1990.p.393.

26. *Ibid*., pp. 401-2.

27. Ibid., p.121.

28. Ibid., p.122.

29. Ibid.

30. *Ibid*., p.121.

Science and Democracy: Technology as an Idiom of Cultural Dissent

Biju P.R.* and Dr. Gayathri O.**

The story of development of western science in India in turn is the story of democracy and nation state. They are intimately connected because democracy to work in the right spirit, there must be at least a society which thinks rational and there is enough room for scientific advances. This is only possible if science is promoted. Hence, this connection also tells what role technology was thought to perform in order to make India progressive, overcoming superstition and oppressive social structures. So, the way in which India greeted western science and technology, also constitutes one of the fascinating chapters of the encounters between science and democracy in the whole world.

Certainly, western science arrived in India primarily through colonial routes. In the beginning itself, nationalist groups were but skeptical of it. However, it was not purely alien ideas to be handled with suspicion as it was approached by Hindu nationalists. Indians had to internalize and reinvent it for themselves. It was used as a powerful force by Nehru administration to save India from irrational belief systems and dividing social structures.

Unfortunately, the engagement between democracy and science in India fell captive to the dryness of official science policy documents. It presented science as celebration, primarily for development. The lesson India had forgotten in the dialogue was science as a cultural force. It failed to see science as a mental picture of rational thinking and progressive attitude, which primarily goes to serve the larger society and undertakes social engineering. Science as a force of dissent and

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cultural identity was rarely promoted. Science as an alternative form of community practices against the official statist versions of science as development was seldom appreciated. Alternative possibilities of the interpretation of science weren't tolerated.

Western Science Developed in India Through Colonial Administration

Western science in India originated under the patronage of colonial administration. Initially, it was developed through the services of East India Company surgeons and surveyors.[1] That also means science was developed through institutionalisation.

It had grown up with the founding of the Great Surveys: the Geological in 1851, the Botanical in 1890, and the Trigonometric in 1802.[2] They were established under the inspired impetus of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, which was inaugurated in 1784.[3] Archaeological Survey of India was founded by British Raj in 1861. Later Zoological Survey of India was founded in 1916.

Coupled with this, was the establishment of universities in the Presidency towns: Bombay, Calcutta and Madras in 1857. Understanding local culture, industry, population and economy found little scope in their operation.

Attempt to Indigenize Knowledge was Started by *Swadeshi* Movement

It must be noted that protecting indigenous knowledge was the result of the *Swadeshi* movement, and particularly from 1918 to 1947, shaped by Gandhi and accompanied by the rise of Indian industrialists.

Swadeshi movement produced the great tradition of dialogue on science and democracy. It is on the continuities and discontinuities of this debate reinforced by *Swadeshi*, later by the civil society, that dialogue between democracy and science had actually taken place. In this viewing of science as cultural force in the civil society, the constant engagement between democracy and science attained its heights in India.

Early attempts in that direction took place when Mahender Lal Sircar– a Bengali medical doctor and the second MD graduated from the Calcutta Medical College; established the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science in 1900. It was the first science laboratory instituted outside colonial control that claimed that a scientific India would humanize the aggressive West.

In 1912, the nationalist Har Dayal– a polymath who turned down a career in the Indian Civil Service; opined that Pasteur and Koch[4] had done more for human welfare than all the nuns and monks. Scientists would become the *rishis* (the sages and savants) of that era.

What the *Swadeshi* and Nationalist Movement did was to turn India into a theatre of thought experiments, where modern Western science converse with other forms of knowledge, particularly those locally ubiquitous.

There was attempt to allow equality and reciprocity between various systems of medicine, including allopathy and homeopathy; the attempt to integrate local systems of technology and architecture in constructions in big cities such as Mumbai and New Delhi. The effort to avoid the use of synthetic fertilizers while modernizing Indian agriculture was laudable.

These types of search to intermingle knowledge and this attempt to bypass the monoculture of Western science were modern India's greatest contribution to democracy's engagement with science. The contribution was centred on the right of different forms of knowledge to coexist without being marginalized by official, State-sponsored forms of science.

Statist Science Developed During Nehru Administration

It was within this drapery of debates between attempt to protect local knowledge system and making India progressive through scientific thinking of the west that statist science gained traction. Statist science, particularly those of Nehruvian conception of science for India was an attempt to create a technological and scientific conscience that can bypass superstition and social orthodoxy. Such a science indeed had no sense of the roots and tensions within modern Western science. The tension is that ritualistic and indigenous knowledge which co-exist with nature tends to be seen as pre-modern and unscientific in the methodologies of western science.

The rhythm of pluralistic debates between Western science and indigenous knowledge declined with the independence in 1947. Nehru era was committed to the civics of development, industrialization, and eventually the national security state. This was a world where science policy documents and the scientific perspective coming out of it were as important as the national anthem or political boundary.

The Indian pursuit of scientific knowledge was transformed into bureaucratic entity. Consequently, science became positivism. It

developed without recognizing its genealogies or appreciating doubts. It must be remembered that P. M. S. Blackett, the British Nobel laureate who was a consultant to Nehru; had to warn him that science was no magic baton that could bring prosperity. In fact Nehru had the idea of expert science residing in the complex of laboratories called the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC). That was square opposite to science in village where every man is scientist drawing upon the needs of the local context. Village was imagined as a science academy in *Swadeshi* movement that was in part rooted in Gandhian traditions.

Indian science was a bureaucratized collection of laboratories that fumbled over State support. Homi Bhabha, the father of the Indian atomic energy programme, had once observed that the creation of massive bureaucratic science infrastructure had emptied the universities of outstanding talent who could have served as seeds of creative dissents and cultural forces.

The fifties and sixties saw a celebration of official science. For Nehru, dams and laboratories became temples of modern India. The tragedy was that both were disasters. Since those days were not able to give a hand to farmers in areas where flood and weather changes were frequent. Health infrastructure was not able to predict or prevent epidemic and outbreak of transferable diseases.

Nehru era had huge fascination for super-sized industrial projects. In particular, India's First Five Year Plan provided for three major hydroelectric projects — the Bhakra-Nangal Dam in Punjab, the Hirakud Dam on the Mahanadi in Orissa and the Nagarjuna Sagar Dam on the Krishna River in Andhra Pradesh. It was while speaking at Bhakra and Nangal in 1954 that Nehru coined the famous "Temples of Modern India" phrase.

But there were changes in this big industrial projects scenario in latter Nehru. Historian Ramachandra Guha quotes Nehru's speech from 1958 in which he had said: "The small irrigation projects, the small industries and the small plants for electric power will change the face of the country, far more than a dozen big projects in half a dozen places." Guha reasoned that Nehru changed his views on dams after he saw that these schemes were becoming avenues for corruption. However, it must be pointed out that combining rapid industrial development with democracy was something none had tried before.

Nehru had overseen the founding of the prestigious IITs (Indian Institutes of Technology), the CSIR (Council of Scientific and Industrial Research), the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, the National Physical

and Chemical Laboratories, the AIIMS (All India Institutes for Medical Sciences) and many other big bureaucratic institutions all over India. An atomic reactor was set up in Bombay, which attained criticality in 1956.

The CSIR laboratories basically produced second-grade research that was often a crude mimicking of some foreign papers. Electricity generation did not meet the requirements of the agrarian economy, which constituted more than half of country's economy. Dams generated unrehabilitated refugees.

As bureaucratized science, knowledge lost its sense of play and was removed from the democratic domain. Critique was a taboo, and even leading universities were ignorant or innocent of the works of *Feyerabend,*[5] Koyre,[6] Kuhn,[7] or Bachelard.[8] In a strange sense, Indian science directed by official State policy had become allergic to democracy and citizen involvement and corrections to development schemes suggested by local community. What should have been a partnership of democratic dialogue and openness had become a dull civics, where the scientific knowledge as an ideology became a contrivance constricting creativity. The worst was the fact that scientific institutions themselves functioned undemocratically. As a result, the great debates on science and technology in post-colonial history of India came not from the scientific academies but from political movements. Call it People's Science Movements (PSM).

