

ANTAR RASHTRIYA SAHAYOG PARISHAD BULLETIN

Monthly Newsletter of Indian Council for International Co-operation

Vol. 34 No. 12

DECEMBER, 2021

(16 Pages including Cover)

श्री बालेश्वर अग्रवाल जन्मशताब्दी के अवसर पर

Baleshwarji Agrawal: An Iconic Figure of Selfless Service

Dr. Sarita Boodhoo

I have known Shri Baleshwarji since 1975, when he first came to Mauritius. My husband Harish and I were very actively involved in the upliftment of Mauritian youths and their empowerment. Prior to this visit, Baleshwarji was already acquainted with my Guru Pujya Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj. It was a happy meeting which would last for more than 30 years. We collaborated on many projects of international dimensions. I have seen from close quarters how he created and shaped the Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad (Indian Council for International Cooperation) from his small but buzzing and dynamic office at 6-M, Bhagat Singh Market Road. Whenever he visited Mauritius, I used to drive him around in my car to meet various people in different parts of the island. He was amazed to see a young Indian lady driving alone late at night amidst the lush green sugarcane fields.

Later, in the 1980s, I proposed the idea of celebrating the 150th anniversary of the arrival of Indian Indentured Immigrants in Mauritius. The idea was accepted leading to the setting up of a National Organizing Committee. The commemoration lasted for two years, from 1984 to 1985. I proposed to Shri Baleshwarji that it would be a historic occasion for the Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad to bring a group of 150 delegates from India to celebrate the 150 years of Indian settlement on the Mauritian soil; one for each year! He liked the idea immensely and we



worked out the project together. The delegation was led by Bihar Minister, Shri Bhagwat Jha Azaad. It comprised of eminent dignitaries, political and intellectual personalities as well as cultural troupes. It also included a ballet troupe. The ballet, entitled Sone ke Khazanwa, was conceptualised by eminent scholar Dr Veena Sharma on the theme of Indian Immigration. This huge and historic delegation paved the way for people-to-people bonding between Mauritius and India—a bonding based on blood relations, cultural affinities and history.

In 1987, when Baleshwarji visited Mauritius again, I seized the opportunity to get him to inaugurate 'Know The Roots Centre' which I had set up at the Mauritius Bhojpuri Institute in Port Louis. He would continue, from the Indian side, to help people worldwide in tracing their roots.

I accompanied Baleshwarji on several tours to the Indian diasporic countries. I remember in particular, the tours of the Caribbean countries of Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname and Guyana in 1996 for the fourth World Hindi Conference. He was a stern and vigilant group leader; an adherent of punctuality and made everybody in the group, whether VIP or otherwise, to conform to the rules and regulations he had set for everyone.

Baleshwarji was a Karma Yogi, par excellence, as propounded by Shri Krishna in the third chapter of the Bhagwad Gita. He worked without expectation of rewards. He was a no nonsense man and did justice to time; he meant business. He was a man of principles and a strict disciplinarian. What he did in the last several decades amply exemplifies his achievements and milestones. He was able to create a world wide web of interconnectivity between Mother India and her children abroad. Undoubtedly, his series of publications entitled Mother India's Children Abroad serves as a veritable work of reference.

Baleshwarji will remain an iconic figure; a role model in selfless service; an institution unto himself. His was a life well-lived on planet Earth; enriched with dedicated service to humanity, Mother India and her children abroad. He may not be physically present amongst us but his ideals will act as a beacon of light for future generations of People of Indian Origin. ■

SENSITIVITY, ACCOUNTABILITY, PARTICIPATION AND REFORMS pillars of INDIAN DEMOCRACY: PM Modi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi outlined sensitivity, accountability, participation and reform orientation as four pillars of the Indian democratic governance while participating in the main leaders' Plenary Session of the Summit for Democracy hosted by US President Joe Biden.

This closed-door Session saw interventions from 12 select countries, including India, sources informed.

Modi emphasised the need for democratic countries to deliver on



values enshrined in their constitutions. He stressed that principles of democracy should also guide global governance; and that given technology's ability to impact democracy positively or negatively, technology companies should contribute to preserving open and democratic societies.

Modi will deliver India's national statement at the Summit on Friday. In his remarks on Thursday, Modi also recalled that exactly on this date 75 years ago, India's Constituent Assembly had held its first session. He highlighted India's civilizational ethos as one of the original sources of democracy.

Modi further said that the democratic spirit, including respect for rule of law and pluralistic ethos, is ingrained in Indians. "The Indian Diaspora carries it too, thereby contributing to economic well-being and social harmony of their adopted homes." ■

A.R.S.P. Bulletin

A NEWS & VIEWS MONTHLY
Published Since 1987

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PRINTER

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PUBLISHER

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PRICE

Rs. 5/- per copy
Rs. 500/- for Life

High Commissioner of Sri Lanka HONOURED INDIAN STAFF MEMBERS

High Commission of Sri Lanka in New Delhi celebrated with its long-serving Indian staff members and with a family get together that included the family members of both home-based and local staffs. The High Commissioner of Sri Lanka to India Milinda Moragoda, with a view to promoting camaraderie between the home-based and local staffs, and particularly to recognize and honour the services of Indian staff members who have served in the High Commission for more than thirty years.

In this regard, five Indian staff members who have served more than thirty years in the High Commission were felicitated at the event. Notably, the High

Commissioner, with the support of the Sri Lankan private sector, has made arrangements for these long-serving five staff members and their spouses to undertake a visit to Sri Lanka with a five-night stay, and the announcement in this regard was made at the family get together. Deepak Nathali: Sr. Principle Secretary, Renu Sharama: Sr. Executive officer, Vijendra Kumar: Peon, Bijendra Pel: security and K. C. Sharma: Receptionist was honour as the long services of Indian staff members

Mrs. Jennifer Moragoda also joined the High Commissioner in distributing Diwali gifts to children and felicitating long-service staff members. ■

INDIAN COMMUNITY IN THAILAND AND INDO-THAI CULTURAL RELATIONS

Compared to other countries in South East Asia like Malaysia and Singapore, the Indian community in Thailand is small in number, estimated to be around 100,000. The community has been living in harmonious relationship with Thais and are well thought of.

A large majority of the Indians are located in and around Bangkok though quite a few are spread out in almost all the provincial capitals. The community is evenly divided between people from Punjab and those from U.P., particularly from the two districts of Gorakhpur and Azamgarh in eastern Uttar Pradesh. Again half the people from Punjab are Sikhs and many of them are Namdharis. The Namdhari community besides being large is the most prosperous of the Indian community havin business interests in real estate and industries. From ready made garments many have moved into production of textiles.

Despite the small size, the Indian community is represented by several organisations like Arya Samaj, Hindu Dharma Sabha, Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Hindu Samaj, Thai-Bharat Cultural Lodge, Siam Sindhi Society, Geeta Ashram, Indian Women's Club andf Gitanjali Arts. Thai students who were educated in India have formed an Indian Institutes Alumni Association who not only are proud of their association with Indian institutions but have maintained links with fellow students who studied with them through this association.

The Indian community has not lagged behind either in performing welfare activities contributing considerably to Thai charities. During the days of



India's struggle for independence a number of Indians played an important role in the Indian National Army. When Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose visited Thailand he was actively involved with the Indian community.

The Indian community runs innumerable cultural organisations of various religious groups. An Indian women's club arranges cultural shows of leading artistes from India and the proceeds are used for philanthropic activities. Members of the Royal family attend performances given by Indian cultural troupes. Diwali is celebrated in a very big way by all the members of the community.

