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Condolence Message



Vinay Kumar Srivastava (3.12.1952 - 23.12.2020)

Professor Vinay Kumar Srivastava was the Life Member and one of the Vice-presidents of Kolkata Society for Asian Studies and a member of the editorial board of the *Journal of Kolkata Society for Asian Studies*. He was an eminent scholar, teacher and researcher in the field of Social Anthropology in the country. He was a modest person and always won the heart of others with his pleasant personality. He was an eloquent speaker and prolific writer. He was always respectful to his seniors. Many qualities of life blended in one as he was.

His contribution to the Kolkata Society for Asian Studies has been highly appreciated by the members of KSAS. He encouraged this new organization and collaborated with it to organize a ten days research methodology course with a guide line of ICSSR when he was the Director of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies. KSAS organized a National Seminar with MAKAIAS during his tenure of directorship.

After his retirement from Delhi University he became the Director of Anthropological Survey of India. In spite of his busy schedule he always supported us with his wise advice and tried to contribute for the development of our Society.

He was a perfect Administrator in professional life. His contribution to academic field is highly acclaimed not only in India but also in abroad.

He received many prestigious awards from different academic and professional bodies. He was a member in National Commission for the sub-categorization of other Backward Classes, Government of India and also a member in the National Commission for Denotified, Nomadic and Semi Nomadic tribes, Government of India.

Professor Srivastava leaves behind his wife and son, a daughter, grandchild and lots of students and admirers.

There is hardly any matching word to console his untimely demise. The members of our Society share their deepest sympathy with the members of his bereaved family.

May his Noble Soul rest in peace.

Editorial Note

Kolkata Society for Asian Studies received a large number of articles for publication this time. After going through the process followed for referred journals, twenty articles are selected for publication in this volume. Some information on the contents of the papers is given in sequential order in this note. The first paper on a phenomenon called *Saato Haraunu*, meaning loss of soul; deals with the belief system related to sickness and shamanism, still practiced by two ethnic communities in Darjeeling district. The practice is analyzed from the view point of medical anthropology and cultural revivalism. The paper on the stress factors of Indian army is a study on secondary material and has recommendation measures for stress management among Indian men of arms. The next paper is on BRI, that is, Belt and Road Initiative project of China, designed to facilitate Eurasian economic integration. The author has dealt with the role of Bangladesh, one of the signatory nations, in it. The paper on the marginalized tribe, Hazaras of Afghanistan is a discussion on the seminal work of Khaled Hosseini's novel, "The Kite Runner". The article deals upon the background of tortuous behavior of the Pashtuns on the Hazaras of Afghanistan. It is on the theme of discrimination of one group against the other in the same country with a hope of redemption. Work participation of women in relation to men in the Coochbehar district of West Bengal is studied in another article. The study is on secondary source from census. Though women work participation is lower in the district but in the context of the state the rate of participation is increasing. Recommendation is for state policy to rectify the disparity in gender based work participation. The paper on CSR in Nepal studied the CSR status in Nepal by analyzing development of the Corporate Social Responsibility in the business sectors through time. The work is based on secondary sources. Next article is on the ivory craft of Jaipur, Rajasthan. A group of craftsmen mostly belonging to Kamawat group, traditionally lived on ivory carving. With the ban on ivory, the craftsmen are trying their skill on alternate materials like sandal wood, bones etc. The authors discussed on the viability of the skill on other materials and had suggested some alternate for the survival of the craftsmen. Ethno –medicine and its practice among the Santhals of Bankura district is discussed in the next paper. The author has given both scientific and local names of the plants used as medicine by the Santhals in a few villages. She has suggested that since the use of such medicine is decreasing through time due to urban effect and loss of biodiversity, endeavour should be made for preservation of the knowledge and the plants. Next paper is on the Lepcha belief system related to the so called Neolithic celts. These are locally known as *Saderlong* and are used for cure of diseases and as talisman against natural calamities, even in

the present era of modernization. Another article deals with Mahatma Gandhi's views on machines and industrialization. The authors have shown with historical evidences, how Gandhi had changed his views on use of machines and industrialization through time. The change is divided into three phases. At the beginning he opposed mass production through machines, which led to exploitation of people and he emphasized on homegrown products with the use of indigenous methods and tools. Gradually with time he realized that machines have their own utility. Each of these phases is logically placed with discussions on contemporary developments in political arena. The article on 'ideas of fearlessness' deals with Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence. The author has discussed at length the policy of non-violence of Mahatma Gandhi in the back drop of contemporary political situation. Gandhi used the riot torn Noakhali district as a laboratory to prove his point but failed. Communal violence and law in India is the topic for the next paper. The author gave a statistic of the casualties of communal violence since year 1921 till 2012. He had divided the time between pre independence and post independence periods. Provision in the constitution of India against such violence is discussed and suggestion is put forward to curb such violence in India. Jawaharlal Nehru's endeavour to build the newly formed nation of India with Science and technology is the topic of the next article. The author discussed Nehru's vision for India as a developed country in near future with the help of science and technology. For this he had taken help of some of the frontline scientists like Bhaba. The paper is a critique of Nehru's policies in this respect. Next paper discusses how population influx from rural areas to urban centres brings a lot of problem to the governance in the realm of civic, economic and political conditions. The situation faced by the inhabitants of Silchar town, Assam, is discussed in the paper. In another paper study is conducted on the attitude of undergraduate teachers towards the Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) at the under graduate level as recommendation by UGC. The authors selected government, government aided and autonomous colleges under three universities of West Bengal; namely, Calcutta, Vidyasagar and Burdwan universities. Statistical tools are used to find out the teachers' attitude towards the new system. Attitudinal study is made in relation to rural urban set up, gender perspective and science arts topics. Another paper discusses the growth of special system of education in India to meet the requirement for a special group of people. In the British colonial regime a new community emerged as Anglo Indian, the Eurasian. Under British rule policy was made for their education in a special way so that they may serve the colony in a better way. Next paper on education compares the present mode of education with the ancient system with respect to their impact on contemporary society for values and morale. One paper is on students' attitude towards e-learning. The study is made on the students of higher secondary schools of Birbhum district, West Bengal. Comparison

and analysis of data shows that there were no significant difference between genders, in rural/urban up and between arts and science students. Young students are equally interested in e learning. The last two papers are in Bengali language. One is on elderly people and the other is on the mode of dance performance of Bengal. People in their advanced age face a number problem both in their body and in the society. The author has given the solutions that are prescribed in the ancient texts of India. The paper on 'Gouriya Nritya' describes the mode of dance performance practiced in Bengal together with its geographical domain, history of development, various forms and regimes of performances.

As already mentioned we have followed the prescribed mode for peer review of the articles. We extend our gratitude to the scholarly reviewers for their views and suggestions. Finally we thank the authors for enriching this volume of the journal with the articles, which are the outcome of their painstaking researches.

Ranjana Ray
Sarmistha De Basu

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'Saato Haraunu' - a notion of similar to Soul Loss: The glimpses of ethnic revival among the Mangars and Limbus of Darjeeling

Manisha Thapa[1] *and Pinak Tarafdar*[2]

Abstract : *The article highlights the phenomena of Saato Haraunu (soul loss) among the two hill communities of Darjeeling. Saato Haraunu is a kind of sickness prevalent among the children moreover; it also affects shamans during their pre-initiation phase. In spite of similar kind of experiences both in Saato Haraunu and shamanism still one of the under study populations does not hold the scheduled tribe status. The present endeavour has made the exploration unique through the application of auto-ethnographical approach and participant observation of Saato Haraunu and shamanism by the first author which are further conceptually furnished by the second author. It also reveals that soul loss and subsequent shamanic practices remain at the foundational core of both the communities and embedded in the deepest layer of the culture even in the contemporary era and among the formally educated members also. It also emerges as one of the conspicuous factors for retaining and rejuvenating the tribal status for achieving further goals.*

Key words: *Saato Haraunu* (soul loss), shamanism, scheduled tribe, auto-ethnography, participant observation, Mangar, Limbu, Darjeeling.

Introduction : *Saato harako hola yeta uta garnu lanu parxa-* these are the exact words commonly phrased among most Nepali speaking hill communities residing in and

around Darjeeling. It means, soul loss might have occurred, so the person should be taken to a shaman for healing. *Saato haraunu* is considered a common sickness occurring mostly among children and rarely affecting adults. However, it also affects shamans during their pre-initiation phase when malevolent entities try stealing their soul for preventing them from choosing the shamanic path.

The concept of soul loss or *Saato Haraunu* is familiar in various regions of the world. It is known by different terms across cultures with variability in symptoms depending on the concerned socio-cultural and ecological milieu. Clements (1932) states that soul loss results in sickness caused through separation of soul from the body through attack of ghosts, sorcerers or through mishaps occurred during its wanderings while a person is asleep. The concept of *Saato Haraunu* bears similarities to the concept of *Susto* (Spanish term for fright), a culture bound syndrome prevalent in South America. A cultural syndrome will be defined as a complex understanding of illness that is culturally specific (O'Ne ll and Rubel, 1980; Oths, 1999).

Literature reviews : Since its first description in English by Gillin (1945), substantial research has been devoted to *Susto*, a Latin American folk syndrome that has generally been documented to be related to acute fright (Baer et al. 2003; Bourbonnais-Spear et al. 2007; Klein, 1978; Rubel et al. 1984; Uzzell, 1974; Weller et al. 2002). The notion of soul loss (*Susto*) due to fright is well known from ethnographic accounts throughout Latin America (Lincoln 2001), and Aymara –an Indigenous community residing in the region of Bolivia and Peru believed to be originating from the region of Lake Titica (Forbes,1870), the notion of *ajayu* loss has been studied by Gerardo Fernández (1999), Andrew Orta (1999), and others. Klein (1978) describes *Susto* as the product of the complex interaction between the individuals' state of (physical) health, the social and cultural system in which they live, and the individuals' personality.

Hooker (1855) during his travels in the regions of Darjeeling, Sikkim and Eastern Nepal had stated Magars as the aborigines of Sikkim who had been pushed towards Western Nepal by the Lepchas to the region of Limbus. O'Malley (1907), Namgyal and Drolma (1908), Chemjong (1966), Bagchi (1972) states the Mangars and Limbus are known to be among the oldest inhabitants of Sikkim. The word 'Mangar' is the endo-ethnonym used by members of community residing in the region of India whereas the same community is referred to as 'Magar' in Nepal. According to Chinese and Burmese language, 'Mang' or 'Mong' meant Mongolians while 'Aar' or 'Aarui' meant child. Therefore, the etymological meaning of the term 'Mangar' was the 'Children of Mongolia'. They are believed to originate from the Shin region of Central Asia (Pulami, 2009).

The word 'Limbu' or 'Limboo' is an exo-ethnonym provided to the community by the British while the community prefers the term *'Yakthumba Pan'. 'Yakthumba'* refers to the people carrying bow and arrow that conquered the region of Limbuwan. Another variation by Bankoti (1961) states 'yak' to be a place for house building while 'thumba' refers to hard worker implying 'yakthumba' to be 'hardworking person of a particular house'. Subba (2008) states the term Limbus or Limboos emerged after coming in contact with the Gorkhas in 1774 A.D. Limboo surname became post-fixed from 1806 A.D. (Subba, 1999; Shrestha, 1985; Khamtak, 2007). Bhutias refer to them as Tsong or Chang as they are believed to have migrated from the Tsang province in Tibet (Subba, 2008). Mangars, a Hinduised community who have been categorized as caste population are striving towards attaining the status of Scheduled Tribe while Limbus are recognized as Scheduled Tribe in both the states of West Bengal, Sikkim and also by the Central Union of India in 2003.

Material and methods : The present study has been conducted among two communities, the Mangars and Limbus residing in three distinctive habitations of Darjeeling district, West Bengal. It aims to explore the conception of *Saato Haraunu* or soul loss among members of both the communities residing in different localities and the study also intends to understand the role of shaman to get rid of. Stratified sampling has been administered for purpose of the study wherein participant observation, focused-group discussion coupled with key informant, semi-structured and unstructured interview shed light on numerous aspects of the present discourse. Auto-ethnographical approach is applied for shedding light on the in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. Anthropologist Karl Heider introduced the term 'autoethnography' in 1975 in the context of Dani autoethnography (Chang, 2008).

The concept of layered account within auto-ethnography has been applied for understanding cross-cultural views of soul loss through means of explanatory models (Kleinman, 1980) provided by the traditional healer-cum shaman of both the Mangar and Limbu communities of the studied area as well as through unfolding the personality transformation of the first author through first-hand experience of the same. 'Layered account' (Ronai, 1995) is one that shows connections among 'personal experience, theory, and research practices' as the writer moves 'back and forth between narratives and reflections on those narratives or their content' (Goodall, 2008) and challenges a single telling from just one viewpoint. (Kleinman, 1980) envisages 'Explanatory models' as 'the notions about an episode of sickness and its treatment that are employed by all those engaged in the clinical process'.

The theoretical knowledge and substantive period of research experiences have enable the second author to formulate the current research topic, moreover continuous interaction with the first author (who is a community member and also a Ph.D. research scholar of the second author) and the transformation of 'basic personality type' (Kardiner, 1945) of the same has insisted the second author to intervene the situation and subsequently conceptualize the research design.

The village of Naspatigaon lying in the forested region of Sittong about 20 kilometers from the sub-divisional town of Kurseong has been selected as it is solely inhabited by Mangars adhering to traditional animistic beliefs and culture. Another region, Latpanchar, the region of Cinchona (*Cinchona officinalis*) plantation has been chosen which is divided into small residential areas based on acres provided by the plantation owners. It is composed of dispersed population of Mangars and Limbus residing parallel to each other. The third area of study is Lamagaon, a village located in the region of Bijanbari adhering strongly to Limbu beliefs and culture.

Discussion : Symptoms of *Saato Haraunu* or soul loss mostly include persistent fever, vomiting, loss in appetite, sudden mood swings, highly intensified fright, shivers followed by pain in body. Children are easily susceptible to the attacks of souls and supernatural entities. *Saato Haraunu* is commonly found among them but sometimes also occurs in adults. The popular notion is that *Saato* of a child can be easily relapsed than that of an adult. Late treatment could be highly fatal. The incident occurred in the village of Lamagaon located in Bijanbari block within the district of Darjeeling where 42 year old Rajen Limbu, the *Samba* (a Limbu shaman) from the nearby village of Kainjaley was summoned to conduct the *Saato Bolauney* (calling of soul) ceremony for a 12 year old boy. The boy was feeling ill for a while so his parents rushed to the Bijanbari hospital. Later he was referred to a private hospital in Siliguri. The parents in desperation finally called for the services of Rajen who stated:

> 'Pura dhilo bhaye sakey ko thiyo. Tyo keta lai jungle ko deuta Tamphungnama lageko le chito chot pareko theyo tei bhaera jiudo manchey haru ko thau ma leunu sakindaina theyo.'
>
> [It was already too late. Saato of the boy was already hurt and stolen by the forest hunter-deity Tamphungmana so he could not be brought back to the land of the living].

A few hours later the boy died owing to late treatment. This conception of stealing of soul by the forest hunting deity parallels synchronously to the *Susto* etiology of Trinatario people of Bolivia. The fact that the hunter worldview is reflected in Trinitario *susto* etiology clearly supports the argument that the subjective experience of a traditional illness is shaped both by the cultural and spiritual background of individuals, as well

as by the sociological features of the cosmological setting in which these individuals live (Castro and Eroza,1998; Greenway,1998).

Unlike his predecessors, Rajen refrains to perform animistic sacrifices and alcohol consumptions. Belonging to a family of shamans, he started having symptoms of *Mang utrinu* (possession of tutelary deity) shaking involuntarily, speaking in different tongues, sometimes roaming around in the forest. On being possessed, he started citing the *Mundhum* oral literature of Limbus regarding various facets of the community. He would recite folk stories regarding the Limbu way of life and provide divinations. He received mantras and foresight in dreams through his spirit teacher (*Mang Guru*) and knowledge on conducting various rituals by means of his human teacher (*Hang Guru*) *Satakey Maila* a renowned *Samba* of earlier times.

Being a Samba gives him the freedom to perform rituals for both natural and violent deaths. He believes that soul loss or *Saato Haraunu* occurs during sudden fright, evil-eye or *Nahen*, death of a close person, attack of witch-craft and even stealing of soul by *Tamphungnama* (Hunter deity of forest). Above stated symptoms are in close proximity to factors inducing *susto* such as fright, evil eye, bad wind, witchcraft, being grabbed by the earth and even pesticides (Baer and Penzell, 1993; Greenway,1998; Kiev,1972).

60 year old, Nar Bahadur Mangar, *Jhankri* of Latpanchar belonging to the Darlami clan experienced soul loss before being summoned into the generational practice. As a boy, he experienced symptoms of soul loss along with spirit possession. Belonging, to family of shamans it was destined that ancestors (*Pitri*) would choose one individual who would carry forward the generationally ascribed practice of shamanism prevalent among the Mangars. He states:

> 'Guru thapnu aghi dherai dukha paye. Jungle tira kudinthyo, dara tira kudinthyo, koi bela kata koi bela kata huntheo. Deuta utrinda jiu ma dherai kampa huntheo ani jokhana haru bhanthye harey. Tara malai tyo samay kehi yaad hunthena. Ghar ko manche haru le pani dherai dukha bhognu paryo. Paxi guru thapera puja siknu thalepaxi sabai ramro hudai gayo.'
>
> [Before committing to a human teacher I faced enormous suffering. I ran around carelessly into the forest, cliffs wandering carelessly. During the possession of my spirit guide I faced enormous involuntary body movements. But I cannot recall everything. My family suffered a lot during that time. Later, things started improving after I sought a human shamanic teacher and performed rituals.]

He received predictions and premonitions in his dreams which mostly held true in reality. As time passed, his family and relatives have started to believe that he is chosen by the ancestors to be a *Jhankri*. Divination was sought through the help of another shaman and it was found to be true. He is considered to be an *Aitabarey Jhankri* (a

category of *Jhankri* chosen by the ancestors). It has been nearly thirty-six years since he accepted his fate as a shaman performing divinations along with clan and community rituals.

Unlike the Limbu shaman of Lamagaon, he prefers animistic sacrifices for specific rituals while fruits and flowers for others. 5 year old, Andrick Mangar of Gumbadhura, Latpanchar faced severe fever accompanied by vomiting and chills throughout the body. Feeling helpless his parents rushed towards the house of Nar Bahadur who was retiring to sleep. On seeing the child, he stated that he felt scared while playing and having *Halka Chaya* (weak shadow soul) made it easier for *Saato Haraunu* (soul loss). Keeping the boy upright he performed incantations brushing *Titeypati* (*Artemesia vulgaris*) over a glass of water. This water was sprinkled thrice over the child and few rice grains were given to feed for regaining normalcy.

Offering chopped head of a cock to the hunter deity *Shikari Deuta* is mandatory when soul loss or *Saato Haraunu* occurs near a river. Irregular performance of ritual may hurt the soul of individual ultimately leading to death. This conception is similar to the Limbus who believes soul stolen by the forest deity has to be retrieved soon. Most of the tribal communities have their own beliefs and practices in terms of seeking traditional health care which they acquire through their knowledge and experiences in search of getting psychological support to get rid of ailments (Tarafdar, 2010, 2017). In his theory on disease etiology, George Foster (1974) distinguishes between naturalistic and personalistic etiologies. As opposed to naturalistic systems that largely employ self-diagnosis, personalistic systems typically require curers with supernatural or magical skills, as the primary concern of the patient and his family is not to identify the immediate cause of illness, but instead to find out who is responsible, and why?

Limbus of Latpanchar represent numerous religious factions with few families adhering to traditional animistic beliefs while a growing number participating in religious groups such as Satya Sai Samiti, Manav Dharma and few being embraced to Christianity. The varied groups possess belief in Saato Haranu and its associated rituals. The area does not have a *Phedangma* (Traditional male Limbu shaman involves in performing house and health related rituals except rituals involving violent deaths) so Limbu shaman is called from the village of *Tham* located a few kilometers away. During exigency people sometimes resort to services of a local Buddhist medium or *Khandro* (female Buddhist Medium) specializing in solving cases related to spirit attacks. The 31 year old spinster gifted with the ability to see and handling the evil spirits does not have any human teacher. She was taught through dreams and premonitions provided by her spiritual guide. She states:

> 'Dhyan ma basda sabai kura dekhna thalinxa. Kampa chutindaena tara Guru le sabai kura dekhaidinuhunxa'.
>
> [As I meditate everything starts getting envisioned. I do not undergo any involuntary body movements but visions are shown through my tutelary deity/ Guru].

She does not perform any blood sacrifice but offers divinations along with amulets for protection. People from all walks of life visit her and is sought both by the Mangars and Limbus.

At one instance she performed the ritual of soul retrieval for 28 year old Revati Limbu who experienced anger, sleeplessness; loss of appetite accompanied by loss of interest in general activities. An offering of milk and fruits was made to the medium after which divinations were made by her student. The student 27 year old Nilima Limbu had been apprenticing for a year and was given responsibility of divining. She underwent a séance and when her tutelary deity seated upon her she started shaking violently making hand gestures in the form of *Mudras* (Sacred hand gesture expressing inner wisdom Blau and Blau, 2003). She spoke in Tibetan language and later in Nepali.

As she spoke, she stated that the client was facing soul loss and infertility. The reason was due to black magic performed by a sorcerer who had placed a white scarf wrapping a malevolent object angering the household deities resulting in household dispute and soul loss. Infertility had occurred through passing of the client over a cross-road where food offerings were made to *Moch* (spirit of dead child). *Saruwa moch* (spirit of dead child capable of transferring through touch) had entered her body and was causing miscarriages. Later, the client was offered more divinations by the *Khandro* herself who sprayed water from the ritualistic holy water holder or bum offering the client to drink thrice. Amulet was provided to the satisfied client who made offerings as per her wish.

Ram Bahadur Thapa a 63 year old Mangar Jhankri residing in the village of Naspatigaon, Sittong has been a *Jhankri* ever since his days as a young boy of ten. He was chosen as the lineage shaman through the spirit of his ancestors who had expressed the prediction during the ceremonial ritual of *chinta* (household ritual of divination and removal of ailments). He had attained the position after the death of his grandfather who had also been a shaman. He had to undergo through ailments, involuntary body movements and misfortunes before finding a teacher. He states:

> 'Kul le chaneko vanera matrai hudena. Guru khojnu parxa. Ramro Guru payena vaney bato lagnu saro parxa. Koi bela ta pagla natra pagli pani hunu sakxa.'
>
> [Being chosen by the ancestors is not enough. The right Guru has to be searched. If a proper Guru is not found then it would be difficult to find the right path. Sometimes it may even lead to madness among both males and females.]

He works as a part-time shaman for the village with most of his time occupied as a small-scale farmer. He performs household rituals, forest rituals and healing rituals for the villagers. He states that Saato Harauanu is mostly prevalent among children. 11 year old Umang Thapa the only son of Sobha Thapa a 52 year old widow residing in the village was mostly susceptible to *Saato Janu* as he had the presence of *Halka Chaya* (weak shadow soul). When he was just eight months old he fell off the house window. He survived but faces problems due to the head injury caused at a young age. Sobha often had to keep a close eye over him as he easily got frightened which lead to him suffering from *Saato Haraunu*.

Umang mostly played alone but one day being excited by the new toy that Sobha bought he played near the edge of the household late in the evening and laughed along. She was scared that he might face problems later in the night and chided him to keep calm. As was expected, Umang did not accept food and started having rising temperature followed by shivers. She took him and went to Ram Bahadur Thapa or *Jhankri Maila* as he is popularly known. He checked the eyes and pulse of the child and stated:

> 'Saato harako cha naniko. Kati palta samjhaunu timro nani ko halka chaya cha.? Saanjh ma khelnu na dinu.'
>
> [Soul loss of the child has occurred. How many times do I have to tell you that your child has weak shadow soul? Do not allow him to play at dusk].

Maila took the child and applied *Kalo tika* (black powder mark) on the forehead from coals of the *Chula* (hearth). He brought a glass of water and using mantras sprayed water seven times on face and body of the child. Sudden jerking of the child during the ritual entailed return of his soul.

I (the first author) belong to Mongar and inhabit in Kurseong town experienced the same phenomenon when as a child I mostly felt sick and sought services of the Limbu shaman known as *Aitu Bajey* working as a staff of the printing press section of Railway department. I was a frail child visiting the shaman and doctor most days of the week. As soon as I felt ill, my grandparents called upon *Aitu Bajey* who mostly asked for a glass of water, some turmeric and few rice grains. Blowing incantations on them through light touch of *Titey Pati* (*Artemesia vulgaris*) and asked me to drink it. By the time we visited the family doctor I would feel better. I always had a weak shadow soul or *Halka Chaya* with susceptibility to soul loss or *Saato Haraunu*. Belonging to a family of shamans chosen through means of ancestors traditionally at least one shaman must be present in our clan. The last shaman in the family was my great-grandfather who ran-off from his ancestral home in Marma tea garden.

Decisions of the spirit to either stay in the *kul* (lineage) as *pitri* (ancestral deity) or

incarnate as animal, bird, flower or reincarnate as human being was taken into account. Food items, beverages and clothing liked by the deceased whilst alive are provided as offerings in front of the altar during *Saato Chutauney* performed for cutting-off ties with the deceased. It ensured that the spirit venture on its soul journey without interfering in the lives of living family members and relatives. The angry *Pitri* (ancestral deity) speaking through the *Jhankri* divined that after the death of a young boy and deaths of several middle-aged men a female of the lineage would either be a *Mata* (medium) or *Jhankrini* (shaman).

The *Jhankri* offered descriptions of the future shaman stating a female had been chosen. If she did not acknowledge the healing tradition herself then the lineage would suffer greatly. It could even cause her early death by means of accident. After serious forethought, an unmarried aunt with long hair was selected by the elders. She did not match all the criteria mentioned but the elders thought that performing rituals for her could prevent the prophecy. I (first author) and two relatives were cut-off from the list as we did not possess long hair at the time of the prophecy. Although the exact person did not undergo the ceremony yet it was a sense of relief to have conducted few precautionary means to avoid the prediction.

After the engagement of a relative, my paternal aunt and her husband went to visit a shaman. Taking a fistful of rice for divinations, I went along with them for knowing the cause of disruptions in my life. The shaman did not wear any special garment or ornament and seemed ordinary. He asked me to keep rice grains on both hands and directly look in his eyes. People stared at me as I sat inside the circle of a huge *Rudraksha Mala* (necklace comprising of the 108 dried seeds of *Rudraksha Elaeocarpus ganitrus* tree considered to be the tears of Lord Shiva, the supreme destructive deity of Hindu pantheon). He cut a lemon into two halves by the knife followed by application of vermillion over the cut pieces symbolic of blood sacrifice to the invoked deity. Sacrifice through lemon, fruit and even egg was made but blood sacrifice of animals was strictly prohibited and completely against his ethics.

The last ritual was *Jhaar Phook* (ritualistic removal of evil entities by reciting and blowing spells) by means of camphor burnt over betel nut leaves. He used 7 betel nut leaves and swayed them over my body while simultaneously uttering *mantras*. The entire phenomenon sent shivers through the body similar to sensations produced while scattering grains in different body parts. The shaman asked me to recall events which had taken after I first took the fistful of rice in my hands. As I was unable to remember, my aunt stated that I cried screaming with rage as I had been possessed unknowingly experiencing soul loss for three years through *Ankhi Dahi* (jealous evil eye) of a *Bokshi* (witch).

The shaman had interrogated the *Bokshi* (witch) asking her to reveal her identity. He had made me catch the burning *Taba Diyo* (copper oil-wick lamp) making the *Bokshi* (witch) promise that she would not bother me. However, the *Bokshi* (witch) remained adamant and continued screaming through my body. The shaman warned that if she did not agree then he would send magical arrows known as Ban upon her. At his repeated threatening, she bowed her head in front of him. The promise was made and later I came back to my senses.

Despite undergoing the healing ritual, visions kept recurring and felt it best to discuss the entire issue with the shaman. I described everything and did not have to state many other details as he could tell everything by just reading my face. He stated, I was destined to be a medium and if it was possible then he could be my teacher. Unlike other shamans he did not make any student and I would be his first student after his 52 years of experience. He wanted to teach his son who refused and if I learnt it then he wanted to transmit his knowledge to ensure his *mantras* lived after his death. He suggested it was best that I did not waste my abilities but nurture them through acceptance and practice.

People from all communities, socio-economic and linguistic groups came for seeking his services. Whenever the need arose, people irrespective of differences believed in the traditional healing practices and resorted to it either as a primary, secondary and even tertiary form of treatment. Most fascinating of all was seeing people suffering from severe body aches, some even arriving in stretchers return home walking unaided. The hospital authorities were also familiar with his healing practices and permitted patients to visit the temple whenever permission was sought for the same.

A month passed by and I was told it was the right time for initiation. The ritual was not elaborate and occurred during the phase of full moon. Offering known as *Pong* consisting of milk, alcohol, *Khada* (traditional silk scarf) sweets, fruits, flowers and cash made accordingly. He stated that a blood relationship was formed between us and I would be his daughter. Period of pollution had to be observed by both if a person dies. He was teaching me all the procedures for performing varied rituals and further teaching would also be provided by means of helping spirits through dreams and visions.

A recently retired railway employee my *Guru*, 63 year old man, never demands any specific form of cash and kind for his services. Initiated at the age of seven and performing healing ceremonies since the age of eleven years he has remained dedicated to the practice for the past 52 years. He had been naturally selected through the past lineage of shamanic ancestors. The art of shamanism was learnt through a master shaman while the knowledge of ethno-medicine and *Tantra* had been handed down

through scriptures of his great grandfather.

Analysis: The belief in Shamanism and its associated rituals lies embedded deep in the cultural fabric of most indigenous groups. Although, modern individualistic modes of life have rendered it superstitious by the present generation of skeptics yet its use as primary means of health care remains uncontested. Divination before being admitted to the hospital still remains popular not only in interior regions but also prevails among the formally educated class of the hill communities. Not education rather enculturation and assimilation of culturally approved structures provides the basis of belief in the cultural trait of soul loss which is encompassed within the pattern of shamanism.

The parabolic evolution of shamanism passing through the religious institutions of encoded religious structures originating through animism becomes widely prevalent. What was rather a bygone cultural trait has retained and reinvigorated itself. This is also true in terms of the present ethnic movement of retribalization (McLuhan, 1964) among the Mangars where the phenomenon of animistic shamanic practices are revived and highlighted for emphasizing the demand to be recognised as one of the Scheduled Tribes in the state of West Bengal through consent of the Central Government of India. Presently, the Mangars of West Bengal are recognised as Other Backward Class (B) and have requested to be placed as Scheduled Tribe. Although, most Mangars have been assimilated into the Hindu social structure but presently they are moving towards the phenomenon of tribalization. From 1994, the recommendations of the Mandal Commission were gradually implemented as follows: 2nd June, 1994, recognition as OBC by the Sikkim government of: the Bhujel, Gurung, Limboo, Mangar, Rai, Sunuwar and Tamangs; added to the central list of OBC on 25th May 1995; 6th December, 1999, addition to the central list of OBC of the: Sanyasi and Thami; Jogi added on 4th April 2000;134 2000: addition of the Thami, Yogi and Dewan to the list of OBC by: the Sikkim Government (Gazette No.94 dated 11th April, 2001; Vandenhelsken, 2010)

The Limbus have greatly adhered to ancient animistic practices and preserved their folklore and language. The new generation is slowly drifting away from elaborate blood sacrifice which is evident through shamans refraining use of blood and alcohol. This is a huge change owing to the earlier conspicuous use of blood. Being classified as Scheduled Tribe, the Limbus now focuses primarily on enhancing the development of their community and preserving their culture. Bose (1975) has rightly pointed 'fear of loss of identity in several parts of India leads two- pronged processes: one leads the tribes, willy-nilly into greater participation in technological change, and the other, to a re-establishment of their separate identity in contrast with the rest by a search for

certain distinctive elements in their original culture.'

Although, Limbus have been designated as Scheduled Tribes in the Central List of the Constitution but still they also identify themselves as Gorkhas supporting the cause of Gorkhaland. This also holds true for the Mangars who also support the cause of Gorkhaland and are striving towards achieving the status of Scheduled Tribe. Although, Limbus having achieved the status of Scheduled Tribe still cohere with other hill communities for achieving the common pan-Gorkha identity and a separate Gorkhaland. The Mangars are trying to attain tribal status by reviving their traditional culture for carving a separate identity for the community at the same time supporting the wider cause for a separate Gorkhaland. This is comparable to Subba (2003) where situation like that of the Gorkhaland movement brings numerous historically, culturally, linguistically and religious divergent groups under a common identity called 'Gorkha'.

Like the section of Mangars who accepted the Mangar Development Board (2015) under the Backward Classes Welfare Department, Government of West Bengal a section of the Limbus have also been integrated into the Limbu Development Board (2016) under the Tribal Development Department, Government of West Bengal. The aim of the boards is to look into the micro issues specific to particular community for enhancing their socio-economic development. But despite few housing schemes much has not been able to be achieved. Politics in the eastern Himalaya follows what Chandra (2000) calls the 'ethnic template', the principle guideline used by political parties to identify the population and to structure socio-economic grievances or demands on an ethnic basis. As a consequence, 'ethnic politicking is moving from the margins of the political arena to fight for center-stage'. Chettri 2015 states that 'the increasing importance of ethnicity as a political identity is facilitated by institutional structures and democratic politics that place emphasis on affirmative action, thereby enabling people to be categorised on the basis of their ethnicity'.

Mangars have put forth the request owing to practice of animism, prevalence of unique language, distinctive kinship structures, shamanic practices and wide ethno-medical knowledge, folk culture, distinctive socio-cultural and food practices. Association with the wider Nepali population caused them to syncretise into the Hindu caste order which led to dissolution of their cultural traits. This happened to such a great extent that after a vast stretch of time they had to think of their own ethnic identity. Although, the demand for tribalization seems to have cultural connotations yet it cannot be denied that the masses support it for gaining previlages associated with reservations provided for tribal groups. There is a wide belief among the communities striving for the status of Scheduled Tribe that revival of animistic practices added to the use of

traditional dresses and material culture enhances the tribal identity of the community. This was made most popular during the demand for statehood from time to time.

Conclusion : Unlike previous conceptions held about soul loss, traditional healing and shamanic practices the scenario is changing through universality of health and healing practices ranging among the people of varied professions and educational levels, the significant involvement of first author as a victim of soul loss and being a shaman is evident in this regard and the eventual transformation of her personality has been noticed and conceptualized by the second author. It helped the former to explore the entire phenomena in the sphere of medical anthropology and identity issues. It can also be concluded that soul loss and subsequent shamanic practices remain at the foundational core of both the communities. The practice has gained renewed importance through the present movement of reviving traditions for ensuring unique identity under a single umbrella. It seems to be the communities under the study want to retain and rejuvenate separate identities rooted towards attaining a common identity to achieve a specific goal of statehood.

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Study on Stress among Indian Army People: Evidence from various Literature Studies

Rajwinder Kaur

Abstract : *The study aims to identify various factors responsible for stress among Indian army people and tries to suggest some measures to reduce stress. Reviewed literature highlights the stress causing factors that are conflict in roles, lack of work control, lack of awareness of profession or work, work pressure and job load, different attitude of boss and supervisors, lack of support from colleagues, improper training, ineffective leadership, and lack of role clarity, working conditions, family separation and demographic variables. It is highlighted that stress among army personnel spoils their marital relations, create tensions, and reduce effectiveness of soldiers. It is recommended to implement yoga practices, redressal of grievance mechanisms, psychological counsellors and recreational activities so that stress level can be reduced and manage in a proper manner.*

Keywords : Stress, Factors causing stress, Army Personnel, Indian Army.