Science as a Cultural Dissent and Alternate Living was Rooted in People's Science Movements

It was local struggles against tree cutters, missiles, bombs, pollution, nuclear reactors, industrial accidents and waste that re-created the dialogue between science and democracy in the real spirit. Local struggles against official statist development leapfrogged around Nehruvian science became the dissenting academies of Indian democracy. That is grassroots against science.

Few important events defined this new dialogue, but not confined only to National Emergency in1975 to 1977 and the consequent violence of the forced sterilizations, mechanical world view of the failed green revolution.[9] Chipko movement against forest contractors in the Himalayas, reactions against Bhopal Gas Disaster of 1984, protest against Narmada Dam and Kudankulam nuclear power project.

These events buttressed the conflict between the fundamentalism of the official science and the alternative worldview represented by

civil society groups. The propagators of official science partly justified development in the name of science and this destructive science began to be questioned by human rights groups in the civil society.

The conflict emphasized that the resolution of scientific controversies could not be left to experts, but was part of citizenship, especially when experts were tongue-tied or illiterate on technical issues. Only a few scientists, like C. V. Seshadri and A. K. N. Reddy, realized that these debates were grist for the innovative science mill and that Third World problems demanded frontline science, not third-rate research in the guise of renewal.

The huge fascination for scientific resolution for India reached its negative side as it had created huge displeasure among the vast number of local population. The ecological consequences of large development projects were so much devastating, which demanded eco-friendly alternative living models.

The disillusionments from people in the local community contributed to the history of alternative science in India. Alternative science movement had interventions in areas where conditions of social groups, often disadvantaged needed improvements through science and technology inputs.

This type of alt-science movement in India originated as early as 1950s in close parallel to official science policies. A number of organizations started scientific awareness among the general public. The early attempt in this regard was the Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad (KSSP) in 1962. Its intervention was to expose and oppose the abuse of scientific knowledge detrimental to the interests of the majority. It was a classic case of PSM. The Marathi Vigyan Parishad, the Assam Science Society (1953), The Science Writers Association of India (SWAI) and the Banga Vigyan Parishad were prominent among them. KSSP was confined to the language of Malayalam, while SWAI, mostly in Hindi and English.

In 1966, half a dozen other organizations came into existence in Mumbai. It was initiated mainly by scientists from Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) and Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR). They were institutions created by the scientific resolution Nehru India embraced. These organizations were also networked into a Federation of Indian Languages Science Association (FILSA) in the same year. All India People's Science Network (AIPSN) – an Umbrella PSM Organization; Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samiti (BGVS) – a PSM organization for Literacy; Jana Vignana Vedika (JVV) in 1988, Delhi Science Forum (DSF) – a unique PSM organization for S&T Policy

Critique; Eklavya, A Pedagogic PSM Organization are some other organisations.

People's Science Movements (PSMs) in India were unique in the sense that such movements, unlike those of the expert science in Western world were popularized by people scientists. The genesis of the science from below in Indian context is a post-colonial phenomenon. It was people's right to life activities to achieve their objectives through science.[10] It got variety of shades. A pattern emerged from all the different shades.

It is in the exclusion of the underprivileged people, such as Dalit, women sexual minorities, displaced and unrehabilitated communities, victims of environmental and industrial disasters; alternative interpretations to science was attempted. It was in part attempted by local population to offer sustainable living which questioned the fundamentalism of industrial production houses. It initiated a new thinking, which questioned those who pollute environment and put local community into industrial hazards.

For sexual minorities, science was search for alternative interpretation to heteronormative reproductive medicine, which questioned the fundamentalism of modern science. It is argued by gay and lesbian groups that sexuality is down to choice, not genetics, which is claimed by modern biology. Modern science points strongly to a biological origin for sexualities. So finding evidence for an alternative existence to deviant sexualities is science as a cultural dissent for LGBT.

Ideologies of gender, nature and science developed over different eras have resulted in the exclusion of women from science. The idea prevailed that education would distract women from their natural roles as mothers. Science and especially, technology, has been considered 'masculine' for a long time. The social norms, societal structure, relationship between family and work, and the organizational processes of scientific institutions, have created a series of interrelated problems for women in science. Men have always used science to advance the argument that they are better than women.

Both scriptures and science have been leveraged by caste Hindus to justify casteism in India. By looking at the block lengths of ancestral genes, Western science and genomics explore and trace out the era when mixing of castes ended. Science itself was furthering casteism. Or let us ask a disgusting question, one day, what would the Dalit do when science say the upper-castes are genetically closer to Europeans and the lower-castes to Asians.

Here alternative science becomes a theatre of struggle, when dams and massive hydroelectric power projects persuaded indigenous and tribal communities search for science that acknowledge eco-friendly living.

Most important among this was technology in political struggles. Technology as an alternative for big State, big bureaucracy, big corporate, big media and big scientific community was used by people from bottom end. It is in this search for alternative by local community or ordinary people, technology as a liberation ideology gets traction in democracy in India.

Decline of Institutions Persuaded People Look for Alternatives

The engagement between science and democracy is incomplete without looking at how institutions failed in India. Democracy was an experiment in India; an experiment for a people divided by social cleavages. People looked at this with so much hope. Trust on it, particularly, those from the periphery were phenomenal. Dalit, minorities and displaced people dreamt of a resolution for their misfortunes.

Defying all the expectations, there were twists and turns. But this letdown in our democracy was anticipated quite a long time ago. It was critiqued by Gandhi, Vinobha Bhave, Jayaprakash Narain, M. N. Roy, Ram Manohar Lohia, and Dr. B. R. Ambedkar among others. Except Ambedkar, all other nationalist leadership aforesaid preferred for decentralization.[11]

Democracy to survive, at least, some ideals needs to be fulfilled. Most important among them are participation and deliberation. Theories of these ideals were established so long ago, before India became democracy. During 1970s, Western writers like Patema[12] and Macpherson[13] had formulated practical solutions for participation as ideal of democracy inspired by the writings of Rousseau and John Stuart Mill. Discussion of this model of democracy was found in David Held.[14] A participatory democracy approach suggests that political decisions will be more acceptable to all the citizens, if they are available through a transparent and participative process. Such a model, it was anticipated, overcomes societal divisiveness and polarization.[15]

Discussion is at the heart of democracy. It involves conversation in which individual actions are open to scrutiny. Citizens are also expected to change their preferences in the light of persuasion. But it need not be under the guise of trickery, intimidation or manipulation from other participants. This model is called deliberative model.

Different versions of deliberative democracy are roughly classified under two main schools: the first is broadly influenced by John Rawls, and the second by Jurgen Habermas. In the past decades, the theory of democracy has been dominated by these two very different approaches.[16] For deliberative democrats, the essence of legitimacy is the capacity of those affected people to deliberate in the making of a resolution to their tribulations. Indian democracy had indeed collapsed on these two counts. That is discussion and participation.

Participation and deliberation of Dalit, women, religious, linguistic and sexual minorities were minimal. Not because they are disinterested but because huge democratic deficit exist in India in which powerless citizens do not have enough opportunity structures to overcome their debacles. Seldom did they influence any political decisions being taken on the corridors of power, which had bearing on their lives. Very few had been represented in the high echelons of power from amongst them.

The ideals of democracy were rarely achieved. The ideals claimed in the writings of eminent thinkers were participation, equality, information, and inclusion. They are necessary conditions for success of democracy.

These ideals found no credence in the democratic experiments in India. The institutions such as the judiciary, parliament, civil service, political party, media and ideology–are being damaged. This decline has something to do with the nature of democracy we have implemented here.

Writings of Rajani Kothari, Ashis Nandy, D.L. Sheth, and others who worked partly with the language of comparative politics had drawn up uncommon conclusions about this problem. They highlighted the eurocentric limitations defeating the theorization of Indian democracy in India. *The Imaginary Institution of India* by Sudipta Kaviraj[17] suggests that modernity being brought to India from the West explains much of the disconnection between citizens and institutions. The failure of Indian politics is the failure to comprehend the importance of culture in people's lives. This question was beautifully pinpointed in *India after Gandhi* (2007) by Ramachnadra Guha, who elaborated that India as an unnatural combination survives as a constitutional democracy, but the seeds of its destructions are within.