Cultural ties between Indian and Thailand have existed from time immemorial. Spread of Buddhism from India further strengthened the ties. Influence of India in Thailand can be seen in all walks of life. It is interesting to see that the Thai Kings have taken the name of Rama while ascending the throne. The present king His Majesty Bhimubhol Adulyadej is Rama IX. The social mores of the two peoples are very similar. The traditional mode of greeting of the Thais is with folded

hands known as 'Sawasdee' in Thai like 'namasthe' in Hindi. Reverence accorded to teachers, elders and parents, the importance religion plays in the life of the people are similar to what are obtained in India. There ae similarities in the festivals too like Songkran (the Tahi water festival) and Holi and Loi Krathong (the Thai festival of lights) and Diwali. Similarly the influence of Pali and Sanskrit has been considerable in Thai language.

One Indian scholar who is remembered by the Indian community is Swami Satyanand Puri. He founded an institution in 1930 now named as "Thai Bharat Cultural Lodge". This institution is doing commendable work in fostering close cultural ties between India and Thailand. Its activities include celebration of birth anniversaries of important leaders, Magha Puja, arranging Indian dances, exhibition of Indian paintings and Yoga classes. This lodge has a well stocked libray useful for scholars doing research on Indian and Indo-Thai relations.

Every year over 5000 Thais visit various places in India connected with Buddhism. Buddhist monks also visit India to study Sanskrit, Pali and Buddhist studies. There is a Thai Dharmasala in Bodh Gaya and the Thai Ambassador to India is one the Board which governs the development of Buddhist shrines.

As is common throughout south east Asia, Ramayana is very popular in Thailand too. The Thais have their own version called Ramkien performed in the Thai classical style called "khon". It is interesting to see that Ramayana is portrayed in such a way that it is supposed to have taken place in Thailand.

Relationship between the Indians and Thais in Thailand could be termed as one extreme understanding and love in the true spirit of Buddhism.

Thailand : Land, Climate and People

Thailand literally means "Land of the Free." It was free through out history as it has never been colonised by any Western country, and the Thai people are specially conscious of this fact.

Thailand has an area of 513,000 square kilometres, about the size of France, and stretches 1650 kilometres from north to south (longitudes 97 E & 106 E) and 780 kilometres at its widest from west to east (latitudes 5N & 21N). It has a long coast line of over 2,600 kms of which 740 kilometres is one the Indian Ocean to the west and 1,875 kilometres is on the Gulf of Thailand to the east. It is bordered by Myanmar to the west and the north, Laos to the north and northeast, Cambodia to the east and Malaysia to the south.

Geographically the country is divided into four regions. Much of the north consists of mountainous forests, the highest peak being Doi Inthanon (2,596 metres or 8,515 feet). Temperatures can drop to 90C (480F) in the cool season (November to February), and the climate is cool enough to permit the cultivation of temperate fruits such as lychees and strawberries. The central plains watered by the Chao Phraya river, which rises in the north and flows into the Gulf of Thailand at Bangkok, are a lush, fertile area where much of the country's rice is grown. During the hot season (March to June), temperatures can reach 380C (1000F), accompanied by high humidity. The rains start during June and continue until October. During

the cool season (November to February), temperatures sometimes drop to 190C (660F). The north east is semi-arid, with poor soil and inadequate irrigation, but is occasionally subject to the other extreme of flooding from the Mekong River. The area is heavily populated and is the poorest part of the country, though it contains valuable mineral resources. The seasons are much the same as those in the central plains, though temperatures are somewhat more extreme. The long southern isthmus has a heterogeneous topography and a variety of climates depending on altitude. It encompasses sandy beaches, tropical forests and limestone mountains, rubber plantations and fruit orchards, coves and bays filled with fish, and rugged hilly terrain from which high grade iron ore has been extracted for centuries.

Thailand is generously endowed with natural resources. Rice, tapioca, sugarcane, maize and jute are major economic crops, while pineapple, tobacco, mung and black mung beans, coconut, sorghum, groundnut, palm oil and cotton are less important, but nevertheless economically significant crops. Cattle, poultry and fish abound, and a wide variety of vegetables and fruits thrive in Thailand's tropical, humid climate. Fluorite, wolfram, tungsten, potash, tin and precious gems are mined and the discovery of natural gas in the Gulf of Thailand has resulted in an ambitious plan to develop the country's Eastern Sea Board.

People

Thailand has a population of approximately 56.7 million. Over 90% of the population of Thailand is Buddhist, professing Theravada

Buddhism. Mahayana Buddhists are found primarily among Thailand's ethnic Chinese and Vietnamese population. Buddhism first appeared in Thailand during the 3rd century B.C., when Buddhist missionaries despatched by the Indian Emperor Ashoka visited Suvannabhunj in the area of present day Nakhon Pathom. The Constitution states that the king must be Buddhist. Buddhism is the state religion and all important Buddhist holy Days are national holidays. However, the constitution guarantees protection to all religions and the king is regarded as the "Upholder of all religions." Is it common for Buddhist males over 20 years of age to be temporarily ordained as Buddhist Monks for a few months. There is a large ethnic minority of Chinese descent, estimated at about 4 million, though precise figures are not available because of widespread intermarriage of Chinese with Thais. Persons of Indian origin, estimated at about 100,000 constitute the second largest ethnic minority in Thailand.

Thailand's largest religious minority are the Muslims, numbering some 2 million or around 4% of the population. They are concentrated mainly in the southern provinces of Thailand, on the Thai-Malaysian border, Islam is thought to have been introduced in the Malay Peninsula by Arab traders and adventures during the 12th century and the majority of Thai Muslims are of Malay descent. Christianity was introduced in the 16th and 17th centuries by European missionaries, and there are nearly 3 lakh Christians in Thailand. Many Thai schools and hospitals are Christian-affiliated. Other religious minorities in Thailand include Hindus and Sikhs.

Dialogue with DIASPORA

WEBINAR ON GEET GAWAI

(UNESCO APPROVED INTANGIBLE HERITAGE OF HUMANITY)

Dr Ruchi Verma
Research Fellow, DRRC/ARSP

Diaspora Research and Resource Centre (DRRC), Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad (ARSP), New Delhi has started a fortnightly virtual programme, "Dialogue with Diaspora" in which, important members of Indian diaspora from different countries are invited to share their ideas and experiences for deepening their engagement with India and for networking with the global PIOs.



Geet Gawai Group of Mauritius after performance in Pravasi Bhawan Auditorium(ARSP)

As part of this series, a session on the significance of Bhojpuri folk songs "Geet Gawai" in Mauritius was organised on Friday, 12 November 2021. Dr Sarita Boodhoo, Chairperson Bhojpuri Speaking Union operating under the aegis of the Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage, Mauritius joined in the discussion. The programme was moderated by Amb. Anup Mudgal, Chairperson, DRRC. Shri Narayan Kumar, Hon. Director, ARSP and Prof. Sandhya Sinha, Editor, Angana: Bhojpuri Women's magazine were the discussants.

The Geet Gawai is a musical ensemble that encapsulates the intangible cultural heritage brought to Mauritius by Indian indentured immigrants 187 years ago from the Bhojpuri belt of India. It is a combination of rituals, prayers, songs, music and dance which is also a living means of expression of the Bhojpuri language and oral traditions. The tradition bearers especially the women who have preserved this rich oral musical performance are known as Geetharines. They have learnt these rich oral literary art forms from their elders and the tradition has been

passed on from generation to generation. The Geet Gawai depicts a harmonious blending of the different aspects of the cycle of life and rites of passage. This tradition has unifying effects on Indians from different regions of India in Mauritius and other parts of the world. The significance and importance of Geet Gawai has been recognised by UNESCO and in 2016 it was listed as the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Government of Mauritius also ensures that this intangible cultural heritage is safeguarded.