Introduction: Stress is the crucial part in today's life and it is one of the important subject for researchers. Stress is a situation of individual where a person confronted with demand, opportunities and resources related to individuals' desire. Due to stress the perceived outcome could be taken in both ways i.e. important and uncertain. Like every coin has two sides; likewise stress has also two contexts i.e. positive context and

negative context. Positive stress is not bad for individual because it is mandatory to take work seriously and fulfil the desires and demands of personal life. When stress is taken in positive context, it relates to an opportunity that offers potential gain.

Particularly, stress is linked with demand and resources. Demands include duty, responsibilities, commitment, pressures and it could be some uncertain situations that an individual faces. Resources are used to settle demands and also lie within the control of an individual. Stress can be experienced at any level whether it is at individual, group, organization or at societal level.

At present Indian army is facing shortage of army personnel in both categories i.e. officers as well as jawans. This shortage leads to increase in work load, stress. As army personnel's are working in field and peace units. They are serving our nation; protecting our national boundaries from all three sides i.e. land (Indian Army), air (Indian Air Force) and water (Indian Navy). It is important to explore various factors which become the cause of stress among Indian Army so as to protect them from all these bad effects.

Review of literature

Definitions of stress: Stress can be defined as "a physical or psychological stimulus that can produce mental tension or psychological reactions that may lead to illness."

According to Richard S Lazarus, Stress happens when an individual thinks that "the demands exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize."

According to Dr. Seyles "stress is non-specific response of body to the situation."

According to Dr. Pestonji of I.I.M. Ahmedabad, there are various categories of stress:

Eustress: Eustress is also known as positive stress because it is not harmful. It is a state of over joy and happiness. It is neither permanent nor long lasting, its being occasional.

Distress: Distress is also known as negative stress. It is completely opposite of eustress. It happens when an individual is sad or angry. Distress is very harmful. It is experienced due to demands of life and effort to cope with them. The consequences of this type of stress results in nervousness, anxiety, loss etc.

Sivasubramanian and Rajandran (2017): The study investigated the impact of family and relatives separation on stress level of people of Indian Air Force those are employed in various upper units of Indian Air Force. Data was gathered in both ways i.e. primary data (direct meetings and telephonic interview using prepared structured questionnaire) and secondary data (research papers, journals, library, newspapers, magazines and various web sites). Data was collected from frontier respondents of

Indian Air Force situated at Nal, Bikaner and Suratgarh in Rajasthan. Sample size for data collection was 80 Indian Air Force soldiers. Tools used for collection and analysis of data were convenient sampling, multiple regression and descriptive statistics. In findings, researchers find out that the significant effect of family distance on stress level of Indian Air Force people. Family separation has direct impact on soldiers like there is stress level on soldiers, in certain situations it spoils marital life, create tensions, reduce effectiveness of soldiers, bad health situations of soldier men and their families.

Sudhakar, Bhaskararao, and Laksmi (2017): The study explored the impact of socio demographical variables on job stress among Indian army soldiers. Data was collected from 417 soldiers through questionnaires. Tools used for analysis of data were T-test and ANOVA. Results indicate that personnel above 40 years of age are experiencing more stress in individual, group and organizational stress as compared to soldiers that are below 40 years of age. In respect of designation, JCO felt that they are working on many jobs and people have feeling that they did not get enough time to spend with family members. Soldiers having below 5 members in their family felt that they are working too hard and are depressed by working environment, they have feeling that they are doing tough job. Researchers also reported that soldiers of south India are experiencing more stress as compared to soldiers of north India.

Gulab & Mehta (2015): The study reviewed stress management in the Indian Air Force. Researchers formulated four objectives i.e. 1. To study the impact of 31st standing committee on stress management in Indian Air Force. 2. To find out which recommendations of the committee are satisfactorily executed in Indian Air Force. 3. To identify the present occupational stress among senior non-commissioned officers (SNCOs) and Airmen in the Indian Air Force. 4. To find out which dimension contributes as a major source to present day occupational stress of SNCOs and Airmen in the Indian Air Force. Data was collected from 60 Airmen and SNCOs. Sample was from field and piece units of the Indian Air Force. Initially random sampling was used for selection of field and piece units, further multistage stratified random sampling was used to select sample size based on their trades and ranks. In findings, to manage stress more thrust was given to yoga, physical exercises, counselling's and recreational activities. In most of the stations/units psychological counsellors were available. Redressal of grievances mechanisms was rare. Main source of stress level was found at lower level due to role overload, resource inadequacy and role erosion. Researcher has recommended using large sample with equal representation from all command for reassurance of outcome.

Sharma (2015): The study aims to find stress related to occupation in the army forces. They aimed to identify various factors causing stress related to occupation in the Indian soldiers. Data was collected from 415 Indian army soldiers through a structured questionnaire. Data was gathered from most sensitive regions of India where a majority of fratricidal and suicidal cases have been identified in past. Researcher have found 9 dimensions of stress related to occupation in the Indian army that are less control at work, conflict of role, improper awareness and knowledge about profession, work load & job load in differential organisational attitudes, lack of support from colleagues, inadequate and improper training, and ineffective leadership. In this study researcher only focused on organisational factors, they have suggested to include other factors as well i.e. personality types & domestic problems. Further research can be conducted to find out the results of stress related to occupation and impact of stressors.

Cheema & Grewal (2013): The study assessed the level of stress among army personnel, to recommend measures to improve the stress coping measures of army personnel and suggested special measures to combat stress in army personnel deploys in insurgent and difficult areas. Researchers have formulated three hypotheses i.e. 1. Army personnel in the insurgent areas are stressed. 2. There is a relation between working condition and stress among individuals. 3. Mediation provides effective solution against stress. Geographical focus for gathering of data was North Eastern states of India. Data was collected from sample of 37 faculty members, 51 soldiers from relatively less insurgent areas and 115 from deep insurgent areas. There blood reports were taken along with medical examination of soldiers. After analysis of data researchers reported that army personnel in insurgent areas are more stressed and there is relationship exist between working conditions and stress. For future study researcher suggested that a study could be conducted to compare quality of work life and remuneration paid to soldiers with civilians. Future study can be conducted to measure stressed condition in piece and field condition of a soldier.

Pawar, et al., (2012): Examined the level of stress in Indian navy individuals and to examine the impact of social support on stress related to occupation. Data was gathered through primary sources from 5077 naval personnel. Data was analysed through non-parametric & chi-square test. In findings, researchers reported that personnel serving afloat were reported highly stressed as compared to those serving ashore, junior sailors were reported highly stressed as compared to officers, stress related to occupation was found to be connected with psychological health, social support was found to be effective in reducing and managing stress related to occupation in senior sailors officers but not applicable in junior sailors.

Sharma, Kaur and Sharma (2011): The study aims to investigate the impact of stress related to occupation and organisational stressor in Indian army. The study reveals the results that in Indian army there is moderate rate of stress. The stressor those have significant impact on individuals are work and job load and indifferent attitude of people in force. The study also concludes that this stress among the army people can be reduced and managed through implmtig proper strategies and procedures for the well being of our brave solders.

K, A. (2011): Examined the relationship of organizational role stress and burnout in military aircrew officers, to identify the predictor of stress on burnout and to conclude the interference of presence of these stressors. Geographical focus of study was Western Air Command of IAF. Data was gathered from 58 military aircrews (26 pilots, 19 navigators). Tools used for the study were organizational role stress scale of Udai Pareek, zero order correlation and stepwise multiple regression. In results, researcher revealed that the more the person experiences inter-role distance, the more he/she will experience emotional exhaustion. Inter-role distance is also predictor of depersonalization. No stress variable is linked with personal accomplishment. Role stressors (personal inadequacy and inter role distance) are accountable to feeling of burnout. Burnout leads to reduced well-being and job-satisfaction. For future study, researchers suggested to take large sample size from all command.

Adhikari (2008): The study explored the impact of meditation or yoga training practices on stress among serving Indian Army individuals. The period of the study taken was 30 days. Data was collected from 60 army individuals ranging from rank of jawan to JCO through questionnaire. Geographical focus for the study was 4th Battalion Rajput Regiment, Saharanpur, UP. In findings researcher reported that physical and mental efficiency has been improved due to pranayamas and asanas. Yoga practices have a positive and effective impact in management and reduction of stress related issues.

Kumar (2011): The study examined the difference in stress level among Indian army officers and jawans and to study the difference in organizational commitment level among officers of Indian army. Researcher proposed two hypotheses i.e. 1. There would be high stress level among jawans as compared to officers of Indian army. 2. Officers are highly committed to organization as compared to jawans of Indian army. Data was collected from sample of 100 jawans and 100 officers. In findings, it was accepted that jawans of Indian army are more stressed as compared to officers. It was predicted that jawans are more committed to organisation as compared to officers.

Objectives : 1. To explore the factors causing stress among army people of the Indian Army.

2. To suggest remedial measures to reduce the level of stress among army people of the Indian Army.

Research Methodology : The current study provides the descriptive review of literature. The study uses various articles, journals and related material of stress among Indian Army people for exploring the various causes of stress. The data collection for the study is done through secondary sources mainly.

Secondary sources include data from various published and reputed journals and magazines. The study also makes use of different databases like Google Scholar, Research Gate, and Shodhganga etc.

Result & Discussion : The literature that has been reviewed states that there are many factors responsible for stress among army people of the Indian army. According to reviewed literature factors responsible for stress are lack of work control, lack of awareness of profession or work, work pressure and job load, different attitude of boss and supervisors, lack of support from colleagues, improper training, ineffective leadership, and lack of role clarity, working conditions, family separation and demographic variables.

On basis of literature, Army personnel in insurgent areas are more stressed as compared to army personnel deployed in relatively less insurgent areas or in peace areas. Level of stress is also impacted by working conditions. There is significant effect of family separation on stress level. It spoils marital relations, create tensions, and reduce effectiveness of soldiers. Demographic variables also impacts stress level of army personnel. Soldiers having below 5 members in their family felt that they are working too hard and are depressed by working environment, they have feeling that they are doing tough job. Main source of stress level was found at lower level due to role overload (Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011), resource inadequacy (Fareed and Naeem, 2019) and role erosion. Jawans of Indian army are more stressed and more committed to organisation as compared to officers.

From the past literature it has been observed that yoga practices, physical exercises, counselling's and recreational activities are helpful to manage the stress level. Yoga practices have a positive impact in reduction and proper management of stress and stress related problems. Physical and mental efficiency has been improved due to pranayamas and asanas.

Main Causes Identified Of Stress Among Indian Army People

From the study of available literature following are the main causes identified among Indian Army people:

S. No.	Factors	Literature Survey
1.	Role Overload	Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011; Sharma, 2015; Arora, 2014; Saravanan and Panchanatham, 2017; Fareed and Naeem, 2019; Velayudhan and Benedict; 2013; Chandel, 2013; Munir, Rahman and Ahsan, 2017; Bokti and Talib; 2009; Brooks, 2017; Adhikari, 2008; Joseph, 2016; Singh and Adhikari, 2016;
2.	Resource Inadequacy	Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011; Sharma, 2015; Fareed and Naeem, 2019; Velayudhan and Benedict; 2013; Cheema and Grewal, 2013; Arora, 2014; Brooks, 2017;
3.	Role Erosion and Inadequate Salary	Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011; Mohan and Arora; 2013; Sharma, 2015; Fareed and Naeem, 2019; Chandel, 2013; Munir, Rahman and Ahsan, 2017; Chhabra and Chhabra, 2009; Bokti and Talib; 2009; Cheema and Grewal, 2013; Brooks, 2017;
4.	Conflict in Roles	Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011; Sharma, 2015; Saravanan and Panchanatham, 2017; Fareed and Naeem, 2019; Velayudhan and Benedict, 2013; Chandel, 2013; Munir, Rahman and Ahsan, 2017; Brooks, 2017; Singh and Adhikari, 2016;
5.	Lack of Work Control	Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011; Sharma, 2015; Velayudhan and Benedict, 2013; Chhabra and Chhabra, 2009; Bokti and Talib; 2009; Cheema and Grewal, 2013
6.	Lack of Awareness of Profession or Work	Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011; Fareed and Naeem, 2019; Chandel, 2013; Munir, Rahman and Ahsan, 2017; Chhabra and Chhabra, 2009;
7.	Work Pressure and Job Load	Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011; Mohan and Arora; 2013; Sharma, 2015; Saravanan and Panchanatham, 2017; Bokti and Talib; 2009; Brooks, 2017;
8.	Different Attitude of Boss and Supervisors	Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011; Sharma, 2015; Velayudhan and Benedict, 2013; Chandel, 2013; Munir, Rahman and Ahsan, 2017; Bokti and Talib; 2009; Cheema and Grewal, 2013
9.	Lack of Support from Colleagues	Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011; Sharma, 2015; Fareed and Naeem, 2019; Chandel, 2013; Chhabra and Chhabra, 2009; Singh and Adhikari, 2016;
10.	Improper Training	Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011; Saravanan and Panchanatham, 2017; Velayudhan and Benedict, 2013; Munir, Rahman and Ahsan, 2017; Arora, 2014; Brooks, 2017;
11.	Ineffective Leadership	Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011; Sharma, 2015; Munir, Rahman and Ahsan, 2017; Chhabra and Chhabra, 2009; Joseph, 2016;

S. No.	Factors	Literature Survey
12.	Lack of Role Clarity	Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011; Velayudhan and Benedict; 2013; Bokti and Talib; 2009; Cheema and Grewal, 2013
13.	Working Conditions	Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011; Sharma, 2015; Fareed and Naeem, 2019; Velayudhan and Benedict, 2013;
14.	Family Separation	Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011; Saravanan and Panchanatham, 2017; Chandel, 2013; Chhabra and Chhabra, 2009; Bokti and Talib; 2009; Arora, 2014; Brooks, 2017;
15.	Demographic Variables	Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011; Sharma, 2015; Fareed and Naeem, 2019; Velayudhan and Benedict, 2013; Munir, Rahman and Ahsan, 2017; Chhabra and Chhabra, 2009; Adhikari, 2008; Joseph, 2016;

Remedial Measures To Reduce Stress Among Indian Army People

- Liberal Policies of Indian Army: Liberal Policies of Indian Army can help army people to reduce stress up to some extent. Although discipline is very much essential in army but by considering the mental health of soldiers so win-win situation must be created.
- Daily Yoga Practices: Yoga practices are very much helpful in reducing any type of stress. It is considered as one of the stressor to make a human body calm and active (Singh and Adhikari, 2016). Daily yoga practices are necessary for army people where they have to follow strict duty (Adhikari, 2008).
- Daily Physical Exercises: Physical exercise is very good for every human body especially for people who are doing duty in Indian army. Daily physically exercise helps in maintaining proper body and keeps a person active for work. It reduces fat from human body and burn extra celeries. For soldiers it is must to make body fit to fight with enemies.
- Regular Counselling's and Recreational Activities: One of the another important measure of reduce stress in Indian army people is regular counselling and activities which makes them fresh like music, fun days and off from duty etc. Regular counselling makes their mind in a way that they are ready for any type of situation.
- Possible improved Working Conditions: Improves working conditions helps a lot to person to work freely and without any hurdles. But for army people because of their duty they have to stay in worst conditions. So by taking some protective measures by government working conditions of Indian army can be improved to some extent.
- Implementation of proper Grievances Redressal Systems: Sometimes due to misunderstanding and other causes grievances may arise between army men. By

implementing some proper grievances redressal systems and proper policies this can be reduced. Many of the times people take stress because of misunderstanding between people.

- Focus on Physical Fitness: Physical fitness is extremely important for army people because of the type of duty they are doing. Stress can also be reduced when a person is fit from physical and mental side both. For physical fitness yoga and meditation are important (Cheema and Grewal, 2013).
- Immediate care and support to Family in case of Emergency: As army people perform their duty without the immediate care of family. Their families are far from their place and they are not allowed to take leave frequently. When there is something important on duty then their leaves sometimes get cancelled. Due to this they have tension for their family and their care (Mohan and Arora; 2013). So when their families have support by government in case of emergency then the stress level of army people can be reduced to some extent.
- Improved Health Care Practices: In Indian army there is need to provide best health care services so that army people can have relief from the medical expenses burden. In army due to the duty of army people in remote areas they are not able to get proper treatment for the health. But improved and better health care practices can work to reduce stress up to some extent. On the other hand when an army person feels stress they must be given with proper counselling and mental treatment.
- Proper leadership Roles: Inadequate and improper leadership role creates stress among army people. So this is essential to have proper leadership roles in Indian army so that one person is directly for one work only.

Conclusion : The study concludes that no doubt in Indian Army the level of stress is high at different levels. Many suicide cases were reported in Indian Army due to the cause of stress among Indian army people. The cause of stress includes the tuff job situations of Indian army. As army job is not easy to do and people in Indian army have to stay separate from their families for the long time. Sometimes they do not get enough time for their own maintenance. Lack of job control and less support from other army people makes a person alone and become a patient of stress. The stress can only be controlled by positive and healthy mind set. So it is mandatory to adopt some preventive measures to control stress.

Limitations of Study : The present study is not free from limitations because study can be conducted at large levels with taking primary data into consideration. Interview method of data collection can be used to get more clarity about the level and type of

stress among Indian army people. Moreover study can be conducted by taking female respondents as sample. As problems of female army is different from male army.

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What does Belt and Road initiative connote for Bangladesh : A window of opportunities or potential challenges?

Shah Md Azimul Ehsan

Abstract : *Much speculation has been spurred among scholars and policy-makers around the world regarding Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), previously known as One Belt One Road (OBOR). There is no denying the fact that it is the biggest initiative of its kind under the leadership of a single nation, China, recorded in human history, and if implemented properly, could prove a game changing grand initiative, which would change the geo-political landscape of Eurasia to China's favor. Nevertheless, many critics have dubbed it as China's own "Marshall Plan" for spreading its hegemony. Bangladesh officially became a part of this herculean project in 2016 with high hopes and believes that it would open up window of opportunities. Being one of the signatories of sustainable development goals (SDGs), Bangladesh is committed to achieve sustainable development and integrate those global goals in its national plans and policies. As the country will soon graduate from least developed country (LDC), funding from western allies will dry up in the near future. And so materializing those goals and continuing its robust economic growth and pace of socio-economic development might get halted if the necessary financial backing is not ensured. It is expected that supplementary source of financing will come from various projects related to BRI which would further led to infrastructural development both at land and sea routes in Bangladesh. The positive externality and trickle-down effect of those efforts would mean more employment generation, sustained economic growth, bridging the trade deficit with China along with other socio-economic benefits. This qualitative study drawing information from secondary sources argues that albeit BRI can turn out to be a*

blessing for Bangladesh; however, it will have to negotiate multiple challenges which include- high rate of interest while borrowing leading to debt-trap; non-involvement of other Asian giant, India in BRI; environmental degradation; not well developed financial system and weak governance system leading to grand corruptions; threat for sovereignty etc. Hence, the study makes a modest suggestion that the Bangladeshi policy makers need to be extra cautious and strategic before making any deals related to BRI projects considering the sensitivity of the issue.

Keywords: Belt and Road Initiative, Bangladesh-China relations, opportunities, infrastructural development, regional integration, challenges, Sino-India rivalry, debt-trap.

Introduction: Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)) of China is one of the biggest initiative taken by a single country ever in the planet (Haque 2018:754). Hailed as 'Project of the century' by the Chinese government, BRI is basically a part of their foreign policy program. It is a web of infrastructure development plans that has been so designed to facilitate Eurasian Economic integration. Since its inception, Chinese official have invited all the countries to board on this "express train" to wealth and prosperity by highlighting the economic promise and progress that BRI focuses on (Wuthnow 2017: 03). The current BRI project was born out of a pair of grand development strategy speeches by the Chinese president Xi Jinping delivered in Kazakhstan and Indonesia in 2013 (Pantucci 2019: 210). Although initially it was named was "One Belt, One Road," due to the misinterpretation of the term "One", it was changed to "Belt Road Initiative" in the middle of 2016 (Khan 2020: 01). What is really amazing about this grand ambitious project is that it will connect 78 countries of the world lying within the 3 continents –Asia, Europe/Africa, 60% total population of the world and 40 percent of global GDP. BRI aims to strengthen connectivity and foster cooperation within this region (Ahmad 2020; Haque 2018:754).

Since the inauguration, this project has successfully grabbed the attention of policy makers, academicians and researchers, political leaders and various other stakeholders from all around the world. (Sarker *et al.* 2018: 623). Nonetheless, globally; the initiative has been seen from two different perspectives. One group of scholar and observer term the initiative as a 'Functionalist connectivity project'. They opine that this project seeks to promote economic integration among the Eurasian countries. Alternatively, the other group of thinkers have perceived it as a geo-strategic element within China's grand strategic vision in Eurasia (Saimun 2020: 02). A number of studies have been conducted on the geopolitical, economic, and institutional implications of the BRI

where it has been termed as a 'Geo-Functional-institutionalist' initiative seeking to create new and parallel institutions (Kaplan 2017: 10). Some skeptical scholars have argued that the initiative is a contemporary expression of 'New regionalism' and 'multipolar world order' (Callens and Cherfi 2015: 498). While other studies associate the approach with China's 'Grand design' to re-emerge as the world's primary great power (Fallon 2015: 141; Saimun 2020: 02).

Officially, Bangladesh became a part of this grand initiative in 2016 after a visit by Chinese President Xi Jinping when China pledged to invest in the critical sectors of Bangladesh's economy (Saimum 2017; Rahman 2019). Bangladesh government did not give a second thought to the Chinese proposals considering the country's aim of joining the bloc of developing countries by 2021 and being a developed nation by 2041. Again, being a signatory of Sustainable development goals (SDGs), Bangladesh would require chunk of sustainable funding to materialize those global goals because as it graduates from LDC and enter the group of developing countries, the traditional sources of funding will eventually dry up. Thus, the proposal from China came out as a window of opportunity. Under BRI, for different infrastructure related projects, Bangladesh will receive a total sum of $40 (HSBC 2017). Bangladesh is also part of the proposed Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar corridor (BCIM), one of the six corridors of BRI (Saimum 2017; Rahman 2019). However, the initiative has generated a wide range of debates among the experts in Bangladesh. In general, the government and experts regard the initiative as a huge blessing for attracting investments to develop Bangladesh's poor infrastructures. On the contrary, some think-tanks have cautioned against China's alleged 'Debt trap diplomacy' by drawing the example of the Chinese takeover of Sri Lanka's Hambantota port (Rafee 2019; Saimum 2020:02).

On this backdrop, this paper is an attempt to examine the prospect and the potential challenges of the BRI from the perspective of Bangladesh. The paper investigates the rationale and motivation behind Chinese involvement in Bangladesh's economy for understanding the geo-economic basis of the BRI. The paper will also shed light upon the politico-economic challenges and few other likely consequences which Bangladesh might eventually would have to deal with for being one of the signatories of BRI. Methodologically, the paper has adopted a qualitative approach and relied on secondary sources for collecting data. Following content analysis method, a set of previous studies on the relevant subject matter has been reviewed for formulating the basic arguments of the paper. In order to supplement the discussion, other sources, such as newspaper articles, op-eds, and reports, were also examined.

Synopsis of Belt and Road Initiative: China's BRI is an alternative approach to

hitherto dominant form of global market order created by the so-called Washington Consensus[i]— which is popularly known as neoliberalism that instrumentally involves liberalization, deregulation and privatization (Titumir and Raihan 2020:03). A critique of globalization, Joseph Stiglitz (2002) noted that the liberalization-based globalization has delivered restricted benefits to most of the developing countries and created widespread disquiet. In this context, China has devised this new initiative to strengthen its close relations with neighboring countries with an enhanced focus on connectivity, trade and economic integration for Eurasian development (Clarke 2017:74; Nicolas 2015). Through BRI, Beijing also aims to revive the ancient Silk Road (Habova 2015: 64). The historic trade route dates back to the 2nd century BC until the 14th century AD that stretched from Asia to the Mediterranean Belt; traversing China, India, Persia, Arabia, Greece, Italy. It was renowned as silk route because, the route was mainly used for silk trading and China monopolized the production and export of silk fabrics during the period (Ahmad 2020). Although the silk route was primarily land based, the 21st century silk route that China is envisioning has two components- first, the Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB) second, the 21st century Maritime Silk Road (MSR). On one hand, the SREB focuses on bringing together China, Central Asia, Russia and Europe (the Baltic); linking China with the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean Sea through Central Asia and West Asia; and connecting China with Southeast Asia, South Asia and the Indian Ocean. On the other hand, the 21st-Century MSR, is designed to go from China's coast to Europe through the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean in one route, and from China's coast through the South China Sea to the South Pacific in the other (Fuad 2017).

Nevertheless, China was not alone in its focus on Eurasian development. Since 1992, the European Union had launched several projects under its Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia initiative (Federinko 2013: 17). In 2011, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton announced the New Silk Road Initiative to better integrate Afghanistan into the Central and South Asian economies through energy and transportation development (US department of State 2011). In 2013, Japan's Shinzo Abe initiated a "revitalization strategy" involving $110 billion in infrastructure investment over 5 years, while in the same year South Korea's Park Geun-hye announced a Eurasia Initiative focused on regional economic connectivity (Rolland 2018:17). All of these programs took place in the context of Eurasia's growing need for infrastructure spending to support development, which the Asian Development Bank assessed would require $1.7 trillion per year between 2016 and 2030 (ADB 2017: 09).However, what is unique about BRI is its expansive scope and scale. The centerpiece is a web of six economic corridors linking China with each of its neighboring sub regions, identified in the table 01 (Rolland, 2018). Financing would be allocated by new multilateral institutions such

as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), with an initial capitalization of $100 billion, and the $40 billion Silk Road Fund, in addition to national banks such as China's Export-Import Bank. In total, Chinese government spending on the BRI is expected to reach $1 trillion (The Economist 2015).

Interestingly though, many experts have compared the BRI to the American Marshall plan and criticized it as nothing but a Chinese strategy of using its economic strength to secure foreign policy goals and eventually emerge as a rising sun in the global power order (Tiezzi 2014). It is true that China have their own motives and rationales in launching the mega project, but still there are differences between the two programs. Firstly, the context of both the programs is completely different. While the Marshall Plan was launched with strong ideological nature for containing communism in Eastern European countries, the BRI lacks such philosophical background; being only the consequence of China's all-around opening up. Secondly, the New Silk Road initiatives are meant to be based on collaboration and common investment projects. On the contrary, the Marshall Plan was a one-way flow of goods and capitals from the United States to Europe. So the BRI will be much more comprehensive and complex than the American post-war recovery plan (Clemenete n.d).

Table 1: Synopsis of BRI Economic Corridors (Adopted from Wuthnow 2012: 07)

Corridor	Partner	Example Projects
Bangladesh-China India-Myanmar Economic Corridor	Bangladesh, India, Myanmar	• China-Myanmar crude oil and liquified natural gas (LNG) pipeline • Padma Bridge (Bangladesh) • Tunnel construction under Karnaphuli River (Bangladesh)
China-Pakistan Economic Corridor	Pakistan	• Gwadar free zone development • Karakoram Highway, Phase II (Thakot-Havelian) • Peshawar-Karachi Motorway
China-Central Asia-West Africa Economic Corridor	Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Uzbekistan	• China-Kazakhstan passenger train • Manas airport modernization (Kyrgyzstan) • Turkey east-west high-speed Rail
China-Indochina Peninsula Economic Corridor	Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam	• China-Laos Railway • Upgrade of Lancang-Mekong ship route

Corridor	Partner	Example Projects
New Eurasian Land Bridge Economic Corridor	Belarus, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Poland, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia	• China-Europe freight trains (39 routes linking China with 9 European countries) • Hungary-Serbia railway • China-Belarus Industrial Park • China-Kazakhstan Khorgos International Border Cooperation Center • Port of Pireaus (Greece)
China-Mongolia Russia Economic Corridor	Mongolia, Russia	• Altai LNG pipeline (linking Xinjiang and Siberia) • Altanbulag-Ulaanbaatar • Zamiin-Uud highway

Although the main beneficiary of this effort will be China, the BRI will also act as a "key growth engine" for the global economy and also offer direct and indirect benefits to a range of actors from developing and developed countries (Leong 2017). An analysis of economic simulation suggests that BRI economic corridors will generate sizeable gains across participating countries with a combined welfare gain well exceeding one trillion US dollar and particularly. Due to participation in BRI projects, countries like Vietnam and Bangladesh could experience 7% to 17% increase in their output levels over next few years (Hahm and Raihan, 2018: 140).

China's rationale and motivation behind launching BRI: There is no denying the fact that China has taken the grand project of BRI focusing on Afro-Eurasian development in order to achieve five intended goals- policy coordination, unimpeded trade, facilities connectivity, financial integration, and people-to-people contact; but there is another side of the coin as well. Beijing has strong economic and geopolitical rationales as well which it aims to achieve through this initiative (Winter 2016).

Firstly, the slowing down of China's economic growth from its three-decade-long 10% to (6-7)% is driving Chinese leaders to pursue policies appropriate for a third wave of industrialization (Wen 2015; Zou 2013:80). Such decline in GDP growth has resulted owing to China's suffering from overcapacity in heavy industries which include steel, cement, and aluminum. The situation became even worse when demand from the West declined significantly in the recent years. (Kon et al. 2016: 40). Hence, China is desperately looking for new export destinations both for reducing its economic dependence on the United States and simultaneously, rolling the wheel of its export earnings. They are ensuring it quite strategically by channeling its substantial foreign

exchange reserves to fund infrastructure development in Asian states (Habova 2015:67). Under BRI, China will build roads, airports, and sea-ports to integrate the developing and under-developed countries closely with the Chinese economy to fulfill this objective (Saimum 2017). Thus, the infrastructural development projects across the several developing countries in Asia like Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka then become the perfect source for utilizing China's excess supply of industrial goods. Again, a few of those construction projects taken under BRI is funded by China itself. After the accomplishment of these infrastructure development projects, China's export volume will continue to increase well via establishing new trade relationship with the newly linked BRI countries (Fuad 2017).

Secondly, in accordance with exports, China will also become economically benefited from their imports. Currently, China's huge demand of raw materials and energy sector such as oil, gas and minerals are fulfilled by importing them mostly through the Strait of Malacca from the Persian Gulf states (Kon et al 2016: 41). However, this scenario will drastically change as China has recently established a 1,100-mile oil and natural gas pipeline from Myanmar's Arakan coast in the Bay of Bengal all the way to Kunming, a major city in China's southwest Yunnan province. This will not only reduce China's dependence on Malacca straits (through which about one-fourth of the world's trade goods pass) and but also make China's future secure in terms of energy in the foreseeable future (Ahmad 2020). The new BRI routes will allow China to secure their energy imports from nearer locations, within shorter time and cheaper rates (Kon et al. 2016: 41). Moreover, it will also help China to leverage its financial footing to assert geopolitical influence from East Asia to Africa. It is ultimately a soft power move by China which will remake the world order (Ahmad 2020).

Lastly, one of the key underlying aims of the BRI is to introduce Renminbi as a currency of international transactions (Saimum 2017). In order to materialize that, China has already signed thousands of MOU's with neighboring BRI partners on diversified issues such as infrastructure development, educational exchange and cultural interaction. For example, in Bangladesh, Chinese experts are working as leaders for multibillion dollar construction projects i.e Karnaphuli tunnel construction project in Chattogram, Padma Bridge construction project in Mawa. In Turkmenistan, China has established Confucius Institute and provided Hanban teachers to language universities. Besides, Chinese Ambassadors are found to be regularly present in local press and local discourse of different countries (Pantucci 2019: 210). All these collaborations and activities are focused on bringing acceptance of the Chinese people among the BRI nations. Scholars and observers also speculate that the omni-presence of China all around the Asian region might also bring international recognition to

its currency Renminbi (RMB) and take them to the position of the next global leader (Fuad 2017)

Why Bangladesh is an important partner for China in BRI?: BRI could be considered the panacea for China that will ensure it's both economic and geo-political supremacy around Asia and beyond, making the country not only as the Pan-Asian leader but also as a hegemon in world politics. However, China needs strong support from the BRI nations in order to secure its position. Bangladesh, a comparatively small country, is extremely vital for China's cause and has predominantly become its center of attraction because of its geographical location and the demographic structure (Khan 2020:03). Beijing, in particular has two geo-economic motives to include Bangladesh in the BRI fold.

First, Bangladesh's strategic position between South Asia and South East Asia could give China access to large South Asian markets as well as to the Bay of Bengal (Kabir and Ahmad 2015: 202). China's immediate challenge of operating in the Bay of Bengal region comes from India, another emerging hegemon of this region, because New Delhi perceives the Indian Ocean region (IOR) as its own 'sphere of interest' (Mohan 2006:22). The main water way trade route for China is the Strait of Malacca accessed through the Indian Ocean. Therefore, there is a persistent threat for China of losing connectivity to this water way if India decides to block this route during a potential war situation (Faruque 2018: 05). In such a competitive security setting, due to Bangladesh's critical access position of the Bay of Bengal and Indian Ocean, China has sought to build strong partnerships with Bangladesh (Saimum 2020:07). Also, land-based connectivity with Bangladesh is a must for China because Bay of Bengal could be the closest sea access point for the landlocked Southern Provinces of China, Bhutan, Nepal and seven north eastern states of India. China is planning to develop oil and gas pipelines starting from Chattogram port to Kunming via Myanmar's territory. This will allow the landlocked provinces of southern-western China to fulfill their demand of energy resources through easier and cheaper way of transportation. This land-based new trade route will also assist China to reduce its high dependency on the Straits of Malacca and eradicate the tension of getting dominated by India (Faruque 2018:06; Khan, 2020:03).

Second, Bangladesh's growing economy could offer China an opportunity to export its industrial overcapacity as China's future economic success requires continuous access to markets and resources overseas. Albeit the world economy is suffering from pandemic, both IMF and ADB has made projections that Bangladesh's GDP will expand at 9.5% and 8% respectively in FY 2021 (Financial Express 2020).According

to Goldman-Sachs, the country among the next 11 countries having the potential of becoming the largest economies of this century. However, Bangladesh needs critical infrastructures to sustain economic growth. According to the World Bank, the country requires a US$ 320 billion investment in support to maintain 6–8 per cent annual growth (Islam 2018). The demand for infrastructures in developing economies like Bangladesh is a significant opportunity for Chinese state-owned and private companies to expand into foreign markets (Ferdinand 2016: 943).

Besides, Bangladesh has a comparative advantage of surplus labor force with relatively lower cost over its developing counterparts (Hussain 2013). A totally different scenario prevails in China with 'labor cost' rocketing day by day. This has happened because Chinese economy is shifting towards a developed one. Hence, they are downsizing the low-tech industries and expanding their high margin, high tech industries like artificial intelligence, aerospace and IT. Thus Chinese manufacturing industries are planning to relocate their surplus industrial capacities to countries like Bangladesh who have suitable workforce and wage rate for it (Faruque 2018:07).

Prospects for Bangladesh through BRI: The BRI comes as a big blessing, with window of opportunities for a country like Bangladesh, especially when many speculations were being made by the scholars and policy makers regarding the upcoming financial challenges that the country is very much likely to face with its graduation from LDC. China plans to invest up to $4tn in BRI-related projects in the next couple of decades. Through proper policy co-ordination, Bangladesh can attract a large chunk of that investment (Saimum 2017). Moreover, Beijing also assured Dhaka that it would better align its projects under the BRI with Bangladesh's development priorities, a key issue of concern for the people of Bangladesh during a recent visit of Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to China (Rahman 2019). Furthermore, it is also offering an opportunity for Bangladesh to integrate with the international market being a part of the proposed Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar corridor (BCIM) (Khatun 2019:16). This section here will highlight most of the opportunities, if not all, on which Bangladesh can cash in through BRI.