The perceived decline of ideology in public life and between political parties from the left to the right across political spectrum has contributed much to the decline. There is an 'anonymous empire'; party funding. The political parties in India are funded and financed by undisclosed contributors who influence the party and its programme.

Politician, contractor and business nexus has become a visible reality and power seeks wealth and wealth seeks power.

The best example was the dynasty factor. Your family lineage, caste, class, etc., mattered in terms of access to dialogue and participation. That was the reason why authors of the book *The State of India's Democracy* (2007) Sumit Ganguly, Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner demanded an inclusive brand of politics.

The mediated nature of political debates across television and other public platform shows the unholy nexus media and political recruits. The media have decided that politics is a dirty game, played by devious people, who tell an essentially false narrative about the world and deceive the people. As a result, the media have become ravenous, hungry for conflict and scandal. The ascribed culture of incompetence was visible in the frequent abuses and defaming of cherished ideals of society such as the judiciary, Parliament, civil service and the ideology by the political recruits mostly at TV debates, public meetings and rallies. Atul Kohli's book *The Success of India's Democracy* addresses this question.

The functioning of the Parliament has almost been dormant to the needs of democracy and aspirations of people. Many, studies have documented it. The decline of institutions has done away with our old ideals which we cherished from the past, freedom struggle and national movement.

Democratization process need to take into consideration key elements such as citizenship, development, class, religion, caste, capitalism, poverty, the struggle for equality and the status of minorities. This state of Indian democracy's failure to grapple with these has been well documented.

On the whole, democracy presents two stories. Long march from ancient Greek City States to representative liberal democracy along with consequent challenges by both the fascistic and communist regimes is the first. Search for alternatives to direct democracy in the heartlands of democracy, is the second. In between these two stories, there is continuing exclusion of women, religious and racial minorities from full citizenship.[18]

Science and democracy attains critical attention in this failure of democracy. Technology was viewed as a resolution to the failed promises of democracy. Science and democracy as imagined in the West seldom resurfaced in India. Instead, science as presented in official policy documents was challenged, contested and reinterpreted by peoples' science movement.

The disillusionment of the underprivileged people in this juncture was apparent in their science activism. A digital ethnography being carried for this research gives proof for the fact that Dalit, queer, and women activism on cyber space point towards the apparent failure of institutions of democracy. It represented their anger and disappointments.

People Look for Viable Alternatives Through Technology

In the light of the preceding discussion on the linkages between science and democracy in India, it appears that by the time, India went for the seventeenth Parliamentary election in 2019, through a cumbersome decades old ritual, in which millions of citizens queued up on polling booths; few other things already happened in India. Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (*VVPAT*) have almost replaced ballot box. Postal delivery has been disrupted by what may be called digital deliveries. Telegram services being stopped. Metre-gauge and narrow-gauge railways tracks have been replaced by broad-gauge in almost all places. Mobile phones made landline devices an ancient tool. Plenty of other old technologies have been replaced.

The same way, democracy in India is too affected by the change in technology. But unlike change in technology affecting change in respective social spheres, its effect on democracy is multifarious, often confusing. Unlike the changes caused by digital technologies in other fields, citizens are not satisfied by the change brought about by digital technology on democracy. Particularly the disruptive tendencies being developed raise some disturbing questions about the very survival of digital media platforms as a tool of political communications in India.

Notes

1. Pratik Chakrabarti. Western Science in Modern India. New Delhi: Orient Black Swan. 2010.
2. The Great Trigonometrical Survey was a project which aimed to measure the entire Indian subcontinent with scientific precision. It was begun in 1802 by the infantry officer William Lambton, under the auspices of the East India Company. B. Gill. "THE BIG MAN. Surveying Sir George Everest", in: Professional Surveyor Magazine, Vol. 21 Nr 2. 2001.
3. Sir William Jones, a British lawyer and Orientalist, founded it to encourage Oriental studies.
4. The French Louis Pasteur (1822–1895) and German Robert Koch (1843–1910) are the two greatest figures in medical microbiology and in establishing acceptance of the germ theory of disease.

5. Paul Karl Feyerabend was an Austrian-born philosopher of science best known for his work as a professor of philosophy at the University of California, Berkeley.

6. Alexander Koyre, was a French philosopher of Russian origin who wrote on the history and philosophy of science.

7. Thomas Samuel Kuhn was an American physicist, historian and philosopher of science whose controversial 1962 book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* was influential in both academic and popular circle.

8. Gaston Bachelard was a French philosopher. He made contributions in the fields of poetics and the philosophy of science.

9. The Green Revolution in India refers to a period of time when agriculture in India changed to an industrial system due to the adoption of modern methods and technology such as high yielding variety (HYV) seeds, tractors, pump sets, etc. Green revolution was started by Dr. M.S. Swaminathan.

10. R. Varma. "People's Science Movements and Science Wars?" Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. 36. N0.52. 2001. 4796-4802.

11. Rajendra Vora and Suhas Palshikar. Indian Democracy: Meanings and Practices, New Delhi: Sage. 2013.

12. C. Pateman. Participation and Democratic Theory. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1970.

13. C.B. Macpherson. The Life and Times of Liberal Democracy. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1977.

14. David Held. Models of Democracy. Stanford: Stanford University Press. 1987.

15. See, D. Kemmis. Community and the politics of place. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press. 1990; M. A.Shannon. "Building trust: the formation of a social contract". In R. G. Lee and J Schumpeter. Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy. New York: Harper and Brothers. 1992. pp. Pages 229-240.

16. See, James Bohman and William Rehg. (eds). Deliberative Democracy: Essays on Reason and Politics, Cambridge. MA: MIT Press. 1997; Joshua Cohen. "Deliberation and Democratic Legitimacy". In Alan Hamlin and Philip Pettit. (eds). The Good Polity: Normative Analysis of the State. Oxford: Basil Blackwell. 1989; John S. Dryzek. Discursive Democracy: Politics, Policy and Political Science. New York: Cambridge University Press. 1990; John S. Dryzek. Deliberative Democracy and Beyond: Liberals, Critics, Contestations. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2000; Jon Elster. "Introduction". In Jon Elster. (ed). Deliberative Democracy. New York: Cambridge University Press. 1998; James Fishkin. Democracy and Deliberation. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1991; Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson. Democracy and Disagreement. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. 1996.

17. Sudipta Kaviraj.' The Imaginary Institution of India: Politics and Ideas. New York: Columbia University Press. 2010.

18. Anne Philipp's Democracy and Difference presents a telling portrait of democracy in our time, Anne Philipps. Democracy and Difference. New York: Wiley. 2006.

Borderlands of India's Northeast and Myanmar: A Community and Cultural Space

Akshay Jyoti Sarma*

Abstract:

Northeast India is a cultural hotspot in the country with hundreds of different communities living in the strategic frontier manifesting cultural and ethnic diversity on the one hand and a great potential for development of economy making this diversity the capital for the region on the other. Although, in contemporary political understanding, the region is projected as a homogenous space called the 'Northeast', but in reality the region is a home of differences in terms of history, geography, polity, culture and ethnicity. The international boundary created between, particularly, Northeast and Myanmar demonstrate a clear arbitrariness that ethnic groups, communities, clans, and families were divided without taking cognizance of the historical existence and the community lineage on the ground. However, community bonding in the borderlands of India and Myanmar is so strong and alive that the political division could not divide their shared cultural space. The hundreds of trans-border communities living in India-Myanmar border demonstrating the vibrancy of a shared space in taking forward the heritage and also looking forward to development through such heritage in the changing political economy of the region. With the advent of India's Look East Policy, where Northeast is placed in a vital position, the region is expecting major dividends given its geographic and cultural proximities with Southeast Asia. The rich cultural heritage and ethnic customaries can be capitalised as the major prospects of the region in

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the ambition of economic integration with Southeast Asia. This paper argues that Northeast has to capitalise its shared community and cultural space in order to augment dividends from trans-national exchanges with Southeast Asia.

