

ANTAR RASHTRIYA SAHAYOG PARISHAD BULLETIN

Monthly Newsletter of Indian Council for International Co-operation

Vol. 34 No. 2

FEBRUARY, 2021

(16 Pages including Cover)

श्री बालेश्वर अग्रवाल जन्म शताब्दी के अवसर पर

The People of Fiji Islands

(A Historical Perspective)



The People of Fiji Islands' is the result of unsolicited efforts of Shri S. M. Gupta. The book presents the history and background of a country, which he has described as a sparkling necklace of tropical islands. Fiji lies in the heart of Pacific Ocean midway between the equator. Only one-third of 332 islands are inhabited. Fiji is one of the several countries where Indians were taken as indentured labour to work in sugarcane plantation. The first batch of Indians reached Fiji in 1879. They had to undergo trials and tribulation before they were emancipated. Those who went as indentured labourers to countries like Mauritius, Guyana, Surinam, Fiji, Trinidad and Tobago had hardly any inkling of the struggle and hardship they had to face there. Despite many racial, social and political problems, people of Indian Origin have contributed in the overall development of the country.

Through a brief historical perspective presented in the Introduction of this book, Fiji has been described as 'Mini India' though the Island is about 15000 kilometers away from India. The present population of Fiji as per the latest census conducted in December 2004 is about 8,40,201 having 51 per cent indigenous Fijians and 44 per cent Indo-Fijians. Before 1987, the

Indo-Fijian population had outnumbered indigenous Fijian, but since 1987 the demographic balance has changed due to large scale emigration of Indo-Fijians to other developed countries like Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada and U.K.

I wish to congratulate Shri Gupta for introducing Fiji to the Indian readers in a very systematic manner and in a historical perspective. He has divided his book into chapters and has covered almost all important events of the history of the country, right from the threads of history to future prospects of the people. While tracing the threads of the history the author has summarized the important events and historical facts from 1500 B.C. with the arrival of first wave of Indo-Aryans through South-East Asia. While presenting preliminary and brief study of a vast subject he has borrowed information from the centenary issue of Fiji Times which had commenced its publication in 1869-prior to Fiji becoming a British colony in 1874. In addition to the information contained in the 100th birthday issue of the special supplement of the Fiji Times of 4.9.1969, he has described the events pertaining to Independence of Fiji on 10th Oct., 1970. First General election under the 1970 Constitution held in

1972, coups in 1987 and 2000 and victory of Fiji Labour Party in 1999 when the first ever Indo-Fijian Shri Mahendra Chaudhary became the Prime Minister of the Country. In the last chapter, event about the emergence of Laisinia Qarase as Interim Prime Minister after May 2000 coup and again becoming Prime Minister after general election held in May 2006 have also been included.

Shri Gupta has propounded the theory that "The question of Fijian origin has to be considered as two inter-related problems - one is relationship of Fijian to Indonesians, Melanesians and Polynesians and the other is the broader question of the ultimate origin of all of them. A lot of fruitful research work has been done in this regard and Percy Smith in his remarkable work 'Hawaike' had worked out a theory as back as in the beginning of the last century that Polynesianes have originated in Ganges Valley in India." Shri Gupta has also endorsed the theory of famous Hindi Journalist Shri Jagdish Prasad Chaturvedi, who had opined that according to many scholars. Fijian forefathers were originally Hindus and Indians who had initially settled in South-East Islands



and later migrated to Fiji islands in ancient time. This is yet a subject for further research but it is a fact that mutual understanding between the two communities (Indigenous Fijian and Indo-Fijian) can pave a way for closer political, diplomatic, cultural and economic relations between India and Fiji.

The book includes the stories of early encounters, Transition-1859 to 1874 and events of colonial era. The most important chapters of book deal with the Indian Indenture, Indian Heritage, Independence of Fiji-Land Rights, Education and National Economy. The author has obtained information from various sources and made book a

valuable one from the point of research and reference. The remaining 8 chapters are regarding 1987 Coups, Rebuka's Balance Sheet, the 1977 Constitution, the Grand Old Man (Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara-Father of the Nation who dominated the political scene of the nations from 1966 to December 2000), the Trade Union movement (which has played an important role in the political and economic development of Fiji), Shattered Paradise (on account of the cultural gulf created among Fijian and Indian communities), Forces of Instability (mainly on religious grounds) and Future Prospects.

Elections were held in Fiji Island after five years from May 6, 2006 for about a week and the final results were announced on 14th May. The Ruling Party (SDL) led by Prime Minister, Mr. Laisenia Qarase got 36 seats where as the main Opposition Party (FLP) led by Shri Mahendra Chaudhary could secure 31 seats in the House of 71. It was keenly fought elections and both parties had predicted their victory. The Ruling and Opposition Party got the support of two more members each making it to 38 and 33, respectively.

Under Swiss style Multi-Party Cabinet system, any party which wins more than 8 seats in Parliament must be offered a proportionate number of cabinet posts as per 1997 Constitution of Fiji. After being sworn as the Prime Minister, Mr. Laisenia Qarase offered Fiji Labour Party (FLP) also seven seats in the cabinet on 18th May, 2006. Shri Mahendra Chaudhary, leader of FLP and former Prime Minister, responded positively to the Prime Minister's offer and gave a letter of acceptance of his invitation to be represented in the Multi-Party Cabinet. Nine members from Fiji's

ethnic-Indian Opposition were accordingly sworn into the Prime Minister's new Cabinet on 24th May, 2006 sealing a deal that many hope will cool racial tensions in the coup-plagued South Pacific nation. The lawmakers from the Labour Party took their oaths before President Ratu Josefa Iloilo at Government House in the capital, Suva, joining the Cabinet of Fijian Prime Minister Mr. Laisenia Qarase. Labour Party leader Mr. Mahendra Chaudhary sat with Qarase as the Ministers were sworn in. Mr. Chaudhary has, however, not himself joined the Cabinet. The Cabinet has 23 full Ministers and 12 junior Ministers. It is the biggest in Fiji's history and almost half of the 71 members in Parliament. We hope the formation of new multi-party Government in Fiji will bring peace, prosperity and goodwill among different sections of Fijian society and also create favourable condition for racial harmony. It however depends in the wisdom and approach of both Laisenia Qarase and Mahendra Chaudhary.

Shri S. M. Gupta has a keen and deep interest in the history of the countries of the Pacific Ocean. Prior to this publication he had written a book on the Indian Origin of New Zealand Maori which was widely welcomed by readers. Like his previous book he has written this book on the basis of evidence and facts already brought by various scholars and authors. He therefore does not claim any originality for his conclusions.

I, however, like to add that this book will definitely create awareness among scholars who wish to know Fiji in its historical perspective. The various aspects of the people of Fiji islands from their early days to present times make this book more valuable and interesting. ■

A.R.S.P. Bulletin

A NEWS & VIEWS MONTHLY
Published Since 1987

EDITOR

Keshav G. Parande
(M): 98113 92777

PRINTER

Avon Printers

D-6, Ranjit Nagar Comm. Complex,
New Delhi-110008
(M): 93123 05230
E-mail: a1printers@gmail.com

PUBLISHER

Keshav G. Parande
Pravasi Bhawan
50, Deendayal Upadhyay Marg,
New Delhi-110002
(M): 98113 92777

CONTACT

Phone (O) : 011 - 2323 4432

E-mail

arspindia@gmail.com
arspind@bol.net.in

Website

www.arspindia.org

PRICE

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

“DIASPORA JOURNALISTS AS A FORCE FOR SOFT POWER PROJECTION”

✍ Dr. Ruchi Verma

This year Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad is commemorating the birth centenary of Shri Baleshwar Agrawal and as part of the activities; an international conference on “Diaspora Journalists as a force for soft power projection” was organized on 23 January, 2021 by Diaspora Research and Resource Centre (DRRC), Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad (ARSP), New Delhi. The webinar was co-hosted for live telecast by UNI TV in collaboration with PIO TV.

The Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad has a special emotional connect with diaspora journalism as its founding Secretary General Shri Baleshwar Agrawal was himself an eminent journalist and extensively used this channel for ARSP's outreach with the diaspora. Indian diaspora for its intrinsic qualities of peace, tolerance, non-violence, pluralism and progressive thinking has always been amongst the most sought after expat communities anywhere in the world. These qualities have also led to an extraordinary success of Indian diaspora in all fields of politics, economy, technology etc.

An important strength of Indian diaspora has also been the emergence of well known and reputed media persons in different countries. Today the Indian origin journalists are writing in some of the most reputed newspapers and other publications. Many of them are leading important media platforms, including TV and radio channels and print versions. India is proud of the contributions of the Indian origin journalists in enhancing India's prestige and standing abroad. They also act as crucial channels of promoting bridges of mutual awareness between India

and countries of their adoption. In their own right, they all act as India's ambassadors to the world.

Keeping the above in mind, the conference was organized to primarily spell out the contribution of diaspora journalism in soft power projection and the way forward. For accommodating the different time zones, there were two separate segments- one for the Eastern region (Gulf, Africa, Asia and the Far East) and another for the Western region (Europe, Americas and the Caribbean). The experts on the subjects represented eminent diaspora journalists from abroad.

The Eastern segment was addressed by Shri Ashok Kumar Tandon, Member Prasar Bharati Board, Veteran Journalist and Columnist and renowned experts were Dr. Jean Regis Ramsamy, Historian & Journalist, Reunion, Ms Aditee Gunowa Awotar, Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation, Mauritius, Mr Venkat Raman, Editor, Indian Newslink, New Zealand, Mr Rakesh Kumar, Senior Journalist and Sub - Editor Shanti Dut, Fiji Times, Fiji, Mr Mohamed Javed Kana, Executive Editor, The Asian Weekly, Kenya and Ms. Hermina Patel, Station Manager, Radio 44, Kenya.

The Western segment was addressed by Prof. Ved P. Nanda, Padma Awardee, The Ved Nanda Center for International and Comparative Law, University of Denver Sturm College of Law, USA and eminent experts were Mr Lalit K Jha, Chief US Correspondent, Press Trust of India, USA, Mr Kuldeep Shekhawat, Secretary, Indian Journalists Association, UK, Mr Rabin Baldewsingh, Former Deputy Mayor of Hague, The Netherlands, Dr Sudhir

Parikh, Padma Shri Awardee, CEO, News India Times & ITV, USA and Ms Anjana Shanker, Assistant Editor, Khaleej Times & Journalist, Dubai.

There was an extraordinary convergence between the concept and approach set by the organizers on the one hand and the ideas presented by the dignitaries and the expert panelists on the other. There was complete agreement on the important role of diaspora journalists in promotion of India's goodwill abroad, which also gives them the added responsibility to maintain a balance between views and news.

The participants made some very relevant suggestions and the important ones are listed below:

i) Role of diaspora journalists as a bridge

As people of Indian origin, diaspora journalists have an acceptance and attachment to India's cultural heritage. They have also created a space for themselves in the countries where they live. A diaspora journalist is the bridge that fills the information gap, presents ground level realities and showcases the issues from a 360 degree perspective covering the interests of their host country, country of origin and the diaspora. They can help create an eco-system of friendly and strategic relationship between India and the country they live in. However, this role of diaspora journalists needs to be strengthened more systematically. There is a need for regular and frank consultations with the diaspora journalists for better understanding and appreciating their needs and expectations.

ii) Projection of India's soft power abroad

The projection of soft power of India has to be subtle, regular and long term exercise. This would largely depend on how the diaspora journalists assess India in terms of its values, development and its utility for promoting the larger visions and goals of the societies. Traditionally the most important elements of India's soft power are its values of peace, tolerance, non-violence, pluralism and progressive thinking, which have been much valued globally. These have been further strengthened by India's broad based economic and technological growth as also an important factor in the geo-political stability. While reporting the ground developments the diaspora journalists are better placed for projecting the developments in totality and right perspective.

iii) Establishment of a real time database on facts and developments

There is a genuine need for a trustworthy real time data base of facts and developments for countering fake news and misinformation. In today's age of digital revolution and social media, a diaspora journalist can play an important role in not only verifying

facts and information on a real time basis, but also giving a right perspective to all the developments both ways.

iv) Addressing the language barrier

There is an urgent need to bring the amazing story of India, its people and the large diaspora to people across the world in the language and medium they understand. While main focus is on English medium, the reach impact would amplify multifold if diaspora journalists can generate original news in other major languages of the world as well. When original news and information content hits the eyeball in the language they understand the best- their mother tongue- it would have a greater reach and impact than what only the English language can offer.

v) Engaging the youth

The character, capacity and needs of diaspora evolve with each generation and this process has accelerated in the digital technology era. There is a need to prepare the diaspora youth for effective journalism. Involvement of the best known Indian institutions of journalism for assigning the diaspora youth under scholarship schemes

needs to be encouraged. Educational exchange programmes in journalism should be promoted.

vi) Promoting the welfare of the expat community

Given the understanding and relationship of diaspora journalists with the Indian community abroad they can better highlight their problems, needs and expectations. On the other hand they can also educate the Indian community about the host government initiatives and policies and also the expectations of the local societies.

vii) Multiple identities

Journalists can play an important role in creating awareness for maturely dealing with pressure of multiple identities diaspora have to go through.

viii) Establish a diaspora journalists association for networking

ix) Use of digital technology and social media

Given the growing access of social media, it is important to develop social media platforms for credible news.

It was agreed that such conferences should be organized more regularly. ■

INDIAN AMERICAN Rohit Chopra TO LEAD CONSUMER BUREAU

Announcing Chopra's nomination with a number of other key administration posts, a Biden-Harris transition announcement said Chopra has actively advocated to promote fair, competitive markets that protect families and honest businesses from abuses. He was unanimously confirmed by the Senate in 2018, and he has pushed for aggressive remedies against lawbreaking companies, especially repeat offenders, it noted. Together with state and international law enforcement partners, he has worked to increase scrutiny of dominant technology firms that pose risks to privacy, national

security, and fair competition.

Chopra previously served as Assistant Director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, where he led the agency's efforts on student loans. In 2011, the Secretary of the Treasury appointed him to serve as the CFPB's Student Loan Ombudsman, a new position established in the financial reform law. He also served as a Special Advisor at the US Department of Education. He holds a bachelor's degree from Harvard University and an MBA from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.

The selection of Chopra signals that



the Biden administration plans to return the CFPB to the more-muscular posture of its early days following three years of Trump administration appointees curbing the agency's reach, Politico reported. ■

Two-Day virtual Indo-Roma Art and Cultural Festival

(Continued from the Previous issue)

✍ Md. Zameer Anwar

The second day of Two-Day virtual Indo-Roma Art and Cultural Festival on 11th December, 2020, began with introductory remarks made by Md. Zameer Anwar- Research Associate, Centre for Roma Studies and Cultural Relations- ARSP. He introduced the performers and guests, and offered bird's eye view of the relevance and significance of the Indo-Roma Cultural Festival particularly in the context of Roma's cultural linkage with India. The first bewitching performance of second day was given by Master Nosratollah Zargar from Iran, an eminent musician and extraordinary player of three musical instruments. The musical presentation was based on the soft yet touching rhythms of three musical instruments like Tanbur, Jorreh and Chegour.

The other performance was enthralling Flamenco dance by Ms. Belen Maya- director, choreographer and performer. The theme of the performance was "Romnia" that is a search for a new question about two dimensions of being: the Roma origin and femininity. Romnia are voices of non-flamenco Romaní women who are nonetheless overflowing with jondura (depth). This piece wants to give life to melancholic sigh coming from the East, loaded with the sorrow amassed by thousands of displaced people throughout their history. The dance manifests a celebration of being Roma, without feeling victimized, but with a sometimes compassionate, sometimes joyful look at the plight of women, whose courage to survive has led them to a new ethical and aesthetic commitment.