(i) Infrastructural Development

According to one of the recent studies conducted by CPD (Centre for Policy Dialogue), the infrastructure investment needs as a percentage of GDP is expected to fall in the coming years, due to the rapid pace of growth of the Bangladesh economy. The study also revealed that the greatest need for investment in Bangladesh is in the energy and transport sectors. (Khatun 2019:25). Thus, like other emerging economies, Bangladesh

has been desperately looking for investor for its infrastructural development but traditional sources of funding have been proved inadequate, driving Dhaka to look to China to meet this need (Rahman 2019). Under BRI, China has promised to conduct an investment of around USD 40 billion in Bangladesh. Table 2 shows that 8 out of 27 projects expected to be financed by China are focused on enhancing road and rail connectivity across the country. Apart from infrastructural development, that these initiatives would also create new market and employment opportunities in the developing economy of Bangladesh (Titumir and Rahman 2020:22).

Table 2: List of Proposed China finance proposed projects in Bangladesh

Name of the sector	Name of the project	Foreign Assistance (Million USD)
Road and Rail Connectivity	Padma Bridge Rail Link Project	2667.93
	Dhaka–Sylhet four-lane highway project	2110.00
	Construction of tunnel under Karnaphuli River	705.80
	Construction of Dhaka–Ashulia elevated expressway	1393.98
	Construction of a dual-gauge track parallel to the existing Joydebpur–Mymensingh–Jamalpur section	581.26
	Construction of double line between Joydebpur and Ishurdi Sections	752.79
	Marine Drive Expressway and coastal protection works from Sitakunda–Chittagong–Cox's Bazar	2856.56
	Conversion of MG railway track to DG railway track in the Akhaura–Sylhet section	1756.05
Energy Sector	Expansion and strengthening of the Power System Network under DPDC area	1650.51
	Power Grid Network Strengthening Project under PGCB	1321.83
	Extension of underground mining operations of Barapukuria Coal Mine	256.41
	Gazaria 350 MW coal-fired power plant	433.00
	Prepayment metering project for Bangladesh Power Development Board's (BPDP) distribution zone	521.56
	Replacement of overloaded distribution transformer to provide reliable electricity to the RE region	230.59
	System loss reduction by replacing 5 million electromechanical energy metres with electronic energy metres	165.98

Name of the sector	Name of the project	Foreign Assistance (Million USD)
Port Development	Expansion and modernization of Mongla port facilities	249.17
	New inland container port near Dhirasram railway station	200.00
	Installation of Single Point Mooring (SPM) with double Pipeline	500.466
Developing Digital Connectivity	Development of the national ICT infra-network project for the Bangladesh Government	156.56
	Modernization of telecommunication network for digital Connectivity	231.00
	Establishing digital connectivity	1000.00
	Modernization of rural and urban lives through ICT	500.00
Miscellaneous	Rajshahi WASA Surface Water Treatment Plant	350.00
	Establishing six full-fledged TV stations of Bangladesh Television	127.88
	Water supply, sanitation, drainage, and solid waste management for small municipalities	150.00
	Modernization and expansion of public sector jute mills of Bangladesh	280.00
	Chinese economic and industrial zone in Chittagong	280.00

Source: Developed by author adopted from (Saimum 2020:10)

(ii) Unconstrained Trade

Bangladesh's association with the proposed BCIM-EC through BRI will facilitate unconstrained trade and diversification of export basket for the country. Due to its geographical proximity, it can be a suitable connecting corridor between the semi-industrialized ASEAN (Association of South East Asian countries) and the highly populated fast growing Indian sub-continent (Ahmad, 2020). Moreover, it can also function as a transit corridor for landlocked neighbors such as Nepal and Bhutan, as well as the north-eastern Indian states (Ahmed et al. 2015:68). Additionally, Bangladesh will be able to fortify its supply chain of apparel industry-the major source of export income-by importing raw materials from China at a cheaper rate through the newly linked routes and further stimulate export income. China's engagement in Bangladesh's current Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and Export Processing Zones (EPZs) is expected to boost bilateral trade between the countries and might open up new export destinations in the global market. Another trade creation opportunity for Bangladesh in the BRI region will be through specialization on some of the 5000 products those China has authorized duty-free access (Karim et al. 2018:292).

(iii) Investment in Energy sector

The BRI-affiliated energy projects, such as pipelines and power plants, are expected to ensure the energy security of China and the partner countries (Han et al. 2018:112). So far, Bangladesh has been able to secure a small portion of Chinese investment in the energy sector. Nonetheless, the scale of investments is expected to increase in the upcoming years. This is already reflected from Chinese investment trends in 2018-2019 fiscal year where they have invested heavily in Bangladesh's energy sector particularly to coal-fired power plants. Chinese companies are especially interested in investing in Bangladesh's electricity sector (see Table 2). China has already committed US$1.9 billion on coal plant expansion and another US$5.1 billion in developing a 14 GW coal fired capacity (Siddique 2019). Recently, GCM resources and Power China signed a US$4 billion deal to build a 2000 MW coal-fired power plant in Dinajpur using ultra-supercritical technology (Dhaka Tribune 2019). Furthermore, China-led Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank (AIIB) has granted Bangladesh US$120 million to upgrade and expand the power transmission system in the Chittagong region (AIIB 2019).

(iv) Establishment of Deep sea port

Due to Bangladesh's proximity to Southern China and the Malacca strait, it is strategically vital for China's maritime security (Saimum 2020:12). And so China has already shown interest in developing a deep sea-port in Bangladesh under the 21st century maritime Silk Road initiative. Bangladesh and China have agreed to increase the capacity of the Mongla port. Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) have also been signed with China to build several components of the Pyra deep sea-port which is expected to be operationalized by 2023 (Mamun 2016). The port would be connected to the national transportation network upon the completion of the Padma Bridge project. The project could help Bangladesh to become an important trade hub in the South Asian region. Bangladesh could also use its spare capacity to provide port facilities to land locked countries-Nepal and Bhutan, as both are heavily dependent on the Kolkata port for International trade (Saimum 2017; Saimum 2020:12).

(v) Becoming the prime destination for China's sunset industries

The Chinese economy is transforming rapidly with a shift towards high-tech, high-margin and high-end industries, such as: IT, Aerospace, and Telecommunication (Fuad 2017). As a result, the production cost of garments in China is increasing day by day. Currently, average monthly salary for a Chinese worker stands around $400

to $500 (£250 - £315) (Textile Today, 2017). Hence, existing Chinese companies that deal in low-tech labor intensive industries are trying to relocate their manufacturing plants to locations that offer cheap labor and quality work. Bangladesh can be a prime destination for these sunset industries of China for three main reasons- favorable demographic structure, advantageous geographical location and reasonably lower salary of workers (Fuad 2017; Haque 2018:755; Saimum 2017). According to a report of UN (2017), Bangladesh has one of the highest rates of unemployment in South Asia despite having continued economic growth with low job creation in the economy. Therefore, if Bangladesh can grab this opportunity, it will create huge employment generation in those locations and solve the country's chronic unemployment problem.

(vi) Bringing in Loans and Foreign Direct Investments

Association of Bangladesh with BRI will help it to hunk inward investment both in the form of loans and foreign direct investments which will be a huge booster for Bangladesh economy (Fuad 2017). According to a report of UCTAD (2017), for FY 2017, FDI inflows to Bangladesh increased by 4.4% attracting 2.3 billion dollars, which was fourth largest among the least developed countries. In FY 2019, Bangladesh witnessed a record high net foreign direct investment (FDI) inflow of USD 3232.89 million between the months of July-March. This surge in FDI was largely driven by Chinese investment. Again, during the period January-March 2019, Chinese net FDI inflow amounted to USD 396.99 million, which was 38.34 per cent of total net FDI inflow into Bangladesh during that period (Bangladesh Bank 2019).Moreover, newly established AIIB (Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank) could become a major source of foreign loans for infrastructural development in Bangladesh apart from ADB and World Bank (Fuad 2017)

(vii) Education sector

One of the five components of BRI is cultural exchange, through means of knowledge sharing, research collaboration and strengthening of people-to people bonds. There has been a significant increase in the number of Chinese government scholarships (CGS) offered to foreign students since the declaration of BRI in 2013. Bangladesh being one of the signatories of BRI have also been receiving CGS since its inception. As a matter of fact, the number of Bangladeshi students pursuing higher education in Chinese universities has grown rapidly in the last few the years. For example, 4,905 more Bangladeshi students went to study in China in 2016, compared to 2015. Chinese government scholarships are offering lucrative higher education opportunities to students from Bangladesh (Khatun 2019:37).

(viii) Achieving SDGs through BRI

BRI not only embraces and echoes the SDGs, but also works very much in line to implement areas that SDG prioritizes. The Executive Secretary of UNESCAP, Shamshad Akhter, rightly pointed out that through the BRI, more comprehensive, integrated regional plans will be developed that are fully aligned with the 2030 Agenda. (Honghui & Ting, 2016: 35). Table 3 clearly illustrates how a country through BRI approach can achieve the SDGs. From this dimension as well, BRI is a huge opportunity for Bangladesh. Through the 40 billion USD funding that has been promised by Beijing for the 27 proposed projects (see Table 02), Bangladesh will not only be able to improve its infrastructure connectivity, modernize energy sector, boost up its economic growth and reduce poverty, but also be able to achieve the SDGs.

Table 3: Achieving SDGs through BRI

BRI approach	SDGs
Infrastructure connectivity	Goal 9
Energy modernisation	Goal 7
Focus on green and low carbon development	Goal 6, Goal 12, Goal 13, Goal 14 and Goal 15
Reduction of poverty through economic growth	Goal 1, Goal 10
Focus on people's livelihood through economic growth: employment, health, education, etc.	Goal 2, Goal 3, Goal 4, Goal 5, Goal 8, Goal 11 and Goal 16

Source: Adopted from (Khatun 2019:13)

Issues and Challenges for Bangladesh to ponder about: There is no doubt that the BRI project will bring large scale benefits for Bangladesh. However, at the same time it will expose Bangladesh to many critical threats and challenges. Some of those geo-political and economic pitfalls which are likely to emanate from BRI projects are discussed below.

1. Debt Trap

According to a survey of United Nations Economic and Social Commission for the Asia Pacific (UN-ESCAP), large-scale loan grants to developing countries could potentially harm the macroeconomic stability in these countries due to the underdeveloped nature of the market and insufficient debt management capacity (Akhtar, Hahm and

Malik 2017). Relating to such concerns with the BRI, the former foreign secretary of Bangladesh expounded that countries can find it hard to repay any loan under the conditions of BRI as there are limitations to pay back the grossly overpriced projects. (Daily Star 2019). China's official finance is less concessional than funding from other multilateral or bilateral sources, along with high interest rate of 2.25% and relatively shorter grace period (AIIB 2017). As a matter of fact, countries often struggle to pay off Chinese debts, which results in bitter consequences for the recipient countries. The case of Sri Lanka is one of such instances where the island country was compelled to lease out Hambantota seaport to China due to its failure in paying off Chinese debt (Financial Express 2019).Thus the threat of 'Asset seizure' is a serious concern for a resource-poor country like Bangladesh because China is seeking to convert a part of its "soft loans" pledged to Bangladesh into commercial credits. If disbursed as commercial credits instead of a government-to-government basis (G2G), the loans could be very expensive for us and could cause a long term debt crisis (Ahmad 2020; Awasthi 2017; Saimum 2017). Another worrying factor is that the amount of investment that China promised has a slow pace of reimbursement. For example, China has released only 194.81 million USD out of 689.35 million USD fund for the Karnaphuli river tunnel project. This slow rate of disbursement of funds is also slowing down the progress of the infrastructural development projects and causing great financial loss to Bangladesh (Ramachandran 2019). Moreover, there has been considerable delay in realizing all the projects under BRI. So far, only five projects worth US$4.5 billion have been signed, while the remaining projects are in different stages of 'planning, preparation, negotiation and approval' (Chakma 2019). Such delays have raised questions about the viability of the Chinese-funded projects in Bangladesh (Saimum 2020:11).

2. Concerns related to BCIM-EC

Geo-political tension and disagreement among the members of BCIM economic corridor might seriously jeopardize Bangladesh's prospects in reaping the fruitful consequences of BRI project. India has already boycotted BRI over Chinese involvement in the China Pakistan economic Corridor (CPEC), which according to India, violates its sovereignty. The proposed land connection of CPEC passes through Pakistan ruled part of Kashmir; which is strongly believed by India to be a part of its territory (Saimum 2017; Ahmad 2020). Also, over Arunachal Pradesh, which is currently under control of India, there is direct geo-political dispute between China and India as China claims that to be one of the parts of Tibet (Uddin, 2017:215). Moreover, there has also been tension between the other two members of BCIM-EC, Bangladesh and Myanmar, over the 'Rohingya issue' which is one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world. The UN has accused the Myanmar military of committing a 'textbook example of ethnic cleansing' against

the Rohingya minority by forcing more than 700,000 refugees into Bangladesh (Safi 2017; UNOCHA 2019). This issue has complicated the Bangladesh–Myanmar relations and if the crisis is not resolved peacefully, it could retard the BRI-backed connectivity initiatives in the region.

3. Sino-Indian Rivalry

Another factor which might severely disrupt Bangladesh prospects from BRI is Sino-Indian rivalry. It has been mentioned earlier that India perceives BRI as a direct threat to its regional and global interests. As a result, they have not only boycotted it but also expressed its intention to resist it. Given India's clout in South Asia, it can seriously delay or disrupt BRI related projects in the region (Ye 2017:40). They have sought plans to counter Chinese influence in South Asia and the IOR at two levels. At the regional level, they have called for regional integration schemes such as the Bangladesh–Bhutan–India–Nepal (BBIN) initiative to counter the BRI (Jacob 2017:90). While at the international level, it has taken measures to build closer strategic ties with another Asian giant, Japan. The Indo–Japanese Asia–Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC) has been portrayed as an alternative initiative with a similar scope to that of the BRI which aims to establish a 'special and strategic global partnership' between India and Japan to create a 'peaceful, open, equitable, stable and rule-based order' in the Indo-Pacific region (Panda 2017:06; Saimum 2020:14)

An old African proverb says, "When the elephants fight, it's the grass that suffers". Here the grass might be Bangladesh between the Sino-Indian conflicts. Bangladesh's growing partnership and dependency on China regarding BRI project might deteriorate the historical friendship ties between Bangladesh and India. In recent years, due to heavy Chinese investment under the scheme of BRI, China became the largest investor and trading partner of Bangladesh replacing India. As a matter of consequence, India has not taken this Bangladesh-China ties positively and identified China as a "thorn" between the relationship of India and Bangladesh as both have common geo-political interests in Bangladesh. In contrast, Bangladesh is neither in a position politically or economically to confront with India nor it is capable enough to break its collaborations with China. Hence, Bangladesh is in a great danger of falling passive victim of the growing power conflict between the two rising Asian giants (Faruque 2018:18; Khan 2020:05).

4. Environmental concerns

While the BRI has the potential to bring in positive economic development for Bangladesh, it may cause irreversible damage to the environment. Infrastructure may

threaten the ecosystems and the livelihoods of the people who depend on environmental resources surrounding them. Around 56 per cent of China's total investment in Bangladesh is in the energy sector. To be more specific, 38.05 per cent BRI construction contracts in the energy sector are in coal. Such large investment in coal based energy sector projects may have adverse impacts on the environment. A study conducted by CPD rightly pointed out that despite BRI's partly responsibility for the soaring investment in renewable energy worldwide, it is strange that for Bangladesh, there was not enough BRI investment in that particular sector (Khatun 2019:46). Scholars have also raised their concerns that as China is focusing on higher-value goods and services and adoption of stricter emission standards, high emission manufacturing industries and unsustainable technologies might be moved to low income BRI countries like Bangladesh and result irrevocable environmental catastrophe.

5. Concerns related to Transfer of technology

There is no denying the fact the considering the changing context and nature of transformation of China's economy; and the comparative advantage that Bangladesh have over its neighboring countries in terms of demography, geographical proximity and low labor cost, it will house most of the Chinese sunset industries. Nonetheless, concern remains to what extent BRI will facilitate transfer of technologies for the country. The manufacturing sector in Bangladesh is heavily dependent on imported technology with very limited research and innovation capacity (Raihan and Ahmed 2009). Thus technology transfer can generate multifarious benefits for manufacturing sector of Bangladesh in the form of diversification of export basket, improvement of product quality, and technological upgradation. However, following the growth and stability framework, if there is no technology transfer or delay in technology frontier, mere import of obsolete technology would generate no stimulus to transform the local economies into industrial ones.

6. Implications on society

Bangladesh will also have to deal with the social implications of BRI projects as people may be affected in various ways and the impact could be disproportionate on different sections of the society. Infrastructural development usually requires large pieces of land, which are acquired either through clearing forests or through acquisition from people. However, such actions on one hand increase the green-house gas emission and polluting environment; while on the other hand, people are often forcefully displaced from their roots in exchange of compensation. Again, for transport investment projects under BRI, large labor force would be brought from outside the locality and many

others would try their best to test their luck. As a matter of fact, these would put pressure on natural and physical resources leading to price hikes, social conflicts, spread of diseases and insecurity. Thus vulnerability of the poor may increase with BRI projects (Khatun 2019:47).

Apart from these pitfalls, Bangladesh also have few other areas of concerns like weak internal governance, issues related to grand corruption in mega projects and policy deficits. Moreover, few scholars have also raised concern about the possibility of the Chinese economy slowing down and its adverse impact on BRI; the possibility of sudden rise in global oil prices and slowing down of remittances and RMG exports and its effect on Bangladesh's ability to repay its debts (Daily Star 2019). Furthermore, many economists have predicted about global economic recession as aftermath of Covid 19 pandemic which probably will also badly hit the growing economy of Bangladesh. Such economic debacle can have serious implications in paying off debts to these Chinese loans.

Concluding Remarks : In the end, it can be said there exits both shining prospects as well as formidable risks for Bangladesh pertaining to the BRI project. The funds related to the projects of BRI have been more a blessing than a curse for Bangladesh as the country is searching for investments to feed its target of eight percent GDP growth. As BRI is a comprehensive undertaking, it would not only transform the development endeavors but also support Bangladesh in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. However, managing such massive infrastructural investment and development will not be always a straight forward task for Bangladesh. In order to reap the benefits of this initiative, Bangladesh government will need to strengthen internal governance by developing sound policy and management capacity. In case of project identification, the policy makers must prioritize the national needs and objectives and remain very much aware about 'globacolization' which means colonizing through globalization (Hossain 2020:01). It is imperative that the selection and planning of the BRI projects should be sound with a thorough analysis and understanding of the socio-economic benefits and implications that will be generated through such projects. Again, the policy makers should ensure the environmental viability of the proposed projects adopting highest environmental standards keeping in mind that the country is an enlisted climate affected country (Maniruzzmaan 2019). Moreover, government should take the issue of 'debt trap' with diligence, considering its awful consequences, and thus make responsible borrowing. Another crucial factors, which the policy makers must safeguard during the planning and the implementation phase of these mega projects are 'transparency' and 'accountability'. Maintaining the highest degree of quality and

international standards for project completion is also of utmost importance. Going by the past records and experiences, this is quite a tall order but given the size and importance of the projects, Bangladesh cannot afford to compromise on any account.

Any mega project of this scale will also have geopolitical and geostrategic implications. Dr. Tanzim Uddin Khan, Associate Professor of International Relations of Dhaka University, rightly pointed out that, 'there are reasons to be optimistic regarding BRI but at the same time, there are factors for being pessimistic. There is no way of viewing this grand initiative from a simple Bangladesh-Sino bilateral perspective. Rather there is a triangular dimension. Bangladesh is sand-witched between two regional hegemons-India and China' (Financial Express, 2019). Both India and China are important partners for Bangladesh, and favoring one over the other could get in the way of Bangladesh's national interests. Thus, Bangladesh government has to act with utmost caution, while all economic issues must be kept out of political considerations. So far, government has acted much smartly in maneuvering the situation through prioritizing the economic merits of the BRI projects keeping the geopolitical tensions apart. Nevertheless, Bangladesh would need to sustain this position for continued success in navigating emerging geopolitical tensions along with keeping stringent eye towards protecting its autonomy.

End Note

[i] The Washington Consensus refers to a set of free-market economic policies supported by prominent financial institutions such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the U.S. Treasury. John Williamson, a British economist, coined the term Washington Consensus in 1989. The Washington Consensusintended to help developing countries that faced economic crises and so recommended structural reforms that increased the role of market forces in exchange for immediate financial help which included free-floating exchange rates and free trade (Agarwal, 2018)

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The Hazaras in Life and Literature: The Representation of the Hazaras in Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner*

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Abstract : *The paper aims to focus on the representation of the marginalised Hazara community in Afghanistan through Khaled Hosseini's seminal work, The Kite Runner. The Hazaras have been brutally persecuted, discriminated and enslaved for over a century since the late 19th century. The paper shows the importance of Hosseini's work to explore terrains in culture studies which have not been treaded earlier. The Kite Runner is the first English novel depicting the experience of the Afghans before America's entry into Afghanistan after 9/11. Hosseini being a Pashtun and writing about the Hazara community promises an atmosphere of change and hope for the ethnic minority communities in Afghanistan.*

Keywords : Hazara, Taliban, ethnic minority, post 9/11 novel, multidisciplinary, social science, literature.

Afghanistan witnessed the emergence and the downfall of almost half a dozen regimes from the 1970s to the disastrous incident of 9/11; the government shifted from monarchy to democracy to dictatorship within a span of thirty years but the condition of the ethnic minorities in Afghanistan, especially the Hazaras did not change. The last king of Afghanistan, Zahir Shah, was overthrown in a military coup by Daoud

Khan, the leader of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan in 1973. He rose to power with the help of the Soviets. However, the dream to create a democratic Afghanistan was cut-short with the Soviet invasion in 1979. The Mujahideens formed a strong opposition against the communist rule of the USSR with the help of the secret intelligence agencies of the United States of America. The Soviets had to leave Afghanistan after the signing of the peace accord in 'Geneva guaranteeing Afghan independence and the withdrawal of 100,000 Soviet troops' (PBS 2011).[1] Talat Farooq writes:

> The CIA, with Saudi financial contribution, funnelled $3.5 billion and weapons, including Stingers, into Afghanistan between 1980 and 1992. Using the ISI as a conduit the CIA provided technical and strategic advice on training, intelligence and sophisticated technology. Pakistan's tribal areas bordering Afghanistan were subsequently used for the Afghan resistance to regroup among a sympathetic tribal population (Farooq 2016: 25).[2]

However, problems started to arise as soon as the Americans wiped their hands off the Afghanistan matter after the Soviet withdrawal. The mujahideens who had been fighting against a common enemy started to fight amongst themselves to claim their supremacy over Afghanistan. Burhanuddin Rabbani, Ahmad Shah Massoud and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar contested amongst themselves. This resulted in a period of unrest and civil wars till the emergence of the Taliban in 1996. In this time of crisis, the emergence of the Taliban with their unifying ideals and a belief to unite the nation under Islamic laws came as a relief. 'In successive campaigns the Taliban had brought 80 percent of Afghanistan under their nominal rule (Burke 2011: 5).[3] The movement was the brainchild of a lower order cleric of the Afghan society, a mullah, near Kandahar in September 1994. Under the leadership of Mullah Mohammad Omar and his second-in-command Mullah Mohammad Hassan Rehmani, the main aim of the Taliban was to put an end to the anarchy and civil war that followed after the withdrawal of the Soviets in 1989. However, they started a puritanical regime with the idea of ethnic cleansing in their mind. They wanted to construct a utopian Afghan state based on the Pashtun culture. Although with their sudden emergence they brought peace and security, they also implemented 'an extreme interpretation of the Sharia or Islamic law' (Rashid 2001: 2).[4]

According to United Nation's Report on World Social Situation 2018, the term 'ethnic minority' refers to the 'ethnic or racial groups in a given country in which they are in a non-dominant position'. The report also states:

> The term refers to a group of people in a nation-state that meets one or more of the following criteria: it is numerically smaller than the rest of the population; it is not in a dominant position; it has a culture,

> language, religion or race that is distinct from that of the majority; and its members have a will to preserve those characteristics (Policy 2018).[5]

'The raison d'être of the Taliban was to end the anarchy. But when they took on powerful non-Pashtun warlords and militias, some Afghan and international observers tended to describe them as Pashtun nationalists who wanted to revive a centralised Pashtun-dominated state in Afghanistan' (Siddique 2012: 1).[6] The creation of the 'Pashtunistan' has been a major driving point of almost all the governments formed in Afghanistan and not just for the Taliban. Unfortunately, every time an initiative was taken for such an endeavour, the ethnic minorities of Afghanistan paid the price for it. They were subjugated, displaced, marginalised, discriminated, humiliated and executed. Presently, 'Afghanistan's national anthem recognises 14 ethnic groups among the country's 27 million people: Pashtun, Tajiks, Hazaras, Uzbeks, Balochis, Turkmens, Nooristanis, Pamiris, Arabs, Gujars, Brahuis, Qizibash, Aimaq and Pashai' (2012: 4).[7] And, the ethnic group among the 14 that is worst affected and has undergone prolonged period of subjugation and discrimination is the Hazaras. Wilfred Thesiger published one of the first detailed reports about the Hazara community in 1955. He writes about their origin:

> The Hazaras are Mongols and inhabit a large area in Central Afghanistan. They were settled in this country in the thirteenth century either by Jagatai, Jinghis Khan's son, or by Mangu, his grandson, on the lands of the Ghoris, who had been largely exterminated during the Mongol invasion… It is more probable that they were the followers of chiefs, selected loyalty and that they represented many of the tribes and races incorporated Mongol army. Even today most of the Hazaras have unmistakably Mongol appearance but they have abandoned the Mongol language... The Hazaras inhabit the Hazarajat which includes the western extremity of the Hindu Kush range and the broken country round the headwaters of Helmand River (Thesiger 1955: 313).[8]

The persecution of the Hazara community started as early as the nineteenth century when the Afghan king, Abdur Rahman wanted to unite all the tribes of Afghanistan under one banner. The Hazaras revolted but failed and they were 'brutally punished for their uprising'(Farr 2007: 161).[9] Rahman partitioned the Hazarajat, 'making it part of three provinces- Kabul, Bamiyan and Kandahar' to breach the unity of the Hazara people (161).[10] The Hazaras generally belonged to the Shi'a sect of Islam from Iran and several efforts were taken to convert them to Sunni Islam. They were further persecuted, punished and enslaved. They are seen as 'outcast, despised and to be avoided' and they are labelled as a pariah group. 'They are publicly humiliated with taunts of Hazara-e mushkhur (mice eating Hazara), binipuchuq (flat-nose), and khar-e barkash (load carrying donkeys)' (161).[11] They have traditionally been 'marginalised, politically and economically, and have normally undertaken the most menial tasks

within the economy' (Marsden 2001: 9).[12]

Khaled Hosseini became the spokesperson of the Afghans as soon as he published The Kite Runner in 2003. It was the first Afghan novel written in English. He represented the angst, the loss, the sensibilities, the cultural values and also the follies of the Afghans and presented them in a more humane way before a western audience that had already stereotyped them as terrorists. David Jefferes notes that the novel was 'publicised initially through word of mouth, the novel was picked up by community reading programs across North America in 2005, and eventually spent more than five years on the New York Times bestseller list, currently with millions of copies in print in 42 different languages' (Jefferes 2009: 389).[13] Although it is a tale of redemption, it is also a tale of revelation. Hosseini constantly exposes the hypocrisy of the Afghan society. Amir's redemption also exposes the unjustified discrimination faced by his half-brother Hassan from his birth till death only because of the fact that he was a Hazara boy.

Harold Bloom notes that several of the characters and incidents in the novel are influenced by real events from Hosseini's own life. The character of Hassan is based on Hosseini's own playmate, a Hazara boy, who was sexually abused by a man who worked for his father. Hosseini and his brother were too scared to report the crime when they were kids just like Amir in the novel who was too scared to report Assef's assault on Hassan to his father or to anyone. Hosseini and his family migrated to the United States at the time of Soviet invasion just like Amir and his father. Bloom further writes:

> Hosseini has explained that while he was inspired to create the central character of Hassan, the boy could not be the novel's protagonist. It is Amir whom Hosseini cast in that key role, since he is stricken with guilt, a conflicted figure who grows and changes. In this way, Hosseini added depth and complexity to his portrayal, addressing regret and the need for redemption and showing troubled relationships between brothers because of domineering fathers (Bloom 2009: 13).[14]

The Kite Runner is a bildungsroman based on the life of the protagonist, Amir. The story revolves around his choices, his friendship with Hassan, his cowardice, guilt and redemption. The story starts in the December of 2001 in San Francisco, California and then takes the readers back to 1970s Afghanistan. There is a continuous interplay of the past and the present. Amir gets a phone call from his father's long-time business partner, Rahim Khan from Peshawar, Pakistan asking him to visit Pakistan and meet him face to face one last time before his death. However, the real intention was to give Amir a last chance to redeem himself. "There is way to be good again", noted Rahim Khan before putting down the receiver (Hosseini 2003: 2).[15] Likewise, to understand the wrongs, Hosseini takes us back in time to Kabul, Afghanistan during the rule

of Zahir Shah where we find a ten-year old Amir, son of one of the richest Pashtun businessmen in Kabul, and Hassan, a Hazara boy and son of the handicapped servant Ali. From the very beginning Hosseini sets Hassan apart from the rest of the boys. His Mongolian appearance becomes the first point of contrast. Hosseini writes:

> ...sunlight flickering through the leaves on his almost perfectly round face, a face like a Chinese doll chiselled from hardwood: his flat, broad nose and slanting, narrow eyes like bamboo leaves, eyes that looked, depending on the light, gold, green, even sapphire. I can still see his tiny low-set ears and that pointed stub of a chin, a meaty appendage that looked like it was added as a mere afterthought. And the cleft lip, just left of midline, where the Chinese doll maker's instrument may have slipped, or perhaps he had simply grown tired and careless (2003: 3).[16]

Wilfred Thesiger notes in his documentary that he 'had supposed that the Hazarajat was a desperately poor country and [his] first view from the slopes of Kuh-i-Baba confirmed this impression... Hazara houses are built of mud and stones, and most of them are very primitive' (1955: 314).[17] Although Ali and Hassan were far from Hazarajat and were serving one of the wealthiest men in Kabul, their condition did not change. Amir lived in his mansion and Hassan in his 'mud shack where he had been born and where he'd lived his entire life'(2003: 6).[18] Unlike the mansion where Amir lived, the mud shack was dimly lit by a pair of kerosene lamps and there was hardly any furniture in the room except for a couple of mattresses where Hassan and Ali slept, 'a Herati rug' and 'a three-legged stool, and a wooden table in the corner where Hassan did his drawings' (2003: 6).[19]

The common prejudice and hatred for the Hazaras could also be seen through the treatment of the soldiers towards Hassan when the boys accidently crossed their path. The distinct physical appearance of a Hazara made Hassan a prominent target. Although the Pashtun soldiers did not physically assault Hassan, they passed lewd remarks about his mother and 'tears were sliding down his cheeks' (2003: 10).[20] In comparison to Wilfred Thesiger's discovery of only thirteen pages in the Gazetteer of Afghanistan (1882) dedicated to the Hazara history, Amir finds an entire chapter in a history book that belonged to his deceased mother. He finds out in the book:

> It said the Hazaras had tried to rise against the Pashtuns in the nineteenth century, but the Pashtuns had 'quelled them with unspeakable violence'. The book said that my people had killed the Hazaras, driven them from their lands, burned their homes, and sold their women. The book said part of the reason Pashtuns had oppressed the Hazaras was that Pashtuns were Sunni Muslims, while Hazaras were Shi'a... It also said some things I did know, like that people called Hazaras mice-eating, flat-nosed, load-carrying donkeys. I had heard some of the kids in the neighborhood yell those names to Hassan (2003: 9).[21]

However, when he tried to verify the facts of the book by his teacher, he received nothing but a sneer and a prejudiced vague answer that didn't justify the question at all. 'He wrinkled his nose and when he said the word Shi'a, like it was some kind of disease' (2003: 9).[22] The prejudice against the Hazaras could also be seen in the Afghan judiciary system as well. Hosseini narrates the story of Ali's childhood at the beginning of chapter four. Ali's parents were killed in a road accident by two brothers who were driving under the influence of hashish and wine. Amir's grandfather who was a reputed judge only gave them a year's service in the military as punishment and adopted Ali to grow as a servant and a playmate for his son. The leniency in the punishment was only because of the fact that Ali and his parents were Hazaras. Their lives did not matter as much as that of a Pashtun.

Amir and Hassan shared a very intimate bond of friendship. Hassan stood by Amir through thick and thin. Hassan protected Amir from Assef's assault at the corner of the street when they were cornered by Assef and his friends by threatening them with his pinpoint accuracy on his slingshot. Even when Amir tried to mock Hassan because of his inability to read and pronounce difficult words from his books or when Amir made up stories to tell Hassan, he only saw the brighter side of things. It was through Hassan's appreciation of Amir's cock and bull stories that Amir gained confidence to become a story teller. Amir and Hassan were very close. Hassan ran kites for Amir, they took strolls through the bazaars, talked about films, shared Coca-Cola and rose water ice cream topped with crushed pistachios. However, the difference in their lifestyle reflected their social status. Likewise, Hosseini tells his readers through Amir's persona:

> By the time I dragged myself out of bed and lumbered to the bathroom, Hassan had already washed up, prayed the morning namaz with Ali, and prepared my breakfast: hot black tea with three sugar cubes and a slice of toasted naan topped with my favorite sour cherry marmalade, all neatly placed on the dining table. While I ate and complained about homework, Hassan made my bed, polished my shoes, ironed my outfit for the day, packed my books and pencils... Hassan stayed home and helped Ali with the day's chores: hand-washing dirty clothes and hanging them to dry in the yard, sweeping the floors, buying fresh naan from the bazaar, marinating meat for dinner, watering the lawn... Hassan would grow up illiterate like Ali and most Hazaras had been decided the minute he had been born, perhaps even the moment he had been conceived in Sanaubar's unwelcoming womb—after all, what use did a servant have for the written word? (2003: 25-26)[23]

Although Hassan stood guard for Amir, Amir did not do the same for Hassan. Hassan fell victim to Assef's wrath and prejudice. Assef, by birth a Pashtun, wanted Afghanistan only for the Pashtun. He wanted to drive the Hazaras back to Hazarajat.

He worshipped Adolf Hitler and his policy of ethnic cleansing. He declared that 'Afghanistan is the land of Pashtuns. It always has been, always will be. [They] are the true Afghans, the pure Afghans' (2003: 38).[24] Assef wanted to teach Hassan a lesson that he would never forget. The moment he found Hassan alone, cornered in a blind alley, he pinned him down with the help of his friends on the street and raped him. Although the aggression meted out to Hassan was unjust and sacrilegious, it was the cowardice of Amir that Hosseini tries to highlight in the following scene. Amir stood his ground and did not intervene to stop the onslaught on Hassan fearing brutal repercussion. However, the worst form of betrayal against Hassan came from Amir's sense of guilt. Amir suffered from guilt for not standing up against Assef's atrocity and in order to get rid of this suffering he wanted to get rid of Hassan for good from his family. He framed Hassan for theft of his watch and gift money which he got as present on his birthday. The Hazaras were known for their loyalty and the insult was too much for Ali to stay in the household any longer. Although Hassan accepted that he was guilty of stealing the watch, Amir's father forgave him. But it wasn't enough to stop Ali from leaving. Amir's father was heartbroken after the incident.