Key words:culture, community, borderland, development.

Introduction

Northeast India (the region) has remained a strategic frontier even after seven decades of the country's independence. This frontier region has its own history of State formation in the pre-colonial period. Although, parts of the region was colonised and other parts of it were semi-colonised, meaning not fully controlled by the British administration but by local kings and chiefs. Similarly, the freedom movement also could not penetrate into whole of the region resulting in dissention and contestations in the post-colonial developments. Such contestations also took violent form with outbreak of militant insurrections in the region. Considering all these socio-historical developments, the region remained isolated in the development discourses of the country and faced a continuous developmental deadlock despite being resource rich. Nevertheless, the diversity and multi-cultural existence in the region is in fact gives a unique identity to the region. The region is 'marked by diversity in customs, cultures, traditions and languages, the region is home to over 200 of the 635 tribal groups in the country. Each State of the region has its own history, culture, tradition and governance systems.'[1] The existence of trans-border communities and their shared cultural life at the borderlands has also added significance to the identity of the region. The diversity and the unique cultural self of the region, however, suggest becoming a capital for development opportunities with proper policy orientation.

The diversity makes the region exceptional with the fact that its borders particularly with Myanmar stand to be a trans-border shared space. The four States i.e Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram share a border of 1643 kilometre with Myanmar. This very reality remains at the core of the prospects for the region that this long and fluid border demonstrates a shared community and cultural space which could be translated into an opportunity for the region. Besides being isolated in the mainstream discourses mostly because of perceived security dynamics and prevalence of customary regimes, this shared

space remained 'unruly'[2] in the recent past. There has not been much effort to mainstream the diversity in the policy frameworks and to transform this shared cultural space into a shared economic space.

Further, the partition has also adversely affected the prospects of development of the region by reducing the region into a land-locked space ceasing all traditional routes of trade and communication. With the announcement of the Look East Policy in the early nineties and subsequently the Act East Policy, a distant ray of hope loomed large in the region that there will be openings for the region through Myanmar to Southeast Asia. This opening would give opportunities for transnational exchanges and interactions through the only possible land route via Northeast. With such an assumption, there are articulations on possibilities and opportunities for Northeast in the India-Southeast Asia relations. However, such openings would not benefit the people of the region unless the borderlands and people living in the borders are able participate in the process.

The expression of India's policy towards Southeast Asia has undergone a significant change in the post-economic reform but there has been a very strong bonding between the two regions since time immemorial. One must consider India's religious and cultural influence in Myanmar and Southeast Asia which is deep-rooted in the history. As Devi (2017) observed that 'the common heritage of Buddhism and the philosophy of compassion, tolerance, non-violence and peace have laid the foundations of the relationship' paving the mutual understanding and a shared space between the two regions.[3] Moreover, the cultural interfaces between communities living in the borderlands also recollect the deep-rooted traditions and customaries with changing dynamics of time and space. The historical connections between India and Southeast Asia remained foundational towards building a vibrant relationship in the 21st century. Further, imagination and consolidation of an identity leaves far-reaching impact on the understanding of a community and cultural space. Today, the border and culture interacts with each other with an imagination and formation of a society that includes and excludes people in the borderlands by constructing and re-constructing identities. Such identities are cultural construction for different appropriations such as consolidation of power and control over the space. As Victor Konrad puts: 'Culture is everywhere yet nowhere; culture is an idea ever more imagined, produced and re-produced by society'[4] Imagining a cultural space and identity gives not only strength to the people but

also a significance in the articulations of changing political economy of globalisation.

In the Northeast too, there are efforts to reiterate the cultural and ethnic bonding among different trans-border communities to usher in their identity and the cultural space lost in the course of historical events and political partitions. The assertion of a cultural identity has become important not only for the members of the society but also the nation-state to appropriate such a cultural space in the trans-national exchanges necessitated by the pace of globalisation. In the following discussions, it has been tried to understand the nature of interactions among communities living in the borderlands demonstrating a vibrant cultural space and a shared community life.

Borderland: A Shared Community Space

The shared geography and India's vision towards Southeast Asia made Myanmar a country of strategic significance for India. The 1643 km long border remained without any hard fences, symbolises the community and cultural space which is mostly shared by people belonging to the same tribe or sub-tribe and clans of a larger ethnic group. People have largely accepted the political demarcation of the border but not the ethnic division resulted thereon. The demarcation of international boundary was made at the whims of few colonial officials without any consultation with the people on the ground, resulting in severe consequences and contestations in the post-colonial history. The border has adversely affected the prevalent community life by dividing families and clans, tribes and sub-tribes and their culture made this borderland, going by the classification of borderlands by Van Schendel and Baud (1997), 'unruly' in some places and 'rebellious' in other places.[5] The consequences are not only affecting the community concerned but also affecting the nation-state by confronting with the idea of State control over the borderland.

Even though, the international border has created the geographical landscape of two separate nation-states – India and Myanmar, a shared cultural and community space remains intact in many of the villages bordering Myanmar. The border gives access to families, clans, relatives on either side to maintain a strong community relation and also interdependence for livelihoods. Beyond the political cartography, one can visibly notice the assertion of a common identity among different tribes living across the border. There are many communities such as

Konyak, Khiammiungan etc. in Nagaland who are spread across the border. 'In Myanmar, there are 162 *Khiamniungan* villages and 40 in Indian side as per the record. There are some unrecognised villages also in and across the border.'[6] It has been claimed that the Naga identity is spread across the border and there are some Naga community whose members are more in the Myanmar side. It was observed that family and clan relations in this part of the border have remained very strong. They maintained unity among the fellow community members across the border by way of celebrating festivals, get-together with relatives and through several traditional events. 'We have maintained the bonding with our relatives by celebrating religious festivals together, meeting relatives, exchanging food and other stuffs as token of love and brotherhood' said the village head *(the head gaon burha)* of ITC Dan village in Nagaland.

There are many examples of arbitrary division of the international boundary between India and Myanmar. The Konyak village *Longwa* in the Mon district of Nagaland is an outstanding example. The village has been bifurcated and placed under two different nationalities. But, the villagers have been trying to remain united with the help of traditional and customary local governance. The village popularly known as 'one village-two nations' has one traditional Chief *(the Angh)*, one village council, on church and one playground for people living on both sides of the political boundary. The people of *Longwa* want to carry forward their identity and customaries to remain a space in between India and Myanmar. The Chief *Angh* of *Longwa* who is the traditional head of the village expressed the determination of the people of the village to protect the unity and integrity of his village by saying '*Longwa* is one, and no one can divide it.'[7] Such determination reflects the vigour of the shared space in the borderland. However, such notion is on the understanding of an independent identity without confronting with any of the countries – India or Myanmar. They want a peaceful coexistence between the two countries in order to maintain the heritage and the legacy of their customaries. Therefore, the people of *Longwa* would like to 'carry India on their lap and Myanmar on the back', said the Chief *Angh*.[8]

The border pillars do not matter much for the people living in the borderland in maintaining a shared community space. People of *New Pangsha* and also *Longwa* reported that they have *jhoom* fields much inside the Burmese territory and they have been cultivating those lands

without any conflict since time immemorial.[9] They have been rearing *mithun* in the forests on the other side of the border and also visit the forests regularly for hunting. A strong interdependency can also be observed because of convenience and availability of services. Dependency on accessing essential goods like edible items, medicine, construction materials, cross-border marital relationship etc. mark the nature of community interaction and fluidity of the border. The interdependency of the bordelanders is determined by the accessibility of basic services, traditional institutions, connectivity, and a shared ethnic bonding. There are examples of such interdependency as people from Burmese villages which are accessible to India come for their daily needs. For instance, people cross the border and come to the market at Lazu in Arunachal Pradesh to exchange goods, meet their relatives and to bring back essential goods. Similarly, students from Myanmar also come to study in towns like Mon in Nagaland. People in the *Noglo* village in Arunachal Pradesh feel that the border has not debarred them from maintaining a strong cross-border community relation. "The Border has not barred us from continuing our ethnic relationship. They (people from Myanmar) are also dependent on us for their daily needs. They normally come to Lazu and collect their rice, salt, clothes and other necessities. Unless there is security issue between the underground people and the security personnel, the normal cross-border traffic is not disrupted. *Noglo* is like the centre place between India and Myanmar. For the villagers on the other side, *Noglo* is the only link road to access the market at Lazu," said the village elder and member of the village council Mr. Yumyang Homthok.[10] Such vibrancy of borderland demonstrates a shared community life which can be observed in many other parts of the India-Myanmar border.