The last show was by Bachu Khan Langa who represents the Royal family of Jodhpur-Rathore Gharana. Mr. Khan is a high-pitched, open-throated, vocalist, perfectly

complemented by the woodwind and string instruments, forming a melodious and sensuous musical score. The performance presents Rajasthani Gypsy Folklore Music with beautiful melodies preserving the ancient Indian musical tradition in its pure form as well as depicting one's longing for the lover and joy of reunion. Instruments, used are Sarangi (string instrument), Murliand Algoza (woodwind instruments), Morchang (Jewish harp) and Khartal (wooden castanet).

A session of poetry recitation was held in honour of the late writer Rajko Duric who was a Romani poet, Member of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts and also a Member of the Serbian Parliament, and devoted his life for the justice of the Rromani people and endorsed Roma's links with India with the help of ethnographical and historical studies, took last breath on 2nd November, 2020.

Prof. Marcel Courthiade paid tribute to Late Rajko Djuric and Late Smt. Sushma Sawraj, Ex External Affairs Minister, Government of India. He wholeheartedly appreciated the initiative taken by Smt. Shusma Sawraj who agreed to recognize Roma Community as a part of Indian Diaspora. Prof. Courthiade admired Rajko Djuric's phenomenal legacy includes the strong dedication to the cause of the promotion of Rromani language and his unwavering commitment to global justice and peace.

Mr. Rudiza Russo Sejdovic, Romani Poet, Montenegro, recited in Romani language two poems which were translated in English by Prof. Courthiade. The meaning of his first poems is dedicated to the contrast between dreaming of tradition, faithfulness to the old customs and

challenges of modernity. His second poem reflects the food and cuisine of Roma that was dictated and regulated by German authority during the Second World War.

Prof. Marcel Courthiade recited his own poems of which English translation is as follows:

WHENCE ARE THESE PEOPLE COMING?

Whence are these people coming?

They are not the children of Cham

They are not the children of Sem

They are not the children of Japheth

What kind of persons are these people?

With so much light in their eye

With a song on their lips

With love in their heart ?

Who are these people?

With Christians they celebrate Christmas, they are Christians.

With Muslims they celebrate Eid al-Adha, they are Muslims.

With Jews they celebrate Pessah, they are Jews.

These people come from India and in their poor belongings

They are bringing the most precious journey provision: peace, brotherhood and respect.

This virtual festival, including colorful and bedazzling musical, dancing and singing performances and the recitation of insightful poetry, reached the finale by preceding the speech by Dr. Shashi Bala who summed up the event and paid vote of thanks on the behalf of CRSCR. ■

“CONTRIBUTIONS OF LATE BALESHWAR AGRAWAL AND SWAMI KRISHNANAND SARASWATI FOR STRENGTHENING PEOPLE TO PEOPLE CONTACTS”

✍ Dr. Ruchi Verma

Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad (ARSP), India and Human Service Trust (HST), Mauritius have historically played an important role in preservation and promotion of Indian heritage and culture in Mauritius and strengthening of people to people contacts between the two societies. As Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad is commemorating the centenary year of its founding Secretary General Late Baleshwar Agrawal and Human Service Trust has also just concluded 120th anniversary of its founder H.H Swami Krishnanand Saraswati, a virtual conference on **“Contributions of Late Baleshwar Agrawal and Swami Krishnanand Saraswati for strengthening people to people contacts”** was organized on 31 January 2021 by Diaspora Research and Resource Centre (DRRC), Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad in collaboration with Human Service Trust.

The conference was chaired by Amb Anup Mudgal, Chairman, DRRC who paid rich homage to Late Baleshwar Agrawal and Swami Krishnanand Saraswati in his remarks. He said that they both were the bridges between India and Mauritius. He also talked about ARSP's increasing outreach to the diaspora. ARSP which is nearly five decades old NGO has been traditionally focused on expanding India's outreach to its diaspora in the indentured route countries and neighbouring countries, but off late its outreach has expanded to other major

diaspora regions and countries. Considering ARSP's contributions, MEA has set up DRRC as part of ARSP.

Shri Premchand Boojhawon, President, HST remarked in his welcome address that both India and Mauritius have a shared heritage. Mauritius's beauty lies in its linkages with India, the way Mauritian Indians have preserved their culture. They are equally proud of their common roots. While paying his homage to both the significant figures, he stated that Baleshwar ji and Swami ji's importance was that they took on this mission of people to people linkages, carried this mission forward, and even tending their own resources for this venture.

Shri Shyam Parande, Secretary General, ARSP while introducing the conference theme, reflected on the saintly and humanitarian qualities of both Baleshwar ji and Swami ji. While Swami ji spread the teaching of spiritualism, Baleshwar ji tirelessly worked towards the organization of diaspora all around the world. They both tried to sensitize the world towards the diaspora and their problems.

Amb. Virendra Gupta, President, ARSP in his opening remarks stated that Baleshwar ji started connecting with the diaspora when not many organizations were dealing with the diaspora matters. While Baleshwar ji was travelling all over the world, Mauritius had a very special place in

his heart. Mauritius is one of the most important countries having major Indian origin population. He further added that these personalities have played a crucial part in developing people to people contacts and good relationships. Though, there are still areas of improvement and we look forward to hearing how this relationship will be enhanced further.

Mr Premlall Mahadeo, Chairman, MGI & RTI, Mauritius highlighted the importance of these personalities behind creating the connection between India and Mauritius. He stated that Swami ji had taught Mauritian Indians to lead the country after Independence. He was an organizer, a real Karma yogi. He worked with Mahatma Gandhi for ten years and served the needy. He also worked in Africa to help the Indian diaspora. He further illustrated that Mauritius's real values lies in its multiculturalism and being a welfare state; keeping which teachings of Swami ji has undoubtedly played an important role.

Ms Soojata Ramdharee, General Secretary, Human Service Trust, Mauritius narrated her personal experiences with Baleshwar ji. She added that he created a platform for all PIO youth students to interact with each other while studying in India. He was always there to solve any difficulty faced by the diaspora youth. She fondly remembers him and paid her emotional homage.

Prof. Gopal Arora, Secretary, ARSP reveals that both Baleshwar ji and Swami ji have striking resemblance in their life. They both were wealthy elites, well educated and worked in well-respected jobs. But they both came out of their comfort zones and served humanity. They were the ones who recognized that Indian people also need to sensitize in regard to their fellow Indians abroad. Baleshwar ji played a pivotal role in bringing out several programmes like Know Your Roots, Know India Programme to maintain the contacts between PIO's and Indians. He was instrumental in the

promotion of Indian culture and Hindi language. Prof. Arora summarized by saying that the path they have shown to us makes them immortal.

Dr Vandana Lamba, Head of Department, Secondary School, Mauritius in her statement, brings out the divinity of Swami ji. She recalled that according to Swami ji Sewa was the highest of all religion. Service to humanity was his main aim. He was very concerned about youth; he has established youth training camps for young boys and girls for this purpose. He was a great disciplinarian, who has guided the youth to the right path.

Mr Ramesh Subramaniam Iyer, Mumbai Coordinator, Sewa International, mentioned that both Swami ji and Baleshwar ji were India's cultural ambassadors to Mauritius and the entire world.

Shri Narayan Kumar, Hon. Director, ARSP paid his tribute to both Baleshwar ji and Swami ji and presented the vote of thanks. ■

Ayesha Aziz from KASHMIR BECOMES INDIA'S YOUNGEST FEMALE PILOT



Ayesha Aziz, a 25-year-old from Kashmir is the youngest female pilot in the country. In the year 2011, Ayesha Aziz became the youngest student pilot to get a license at the age of 15 and underwent training to fly a MIG-29 jet at Russia's Sokol airbase in 2012. She graduated in aviation from the Bombay Flying Club (BFC) and obtained a commercial license in 2017. Aziz believed that Kashmiri women had progressed immensely in the last few years and have done exceptionally well in the field of education.