Dr Sarita Boodhoo informed that Mauritian Government is planning several initiatives to promote and preserve Bhojpuri language and Geet Gawai. Language is the most important aspect of any tradition and culture, therefore, transmitting, preserving, protecting and propagating the language is very important. Efforts are being made to introduce Bhojpuri (in Devnagri script) in the school's curriculum of Mauritius to make it accessible and attractive to younger generation.

According to Dr Sarita Boodhoo, the Prime Minister of Mauritius, Mr Pravind Kumar Jugnauth has

announced that as from 2nd November 2021, the occasion of the anniversary of the arrival of Girmityas, indentured labourers in Mauritius, that there would be a daily Bhojpuri news bulletin on the National TV channels. This has already started. There is already a 24 Hour Bhojpuri Channel operating from February 2013. The Geet Gawai will also be made part of the culture tourism of Mauritius. The Bhojpuri Speaking Union operates some fifty Geet Gawai Schools to initiate younger women to Geet Gawai singing based on a well-established curriculum.

Dr Sarita Boodhoo also illustrated that the government has plans to organise an International Bhojpuri Mahotsav in Mauritius as soon as the pandemic situation normalizes. She concluded by saying that through the unison efforts of Indian diaspora and Mauritius government the future is bright for Geet Gawai and Bhojpuri language.

Given the richness of the theme, it was decided that there would be another session with special emphasis on the performing part of this art form. ■

ROMANI DANCE AND MUSIC: PRECIOUS TREASURES OF INDIAN

 Zameer Anwar

Since the migration of Roma from India in eleventh century, the survival of Romani art and culture has hinged on a vast array of artistic forms straddling folklore, storytelling, oral history, music, dance, theatre, painting and metal and wood craft. Though their practices have been influenced to a great extent by interaction with the culture of their surrounding population, yet some unique and special aspects of Romani culture have been preserved. In turn, the Roma and Sinti have also influenced the art and culture of the countries they live in. The influence is seen across Europe.

Music and dance have a deep symbolic connection with Roma and have been a mode of expression, communication and livelihood. The Arts, dance, music- vocal and instrumental provide solace and motivation to the Roma community to live on in spite of extreme poverty, hardship, and fundamental rights' violations and so on. Music and dance have been one of the oldest professions of Roma and are so indispensable with Romani identity that even groups of Armenian and Greek dancing girls and boys were called Roma (Gypsies) owing to their musical and dancing prowess. Music, being one of the powerful tools for positive articulation of a public identity of Roma, is the only lustrous light in their otherwise gloomy life.

The great tradition of music-making of Romani community by means of Guild system produced distinguished and illustrious musicians and dancers who have received international acclaim. A few to name, Violinist- Janos Bihari, jazz violinist and

guitarist – Elek Bacsik, Flamenco dancer - Carmen Amaya and Joaquin Cortes, Singers- Esmá Redzepova and Saban Bajramovic, Franco-Spanish guitarist- Tonino Baliardo, Django Reinhardt, Manitas de Plata and the Schmitt brothers, violinist Roby Lakatos and multi-instrumentalist Tcha Limberger, Romanian actor and singer - Sr. Stefan Banica, French film director and actor- Tony Gatlif, English comic actor and filmmaker - Sir Charles Spencer Chaplin, are revered as icons of their art.

Different scholars and researchers have critically analyzed and established the relation between the Roma and India from various perspectives: Courthiade's Kannauj theory, Kshatriya theory by Hancock and Kochanowski and the historical narration of Bahram Gur V etc. The linguists proved the affinity of Romani language with Indian languages as well as Genetic studies further substantiated the link of Romani origin from Indian subcontinent. However, one may find artistic similarities which are more poignant and fascinating.

Ian Hancock (2002) and Isabel Fonseca (1995) have attributed the vocal performance of rhythmic syllabic metres by Hungarian Romani musicians to Indian origin. Bulgarian chalga / pop-folk singers Sofi Marinova asserts her affinity for Indian music and signifies the tone and timbre of her voice resemble an Indian voice, when she sings in Romani language. Sofi points out her song features the Cocek/kyuchek rhythm, closely resembling Indian beats, produced by synthesized drum



(Dhol), and accompanied by Tabla (in Romani known as tarabuka) and Dafli (in Romani known as Dajre). Bulgarian chalga singer Aziz employs Indian motifs in his songs as well as posits parallels between Indian classical rag-based music and hicaz. He remarks, his song depicts the distinctive beats and rhythm of north Indian musical instruments such as pungi, shahnai and dhol.

Flamenco dance, innovated, improvised and enriched by the Roma (Roma are known by an ethnonym “Gitanos” in Spain) of Spain, has been declared an “intangible cultural heritage of humanity” by UNESCO in 2010. It is important to note that flamenco would cease to exist without the Romani music and its wide repertoire. Flamenco uses rhythm, voice and percussion in a way that strongly reminds of Indian music and dances. It emphasizes the nuances of the footwork, spins, facial expression, gaze and the movement of arms, hands and fingers which bear a resemblance to those of classical dance of Northern India such as Kathak. The Indian dance elements especially of Kathak and Kathakali strikingly coalesce into Flamenco dance (the Baile). The Phrygian mode, often used in Flamenco,

matches the Indian Bhairavi raga. The cante jondo (The traditional vocal style of Flamenco) employs 12-beat pattern of syncopated palos which are reminiscent of Indian talas (rhythms) and the castanets evoke the sound of the Indian khartal. The other characteristic that Romani Flamenco and Indian dance share is the presentation of the history of Roma's ancestors in Flamenco as a form of prayer, whereas the lives of Gods and Goddesses in Indian classical dances are staged.

Sinti Swing, Gypsy Jazz and Balkan music also resonate to the strains of Romani rhythms, melodies and harmonies. Several instruments used in the Balkans like the Dauli, Tapan and Zurna have parallels in Indian music. Even western classical music has Romani influences as evident in works by Haydn and Liszt. Hungarian composer Franz Liszt remarked that the musical scale of Roma is identical to the oriental chromatic scale and Indian Bhairava scale, but in the course of time, modified by Middle Eastern styles acquired in Anatolia before being first introduced into Europe in the fifteenth century. A kind of drum called Dauli in Balkan, got a significant place in Romani musical ensembles, is identical to Indian Dhol. The melismatic and free style of Romani music could be a reference to the heritage of Indian music. The

basic scale of north Indian music is heptatonic and its seven notes (Sa- ri- ga- ma- pa- dha- ni) correspond approximately to those of Romani major scale.

Romani musicians have historically adapted to both eastern and western musical elements including rap, rock, jazz, rumba and Indian motifs (ideas used frequently in music). A renowned Bulgarian Romani Saxophonist Yuri Yunakov stated Indian music is perhaps closest to my style of music and further commented that some Rajasthani tunes sound like Cocek/Kyuchek to him. Kyuchek is Romani musical genre, associated with solo dance and accompanied by music, immensely popular in Balkan, Albania, Bulgaria and Turkey. The Kyuchek are embellished by old Romani tunes, inspired by music of Indian films. A number of tunes and themes from Indian movies have been incorporated into Romani Kyuchek tunes.

Romani musicians from Serbia and Macedonia embraced Indian melodies and songs, as there is vehement craze for Indian music and culture in Macedonia. Indian movies are widely viewed by Roma because of their some understanding of Hindi as Romani language is similar to Indo-Aryan Languages particularly North Indian Languages. In 1970,

Serbian song of Muharem Serbezovski "Ramo Ramo", inspired by Indian movies, that became super hit in then Yugoslavia. Several songs showcase Indian elements not only in the text but also in music. The musical documentary film Latcho Drom provides the structural model that articulates the linear migration of Romani music originated in India, but flourishing in Europe.