Borderland: A Shared Cultural Space

The cross-border relations including matrimonial relations and cultural exchanges are very strong and alive all along the India-Myanmar border. Celebration of traditional ethnic festivals and rituals are a great part of the cultural life at the borderland. However, the advent of Christianity in these areas has impacted some of their indigenous cultural practices, though not rooted out. There are communities and people who still continue to celebrate the ancestral and folk festivals such as the *Ollo Worang Juku* of the Ollo community in Arunachal Pradesh. Similarly,

the Kukis in Manipur celebrate a traditional festival called *Chabang kut*. During such celebrations, people invite their clan members from the other side of the border which gives an occasion of get-together reminding their cultural affinities and bonding. The practice of cross-border cultural exchanges depends on many other conditions including nature of security regime placed in the border and also the political and religious considerations.

There are some cultural and historical symbols that also prompt a feeling of cultural bonding among the cross-border communities. The *Rhi-dil lake, the Kabaw valley and the Lake of no return* in today's Myanmar stand for cultural unity and shared existence for the *Mizos* of Mizoram, the *Nagas* of Manipur and Nagaland, and the *Noctes*, *Tangsas* and *Wangchus* of Arunachal Pradesh with their counterparts in Myanmar. There are efforts of reconstructing and reviving ethnic identity and historical and cultural bonding to augment better trade-offs in borderlands in the changing circumstances. Besides, celebrating Christmas, it was observed that the *Zofa Cultural Festival* in Champhai, Mizoram; the *Border Trade Football Tournament* in Longwa, Nagaland, the *Pangshu Pass International Festival* in Nampong, Arunachal Pradesh etc. are some of such examples which have started in recent decade with an objective to promote cross-border interaction and to revive and strengthen the cultural and ethnic identity among the cross-border communities. The People from across the border come and take part in huge numbers in these festivals with cultural events and performances. Speaking at the first Zofa Global Convention in Aizawl, Mizoram Home Minister argued for revival of the Mizo identity scattered in the region and across the international border and for that there is a need to preserve the cultural, traditional and historical identities.[11] The recent trend of celebrating cross-border cultural festivals and other cultural interactions has, on one hand, deepened their historical and ethnic connections and on the other hand consolidated the shared community and cultural space in the borderland.

Conclusion

India's cultural and community linkages with Myanmar and Southeast Asia are well placed in the history. The significance of geographic proximity, cultural and ethnic resemblance with Myanmar has already been acknowledged in the policy discourses including the much talked about Look-Act East Policy of the country. To bring into play such

cultural and historical affinities for a better realisation of India's aspirations in Southeast Asia and vice versa, it is important to recognise the existing community and culture life at the borderlands. The community and cultural space that existed in the borderland of Northeast and Myanmar could be capitalised for development of the region in the line of India's vision towards the Southeast Asia.

Hence, there has to be policy innovation for the borderlands of the region going beyond the typical 'border-trade approach' to accommodate the community and cultural space at the border. As it was articulated, 'Northeast has been a natural priority in the Act East Policy of the Country',[12] the development of the shared border space has to be considered from a bottom-up approach. This would give significant impetus to the borderlanders and their shared cultural space which might contribute in exchanges of cultural values and traditions in a globalised economic space. S. Raikhan (2014) argued that 'globalisation of culture' contributes to the exchanges and convergence of cultural values of different countries.[13] Therefore, the policies have to be innovative to make the best use of the community and cultural space what we would call the 'geo-cultural capital' of the region in order to address its developmental bottlenecks. In doing so, there is need to develop a 'border culture'[14] in the borderlands of the region. Further, the shared community and cultural space at the borderland, as argued, has not been properly articulated in the policy frameworks of the Look-Act East Policy so far. However, for better realisation of the objectives of the policy, the appropriation and development of the borderlands have to be moved in parallel if not the prerequisite.

Notes:

1. The North Eastern Region Vision 2020, Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region, [URL: https://mdoner.gov.in/activities/vision-document accessed on 2 October 2019].
2. See, van Schendel, Willem, and Michiel Baud (1997) "Towards A Comparative History of Borderlands", Journal of World History, Vol. 8, no. 2: 1–35.
3. Devi, Thongam Somola (2017) "Cultural Bond between India and Myanmar: Perception from the Past." IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science, vol. 22, no. 10, pp. 26–28.
4. See, Victor Konrad, "Borders and Culture: Zones of Transition, Interaction and Identity in the Canada-United States Borderlands", [URL: http://src-

h.slav.hokudai.ac.jp/BorderStudies/en/publications/review/data/ebr51/V5_N1_03Konrad.pdf accessed on 30 September, 2019].

5. See, van Schendel, Willem, and Michiel Baud (1997) "Towards A Comparative History of Borderlands", Journal of World History, Vol. 8, no. 2: 1–35.

6. Author's interview with Mr. Musho, The Head Gaon Burha of ITC Dan village, Nagaland, dated 21 December, 2017.

7. Author's interview with the Chief Angh of Longwa, Nagaland, dated 18 December, 2017.

8. Author's interview with the Chief Angh and village elders of Longwa, Nagaland, dated 18 December, 2017.

9. Author's FGD with villagers at New Pangsha village, Nagaland, dated 21 December, 2017.

10. Author's interview with Village elders at Noglo Village, Arunachal Pradesh, dated 20 January, 2018.

11. First Zofa global Convention of Mizos across the globe held at Aizawl, Northeast Now, 15 February, 2018. [URL: https://nenow.in/north-east-news/first-zofa-global-convention-held-aizawl.html, accessed on 5 October, 2019].

12. 'Act East Policy', Press Release of Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, Press Information Bureau, 23 December, 2015. [URL: https://pib.gov.in/newsite/printrelease.aspx?relid=133837, accessed on 5 October, 2019].

13. See, S. Raikhan et al. (2014) "The Interaction of Globalisation and Culture in the Modern World" Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, vol. 122, pp. 8-12.

14. See, Konrad, V. and Nicol, H.N. (2011) "Border Culture, the Boundary between Canada and the United States of America and the Advancement of Borderlands Theory" Geopolitics, vol. 16, no.1, pp. 70-90.

Human Trafficking at Moreh Corridor: Route to Chaos

Dr. I. Yaipharemba*

Introduction

Manipur alone shares 398 km of international border with Myanmar which is highly porous. The border is insurgency infested and problem of illegal border crossing add significant pressure on security forces. The porous border enables easy border crossing, narcotics smuggling and instigate organised crime like human trafficking.

The problem of ethnic mistrust, armed conflict and corruption generate poor employment opportunities and slow down economic and infrastructure development. The instabilities, thus, create situations where especially women and children, become vulnerable to human trafficking. It would not be wrong to describe human trafficking is closely related to poverty and unemployment, coupled with lack of social awareness. Human trafficking is a rapidly growing central element of global organised crime. The disparity between the developed and the developing countries is a major driving force for the growth. The trade and mobility between Northeast India and Southeast Asia increased due to India's Act East Policy. Many believed the benefits of inter regional economic boom will outweigh the setbacks but it is important to understand issues like drug and human trafficking at Moreh corridor is also increasing and is a matter of concern. The security along Moreh border is concentrated more on controlling drug trafficking, arms proliferation from Myanmar to Manipur and counter insurgency operations. Cases of human trafficking attract minimal attention until some big catch happens.