Despite the odd timings required by the job and a dynamic work environment, the 25-year-old said that she was happy to take on the challenge. She said, "I chose this field because I have loved traveling since a very young age and was very fascinated by flying. One gets to meet so many people. This is why I wanted to be a pilot. It is quite challenging because this is not like a normal 9-5 desk job. There is no fixed pattern and I have to constantly be ready to face new places, different types of weather, and meet new people". ■

WE BELIEVE RULE OF LAW AND DEMOCRATIC PROCESS MUST BE UPHELD, SAYS INDIA ON MYANMAR COUP



Myanmar again slipped back into military rule, when the Tatmadaw or the military wrested control of government, detained political leaders including state councillor, Aung San Suu Kyi and President U Win Myint.

Reacting to the events, India expressed "deep concern". "India has always been steadfast in its support to the process of democratic transition in Myanmar. We believe that the rule of law and the democratic process must be upheld. We are monitoring the situation closely," said an MEA statement. ■

VANDALISATION OF GANDHI STATUE IN CALIFORNIA CONDEMNED

Indian-American Congressman Rohit Khanna strongly condemned the vandalism of a statue of Mahatma Gandhi in the US state of California, calling it as a shameful act. The 6-ft tall, 650-pound (294 kg) bronze statue of Gandhi in the Central Park of the City of Davis in Northern California was vandalised, broken and ripped from the base by unknown miscreants early this week.

Nonviolent, respectful protest was the essence of Gandhi's life mission. To see the desecration of this magnificent



statue only underscores the need for more people to study Gandhi's teachings, not unilaterally erase him from the public discourse, Khanna

said.

This was a shameful act. At a moment in our history when disagreement needs to be managed with tolerance and patience, I urge everyone involved to take the time to listen and talk instead of resorting to acts of public vandalism, he said.

As the Democratic Vice Chair of the India Caucus, Khanna said he will continue to work with his colleagues to build bridges across these divisions. ■

This is my Mom

*Kindness in her souls strong willed of heart,
Resilient like no other was my Mom who is set apart
I stand here today not in strength but in awe,
For woman who lived with passion, integrity and challenges would never withdraw*

*As a girl I saw that as pushing me too hard.
As a woman I stand here humbled and jarred
She taught me to stand up for myself and have a voice,
She was my role model and hero which I accepted by Choice
Her desire to educate women to become a better version for success,
She dedicated her life with multiple challenges nevertheless
Students who went to become her colleagues made her proud,
College she founded was closed in her honor that put us all one the cloud
The love her friends shower is a testament of her trust,
When we speak of my mom, we speak of loyalty that is a must
Causes that are near to her heart,
She fought for them with quick wit and art*

*As a wife she was my father's rock,
His biggest confident, and a shore where he could dock
50 years of life they celebrated together,
The promise was to be forever
It's an honor to carry out parent's legacy,
It's a pleasure to be a fraction of who she was with ecstasy*

**Mansi Puri
(Daughter)**

OBITUARY



Dr. (Smt.) Usha Puri, the wife of Shri Manohar Puri, left for heavenly abode on 3rd February, 2021. She was an eloquent poetess and dauntless activist as well as senior member of Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad. On behalf of ARSP Family, we pay heartfelt homage to the departed soul.

Economy heading for strong V-shaped recovery with 11% growth in 2021-22: Economic Survey 2021

India's economy is likely to rebound with an 11 percent growth in the next financial year as it makes a 'V-shaped' recovery after witnessing a Covid-19 pandemic-led slowdown according to the pre-Budget Economic Survey 2021. "After an estimated 7.7 percent pandemic-driven contraction in 2020-21, India's real GDP is projected to record a growth of 11.0 percent in 2021-22 and nominal GDP by 15.4 percent. These conservative estimates reflect upside potential that can manifest due to the continued normalization in economic activities as the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines gathers traction," the survey said. Even though the survey forecast a "V-shaped" economic recovery, it also cautioned that it would take at least two years to go back to the pre-pandemic gross domestic levels.

According to the Economic Survey, this recovery is expected to be just the beginning of a strong era of economic growth in India. Further improvement and firming up in industrial activities, enhanced capital expenditure by the Government, the vaccination drive, and the resolute push forward on long-pending reform measures are expected to provide the much-needed support to the ongoing recovery path.

Further, the survey observed that the growth of infrastructure in the country has remained a key priority for the



Government. "The strong forward-backward linkages of the infrastructure sector are well established. Therefore, investment in infrastructure is quintessential for more rapid and inclusive economic growth," it said. Noting the sector-wise growth in 2020, the survey said that total investment in the Roads and Highway sector has gone up more than three times in the six years from FY15 to FY20 which also led to increased road density across the States.

Despite the severe challenges posed by Covid-19, the Indian aviation industry has persevered through the crisis and demonstrated long-term resilience and full commitment to serve. "The aviation market of India is one of the fastest-growing in the world. India's domestic traffic has more than doubled from around 61 million in FY14 to around 137 million in FY20, a growth of over 14 percent per annum," the survey said.

The survey highlighted the great strides in the electricity sector, which is essential for powering economic

activity. "Commendable progress has been made in the generation and transmission of electricity in India. The total installed capacity has increased from 3,56,100 MW in March-2019 to 3,70,106 MW in March 2020. Further, the generation capacity increased to 3,73,436 MW in October-2020 and

comprised 2,31,321 MW of thermal, 45,699 MW of hydro, 6,780 MW of nuclear, and 89,636 MW of renewable and others," it said.

The International Monetary Fund also projected an impressive 11.5 percent growth rate for India in 2021, making the country the only major economy in the world to register double-digit growth this year amid the pandemic. The projection for next year is in line with the International Monetary Fund's estimate for 11.5% expansion, which will once again make India the fastest-growing major economy in the world ahead of China's 8.1 percent pace, it said. The government may miss its fiscal deficit target of 3.5% of GDP this fiscal, the Economic Survey said. "In order to sustain the recovery in aggregate demand, the government may have to continue with an expansionary fiscal stance," it said. The survey said there is a need for more sustained and calibrated measures to facilitate the process of economic recovery in the new fiscal year. ■

India sends 22.9 MN doses of Covid-19 vaccines to foreign nations, more in the pipeline

While 64.7 lakh doses have been given as a grant, 165 lakh doses have been supplied to various countries on a commercial basis

India has sent more than 22.9 million doses of Covid-19 vaccines to the global community and has plans to cover more countries in a phased manner in the coming weeks.

“As of date, we have supplied a total of 229.7 lakh doses to the global community,” Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) Spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said in a media briefing on Friday.

“We will continue to take forward the global vaccine supply initiative and cover more countries in a phased manner. In the coming weeks, vaccines will be supplied to more countries in Africa, Latin America, CARICOM, and Pacific Island states,” he said.

Other than the 64.7 lakh doses supplied as a grant, 165 lakh doses have been supplied by India to various countries on a commercial basis.

The following countries have received supplies as gifts: Bangladesh (20 lakhs), Myanmar (17 lakhs), Nepal (10 lakhs), Bhutan (1.5 lakhs), Maldives (1 lakh), Mauritius (1 lakh), Seychelles (50,000), Sri Lanka (5 lakhs), Bahrain (1 lakh), Oman (1 lakh), Afghanistan (5 lakhs), Barbados (1 lakh) and Dominica (70,000).

The countries which have received the vaccine on a



commercial basis are Brazil (20 lakhs), Morocco (60 lakhs), Bangladesh (50 lakhs), Myanmar (20 lakhs), Egypt (50,000), Algeria (50,000), South Africa (10 lakhs), Kuwait (10 lakhs), and UAE (2 lakhs).

Meanwhile, Srivastava declined to go into specifics on whether India will also provide vaccines to Canada, whose Prime Minister Justin Trudeau had taken up the issue with Prime Minister Narendra Modi during a phone call on Wednesday.