The continual transnational migration of Roma has played a cornucopia of influences on their music, beginning with Indian roots and subsequently adding Greek, Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Slavic, Romanian, Spanish and Celtic touches. It is therefore considered to be world music. However, it is a bitter irony that Romani music is loved and admired, though Roma are hated and despised over the centuries.

Roma is the main force of innovation in music and their inborn musical talent gives them opportunity to enlarge and mold their repertoires in order to cater to multiple patrons of various ethnic groups. There are a large number of unmetered songs and instrumental music with free rhythm which have been neither written nor recorded. The oral musical tradition of Roma has parallel with old musical heritage of India. ■

DIPLOMATIC POSTINGS

Shri Pradeep Kumar Rawat (IFS: 1990), presently Ambassador of India to the Kingdom of the Netherlands has been appointed as the **next Ambassador of India to the People's Republic Of China.**

Shri Anindya Banerjee (YOA: 2006), presently Assistant High Commissioner of India to Chittagong has been appointed as the **next High Commissioner of India to the**

Republic of Cameroon.

Shri B.S. Mubarak (IFS: 2001), presently Ambassador of India to Guatemala, has been appointed as the **next Ambassador of India to the Republic of the Sudan.**

Shri Manoj Kumar Mohapatra (IFS: 2000), presently Minister in Embassy of India, Washington DC, has been appointed as the **next Ambassador of India to the Republic of**

Guatemala.

Shri Harsh Kumar Jain (IFS: 1993), presently Additional Secretary in the Ministry, has been appointed as the **next Ambassador of India to Ukraine.**

Shri Vinay Kumar (IFS: 1992), presently Additional Secretary in the Ministry, has been appointed as the **next Ambassador of India to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.** ■

INITIATIVE ON COLLABORATION BETWEEN INDIAN AND INDO-SURINAMESE OF THE NETHERLANDS

An online meeting was held for signing an MOU between the Organisation of Diaspora Initiatives (ODI International) and the Sarnámihuis Foundation, Netherlands (Sarnámihuis) on 5 December 2021 to collaborate between Indian and Indo-Surinamese of the Netherlands. The signing event was attended by participants from India, the Netherlands, France, Germany, Mauritius, Malaysia, South Africa,

Madagascar, Caribbean and many other countries.

The prominent speakers were Mr Amar Soekhlal, Prof. Ajay Dubey, Mr. Sandew Hira, Amb. Mookhesswur Choonee, Amb. Manju Seth, Dr. Markandey Rai, Prof. Anand Singh, Dr Sivem Dorairajah. Several speakers emphasised the need and outlined the strategies for global connection for Indian Diaspora with India and among themselves through research, new IT applications,

publications and finally translating them to community connect.

From Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad, Shri Shyam Parande, Secretary General, Shri Narayan Kumar, Hon. Director and Dr Ruchi Verma, Research Fellow, Diaspora Research and Resource Centre participated in this important event and assured them of continued support and cooperation in their endeavours through ARSP's established channels and contacts. ■

INDIAN ARCHITECT, MENTORED BY CORBUSIER, WINS UK AWARD



Acclaimed Indian architect Balkrishna Doshi, who worked with the legendary Le Corbusier, would receive the Royal Gold Medal for 2022, one of the world's highest honours for architecture.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi hailed the achievement and spoke to the distinguished architect to congratulate him.

With a 70-year career and over 100 built projects, Doshi (94) has influenced the direction of architecture in India and its adjacent regions through both his practice and teaching. His buildings combine pioneering modernism with vernacular, informed by a deep appreciation of the traditions of India's architecture, climate, local culture and craft. His projects include

administrative and cultural facilities, housing developments and residential buildings.

On hearing the news that he would receive the Royal Gold Medal in 2022, Doshi said: "The news of this award brought back memories of my time working with Le Corbusier in 1953, when he had just received the news of getting the Royal Gold Medal. Today, six decades later, I feel truly overwhelmed to be bestowed with the same award as my guru — honouring six decades of my practice." — TNS. ■

PARAG AGRAWAL APPOINTED AS TWITTER'S NEW CEO



Non-Resident Indian Parag Agrawal, 37, an IIT-Bombay graduate, has replaced Jack Dorsey as the new Twitter chief executive officer, becoming the youngest CEO among the top 500 US companies.

The Board of Directors unanimously appointed him as the new CEO. Parag Agrawal did his graduation from IIT-Bombay and PhD in computer science from Stanford University.

He joined Twitter in October 2011 as an ads engineer and soon after held the title of the company's 'Distinguished Software Engineer'. He was appointed as its Chief Technology Officer in 2017.

Twitter has revealed that as CEO Parag will be given an annual compensation of USD 1 million as well as stock compensation worth USD 12.5 million.

Within Twitter, Parag is considered one of the top engineers. He was once part of the company's TAG group, which oversaw all the new products and technologies with Twitter.

Agrawal is expected largely to pick up where Dorsey left off, continuing to fight for users being lured away by competitors like TikTok and Instagram. Over the past year, Twitter has fought to end years-long criticism that it has been slow to introduce new features for its 211 million daily users and was losing ground to social media rivals. ■

INDIA'S HARNAAZ SANDHU BRINGS HOME MISS UNIVERSE CROWN AFTER 21 YEARS

India's Harnaaz Sandhu is the new Miss Universe, 21 years after Lara Dutta won the title in 2000. Ms Sandhu represented India today at the 70th Miss Universe 2021, held in Eilat, Israel. The 21-year-old from Punjab claimed the crown edging out Paraguay's Nadia Ferreira and South Africa's Lalela Mswane.



Ms Sandhu was presented the crown by Andrea Meza, former Miss Universe 2020 from Mexico.

Before the Chandigarh-based model, only two Indians have won the title of Miss Universe - actors Sushmita Sen in 1994 and Lara Dutta in 2000.

On being asked what advice she would give to young women on how to

deal with the pressures they face, a composed Ms Sandhu said, "The biggest pressure the youth of today is facing is to believe in themselves, to know that you are unique and that's what makes you beautiful. Stop comparing yourselves with others

and let's talk about more important things that's happening worldwide."

"This is what you need to understand. Come out, speak for yourselves because you are the leader of your life, you are the voice of your own. I believed in myself and that's why I am standing here today," Ms Sandhu said with aplomb.

Ms Sandhu, who started her journey in pageantry at the age of 17, has previously been crowned Miss Diva 2021, Femina Miss India Punjab 2019 and was even placed in the Top 12 at Femina Miss India 2019. She has also worked in Punjabi films like "Yaara Diyan Poo Baran" and "Bai Ji Kuttange". ■

INDIAN AMERICAN GAUTAM RAGHAVAN ELEVATED TO KEY WHITE HOUSE POST

US President Joe Biden announced Raghavan's promotion to the key White House post after UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres announced his intent to appoint Cathy Russell as the next executive director of UNICEF.

Biden elevated Indian American Gautam Raghavan to a new position making him head of the White House Office of Presidential Personnel.

"I am also pleased that Gautam Raghavan, who has worked in tandem with Cathy from Day One, will become PPO's new director — a seamless transition that will enable us to continue building a federal workforce that is efficient, effective, dependable and diverse," Biden said in a statement.

A first-generation immigrant, Raghavan was born in India, raised in Seattle and graduated from Stanford University. He is the editor of "West

Wingers: Stories from the Dream Chasers, Change Makers, and Hope Creators Inside the Obama White House." He lives with his husband and their daughter in Washington, DC.

Gautam Raghavan has served as deputy assistant to the President and deputy director of the White House Office of Presidential Personnel since January 20, 2020. Previously, he was the first employee hired by the Biden-Harris Transition Team where he served as deputy head of Presidential Appointments.