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Are the security parameters and governmental machineries at the Moreh Integrated Check Post well equipped to tackle human trafficking methodically and technically is a big question? The Free Movement Regime between India and Myanmar at Moreh corridor proves to be a double edged sword. The land route through Moreh to Myanmar provides a valid point of entry. Thanks to Act East Policy, the Trilateral Highway includes good portion of Imphal-Moreh road further to Myanmar and Thailand, which is emerging as a safe haven and easy route for human traffickers.

Moreh corridor is becoming notorious as an easy route for human and drug trafficking in the north-eastern part of India. The intensity and characteristics of human trafficking is changing and increasingly associating with other criminal activities such as drug trafficking, smuggling of precious metals, timber etc. Necessary measures are needed for effective fight against human trafficking and associated crimes in the borderland. In the realm of connectivity and development, precaution should be taken at this section of the Trans Asian Highway bordering Myanmar so that geographically and socially the borderland doesn't turn into a hub of human trafficking and other immoral activities.

Changing Scenario

The case of human trafficking in Manipur is rapidly changing. Not the frequency, but, the modus operandi of the trafficking is evolving. In present scenario the threat can be counted in different frames. Many of the previous cases of human trafficking were carried in the name of providing better education or good job opportunities. Initially, Manipur acted as a front of trafficking children to mainland India or other Southeast Asian countries. Most of trafficked victims are children of poor families from interior hill districts. In the name of good samaritan, poor children were trafficked by religious institutions resulting to sexual exploitation, bonded labour or to make a physical presence in order to run unauthorised children home to get financial donation from foreign countries. In another event, 21 Muslim boys were deplaned at Imphal airport from a Kolkata bound flight on 14th July 2016. The boys were travelling without any guardians and alarm was raised when one of the boys refused to board the flight. When the minority card started to wave against the authorities, the Manipur Commission for Protection of Child Rights said the rescue operation was conducted in compliance with the Supreme Court's directions (01/09/2010) in the matter of

exploitation of children in orphanages in the State of Tamil Nadu v/s UOI and Ors., concerning large-scale transportation of children from one State to another and its compliance, and exercising the power and functions as vested under Commission for Protection of Child Rights Act, 2005, and The Manipur Commission for Protection of Child Rights Rules, 2011.[1] It demobilised the protest.

There were reports of children belonging to Chandel, Senapati, Ukhrul, Churachanpur, Thoubal and Bishnupur districts of Manipur being trafficked unknowingly. In most cases all the victims are less than 18 years of age. In an SIT investigation conducted by Churachanpur police between late 2017 to early 2018, it is known that more than 100 individuals were trafficked from Manipur in previous years for better education, job through Moreh corridor. This incident came to light when two women including an alleged key player of trafficking girls were held by Churachandpur police along with a driver in an overnight operation conducted by Anti Human Trafficking unit and Women Police Station in September 2017. Three girls who were destined for Myanmar were rescued. The police further revealed the traffickers' modus operandi; the gang would first persuade the family to part with their girls on the promise of well paid jobs. Thereafter, they would pay the family Rs 10,000 each just before taking them to Moreh town. There the local traffickers who will trade them to their contacts in Myanmar for Rs 90,000 each. From Moreh, the girls are taken to Yangon, where they are reportedly sorted out depending on their appearances and supposedly trained to be maids or masseurs. They are then smuggled to Singapore or other countries with fake documents arranged by their handlers.[2] Its real volume is not known as detected cases are only reported.

In present day, the modus operandi of human trafficking abruptly changed, when the Nepali incident in early 2019 came to light. The reincarnation of Look East to Act East Policy leading to development and extension of Trans Asian Highway led to frequent increase of organised crime at Moreh corridor. Presently, Manipur is not only a source of trafficking but a viable route of human traffickers to carry out their nefarious activity. The rescue of 179 Nepalis – 147 women and 32 men proved the easy mobility at the land route to Moreh and used Moreh corridor to travel further to their end destination. The route of operation is critical, time consuming, expensive but provide least chance of detection if one reaches Moreh town. The Nepalis when cross-

examined revealed that they travelled from Kathmandu to Delhi, Delhi to Imphal, Imphal to Moreh and from Moreh planned to reach end destination such as Dubai, Saudi Arabia, Kazakhistan, mainly the Arab countries were the end destinations. The Manipur police arrested eight Nepali agents including one woman charging them with human trafficking. However, a nepali agent caught in the act was released on bail by court after the police failed to file chargesheet in time. It cannot be ruled out that trafficking mafia is strongly operating in Moreh town for illegal transporting of peoples across the border. Many are using uncharted hill routes to cross the border for illegal trade and smuggling. Cases of Rohingyas caught at Moreh town are already in news during and after the Rohingya crisis which proved that somewhere the illegal crossing is funnelled through the border. Even many of the ethnic Burmese are assimilating among the kuki villagers at Manipur side, taking advantage of the same ethnicity. The Nepali incident was an eye-opener for the Authorities and could be considered first time for any nepali trafficking racket which got busted.

The Moreh corridor is also one of the major trans-border transits vulnerable to women and children from Assam and Bangladesh, who were trafficked to Myanmar and further beyond. Previous incidents of Assamese and Bangladeshi victims proved the case. The evolving mode of operation is threatening to the security problem of border State like Manipur. Since Manipur is on the forefront of Act East Policy, organised crimes in addition to insurgency have different dimensions and needs to be looked upon critically. Integrated Check post in Moreh is not technically equipped to detect human trafficking and the personnel lack training to detect complicated cases. Though, the Nepalis were rescued from Imphal and Moreh town, it was confirmed that a batch of 80-100 Nepalis had already crossed the border some days before. They were guided by a Manipuri Nepali transporter. Those trafficked victims were to be absorbed in jobs such as spa, domestic helper in Middle East countries. The trafficked victims were promised good and well paid jobs, the rescued victims were both male and female, and some of them were even 30 years old. In pretext of getting passage and job security Rs 3 to 4 lakhs each were collected from the victims by the handlers.[3] In order to counter human trafficking, Nepal government authorities had put extensive paperwork screening on any Nepalis travelling to West Asian countries. Such actions limit any wrongdoer to travel to end destination easily which in turn make the trafficking mafia look for

easy and viable Moreh route to Myanmar. From Myanmar, document will be forged; visa will be obtained for the end destination country. It was a well planned journey but successfully foiled by Manipur police with the help of Maiti Nepal, a Nepali non-government organisation working against human trafficking.

Besides the detection of Nepalis by Manipur Police and officials of Social Welfare Department, Government of Manipur and Manipur Alliance for Child Rights on February 2019 proves the vulnerability of the corridor, some Nepalis were also rescued from Changangei area near Imphal Airport subsequently. The Manipur Alliance for Child Rights (MACR), an NGO based in Imphal, involved in the rescue exposed that at least 310 Nepalese have crossed into Myanmar from Moreh from December 2018 to January 2019. Cases of human trafficking at the corridors also includes vulnerable tribal girls lured for good jobs but ends in illegal trade or bonded labour without the knowledge of the victim.

Problems of Coordination

In the Nepali incident, the Social Welfare Department decided to take charge of only female victims whereas Manipur Police was asked to take charge of the male victims. The Indo Nepal Peace & Friendship Treaty 1950, that allows individuals without passport and visa entry to both countries allows the Nepalis opportunity for easier to transit.

There potential for human trafficking will increase due to open border owing to trade and commerce, people to people connectivity under Act East Policy and Trans Asian Highway project. In short, to say, many illegal activities are also germinating parallel to development and trade in Moreh borderland. The main issue is that we prepared for such challenges owing to open border policy and contact with South East Asian countries? Without stringent control, Manipur will face an uncertain human security dilemma, liquor flow, commercial sex workers, and unauthorised trade at the border. This activities need to be regulated properly so as to boost tourism and generate revenue rather than giving negative implications.