“Decisions on these supplies will, of course, be calibrated as per domestic production and the requirements of the national vaccination program,” Srivastava said. ■

Three Indian American Entrepreneurs Named to the Forbes '30 Under 30' for Social Impact



Forbes unveiled its “30 Under 30” list recently, with several Indian American individuals named in the Social Impact category.

Among those honored in the Social Impact category were 27-year-old Viveka Hulyalkar, 23-year-old Devshi Mehrotra, and 20-

year-old Trisha Prabhu.

Hulyalkar, along with fellow honoree Alex Sadhu, co-founded Beam Impact. The New York-based duo are on a mission to convert consumer behavior into cash for non-

profits, the Forbes magazine profile says.

Mehrotra, along with Leslie Jones-Dove, is co-founder of JusticeText. An audio visual evidence management software that generates automated transcripts of body camera footage, interrogation videos, and jail calls, JusticeText expedites the pre-trial preparation time and allows public defenders to analyze crucial data, the profile notes.

Harvard student Prabhu is the creator of ReThink, a patented technology that detects and stops cyber bullying before it happens. The 10th Annual Forbes “30 Under 30” list featured 600 young entrepreneurs, activists, scientists and entertainers. ■

BHUTAN RECEIVES 150,000 Covishield VACCINES FROM INDIA AS GIFT

An AN32 glided its way into the Paro valley around 3.25 pm on 20 January 2021, ferrying Bhutan's first consignment of COVID-19 vaccine. The aircraft of Indian Air Force delivered 150,000 doses of Covishield vaccines from India, making Bhutan the first country to receive the gift, just four days after India's own massive roll out of the vaccine.

Led by Prime Minister Dr Lotay Tshering, the health minister Dechen Wangmo, Foreign secretary Kinga Singye and a few other senior officials received the vaccines at the Paro International Airport. Representing the friendly neighbour was the Ambassador of India to Bhutan, Her Excellency Ruchira Kamboj and the embassy officials who handed over the vaccines the Oxford-Astra Zeneca vaccine, manufactured by the Serum Institute of India.

Venerable Laytshog Lopen Sangay Dorji presided over prayers for auspicious endeavour, and conducted a thrusoel (purification) of the consignment. Receiving the vaccine, Prime Minister said it was a gift from a

trusted friend, who has been with Bhutan all through the decades and in this pandemic too.

"As we celebrate the arrival of vaccine as the new milestone in our battle to beat the pandemic at home, we applaud the gesture that signifies the compassion and generosity of the Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, and the people of India for the wellbeing of the humanity," he said.

"It is the display of altruism at best, and an exhibit of India's sincerity in the relationship we cherish," Prime Minister said, adding it comes despite enormous challenges India was facing due to the pandemic.

"It is of unimaginable value when precious commodities are shared even before meeting your own needs, as opposed to giving out only after you have enough."

The dispatch of the vaccine was the testimony to India's commitment of "neighbourhood first" and its leadership in the global fight against COVID-19. Prime Minister said these supports translate into hope and

confidence for all the countries to successfully sail across the pandemic soon.

The contribution of 150,000 vaccines prepares Bhutan to wage forward to protect the people and heal from the destructions of the pandemic, together with the rest of the world. India has also extended timely and generous support through supply of medicines, medical equipment and personal protective equipment since March last year.

Meanwhile, the Indian government has assured to cover the two doses requirement of Bhutan's target population of slightly over 533,500 and has committed to deliver the remaining consignments soon.

Prime Minister said the government and the people of Bhutan are immensely grateful to the government and people of India for remembering us at this time.

"These will all translate into the prayers and prosperity of the people of India, emanating from the grateful hearts of Bhutan," he said.

MESSAGE FROM DR. LOTAY TSHERING ON THE 72ND REPUBLIC DAY OF INDIA

"As friends in India celebrate the Republic Day, I convey prayers of the people of Bhutan for India's lasting peace and prosperity.

This is apparent for a country that has the blessings of a deeply spiritual and compassionate leader, who believes in helping and healing together. Just as Prime Minister Narendra Modi

shared the vaccines with other countries soon after India's own roll out, I know he is earnestly fighting to prevail over the pandemic and for the global peace.

I join Your Excellency, and the kind and courageous people of India, in your prayers for the world to triumph over COVID-19 as soon as possible.

And as you celebrate the important day, we also join you in offering prayers and strength to all the families who lost lives and livelihoods to this pandemic. Through the friendship and empathy we share, we will make every tear count and work together for the best of humanity." ■

DAYS TO REMEMBER

IN MARCH, 2021

March 03 : Bulgaria - National Day	March 17 : Ireland - St. Patrick's Day
March 03 : World Wildlife Day	March 20 : Tunisia - Independence Day
March 06 : Ghana-Independence Day	March 22 : World Water Day
March 08 : International Women's day	March 26 : Bangladesh - Independence Day
March 12 : Mauritius - Republic Day	January 28 : Paush Purnima ●
March 13 : Amavasya ●	March 29 : Holi

DIPLOMATIC POSTINGS

Shri Ankan Banerjee (IFS:2001), presently Deputy Chief of Mission in the Embassy of India, Paris, has been appointed as the **next High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Mozambique**.

Shri Sanjay Rana (IFS: 1996), presently Joint Secretary in the Ministry, has been appointed as the **next Ambassador of India to the Republic of Bulgaria**.

Shri Palaniswamy Subramanyan Karthigeyan (IFS:2004), presently Deputy High Commissioner in the High Commission of India, Canberra, has been appointed as the **next High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Fiji**.

Ms. Pooja Kapur (IFS:1996), presently Ambassador of India to the Republic of Bulgaria, has been appointed as the **next Ambassador**

of India to Denmark.

Ms. Shubhdarshini Tripathi (IFS:1994), presently Deputy Director General, Indian Council for Cultural Relations, has been appointed as the **next Ambassador of India to the Republic of Kazakhstan**.

Shri Ajit Vinayak Gupte (IFS:1991), presently Ambassador of India to Denmark, has been appointed as the **next Ambassador of India to the Arab Republic of Egypt**.

Shri R. Masakui (IFS:2001), presently High Commissioner of India to Jamaica, has been concurrently accredited as the **next High Commissioner of India to the Commonwealth of The Bahamas, with residence in Kingston**.

Shri Tanmaya Lal (IFS:1991), presently Ambassador of India to the Kingdom of Sweden, has been

concurrently accredited as the **next Ambassador of India to the Republic of Latvia, with residence in Stockholm**.

Ms. Monika Kapil Mohta (IFS:1985), presently Ambassador of India to Switzerland, has been concurrently accredited as the **next Ambassador of India to the Principality of Liechtenstein, with residence in Berne**.

Shri S. Gopalakrishnan (IFS:2005), presently Counsellor in the Embassy of India, Washington, has been appointed as the **next High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Malawi**.

Shri Jayant N. Khobragade (IFS:1995), presently Joint Secretary in the Ministry, has been appointed as the **next Ambassador of India to ASEAN**.

GIRMIT MUSEUM IN FIJI

The construction work on the first ever Girit Museum in Fiji is currently underway in Saweni, Fiji. It's an initiative by the Global Girit Institute to immortalize the history of Girit and also educate people on the history of the Giritians.

Administrator Vinod Sami says the museum will feature an indoor display

as well as an outdoor setup. *"The actual framework Girit era artifacts to showcase the lifestyle then, these can include objects that made up their Home, Farms, Lifestyle, Music, Dance, Garment, Jewellery and community and or religious events."*

Vinod says work had halted for a while due to the pandemic however the

institute is doing all it can to see the first phase completed.