"Raghavan served as chief of staff to US Representative Pramila Jayapal (WA-07), the Chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, and advised organisations focused on advancing civil rights and social justice, serving as an advisor to the Biden Foundation and as vice president of Policy for the Gill Foundation," the White House said.



"During the Obama-Biden Administration, Raghavan served in the White House Office of Public Engagement as liaison to the LGBTQ community as well as the Asian American & Pacific Islander community, as acting White House liaison for the US Department of Defence, and as Outreach Lead for the Pentagon's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" Working Group," it said. ■

His Majesty The King confers The Order of Druk Gyalpo to H.E. Shri Narendra Modi

The Order of The Druk Gyalpo, Bhutan's highest civilian award, has been conferred to His Excellency Shri Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India by His Majesty The King of Bhutan, as a mark of deep appreciation from the people of Bhutan for his leadership and personal efforts towards strengthening the exceptional relations between Bhutan and India on 17th December 2021, during the National Day Celebration of Bhutan.

His Excellency Shri Narendra Modi further strengthened the great tradition of exemplary friendship and cooperation between Bhutan and India by building upon a legacy founded over 50 years ago. The importance Prime Minister Narendra Modi attaches to the close and special relations between our two countries was evident in his choice to



File photo from Prime Minister Modi's visit to Bhutan in August 2019.

choose Bhutan for his first international visit as Prime Minister in 2014, and the continued gestures of support, including initiating new partnerships in space technology.

As the world continues to face the difficult challenge of COVID-19 Pandemic, His Excellency Prime Minister Narendra Modi led his nation in extending support to many countries including Bhutan by providing, amongst others, 500,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccines. This provided immense impetus for the successful conduct of nationwide vaccination.

The people of Bhutan deeply appreciate this extraordinary gesture, which reflects the noble spirit of selfless generosity of the people of India. This award honors Bhutan's special bond with India, who is our closest neighbor and friend.

DAYS TO REMEMBER

in January, 2022

January 01 : New Year Begins

January 02 : Amavasya ●

January 04 : Myanmar- Independence Day

January 12 : National Youth Day-Swami Vivekanand Jayanti

January 13 : Lohri

January 14 : Makar Sankranti + Pongal

January 15 : Army Day

January 17 : Paush Purnima ●

January 23 : Birth Anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose

January 25 : National Tourism Day

January 26 : Republic Day of India

January 26 : Australia- Australia Day

His Majesty The King and His Majesty The Fourth Druk Gyalpo offered prayers for late General Bipin Rawat, the Chief of Defence Staff of the Indian Armed Forces



His Majesty The King and His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo offered prayers and Karmi Tongchoed at the Kuenrey of the Tashichhodzong for late General Bipin Rawat, the Chief of Defence Staff of the Indian Armed Forces, his wife Mrs. Madhulika Rawat, and 11 armed forces personnel who lost their lives in a helicopter accident on 8th December 2021.

His Majesty The King and His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo have sent messages of condolence to the bereaved families, and the Government and people of India.

Late General Bipin Rawat, who visited Bhutan several times during his career, will be remembered as a friend by the people of Bhutan. The Prime Minister, Foreign Minister,

Royal Government of Bhutan, Chief Operations Officer of the Royal Bhutan Army and senior officers of the Armed Forces, along with the Indian Ambassador, the heads of IMTRAT and DANTAK, and representatives of the Indian community in Bhutan, joined the ceremony to offer a thousand butterlamps. ■

दिव्या माथुर का रचना संसार

श्याम त्रिपाठी
हिन्दी मिलाप
प्रमुख सम्पादक

दिनांक 19 दिसम्बर 2021 को केन्द्रीय हिंदी संस्थान, विश्व हिंदी सचिवालय, वैश्विक हिंदी परिवार एवं अन्य सहयोगी संस्थाओं के संयुक्त ऑनलाइन आयोजन में प्रवासी साहित्यकार दिव्या माथुर का रचना संसार विषय पर एक साहित्यिक विचार संगोष्ठी का आयोजन किया गया, जिसकी अध्यक्षता प्रवासी साहित्य के सशक्त हस्ताक्षर प्रो. कमल किशोर गोयनका ने की। कार्यक्रम का प्रारम्भ प्रो. राजेश कुमार एवं हिंदी भवन भोपाल के डॉ. जवाहर कर्नावट ने दिव्या माथुर जी का परिचय देते हुए किया। स्वागत वक्तव्य मैसूर केन्द्र के प्रभारी निदेशक डॉ. परमान सिंह तथा संचालन वैश्विक हिंदी परिवार के संयोजक, प्रवासी लेखक पद्मेश गुप्त ने किया।

कार्यक्रम के प्रारम्भ में पद्मेश गुप्त ने डॉ. निखिल कौशिक द्वारा दिव्या माथुर के व्यक्तित्व एवं कृतित्व पर निर्मित एक लघु फिल्म 'घर से घर तक का सफर' का प्रदर्शन किया जिसकी समस्त श्रोताओं ने करतल ध्वनि से बहुत प्रशंसा की। दिव्या माथुर के रचना संसार पर डॉ. मनोज मोक्षेन्द्र ने कहा कि उनकी रचनाएं स्त्री की पुरुष पराधीनता की बात तो करती हैं किंतु संबंधों के द्वंद को भी बखूबी उजागर करती हैं और दोनों ही पक्षों की कमजोरियों, पाखण्डों का मखौल भी उड़ाती हैं। इन्द्रप्रस्थ कालेज दिल्ली की प्रो. डॉ. रेखा सेठी ने दिव्या माथुर की शाम भर बातें, साँप सीढी, अंतःसलिला जैसी अनेक रचनाओं की चर्चा की और उनके अनुवादक पक्ष की भी प्रशंसा की और कहा कि उन्हें पढ़ते हुए अपने जीवन के एक समानांतर इतिहास से परिचय होता है। इंदु जैन की पंक्तियों को उद्धृत करते हुए उन्होंने कहा कि मैं डरी लेकिन मरी नहीं—दिव्या जी पर सटीक बैठता है।

लेखिका एवं समीक्षक कल्पना मनोरमा ने कहा कि उनकी कविताएं पढ़ते हुए

मन भीग जाता है। श्री राजेश कुमार ने दिव्या माथुर के उपन्यास के अंश 'एक आले जितनी छोटी खिड़की में जंग लगे सरियों की परछाइयाँ मेरे दड़बे की जमीन पर मोमबत्तियों के जैसा आकार बना रही हैं' से प्रारम्भ करते हुए प्रभावशाली पाठन किया। हिंदी प्रवासी साहित्य के अंतरराष्ट्रीयकरण की चर्चा करते हुए दिव्या माथुर के रचनाधर्म के विषय में डॉ. अरुणा अजितसारिया ने कहा कि उनकी कहानियों में सिर्फ भारत ही नहीं किसी भी देश के स्त्री पुरुष एवं बच्चों की कहानियाँ हैं, और वे आपको अपने आस पास की ही लगती हैं।