Years later in 2001 when Amir visits Rahim Khan in Pakistan, he comes to know about his father's secret that Hassan was his half-brother and hence his father was so sympathetic towards Hassan. It was easy for a Pashtun to show his benevolence towards a Hazara boy but unacceptable in the Afghan society to father one. Amir notes:

> How could I have been so blind? The signs had been there for me to see all along; they came flying back at me now: Baba hiring Dr. Kumar to fix Hassan's harelip. Baba never missing Hassan's birthday. I remembered the day we were planting tulips, when I had asked Baba if he'd ever consider getting new servants. Hassan's not going anywhere, he'd barked. He's staying right here with us, where he belongs. This is his home and we're his family. He had wept, wept, when Ali announced he and Hassan were leaving us (2003: 208).[25]

Hosseini also notes that the condition of the Hazaras worsened after the Taliban came to power in Afghanistan in 1996. They openly persecuted the Hazaras in the name of ethnic cleansing. The Hazaras had to pay the price for siding with the Northern Alliance in the post-Soviet era prior to the Taliban rule. In the August of 1998, the Taliban militia openly executed between 2000 and 5000 Hazaras at Mazār-e Sharīf (Ghohari 2000: 102).[26] Hassan too had to pay the price for his loyalty. He and his wife were killed by the Taliban in front of their son Sohrab on the streets for living in Amir's house after they left. Sohrab was sent to an orphanage and fell victim to Assef's lust for small boys.

Therefore, Rahim Khan's indication- 'There is a way to be good again' for Amir was to atone for his past sins by retrieving Sohrab and provide for him a better future (2003:

2).[27] Although Amir heroically tries to save Sohrab from Assef, it was Sohrab who saved Amir with his slingshot just like his father once did. Amir brought Sohrab to the United States of America. America becomes the place of refuge for the ethnic minorities of Afghanistan who had been brutally persecuted by their own people. Likewise, through Amir's atonement of his past sins, we are brought face to face with the atrocities and discriminations the Hazaras were subjected to in real life. The Kite Runner was adapted into a motion picture in 2007 and it served a very important purpose. It was screened before George W. Bush and his defence team and Hosseini was among one of the invited guests. 'Ostensibly the film serves the strategic and propaganda interests of this small audience, given the war on terror raging in Afghanistan' (Raza 2016: 84).[28] However, the more sympathetic critics of The Kite Runnerare of the opinion that the novel is about hope, redemption and about the 'way to be good again' (2003: 2).[29] 'The Kite Runner bears a typical theme of growth... the glory and darkness of human nature is two sides inside a person... A personal growth may represent all of ours' (Du 2017: 93).[30] Hosseini brought us face to face with the atrocities meted out to the Hazaras by the Pashtuns of Afghanistan. However, he is also certain of the fact that no one is deprived of redemption and it's never too late to atone for one's sins.

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Trends and Patterns of Female Work Participation in Koch Bihar District, West Bengal : An Analysis

Sangita Karmakar[1] *& Prof. Ranjan Roy*[2]

Abstract : *Female work participation is an indicator of economic development. Female are the backbone of our society and female work participation is nothing but the symbol of women empowerment which drives the society towards the development. In Koch Bihar district female work participation rate is 20.67% against male work participation of 58.24 % as per 2011 census. In this paper an attempt has been made to show the trend of female work participation, temporal variation of female work participation and gender disparity in work participation in the district based on data collected from different secondary sources. Block wise female occupational structure has been shown here with some cartographic techniques. To measure disparity Sopher's Disparity Index (modified by Kundu & Rao, 1986) has been applied. Statistical analysis like standard deviation, CV, correlation has been done on excel to fulfil the objectives. The study reveals that though the female work participation is very low in the study area but it is a little bit higher than state average and is in increasing trend. There exists male female disparity in work participation in both rural and urban areas. Out of 12 blocks 3 blocks having high disparity. Beside this, spatial pattern of economic activities shows that most of the rural women are predominantly engaged in agriculture work.*

Key words: Female work participation rate (FWPR), disparity, Sopher's Index, agricultural worker, occupational structure.

Introduction: Work participation rate is the key indicator of the growth and development of any country. Female are the spine of any society and female work participation plays a significant role in determining the progress of the nation. Less female work participation is the sign of stagnation of development which counteracts the progress of any society. In our society, female are mainly neglected and their workforce participation is controlled by various socio economic factors. Poverty, illiteracy, lack of facilities, conservative thinking of elderly persons, rigid religious perception etc are the main constrains of participation of female in economic activity. On the other hand, women rights are included in human rights, it gives them right to work with everyone in any platform. So, it is very much important to encourage and to engage them in all kind of economic activities available in our society. Participation of women in working sector not only reduces gender inequality but also promotes their economic strength (Narayan, 2016). Therefore, reducing gender disparity in workforce and making women empowered have been included in Millennium Development Goals by United Nation (Deshbandhu et al, 2017). In India female work participation is very less compared to male. Female work participation rate is directly associated with female literacy but Chakraborty & Chakraborty (2010) stated that in West Bengal high work participation is noticed in areas where female literacy is comparatively low and work participation is showing low in Muslim community dominating areas. Female work participation is also low among SC/ST and backward class people. Active participation of women in work with developed education and skill can enrich their status in home and outside (Ghosh & Khatun, 2018). Koch Bihar is a socio economically poor district where female work participation is 20.64% (2011 census) which is quite higher than state average but still there exist high gender disparity in work participation in both rural and urban areas. So in this paper an attempt has been made to analyse the female work participation rate, gender disparity in work force participation and variation in occupational structure of Koch Bihar district.

Study area : Koch Bihar is a district of West Bengal in the foothills of Himalaya. Koch Bihar lies in the North Eastern part of West Bengal, bounded by the district of Alipurduar in the North, Jalpaiguri in the North- West, State of Assam in the East and International border in the form of Indo-Bangladesh boundary in the South-West, South and South-East. It lies between 2557′47″ N and 2636′20″ N and 8847′44″ E to 8954′35″E with the total area of 3387 square kilometres having population of 2,819,086 of which 1,451,542 are male and 1,367,544 are female. The density of population is 832 persons per square kilometres and sex ratio is 942 and child sex ratio is 948 females per 1000 males as per 2011 census. The district comprises 12 blocks namely Haldibari, Mekhliganj, Mathabhanga-I, Mathabhanga-II, Koch Bihar-I, Koch Bihar-II, Tufanganj-I,

Tufanganj-II, Dinhata-I, Dinhata-II, Sitai and Sitalkuchi.

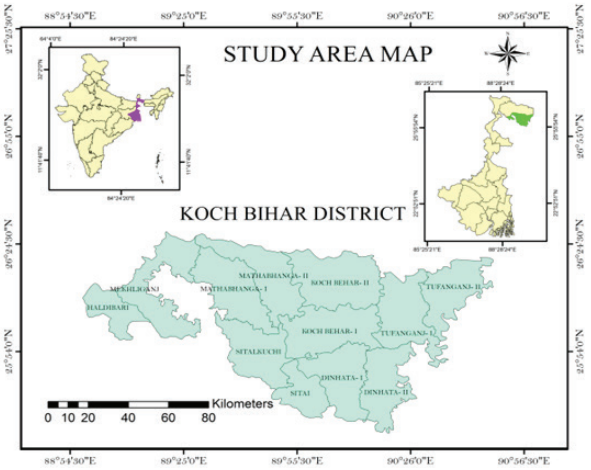


Fig.1: Location map of Study Area

3. Objectives: To study the trend of female work participation in Koch Bihar district.

To study gender disparity in work participation rate in rural and urban areas of the district.

To assess the block wise variation in female occupational structure in the district.

4. Methodology: The study is mainly based on secondary data collected from various sources. District census handbook for the year 2001 & 2011, different literatures, government records have been used here. Work participation rate and disparity index has been calculated by the following formula. Statistical tools like standard deviation, CV, correlation has been done to fulfil the objectives. Finally maps have been prepared on Arc GIS 10.1 version.

Female Work participation rate

(Total female worker/ Total no. of female population)*100

Disparity Index

$$DI = \log (X_2 / X_1) + \log (Q-X_1) / (Q-X_2)$$

Where, $X_2 > X_1$ and $Q = 200$

This (Sopher's Disparity Index modified by Kundu & Rao, 1986) method is most suitable to measure the inequality between two variables. The value of DI '0' means the perfect equality between two variables. Greater the value indicates higher gender inequality.

Analysis and discussion

5. Comparative analysis of work participation rate with state average: The comparative study will help to understand the situation of the district with state average. The following table shows that there is no such wide difference in WPR in Koch Bihar with compared to West Bengal and WPR in Koch Bihar is higher than the state average. According to 2011 census total WPR in West Bengal is 38.08% but in Koch Bihar it was 40.01%. Male and female WPR in the district were 58.24% and 20.67% respectively which is also higher than state average.

Table 1: Work participation rate of Koch Bihar & West Bengal

Region	Total	Male	Female
West Bengal	38.08	57.07	18.08
Koch Bihar	40.01	58.24	20.67

Source : Census of India, 2011

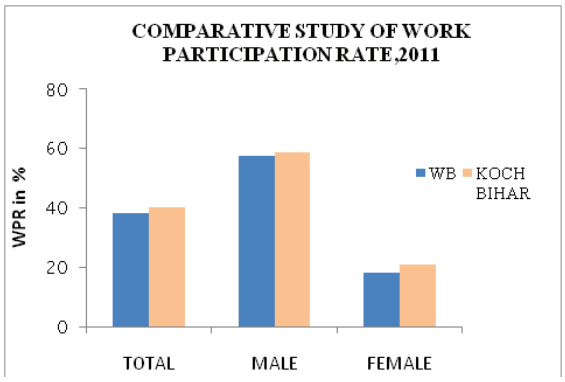


Fig.2: Comparative study of work participation rate, 2011

5.1. Temoral change of FWPR: Table 2 shows the block wise temporal variation of FWPR in the study area. FWPR for some blocks have been increased and some blocks show a negative change during 2001 to 2011. Highest WPR in 2011 is recorded in Sitai block (31.77%) followed by Mathabhanga I (29.85 %), Sitalkuchi (22.9 %), Koch Bihar I (22.83%) etc and lowest WPR has been recorder in Koch Bihar II block (14.84 %) followed by Haldibari (18.06 %), and some other blocks. Out of 12 blocks 5 blocks are showing positive change whereas 7 blocks are showing negative change in FWPR in this period. Highest positive change in FWPR has been shown in Haldibari block but in Dinhata II block highest negative change has been recorded. In 2001 it was 37.91% but in 2011 it decreased to 17.82% which is a matter of concert that in this block share of non working population has been increased during this period.

Table 2: Temporal variation of FWPR (2001-2011)

Female work participation (%)					
Blocks	2001	2011	Blocks	2001	2011
Haldibari	7.83	18.06	Tufanganj - I	14.17	20.2
Mekliganj	18.67	23.83	Tufanganj - II	20.79	19.92
Mathabhanga - I	32.00	29.85	Dinhata - I	23.20	19.54
Mathabhanga - II	23.22	20.33	Dinhata- II	37.91	17.82
Koch Bihar - I	16.06	22.83	Sitai	28.69	31.77
Koch Bihar - II	24.78	14.84	Sitalkuchi	28.31	22.9

Source: Census of India, 2011

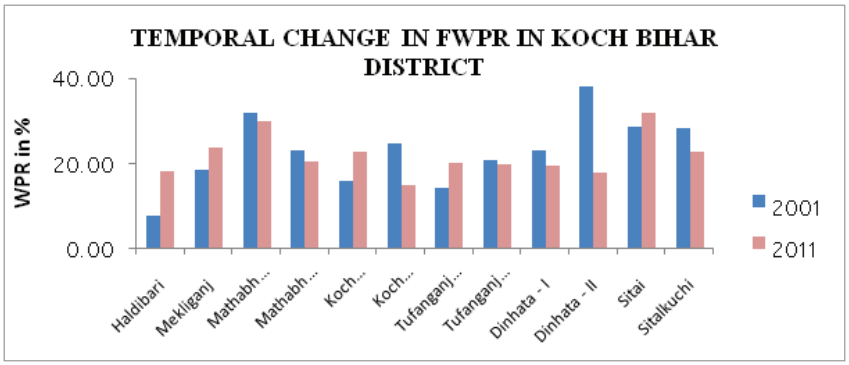


Fig. 3: Temporal Change in FWPR in Koch Bihar district

Table 3: Measures of dispersion

Year	Mean	SD	CV
2001	22.97	8.24	35.87
2011	21.82	4.88	22.37

Source: Census of India, 2011

There exist heterogeneity in the distribution of female work participation among the blocks. This nature of spatial distribution can be measured by using some measures of dispersion (Chattaraj & Chand, 2015). The SD value for 2001 and 2011 is 8.24 and 4.88 respectively and the value of coefficient of variation is 35.84 in 2001 and 22.37 in 2011 which means that FWPR is more consistent in 2011 in the district. It depicts no doubt a satisfactory picture in FWPR in the study area.

5.2. Trends of female work participation rate with compared to State: Trend of FWPR in district with comparison to West Bengal has been shown here (Fig 4).There has a fluctuation trend in FWPR. In 1951 and 1961 district FWPR was lower than the state average but after 1971 district shows an increasing trends and it is noticeable that district FWPR was higher than state in all the decades.

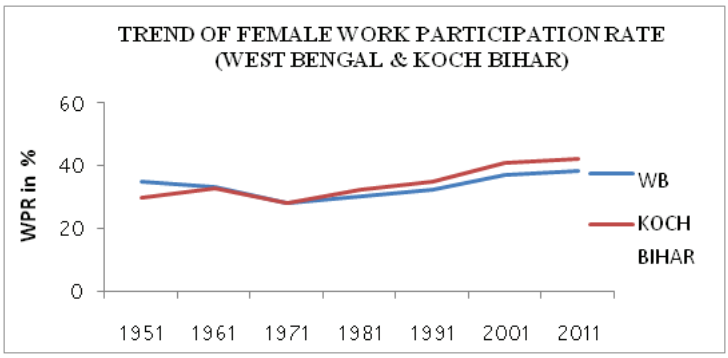


Fig. 4: Trend of FWPR (West Bengal & Koch Bihar)

5.3. Male female Disparity in work participation in rural areas of Koch Bihar district (2011): There is a gap between male and female work participation rate in rural areas in the district. Male work participation is high in each of the block compared to female. The existing disparity in work participation in rural areas in the district has been shown here (Fig 5). As per census 2011 work participation of male is 58.24% and female is 20.67. So the gender gap in work participation is 37.57% which is very much serious problem because work participation rate is a way of making women empowered. Though the rate of FWPR is increasing but disparity in work participation is a matter of concern.

Table 4: Gender disparity in WPR in rural areas of Koch Bihar district

Blocks	Total worker	Male worker	Female worker	Gender Gap	Disparity Index
Haldibari	37.91	57.11	18.06	39.05	0.605
Mekliganj	41.34	57.42	24.19	33.23	0.466
Mathabhanga - I	44.94	59.12	29.85	29.27	0.379
Mathabhanga - II	39.76	58.07	20.33	37.74	0.558
Koch Bihar - I	41.50	58.51	23.34	35.17	0.496
Koch Bihar - II	37.71	58.11	15.25	42.86	0.696

Blocks	Total worker	Male worker	Female worker	Gender Gap	Disparity Index
Tufanganj - I	40.48	59.47	20.19	39.28	0.576
Tufanganj - II	39.91	58.43	20.21	38.22	0.565
Dinhata - I	39.77	58.67	19.67	39.00	0.580
Dinhata - II	39.69	59.97	17.82	42.15	0.641
Sitai	45.67	59.14	31.77	27.37	0.347
Sitalkuchi	39.53	55.60	22.90	32.70	0.474

Source: Census of India, 2011

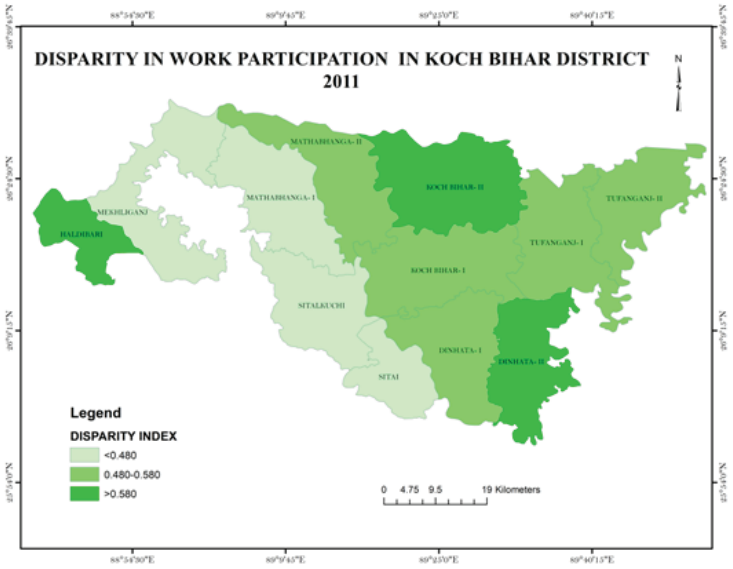


Fig.5: Disparity in Work participation rate in rural areas in Koch Bihar district

Based on calculated disparity index value the district has been categorised into 3 broad categories i.e, high disparity zone (>0.580), moderate disparity zone (0.480-0.580) and low disparity zone (<0.480). Out of 12 blocks 3 blocks having high disparity. Highest disparity is found in Koch Bihar II block followed by Dinhata II and Haldibari block. Low disparity has been found in Sitai block followed by Mekhaliganj and Sitalkuchi. Rest are the blocks fall under moderate disparity zone. Fig 5 reveals that the work participation rate in the blocks is heterogeneous in nature.

5.4. Male female Disparity in work participation in urban centres of Koch Bihar district (2011).

Table 5: Gender disparity in WPR in urban areas of Koch Bihar district

Urban Centers	work participation rate in %			Gender gap	Disparity Index
	Total	Male	Female		
Nagar Changrabandha	33.75	55.31	12.01	43.3	0.777
Kharimala Khagrabari	35.44	57.19	13.54	43.65	0.742
Guriahati	38.00	58.42	17.14	41.28	0.644
Dhaliabari	47.64	61.85	32.44	29.41	0.364
Baneswar	34.85	54.3	13.48	40.82	0.712
Khagrabari	34.79	56.48	12.43	44.05	0.774
Baisguri	36.33	56.69	14.85	41.84	0.693
Chakchaka	33.72	57.5	8.4	49.1	0.964
Takagach	36.62	57.05	15.06	41.99	0.690
Kamat phulbari	40.93	59.75	21.03	38.72	0.559
Chhota laukuthi	35.00	58.72	10.38	48.34	0.880
Bhangri pratham khanda	36.83	60.3	11.42	48.88	0.853
Haldibari (M)	35.76	54.97	15.99	38.98	0.640
Mekhliganj (M)	35.21	55.47	14.05	41.42	0.706
Mathabhanga (M)	36.16	57.45	14.45	43	0.714
Koch Bihar (M)	35.16	55.43	14.83	40.6	0.680
Tufanganj (M)	35.78	56.99	13.82	43.17	0.730
Dinhata (M)	33.9	56.4	10.69	45.71	0.842

Source: Census of India, 2011

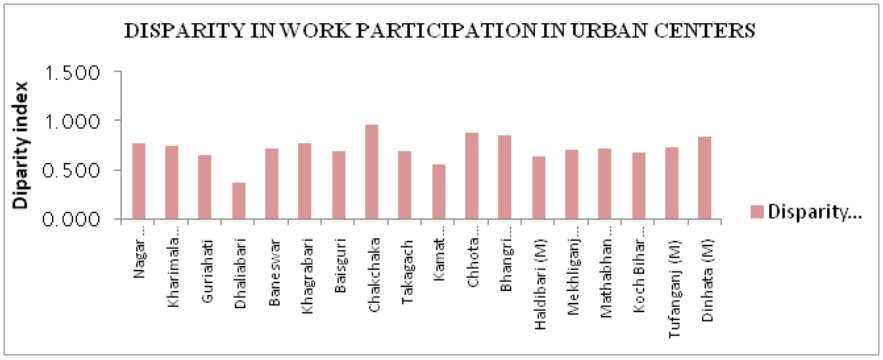


Fig.6: Disparity in Work participation rate in urban areas in Koch Bihar district

Table 5 shows the gender wise disparity of work participation in urban centres in Koch Bihar district. In each of the urban centres disparity in WPR is a common phenomenon but highest disparity is found in chakchaka whereas lowest disparity is recorded in Dhalaibari urban centres. It is interesting to see that the range of disparity in urban centres is higher than the rural areas.

Relationship between FWPR and Disparity index

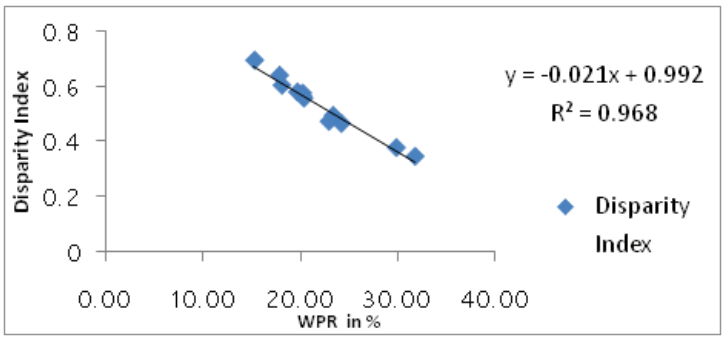


Fig.7: Relationship between FWPR and Disparity Index

There is a relationship between female work participation rate and disparity index. There is a strong negative relationship between these two variables (Fig 7). If the female work participation is high then the disparity will be definitely low.

5.6. Correlation between female work participation and some other socio economic variables:

Table 6: Correlation matrix showing relation between FWPR and other socio economic variables

Variables	Female worker	Sex ratio	Total literacy	Female literacy	MWPR	% of net shown area	% of Agricul-tural worker	Urban pop
Female worker	1							
sex ratio	0.508*	1.000						
Total literacy	-0.687*	-0.812**	1.000					
Female literacy	-0.418**	-0.795**	0.991**	1.000				
MWPR	0.407*	-0.421	0.081	0.114	1.000			
% of net shown area	-0.240	-0.751**	0.762**	0.741**	0.119	1.000		
% of agricultural worker	0.147	0.144	-0.392	-0.317	0.430	-0.611	1.000	
Urban pop	-0.370	-0.655*	0.719**	0.731**	0.000	0.726**	-0.369	1

Source: Census of India, 2011

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Basically female work participation is determined by various socio economic factors which is directly or indirectly influence female work participation in any region. Here relation between female work participation and some variables have been shown (Table 6). There is a positive relation between female work participation and sex ratio (0.508) and % of agricultural worker(0.147). Male work participation rate also found to be positively related with female work participation(0.407). But female work participation has negative relation with, total literacy (-0.687),female literacy (-0.418),% of net shown area(-0.240), % of urban population (-0.370) in the study area.

5.7.Block wise female occupational structure: A large share of women work participation in West Bengal is seen either in agricultural and traditional rural household industries (Hussain & Siddiqui, 2013). According to census 2011, occupational

structure can be classified into four broad categories i.e, cultivator, agricultural labour, household industry worker and other workers. Fig 8 shows the block wise distribution of female occupational structure. In each of the block agricultural labours occupy major proportion followed by cultivator. Highest female agricultural female labour (66.36%) can be found in Dinhata II block and lowest can be found in Tufanganj I block (37.32), but this block holds highest household industrial labour which is only (23.80%). The share of industrial worker in the study area is very much low this is mainly due to lack of major industry, infrastructural facilities in the district. Female in the district area mainly engaged in home based work like beedi making, tailoring, pati weaving etc. Sitai block is considered as the block having highest female cultivator. The picture depicts that distribution of economic activities are not homogenous. The female work participation in each of the block is low and most of them engaged as agricultural labour.

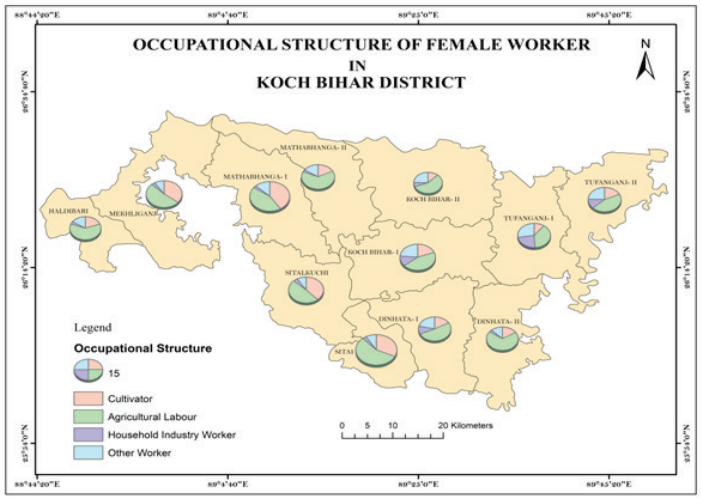


Fig.8: Occupational structure of female worker in Koch Bihar District

Conclusion: From the above discussion it is clear that though female work participation in the study area is very much low but is in increasing trend. Block wise female work participation is heterogenous in nature. Gender Disparity in work participation is a serious issue of concern for both rural and urban areas. It is common in each and every block but Haldibari, Koch Bihar II, Dinhata II these 3 blocks having high disparity in work participation. Highest FWPR in 2011 is recorded in Sitai blocks and lowest FWPR is found in Koch Bihar II block. Various socio economic factors may effect on female work participation rate. Total literacy and percentage of female literacy have

negative relation with FWPR. But MWPR and Sex ratio and percentage of agricultural labour have positive relation with FWPR. Major share of working female are mainly engaged in agricultural practices in the district. Very little share of female is engaged in household industry. Overall female work participation is not as much satisfactory in the study area. So government should make proper policies and facilities to bring them in this platform.

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The Corporate Social Responsibility Status in Nepal

Sudip Wagle[1] *& Dr. Ajeya Kumar Gupta*[2]

Abstract : *Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is the most important strategic tools for business in the 21st century. In corporate world, it is not mandatory about how much money is spent; it is to a greater extent about how to make money in the long run. This review paper aims to find out the status and the trend of CSR in Nepalese corporate world. The study is descriptive in nature, cross-sectional and is based on available printed materials. It has four major findings. First, Nepalese entrepreneurs have been doing CSR activities for a long time. Second, the level of CSR activity in Nepal is even lower than in developing countries. Third, nowadays, Nepalese corporations have much awareness about the significance of CSR. Eventually, most corporations have fallen out of the philanthropic model of CSR. This article has been done only on the basis of those materials which are accessible during the work time. The report is valuable to academicians, a future researcher as government bodies to acquire information on what form of CSR activities are taking place in Nepal. This type of cross-sectional analysis, perhaps has not been done in the Nepalese context. At last, it is correct to say that right now corporate sectors have not been able to carry out their mandatory CSR activities accordingly as required but its pattern shows there is rich potential for optimism.*

Keywords: CSR, Models, Status in Nepal, Mandatory, Sustainable Development

Introduction: Corporate societal responsibility (CSR) is a business idea that adds to sustainable growth. It is connected with all the stockholders like customers, employees,

investors, society and the government. It emphasizes the corporate commitments to social and environmental practice. It is the organization's task for its values, culture, decision making, strategy and reporting mechanisms (Khanal 2016).

Nepal is a developing country, but at the initiate discussion on CSR dimension, yet regarded as an underdeveloped country (Adhikari et. al 2016: 673). It possesses a long history of unstable government and the nation is confronting problems in a number of sectors. The concept of CSR went on changing in its business and society. Over the globe, CSR has been recognized as an element of long-term survival activities balancing the business with economic growth and societal expectations. However, In four countries, the France, the Netherlands, the U.K., and the U.S. do not have the same degree of commitment of being socially responsible (Maignan & Ralston 2002: 497). CSR and profit maximization are the interrelated objective of the firms (Chapagain 2012: 165). The strategic approach decidedly corresponded with the company and its stakeholders (Pant & Piansoongnern 2017: 275). The purpose of the business is not only to earn profit but also to ensure the welfare of society as well by showing a part of their profit. In this circumstance, business enterprises can play their CSR role to improve their reputation as well as long- term financial goals, just by improving social welfare as a whole. Nepal's neighbor countries India and China practices CSR like developed countries. In India, late Mahatma Gandhi influenced CSR. The Indian Government has declared the national CSR award to the corporate houses each year on October 29 since 1999. In China, the primary aim of CSR is to create work opportunities (Xu and Yang 2019: 321). The Chinese central Government embraced a circular economic policy to protect environmental degradation and resource scarcity issues. Local and provincial Governments of China conduct CSR programs fundamentally on health maintenance, training, support and environmental protection (Mullich 2011).

Despite the fact that the idea and practice of CSR were initiated from the western countries, social responsibility of business is not new to Nepal. In the past 100 years of history of Nepal few business communications have contributed their wealth to build educational institutions, temples and dharmasalas. Hundreds of acres lands were donated by some landlords in the name of Gods and Goddesses. Whenever the country faces disaster there will be some intellectual personality who will be there to donate food, cloth and other shelter services. In this regard, the policy recently issued by the government of Nepal is as follows;

The government of Nepal has announced legal rules binding the business and industries to allocate certain fund on corporate social responsibility ("CSR"); for industries ("IEA"), banks and financial institutions ("BFIs"), and micro financial institutions ("MFIs") since the fiscal year 2016/17. No such requirement is prescribed for insurance

businesses and other non-industrial sectors (for example, trading businesses).

The mandatory requirement of the CSR is based on (a) investments in the fixed capital, or (b) annual turnover.

The CSR requirement is applicable in the following way; (i) small industries: Industries having an investment in fixed capital up to NPR 150 million (ii) medium industries; i.e. industries having investment in fixed capital exceeding NPR 150 million but less than NPR 500 million; (iii) large industries, i.e. industries having investment in fixed capital exceeding of NPR 500 million and (iv) cottage industries (i.e. Industries based on traditional skill or technology, local raw materials and resources, etc.) and micro industries (i.e. Industries having investment in fixed capital of less than NPR 2 million) whose, annual turnover is more than NPR 150 million.

Fixed capital for the purpose of (IEA) is calculated based on assets such as land, buildings, factory, storage house, machineries, vehicles, furniture etc.

Table 1: Nepalese Existing Laws on Corporate Social Responsibility

CSR Requirement for Industries (IEA)	CSR Requirement for Bank and Financial Institutions (BFIs)	CSR Requirement for Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs)
Applicability	*Applicability*	*Applicability*
The IEA makes it mandatory to allocate at least one percent (1%) of the annual profit to be utilized for CSR	The NRB Circular has required BFIs to allocate at least one percent (1%) of net profit and deposit the same in a separate CSR fund. The fund is allocated to be utilized in the subsequent fiscal year.	The NRB Circular has required MFIs to allocate at least one percent (1%) of its net profit for each financial year and deposit it in the corporate social responsibility fund. The fund is allocated to be utilized in the subsequent fiscal year.

Source: Industrial Enterprise Act (IEA) 2016 (www.lawcommission.gov.np)
Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) Unified Directives 2020 (www.nrb.org.np)

Here is discussion on few models and theories of CSR.

Table 2: Models of CSR

Model	Period	Focus
Philanthropic	1930s - Later	Making profits and donating a part of it to charitable causes.
Ethical	1930s - 1950s	The voluntary commitment showed by corporations towards society.
Statist	1950s - 1970s	It is based on legal responsibilities towards society.

Model	Period	Focus
Liberal	1970s - 1990s	Just obey the law and generate as much wealth as possible.
Stakeholder	1990s - Present	It focused on triple-bottom-line concept of business.

Source: Khanka 2014

Philanthropic Model: The model says that CSR is both for making profit and donating a portion of it for charitable campaigns for the company. Companies should also pay taxes regularly as per their statements. The poser is not against companies producing a profit, but the business should be socially viable.

Ethical Model: The model presents the ethical form of CSR. It is a voluntary commitment shown by corporations towards society. Business organizations should also contribute to social welfare activities. Wealth is just a means to an end, thus; corporations have a duty to contribute something back to society.

Statist Model: This model is based on legal responsibilities towards society. It is also founded on socialist format. This model is applicable in a mixed economy like public and private sector enterprises.

Liberal Model: This model is based on Milton Friedman's view, which says companies' responsibility lies mainly in improving the economic bottom-line and increasing the wealth of the shareholders. His views say that the business should simply obey the law and generate as much riches as possible. When more profit is gained in a a business, it should aim towards the social wellfare by offering cheaper and quality goods.

Stakeholder Model: This model focuses on the triple-bottom-line concept of business. Companies are expected to stick to the triple-bottom-line of economic, social and environmental responsibility towards workers, the shareholders and the community.

Table 3: Theories of CSR

Theories	Focus	Paramount Advocate
Fiduciary capitalism theory	Shareholders value maximization.	Milton Fried man (1970)
Stakeholder theory	Stakeholders' relationship for value creation.	Freeman (1984)

Theories	Focus	Paramount Advocate
Social contract theory	Business enterprises should contribute more to the quality of life than just supplying quantities of goods and services.	Altman and Vidaver-Cohen and Winder (1980s)
Feminist theory	Corporations not only for employees to care, but also for other stakeholders such as suppliers, consumers, communities and the environment.	Burton and Dunn (1996)

Source: Khanka 2014

Fiduciary capitalism theory: The Nobel laureate Milton Friedman is the paramount advocate of the Fiduciary capitalism theory. This theory focuses on shareholders' value of interest. It emphasizes that the only social responsibility of businesses is to make a profit and in turn to increase the companies' economic value for its shareholders. Any social goals could be borne by the company if they lead to maximize shareholders' value. The shareholders are the most important in a business set up, therefore once their needs were met, then the firm has no other responsibilities. This approach enlightened the value maximization.

Stakeholder theory: Stakeholder theory was first postulated by Edward Freeman in 1984 and applied in strategic management. A stakeholder is any individual or group who can affect or is affected by the actions, decisions, policies, practices or goals of the organization. The theory says shareholders are not the only stakeholders in a company but others such as employees, customers, suppliers, government, moneylenders, etc. also. This theory is based on two ethical principles which are i) Principle of corporate right and ii) Principle of corporate effects. This theory emphasizes that the success of a company depends on the relationship with stakeholders and managing them has become an essential tool for value creation.

Social contract theory: This theory focuses on changing contracts between business and society. It indicated that economic development does not inevitably result in social development. It means business houses need to reduce societal costs by not merely centering on improving economic development but also increasing social growth. The major contract between society and business are in fact, changing in real ways. Business is being asked to assume broader responsibilities to society than ever before. Business enterprises should give more to the quality of life than just supplying quantities of commodities and serves.

Feminist theory: Feminist theory of CSR is known as ethics of concern. This theory advocates respect for all individuals, relationships amongst them and care it. Corporations should not be carrying all stakeholders into a business sense only. In the pursuit of innovation, the business has become blind to some consequences of their actions, such as environmental degradation, dominances of less privileged groups and inequitable distribution of opportunities. This theory suggests that special attention be given to the least advantaged groups or individuals incorporating a care perspective.

Some extensive Nepalese studies are concentrated about CSR practices, disclosure activities, shareholders attitude towards CSR in the context of Nepal. At present, it is necessary to blend the overall CSR activities what have been done up in the context of Nepal and which model/theory they have been taken. The aim of this study is to find out in the comparative context, the status and trend of CSR in Nepal. To date, there is no such research conducted based on cross-sectional analysis to ensure the perception of corporations which are exposed to some extent towards the mandatory CSR policy recently issued by the regime.

Research Design: This work is grounded on a secondary source, specially identified and analysis of recent research document. The research work confirms the prevailing CSR practices in different parts of Nepal, which are cross-sectional in nature, having reasons and logic as elicited by the descriptive analysis. The research paper is based on the intensive review of the published materials.

Results and Discussions: Corporate social responsibility refers to the responsibility of the business organization towards its shareholders, employees, investors and the community. CSR aims to maintain sustainable development in society along with the long-term achievement of business destinations. The accompanying board indicates the status and trend of CSR activities in the context of Nepal.