The institute is also planning to set up a heritage database that will allow people to trace back their roots. (Courtesy: Fijian Broadcasting Corporation) ■

INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY

- Prof. Dr. Bajram Haliti

Every 27th January, Serbia and the world mark the International Holocaust Remembrance Day as well as the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz death camp. World Holocaust Remembrance Day was established on November 1, 2005 by a resolution of the UN General Assembly. Considering it necessary to reaffirm human rights, prevent and punish the crime of genocide, and warn of the ever-present danger of racial, national and religious hatred based on prejudice, to support education and research of the Holocaust at national and international level, through spreading awareness about Holocaust amongst public and including this issue in national educational programs.

The Law on the Protection of German Blood carried out mass genocide against Serbs, Jews and Roma: First in Germany, and then in all European countries under the occupation of the German Reich. Concentration and Extermination camps including Auschwitz, Dachau and Buchenwald, Jasenovac and others took the lives of 6,500,000 Jews, 700,000 Serbs and 3,500,000 Roma. In a word, the Roma passed through Dante's hell from Vitos through Iasi to Auschwitz and Jasenovac.

Hitler set out the goals of Nazism on February 24, 1920, in a 25-point program, five of which show the roots of future criminal and genocidal acts,



namely:

We demand the unification of all Germans into a greater Germany, based on the right of peoples to self-determination;

We demand equality for the German people in relation to other people, the annulment of the Versailles and Saint-Germain peace treaties;

We demand land and territory to feed our people and to colonize the surplus of our population;

Only a member of the race can be a citizen. A member of the race can only be one of German blood, regardless of religion. Therefore, no Jew can be a member of the race... (anti-Semitism occupied a very prominent place in Hitler's Nazi ideology and propaganda).

We demand the abolition of the mercenary army and the formation of a national army. This program was elaborated by Hitler in detail in his book "Mein Kampf", published in 1925, explaining Nazi views and

goals, which is why this is considered an authentic source of Nazi doctrine.

From his program and book, and then the policy of the Reich Chancellor of January 30, 1933, it is clear that he planned and prepared the ground for waging a war of aggression against a number of other states, prepared a crime against peace and genocide against the Jewish, Slavic and the Roma people.

And in Pavelic's Independent State of Croatia (NDH), which was proclaimed on April 10, 1941 under the auspices of Nazi Germany and fascist Italy, and included Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Srem region - an area inhabited by about 6.3 million people, from more than a third of whom were Serbs, and the complete liquidation of Serbs, Jews and Roma was sought.

In atrocities and sadism towards Serbs, Jews and Roma, the Ustasha (a Croatian fascist, ultranationalist and terrorist Organization) almost surpassed their Nazi-fascist masters. It was one of the largest execution sites for Serbs, Jews and Roma in the former SFRY (The six republics, made up the federation - Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia (including the regions of Kosovo and Vojvodina) and Slovenia). Ustice and Gradina were places of fear and horror. There, the Ustasha mercilessly slaughtered and killed innocent Serbs, Jews and Roma

with knives, shovels, axes and mallets. Roma women were brutally tortured there, and Roma, Serbian and Jewish children were buried alive..

The crime of genocide against children is crimes for which there is no repentance. In the entire occupation area of Europe, there were children's concentration camps the Ustasha Independent State of Croatia. During the Second World War, over fifty thousand children, including the unborn and the newborn, were killed, slaughtered and massacred in the Independent State of Croatia, over ten thousand in the Ustasha camp Jasenovac alone. The world does not know the truth about the crimes of genocide against Serbian, Jewish and Roma children.

The genocide of the Roma has often been challenged. It was usually claimed that the Roma were an antisocial problem - which is very incorrect - because in the third point of Mein Kampf it is stated that from the racial aspect, in addition to the Slavic and Jewish people, the Roma should also be exterminated.

Seventy-five years have passed since the end of World War II, and there are still debates about whether the Roma were victims of the Holocaust. The genocide against Serbs, Jews and Roma was not only erased from world history, but until recently it was also erased from national history. In our textbooks, this phenomenon is simply omitted; there is no place for it even in the footnotes. However, it should be said that the lack of scientifically based discussions on genocide in the former Yugoslavia is a much more complex problem than it might seem at first glance. Scientists remained silent

in the face of the intricacy of the situation they faced in a skilfully staged revolutionary time.

The Roma experienced Genocide in the Second World War, as did the Jews and Serbs, but to this day a part of the world's scientific and intellectual public disputes that. This is due to the fact that the Genocide against the Roma was not in the focus of the legal processes that were conducted after the capitulation of Germany and its war allies, and the disappearance of the so-called NDH and so on, precisely because of the undefined constitutional and legal status of the Roma and the sociological degradation to which they have been exposed throughout the history.

Based on established facts, eyewitnesses, witnesses, historical and legal documents, the crime of genocide against Orthodox Serbs, Jews and Roma of all faiths except Islamic was committed during the Second World War. The objectively approximate number of victims of genocide has not been determined, which is a crime, an injustice towards innocent victims. The perpetrators were not called to account, justice was not served, thus leaving the possibility of renewing the crime of genocide, which was contrary to the International Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

The victims of the genocide were not compensated. No one has calculated how many Serbs, Jews and Roma are there today as a result of the crime of genocide. Of the approximately 75,400 Jews who lived in Yugoslavia during World War II, only about 16,000 survived. Of the 10,500 Jews who took refuge in Sarajevo at the beginning of the war, about 9,000 were taken to Ustasha camps, from where about

forty returned. Almost all Jews in Zagreb were killed, property was looted. Ustasha leaders Budak and Artuković boasted in 1942 in the Ustasha NDH Parliament that they had solved the "Jewish question" most radically. After immigrating to Israel, it is estimated that about six thousand Jews live in the former Yugoslavia today.

Jasenovac; an eternal warning, one needs to write about it, talk about it, and make movies on it in order to make the memories of Nazism alive and to warn of the danger that threatens the world from the growing neo-Nazism.

Fascism and Nazism have done too much harm to humanity to be easily and quickly forgotten. Those evils must not be forgotten! Remembering them, as the darkest part of the new human history, this is in the interest of the people, societies and those countries on whose soil fascism arose as an ideology or as a form of government.

According to some estimates, the genocide against the Roma took about three and a half million victims in Europe. Historians forget those three and a half million Roma who disappeared in the smoke of a crematorium or bonfire built by the Nazis. However, that is a fact: in most of the works that deal with the world of concentration camps: not a single word, not even a phrase. Silence. Forget it. Gypsies. Unknown.

I hope that this piece of work will make a significant contribution to the spread of knowledge and teaching about Destruction and that it will be a starting point for discussions between parents and children about morals, ethics and human values, not only today but also in the future. ■

राजभाषा हिन्दी : एक विचार

— डॉ. एम. शेषन्

स्वतंत्रता प्राप्ति के पश्चात भारतीय भाषाओं की प्रोन्नति एवं विकास के निमित्त भारत सरकार ने अनेक सक्रिय कदम उठाये। उनमें मुख्य रूप से सरकारी कामकाज के निमित्त प्रशासन में हिन्दी को राजभाषा के रूप में घोषित करना एक महत्वपूर्ण कदम माना जायेगा। अब तक राजकाज एवं प्रशासन के निमित्त प्रयुक्त अंग्रेजी के महत्व को घटाकर उसकी जगह पर हिन्दी भाषा को प्रयोग में लाना और अंत में केवल मात्र हिन्दी को राजभाषा के रूप में प्रयुक्त करना तथा इसी प्रकार प्रान्तीय सरकार के प्रशासन के निमित्त तद् तद् प्रादेशिक भाषा को प्रयोग में लाना एवं केन्द्र सरकार के प्रशासन के निमित्त हिन्दी को प्रयोग में लाने का कदम एक महत्वपूर्ण एवं क्रांतिकारी कदम माना जायेगा। लगभग सत्तर, बहत्तर साल से यह प्रयत्न जारी रहा है। अब हम इस स्थिति पर पहुंच गये हैं कि भारत सरकार का यह प्रयत्न कितना कारगर और सफल हुआ है और क्या वास्तव में भारतीय भाषायें अंग्रेजी की जगह पर अपनी भाषा को अपने प्रदेशों में तथा केन्द्र में हिन्दी की प्रयुक्ति को पूर्णरूप से सफल बनाने में सफलता प्राप्त कर सकी?