प्रसिद्ध लेखिका नासिरा शर्मा ने वैश्विक हिंदी परिवार, वातायन की संगोष्ठियों की प्रशंसा करते हुए कहा कि दिव्या जी का बचपना बने रहना उनकी सबसे बड़ी खासियत है कि जिस मासूमियत से लिखती हैं और हँसती हैं, वह दुर्लभ है। उन्होंने कि मंत्रा लिंगुआ, दीपक की दीवाली, चीते से मुकाबला, सिया-सिया, 'बिन्नी बुआ का बिल्ला' आदि की संक्षिप्त विवेचना करते हुए कहा कि दिव्या जी ने बच्चों को भी बड़ों से मिलाने में अपने साहित्य और अनुवाद से विशेष भूमिका निभाई है। लेखिका, कवियित्री एवं संचालक अल्का सिन्हा ने दिव्या माथुर की कहानियों एवं उनके मंचन, पाठन की विशेष चर्चा की और कहानियों में नएपन की सौंधी सुगंध से परिचय कराते हुए कहा कि उनके लेखन में पश्चिम एवं पूर्व की संस्कारशीलताओं के संघर्ष का भी भरपूर परिचय मिलता है और उनकी रचनाओं का पाठन, मंचन उनका सौभाग्य है और उन्हें उनसे बहुत अपनापन मिला है। राहुल देव ने दिव्या माथुर के विराट व्यक्तित्व को रेखांकित किया जो हिंदी साहित्य को अनेक विधाओं में अपने लेखन से समृद्ध कर रहा है।

अध्यक्षीय वक्तव्य में प्रेमचंद साहित्य मनीषी ए. व. सुप्रसिद्ध प्रवासी लेखन के सशक्त हस्ताक्षर, समीक्षक, ख्यातिलब्ध विशेषज्ञ प्रो. कमल किशोर गोयनका ने दिव्या माथुर के साहित्यिक अवदान के लिए बधाई दी और कहा कि यह हिंदी का सौभाग्य है कि विदेशों में इतने अधिक लोग हिंदी में लिख रहे हैं और भारत के पाठकों को वह साहित्य घर बैठे मिल जाता है और वह उन देशों से और वहाँ के परिवेश से जुड़ जाता है। यही साहित्य का धर्म ही है कि वह सबको जोड़ता है—पूरी सृष्टि को एकात्म भाव से देखने में सहायक बनता है इसलिए इस भाव को आत्मसात करते हुए अपने लेखन में दिव्या जी वैश्विक संवेदनाओं की संवाहक हैं। विविध संवेदनाएं दृ. प्रवासी लेखन का मूल आधार ही है क्योंकि व्यक्ति और देश अलग हो सकते हैं किंतु मानवीयता एक ही होती है। बच्चों से बच्चों को जोड़ने से संस्कृति, देश बनते हैं जैसा कि जापान में सब बच्चे साथ मिलकर काम करते हैं तब देश और समाज बनता है। हमारे वेदों में भी कहा गया है— और यह लक्ष्य साहित्य के माध्यम से पाया जा सकता है क्योंकि संस्कृतियों के द्वंद से एक नई संस्कृति का भी जन्म होता है। दिव्या जी ने अपनी भावुक टिप्पणियों में कहा कि इस आयु में भी मैं अपने बचपन को साथ रखती हूँ और 'जीवन की अंतर्निहित अर्थहीनता को ध्यान में रखते हुए मैं यह भी मानती हूँ कि हर जीव किसी न किसी उद्देश्य के लिए पैदा



होता है। मैं शायद उसी 'उद्देश्य' की तलाश में मेहराब से लटकी हूँ।' संगोष्ठी का समाहार करते हुए केन्द्रीय हिंदी शिक्षण मंडल के उपाध्यक्ष श्री अनिल जोशी ने कहा कि दिव्या माथुर मात्र एक लेखिका नहीं हैं, बल्कि वे एक शीर्ष रचनाकार हैं जो कि लंबे समय से निरंतर लेखन में लगी हुई हैं। आपने सुषम बेदी, सत्येन्द्र श्रीवास्तव जी जैसे अन्य अनेक समकालीन साहित्यकारों के अवदान की भी चर्चा की। उन्होंने स्मरण किया कि दिव्या माथुर ने '11 सितम्बर' की घटना पर अपनी संवेदनाओं, उद्वेगलानों को बहुत संजीदगी से शब्द दिए और एक संकलन प्रकाशित हुआ। उन्होंने कहा कि वे मौखिक अभिव्यक्ति के प्रति संकोची हैं और लेखन में पूरी तरह निखर के आती हैं। वातायन से जुड़े हुए आयोजनों में भी वे कम बोलती हैं परंतु वे अपने लिए जीवन को

लिखने में सिद्धहस्त हैं। आपने दिव्या जी की कहानी 'मेड इन इंडिया' की विशेषता की ओर इंगित किया और दिव्या जी की भाषा की प्रांजलता को नमन किया जो स्थानीय पात्रों के कथन उनकी स्थानीय भाषा में ही लिखती है। इस प्रकार वे हमारी वैश्विक धरोहर हैं।

कल्पना मनोरमा ने दिव्या माथुर की विश्व प्रसिद्ध कविता 'कढ़ी' का वाचन किया जिसकी भूरि-भूरि प्रशंसा मिली, जिसने परिवार, समाज के कमजोर रिश्तों पर तंज कसा कि किस तरह एक वृद्ध माँ की स्नेहिल भावनाएँ, भावुक बेवसी और पीड़ा अपने पुत्र, नाती, बहू से उपेक्षित होती हैं किंतु समाज के एक दूसरे बच्चे और परिवार से वह स्नेह, अपनत्व मिलता है तब वे कितने अपने लगते हैं। रचना की संवेदनाएं समृद्ध

परिवारों के समाज के खोखलेपन को व्यक्त करती है और सभी को भावुक कर देती हैं। कार्यक्रम में प्रवासी साहित्य के पुरोध नारायण कुमार, श्री तोमियो मिजोकामी, प्रो तत्याना औरिसियनका, डॉ शिव निगम, डॉ सुरेश मिश्र, डॉ अरुणा अजितसरिया, रोहित हैप्पी एवं अनेक गणमान्य व्यक्ति उपस्थित थे।

कार्यक्रम में उपस्थित सभी अतिथियों, वक्ताओं सहित अध्यक्ष के प्रति डॉ जय शंकर यादव ने आभार प्रकट किया और दिव्या माथुर की साहित्य साधना के प्रति हिंदी पाठक समाज की ओर से कृतज्ञता व्यक्त की। आपने वैश्विक हिंदी परिवार, सभी सहयोगी संस्थाओं एवं व्यक्तियों के योगदान के प्रति भी आयोजन समिति की ओर से आभार प्रकट किया। ■

यूनेस्को ने बंगाल की दुर्गा पूजा को सांस्कृतिक विरासत का दर्जा दिया

UNESCO ने बुधवार को बंगाल की दुर्गापूजा को सांस्कृतिक विरासत का दर्जा दिया है। प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने UNESCO की इस घोषणा पर खुशी जाहिर की है। उन्होंने कहा कि यह हर देशवासी के लिए गर्व का पल है। उधर, बंगाल की मुख्यमंत्री ममता बनर्जी ने कहा कि यह हर बंगाली के लिए गर्व का पल है। दुर्गा पूजा हमारे लिए पूजा से बढ़कर है। यह हमारे लिए भावना है।

UNESCO ने कहा कि हम भारत और भारतीयों को बधाई देते हैं। हमें उम्मीद है कि दुर्गा पूजा को इंसानियत की आमूर्त सांस्कृतिक विरासत की लिस्ट में शामिल किए जाने के बाद स्थानीय



लोग इसे लेकर और ज्यादा उत्साहित होंगे। सांस्कृतिक विरासत केवल निशानियों और वस्तुओं का संकलन नहीं है, इसमें परंपराएं और हमारे पूर्वजों की भावनाएं भी शामिल हैं, जो आने वाली पीढ़ियों को मिलती हैं।