Table 4: The status and trend of CSR activities in the context of Nepal

Paper/Article written / published	Author's Name	Title	Major Findings	Theoretical Strand
2018 A.D.	Drishti Maharjan	Corporate social responsibility (CSR): Scenario & Implications in Nepal	By the CSR organization can willfully work upon, to adjust business and social advantages.	Philanthropic motive

Paper/Article written / published	Author's Name	Title	Major Findings	Theoretical Strand
2018 A.D.	Laxman Raj Kandel	Corporate Social Responsibility in Nepalese Commercial Bank regards the Bank of Kathmandu Limited.	The priority of CSR disclosure activities of the bank is education, health, and environment.	Somehow tried to follow by stakeholder model from Philanthropic
2018 A.D.	Sudip Wagle	Corporate Social Responsibility: A status review in Nepalese selected companies.	Centered regions of normal CSR intercession are environmental awareness, blood donation, and donation to bridhasharm.	Philanthropic motive
2017 A.D.	Smriti Shrestha	Status of Corporate social responsibility in Nepal	The status of CSR is not agreeable, but their social responsibility seems more serious.	Corporations Commitment for ethical motive
2017 A.D.	Dr Manoj Kumar Chaudhary	Corporate social responsibility in Nepal: Is CSR does good for business and society?	In Nepal, a unified structure for CSR execution is required instead of Arbitrary.	Upliftment of the need of stakeholder motive for philanthropic
2017 A.D.	Dinesh Raj Pant, Opas Pianso-ongnern	Impact of Corporate Social Responsibility on Sustainable Competitive Advantage: A Case Study of Leading Noodle Companies in Nepal.	Because of the globalization organizations these days are progressively positive towards CSR and stakeholder management.	Appreciate to stakeholder motive
2016 A.D.	Krishna prasain, Nikeeta Gautam and Gagan Shrestha	CSR Initiatives of some companies in Nepal	The awareness of social duty has led them to share their benefit with the society and being engaged in various territories of social well-being.	Followed to Liberal motive

Paper/Article written / published	Author's Name	Title	Major Findings	Theoretical Strand
2016 A.D.	Dev Raj Adhikari, Dhurba Kumar Gautam, and Manoj Kumar Chaudhari	Corporate social responsibility domains and related activities in Nepalese Companies	The economic domain of CSR is emerging prominence in Nepal. It is moving from philanthropic toward focusing on their strategic intent.	Focusing for stakeholder from philanthropic motive
2013 A.D.	Kshitiz Upadhyay-Dhungel, Amar Dhungel	Corporate Social Responsibility Reporting Practices in the Banking Sector in Nepal.	In the past, few banks had already taken CSR practice involuntary basis. Uniformity standards and framework of CSR is highly recommended.	Agreed the need to Stakeholder's motive
2012 A.D.	Bal ram Chapagain	Corporate Social Responsibility: A review of managers' attitudes in Nepal.	Manager's attitude towards CSR by both manufacturing and banking sector are positive.	Ethical motive
2012 A.D.	Krishna Kumar Shah	Corporate social responsibility in Nepal	Business concerns depend on something more than the expedition for benefits.	Philanthropic motive

Source: Printed materials 2019

The above table shows that in all aspects concerning corporate social responsibility in Nepal there are no significant differences in above findings in the study period. Dinesh Raj Pant, and Opas Piansoongnern (2017: 275) concluded that the strategic approach to CSR can help the companies gain support with betterment in financial performance. Followed by Shah (2012: 33). Management of Nepalese firms still is engaged in maximum profit motive rather than social interest. Nowadays, the Companies were more positive towards CSR and stakeholder management. The attitude towards CSR by banking and manufacturing sector managers were positive by favorable public image and negative to cost adding pricing structure, but they were assured about CSR and profit maximization for common goals of the firm (Balram 2012:165). Laxman Raj

Kandel (2018: 90) focused on the sectors of the company concerned with their CSR activities and the relation of CSR on financial performance. The relationship of CSR with the financial performance of the company results in positive (93.33 per cent), negative (0 per cent) and indifferent (6.67 per cent) respectively. It seems that the majority of employees believe that CSR contributes to financial performance. Sudip (2018: 170) contemplated the CSR reporting trend and focusing on areas of CSR intervention by the Nepalese Companies. Out of 3 (3 commercial banks, 1 insurance and 1 hotel) sectors of selected companies, 61 times CSR reporting information was found from the banking websites since their establishment. Whereas, from the remaining sectors of companies only 3 equal times reporting information were found. Most of the CSR areas of intervention involved were related to companies to environmental awareness, blood donation and donation to bridhasharma, which was 80 per cent. Also, 60 per cent intervenes in healthcare and furthermore, support to equipment installation for social security, a donation to various food items for the orphanage and donation to the school was 40 per cent.

According to Kshitiz Upadhyay-Dhungel, Amar Dhungel (2013: 61), out of 14 different types of banks only 71.43 per cent of them were reporting on their CSR activities. Furthermore, most of the CSR area of intervention related to education/training was 64.29 per cent and contribution to the welfare of underprivileged was 64.29 per cent. For arts/heritage/culture, associations/clubs/trust/organization, and health care, contribution was 42.86 per cent in each case and so forth. This result shows that when CSR was not mandatory in Nepal, a few banks had already taken CSR practices on an involuntary basis, also some have CSR report pages on their websites. According to Dev Raj Adhikari, Dhruba Kumar Gautam, Manoj Kumar Chaudhari (2016: 673) jointly published the research article on Corporate Social Responsibility domains analyzed from focus group discussion. According to this study, out of 21 recorded statements, the highest 10 statements represented economic domains. 9 statements followed philanthropic, 8 ethical and 6 legal domains. Among them, few domain activities are overlapping. The findings concluded that the strategic importance of CSR activities is getting higher in Nepal. Similarly, Dr. Manoj Kumar Chaudhary (2017: A8) did his research from both structured Questionnaire and focus group discussion methods. Questionnaires were put to the faculty members of Tribhuvan University, to those who had more than 5 years teaching experience. Focus group discussion method was applied to experts with different background like industry and academia. The result enhanced that corporate reputation is the first benefits for adopting CSR activities in an organization. Likewise, to improve the employee's institution and community, efficiency increment, acquisition of commercial benefits and identification of reputational risks as second, third, fourth and fifth respectively. Besides, to test the

perception towards CSR, among 16 discussion statements shows that it was not the time to be a CSR as mandatory in Nepal due to very low conditions of legal and ethical domains. However, the tendency of the organization seems to be becoming more responsible in the society day by day.

Conclusion : The overall survey of the position of CSR in Nepal from various news, articles, research papers summarize that, Nepalese businesses performing their CSR activities very efficiently all through the past. Although lots of work has been done based on the CSR Model and Theories in developed countries, a developing country like Nepal is far behind at this. Nepalese corporations are very much aware about what CSR is but have a different understanding and viewpoint about the way it should be carried out. Most corporations have a philanthropic viewpoint, while some have barely taken interest towards stakeholders' direction. Similarly, fiduciary capitalism of business community were studied by mostly applying feminist theory. However, the social contract and stakeholder theories are not utilised properly. These days, corporations' strategy is being changed from voluntary to obligatory. It creates pressure to the companies for being socially responsible. Ultimately, it is right to say that corporations have not been able to take out their mandatory CSR activities. However; the trend shows huge potential for positive thinking.

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The Study of the Process of Transformation from Ivory to Wood Carving in Jaipur, Rajasthan and its effect on the Craftsmen

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Abstract : *Rajasthan, the western most state in India is a repertoire of cultural heritage. Countless examples of tangible and intangible cultural elements are scattered over its diverse territory. Among those its handicraft traditions are the most remarkable amalgamation of tangible and intangible cultural traits. Jaipur the capital of Rajasthan had a long antiquity of ivory craft dated back to seventeenth century and continuously practiced till the complete ban of ivory in 1990. However, the high demand of ivory objects in different parts of the world led to the ruthless killings of elephants, as such, the authority had to sacrifice the art for the sake of the survival of the nature's mighty creature. The craftsmen mostly belonging to Kumawat community are still struggling there to survive with some alternative raw materials of ivory like sandal wood, kadamba wood, bone and artificial ivory. The goals of this article are to assess the effects of the change on the craft and the craftsmen, to find out whether there is any continuity of the age-old traditional craftsmanship still exist even after the change of the raw material and to formulate sustainable strategies for the further development of the heritage craft with alternative raw materials.*

Keywords: Intangible cultural heritage, traditional craftsmanship, ivory carving, wood carving, sustainable development

Introduction: Rajasthan, located at the north-western part of India is one of the most colourful and culturally enriched regions of the country. Monuments like gigantic forts, palaces and temples having immense historical and archaeological significance as well as intangible cultural elements like different forms of folk dances, music and paintings are the incredible heritage of Rajasthan. The region is also the birth place of several handicraft traditions which produce beautiful decorative and utilitarian objects manifesting indigenous human knowledge, creativity and imagination. The general aridity of the weather is the reason of poor agriculture in the past which in fact gave birth to different handicraft traditions as a source of alternative income for many communities. Handicrafts are the living heritage encompassing tangible as well as intangible cultural elements in the form of objects, knowledge and values. Objects can be studied on the basis of their functional, structural and dynamic properties. Knowledge denotes technique of manufacturing and tools' usage pattern.Values can be described as how the people of that particular community can relate and identify themselves with the objects and how the craft items are acknowledged by the society for their social and economic significance. So, in short traditional handicrafts are the treasure house for knowledge seekers because of having immense historical, social, cultural and economic importance and as such need to be protected from obliteration. Therefore, UNESCO has included traditional craftsmanship as a major domain of intangible cultural heritage in the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage 2003* which is required to safeguard from the threats of "destruction, deterioration and disappearance" due to the process of "Globalization and Social transformation" and a lack of fund to protect them (UNESCO © 2020).

Now a conflict arises, when a traditional craft is using an animal product as raw material and responsible for the reason of the gradual depletion of that particular animal from the face of earth due to over exploitation. Such an example was the ivory craft of India.

India being the natural habitat for the Asian elephant had always exploited ivory for its own benefit. Ancient Indians from this subcontinent used ivory, sometimes to fulfil their aesthetic taste and creative artistic desires by making beautiful decorative art pieces, furniture and other utilitarian items and sometimes just for economic gain by exporting raw ivory. Different centres of ivory carving developed in Indian subcontinent which were showing outstanding craftsmanship such as in Odisha, Thiruvananthapuram, Delhi, Assam, Murshidabad, Sylhet, Pali, Jaipur etc. (Dwivedi 1976; Pal and Roy Burman 1961), mostly in the Medieval period under the patronage of royal families and later on, some were continued in the British period too for immense popularity of the ivory objects among the foreigners. The craftsmen were exploiting

indigenous ivory as well as imported African Ivory and not only in India but in many other countries of the world ivory trading and ivory carving were a lucrative trade for long time.

However, in India where two hundred thousand of elephants were there in the early part of the 20th century became sixteen to twenty thousand in the mid1980s (Indian Kanoon 1997) as well as in Africa there were 1.34 million elephants in 1976 but within a decade the number came down to 600 thousand only (Stiles 2004). As a result Indian Government by implementing the *Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Act 1986 (Act no. 28 of 1986), 1991 (Act no. 44 of 1991) and 2002 (Act no. 16 of 2003)* has banned all kinds of trading of ivory Indian or imported and also prohibited making of articles from them, in addition to that possession of raw ivory or ivory art objects without an authorized certificate by a trader or a person is also a punishable offence. The honourable Supreme Court of India stated in the judgment of the case of *Indian Handicrafts Emporium And Ors vs Union Of India (Uoi) And Ors.* on 27 August, 2003 that the authority i.e. the Central Government should take physical possession of the stock of ivory and the seized ivory art works should be preserved and displayed in the Museum as they were the "cultural and religious heritage of India" (Indian Kanoon 2003). In addition to this inclusion of African elephants in the Appendix I of CITES in 1989 completely banned international ivory trade in 1990 (Reifenstein, Kitschke and Ziegler 2008: 14).

Due to those rules and regulations craftsmen were impelled to shift into some alternative materials of ivory to continue their craft profession. Jaipur was an important ivory carving centre in the western part of the country in the last century and where a considerable number of ivory craftsmen or their descendants are still struggling on alternative raw materials to produce beautiful traditional art pieces by following old technique and designs.

The major goal of this study is to reveal and understand how the change in the raw material affect the ivory craft overall and how the craftsmen are still struggling to survive the adverse situation and also to formulate fruitful strategies for the sustainable development of the craft. The history of the ivory carving industry is documented and analyzed from different published sources to understand the historical, economic and social values of the ivory objects as well as the functional and structural properties of the ivory articles along with the technique, tools and designs. The present day situation is studied by following the qualitative and quantitative methods to understand the effect of the changes into their socio-economic life and their present-day problems.

The history of ivory carving: its growth and decline in Jaipur: The earliest evidence of ivory work is found at Amber palace in Jaipur where walls are paneled with sandal

wood inlaid with ivory and doors which also show ivory inlay work dated to 1630 AD (Watts and Brown 1903:179; Pal and Roy Burman 1961:62). Ivory objects from the Jeypore School of Art mentioned in the Official Report of the Calcutta International Exhibition (1985) were ivory handled silver dagger, ivory priming horn, ivory finger ring, ivory snake, ivory kite, man with a bottle made on ivory. Other important centres of ivory carving in Rajasthan mentioned in the Catalogue of Delhi Art Exhibition (Watts and Brown 1903: 178-180) were Bikaner, Udaipur and Pali a small town in Jodhpur. Pal in his book Handicrafts of Rajasthan (1984) mentioned that Bharatpur, Jaipur and Udaipur were the important ivory carving centres of Rajasthan. Various art objects were manufactured such as decorative items like images of Gods and Goddesses, secular human figurines, animal and birds, contemporary and folk life scenes; utilitarian items like bangles, boxes, chessmen, combs, paper cutters, dagger belts and so on. He also stated that Jaipur became an important centre during the reign of Maharaja Man Singh in the late 19th century who patronized the art very much. He arranged to give training to the craftsmen by the master craftsmen of Delhi. Jaipur was famous for making bangles, chessmen sets, paper knives, hukka bases, jewelry items, figures of animals and birds, fish shaped surmadani, boxes and lamps with intricate jali designs etc. Another specialty of Jaipur was ivory mats and fans made with thin ivory strips introduced in the 17th century probably from Bharatpur. A survey report published by All India Handicrafts Board on the Ivory Carving Industry of Jaipur (1965) gave detail information about the industry. The survey was conducted in 1960. According to the report the industry flourished during and after the World War II when foreign troops stationed in India. After the end of the war during early 50s many rich businessmen see possibilities in this craft so had become interested to invest. The industry provided employment to 235 workers. Most of the workers were working under the dealers on wage rate basis and only a small portion of self-employed artisans purchased raw material from market and supplied the finished product to the dealers and exporters. The wage rate for the workers varied from INR 1.50 to INR 8 per day according to their skill. Power-driven motors were used at that time also along with hand tools. The finished items included articles like statues, animal figures, chess-sets, table lamps, elephant bridges, lion capitol, cock-tail pin, paper cutters and so on. At that time marketing of a large part of the production was conducted by the dealers and dealers cum exporters of Jaipur and outside like Delhi, Bombay, Benaras and Calcutta; a small part by the Rajasthan Government Handicrafts Emporium and even a smaller part by the co-operative societies and small-scale self-employed artisans. The artisans used their traditional designs to make items as well as the dealers also provided designs according to their requirements.

During 80s Martin and Vigne (1989: 16) mentioned in their article that Jaipur had

the largest number of craftsmen around 760, half of whom specialized in miniature paintings on ivory plate. Since 1960s the number of painters increased as it was very popular in foreign countries. Another specialty was elephant making industry which was no longer an important export item as it lost its popularity and replaced by the production of Chinese man. Another tradition of Jaipur was to make antique ivory items by treating them artificially.

A survey was conducted by Traffic India in 2001 and published an online report in 2003. The study revealed that after ten years of ban hundreds of carvers were still involved in ivory carving in India and Jaipur was one of the most active areas of illegal ivory carving. Approximately 120 artisans were still carving on ivory in Jaipur specially making miniature paintings.

Present condition of the carvers: In Jaipur, artisans are presently carving on different kinds of wood, artificial ivory as well as on camel and buffalo bone. Only the families of ivory craftsmen were chosen for interview and those who learnt from ivory workers. As such the following four regions were surveyed namely, Jothwara Industrial area, Niwaru village, Ninder village and at the Kalyan Ji ka rasta in the city of Jaipur of the Jaipur district. These areas are the residences of ivory craftsmen. Total 22 families consisting of 39 artisans were interviewed. Very few female artisans are found to assist their husbands in carving. Here as shown in the table no. 1 that the numbers of young and middle-aged artisans are almost same and only three artisans are above the age of sixty.In Jaipur the craft was practiced by *Kumawats* who were previously temple mansions by profession. Now in the present research except for one Jath all other artisans belong to *Kumawats* community. Regarding education it is found that 12.8 percent artisans are unlettered, while 74.4 percent have left education after matriculation and only 5 percent are graduates.

Table 1: Age and Sex wise distribution of the Artisans of Jaipur

Age Groups	M	%	F	%	Total	%
14 to 30	15	38.5	3	7.7	18	46.2
31 to 60	17	43.6	1	2.6	18	46.2
61 to 80	3	7.7	0	0	3	7.7
Total	35	89.8	4	10.3	39	100

Young generation perception towards the craft as profession: It is found that 37.9 percent offspring of the artisans have chosen craft profession while 24.1 percent of them prefer other kind of jobs and 37.9 percent are still students. Most of them said as they are not highly educated that's why they continue their hereditary profession.

Training: This craft is very difficult to learn and required a long training period with maximum involvement and concentration. Knowledge of drawing and measurement is also inevitable for learning. As such training from a professional carver is very much required for a novice learner. There are different modes of training availed by the artisans. The following table no. 2 shows that most of the artisans took training from family members. Family members mean either from any elder members like father, uncle or maternal uncle from the ascending generation or elder brother or cousin from his own generation. Govt. of India has introduced a training programme for six months or one year for the interested persons by Master craftsmen i.e. national award winners at their home or at any govt. training centre in which the trainees got INR 2000 as stipend per month and the trainer INR 15000 per month as honorarium. Only a few craftsmen are found to avail training under this programme. Another important mode of training is that novices go to any workshop and take training from the owner of the workshop and other senior workers. Now-a-days the apprentice get INR 1200 per month at Jaipur. Earlier this practice generally called *Gurukul* system and the learner had to do all the household work for the Guru and in exchange Guru taught him the technique of carving. The starting age of training for most of the artisans is between 15 and 20. It is very difficult to estimate the training period required to learn carving because most of them could not remember from when or at what age they started to work professionally especially the hereditary craftsmen. However, as informed by the artisans it is found that making of images of gods and goddesses or secular human figure is very tough to learn required minimum 5 years during which one year should be given for drawing and one year to operate the tools. Those who are specialized in making of elephants said that minimum two to four years are required to learn. At first stage they learn to engrave designs on the elephant and in the second stage gradually they acquire the technique of carving the shape of the elephant.

Table 2: Modes of training availed by the artisans

Types of Training	Artisans(%)
Only Family Members	66.7
Only Master Craftsman	0

Types of Training	Artisans(%)
Only on the job training	17.9
Family Members and Master Craftsman	5.1
Family Members and On the job training	10.3

Occupation: Artisans can be categorized into four types according to their nature of earning. Wage earners mean those who bring raw material from other artisans or dealers and after carving the items, again return to them. They either work at their home or at other craftsmen's work shop and get labour charge. Self-employed denotes who purchase raw material themselves and make objects according to order given by dealer or to current market demand. Dealers who collect items from self-employed artisans and supplied those items to the exporters cum showroom owners of Jaipur, Delhi or any other states. Some of the self-employed artisans also work as dealer. They make objects at their own workshops and also purchase products from other artisans and supply to the exporters. While few of them also work as wage earners when carve on expensive items like sandal wood. It was found during field work that though there were many young artisans but most of them i.e 55% of them had some kind of alternative sources of income. Some of the craftsmen engaged themselves in some other kind of crafts for additional earning like marble craft. Some of them with small businesses or private jobs and others had agricultural income. The reasons for involving with other kind of jobs are low and irregular income compare to ivory carving and uncertain future. It was found that almost 90% of the artisans were not satisfied with the present state of affairs like earning, process of selling, price of raw material and availability of raw material.

Artisans can be further divided into four categories based on the products they manufactured like those who are specialized in making Elephants, others in making images of Gods and Goddesses as well as secular human figures, some are specialized in carving stylized composite animal figures and animal cart models and artisans who are doing miniature paintings on artificial ivory. Some of the artisans who are very experienced and talented they can make elephants, images of gods and goddesses as well as secular figures.

Table 3: Occupation wise distribution of the artisans' family

Nature of occupation	HHU	%
Only Artisans	10	45.5
Other occupation craft related	4	18.1

Nature of occupation	HHU	%
Private jobs	1	4.5
Agricultural income	9	40.9
Total	22	100

Table 4: Level of job satisfaction among the artisans

	Artisans (%)
Satisfied with the state of affairs	10.3
Not Satisfied with the state of affairs	89.7
Looking up for alternative employment	23.1
Almost Left	2.6

Assets of Artisans:

Table 5: Types of assets of the artisan families

Types of Assets		HHU	%
Residential Premises	Rented		
	Kaccha		
	Semi pacca	1	04.5
	Pacca	20	90.9
Land		9	40.9
Workshop	Own	21	95.4
	Govt.	0	
	Other	2	09.1
Tools	Hand tools	6	27.3
	Machine tools	20	90.9
Vehicles	Two wheeler	17	77.3
	Four Wheeler	3	13.6
Others		3	13.6
Total		22	100.0

The table shows that almost every artisan family lives in concrete houses except one. 40.9 percent craftsmen have agricultural land as considerable numbers of them live at villages. Most of them work with family members or alone or with wage earners at their own workshops inside their houses. It is found that almost everyone uses machine tools. At Jaipur most of the families have two wheelers due to the poor transport system inside the villages. Three of them have four wheelers who are self-employed cum dealers.

Labour Charge, working time and working environment: Wage rate for plain elephants is INR 8/inch.

Wage rate for special elephants is INR 10/inch.

Per month labour charge for learner is INR 500 - 1200.

Semi-skilled craftsman wage rate is INR 100 to 200/day.

Skilled Craftsman wage rate is INR 300/day. A skilled craftsman should know each and every kind of work on a particular item and should possess the capability to innovate new patterns when required.

In case of sandal wood the workers work on the basis of wages. They charge according to the size of the objects. The wage rate is 10 to 15 % more than *Kadamba* wood. The wastages belong to the wage earner which he can sell at INR 1500/kilo.

In case of bone per day earning is INR 250.

In Jaipur at small workshops one person does not carve the whole piece. A skilled craftsman gives the shape and then semiskilled craftsman finishes the product like engraving and polishing with the guidance from the owner or the employed skilled craftsman. In big workshops of the dealers the artisans make the whole item on inch basis. They work from 7AM in the morning to 10 PM at night and earn INR500 to 600 per day. They get only one holiday per month. They also work for whole night if large quantity of production required. A workshop was visited during survey where the working environment was not healthy at all. The workshop was underground with no ventilation at all. 10 workers were continuously operating machines in small rooms producing huge quantity of wood-dust causing severe breathing problem.

In house hold units the artisans work from morning to evening. The working environment is very healthy with proper ventilation.

Artisans were complaining during the survey that the labour charge is not increasing at all. The rate was almost same for the last five years.

Raw Material: Sandal wood

Before the ban of ivory, the craftsmen had started to shift on sandal wood (Santalum album L.) as a substitute of ivory. At that time sandal wood was very cheap, only INR 250/ kg in 1991-92 which is equivalent to today's INR1610. Around that time in 1986 the wholesale price of imported raw ivory was INR 900/ kg which is equivalent today's INR 30,100/kg (Martin and Vigne 1989: 14). It can be easily assumed that it was not possible for the artisans to purchase such expensive raw material. At that time sandal wood had high demand in market also, but gradually due to excessive smuggling and wrong policies of State Governments the production of sandal wood had decreased from 4631 tonnes in 1971-72 (MRD 1986) to 400/ 500 tonnes in 2010-2011 (Kumar et. al. 2012: 1411). As such sandal wood has been categorized as a vulnerable species and included in the list of IUCN in 1997 (Kumar et. al. 2012, p. 1411). The rate of sandal wood was INR 10,000/kg at the raw material depot of Handicraft Development Corporation of Kerala Ltd. in 2012 and recently in 2019 Kerala Government auctioned sandal wood from Marayoor Sandal Reserve Forest Office which is considered world's best sandal wood. It was sold at the rate of Rs 17802 -18,190/Kg (The Hindu, 5th September 2019). However, the last decade of the last century was profitable for the craftsmen due to the abundance of raw material, reasonable price and high demand of sandal wood handicraft items in the foreign countries. In 2001 the terrorist attack on World Trade Centre in America exceptionally declined the tourism in India as well as the demand in foreign countries which affect the handicraft industry very severely. Many carvers specially the wage earners and small self-employed artisans left the carving profession then. Again in 2008 another blow came on the handicraft industry after the Mumbai attack. The cost of the sandal wood has been increasing day by day since the starting of this century. As a result, the price of the finished product has also increased so much that very few people can afford to buy it. Naturally craftsmen stopped working on sandal wood and started to find some alternatives that have the same look and qualities of sandal wood but available abundantly in low cost.

Sandal wood is brownish in colour, softer than ivory and an aromatic wood. Its oily content gives a shiny look after polishing. The specific gravity of sandal wood is 0.96 (College of Forestry 2012) i.e. very high density which actually reduce the chances of breakage while carving that's why it has been used for sculpting art pieces from very earliest time in India. Its fine texture and regular grain texture (College of Forestry 2012) also helps to move the tools easily and gives a neat and clean finishing almost similar to ivory. Almost 90 percent of natural Indian sandal wood is found at the forests of the south Indian states like Karnataka, Tamilnadu and Kerala. In addition to those states sandal wood in very low quantity are also available in Andhra Pradesh, Madhya

Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh (Rai 1990: 66). Few years back large scale cultivation started in different states like Gujarat, Maharastra, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan apart from Karnataka, Tamilnadu and Kerala (Kumar et.al 2012:1415). Minimum twenty years are required to harvest the tree, so the results are still waiting far away.

According to the craftsmen sandal wood has some demerits also. It has a tendency to develop crack even after seasoning for many days. So, if the finished product develops a crack the dealer or showroom owner returns the article to the craftsman and unlike ivory it becomes a total waste for him. If ivory object developed a crack the craftsman used to treat it with colour or tea liquor or coffee or henna and gave it an antique look and sold it even in higher price. Jaipur had a practice to make antique ivory items with artificial methods (Martin and Vigne 1989: 16). However, presently if the artisans get order for carving sandal wood item, the raw material is provided by the dealer and they work on wage. They do not take the risk to purchase the raw material.

Kadamba wood

Now-a-days the craftsmen are working on *Kadamba* wood(Neolamarckia cadamba) and in a smaller extent on *Haldu* (Haldina cordifolia). *Kadamba* is off-white or light brownish in colour whereas *Haldu* is yellowish in colour. The specific gravity of *Kadamba* is 0.41 to 0.53 (Simpson and Hidayat 1994:11, 15) as such delicate or minute carving is quite difficult to execute. It is a very soft wood that's why mainly used in pencil making industry. Due to the softness carving can be done smoothly and quickly mainly with the help of the power operated tools and the finishing is neat and clean. The wood is fine textured with a regular grain structure and it air dries rapidly. After cutting it gives a good surface. The tree is tall with a canopy style structure so long sized logs are available (Keating and Fundter 2017). The price is INR 80-100/kg. The cost of *Haldu* is a little cheaper than *Kadam*. The cost depends on the size of the log. According to the craftsmen previously it was available abundantly in Jaipur and the price was very low but now good seasoned wood are not easily available specially in the rainy season. Raw material rate fluctuates with the demand in the market.

Bone

Bone is also used as alternative of ivory for making small sized objects as there is a size limitation for bones. Mostly camel and buffalo bones are used. Large sized utilitarian items are also made from bone by joining small pieces. Most of the artisans do not want to work with bone as it releases terrible smell and not possible to work at home.

Those who work on bone have separate workshop detached from locality. The cost of raw material is INR 4/inch. Very few craftsmen carve on bone mostly because the raw material is very cheap, locally available with a steady supply and due to less competition, they get regular order from the dealer. There is not much difference in the earning than those who are working on wood. Bone is harder than ivory so very difficult to engrave even with the machine tools. Dust of the bone released while working with machine tools can cause serious breathing trouble if not proper precaution is taken.

Artificial Ivory

Artificial ivory is a synthetic material of ivory colour. It is harder than ivory and few carvers of Jaipur are using this material to make images or elephants. It is imported to Delhi from foreign countries like Japan and USA. This material is supplied by the exporters or dealers of Delhi. As the material is very hard so artisans preferred to work with machine tools. Tiny pieces of fibers were usually coming out from the object as waste material and floating all over in the time of operating the machine tool which caused severe breathing problem to the artisans. Articles made of this material are gaining popularity because of its similarity with the look of ivory. It's wholesale price in Delhi is approximately Rs. 800 to 1000/kg but retail price is Rs 2000/kg. It comes in sheet form of 4x6ft in size.

Continuity and development of Craftsmanship

Products: Many articles previously the craftsmen were used to carve on ivory as already mentioned in the history section, are still having high demand in the market. The most common are various kinds of elephants, like caparisoned elephants with howdah, single elephants, elephants with *jali* work, painted elephants, elephants with inlay and so on. The attires and accessories of the elephant, the howdah, the king sitting inside and the *mahut* everything are very much inspired by the miniature paintings. In addition to that animal and bird figures, images of Gods and Goddesses, lion capital etc. are also some traditional items still produced by the craftsmen on wood or artificial ivory. In addition to the traditional items some new kind of items are introduced recently like owl with *jali* work, frog, figurines of different animals standing on upon another surrounding a tree etc. Miniature paintings are also done on the plates of the artificial ivory.

Objects, those were used to make on ivory like caparisoned elephant with howdah, plain elephants, monkeys, horses, bridges of elephants, stacks of elephants, images of Gods and Goddesses specially Krishna, image of lord Buddha, Chinese man, toy cars, walking sticks with inlay work etc. are presently fashioned on bone also.

Designs: Artisans always try to bring new elements in the designs to break the monotony. While doing experimentation with designs they always consider some practical aspects like it can be done quickly. As the labour charge is very less if they spend long time in carving one item it will be a wastage of hard work. They are not much interested to improve the quality of carving like intricacy, minute detailing or elaboration but to bring some changes in the pattern or subject matter which can be engraved swiftly. The product will be unique in the market and also will be high in demand as such will fetch regular order at least for quite some time till others start to copy it. A comparative analysis of the engraved patterns on elephant from different artisans was done to understand the variations prevalent in the market. It was found during field work various kinds of motifs were used by different artisans like animals, geometrical designs, foliage, creepers and so on. The elephant is sometime holding a lion with its trunk, sometime it is holding a ball, some time the trunk is upward sometime it is downward. In case of caparisoned elephant with howdah, the structure of the howdah is different like in some cases it is round in shape, some are square shaped, while others are very much traditional such as two conical shaped roofs one little bigger in size with a triangular projection in the front same as found in the miniature paintings. The artisans are continuously trying to bring some new elements in the designs to bring changes though the spirit of the past is continuing through the same traditional product. They have brought some new perspective in the traditional images of Gods and Goddesses like images standing back to back on a pedestal, ideal for displaying on a centre table or office table.

Tools and Technique: Almost all the artisans in Jaipur are using power operated machine tools for carving. Various kind of specialized chisels are fitted in a holder and used for shaping the contour; engraving the design and drilling for *jali* work. Only the finishing touch is given by hand tools. The saws that are used for cutting ivory are different from the saws that are now used to cut wood otherwise the rest of the tools are almost same. However, the artisans fashion their tools according to their requirements. The cost for modification or repairments of the tools is INR 20 to 25 per two/three months. The cutters need to change after 5 years. The cost of the cutter is INR 500 to 700.

In case of wood carving they purchase the log according to the size of the elephants they want to make. Then they cut the pieces from the sawmill itself and bring those pieces to their work shop. Then leave them for twenty to twenty-five days for seasoning. After that they give the rough shape and again leave the products for two to three months for seasoning. After three months they finish the final carving and engraving

and supply the products to the dealers. The dealers then wrap the products with transparent plastic sheets to save them from dusts and outside moisture.

Regarding artificial ivory, as the raw material comes into sheet form so the carvers cut them according to their requirement and then join them with strong adhesive. The material is very hard so the carving is done by machine tools. After polishing the article it exactly looked like ivory, but if somebody examines it closely the hair like joining marks between the sheets are visible.

Making art pieces from bones are very laborious and painstaking. Cleaning the bones thoroughly with acids is a huge task. The inside of the bone is porous in nature, which if visible from outside looks very ugly. So, the craftsman covers the base with velvet paper or fixed the product on a wooden stand and on the top a decorative flat lid is placed to close it. The shapes of the objects are given in a stylized way according to the shape and size of the bone. In case of images the figure is carved in low relief as the diameter and the thickness of the bone is very less compare to ivory. The figure looks very flat and two dimensional.

Marketing: There are many ways of selling products in the market. Products can be sold through State or Central Government showrooms, private showrooms, handicraft fairs arranged by authorities of State or Central government and handicraft market complex like Delhi haat or can beexported to the foreign countries. Only one artisan found in the survey who was a national award winner supplied products in the Cottage Emporium, New Delhi under the Handicraft Development Commissioner of India. Rest of the self-employed artisans sold their products to the private showroom owners cum exporters of Jaipur and Delhi. The artisans who were under self-help group formed by the co-operative bank under NABARD they got the chance to sell their products through the showrooms of NABARD installed at different head branches of various banks and through stalls given at different fairs in Rajasthan and other states. The artisans complained that they could not supply at State government showroom i.e. Rajasthali because they were unable to produce huge quantity of orders at a time as such only rich dealers or middle men purchased objects from them and supplied at Rajasthali. It is needless to say that they are often deprived by the dealers. The dealers give them orders according to the current market demands. Sometimes they also provide designs or instructions to the artisans. If the demand is low or the competition is hard, they ask the artisans to improvise new designs. Some artisans complained that they created some new designs and showed the dealer for approval. The dealer asked them to wait for one or two days because he needed to discuss it with the agent of the exporter and showed the design to someone else to manufacture the product with

less labour charge. That's how they are exploiting the artisan's intellectual property. Many self-employed artisans who also work as dealers prefer to supply at Jaipur itself or Delhi. They do not get prompt payments from the exporters or rich showroom owners. Sometimes they have to wait for two to three months and requested them many times for their payments. They said if they supplied in other states then they had to go there many times for payments which actually caused them lots of troubles. Due to heavy competition many artisans are also ready to fulfil the order without taking any advance and by taking the advantage of that, dealers sometime cancelled the order which caused the artisan lots of trouble.

Sales / Demand Analysis: According to the customers elephants related items are very high in demand. Owls are popular export items for Japan. Regular order for wood items is not available. Only seasonal order is there especially in the month of September and October for the festive seasons and in the winter from January to March for the tourist seasons. Orders become very less in the rainy season. In the first decade of the present century condition of the craft was very poor due to the blast in World Trade Centre, recession, Mumbai attack etc. Presently demands are better. Most of the items are exported to USA.

A six months (1st Oct 2012 to 31st March 2013) sales analysis of the wood craft items sold from SMSM showroom under Handicrafts Development Corporation of Kerala Ltd. was conducted to understand the current market demand of the craft items, where a consignment for Jaipur items was also found. For that purpose, the bills of the customers were analyzed who purchased through credit cards. Those bills contain information regarding customer's name, residential address, product code, product name, price and quantity. Cash bills do not contain any information regarding customers that's why not considered for the present purpose of study.