प्रान्तीय स्तर पर अवश्य ही यह प्रयास बहुत कुछ अंशों में सफल रहा है यद्यपि कोर्ट, कचहरी की भाषा आज तक समस्त भारत में केवल अंग्रेजी ही रही। निम्नवर्ग तथा अनपढ़ नागरिकों के लिये तो आज भी कोर्ट कचहरी की भाषा अंग्रेजी में होने से उनकी पहुंच के बाहर ही रही है यह मानना होगा।

केन्द्र के स्तर पर आज भी अंग्रेजी ही मुख्य भाषा तथा हिन्दी गौण भाषा ही रही है। सदियों से प्रशासन के कार्यों में हमारे देश में अंग्रेजी का ही प्रचलन रहा है। अतः उसके प्रयोग को कम करके या एकदम हटाकर केवल मात्र हिन्दी का प्रयोग करने में आजतक हम पूर्ण रूप से सफल नहीं हो पाये। इसका प्रमुख कारण हमारी मानसिकता है। बड़े-बड़े अफसर से लेकर निचले स्तर के कर्मचारी तक में अंग्रेजी मानसिकता से मुक्त नहीं हो पाये। यह स्थिति हमारी कमजोरी ही मानी जायेगी।

इस मानसिक कमजोरी से मुक्त होकर हिन्दी मानसिकता से काम करने पर ही वास्तविक रूप से सरकारी कामकाज के लिये प्रयोग में पूर्णरूप से हिन्दी को वास्तविक अर्थ में राजभाषा के रूप में हिन्दी की सफलता को हम स्वीकार कर सकेंगे।

आज वस्तुस्थिति यह है कि हिन्दी राजभाषा की जगह पर अनुवाद की भाषा मात्र रह गयी है और हमें इस कमजोरी से शीघ्र ही मुक्त होना होगा। कोर्ट कचहरी की भाषा हिन्दी में होना अब तक एक स्वप्न ही रह गया है।

हिन्दी का इतिहास हमें बता रहा है कि सदियों से अपने प्रदेश में ही हिन्दी भाषा राजभाषा वास्तविक रूप से बन नहीं पाई है। ऐतिहासिक कारणों से उत्तर भारत लगभग एक हजार साल तक विदेशी, विधर्मी शासकों, आक्रमणकारियों के अधीन रहने को बाध्य हुआ। उत्तर प्रदेश में लगभग 700 साल तक फारसी भाषा और फारसी लिपि राजभाषा बनी रही। इस वजह से हिन्दी का विकास भाषा के स्तर पर एवं साहित्य के विकास की दृष्टि से दोनों तरफ अवरुद्ध हुआ। अतः हिन्दी भाषा दब गयी। यहा तक कि देवनागरी लिपि तक का प्रचलन बन्द हो गया। यह तो अंग्रेजों के शासन काल में पंडित मदन मोहन मालवीयजी जैसे देशप्रेमी तथा भाषाप्रेमी के अथक प्रयास के फलस्वरूप फिर से देवनागरी लिपि का प्रचलन कोर्ट, कचहरी तथा प्रशासन एवं शिक्षा संस्थाओं में होने लगी। अतः हिन्दी को राजभाषा बनने का सौभाग्य प्राप्त नहीं हुआ। अंग्रेजों के शासनकाल में तो समस्त भारत में अंग्रेजी भाषा का ही बोलबाला हो गया। बेचारी हिन्दी का यह दुर्भाग्य ही माना जा सकता है।

स्वतंत्रता प्राप्ति के पश्चात ही हिन्दी भाषा को विकसित होने का अनुकूल परिवेश प्राप्त हुआ और संविधान में उसे राजभाषा के रूप मान्यता देकर गौरवपूर्ण स्थान प्राप्त हुआ। वहां भी अंग्रेजी भाषा के साथ सह-राजभाषा के रूप में ही उसे क्रियाशील होने का अवसर प्राप्त हुआ। स्वतंत्र रूप से हिन्दी को प्रयोग में लाने का अवसर पूरी तरह से उसे प्राप्त नहीं हो

सका। यह स्थिति वास्तव में शोचनीय नहीं तो और क्या?

सभी भारतीय भाषाओं के सामने वर्तमान युग की आवश्यकताओं के अनुसार प्रशासन में अनेक नये शब्दों को गढ़ने की अनिवार्य आवश्यकतायें आ पड़ी। ऐसी कठिनाई हिन्दी के सामने भी आयी। उसके लिए विशेष प्रयास करना पड़ा और प्रशासन शब्दावली 'glossary' गढ़ने की आवश्यकता आ पड़ी। तमिल जैसी द्रविड़ भाषायें दक्षिण में सदियों से राजभाषा के रूप में यद्यपि प्रचलित रही, तथापि समसामयिक प्रशासन की आवश्यकताओं की पूर्ति के हेतु उसके लिए भी ऐसा प्रयास करने की जरूरत आ पड़ी। पुराकल में चेर, चोल, पाण्ड्य राजाओं के राजकाल में केवल तमिल भाषा का ही प्रयोग किया जाता था। तथापि वर्तमान परिवेश के अनुरूप उसके समाने भी ऐसी कठिनाई आयी। प्रशासन कार्यों के अनुकूल भारतीय भाषाओं की प्रयुक्ति के चलन को बढ़ाते जायेंगे तो ऐसी कठिनाइयों से हम शीघ्र ही पार कर पायेंगे, इसमें कोई सन्देह नहीं। ऐसी प्रशासनिक क्षमता और योग्यता प्रयोग करते-करते हम प्राप्त करने में सक्षम एवं समर्थ हो सकेंगे, इसमें दो मत नहीं

हिन्दी अपनी आवश्यकता की पूर्ति के निमित्त संस्कृत से मुख्य रूप से बहुत से ऐसे शब्दों, पदों, पदांशों को उधार लेकर आगे बढ़ रही है। कालान्तर में, प्रशासन के योग्य अनुकूल परिस्थितियों के विकसित होने पर क्षमता और सामर्थ्य को प्राप्त करने में वह सफल हो सकेगी। इसमें कोई सन्देह नहीं है। नित प्रति जीवन में तथा प्रशासन कार्यों में हम अपनी भाषा का प्रयोग करते जायेंगे तो उसमें अपने आप क्षमता और सामर्थ्य आ ही जायेंगे।

हिन्दी इस प्रयास में इस समय आगे बढ़ रही है। विगत साठ, सत्तर सालों से यह प्रयास जारी है। बहुत शीघ्र ही अंग्रेजी के दबाव से पूर्ण रूप से मुक्त हो जाने पर हिन्दी राजभाषा के रूप में सक्षम और समर्थ भाषा बन सकेगी इसमें दो मत नहीं है। ■

मेरी कविताओं की भूमि मेरा मन है —रामा तक्षक

मेरी कविताओं की भूमि मेरा मन है। मुझे फूलों की खूबसूरती बहुत प्रभावित करती है इसलिए मेरे मन की भूमि से कविताओं के फूलों ने जन्म लिया। ये फूल अब आपके सामने हैं। यह कहना था — नीदरलैंड से भारत यात्रा पर आए प्रसिद्ध कवि और हिंदी सेवी रामा तक्षक का। अवसर था — केंद्रीय हिंदी संस्थान और अक्षरम के तत्वावधान में आयोजित रामा तक्षक और उनकी पत्नी के स्वागत समारोह का। इस कार्यक्रम का आयोजन केंद्रीय हिंदी संस्थान के 'संगोष्ठी कक्ष' में किया गया।

इस अवसर पर वरिष्ठ कवयित्री अलका सिन्हा ने रामा तक्षक से उनके रचना कर्म पर बात की। कार्यक्रम में कवि ने समारोह में उपस्थित श्रोताओं के सवालों के जवाब भी दिए।