धर्म और जाति का विभाजन टूटता है

UNESCO ने बुधवार को लिखा कि

दुर्गा पूजा के दौरान, वर्ग, धर्म और जातीयता का विभाजन टूट जाता है। दुर्गा पूजा को धर्म और कला के पब्लिक परफॉर्मेंस के सबसे अच्छे उदाहरण के साथ-साथ सहयोगी कलाकारों और डिजाइनरों के लिए एक बड़े मौके के रूप में देखा जाता है।

रामलीला और कुंभ भी

इसी लिस्ट में

आपको बता दें कि इस लिस्ट में साल 2016 में नवरोज और योग को भी शामिल किया गया था। इसके अलावा 2008 में रामलीला और 2017 में कुंभ मेले को भी इस महत्वपूर्ण लिस्ट में जगह मिल चुकी है। ■

चीन सीमा तक बेहतर सड़क जरूरी



भारत के उच्चतम-न्यायालय ने उत्तराखंड में चारधाम यात्रा से जुड़ी तीन सड़कों की चौड़ाई बढ़ाने को देश की सुरक्षा के लिहाज से महत्वपूर्ण माना है। इस परियोजना के खिलाफ याचिका पर सुनवाई करते हुए उच्चतम

न्यायालय ने कहा कि देश की सुरक्षा पहली प्राथमिकता है। हाल के दिनों में सीमा पर हुई घटनाओं को देखते हुए इसकी अनदेखी नहीं की जा सकती। कोर्ट ने कहा कि हम नहीं चाहते कि भारतीय सैनिक 1962 के हालात में हों, लेकिन रक्षा और पर्यावरण दोनों की जरूरतें संतुलित होनी चाहिए।

केंद्र ने चीन सीमा तक की सड़कों को 10 मीटर चौड़ा करने के लिए सुप्रीम कोर्ट से मंजूरी मांगी है। जबकि सड़क

चौड़ीकरण के खिलाफ है। उसका कहना है कि पहाड़ी इलाके में पेड़ों की कटाई होने से भूस्खलन की घटनाएं बढ़ रही हैं। फिलहाल सुप्रीम कोर्ट के सितंबर 2020 के आदेश के मुताबिक इन सड़कों की चौड़ाई 5.5 मीटर से अधिक नहीं हो सकती है।

चारधाम प्रोजेक्ट का उद्देश्य सभी मौसम में पहाड़ी राज्य के चार पवित्र स्थलों यमुनोत्री, गंगोत्री, केदारनाथ और बद्रीनाथ को जोड़ना है।

भारतीय मूल की लीना नायर फ्रांस के लक्जरी ग्रुप शनैल की मुख्य कार्यकारी अधिकारी (सीईओ) बनी



दुनिया भर की बड़ी कंपनियों में भारतीय तेजी से शीर्ष पदों पर नियुक्त हो रहे हैं। सफल हो रहे हैं। पराग अग्रवाल के ट्विटर सीईओ के रूप में पदभार संभालने के बाद, एक अन्य भारतीय, लीना नायर को लंदन में फ्रांसीसी लक्जरी समूह चैनल द्वारा अपना नया वैश्विक मुख्य कार्यकारी अधिकारी (सीईओ) नियुक्त किया गया। लीना पहले यूनिलीवर में मुख्य मानव संसाधन अधिकारी (सीएचआरओ) थीं। लीना आधिकारिक तौर पर अगले साल जनवरी में कंपनी में शामिल होंगी। यूनिलीवर के मुख्य कार्यकारी अधिकारी (सीईओ) एलन जोप ने कहा कि लीना ने पिछले तीन दशकों में कंपनी में महत्वपूर्ण योगदान दिया है। इसके लिए मैं उनका धन्यवाद करता हूँ।

यमुनानगर में देश का सबसे ऊंचे अशोक चक्र पर छत्र

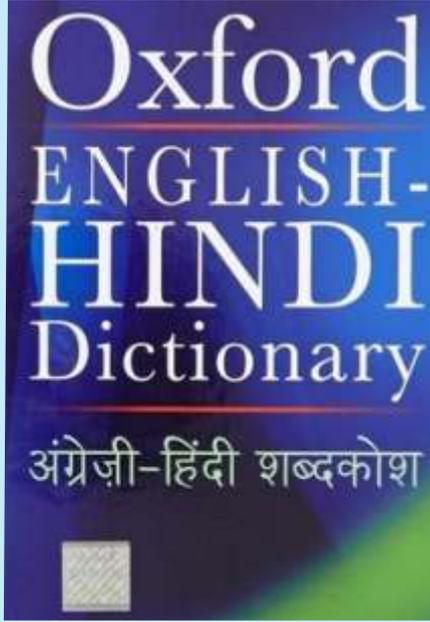


यमुनानगर के टोपरा गांव में देश के सबसे ऊंचे अशोक चक्र पर छत्र स्थापित कर दिया गया। 60 फीट ऊंचा छत्र लगने के बाद अशोक चक्र की भव्यता और बढ़ गई। आसपास की पंचायतों और द बुद्धिस्टि फोरम के सक्रिय सहयोग के बाद चक्र पर छत्र लगाने का काम संभव हो पाया है।

गांव के सरपंच ने बताया कि अशोक स्तंभ की रैप्लिका का काम पूरा होने से उनके गांव को प्रदेश के साथ देश में अलग पहचान मिलना तय था। इसी विश्वास के साथ 4 सितंबर 2019 को पार्क के पहले चरण के लिए अशोक धम्म चक्र स्थापित किया। 30 फीट ऊंचा और छह टन वजनी लोहे का अशोक चक्र देश में सबसे ऊंचा चक्र है। इसका नाम लिम्का बुक ऑफ रिकॉर्ड में भी दर्ज हुआ। इस चक्र का पूरा खर्च डॉ. सत्यदीप गौरी ने उठाया। यमुनानगर के टोपरा में सम्राट अशोक ने 2300 साल पहले एक स्तंभ का निर्माण करवाया था। 13वीं शताब्दी में इस स्तंभ को फिरोजशाह तुगलक यहां से उखाड़ कर दिल्ली ले गया।

उसे फिरोजशाह कोटला मैदान में लगाया गया। 10 साल पहले गांव की तत्कालीन सरपंच रामकली (65) ने स्तंभ को गांव में वापस लाने की मुहिम छेड़ी। दिक्कत यह थी कि न तो इतने संसाधन थे और न ही पैसा। फिर भी उन्होंने ठान लिया कि इस काम को पूरा करना है। इसमें सम्राट अशोक के स्तंभ और शिलालेख का रैप्लिका स्थापित किए जाएंगे। इसमें 9 स्तंभ, 14 शिलालेख भी होंगे। इसकी उंचाई 50 फीट रखी जाएगी। यह पार्क एशिया में अपनी तरह का पहला पार्क होगा। यहां अब श्रीलंका से बौद्धवृक्ष की पवित्र शाखा का भी रोपण करेंगे। इससे पार्क का आध्यात्मिक महत्व बढ़ेगा।

वैक्स बना ऑक्सफोर्ड का वर्ड ऑफ द ईयर शब्द

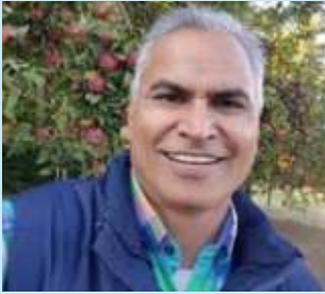


दो साल से दुनिया को कोविड ने अस्त-व्यस्त कर रखा है। इसका नतीजा ये हुआ कि इससे जुड़े कई नए शब्द चलन में आए और छापे रहे। ऑक्सफोर्ड 'वर्ड ऑफ द ईयर' के लिए इस बार मुकाबला कोविड से जुड़े शब्दों के बीच था। इनमें कुछ बेतुके शब्द भी थे। आखिर में 'जैब', 'शॉट' और 'फौसी औसी' (अमेरिका की कोविड एजेंसी के प्रमुख का नाम फौसी) को पीछे छोड़ वैक्सीन का ही छोटा रूप 'वैक्स (VAX) वर्ड ऑफ द ईयर बन गया। ऑक्सफोर्ड लैंग्वेज की सीनियर एडिटर फियोना मैफर्सन ने कहा, वैक्सीन के लिए इस्तेमाल होने वाले सभी शब्दों का उपयोग बढ़ा लेकिन वैक्स जैसा नहीं। यह छोटा, ध्यान खींचने वाला और प्रभावशाली है। नए शब्दों को बनाने में सभी तरह के रूपों में इसका