Concerning the safeguarding of victims against trafficking, a draft policy on Child trafficking is in the pipeline titled 'Manipur State Child Protection Policy 2018'. In that policy, a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is formulated to be undertaken when any trafficking case emerges. Formation of Anti Trafficking Committee and Anti Trafficking Units of

respective districts are all included in the draft. The division of duties and power is significant but lack of stringent law and intra-departmental confusion delay work process thus give the trafficker room to manoeuvre. The security parameters in Manipur are mainly focussed on traditional threats rather than non-traditional like human trafficking, smuggling at borderland etc. There is still no standard operating procedure in Manipur Police to combat human trafficking. The most important strategy to focus in identifying a trafficked victim is to understand three lines operation process i.e. Act, Means and Purpose. Act is the first approach of how individuals agreed to cross border knowingly for value jobs and earning money. Means are methods individuals undertake to cross border legally or illegally so to reach end destinations. But the third process Purpose carries the weightage. Purpose will finally determine the faith of an individual, if a person after successfully reaching end destination instead of promised job were exploited as bonded labour or forced into immoral activities then the individual is finally a victim of trafficking. It is the thin line that determines an individual as a victim, even though a person illegally crosses the border and end up with the promised job. Here, the terminology 'Trafficked victim' comes with vague explanations.

What is most important is the preparedness to face the challenge? Government of Manipur need to have strong coordination with Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India and Anti Trafficking Units of Myanmar. Manipur must have established direct links with corresponding Anti Trafficking Units in Mandalay or any such organisations in Myanmar. The Home Department, Manipur Government must relay any message to corresponding units in Myanmar to investigate trafficking of individuals in Myanmar through Moreh. Such action will deter traffickers and save lives of victims. Therefore, Manipur must have internal Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) with Government of Myanmar for cooperation at regional level on quick and prompt action on human trafficking on both sides of the border.

Between September 2013 and December 2017, in addition to different crimes against children, 133 trafficked children were rescued in Manipur, besides 196 adults. These are only detected figures.

Conclusion

Human trafficking is a complex, multi-faceted organised crime with no single and hard solution. The global trade of trafficking people has

been a subject of growing public and international concern that defined the basic question of human security and rights violation. The boon of Act East Policy and opening of Moreh-Myanmar corridor is a massive and a game changer for Manipur. The corridor is and will bring economic and infrastructural development to the State. Manipur is a fertile source of child trafficking and there is no reason to reject it. Under development in interior hilly areas, non-functioning of schools and colleges, lack of job opportunities and insurgency play a major role in instigating such move among the families and young minds to undertake the dangerous journey. Strict vigilance at Imphal airport and intercity land routes, are needed. The favourable option of Moreh corridor emerged at top spot due to open border and Free Movement Regime for both citizens of the countries. It is easy for someone to cross the border for tourism and marketing on other side and find the loopholes to travel further interior to Myanmar to other Southeast Asian countries. The Nepali incident signifies the easy mode of crossing, existence of border crossing mafia at Imphal city and at Moreh town. It is high time that Manipur Government and concern authorities take a good look at the vulnerability of the border in the light of Act East Policy. The security parameters established along the Moreh corridor for intercepting human trafficking is insufficient. The need to formulate corrective measures to curb the non-traditional human security threat through social and political approaches is paramount in the border region.

Notes

1. Press Release. (2016 July 15). Regarding rescue of 21 children from Imphal Airport. E-pao. Accessed on July 28, 2019.
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3. Montu Ahanthem. Personnal communication. 6 July 2019.

Internal Child Migrants, Child Labour and Education: Concerns and Policy Perspective

Dr. Koyel Basu*

Abstract

Search for economic survival is one of the greatest challenges of contemporary capitalist societies. It entails people to move from one place to another thus creating the unavoidable problem of transient labour force. A key feature of human history is movement of people from one place to another. Migration has become a major area of social science enquiry in recent decades, recognized as associated with widespread societal transformation and economic development. Recent empirical work has presented a very different picture, making clear that, in practice, childhood is envisioned, structured and experienced in divergent ways across the globe. Child migration is especially common in rural areas with low or declining productivity and limited employment opportunities. Theorization of independent child migration is a life transition event.

In fact they migrate in search of improved livelihood and better employment apart from other reasons. However migration literature is either emphatic on optimism or pessimism when it comes to people on the move. But the narratives on migration should be analytical and much more layered while detecting its causality with various factors. Notwithstanding the negative and positive debates on migration, it cannot be denied that migration is a reality both within and across countries and is characterized by order and disorder, will and coercion, welcoming and rejection, in measures.

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Introduction

This study focuses on internal migration in India. To be specific it wants to initiate a connection between migration and labour with focus on children. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) defines a child as a "human being below the age of 18." Migration usually is common from rural to urban places and in the process many families are uprooted from economic subsistence. Among the most tragic circumstances that befall a migrant family is forced participation of children. High inequality in income distribution and poverty are the reasons why child labour is practiced.

Relevant Literature

Migration literature especially those work analyzing a connection between migration of children and fallout on them is very limited. In fact they are invisible in policy debate. However, few works are relevant. For instance, the article titled "Impact of Rural-Urban Labour Migration on Education of Children: A Case Study of Left Behind and Accompanied Children of India" (Roy et al in *Space and Culture,* India 2015, 2:4) explores the impact of temporary labour migration on school attendance of children between 6-14 years. Another very important document is the Global Migration Monitoring Report on Migration titled "Building Bridges, Not Walls", published by UNESCO in 2019 because it has a different take on migration. It says ignoring the education of migrants squanders a great deal of human potential. Inclusive education is needed in a non-discriminatory way. An important article titled "Paternal Migration, Child Labour and Education: A Study from Brickfield Areas of West Bengal "(Majumdar Deepa and Mukherjee Rajasree, Munich Paper Archives, 2011) narrates how children are most vulnerable migrant group in terms of educational attainment and capability formation. Skill formation is urgent so that they can grow up and chooses their livelihood. The World Migration Report 2020 points out how child migration is a significant contemporary phenomenon. Very large numbers lack access to basic services like primary health care and education. However hopeful developments have taken place like vigorous engagement of a range of actors in the improvement of child migrant protection, the production of useful guidelines for policy development and the increasing activism and leadership developing within the child migrant community itself.

Migration's new global character has to be analyzed with new theoretical tools.

Although the number of accompanied and unaccompanied migrant children and adolescents in India may vary, the seasonal migrant children are estimated to be around 15 million. These children are largely invisible as migration sites are located in remote areas away from habitation and mainstream public view. In the absence of crèche, early children services and initiatives for pre-school and formal education, migrant children miss critical inputs necessary in their early years for their physical, motor, cognitive language and psychological development. The vulnerability of migrant children is aggravated since they are cut off from care and security, health and nutrition learning and exposure and an overall normalcy of childhood.

The migrants are mostly impoverished and socially disadvantaged inhabitants of rural areas and leave their villages to find work in the cities, where industries especially in the construction sector, have a huge demand for daily wage labourers. In India, labour laws are twisted and violated leaving workers vulnerable. In a diverse country like India where every state has a different language, children of migrant labourers end up not going to school, jeopardizing their chances of upward mobility in the future. A welfare state which is not rooted to sedentary citizenship is the need of the hour that can rise above neo-liberal compulsions.

What are the compulsions in such case? Market demands an unending supply of labour and child labour migrants come cheap with their own bondages. They are easy to exploit because they are at transient state. They don't have social policies which would cover them. They are vulnerable. Deeper insights into migration literature would prove that children are deprived of their fundamental rights. Migrant workers and their families are forced to live and work for 6 to 8 months under harsh and testing conditions in the heart of a city or suburban area. As Jan Breman argues, "Migrant labourers build and sustain economies but are seen as being the perennial outsiders." Though there is a structural shift in the nature of employment, especially from agricultural to non-agricultural, new jobs that are being created are hazardous where child migrants face hostile work conditions.

The hostile environment is so deeply entrenched that it reinforces the structures of social domination. The scale of distress is very hard to estimate. They are industrial and agro-industrial sectors like brick kilns, manufacturers etc. Basic services and entitlements are debunked here.

There is absence of any concrete mechanism, system or process to track any authentic information about such people who are considered mostly invisible. They are invisible because migration sites are away from habitation and located in remote areas away from public view.