श्री तक्षक ने बातचीत के क्रम में कहा की व्यक्ति को साक्षी भाव से जीना चाहिए। खुद उन्हें इस भाव से जीने की प्रेरणा खजुराहो के मंदिरों से मिली। वे जब भी भारत आते हैं, तो खजुराहो के मंदिरों में जरूर जाते हैं। उन्होंने भाषा पर बात



करते हुए कहा की नीदरलैंड की दूसरी पीढ़ी हिंदी-भोजपुरी से दूर हो रही है। वहीं परंपरा के नाम पर पीढ़ी दर पीढ़ी चली आ रही हिंसा का भी विरोध किया। दो संस्कृतियों के टकराव के सवाल पर उन्होंने कहा की — जब बात संस्कृति की होती है तो सहयोग मिलता है। लेकिन जब जीवन की बात होती है तो कुछ टकराव होता है।

इस मौके पर उन्होंने अपनी कुछ चुनिंदा

कविताओं का भी पाठ किया। इनके माध्यम से अपनी बात को कहते हुए उन्होंने महिलाओं के सशक्तिकरण को भी आवाज दी।

कार्यक्रम की अध्यक्षता करते हुए वरिष्ठ राजनयिक और हिंदी विद्वान नारायण कुमार ने कहा की इस कार्यक्रम ने हमें आभासी से प्रभासी बना दिया और एक प्रवासी साहित्यकार से जोड़ दिया।

केंद्रीय हिंदी संस्थान के उपाध्यक्ष और वरिष्ठ लेखक अनिल जोशी के सान्निध्य में हुए इस कार्यक्रम में श्री जोशी ने कहा कि हम पूरी दुनिया में हिंदी का नेतृत्व विकसित करना चाहते हैं इस कड़ी में हॉलैंड में सामने आ रहे नए नेतृत्व में रामा तक्षक का महत्वपूर्ण योगदान है। कार्यक्रम में नूतन पाण्डेय, दीपक पाण्डेय, अपर्णा सारस्वत और मनोज सिन्हा सहित कई विद्वानों ने सहभागिता की कार्यक्रम में स्वागत भाषण संस्थान के क्षेत्रीय निदेशक प्रमोद शर्मा ने दिया। कार्यक्रम के संयोजक विजय कुमार मिश्र थे और धन्यवाद ज्ञापन अतुल प्रभाकर ने दिया।

इन्दौर चैप्टर द्वारा वेबिनार

श्री बालेश्वर अग्रवाल जन्म शताब्दी पर इन्दौर चैप्टर द्वारा गत 30 जनवरी को एक वेबिनार आयोजित किया गया। जिसका विषय था—भारत का अपने पड़ोसी देशों से सम्बन्ध और उसके वैश्विक प्रभाव।

कार्यक्रम का प्रारम्भ श्री टी. एन. मल्होत्रा द्वारा गायत्री मंत्र से हुआ। पश्चात इन्दौर चैप्टर के सचिव श्री रमेश गुप्ता द्वारा माननीय बालेश्वरजी का स्मरण, उनके साथ यात्रा व सम्बन्ध उनकी इन्दौर यात्रा व इन्दौर में चैप्टर प्रारम्भ करने हेतु नगर के सुधिनो के साथ बैठक व मार्गदर्शन का विवरण दिया।

विषय का प्रारम्भ करते हुए इन्दौर चैप्टर के अध्यक्ष डॉ. प्रभुनारायण मिश्रा ने कहा कि आचार्य चाणक्य ने सही कहा था कि अपने पड़ोसी देश का पड़ोसी हमारा मित्र होता है। तदनुसार हमें हमारी नीति बनाना चाहिये। पाकिस्तान के साथ कितनी भी अच्छाई कर लो वह दुष्ट पड़ोसी है—कभी नहीं सुधरेगा। पाकिस्तान से जो जलसन्धि हुई है, उसे भंग करके पानी देना बन्द कर देना चाहिये यह कैसा पड़ोसी है—जो हमारा पानी पीकर हमें कोसता रहता है। चीन के साथ भी सख्ती से पेश आना चाहिये। उसके साथ व्यापार को भी बुद्धिमानी से नियंत्रण की आवश्यकता है। अभी मोदी सरकार ने जो विदेशनीति अपना रखी है, वह दूरदर्शिता व बुद्धिमानी का परिचय देती है।

प्रमुख वक्ता अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद के अध्यक्ष श्री विरेन्द्र गुप्ता ने आदरणीय बालेश्वर जी को अपने श्रद्धासुमन अर्पित करते हुए कहा कि श्री बालेश्वरजी एक दूरदर्शी महामना थे। उन्होंने विश्व भर में भ्रमण कर 'विश्व बन्धुत्व' का संदेश दिया। विशेष कर भारतवंशियों के तो वे संरक्षक हो गये थे। उनके सुख-दुःख को वे समझते थे तथा तदनुसार भारत सरकार को सूचित कर समस्या सुलझाने में सहयोग करते थे।

वर्तमान वैश्विक धरातल पर भारत एक महाशक्ति के रूप में उभर रहा है। प्रधानमंत्री श्री नरेन्द्र मोदी जी द्वारा नई विदेश नीति गड़ी गई है। जिसमें भारत के 'हित-अहित' पर वास्तविक नीति अपनाई जा रही है। अपने पड़ोसियों से भारत ने मित्रतापूर्ण आत्मीय सम्बन्ध स्थापित किये हैं।

बांग्लादेश व नेपाल चीन के साथ भी अपने सम्बन्ध जोड़े हुए हैं—हमें इस पर कोई शंका नहीं करनी चाहिये। वर्तमान में हमें उनसे सन्धि कर आर्थिक सहयोग भी देना चाहिये। भूटान, श्रीलंका व बर्मा आदि देशों से भी बराबर का व्यवहार हो रहा है। क्योंकि ये छोटे देश अवश्य हैं, परन्तु वे सार्वभौम स्वतंत्र देश हैं।

— अभी—अभी श्री मोदी जी ने अपने देश द्वारा विकसित वैक्सीन को सहयोगी देशों में भेजकर विश्व में प्रतिष्ठा अर्जित की है।

— भारत सरकार ने मुस्लिम देशों से भी

मैत्रीपूर्ण सम्बन्ध बनाकर पाकिस्तान को अलग-थलग कर दिया है।

— श्री मोदी जी ने अपने पड़ोसी देशों को बड़ा महत्व देकर वहां मैत्रीपूर्ण व्यवहार किया है—जिन देशों में भारत के प्रधानमंत्री गत 15-20 वर्षों से नहीं गये थे, वहां भी वे होकर आये हैं।

— हमें पड़ोसी देशों को भी उनके वहां सुख-शांति समृद्धि मिले यह प्रयत्न करना चाहिये। यदि पड़ोसी खुशहाल होगा तो हमें भी लाभ मिलेगा।

— वर्तमान में भारत के रशिया के साथ-साथ अमेरिका से मधुर सम्बन्ध बने हैं। यह हमारे देश के लिये सुखद बात है।

श्री विरेन्द्र जी ने अपने अनुभवों को साझा करते हुए अनेक उदाहरण देकर उक्त विषय को ज्ञानवर्धक व रोचक बना दिया। इस कार्यक्रम में इन्दौर चैप्टर के सदस्यों के अतिरिक्त दिल्ली के भी अनेक सदस्यों ने भाग लिया। इन्दौर चैप्टर के सहसचिव श्री शैलेन्द्र पशीने ने सभी आदरणीय महानुभावों का आभार व्यक्त किया। इस कार्यक्रम का सुसंचालन श्री टी. ए. मल्होत्रा जी ने किया और अन्त में शांतिपाठ के द्वारा वेबिनार सम्पन्न हुआ।

सचिव
रमेश गुप्ता
इन्दौर चैप्टर