Table 6: Customer analysis of the images

Products	Local	%	Institute	%	Natio-nal	%	Foreign	%	Total	%
Ganesh	3	11.1	0		1	3.7	9	33.3	13	48.1
Laughing Buddha	2	7.4	0		0		3	11.1	5	18.5
Ashoka Pillar	6	42.8	1	3.7	0		0		7	25.9
Buddha	2	7.4	0		0		0		2	7.4

Krishna	2	7.4	0		0		0		2	7.4
God	0		0		0		1	3.7	1	3.7
Figure	0		0		0		1	3.7	1	3.7
Total	15 (14)		1		1	3.7	14 (11)		31 (27)	

In case of Jaipur products foreigners were mostly attracted to *Ganesa* figures where as local customers also had a preference for *Ashoka* figure.

Table 7: Price analysis of the wood carved images

Price Range	Number	%
0 - 1000	20	60.6
1001 - 2000	6	18.2
2001 - 3000	4	12.1
3001 - 4000	0	0
4001 - 5000	3	9.1
Total	33	100

It is found that the items below INR1000 have high demands. In Jaipur elephants are made starting from 3″ to 18″. The price for 12″ elephant is INR 6000, 10″ is INR 4000 and 3″ is INR 90 to 300. The cost of 8″ caparisoned elephant with Howdah is INR1200. The price depends on the quality of work, if the item is heavily decorated then the price is comparatively high.

Welfare Schemes by Central and State Governments

Artisan Card and Insurance Schemes

Table 8: Artisan cards and Insurance scheme

Artisan card	Artisans	%
Availed	26	66.7
Applied	2	5.1
Planning to apply	3	7.7

Applied but could not get	4	10.3
Not interested	2	5.1
Do not know the procedure	2	5.1
Total	39	100
Insurance schemes		
Availed	6	15.4
Not Availed	33	84.6
Total	39	100

Most of the artisans have artisan card except a few as shown in the table but most of them are not acquainted with the insurance schemes of the government meant for the benefit of the artisans.

Loan: Artisans who are registered self-help group members under Jaipur Central C-operative bank, they have got financial assistance from the bank and according to their performance their amount of getting credit facilities from bank increased. However, it was found during the survey that artisans were not very much inclined to take loans. Those who had taken it for once were not interested to avail again in spite of possessing the eligibility to take loan for second time.

Discussion and Conclusion: The origin of the ivory craft was not much known though it was clear that from 16th century onwards there were considerable evidences of ivory workmanship. From late nineteenth century the craft became popular due to the patronization of the local dynasty. From old survey reports it was evident that the craft was very much under the control of rich businessmen who worked as dealers and exporters. This tendency has been continuing since then which actually the main cause of the economic deprivation of the craftsmen. Previously the craftsmen used to get advance from the dealers along with higher wage rate. Plain elephants on ivory without any kind of special workmanship also attracted good earning. Now-a-days the artisans are not getting any advance because there is uncertainty in each and every stage of the business. The labour charge has not increased for the last five years but the price of the raw material is getting high day by day. Many skilled craftsmen left the field in the last decade due to the fluctuations in the world economy. Most of them took the profession as house painter. Now when the condition gets better new comers are joining in the field who have less skill. In many villages farmers are also carving

in the leisure time which actually decreasing the quality of work and the wage rate. All the self-employed artisans are complaining about not getting skilled wage earners. Those who have left the profession they have experienced the uncertainty of the work from 1980s onward so they are not interested any more. It is not easy to learn the carving within a year or so, minimum 4 years are required to become a skilled worker. Dealers are also taking the advantage of this adverse situation and depriving the real talented artisans who actually have the capabilities of producing quality work with new designs.

The unavailability of the raw material especially sandal wood is a bigger problem for the craft. This is the most suitable alternative of ivory for carving. Minimum INR 500,000 working capital is required to work with sandal wood but the demand is so less, no artisan is risking to invest that much amount. Sandal wood has more demand in perfume, cosmetics and pharmaceuticals industries due to its medicinal value. It is appreciated for its aroma which cannot even possible to recognize if someone buy a sandal wood statue and put it in the showcase. As such unless somebody has a special liking for sandal wood no body is interested to buy an expensive item of it. Even if the artisans want to minimize the price of an item of sandal wood, they have to reduce their profit to a great extent. As such they prefer to take small amount of loan or to invest a small amount from their savings and work on *Kadamba* wood, in which they can make a large quantity of items within short period of time and earn a living without taking high financial risk. Another problem is the fluctuation of the rate of raw material with the changing demand of the handicraft items in the market. The aspiration of the artisans is that government should fix the rate of the raw material in the market.

Regarding the continuity of the products and the designs, it is found that traditional items are still continuing with the introduction of new patterns and new styles. Along with those some new products have also appeared. The technique of carving is quite similar to ivory carving. Existing qualified artisans are continuously struggling to survive by inventing new designs.

By analyzing the overall situation, it is found during the survey that no self-employed artisans are supplying at the state government handicraft showroom. Either they are not aware of the process or not getting chance owing to their small working capital. Marketing assistance is very much required for the artisans if they want to decrease the dependency on the private dealers or exporters. So, it would be great help for them if they are allowed to supply at State run handicraft showroom even in small quantities. Rather than procuring items from rich dealers in large quantities the authority can collects items from many self-employed artisans in smaller quantities as

the department is meant for the benefit of the artisans only. Artisans are really eager to supply at the State-run Handicraft Showroom as the rate is fixed there. If they are not getting proper marketing assistance then credit facilities will not help them, it will only increase their burden. Proper training should be given to upgrade the skill of the artisan to maintain the quality of the work. Traditional artisans can also form a co-operative society and register their production under Geographical Indication of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 2003 and demand advance from the dealers to reduce the risk of their investments. It should be a collective effort otherwise would not be possible to implement.

The traditional ivory craftsmanship is still continuing with alternative raw materials in the place of ivory. A little collective effort from the side of the Government, traditional artisans and dealers a fruitful sustainable way can be developed to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage having great historical and religious significance.

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Role of Ethno Medicine in Sustainable Development Process- An Ethnographic Study in the Villages of Bankura District, West Bengal

Dr. Moumita Gupta

Abstract : *The paper is on ethno medical practices among three Santhal villages from Bankura district,, namely, Ekkadwar, Jambedia at Mukutmonipur and Ramnathpur at Sushunia. The population size is about 225, 250 and 95 respectively. Present study is focused upon the knowledge of Santhals about medicinal plants locally available, which are used by the Santals to cure some diseases they suffer from. Although the public sectors provide modern allopathic treatment the village people still depend on ayurvedic treatments, on the plant products locally available.*

Availability of ingredients as well as medical practitioners are the two factors that enhance their acceptance of ayurvedic treatment. Trust on their own cultural tradition is responsible for following such practices for generations. Sustainable development is studied for the medicinal plants and knowledge of their application in ailments.

Key words: Santhal, Ethno-medicine, Health-care system, Ayurvedic treatment, Medicinal plants.

Preamble : Ethno-medicine has been playing very important role in human health care since time immemorial. This practice of health care is based on beliefs and experiences of the ethnic groups, which is a part of their tradition and culture (Chowdhury and Karmakar, 2015). There has been an increased demand of herbal medicine in the international market because herbal medicines are cheap, more effective, easily available and supposed to have no side effects. Ethno-medicine means the medical practices for the treatment of ethnic or aborigine people for their health care needs. Indigenous traditional knowledge is an integral part of the culture and history of a local community (Sinhababu and Banerjee, 2013). It has evolved through years of regular experimentation in the day to day life and available resources in the vicinity. The present paper documented 32 ethno-medicinal plants collected from 25 families of Bankura district, West Bengal, India. These were used by the local health healers for the treatment of different diseases.

Herbal medicine is widely practiced from ancient times throughout the world. These medicines are supposed to be comparatively safe and environment friendly than synthetic ones. On one hand drug discovery programmes based on information through traditional knowledge is emphasized and on other hand rapid urbanization, modernization and industrialization are posing threats to the existence of native population and their traditional knowledge. In most parts of the country, forests are being degraded at an alarming rate and monoculture plantation is resulting into the loss of plant diversity, hence there is an urgent need for documentation of traditional knowledge and conservation of plants (Basak, Banerjee and Manna, 2016). Realizing these facts, the author took up the present task.

Traditional medicine has been defined as the sum of the knowledge, skills and practices based on the theories, beliefs and experiences indigenous to different culture, whether explicable or not, used in the maintenance of health as well in the prevention, diagnosis, improvement or treatment of physical and mental illness (Tripathi, Ray, Mondal and Verma, 2013). In many developing countries, a large part of the population, especially in rural areas depend mainly on traditional medicines for their primary health care. The indigenous knowledge of medicinal plants has been well documented in ancient Hindu literature. Traditional knowledge on medicine since the time of great sage Charak has led to the discovery of many important drugs of modern age. Today about 65% of the Indian population depend on the traditional medicine. Plants have traditionally served as man's most important weapon against pathogen. Medicinal plants are widely used by all section of the community, whether directly as folk medicines or the medicaments of the different indigenous system as well as in modern medicines (Bandyopadhyay, 2017).

Background of the study: Bankura is one of the districts of West Bengal is located in the western part of the state West Bengal. The district is described as the connecting link between the plains of West Bengal on the east and Chota Nagpur plateau on the west. Most of the area is covered with forest

Bankura is one of the seven districts of Burdwan Division in the Indian state of West Bengal. It lies between 22°46′ NL and 23°38′ NL and between 86°36′ E L and 87°46′ EL. The district has an area of 6881.24 sq km and total forest area of 1404 sq km. The Biharinath and Susunia are two remarkable hills of this district.

Susunia hill (NL 23.39693° and EL 86.98527°) is situated in the north-west of Bankura district, on the Chhotanagpur gneissic plateau of West Bengal and rises to 439.5 m above sea level.

It is a very small hill and runs for a length of about 3 km. Like other forest areas in the district, forest of the Susunia hill is also tropical dry deciduous type dominated by Sal tree (*Shorea robusta Gaertn. f.*). The hill is rich in its plant resources including medicinal plants. The district Bankura is inhabited by many tribal communities such as Santal, Oraon, Kora, Bhumij, Mech, Mahali, Bedia and Munda. Santals represent the largest indigenous tribal community in the district and the villages surrounding the Susunia hill are dominated by this tribe. The tribal villages selected for this study are located within 10 km radius around the hill. The present research work is based on ethno medical practices among three Santhal villages namely Ramnathpur at Sushunia and Ekkadwar and Jambedia at Mukutmonipur. The population size is about 225, 250 and 95 respectively.

Literature Review: Ethno-medicine is one of the most popular topics in Social-Cultural Anthropology. Bankura is one of the tribal-rich districts of West Bengal. The Santhal tribal community has a good knowledge about the medicinal uses of the plants for various purposes. A number of studies are conducted on Ethno-medicine and its significance in Bankura district. I selected several significant works of some eminent scholars, who had written on ethno medicinal plants and its significance on human life. Sinhababu and Banerjee's paper (2013) mainly pointed out the characteristics of medicinal plants from the perspective of Botany. This paper documented 43 ethno-medicinal plants and their significance among the local people of Bankura district. The paper provides information on medicinal plants along with botanical name, family, local name and medicinal uses. Another significant and interesting paper written by C. H. Rahaman and Suman Karmakar (2015) deals with the observations on ethno medicinal uses of wild plants by the Santhal people living in the villages around the Susunia hill. Data is collected by interviewing Santhal medicine men and other

important persons with the help of questionnaires. This paper mainly depended on Quantitative approach. Detailed survey of medicinal plants of Bankura district was made by S. Basak, A. Banerjee and C. K. Manna (2016) during the period of 2003-2006. Their research is based on questionnaires. Survey from tribal medicine men and women showed that the medicinal plants are mainly used for anti fertility purposes.

S. Tripathi, S. Ray, A. K. Mondal and N. K. Verma's paper (2013) highlights the rare medicinal plants of South West Bengal, along with their various uses. In their study, they identified 45 species which are recommended highly for health-care practices and among them, 10 species are becoming rare and are on the verge of extinction because of extensive use and various anthropogenic activities. According to them, these medicinal plants required proper and full-fledged conservation. D. Bandhyopadhyay's paper (2017) mainly focused on herbal folk remedies as well as Ethno-medicine of different tribal groups of Bankura district. In spite of tremendous progress in development of modern medicine, medicinal plant still is one of the important sources of drugs throughout the World. Each of the tribal population in this district has their own pattern of preparation of herbal medicines, which is continuing from ancient time without mixing of any chemical item.

Objectives of the study: The objectivity of the present work is on importance of oral knowledge regarding local medicinal plants of Santhal Community to cure some major diseases they suffer from. Although the development of modern allopathic treatment is provided by the public sector, these village people are still dependent on ayurvadic practices. In the present research, medicinal knowledge along with detailed procedure of making as well as application of medicinal plants by the Santal of the three villages are pointed out.

Methodology: The methodology adopted for the study was based on interviews of traditional healers (locally called *Kabiraj*) and local villagers, both men and women having knowledge of medicinal plants of their area. The documentation was done based on interview, informal discussion and observation. The information thus collected and documented with local name of the plant, parts used for different kinds of ailments, natural habitat and status in the area. The survey was carried out during the year 2015-2016 in the tribal inhabited area of Bankura. The ethno-botanical data were obtained from tribal people, the Vaidyas, Ojhas, local herbal drug sellers and the information collected from the available literature. Field trips were made to the three villages from January to December between the years 2015-2016. Two or three attempts were made in each village for the interview and discussion, to gather maximum information of

the plants used in the local medicine. Each hamlet was visited 2-3 times and both men and women of age varying between 20 to 80 yrs and two traditional healers from each village were interviewed to get details of plants being used by them for medicinal purposes. Details of the medicinal plants being used by the tribal population are presented (Table 1-2).

Difficulties faced during fieldwork: During the time of investigation, I faced lots of problems like language, unwillingness of the villagers to communicate with us regarding this topic especially as such practice is one of the major cultural assets of their secret knowledge; so initially they hesitated to co-operate with me. But gradually this problem was solved through the help of some local people apart from the villagers.

Results: In the present investigation, 32 species of medicinal plants belongs to 25 families, total 40 genera were used for the treatment of different diseases. The different plants which have been documented during the present investigation along with their mode of use in different health treatment by the local health healers are given in the table 1 and Table 2. Different parts of medicinal plants were used as medicine by the local traditional health healers. Among the different plant parts, the leaves were most frequently used for the treatment of diseases followed by root, bark and whole plant parts. From the study, it was found that plants are mostly used to treat different inflammation, cough and cold, leucoderma, various skin diseases, ulcers and leprosy.

Table 1: Medicinal plants and treatment by the healers of santal tribe of Ramnathpur village

Serial no.	Scientific name	Family	Local name	Parts used	Ailments and mode of medicinal use
1.	Bombax ceiba	Malvaceae	Aafola Simul	Bark of root of fruitless tree	To prevent pimples, parts smashed and apply on the affected area.
2.	Vachellia nilotica	Fabaceae	Babla	Bark	Skin disease, parts boiled and the juice is extracted, then apply locally.
3.	Cynodon dactylon,	Poaceae	Durba ghas	Leaf, root	To help blood clotting during cut, paste of both parts mixed with ash of burnt shell is apply on the affected area.

Serial no.	Scientific name	Family	Local name	Parts used	Ailments and mode of medicinal use
4.	Andrographis paniculata	Acanthaceae	Kalmegh	Leaf	To prevent skin disease, liver worm, blood purifier, paste of the parts made into pellets, one pellet taken in empty stomach everyday in the morning.
5.	Ziziphus mauritiana	Rhamnaceae	Kul	Bark	To prevent sores, the bark paste is applied on affected area.
6.	Azadirachta indica	Meliaceae	Neem	Leaf	To prevent skin disease, leaves of neem, kalmegh and salt are taken together, made into paste and it made into pellet. One pellet is taken in empty stomach in the morning.
7.	Kalanchoe pinnata	Crassul aceae	Pathor kuchi	Leaf	To prevent piles, part is smashed, made into paste and taken orally.
8.	Nyctanthes arbortristis, Adhatoda vasica, Ocimum tenuiflorum, Glycyrrhiza glabra	Oleaceae, Acanthaceae Lamiaceae, Fabaceae	Siuli, Vasak, Tulsi, Yashti madhu	Leaves of first three and latex of last	To prevent fever with high temperature, cold and cough. In case of siuli, leaf is smashed and juice is taken orally with half teaspoon of mixture of 32 types of spices (*batrisa masala*). In case of vasak and yashtimadhu both are smashed, made into paste and taken orally. In case of tulsi, leaf is smashed, made into paste and taken orally with five drops of honey
9.	Cajanus cajan	Fabaceae	Arhar	Leaf	To prevent jaundice, leaf is smashed and the juice is taken orally.

Serial no.	Scientific name	Family	Local name	Parts used	Ailments and mode of medicinal use
10.	Asclepias gigantea	Apocynaceae	Swetakando	Root	To prevent sterility, part is smashed, made into paste and mixed with cowmilk whose calf bearing the same physical features as its mother. It is taken orally on every Sunday.
11.	Moringa oleifera	Moringaceae	Sainya	Leaf	To prevent blood pressure, part is smashed and the juice is taken orally for three consecutive days.
12.	Shorea robusta	Dipterocarpaceae	Sal	Latex	To prevent cholera, the latex for the twig of the tree is taken orally.
13.	Hemidesmus indicus Smilax macrophylla	Asclepiadaceae, Liliaceae	Anantamul, Ramdatan,	Root & fruit	To prevent measles, root of 1st two and fruit of last two are taken together, made into paste and it is made into pellets, then taken orally.
14.	Catharanthus roseus	Apocynaceae	Nayantara	Leaf	To prevent diabetes, juice of leaf is taken orally.
15.	Eclipta Prostata	Asteraceae	Keshute	Leaf	Leaf extraction use to promote hair growth and in Jaundice. Whole plant extraction used for skin diseases and Asthma.
16.	Ficus bengalensis	Moraceae	Aswatha	Bark	Bark is anticeptic, astringent, laxative. Bark used in Diabetes, Diarrhea, Leucoderma.
17.	Peltophorum pterocarpum	Caesalpiniaceae	Radhachura	Stem bark	The stem bark is useful in dysentery.

Serial no.	Scientific name	Family	Local name	Parts used	Ailments and mode of medicinal use
18.	Portulaca oleracea	Portulacaceae	Nona shak	Leaf	Leaves are used as vegetable by tribal people. Leaf extraction is also useful in tumos, inflammation and nephropathy.
19.	Mentha piperata	Lamiaceae	Pudina	Leaf	A volatile oil obtained from the plant is well known in medicine for its antiseptic, stimulant and carminative properties.
20.	Tarminalia chebula	Combretaceae	Haritaki	Fruit	The fruits are used as anti-inflammatory, carminative and digestive agent.

Table 2: Medicinal plants and treatment by the healers of Santal tribe of Ekkadwar and Jambedia villages

Serial no.	Scientific name	Family	Local name	Parts used	Ailments and mode of medicinal use
1.	Tridax procumbens	Compositae	Bissalyokarani	Leaf	To stop bleeding from wounded area, the part is smashed, made into paste and it is applied locally.
2.	Ficus religiosa, Achyranthes aspera, Ziziphus mouritiana	Moraceae, Amaranthaceae, Rhamnaceae	Ashwatha, Chirchithi, Kul	Leaf & bark, bark and root	To prevent diarrohea, both the parts are smashed, made into paste, then it is boiled and taken orally.
4.	Hygrophila sp.	Acanthaceae	Kulekhara	Leaf	To prevent anaemia, part is boiled, the juice is extracted and drink regularly.
5.	Spondeas mombin	Anacardiaceae	Amrah	Pulp of fruit	To prevent skin disease like Eczema, part is boiled, juice is extracted and applied locally.

Serial no.	Scientific name	Family	Local name	Parts used	Ailments and mode of medicinal use
6.	Mangifera indica	Anacardiaceae	Mango	Powder of burned leaves	To protect from toothache, the powder is used locally.
7.	Andrographis paniculata	Acanthaceae	Kalmegh	Leaf	To get relief from liverworm, leaves are boiled, juice is extracted and taken orally.
8.	Azadirachta indica	Meliaceae	Neem	Leaf	To prevent from skin disease, Either leaves are smashed, made into paste and applied locally or leaves are boiled, juice is extracted and it is applied locally.
9.	Ficus bengalensis, Ziziphus mauritiana, Achyranthes aspera, Streblus asper, Piper nigrum	Moraceae, Rhamnaceae, Amaranthaceae, Moraceae, Piperaceae	Aswatha, Kul, Chirchiti, Saora, Golmorich.	Bark	To prevent pox, Bark of all these are smashed to prepare a paste and taken orally.
10.	Curcuma longa, Azadirachta indica	Zingiberaceae, Meliaceae	Holud, Neem	Root and leaf	To cure fever with high temperature, Boiled neem leaves is mixed with smashed turmeric and the mixture is smeared all over the body before bath.
11.	Enhydra fluctuans	Compositae, Asteraceae	Hingche	Leaf and stem	To prevent low density of sperm in semen, Both the parts are smashed and the juice is taken orally.
12.	Ocimum gratissimum	Lamiaceae	Ramtulsi	Leaf	Fresh leaves are used in constipation, cough and fever and also in gonorrhoea with difficult urination.

Discussion and analysis: The use of herbal medicines is wide spread in these regions with higher percentage of the tribal population relying on it. This is because of lack of awareness; shyness and lack of modern medical facilities available in their region and the high cost of modern medical system for treatment, which is unaffordable by tribal. The information documented in this work is totally from primary sources being based on the uses of the locally available plants by the people as their household remedies. The medicine varies according to the symptoms and it means that a particular plant is sometime prescribed for different ailments and sometimes they apply a mixture of plants for remedy of diseases. The observation of present study showed that traditional medicine plays a significant role among the tribal people of Bankura. Present research work was conducted in three Santhal villages. These three villages are not totally tribal villages. Some caste populations like Brahmin, Kayastha and Bhuinya ar also there; whereas the former one is well connected with the main town, the latter two are less connected. The size of the population is greater in Ramnathpur and Ekkadwar than the other. The villagers of Ramnathpur village and Ekkadwar have their own agricultural land, so their economic condition is far better whereas, in Jambedia village, most of the villagers are share croppers and agricultural labourers. Only a few of them own agricultural land, which are with less fertile soil and small in size. Their economic condition is very poor.

In case of Ramnathpur and Ekkadwar villages, with suitable modern medical amenities as well as better economic conditions, the villagers still depend upon the local medicines extracted from medicinal plants present in the vicinity. Availability of ingredients as well as medical practitioners (*Kabiraj*) are the two factors that enhanced their acceptance of Ayurvedic treatment. Lastly, it can be said that, the faith upon their own cultural tradition is another main factor to retain such practices throughout the generation. On the other hand, in Jambedia village the villagers are deprived of basic amenities except for drinking water. There is one sub-health center very near to the village and the villagers are depending on it mainly for major diseases. They are able to cure some mild diseases like cold and cough, fever, haja etc. through Ayurvedic medicines available in the surrounding environments. *Kabiraj* lives about 3-4 km away from the village. Some major diseases like chicken pox, tetanus and sexual diseases are also cured through these practices. Among sexual diseases especially the low density of sperm count in the semen is cured through such practices. In this case, they use *Hinche* leaves as remedy. During our investigation, it is seen that in case of a particular disease, different remedies are used in three villages and depend upon the availability of any particular item in the surrounding environment. It means that, their extent of knowledge regarding the surrounding flora is vast. They are well informed of the medicinal value of most of the plants in their surroundings throughout the generations

and it is totally an oral tradition. They have enough knowledge regarding the varieties and range of remedies of any particular disease. For example, in case of skin disease like haja, bark of Babla tree is used after boiling in Ramnathpur village, whereas, juice of boiled Amrah is used after being made into paste. In case of bleeding of cuts and wound, root of Adagethe and Durba leaf are used in Ramnathpur village. In Jambedia village both root and stem of Durba grass is used for the same purpose.

Conclusion and Recommendations: The rural area of Bankura district which was my study area is an important source of traditional medicines. More information may be explored from the peoples residing in the remote villages in this district. The traditional healers are the main source of knowledge on medicinal plants. This knowledge is transmitted orally from generation to generation. It seems that it is vanishing from the modern society since younger people are not interested to carry on this tradition. It is also observed that some traditional plants in that area are fast disappearing. The conservation efforts are needed by plantation and protection of these plants with maximum participation of local people.

Medicinal plants play an important role in providing knowledge to the researchers in the field of Ethno- botany and Ethno- pharmacology. In Bankura district, many local people are going for agriculture and sustainable harvesting of plants with medicinal value which helps not only in conservation of these important traditional medicinal plants but also in marketing of these plants and their products for economic growth of the people. To avoid the extinction in bio-diversity, some selective measures would be taken to prevent these medicinal plants from all of the natural calamities. These may be in the following ways. Cultivation of rare medicinal plants; provision of elaborative training and special extension services to farmers engaged in cultivation of medicinal plants; establishment of herbal garden in forest areas; and creation of seed-bank.

In pursuance of the basic concept of sustainable development, ethno medicine plays a great role. Ayurvedic or herbal medicines are produced from different plants, parts of different trees along with other metals and non-metals. Most of these inorganic elements are either micro or macro elements of nutrition for human body. These strengthen our immunity power, to destroy the antibodies entered into the human body completely along with minimal or zero side-effect, Herbal or Ayurvedic medicines are the best. Keeping these things in mind, recently, Central Govt. of India recognized Ayurvedic treatment as parallel treatment procedure even where Allopathic treatment is available. In the tribal areas, primary health centers may run Ayush clinic. The registered medical practitioners may advise for the ayurvedic medicines in their prescriptions. Recently, the State Govt. of West Bengal is trying to spread the Ayurvedic treatment among

the common people. Accordingly, herbal gardens are encouraged to develop. Thus, betterment of public health has been associated with the forestation and environmental up gradation.

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Saderlongs: Heritage of Thunder Stones of the Lepchas

Rongnyoo Lepcha

Abstract : *Stones play an important role in the Lepcha culture. One of the most important stones being Saderlong or thunder stones. The world sees them as Neolithic stone tools but for the Lepcha community it has a much deeper meaning and usage. They are used as medicines to cure many general illnesses, as charms to ward off evil auras; they are also put in the foundations while Lepchas build their houses and most of all as protection against thunder. It is a well established belief that these stones are sacred and are objects of divine powers and that comes from the sky. This article explores how the Lepchas have integrated these stones in their culture and given meaning to how these stones came to exist. It also highlights the cultural significance attached to them in the Lepcha culture and the different uses the community derives from these stones.*

Keywords: Stones Play, evil asuras, Lepcha culture, beliefs, sacred stones.

'Thouth!! Thammatsyo' is a phrase common among the Lepchas. *Thouth!!* is an expression made with an action of spitting towards the sky and *thammatsyo*, roughly means a bad omen. In many cultures spitting is seen as an action to ward off evil and bad omens. In similar line the Lepchas also enact this as protection against lightning and thunder. Every time thunder strikes, these words are spoken as a protection charm against thunder. The Lepchas fear thunder profusely and it is a taboo to laugh at animals, insects or any inanimate objects including things made of rubber, effigies made of flour, shapes that roughly imitate animals, and many more similar things. Such action

will bring upon the wrath of *Sader* or thunder. The Lepchas live on the foothills of the Himalayas in Sikkim, Darjeeling and Kalimpong districts in West Bengal and in parts of Bhutan and Nepal. They reside on a mountainous terrain. The great Himalayas form a barrier preventing the monsoon winds from passing through. This causes highest rainfall of the country on this part of the subcontinent. Monsoons are always accompanied by thunder.

Living in this environment the Lepchas who call themselves *Rongkups*, meaning children of nature, have formed their own worldviews. As they saw thunder and lightning destroying trees, cattle and many times even humans, they grew fearful of this natural phenomenon and regarded it as the wrath of the Rumor Gods. According to Lepchas the root of this taboo goes back to the story of how the Lepchas came to fear the *Sader* and how *Sader* came to this world.

To understand this folktale we must also look into the composition of the Lepcha social structure. The Lepcha society consists of the community members, their ancestors and then there are the spirits. Almost everything has a spirit, these are known as *Langzee* which are the deities residing on certain sacred places and landscapes, it could be an old tree, a rock, water bodies, etc. they are similar to what the Japanese would call *'yokais'*; they may have animated forms, or may take any desirable form. Then there are the *Dokh*, who are protectors of an area like a forest or a river and are very much territorial in nature. Lastly, the Rum is also the deity who operate on a much larger scale or what can be defined as God. They can be both benevolent and malevolent, depending upon people's attitude towards them. This particular tale is of the time when both human and spirit worlds coexisted and interacted with each other more often.

Once there was a *ryotkup* (an orphan) boy strolling in the forest foraging for food. As he went searching for wild edibles he noticed smoke rising deep in the forest. Instantly he went to investigate. As he made his way through the dense vegetation, he came upon a forest fire. Tall trees and grasses were scorching in redheat. Amongst the blazing fire he saw a white snake; it was in the middle of a fire circle and was unable to move because of immense heat. As the boy watched, the fires get closer to the snake and it was on the verge being burnt alive in the inferno, similar to the vegetation around it. The boy immediately gathered a bunch of branches and started hitting the fire at one end to break the circle. He went on hitting the flames, till he was successful in making an opening through the ring of the fire for the snake to pass through. Once the snake was out of danger it took the form of a human and thanked the boy for saving his life. As payment for saving his life the snake asked the boy to come with him to his home and meet his parents. The boy agreed. The snake took him to a huge lake in the deepest

part of the forest. He then asked the boy to close his eyes tightly and hold on to his tail and not to let go of his tail no matter what. The snake was a water *langzee* (spirit or deity) and lived at the bottom of the lake with his family. They dived into the lake and the boy held on to the snake's tail as instructed by the *langzee*. As they reached the bottom it was a completely different world; a world of magical beings and spirits.

Upon reaching his home, the snake instructed the boy that when snake's parent would ask that he may demand anything for saving their son's life, he must ask only for a puppy that sits beside his father and not anything else. The snake told its parents how the boy had rescued it from the fire and saved its life. The parents, expressed their heartfelt gratitude and demanded the boy to ask for anything that he desired. As the snake had previously instructed, the boy asked for the puppy. Bewildered the parents asked the boy to ask for anything else other than the puppy but the boy stuck to his demand. The parents were in a dilemma. They dreaded letting their savior go empty handed, so they agreed and gave away the puppy to him. The boy was sent back to the human world. He went straight to his home and placed the puppy inside his home. To his bewilderment, the puppy turned into a beautiful maiden, who was actually the snake's sister. The boy and the maiden started living together as husband and wife and soon the rumors of the maiden's beauty spread like wild fire and soon reached the ears of a king of the nearby province. Out of curiosity, one day the king himself ventured out to see this exotic beauty. Upon seeing the maiden, the king was dumfounded as she was nothing like he had seen before. He desired her more than anything. He then challenged the husband to compete with him. Each would perform similar tasks and the winner would take the maiden. The husband had no other choice than to comply with the king. The first task was a duel between roosters. The king brought his best fighting rooster and the boy brought a jungle fowl given to him by his wife. Both roosters fought hard and in the end the boy won the duel. Displeased by his failure the king threw in another task. The second task was to see who among the two would be able to excrete the whitest stool. The boy grew very nervous because the task was tougher. He came back home and told his wife about the second challenge. The wife reassured him and started preparing for her husband's victory. She filtered ash water in a bamboo container and made her husband drink it all. Soon he would have dysentery, till nothing remained in his stomach. Next she went to the forest and brought wild yams which she boiled and made her husband eat them all. On the other hand the king made his men bring in all the rice, and pork fats available in the kingdom and ate them. Finally the day of the second competition came. Both parties came and started excreting, the king failed on this task since he was unable to produce white stool, whereas the boy was successful in producing one white stool. Out of pure rage the king ordered that they would battle for the maiden in three days. The boy

was terrified. He rushed home and informed his wife about the battle. The wife then came up with a solution, she asked her husband to go to her parents and ask for two boxes hidden in the treasury of the palace. He did as he was instructed but failed to complete the part where his wife had specifically asked him to not to open the boxes at any cost no matter what noises he heard coming from interior of the boxes. As he was returning home with the boxes, the boxes began to rattle and make loud thuds. Out of curiosity he opened one of the boxes. Out came thunder (male) and asked "where should I hit? What should I hit?" to which the boy replied "hit on the stones and trees". Just as the boy instructed the thunder destroyed nearly all the forest covering on its way. The wife immediately knew what her husband had done and scolded him for his foolishness. Finally the day of the battle came and the wife instructed the husband that upon opening the box he must instruct the thunder to hit on the king and his army. As he headed to the battlefield the king and his army laughed at him as a single pathetic man was facing the king's mighty army. So he was given the first chance to draw his weapon. The boy opened the box and out came thunder (female) and asked "what should I hit? Where should I hit?" to which the boy replied 'hit all those who are laughing' and the whole army was turned to ashes with a single bolt of lightning. Thus the boy and his wife lived in peace thereafter. Fig 1.1 is an illustration showing the *ryotkup* (orphan boy) from the land and the maiden from the water coming together and the two male and female lightning coming to this world.

From that day onwards it is believed that the Lepchas mustn't laugh at any living and at certain non-living objects. The deed would call thunder to strike. Even if by mistake the Lepchas happen to laugh upon any insect the elders would take out few strands of hair from the middle of their head and burn it or throw it outside asking thunder not to follow them. Some even would use the *saderlong* (thunder stones) to hit on the pillars of the house saying 'I have arrived here first, so no need for you to come'.

Though this story is also mentioned in Stock's, *Sikkim Custom and Folklore* (1975:56-58) his is a slightly different version. In his edition characters like the snake is replaced by a big fish and addition of bulls in the three competitions. It missed out some parts of the storey that has been passed down. However, variations are part of the culture. This version may depend on the different milieu where the folktale was molded. Other than that the zest remains the same with the king's army being annihilated by lightning and the Lepchas coming to fear the lightning.

What is *Saderlong*? Archeological Survey of India, have classified them as 'Neolithic tools' (Mishra 2008), the celts. Shape of these is narrow at one end and becomes sharp and broad on the other end, at its edge. Some are very polished; some consist of flaking

marks including the scraping marks from the extensive use by *bongthings* as medicine. Putting it differently the technique used for making these stone tools is of a much higher level as they are very polished. Rarely but surely one can find *saderlong*, which is described by some as round, almost disk like in shape with sloping and thin edges. One such stone was found in Suruk in Kalimpong and now sits at the foundation in one of the houses in Sikkim, given away as a token. This can unravel the evolution time line of these tools as well as the civilization that once flourished in the land. Mullard (2011) provides a series of archaeological findings of many stone tools, which resembled the tools of the Hoabinhian culture of South East Asia, (10,000 to 8,000 B.C.E), and also shared similarities with the Suhan and South China cultural assemblages.

The Neolithic tools the Lepchas collected and revered as charms and gifts, are known as *saderlongs*. Foning mentions that the *saderlongs* or thunder stones used 'both as medicine and as a charm' (Foning 1987:31). It is put into the foundation of any Lepcha house as it is said to protect the house from evils and more importantly it prevents the house from being struck by lightning. The importance of these stones is such that 'one could go as far as to say that a house without one of these objects is not a complete house at all' (*ibid* 1987:30).

According to the Lepchas these stones come from the sky. During thunder storms these stones hit earth, destroying everything that comes in its path. Some also believe that they are sent by the Thunder God, pouring their wrath on Earthly creatures. According to Foning, in the past these stones were in surplus as 'after keeping a few of these stones for oneself, the surplus was deposited in small caves, or placed under big overhanging rocks' (Foning 1978:33). Foning also gives a list of landmarks where once these stones would be reserved for future use. Today most of these places are occupied by different communities, who came to live in these parts of the Himalayas, and the number of stones greatly decreased. The cultural contact has also led the other communities who came in to the area to acquire and adapt these stones as well.