An Aide et Action and Bernard Van Leer Foundation study on the status of and condition of young migrants living at worksites located in Delhi, Chennai, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Jaipur, Patna, Hyderabad and Guwahati portrays very grim picture of the children and their conditions. The assessment indicates 90% seasonal migrant children are excluded from assessing the Integrated Child Development Services ((ICDS) whereas 80% school going children do not access education near worksites. While 65% of the children suffer from ill health, 40% work as child labour and experience various kinds of abuse and exploitation.

Child workers are crucial to the labour market and they are an integral part of this vicious cycle. The main reasons of child migration are poverty, unending cycle of deprivation, poor health and nutrition. Educating such children is a challenge that is difficult to meet. They need to imbibe lessons from skilled teachers in non-discriminatory environments. Social protection, urban inclusion and livelihood programs need to include education needs and demands into their efforts.

Recognizing the serious human rights violations and vulnerability due to distress migration of accompanied and unaccompanied children including adolescents, the UN General Assembly has adopted a resolution vide 69/187 in December 2014 on "Migrant Children and Adolescents" in the context of international migration. The resolution is a positive step towards protection of rights and entitlements of international migrant children.

Over the years, some progressive government intervention did target the internal migrants and children in India. The Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA), Department of School Education and Literacy, Government of India devised guidelines for setting up seasonal hostels; providing special trainings and education for the migrant children both at source and destination. The Ministry of Women and Children's flagship programme on Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS) having a mandate to cover migrant children in urban locations; the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) guidelines to make education and child care accessible for migrant children in destination. Last but not the least the Ministry of Labour and Employment's initiatives promoting inter-state MOUs, inclusion under the Labour Welfare Board for social security, protection and basic services for migrant workers.

Migration of either one or both the parents has the potential of reducing the child's probability of getting educated. There are no formal facilities and children end up helping their parents or playing by the roadside. In Western Maharashtra, in sugar-cane-cutting work alone, it is estimated that about 180,000 children from 0-14 years old migrate with their parents every year, of which at least 75,000 are aged between 8 and 14 years. These children have to contribute to household chores (Srivastava 2011a:24) and miss out on school.

All evidence indicates that migration is large and growing. The growth of rural to urban migration is a huge challenge and opportunity for the policy makers and actors to plan for inclusive future cities. The more complex issue before the state and the civil society today is to develop an inclusive policy, programme and convergence to safeguard and protect the interest of millions of migrant children in India. It is imperative to make school education accessible to children of migratory population irrespective of their mobility and stay in multiple locations. This calls in question the role of neo-liberal state which nominally subscribes to democracy. At the same time this state simultaneously deprives the toiling masses from its labour rights. A country that valorizes its achievements on economic growth can't remain non-chalant to its children and their rights. A notion of universal rights that is portable and inclusive needs to be the principal bedrock for the portability of migrants' entitlements. The state cannot abandon its responsibilities.

India's labour economy is rife with violations of labour laws and constitutional rights. For instance there are denials of the child's constitutional right to free and compulsory education and nutritional support through school meals. Joining school in the destination site often becomes difficult because of differences in language and barriers to entry. Rarely able to get back to schooling in the long term, these children are entrenched in low-skilled, insecure and low-paid sectors of the labour market as adults, thus completing the vicious cycle of poverty and distress migration (Whitehead 2011). Children have negligible educational attainments and severe deprivation at work sites. The children are viewed as outsiders and not accepted anywhere. They are difficult to trace and are left out of the educational system.

An inclusive educational policy is important which develops skills on a non-discriminatory way. This only possible through capability formation and education. Excluded children should be brought within the gambit of the educational system at the destination and source areas. Basic learning, hygiene and livelihood techniques need to be

taught to the children. Seasonal boarding schools can be a good idea or setting up cluster school to cater to the child migrants. If they are unable to come to the educational areas the educational personnel should go to them.

Goal 4 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals comprising universal education cannot be achieved unless it becomes mandatory for each state government to provide education to migratory children by collaborating with different stakeholders, setting up interdepartmental convergence, easy school migration, and encouraging and motivating parents, establishing work-site education centres, seasonal hostels, etc. Thus migration should be positioned within the context of human rights framework that provides protection for all children. Young children lose out on education and become extremely vulnerable. Forced by nagging poverty they remain out of school. Persistent absence from school leads to their names being struck off from the school register. Poverty prevents their re-enrollment into school register and forces them into wage labour. Thus the fundamental rights guaranteed in the Indian Constitution protecting them remain violated. The migrant children become alienated and invisible. Uprooted from their habitation and social fabric, the children suffer severe mental and physical agony. There are limited provisions for children of seasonal migrants. What needs to be done by the state are crucial —

· The Right to Education Act (2019) mandated provisions like maintaining/ tracking a database of children by appropriate governments and local authorities to address the issue.

· Initiatives need to be taken to develop a mechanism to track migrant children for interstate coordination to ensure continuity of education.

· Analysis of the annual work plans of the education department of various states shows that they have a specific plan for the coverage of migrant children. However, the resources of these plans require more serious and systemic attention.

· States need to have an aggressive mechanism for documentation, smooth enrollment of children, addressing curriculum and instructional issues etc.

· The rights of the migrant children should be ensured by linking them to nearest neighbourhood schools. The teachers need to visit the work sites to enroll such students to schools.

· In case of distant location of schools, provision of transportation of children to schools should be maintained.

· A pro-active step must be taken against contractors who employ children in labour.
· Steps need to be taken against child labour.

In a country such as India, where it is lucrative for employers to employ child workers since its cheap and labour laws are poorly implemented, the number of urban child workers is huge, though still less than that in rural areas. How well India is able to harness the intellectual capital of its youth is dependent on the access and quality of education that it provides to its children. The schooling of children has to deal with the elusive triangle of access, quality and equity. While approximately 27.4% of children in the age group of 7 to 18 years reside in urban areas, only 17% of schools are located in urban areas. A review of social protection strategies for migrants, shows that "source-based" intervention, such as setting up migratory hostels, in the areas where migrants originate are needed to prevent child migration and child labour.

Research across India is beginning to piece together a picture of an increasingly mobile labour class. Addressing the risks faced by the children must be made a key priority. Bridging and support classes need to be integrated within the educational planning process so as to help bring back out-of-school children and retain them in school. Other recommendations include the need to establish public funded pre-schools in urban areas with a carefully designed age-appropriate learning curriculum and adequate trained teachers, the need for a national-level mechanism for tracking the children in migration, planning of vertical development of school space with proper security. In view of the highly mobile nature of urban poor population, the need for a policy to ensure that identity of children and subsequent entitlement in term of educational right is protected.

Currently there is little tracking of migrating children or data on their education status. The 2013 UNESCO report recommends tracking migrant children by issuing migratory cards, appointing educational volunteers who can move with the migrating families, and making school calenders flexible.

'The world of urban children in India', a report by PwC and the NGO Save The Children, points out that India's education programmes are still geared towards rural rather than urban areas. For example, DPEP (District Primary Education Programme) and Sarba Siksha Abhiyan encouraged decentralization and community participation based on the idea of village structures. These programmes didn't consider

that weak social networks in urban areas would make it difficult for the community to form something akin to the village education committee.

The report says that, as per the 2011 Census, India's child population in urban areas grew by nearly 13% between 2001 and 2011, but school enrolment and the number of educational facilities/ teachers did not increase proportionately.

Conclusion

The magnitude and variety of internal migration flows in India, as well as the distresses associated with them, are enormous. A basic overview of this complex phenomenon makes clear that in spite of the vast contributions of migrants to India's economy, the social protections available to them still remain sparse. While the state and market have failed in providing protections to these millions of internal migrants, civil-society interventions across various high migration pockets in India offer a number of successful, solutions that the government can adapt and build upon. There have been inclusions of children from migrant families in some noteworthy examples like Lokadrushti in western Odisha for children of brick-making workers, SETU in Gujrat for children of migrant working in salt pans, and Janarth in Maharashtra for children of sugar cane cutters.

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