इस्तेमाल किया गया। पिछले साल कोरोना वैक्सीन अभियान के अलग-अलग देशों में शुरू होते ही वैक्सीन शब्द का उपयोग दोगुने से ज्यादा बढ़ गया। हालांकि वैक्स का प्रयोग पिछले साल की तुलना में इस साल के सितंबर 2021 मास में 72 गुना बढ़ गया। वर्ड ऑफ द ईयर ऑक्सफोर्ड के लगातार अपडेट होते रहने वाले 145 करोड़ शब्दों के कोष के शब्दों के उपयोग के प्रमाण के आधार पर चुना जाता है। अंग्रेजी भाषी देशों में समाचार स्रोतों से उपयोग के प्रमाणों को एकत्र किया जाता है। ऑक्सफोर्ड ने बताया, वैक्स को लेकर वैक्सी, वैक्सिनिस्टा, वैक्सिकेशन जैसे शब्द भी बने जो चलन से कम होते गए और डिक्शनरी में नहीं आ सके।

साझा संसार नीदरलैंड्स द्वारा 'प्रवास : मेरा नया जन्म'

आयोजन सम्पन्न



रामा तक्षक

आयोजन की शुरुआत साझा संसार नीदरलैंड्स के अध्यक्ष रामा तक्षक के सभी के स्वागत वक्तव्य से शुरू हुई। स्वागत वक्तव्य में रामा तक्षक ने बताया कि घर, गांव, शहर और अपना देश छोड़ने के बाद एक प्रवासी के जीवन की शुरुआत एक नये जन्म के रूप में होती है। प्रवासी जीवन का अपना घूर्णन है।

नये परिवेश में स्वयं को ढालने की पुकार पहले दिन से ही जीवन में, अंतरंग बदलाव की पहल, आरम्भ हो जाती है। एक तकरार जीवन में शुरू हो जाती है। यही तकरार जीवन शिल्प गढ़ने लगती है। इसी गढ़न से दृष्टि का विकास होता है। समझ का क्षितिज व्यापक होता है। पुराना टूटता और नया अंकुरित होता

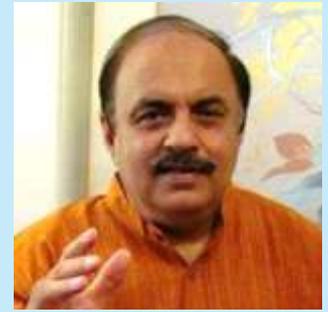
है। प्रत्येक प्रवासी की यही कहानी है।

इस आयोजन की अध्यक्षता लंदन में रहने वाले तेजेंद्र शर्मा ने की। तेजेंद्र शर्मा लब्धप्रतिष्ठित भारतीय प्रवासी कथाकार हैं। श्री शर्मा को ब्रिटेन की महारानी एलिजाबेथ द्वितीय द्वारा भी सम्मानित किया जा चुका है।

आयोजन के अध्यक्षीय वक्तव्य में तेजेंद्र शर्मा ने अपने प्रवासी जीवन के अनुभव साझा करते हुए बताया कि कैसे उन्हें प्रवासी जीवन विरासत में मिला। मां बाप देश के बंटवारे के समय भारत आये थे। यह भी बताया कि मैंने छठी से आठवीं कक्षा में ही हिन्दी पढ़ी। लेकिन मेरी पत्नी ने मुझे हिन्दी सिखाई और आज एक सफल लेखक बनाने के पीछे मेरी पत्नी का हाथ है।

उन्होंने बताया कि ब्रिटेन में लोग दिव्यांग व्यक्ति को दया दृष्टि से नहीं देखते बल्कि उसे इंसान की दृष्टि से देखते हैं। यहाँ के लोग सीधा वार्तालाप करना पसंद करते हैं। जो शब्दों में कहते हैं वही करते भी हैं। इनकी कथनी और करनी में अंतर नहीं है। अमेरिका से विनीता तिवारी ने 'पूरब और

पश्चिम' संस्मरण पढ़ा। नयी परिस्थितियों में प्रवासी की मनःस्थिति का सुन्दर रेखाचित्र



तेजेंद्र शर्मा

खींचा। रूस से श्वेता सिंह उमा ने कविता 'जीना कब शुरू करोगे' का पाठ किया। मोनी बिजय कोइराला ने दोहा कतर से 'संघर्ष, साहस और सफलता' कविता पढ़ी। चुनौतियां ही सफलता के द्वार की कुंजी हैं।

साझा संसार नीदरलैंड्स, द हेग से विश्वास दुबे ने आयोजन का संचालन करते हुए कहा कि विश्व में शांति मानवता का पहला अधिकार है और द हेग शहर शांति का शहर है। उन्होंने स्वरचित गीत 'मेरे देश से दूर ये देश है अपना' भी प्रस्तुत किया। इस आयोजन का संचालन भार विश्वास दुबे ने ही सम्भाला और राजेन्द्र शर्मा ने तकनीकी व्यवस्था।



भारतीय स्वाधीनता के अमृत महोत्सव के अवसर पर विशेष

पर स्वतन्त्र भारत का मस्तक नहीं झुकेगा

एक नहीं, दो नहीं, करो बीसों समझौते

पर स्वतन्त्र भारत का मस्तक नहीं झुकेगा।

अगणित बलिदानों से अर्जित यह स्वतन्त्रता,
अश्रु, स्वेद, शोणित से सिंचित यह स्वतन्त्रता
त्याग, तेज, तप, बल से रक्षित यह स्वतन्त्रता,
प्राणों से भी प्रियतर अपनी यह स्वतन्त्रता।

इसे मिटाने की साजिश करने वालों से
कह दो चिनगारी का खेल बुरा होता है
औरों के घर आग लगाने का जो सपना
वह अपने ही घर में सदा खरा होता है।

अपने ही हाथों तुम अपनी कब्र ना खोदो
अपने पैरों आप कुल्हाड़ी नहीं चलाओ
ओ नादान पड़ोसी अपनी आँखे खोलो
आजादी अनमोल ना इसका मोल लगाओ।

धमकी जेहाद के नारों से, हथियारों से
कश्मीर कभी हथिया लगे, यह मत समझो।
हमलो से, अत्याचारों से, संहारों से
भारत का शीष झुका लगे यह मत समझो।

जब तक गंगा मे धार, सिंधु मे ज्वार,
अग्नि में जलन, सूर्य में तपन शेष,
स्वातंत्र्य समर की वेदी पर अर्पित होंगे
अगणित जीवन यौवन अशेष।

अमरीका क्या संसार भले ही हो विरुद्ध
काश्मीर पर भारत का ध्वज नहीं झुकेगा,
एक नहीं, दो नहीं, करो बीसों समझौते,
पर स्वतन्त्र भारत का निश्चय नहीं रुकेगा।

✍ अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी



अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी

25 दिसम्बर, 1924 – 16 अगस्त, 2018

97वें जन्मदिवस पर कृतज्ञ राष्ट्र की सादर श्रद्धांजलि