As the lightning strikes, the Lepcha people are always much apprehensive and would ask children not to laugh during a rainy day and especially during a thunder storm. I would often hear my grandmothers and grandfathers saying *'thouth'* and spitting lightly while looking upwards as a way of warding off the possibility of avoiding getting hit by lightning. I still have the habit of saying *'thouth!'* if I happen to laugh at animals or insects the words that follow are *'sader lot simou'* directly translating to *'thout!* Lightning will strike' as a warning. It has been as a part of the Lepcha vocabulary and society since time immemorial.

The Lepchas are also anxious, during a thunder storm but this is of a totally different kind, an insatiable kind. Foning states, 'among the people of my tribe this so called

thunder stone is an object that must be possessed' (1987: 29). They would always be looking forward in knowing whether any *saderlong* or thunder stone is left behind. According to the Lepchas, not every thunder strike turns into a stone. Only if the thunder hits something and accidentally get scared, it is left behind in the form of a stone, otherwise the thunder returns back to its abode in the sky.

These stones are what Foning rightly describes as *'lungten'* (*ibid* 1987:36) or a tradition for the Lepchas. Passed down as sacred heirloom; from generation to generation and so does its stories and significance. For the Lepchas it is not just a stone or a stone tool, it is a part of their cultural setting.

Classification of *Saderlong*: These thunder stones come in many sizes and shapes. The Lepchas believe that there are different types of *Saderlong* depending on the colour and elements they posses. They can be categorized mainly into two different categories:

1. Based on colour and element:
   i. *Mi Saderlong* or the Fire thunder stone; these are darker in colour.
   ii. *Ung Saderlong* or water thunder stones; these are light in colour.
2. Based on gender:
   i. *Sader Aabu* or the male, which while hitting, produces a lot of sound, like throwing a fit of rage.
   ii. *Sader Aamot* or the female thunder, which produces a lot calmer sounds, giving calmer but unyielding warnings.

The *Mi saderlong* is considered to be extremely dangerous and destructive. It is darker in shade ranging from almost black, reddish black, dark greenish, dark grey, etc. as can be seen in fig 1.3, fig 1.4, fig 1.6 and fig 1.7. This can hit on anything; humans, cattle, stones, trees, houses, etc.; while the *ung saderlong* is believed to be more subtle and do not hit often. If it happens to hit, it is usually near water bodies. They are lighter in colour, shades ranging from light mustard to beige, light grey or to skin tone, etc. These can be seen in fig 1.2, fig 1.3, fig 1.4 and fig 1.5. These are hard to find. Based on this their gender is determined. The *mi saderlong* are considered as the *aabu* or the male and the *ung saderlong* as the *aamot* or the female stones.

People reported to have found them near water bodies. As we sat talking to Ren Ong Tshering Lepcha, the head *yukmun* (lama or monk in Lepcha) of Yang Pelling Gambu, Suruk, Kalimpong, he narrated how he came across an *ung saderlong* shown in fig 1.3. He was conducting one of the annual rituals that each household has to carry out. The ritual as usual had taken the whole day. It was usual for the *yukmuns* to return home late at night since the houses in the village are spread widely. Sometimes they also have

to cover other villages nearby. On this particular night after the ritual was complete, he and his apprentices had parted ways and he was walking home alone. It was a well lit night as the full moon followed him. The path could be clearly seen as Suruk has an abundant of light grey soil that moonlight illuminates perfectly. As he continued his journey back home, he noticed something that was illuminating brighter than its surroundings on the path. He grew curious and as per human instinct went to examine it. He found that it was the light beige coloured stone. He at once knew what it was, so he brought it home and had kept it ever since for medicinal purposes. The other saderlong in the same picture, a *mi saderlong* also owned by him was passed down by his father. Mr. Ong Tshering was hesitant to show us the *saderlongs* at first. Only when I introduced myself further as being a part of the village with the help of my guide, a paternal kin of my mother that he gladly showed us the *saderlongs*. People are not willing to show these saderlongs to anyone as they are considered sacred and a family heirloom. Being connected to the village from my maternal side was an advantage for me. The pen placed near the objects is used as to give a sense of measurement in the pictures taken.

Another *saderlong* was found by Ms. Mangalmit Lepcha from Yang Gairi Gaon, Suruk in Kalimpong. It was mid-summer, she along with all the village members were preparing field for rice cultivation. As she was tilling the field she noticed a stone in the mud. This was like no other stone, 'it was smooth, beige and shaped like an axe', as she described. She had seen *saderlong* before to unmistakably recognize one. She kept it for many years until it was collected by a relative to be a part of her new home in Sikkim.

The *saderlong* in fig 1.4 is a family heirloom passed down to Mr. S. M Lepcha the former *Thom Sezum* (Community Association) President of Darjeeling, by his in-laws in Kalimpong. His in-laws converted from Buddhism to Christianity. Thus the old practices were given up, but they could not just give up the stones, so they passed it on to their son-in-law in Darjeeling, who still follows the traditional practices. The stones he inherited consist of a male and female *saderlong* recognized by their colours. He keeps it safely in his cupboard.

One of the main places one can surely hope to find these stones are in possession of a *Bongthing*, they keep it for medicinal purposes and also for protection. The ritual specialist will offer a mixture of the stone's powder mixed with water also along with other medicines. It is also used to cure pneumonia, high fever and even gout.

It is also used for making sacred pendants, to ward off evil. As seen in fig 1.5 and fig 1.6 the stones have been scrapped at places, this was used by the *Bongthing* of Gor (Dzongu, North Sikkim), Ren. Dorjee Tshering Lepcha, astalismans. He made for people asking him for protection from evil forces and *nung* (food poisoning). He scrapped the

saderlongs into a small piece of paper, along with other ingredients, including human bones, horns; bones and claws from different animals and birds. Details of which are not be given in order to maintain some confidentiality. Other ingredients used were *sathim chya* (porcupine quills), shells, moult from a *Pamol Bu* (cobra), parts of a vehicle that was in an accident, a rope used for suicide, walnut having three parts, and other unique seeds many more of such things. These are collected or passed down from generation to generation as part of their traditional practices.

Another *Bongthing* from Tingvong, Dzongu (Sikkim), sharing almost a similar name Ren. Tshering Dorjee Lepcha, identified three types of *saderlong* based on their elements, such as, Water or *Ung Saderlong*, Air or *Sakmut Saderlong* and Fire or *Mi Saderlong*. These are classified on the basis of their colour. The *sakmut saderlong* is very light in colour, almost white. The *ung saderlong* is also light in colour but with a hint of *afong*, that is blue spots or shades. According to him the *ung saderlong* come out of water and are found near water bodies. The *mi saderlong* is dark almost black in colour. This along with *sakmut saderlong* falls from the sky. He further describes *sader* or lightning as something that roams the sky and has wings. Its form is undefined. However human cognition collectively with the forces of nature tries to give a form to the reasoning of what is going on around them. This might be a similar instance. He, like the other *Bongthings* also uses these stones to cure illnesses and ward off evil auras. He often gives away medicines made of these stones for lactating mothers with coagulated of breast milk. According to him, the other use of the stones is that, if by mistake they, especially children, laugh at any animals or insects, they take the stone and strike it on the main pillars of the house, so as to prevent lightning from striking their houses.

Other than being used for medicinal purposes and as talismans they are placed under the foundation of a house to be built to keep the house safe from lightning. One or many can be used in the foundation of a house as part of the whole architecture. Even my own house was laid on a foundation of *saderlongs* on all corners. As my father counts there are seven *saderlong* buried beneath the house, which act as grounding against lightning conductor and protect us from lightning.

Some are of the belief that these are pre-historic stone tools, remnants of the past civilizations. Foning calls them 'as all educated people now know, are nothing but tools used by prehistoric men' (Foning 1987:36). But no one exactly knows enough about them since not much archeological study has been carried out on them till now. To put these sacred objects through scientific tests would also be unethical, firstly, because they hold very important and sacred place in the socio-cultural and religious lives of the Lepcha community. Secondly, putting them through tests would demean their cultural value as they would be treated as just an ordinary object whereas for the

Lepchas these stones are much more than that.

Dr. P. K. Mishra and team from the Archaeological Survey of India conducted a survey within the state of Sikkim. It resulted in the publication of the volume *Archeological Exploration in Sikkim, 2008*. It was an attempt at documenting the archeological tools and important archeological sites of Sikkim. Samples taken into consideration were only from the region in and around Gangtok, East Sikkim. Out of the 51 sites that he mentions in his book 48 are in East Sikkim and only three from North Sikkim. These sites are Pengla, Swarani and Tingda. He and his team have also totally overlooked the Lepcha community, whom he clearly stated as 'the earliest settlers in Sikkim' (Mishra 2008:1). He has taken a large amount of samples from communities other than the Lepchas. He wrote extensively about the history of Sikkim starting from post Buddhism. Pre Buddhism is not taken into account. Though the book deals with tools beyond that time period, whether they had no access to the Lepcha community or had any other intention is not explained.

These stones also form an important part of the Lepcha history. These stones, as determined by the ASI, are stone tools from the Neolithic period, points out the tribe's early migration history. The Lepchas have no memories or oral history of using these stones other than as *saderlongs*, meaning they must have travelled to these areas after the Neolithic time period. According to some theory, Sikkim and adjoining hills were used as a passage for the Neolithic culture into India. There were people coming to this area but clearly they did not stay for long. The Lepchas are the first to settle and acquaint with the land, as they were the first ones to identify and assimilate these stones into their own culture, which were left behind by the perished mobile civilization that passed through these lands long-ago. As most stones are found in fields and near water bodies, it is safe to assume that the fields are suitable land for small scale agriculture even in the past, so it may have been a site of horticulture or agricultural activities. Water bodies are another crucial part of human survival, so the major water sources must have been used in the past as well. The stones left behind as evidence of activities near major water sources. A proper study has to be carried out to identify the proper age of these celts, since the Neolithic period in itself is under scrutiny.

Conclusion: With little literature available on these stone we can only rely on the oral history for further details and understanding. The cultural aspect of the Lepchas can be seen centred around stones especially the *saderlong*. The *saderlongs* have been a part of the Lepcha society since time immemorial. These are considered as something which fell from the sky and has become a part of their society as a ter (treasure), a sign of great fortune and also protection. It has also been used in the Lepcha architecture,

giving it both cultural and architectural significance. It is more than a simple stone or a stone tool. The cultural sentiments attached to these stones, it makes them all the more 'treasure' for the Lepchas. The village *Bongthing* always keeps two or three of these stones with him, which he uses as a medicine and to ward off evil.

Although the researchers call the *saderlong* as 'Neolithic Celts' (Lepcha 2019, Mishra 2008) and 'stone tools' (Fonning 1987); there still remains an array of cultural relationships between people of the present day and the *saderlong*. This requires to be unveiled. Present research is an attempt to connect the gap left untouched by works of scholars like Mishra. They are correct in their methodologies but failed to uncover the people's perspectives. The stones also form an important part of the Lepcha history. The stones, determined by the ASI as stone tools belonging to the Neolithic period might also provide information on the tribe's migration history. As stated by McCracken 'Objects carry social and personal information within a larger framework. They communicate relationships and mediate progress through the social world. Their diffusion bridges cultural boundaries and connects centers with peripheries. Although artifacts are produced at particular moments, their persistence creates histories. In addition to information and ideas, they can convey hidden cultural constraints, moral standards, social fears, and emotionality' (McCracken 1988:28).

The Lepchas have no memories or oral history of using these stones other than as *saderlongs*, meaning they must have travelled to these areas after the Neolithic time period. According to some theory, Sikkim and adjoining hills were used as a passage for the Neolithic culture into India. There were people coming to this area but probably they did not stay for long. As for the Lepchas they must be the first settlers to settle and get acquainted with the land, since they were the first ones to identify and assimilate these stones into their own culture, which was left behind by the perished mobile civilization that passed through these lands long-ago. As most stones are found in fields and near water bodies, it is safe to assume that the fields are suitable land for small scale agriculture even in the past. Therefore it could have been a place for horticulture or agricultural activities. Water bodies are another crucial part of human survival, so the major water sources must have been used in the past as well. The stones left behind as evidence of activities near major water sources. A proper study has to be carried out to identify the proper age of these celts as the Neolithic period in itself is under scrutiny. One can never exclude the possibility that the Lepchas could have truly used these stones before the concept of society and community as of today existed.

At present, other than the Lepchas, *saderlongs* are kept by other community members as well, but not extensively used as in case of the Lepchas. They are either part of display or collection for collectors and enthusiasts. The examples are quite evident in the

'*Archeological Explorations of Sikkim 2008'*. They call it *'Chataryang Dhunga'*. It has same meaning as *Saderlong* that is the thunder stone. Mr. Ganesh Kumar Pradhan, curator of the Ram Gauri Museum in Renok, East Sikkim, has in his display a *'Chataryang Dhunga'* he collected from his village long ago. This is shown in Fig 1.4. The written records on these celts are rare. Those available are inconclusive. There is much we know and much we can never know because these stones are perishing. The only ones we may find now are buried deep beneath old houses.

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Figures:



Fig 1.1: illustration of how *sader* caming to the world





Fig 1.2 and 1.3: an *Ung Saderlong,* a *Mi* and *Ung Saderlongs* from Suruk Kalimpong.



Fig 1.4: *Ung saderlong* (bottom) and *Mi saderlong* (top) from Darjeeling



Fig 1.5: an *Ung saderlong* from Gor, North Sikkim.



Fig 1.6: a *Mi Saderlong* from Gor, North Sikkim



Fig 1.7: *Saderlong* from Ram Gauri Museum, Renok Sikkim

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Mahatma Gandhi's Views on Machinery: Ideas, Manifestations and Practicality through the Prism of Ethical Reasoning

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Abstract : *Mahatma Gandhi's attitude towards machinery has passed through three different phases. In the early years of his political thinking, Gandhi was opposed to the concept of machinery and industrialization and justified his arguments based on ethical and economic rationale. However, in the later years, he modified his previous standpoint on machinery, as he realized the distinction between machinery and industrialization on the one hand and between different types of machinery, on the other. He persistently denounced industrialism, i.e. centralized mass production, but acknowledged the limited use of machinery within stringent restrictions for human welfare. During this time, he did not advocate the abolition of machinery, but spoke for its limited usage. In other words, Gandhi, during this phase, amended his earlier stance and upheld his opposition not to machinery but to the obsession for machinery. It is in this backdrop that this paper highlights Gandhi's views on machinery and the question of ethics, which is extremely topical and relevant in this digitized global order, invariably thrust upon us, as the world reels under the pandemic situation.*

Keywords: COVID-19, Gandhi, Hind Swaraj, Khadi, machinery, Satyagraha,

Mahatma Gandhi's Philosophical Thought:

Introduction: Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was one of the eminent mass leaders in the pages of world history and held a unique position in the Indian freedom movement in colonial India. Between 1916 and 1947, Gandhi had revealed his radiant adroitness and appeal as a leader of the masses and earned a niche as a nationalist leader par excellence. He was an iconoclast, who engineered a strategy of resistance to the British Empire in India by adopting novel methods such as non-violence, Satyagraha (acceptance/ adherence to truth), fasting, hartals, non-cooperation and mass civil disobedience. Gandhi was a multifaceted genius, a philosopher and a humanist, deeply pained by the sufferings of the impoverished Indians. His social ideas thoroughly displayed a deep and abiding consciousness of the fundamental reformation of the Indian society. He fervently believed that the economic salvation of India was contingent on the economic revival of the numerous Indians inhabiting both the urban and rural areas. In line with such a conviction, he championed self-reliance and the cause of small-scale village and cottage industries, which could generate employment on a long-term basis to the common masses of India. At the political level, Gandhi felt that the state was a means of intimidation, since it was likely to deflate the cherished and essential ideals of individual freedom. As an individualist, Gandhi acknowledged that adherence to truth, non-violence and an ambience of freedom facilitated the development of the personality of individuals.

Gandhi was a charismatic leader with mass appeal, who introduced a new set of values and learning in the Indian milieu and beyond. Although his ideals had a magnetic influence on the masses, neither did he occupy nor aspire to attain a position of power and authority. He had a towering personality, who contributed to a great extent to the highest social and moral values of the people of India and abroad. He was essentially a psychologist, whose charismatic personality, perseverance and determination in the face of hardship, inspired the masses. The central canon of Gandhi's philosophy and approach was anchored on encouraging the propagation of harmony, sacrifice and service to mankind, which found concurrence with Satyagraha and non-violence. Satyagraha was the most significant ideology of Gandhi, infused with its inherent calmness and practicality, which could be accepted by anyone, irrespective of caste, religion and other affiliations.

Gandhi has been acknowledged as a political activist and a realist philosopher, rather than a theorist. Like Karl Marx, Mao Zedong and Ho Chi Minh, he devoted himself to analyzing a particular situation and modifying principles through practical experiences, rather than advocating a "theory" for an "ideal" society. His philosophical thought was a logical outcome of his political and moral principles, based on the ideals

of Swaraj (self-rule), Sarvodaya (universal kindness and welfare), Satyagraha, truth and non-violence, non-cooperation, civil disobedience, the use of the Charkha, khadi and popularizing the constructive program, to name a few. These ideals, in turn, fed his economic ideas and the economic system he visualized. Of these ideals, Sarvodaya posed the most overwhelming influence on him, following his reading of Ruskin's Unto This Last, which upheld that collective welfare is the source of individual welfare. Gandhi envisioned a society based on Sarvodaya, wherein social welfare would percolate to the grassroots. It was in this backdrop that his wider social ideals of Purna Swaraj (complete independence), truth and non-violence motivated him to envision an economic system consistent with his moral, social and political yearning (Grover and Mehta 2015: 334-335). His philosophy of Swadeshi and self-sufficiency was germane in that of Swaraj, while a chain of economic ideas, like non-exploitation, non-possession, trusteeship and bread-labor evolved from his perception of Sarvodaya. These ideas have constituted the pillars of Gandhi's comprehensive economic principles. His political ideas have exhibited two contrasting trends: on the one hand, his political ideas appeared to be a relative or a reconciled outline of both western and eastern traditions, while he has also been recognized as an original thinker or a unique pacesetter of political concepts, inherently based on Indian traditions, on the other. Gandhi advocated the concept of village self-sufficiency, which originated from his idea of non-exploitation. He was aware of the evils and exploitative character of the capitalist system of production and the advantages of personal interest associated with it. Therefore, he tried to evolve a production system to eliminate the exploitative character for the common masses of India by advocating the principle of Swadeshi. In other words, he emphasized the importance of indigenizing the methods of production, towards which, he objected to the use of machinery. In South Africa, Gandhi witnessed a brute form of capitalism, which laid the seeds of conviction in his mind that capitalism and industrialism were twin evils. To Gandhi, industrialism meant slave labor, the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few and the saving of labor instead of the generation of it, which was relevant for the teeming millions of suffering Indian masses. He believed industrialization was diabolical and an impediment to the growth of a non-violent society.

In this context, it can be argued that Gandhi developed a distinctive, non-western political philosophy, accommodating Indian value systems. On the notion of truth, Gandhi had a self-contradictory view: while on the one hand, he did not regard truth as eternal, he often conceded that truth was as old as the Himalayas, on the other. With this introductory backdrop, the article will analyze Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy on machinery and situate the study in the contemporary context of the unprecedented human dependence on machinery and digital technology. It will conclude with an

analysis of the question of reconciling ethics and the employment of machinery and technology under contemporary circumstances, in an attempt to view the issue through the Gandhian lens of machinery. The methodology of analysis is qualitative and the sources are primary including books authored by Gandhi and his selected speeches and secondary, like the interpretations of Gandhi's writings and archival records.

Gandhi's Views on Machinery: Formative Outlook and Concerns: Gandhi's philosophy and thought pertaining to machinery has been evolutionary in nature and spanned three different phases. The first phase of this evolutionary saga was contained in his famous book, Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule(1909). This book presented a vehement critique of Western civilization, particularly its facets of colonial imperialism, industrial capitalism and rationalist materialism (Chakrabarty 2006: 24). In the fifth and sixth chapters, Gandhi has been uncompromisingly critical of machinery, technology and their attendant consequences on civilization so severely that he was not in a position to compromise with any of its form. He was convinced that, "It is machinery that has impoverished India", likening it to "a snake-hole which may contain from one to hundred snakes" and alluding to its representation of "a great sin." He defined machine "as an appliance that tends to displace the human or animal labour instead of supplementing it or merely increasing its efficiency." While explaining the predicament of the impact of machinery, Gandhi enumerated the plight of the workers in the mills of Bombay (now Mumbai), who had been transformed into "slaves" and his caveat was loud and clear, "If the machinery craze grows in our country, it will become an unhappy land" (ibid.:90-92). Gandhi was unable to recall even a single advantage of the use of machinery and believed that the basic cause of human misery and the "sin" of modern civilization was the advent of technology and industrialization. His negative views on machinery had roots in his student days in England (1888-1891) where he was influenced by radical and liberal groups and individuals. His extensive reading of the fervent critique of industrial life and campaigners of simplicity, namely Tolstoy, Ruskin, Thoreau and Edward Carpenter and profound thinking on this subject were supplemented with his first hand experiences of the indispensable position occupied by machinery in the progress of Western civilization. In his judgment, machine had four essential attributes:it could be duplicated or copied; there was no limit to its enlargement; it appeared to possess a force or creative capacity of its own that functioned as the inevitable law of the dislodgment of labor, which once the machine was created and permitted to function, went more or less out of human control (Tendulkar 1954: 179-180) and if allowed to operate in full swing, machinery would inevitably reduce or even shroud human mobility and competence. Furthermore,

his initial views on machinery as antagonistic and detrimental to civilization were premised on ethical and economic considerations. Of his ethical arguments, to begin with, Gandhi emphasized the inculcation of ethical values, rather than rituals. He envisaged the development of a societal system which could synchronize with his religious vision of life. Gandhi stood for a simple, rural, agrarian social structure and was extremely critical of the modern, complex, automated civilization. He felt that modern, mechanized civilization, with intonation of higher standard of living, was antithetical to his professed religious principles. He advocated the need to restrain human desires within a thin and restricted sphere, while remaining content with the fulfillment of man's fundamental physical requirements. Gandhi believed that the spiritual progress of man should be independent of the obsession with machinery, as he advised the imperative of working several hours a day, taking cognizance of the adverse impact of the modern predilection of reduced working hours on the religious development of man. This view contradicted that of the socialists, as he argued, "I know that the socialist would introduce industrialization to the extent of reducing the working hours to one or two in a day, but I do not want it" (Tendulkar 1951: 202).

Secondly, Gandhi's critique of machinery was borne in his contention that it was offensive to normal life and was contrary to his dictum of "simple living and high thinking" as he argued that:

> "I do not believe that industrialization is necessary in any case for any country. It is much less so far for India. Indeed, I believe that independent India can only discharge her duty towards a groaning world by adopting a simple but ennobled life by developing her thousands of cottages and living at peace with the world. High thinking is inconsistent with complicated material life based on high speed imposed on us by Mammon worship. All the graces of life are possible only when we learn the art of living nobly."(Tendulkar 1954: 188)

Thirdly, the development of machinery had led to the expansion of the factory system, which had relegated the workers to slaves. In this context, he wrote, "The workers in the mills in Bombay have become slaves. The condition of the women working in the mills is shocking…. If the machinery craze grows in our country, it will become an unhappy land" (ibid.:58). Fourthly, machinery tended to impose its individuality on those using it, thereby transforming them into machine-like characters and disparaging their inventive, creative and artistic talents. Probably, one of the best depictions of this sentiment can be found in Charlie Chaplin's movie 'The Modern Times'. Fifthly, technological progress spurred the development of monetary exchange system, which exacerbated economic disparity and exploitation of the impoverished masses. From this perspective, Gandhi preferred the barter system over the monetized model of economy, though he cautioned that the barter arrangement could succeed

only in a labor-intensive arrangement, rather than an automated economic system. In this context, Gandhi argued:

> "Under my system, it is labour, which is the current coin, not metal. And any person who can use his labour has that coin, has wealth. He converts his labour into cloth; he converts his labour into grain. If he wants paraffin oil, which he cannot himself produce, he uses his surplus grain for getting the oil. It is exchange of labour on free, fair and equal terms-hence it is no robbery."(Tendulkar 1952: 135)

Finally, machines fomented economic rivalry and power struggle, eventually demoralizing the process of cooperation on which the human society ought to be premised. In other words, Gandhi apprehended that the simplicity of human life would consequently wither away with the evolution of a mechanized society. Gandhi's critique of machinery from the economic standpoint may be summarized as follows: First, industrialization inevitably led to the displacement of human labor, which would ultimately tantamount to promoting unemployment. In other words, he regarded machinery as a mechanism that tended to displace human or animal labor in addition to retarding its competence. Secondly, machinery stimulated the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few and thus caused severe disparities in the distribution of income, as he contended, "I want the concentration of wealth not in the hands of a few, but in the hands of all. Today machinery merely helps a few to ride on the backs of millions"(Bandyopadhyaya 2000:143). By its logical extension, machinery led to the regional concentration of wealth in cities by exploiting the villages as well as common masses, thereby propagating an undesirable urban-rural divide.Thirdly, automated mass production resulted in a complex system of allocation, demonstrated by swindle and conjecture, which he believed would never emerge in the case of the non-mechanized and decentralized system of rural industries. Fourthly, Gandhi felt that machinery facilitated mass production, in turn leading to over-production and economic crisis. He firmly asserted that the Great Depression of the 1930s was due to the evil consequences of the growth of machinery. He further believed that the effects of over-production did not remain confined to domestic markets, but tended to propagate imperialism. While explaining this idea, he argued that industrialism depended on human capacity to exploit "on foreign markets being open to you, and on the absence of competitors. It is because these factors are getting less and less every day for England that its number of unemployed is mounting up daily" (ibid.:146). Fifthly, machinery was also not necessarily industrious in its capacity, as he acknowledged that the application of machinery in agriculture would impoverish soil fertility and consequently, jeopardize production. Finally, machinery spurred

congested cities, high speed of travel etc. which were responsible for deterioration of health. All these supposedly evil characteristics of machinery guided Gandhi to draw a decisive conclusion that machinery "represents a great sin"ashe failed to "recall a single good point in connection with machinery" (Chakrabarty 2006: 92). Therefore, in the early years that characterized the evolution of his philosophical thought, Gandhi vehemently objected the use of machinery, denounced it as an absolute evil justifying his critique on valid ethical and economic rationale. Expressing his reservation to the use of machinery, as he experienced it first hand as a student in London, in the backdrop of its industrial vista, he explained:

> "It was not that we did not know how to invent machinery, but our forefathers knew that, if we set our hearts after such things, we would become slaves and lose our moral fibre…. They further reasoned that larger cities were a snare and a useless encumbrance and that people would not be happy in them, that there would be gangs of thieves and robbers, prostitutions and vice flourishing in them and the poor men would be robbed by rich men. They were therefore, satisfied with small villages." (Gandhi 1947: 61-63)

Metamorphosis of Gandhi's Concept of Machinery:

Reading its Critique

This section delves into the second phase (1920-1925)in the evolution of Gandhi's philosophy, which witnessed significant departure, when contrasted with his initial years that has been discussed in the preceding section. This was a period characterized by his appreciation of the dichotomy between machinery and industrialization on the one hand and the distinction between machinery of different kinds on the other. His repudiation of industrialism or centralized mass production notwithstanding, Gandhi became more amenable to the use of machinery with stringent restrictions, as a means of facilitating human welfare. During this phase, he emphasized limiting the use of machinery, as against its outright eradication. Finally, in the third stage of this evolutionary saga (1926-1946) Gandhi underwent a radical transformation on his concept of machinery, with his acceptance of the establishment of factories on specific premises, like the use of machinery was acceptable if it did not cause unemployment; it must be owned or at least controlled by the state; machinery must run in the spirit of public service and welfare; workers must be given reasonable wages and should not be deprived. Besides, he provided a list of machinery to be used in the fields of electricity, shipbuilding, iron works, railways, machine making and specific machines like sewing machine, printing presses, surgical instruments and steamers, which had public efficacy, provided they were not antithetical to village crafts, or they did not

enhance economic inequality and dislodge manual labor. Validating his argument, Gandhi wrote:

> "Electricity, shipbuilding, iron works, machine making and the like existing side by side with village handicrafts…. Hitherto industrialization has been so planned as to destroy the villages and village crafts. In the state of the future, it will sub serve the villages and their crafts. I can have no consideration for machinery which is meant either to enrich the few at the expense of many or without cause to displace the useful labour of many."(Ministry of Information &Broadcasting 1963: 580-581)

Finally, he also stressed that the use of machinery is lawful which serves the interests of all. However, he issued a caveat against allowing it to displace human labor and render them unemployed.However, such an analysis of his views of machinery suffers from the lack of a strong rational basis. His arguments from the economic perspective were justified from the standpoint of unhygienic factory environment and lack of proper town planning, while his contention that machinery led to the loss of soil fertility had no valid or scientific basis. Gandhi's critics have argued for the need to replenish soil fertility with fertilizers, irrespective of the method of cultivation, physical or mechanized. They asserted that machinery did not impoverish the natural and indestructible properties of soil. Besides, Gandhi's explanation of the concentration of wealth has been challenged on the logic that social relations in general, the system of ownership and government policy, in particular, are responsible for the same. The issue of the skewed distribution of wealth could be addressed by trade union activism, public ownership in one form or another, preventive as well as redistributive fiscal and monetary policies, regional economic decentralization and the delegation of economic power through organizations of workers' self-management, which Gandhi had approved of as well (Bandyopadhyaya 2000: 150-152). Moreover, from the economic perspective, Gandhi's argument that big machines had relegated the smaller ones to the back burner of industrial development was also repudiated, as critics justified that big machines were cost-effective, thereby facilitating workers' earning higher wages against less physical labor. The constructive contribution of small machines could not be overlooked in an industrially developing country like India.

Summarily then, Gandhi's initial aversion to the use of machinery and its acknowledgment as a symbol of modern civilization, fueling moral and ethical degradation of human beings experienced a transformation in the later years. Evidently, with his increasing experience of the advantages of the spinning wheel, he erected a thin line of demarcation between machinery designed for human good and those exacerbating human exploitation. He thus submitted that centralized power machinery was more readily capable of being utilized for purposes of exploitation than

decentralized machinery. Since the principal consideration of Gandhi's philosophy revolved around individual welfare, he subjected everything to this highest experiment. His preference for Khadi and village industries was a rational upshot of his views against machinery. He was very passionate about Khadi and village industries as he felt that the Khadi and spinning wheel had the potential for providing employment to millions adding to their slender resources by way of supplementary occupation, which mills could not provide. He believed that the huge population of peasants dependent on land in Indian villages had practically no work for more than four months in the year. This forced idleness, according to him, was responsible for the impoverishment and poverty of these villagers. The effective way of providing employment to these insolvent millions was through the use of the spinning wheel in every household. Thus, Khadi would result in the economic independence of the peasantry and it was, according to Gandhi, the only means of saving the peasantry from extinction and making the impoverished Indian masses self-reliant and self-supporting (Young India 1929: 85). However, Gandhi was not against machines but against the machinery age and the craze for machinery, as he argued, "I am not against machinery as such, but I am totally opposed to it when it masters us." To overcome his personal dilemma regarding his viewpoint on machinery, Gandhi further added: "Ideally, I would rule out all machinery, even as I would reject this very body, which is not helpful to salvation, and seek the absolute liberation of the soul. From that point of view I would reject all machinery, but machines will remain because, like the body they are inevitable"(Gandhi 1951: 29).

Gandhi's perspective of machinery, industrialism and his deep attachment with the spinning wheel has suffered wide criticism. Even his most trusted disciple, Jawaharlal Nehru, did not subscribe to Gandhi's stand on machinery, and during his stewardship of this great country, he took all possible steps to industrialize India. While describing the Khadi movement, hand-spinning and hand-weaving, Nehru asserted that it was "an intensification of individualism in production, and is thus a throw-back to the pre-industrial age. As a solution of any vital present-day problem it cannot be taken seriously, and it produces a mentality which may become an obstacle to growth in the right direction" (Nehru 1936: 523). Subhas Chandra Bose had also expressed his resentment to the Gandhian approach to machinery and industrialism, though he had praised the Khadi program and admitted:

> "If we view the programme of the Congress during the last few years we shall find that only our Khadiprogramme has been able to offer to our masses something which means bread and butter to them. Khadi, I am glad to say, has brought food to thousands and thousands of hungry mouths all over India... There are lakhs and lakhs of poor Indians

> living on the verge of starvation to which Khadi can offer a means of subsistence."(Ministry of Information and Broadcasting 1962: 31)

Additionally, Indian political thinkers of the ilk of M. N. Roy, Rabindranath Tagore and Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar were quite critical of Gandhi's views on machinery. Gandhi and Ambedkar were piercingly divided on the issue. While the former denounced machinery as a "snake-hole which may contain from one to a hundred snakes" and identified it as a significant factor responsible for poverty and diseases in India, the latter acknowledged the potential of machinery to free the masses of their mundane toil and grind, thereby opening up a period of leisure and helping them pursue a "life of culture" and intellectual enrichment. Ambedkar thus explained, "What divides the brute from man is culture. Culture is not possible for the brute, but it is essential for every person to lead a life of culture which means the cultivation of the mind as distinguished from the satisfaction of mere physical wants." (Rodrigues 2006: 157) Ambedkar deplored the Gandhian philosophy as Sanatanism or militant orthodox Hinduism arguing that it would take us back to the "primitive" stage and "animal life" and hailed the use of machinery, since it would play the role of an emancipator among the masses. Appending that modern civilization and machinery were inseparable, he questioned:

> "How then can a life of culture be made possible? It is not possible unless there is sufficient leisure….What can lessen such toil? Only when machine takes the place of man…. The man who condemns machinery and modern civilization simply does not understand their purpose and the ultimate aim which human society must strive to achieve."(ibid.:159)

Notwithstanding his eulogy of machinery, Ambedkar was also aware of the challenges associated with human being's over-reliance on machinery, though he did not concur with Gandhi's view that the solution lay in rejecting it completely, thereby exhorting the need to address "wrong social organization" (Kumar 2015). Gandhi preferred nationalized or state-controlled organizations to private ownership over large industries, but he was not convinced that socialization would remove all the evils of industrialization. His immediate concern was the challenge of acute unemployment and underemployment in India, which he apprehended, would be further fueled by the indiscriminate use and obsession with labor-saving machinery. Expressing his concern, Gandhi asked, "How can a country with crores of living machines afford to have a machine which will displace the labour of crores of living machine? It would spell their unemployment and ruin" (Ministry of Information and Broadcasting 1967: vii). It is true that Gandhi's opposition to machinery was crucial at that particular juncture in the history of India, as he professed it was imperative for establishing a non-violent society, contrary to a technologically-advanced society replete with

human greed and desire. He thus advocated, "What is good for one nation situated in one condition is not necessarily good enough for another one. One man's food is often another man's poison. Physical geography of a country has a predominant share in determining its culture"(ibid.:43). In this evolutionary saga of Gandhian thought, he exhibited a transformation from total rejection to limited acceptance of machinery, akin to the conditions and circumstances of the teeming millions in India. This flexibility and pragmatic adaptation encompasses the distinctiveness in Gandhian philosophy.

The Ethical Connotation of the Concept of Machinery:
Interrogating its Contemporary Relevance

The relevance of Gandhian philosophy in contemporary times may be discussed in the context of the situation unleashed by the pandemic, in particular, its impact on digital learning. The indispensability of machinery and technology in our daily lives has been exposed under the present circumstances, as the world is adapting to a "new normal", with the use of digital, virtual technology-fostered online methods of teaching and learning, as against the traditional classroom teaching. Although under extraordinary circumstances, digital learning can act as a supplementary method, it may not be accessible or acceptable as a viable alternative to classroom teaching. In particular, in a developing country like India, with more than 22% of the population enduring below poverty level existence on less than Rs. 32 daily, digital learning undesirably widens the digital divide. According to a Reserve Bank of India estimate in 2019, of the total population living in the rural areas in India, 25.7% live below poverty line, whereas in the urban areas, the situation is marginally better with 13.7% of the population living below poverty line. In sum, however, around 22% of the Indian population pursues below poverty line existence (Sharma 2019).Citing the unprecedented situation unleashed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the University Grants Commission (UGC) has approved in principle a proposal to allow all Indian Universities to complete up to 40% of their existing courses online as a means to supplement the face-to-face classroom mode (Mohanty 2020). However, the question that was raised in this perspective pertained to the viability and adequacy of this mode of teaching in the country's diverse socio-economic milieu. According to the sample survey on "Household Social Consumption on Education in India" conducted between July 2017 and June 2018, it was revealed that 10.7% households in India had computers, which included laptops, desktops and tablets but not mobile phones. The survey also noted a deep urban-rural divide in owning computers and accessing the Internet. Only 4.4% households in rural India had computers, while 14.9% had Internet. The service got disrupted frequently due to power cuts and weak network. In urban areas, 23.4 % households

had computers and 42% Internet facilities. Thus, online education can never emerge as an alternative to classroom teaching, as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) acknowledged it is not the way forward due to disparities in access to computers and the Internet across households.(National Statistical Office2019: B-7)The pandemic has served as a powerful reminder to reassess the challenges to overcome the vulnerability of education, particularly the virtual teaching-learning process, further underscored by a survey conducted by the professors of one of the premier Universities of India, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) with 70% of the faculty respondents acknowledging the ineffectiveness of online teaching to successfully replicate the offline in-person classroom mode. It reported that approximately 40% absenteeism was caused by the inability of students to access the internet either due to poor connectivity or lack of gadgets, representing the diverse socio-economic backgrounds they hailed from. (Sarfaraz 2020)

Therefore, in a Corona Virus Disease (COVID)-dominated world order, the most daunting challenge in India emerges in the spheres of reduction of poverty and inequality. The situation can be addressed by embarking upon more inclusive policies, with stress on social security and equitable redistribution of wealth. Towards this end, smart machines and other digital devices would emerge as inadequate as the sole academic tools for learning and even risk manifestation as an economic "poison" for the impoverished lot. Probably, Gandhi's acceptance of the machine-driven revolution would be contingent upon machinery not creating and increasing the digital divide. To sum up, Gandhi's visualization of the western civilization as self-gratifying and self-centered, was hinged on its pursuit of immediate material benefit. He also attributed it as individualistic in the sense of encouraging egocentric and sovereign individuals. Through personal experience, Gandhi realized that the industrial and technological revolution had transformed man into individual-oriented beings, thus mechanizing life, reducing him to helpless and passive victim and thereby establishing a new form of slavery. From the psychological standpoint, Gandhi had ushered in a transformed milieu in Indian nationalist movement, by inculcating the psychology of non-violence among the masses. Bereft of the psychological plank of non-violence, Gandhi believed, he would be unable to assemble the masses in political demonstrations and peaceful marches. Thus, the ethical premise of his argument was hinged on the fact that machinery was invented for the purpose of fulfilling the needs of the society as a whole, as opposed to satisfying individual greed. Gandhi subscribed to the use of machinery to cater to the basic needs of the masses, failing which, he advocated the rejection of machinery as a curse to the society. He assumed that machines must help to fulfill the ultimate objective of obtaining freedom and said:

> "Ideally, I would rule out all machinery, even as I would reject this body, which is not helped to salvation, and seek the liberation of the soul. From that point of view I would reject all machinery, but machines will remain because, like the body, they are inevitable. The body itself, as I told you, is the purest piece of mechanism; but if it is a hindrance to the highlight fights of the soul, it has to be rejected."(Gandhi 1962: 9)

Gandhi's life is an exemplar of simple living as he spoke for small-scale, decentralized technology, which was consistent and conducive to fostering a nonviolent social order. For him, the supreme consideration of a society is man and machines should not be allowed to tend to atrophy the limbs of man (ibid.:8).He wanted to unfold human uniqueness, development and upheld human dignity and self-respect, as he was convinced that:

> "If individual ceases to count, what is left of a society? Individual freedom alone can make man voluntarily surrender himself completely to the service of society. If it is wrested from him, he becomes mechanized and society is ruined. No society can possibly be built on a denial of individual freedom. It is contrary to the very nature of man."(Harijan 1942)

Gandhi had an open mind and firm conviction, which were amended over time to adapt to the circumstances. His philosophy is universally valid, including in the progressive industrialized west. Human civilization has progressed through science and technology with its beneficial and adverse implications. Today, our lives are intertwined to the wires of digital technology and the virtual society has taken centre-stage under the pandemic circumstances. Our lives are almost unimaginable without sophisticated machines, which have increased our levels of comfort and knowledge. However, on the other side of the spectrum, machinery has eroded human virtues of patience and tolerance, in addition to posing severe challenges to physical and mental health. Modern technology has a debilitating effect on interpersonal relations and disastrous consequences for the environment and ecology, thus justifying the apprehension and concerns of Gandhi pertaining to the unrestricted and unethical use of machines, with his moral commitment to serving the poorest of the poor. Therefore, Gandhi was aware of the menace of technological unemployment, but he emphasized the need for labor-intensive methods of production in a country with surplus labor. On the whole, his ideas on machinery are still relevant in the contemporary context, since in a country like India, which has experienced more than seven decades of planned economy, the use of machinery and power-driven economic development has been unsuccessful in retarding the level of unemployment. Notwithstanding the limitations of the Gandhian concept of machinery, it would be extreme naiveté not to acknowledge the triumphant march of science and technology and therefore, it is imperative to re-

examine his views from a contemporary perspective. From a logical, ethical and honest standpoint, Gandhi's philosophy is justified, particularly with reference to small unit machines in a populous country like India, where unemployment remains the major challenge to development. Thus, it may be argued that Gandhi personified a religious way of life and believed that a rural, natural, agrarian economy was suited to it. A staunch critic of materialism and a high standard of living, Gandhi based his rationale and philosophical thought on the dictum of "simple living and high thinking."

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List of Abbreviations:

COVID - Corona Virus Disease

JNU - Jawaharlal Nehru University

UGC- University Grants Commission

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

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Idea and Practice of Fearlessness: Gandhi's Noakhali Experiment

Arnav Debnath

Abstract : *M.K.Gandhi's (1869-1948) use of "ahimsa", i.e. nonviolence as a "political weapon" as to the question of "Hindu-Muslim relation" in particular in pre-independence India faced one of its hardest challenges in Noakhali of the undivided Bengal (now in Bangladesh) in 1946-1947. The organised violence unleashed by the majority Muslims on the minority Hindus created the point of no return - a "Do or Die" condition for Gandhi which made him set up an experiment upon nonviolence heavily armed with the idea and practice of "fearlessness", another primal observance in Gandhi's thought. This paper attempts to spell out the categories relating to the understanding of the idea of 'fearlessness' which he propelled with an eye to restore the communal trust along with nonviolence to the people of both communities and how the idea, in its varied forms, had been put into effect by the satyagrahi exemplars, including Gandhi himself, in Noakhali. The practice of fearlessness in Noakhali adds further importance to it for its being 'political' by nature as specific for Muslim League's anti-national politics of disintegration (of Indian nation) against the larger context at that juncture of historical time.*

Keywords: Fearlessness, Nonviolence, Hindu-Muslim relation, Satyagrahi, Violence of the strong, Violence of the weak.

Introduction: "Nonviolence", the supremely enabling virtue, as a "means" tends to serve an ineffable master as its "end"- the "truth"- in the M. K. Gandhi's political thought sometimes seems dormant if put into effect insular. Gandhi's notion of nonviolence, being a "pure means", was to invigorate its end, i.e. "satya", was conductive to solving moral and practical problems "supplied Gandhism with a theory of politics, enabling it to become the ideology of a national political movement" (Chatterjee, 1999:107) in colonial India. Yet, to walk down along the path of ahimsa was like, to Gandhi, "balancing oneself on the edge of a sword" for it requires "ceaseless striving", for an act of ahimsa is "not a mechanical performance". The use of the analogy, though unusual, if not contradictory, may dumbfound a heedful student or an ardent reader of Gandhian philosophy of non-violence at first, seems to tease out, inter alia, a certain lineament having been indwelt in the concept itself that to be willing to walk on the sharp edge of a sword of politics in any form demands as much mental strength and high-spiritedness as bodily niftiness in maintaining balance for an accident may cause the walker, the "satyagrahi" or a common person believing in ahimsa, so to say, to bleed or, even worst, to risk of having more fatal consequences at any point of the edge of this deadly political weapon. Thus, the Gandhian gnome that to be a nonviolent satyagrahi or a true believer of ahimsa is to be of a courageous mind comes to reveal one of the most fundamental correlate of the principle of ahimsha: "fearlessness". This article attempts to understand the nature and practice of this idea of fearlessness carried out by Gandhi himself, his fellow "satyagrahies" (who practises the ideal of "satyagraha", i.e. literally "holding on to truth") and the laypersons in a specific context – a historical juncture where a colonial nation was about to be cut off, and communal hatred went to its highest peak as a result on the eve of "transfer of power" in the Indian sub-continent and, from a certain perspective - a "hostile environment" of post-carnage Noakhali in between the late 1946 and early 1947, programmed to be in retaliation of the "Great Calcutta Killing" occurred in the month of August, 1946. Moreover, if it is taken to be true that politics is by no means an "apodictic science" and it "proceeds by experimenting, groping in the dark" (Deluze and Guattari, 1987:461), then Gandhi's experiment in Noakhali with his idea of fearlessness as complementary to nonviolence is well worth considering.

Background: the darkest ditch: "Gandhi was an odd kind of pacifist", wrote Jawaharlal Nehru, "for he was an activist full of dynamic energy. … he was full of resistance, though this was peaceful and courteous." (Nehru, 1989:361) The peaceful yet resistant character of Gandhi seems to represent ahimsha and fearlessness – two complementary means at once. It goes on to carry Gandhi's very own kind of language of politics and actions in a colonized sub-continent where fear after his homecoming in 1915:

"the dominant impulse under British rule was that of fear – pervasive, oppressing, strangling fear; fear of the army, the police, the widespread secret service; fear of the official class; fear of laws meant to suppress and of prison; fear of the landlord's agent; fear of the moneylender; fear of unemployment and starvation, which were always on the threshold. It was against this all -pervading fear that Gandhi's quiet and determined voice was raised. Be not afraid." (Nehru, 1989: 358-9)

The darkness reappeared with much deeper shade in the horizon attempting "vivisection" of India for the second time in history in 1946. Influenced deeply by "two conflicting stereotypes" (Sarkar, 2010:244), i.e. one that the "belief in a kind of golden age of Hindu-Muslim amity, deliberately destroyed by the British" and the "two nation-theory", the polar opposite of the first which was constructed on the outlook that "Hindus and Muslims have always been entities fundamentally distinct in ethnic origin, language and culture as well as in religion", politics in late colonial era in India had little scope to fortify itself against these vices for both of the impressions eventually inclined to direct themselves most forcefully towards negative ends. Thus it seemed as if a crossroad where, as one observer puts it, a triangle of Congress, Muslim League and the British Power –"representing the forces of Nationalism, Communalism and Imperialism, engaged in the final struggle for survival". (Pyarelal, 1956:70) Two nations were about to be born – "India" and "Pakistan" - as a final outcome of two-hundred-year long British imperial project and the principle of "Divide et Impera", the well adopted and executed old Roman motto by the Britishers. India was going to achieve independence at the cost of her Communal unity marked in the "Two Nation Theory".

Gandhi, on 25th October admitted that "India is going through a most difficult time" with reference to the communal riot in Noakhali. And in this critical context his nonviolence was called in question more grimly than ever before. Coming a long way to be succeeded in achieving independence the people of India were able to overcome fear of its colonial oppressor under leadership of Gandhi, but the complex interplay of political interest within the social relationships, especially those based on religious views, sub served to develop a rigid sense of difference beneath the plane of National movement by degrees. United India fought against the Colonialism, but became disintegrated by succumbing to narrow clashes of interest working internally within its social body in the long run. One of the reasons why India succeeded in attaining its goal of freedom against the foreign power was that it did not hesitate to accept the way of seeing the world around it casting away the darkness of fear to fight back collectively with the formidable enemy directly; but at the journey's end the radical mindset was almost lost amidst of communal parochialism. A people-for-itself was

eager to split itself into two resting upon communal identities, i.e. Hindu-Muslim, by way of dismissing the solidarity which bounded the nation against one sovereign foe and by refusing to be one any longer. Like Calcutta and Bihar, Noakhali had to suffer the consequences in an utterly deleterious way.

Gandhi, being a practical idealist, as he preferred to see himself, took the challenge. In spite of being aware of the 'second stereotype' about Hindu-Muslim relations Gandhi recognized that failing to re-establish the mutual trust between the people of two communities, i.e. the Hindus and the Muslims, in Noakhali would leave a dangerous grave scar to their relationship and to his beloved country, for communal feelings was no less powerful than any other 'in-group feeling', even that of the nationalist one. He so asserted that: "I do not propose to leave East Bengal till I am satisfied that mutual trust has been established and the two are resumed the even tenor of their life in their villages. Without this there is neither Pakistan nor Hindustan – only slavery awaits India, torn asunder by mutual strife and engrossed in barbarity." (Bose, 1953:54) Here arise a few pertinent questions: "What made Gandhi take such a decision?" Or, "Why he chose to move to Noakhali rather than to Bihar, Bombay, Ahmadabad or Chhapra?" The latter one has a relatively simple answer: he wanted to rejuvenate and nursed the plant of Hindu-Muslim unity for the interest of future India. The former one has a more complex answer: as Gandhi's political philosophy focused hard realities of politics overlapping ideal of Ashram life, so he wanted to know the real root cause behind the carnage – why there were less causality and more conversion to Islam? To miss to look into this politics in such a historical context is to readily slip into a fatal pitfall: it "would really mean accepting Leagues mischievous two-nation theory." (Bose, 1953:97)

But, there was a more elementary reason besides the former two. Gandhi's ultimate aim to be in Noakhali was come out in an 'Interview' to the Press on 2 December, 1946:

"I find that my ahimsa does not seem to answer in the matter of Hindu- Muslim relations. This struck me forcibly when I came to learn of the events in Noakhali…Was it the weapon of the weak as it was often held by my critics or was it truly the weapon of the strong?...And so setting aside all my activities, I hastened to Noakhali to find out where I stand."

He was hopeful of seeing the sky in a drop of water, i.e., setting amity and peace between the two communities at war to rights in India via Noakhali. "If Noakhali is lost", he so finally avowed, "India is lost." Gandhi thus saw the riot-torn Noakhali as a "nodal point", and chose it as a "living laboratory" (Sengupta, 2016:72) for his experiment with ahimsa. "Be not afraid" – his voice was repeated in Noakhali because first requisite to confront the crisis, as he claimed, was nothing but 'fearlessness':

"Without fearlessness all our virtues turned into dust." (Pyarelal, 1956:305)

The Twitter and the Eagle: The violence started in Noakhali (1,658 sq. Miles) situated in south-western part of the Chittagong Division of East Bengal having two towns and 1,738 villages, about 300 sq. miles areas under the thanas (Police Station Areas) of Raipur, Ramganj, Laxmipur, Begumganj and Senbagh in Noakhali district on 10 October, 1946, on the holy day of Laxmi puja, i.e. the worship of the Hindu Goddess of Prosperity. It continued up to 14 October and readily emanated to the neighbouring district of Tippera.

The first news however (of Noakhali) leaked through to the Press on the 17th of October' because the Muslim League government in Bengal "succeeded in blocking out all news." (Bose, 1953:34) A "telegram" released by "Bengal Press Advisory Committee" on 16 October, 1946 read that: "Riotous mobs with deadly weapons are raiding villages, and looting, murder and arson are continuing since…October 10 in a very large scale." Quoting Mr. Taylor, the Inspector General of Police, "The Statesman" reported on 20th October that the mob "cut telegraph wires, demolished bridges, dammed canals and damaged and barricaded roads, making ingress and egress to and from the invaded localities impossible (or difficult)."

There, perhaps, no crime against humanity was left to be committed. Evidently, incidents of looting, arson, damaging of properties, destruction of the Hindu places of worship and idols, abductions, rapes, forced marriages, brutal murders and forced conversion were ample. "The worst of all", wrote Miss Muriel Lester, the English pacifist and renowned social worker upon her visit to Noakhali, in a note that, "was the plight of the women." One of the chief reasons why Gandhi urged to come here was same one: "the cry of outraged womanhood".

First, it implied that "avenging Calcutta" had been "an occasion" or, even "a pretext": to be able to oust "Hindu landowners and money lenders" would certainly mean to overturn "a lopsided agrarian order" (Lelyveld, 2011:297) for oppressed Muslim mass in the impending Promised Land. The carnage was "neither sudden nor spontaneous" rather "determined and organized". The goondas – gangs of hooligans – was brought mostly from the outside of the localities and worked under the auspices of "superior brains" like Ghulam Sarwar. The masses had been instigated. Even, "Muslims employees in the Post and Telegraph offices held up Hindu telegrams asking for urgent help." (Das, 1991:199)

Second, the corollary that follows from the former one is that, as Gandhi's stern sense of doubt about its nature did not fail to trace it, the devastation was more political than religious. The carnage was an intentional end-product of "institutional politics".

Wearing the Pakistan caps, carrying the Muslim League's party flag or shouting Pakistan zindabad (victory to Pakistan) by the rioters, and compelling the Hindu converts in doing the same apart from the other religious manifestations were the prominent signs of its being an essential disparate category - the political one. Terrorization at gunpoint as short-cut political means: if it was successful in Bengal, the Muslim League would certainly claim it for the rest parts of the nation.

The test of miracle: Noakhali, the one of the most daunting sarcophagus of Hindu-Muslim mutual trust of undivided Bengal, had been divided against itself. How could, then, the dead body of trust inside the dark, cold chest be reincarnated? It was a barbed problem like the hours of repentance and self-reflection after a post-alcoholic accident: how to return to and re-organize the everyday life while clearly recognizing the difference? It, perhaps, needed a "miracle". It was so expected that "Gandhi Likely To Work Miracle" when his "Epic Tour Begins" in Noakhali, a "Historical March Through Paddy Fields And Green Grooves" as the headlines of Amrita Bazar Patrika, a Calcutta based English-language daily acclaimed. (Lelyveld, 2011:311) The Viceroy informed London that, "I see no prospect of securing a return of confidence in Eastern Bengal for a very long time." It seemed to hold true, Gandhi soon found himself "groping" amidst of darkness, i.e. had difficulty to make the people to see his point of view as to the ordeal. Despite, the aim of Gandhi's sojourn in Noakhali from 7 November, 1946 to 4 February, 1947 was certainly to enter into the chest in search of the lost faith, to bring the dead back to life; and to destroy the sarcophagus forever.

Gandhi, "the master of art of compromise" (Lelyveld, 2011:291) was uncompromising to his mission in East Bengal this time. "I don't want to retire from Bengal as a defeated coward", he affirmed. That was, however, possible only if the two communities – the aggressors' and the victims' – torn by hatred came to cohabit as they used to do before the catastrophe. It took moving a mountain: (i) he wanted that the "Hindus never to run away from their homes even if they happened to be in microscopic minority", to ensure return of the evacuees; moreover, to persuade the "Hindu families to take back wives and daughters who'd been snatched from them rather than reject them as dishonored." (ii) he appealed to the good Muslims to respect and protect their Hindu neighbours. In the Muslim League territory of Noakhali Gandhi and his ahimsa were, thus, put to an acid test: he had to marshal these fragments of hope and reconcile the broken spirits of both of the communities scattered around him in the dark to be able to make his pilgrimage worthy. A "stupendous yajna" (sacrifice), *sin qua non*, had to be performed in order to attain this immense goal without failing to upkeep his ideal of ahimsa.

Gandhi looked up a core value that had already been there in his gospel of satyagraha itself in undertaking the mammoth task of restoration of peace and trust which he regarded to be indispensable and now judged to exalt: "fearlessness", the first requisite for disposing of darkness and basing ahimsha on its bedrock. Gandhi was well aware of the facts as to the successful execution of the idea of fearlessness in Noakhali: one, that individuals who had undergone such ordeal would be hesitant to step forward in going upon the precept of fearlessness, or even worse, to accept the ideal inasmuch as they were not in a position, physically and mentally, to recognize its strength at all; and two, he also had premonition that the idea of fearlessness had to contend with long-standing ground level difficulties in Noakhali in order to prove itself for it was subject to gradual realization. He, keeping them in mind, wanted satyagrahis to act as "exemplars" (Sengupta, 2016:79). The intent was clearly expressed in a drafted statement he wrote to a votary: "workers, whom I have brought with me will each distribute themselves in other villages of Noakhali to do the work of peace, if it is at all possible, between the two communities". (Bose, 1953:53) What is more was that he himself wished to become a "prime exemplar" by allowing himself to be a (Hindu) hostage in the cause he came to serve in Noakhali. He, thus anticipating the drawback, tried to amend his ahimsa, the golden technique, with reference to Hindu-Muslim relation in the backdrop of unprecedented horror by pushing the value of fearlessness to its extreme.

Where the mind is without fear: Gandhi's idea of fearlessness is a difficult one to comprehend on account of its contingency. Fearlessness, to begin with, is viewed as one of the cardinal "observances" that a satyagrahi ought to assimilate and apply to his "inner soul". It is a state of mind - Chitta - that exists within. As to the genocide of Noakhali fearlessness referred only to specific internal forms among many, i.e., fear of losing the nearest and dearest ones, bodily injuries and death rather than to less relevant ones such as external freedom from fear of possessions, prestige, losing reputation or office, and government and so on. Fear implies negation of love so as fearlessness is the rejection of hatred: the will to kill, therefore, stands opposite to readiness to die. "Fearlessness", thus, "implies absolute indifference to the physical body and all that goes with it and readiness to face loss or destruction of the same." (Pyarelal, 1956:328) The binary oppositions of hatred/love, "will to kill"/ "readiness to die" corresponds to the basic difference between brute force and soul force, that is, violence and nonviolence themselves.

But what makes Gandhi's idea of fearlessness more complex is his understanding of the same in terms of equally intricate differences of other pairs of oppositions: cowardice/

violence and "nonviolence of the weak"/ "nonviolence of the strong". Both of the pairs operate, at least, in two different levels. First, there is a collective level of fearlessness as regard to violence. A letter written to Maganlal Gandhi dated on 25 July, 1918 may be adduced as its example where Gandhi wrote "I have come to see, what I did not so clearly before, that there is non-violence in violence." In the East, the Oriental society, violence is seen as a last resort and "with a view to lokasangraha', i.e. that which promotes conservation of society."

The other level is individual. When there is the only choice between cowardice and violence, a fearless person certainly opts for the latter fighting fire with fire. When he was almost fatally assaulted in 1908 and asked by his eldest son what he should have done Gandhi advised him not to run away, not to see him killed but to defend him by use of physical force. The method of violence is always better than acting in a cowardly manner – to resort to arms in order to protect one's honour is more praiseworthy than to remain a helpless victim to overwhelming violence. He accepted the 'doctrine of sword' rather than to surrender one's rice bag for fear of being physically harmed, because to kill or to go for vengeance are superior to effeminate submission. Even further, he advocated training in arms for the believers of method of violence. Thus, only a few truly valorous men like Chitta Ray who fought against the hooligans to the last and finally killed his mother and himself too, the two Baisnabas (the believers of a Hindu sect) who preferred to sacrifice their lives rather than to be converted, or, Kali Prassanna Raut who kept the rioters at bay with his muzzle-loader when the house of Rajendra Lal Roy Chowdhury was first attacked on 11 October, 1946 could have drawn Gandhi's sheer respect for their acts of violence in Noakhali carnage.

Second, Gandhi's idea of fearlessness has a further division in keeping with the distinction that Gandhi often argued: "nonviolence of the weak"/ "nonviolence of the strong". A person who ceases to fear has a forked way ahead: he can take the path of violence by striking or, nonviolence by refraining. What is common to both – functioning of body force and awakening of the soul – is, again, fearlessness. Resorting to violence without fear in both collective and individual levels needs "an ability to strike". A coward who lacks courage to strike, in Gandhi's opinion, is unfit for undertaking both violence and nonviolence, for non- violence demands a greater deal of fearlessness. Violence can thus be transformed into nonviolence: to be a follower of nonviolence one must first be a follower of violence. Just as "to kill" is superior to "to be killed" meekly so that "to die without killing" is superior to "to kill"; and "submission" is inferior to "vengeance" as "vengeance" to "forgiveness": nonviolence, i.e. readiness to die, forgiveness, and love calls for extreme valour in comparison to violence, i.e. will to kill, vengeance and hatred. Raymond Cartiar, a French journalist, received an

explanation as to the point: "Unless you can beat Hitler by superior violence, you cannot obtain victory. But then Hitlerism wins." He so drew attention to the ancient hermits of India – the rishis (the Indian hermits of ancient age) – who, being greater warriors than Wellington, were greater geniuses than Newton in discovering the principle of ahimsa amidst of violence: "Having themselves known the use of arms, they realized their uselessness, and taught a weary world that its salvation lay not through violence but through non-violence."[1] This signifies the power of fearlessness that only a brave satyagrahi can cultivate. "Thus the votary", Gandhi wrote in Harijan dated 17 November, 1946, "of (nonviolence) must refuse to be cowed down by his superior without being angry…Assume that a fellow passenger threatens my son with assault and I reason with would-be assailant who then turns upon me. If then I take his blow with grace and dignity, without harbouring any ill will against him, I exhibit the ahimsa of the brave." One who fails to control his chitta (mind) gives his sadhana (striving) of nonviolence of the brave away.

To practice ahimsa of the strong one has to be superior in every possible way to his opponent. It would otherwise be counter-productive leading towards "nonviolence of the weak". This is true to the collective level too. Gandhi himself was well aware of the fact from his experience: most of the people take refuge to nonviolence in the fight against the British power in India for they were too weak to undertake the methods of violence. They failed to realize the fact that the "development of body-force is a sine qua non of full appropriation and assimilation of ahimsa." Gandhi rebuked the villagers for their cowardice near Bettiah in North Bihar when they fled leaving their wives, children and belongings behind at the mercy of the looters after having been attacked by them at the height of the non-cooperation movement in similar manner. In both of the cases the people followed Gandhi's way out of helplessness: "If we had atom bomb, we would have used it against the British."[2] He reminded them that his nonviolence was the supreme virtue of the brave, not a veil for cowardice; and the practice of ahimsa required far greater bravery than that of swordsmanship.

"I seek entirely to blunt the edge of the tyrant's sword, not by putting up against it a sharper-edged weapon, but by disappointing his expectation that I should be offering physical resistance. The resistance of the soul that I should offer instead would elude him. It would at first dazzle him, and at last compel recognition from him, which recognition would not humiliate him but would uplift him."[3]

To attain the necessary goals Gandhi set during his nine week stay in Noakhali and two chief tasks, namely, (a) to build up morale by communicating Gandhi's teaching by personal contact, and, (b) to do constructive activities among the victims after he left for Bihar as "exemplars", the satyagrahis had to observe the norms of "nonviolence

of the brave" - fearlessness as "bhayashunyata" - a term designated by Nirmal Kumar Bose, a renowned anthropologist and Gandhi's Bengali interpreter in Noakhali in his Bengali book on Gandhi[4] at individual level. Gandhi's order to "retrace their steps and find" a "piece of pumice he used to scrape his feet before soaking them" to Manu (Gandhi) which was suspected to be missing without taking any volunteers with her in Narayanpur village and upon finding it her bursting into "tears only to be met by Gandhi's cackle" (Lelyveld, 2011:316) might be considered a breath-taking instance of the same. What Gandhi remarked on it pinpointed the determination of a Satyagrahi practiced ahimsa bravely in herself: "If some ruffian had carried you off and you had met your death courageously, my heart would have been danced with joy. But I would have felt humiliated and unhappy if you have returned back or run away from dander."

Viswaranjan Sen and Bhupal Chandra Kamar's, two workers (exemplar) coming to Shahpur bazaar, "the storm centre" with two other local workers without police escort on 30 October, 1946, to survey actual state of affairs in Noakhali surrounded by about 400-500 agitated Muslims, the mob whom "the Sub-Divisional Officer" was himself confessed to be "afraid of" at that point of time, and continued to stay there (they lived in the Muslim house until Gandhi's arrival), or Pyarelal's, the Satyaghrahi (exemplar), reply on the face of one of the most notorious culprits of Noakhali carnage, Quasim Ali, that: "Some people try to appear fiercer than they actually are….You will have to kill me first. For unless you withdraw your threat, I shall myself go and stay there. Besides it is not true that has gathered round him twenty men. There are not more than three men in his camp. I shall be the fourth", responding upon the claim that if Viswaranjan Sen did not remove his camp Quasim himself would go and kill him based on a false allegation about that Biswaranjan Sen, who run the Gopairbag camp, was inciting Hindus and gathered 20 men to murder Quasim Ali, were the examples of such kind of fearlessness Gandhi had preached to work on in Noakhali. He advised workers in Noakhali "not many man were needed in a village for the protection of the few (Hindus) against many (Musalmans). One or two would be enough. If they laid down their lives in the performance of their duty without flinching and without anger in their hearts, their example would probably inspire others to exhibit non-violent courage likewise, so that they either be able to melt the hearts of the oppressors or die in the act of defending their self-respect and honour in a non-violent way."

Gandhi's general idea of "nonviolence of the strong" – the negative idea of fearlessness in the sense that it limits itself within a certain ambit of an insular satyagrahi – inclined to assume a different form in the 1946-Noakhali at the same time. It contrived to break its negative shell and cast itself beyond the individualist borderline. The 'nonviolence of the strong' as fearlessness as bhayashunyata now turned into a more open category

of the same with a positive character: fearlessness as "abhaya", in the sense that it meant to provide the victims with valour to act in the similar fashion as the exemplars did by transmitting the teaching and strength from the "leaders" into the "led". Gandhi, being himself a sanatani (traditional) Hindu and an Indian was well-acquainted with the notion of abhaya (fearlessness) - as found in the ancient scriptures of Indian culture, in the writings of Janaka and Yajnavalka, two sagacious philosophers of ancient India, "at the dawn of our history". But there was a fundamental distinction in terms of nature of fearlessness. The arm-bearing warriors whose root of power is fearlessness, i.e. 'abhaya', conceived of their immeasurability and finitude in terms of sovereign power: "warriors are masters of themselves" (Skaria, 2016:21) and a "residual fear … makes him take up arms". Satyagrahis - the 'sevaks' (the service-providers) of the people - by contrast, the true warriors free to choose his task in the service of the people in fear:

"so fearless as to never take up arms, as to sacrifice themselves rather than kill their opponents. They work for an absolute and unconditional equality,…Through self-sacrifice, satyagrahis offer fearlessness to their opponents and experience it themselves. Their fearlessness differs from that of warriors; while the latter requires a mastery of fear, the former requires a welling of love and compassion (prem, daya)." (Skaria, 2016:22)

A satyagrahi then, armed with the moral "soul force", was to bring light before the darkness of fear impregnated with the feeling of injustice. A satyagrahi must have a quality of a warrior - fearlessness as abhaya – with the ability to dispel fear in others in the form of a "gift" (dana), for, so to say, "It is the most soldierly of the soldier's virtue", still to see the opponent "as a fellow human being whose temporarily eclipsed sense of humanity it was his duty to restore" (Parekh, 2001:69). Only true balance of negative and positive ideal of fearlessness rooted into the agency of a satyagrahi or a believer of nonviolence could enable him to confront impulses of fear unhesitatingly both within himself and for his fellow-human beings suffering from its shuddering effects in the outside social world in accordance with the principles of ahimsa (of the strong) alike. The responsibility of a satyagrahi, thus, is to act without the traces of fear, both inwardly and outwardly, in a given circumstance to meet the quality of the "leader of a people to make them fearless" (Nehru, 1989:358). "Be not afraid" is the mantra he has to believe for himself and for others and act accordingly. It might be an effect of abhaya that echoed in the firm voice of an old Hindu woman in a Noakhali village catching fish from her pond: "As long as I live", when she was asked by her Muslim neighbour with an apparent tone of sympathy that how long did she expect to do the same household task. Thus, a "sufferer" seems to become an "exemplar" in the very moment of the act of replying caught in the infinite possibilities of turning negative fearlessness into positive one (and vice versa in the cases of those who came

to hear the story and found it motivational to act with courage) - the true significance of the idea Gandhi might have aspired to see in Noakhali.

Conclusion : Like most of the concepts "fearlessness" appears elusive in point of Gandhi's long political career because as a perfect satyagrahi he himself and the ideas he propagated were governed by the "living laws" which are "subject to the principle of growth, evolution, adaptation and change". Nevertheless, Gandhi's idea of fearlessness was found to be varying according to the positions of the slabs of nonviolence of the strong, violence, nonviolence of the weak or cowardice respectively fixed in a horizontal pole of hierarchical relevance on conceptual level. All acts of violence and nonviolence including "nonviolence of the strong" have "fearlessness" in common to them except "nonviolence of the weak" that lacks it. As Gandhi's preaching of nonviolence did not uphold notion of "universal non-violence" before the people of India, it was rather treated with specific intention: as a political weapon for the "solution of political problems". The observance of fearlessness together with nonviolence was applied to confront two such fundamental problems, as it was seen earlier, against the colonial power to achieve freedom and 'Hindu-Muslim relations'. The first instance was essentially a political problem to which nonviolence worked as a solution because of people's solidarity and high moral spirit against the colonial power. But in the second instance, particularly in those days closing to transfer of power, nonviolence failed to offer solution to the problem for it became a much complicated one by the time: it was as much a deep social problem as a political one mixed with communal purposes. Hence, Noakhali presented itself a much more sensitive issue to Gandhi to take care of – a "Do or Die" situation in testing ahimsa –'''To do' means to restore amity between Hindus and Muslims; or I should perish in the attempt." To choose between them was inevitably to choose to be valorous. Gandhi's Fearlessness was, thus, likely to be resembled to the opening line of Erich von Däniken's controversial book 'Chariots of the Gods?' [1968 (1970)] in a certain respect that anyone who advocated the principle as its author (like Gandhi himself to the co-workers or a co-worker to a common person) and anyone who observed it (be it Gandhi himself, a co-workers or a common person) in reality as its reader were both to be fearless, for "It took courage to write this book, and it will take courage to read it."

And in the process role reversal might ensue: a led might turn into a leader, a leaner into exemplar or negative "fearlessness as bhayshunyata" into positive "fearlessness of abaya". Ahimsa, he so believed would act miraculously if it was possible to walk "balancing on the edge of a sword" of the problem of "Hindu-Muslim relationship" in Noakhali by dint of its co-discipline of fearlessness (of the brave). It was difficult to judge whether Gandhi's experiment in Noakhali was successful or not for despite of its

carrying out by his co-workers after he left for Bihar it was unable to meet full goal. But what is important about the Noakhali experiment of nonviolence is, indeed, beyond its merit and demerit, success and failure, the teaching and practice of fearless striving to the grave problems of life in a Gandhian way. Moreover, the spirit of fearlessness is, one can infer in this way, inherent in Gandhi's two cardinal objectives "swajaj" ("home rule") and "sarvodaya" (literally, "uplift of all") that are "loosely described the ideal society towards which he worked" (Bondurant 1988: 6). And fearlessness so remains one of the major sources of political strategy in the socio-political history of South Asia contributed by Gandhi.

Notes

1. Quoted from 'Selected Works of MAHATMA GANGHI', compiled by Ronald Duncan, 24, Russell Square, London: Faber & Faber, p-48.
2. Gandhi said it in a prayer speech in 16th June, 1947.
3. Quoted from 'Selected Works of MAHATMA GANGHI, Selected by Ronald Duncan, 24, Russell Square, London: Faber & Faber, pp.53.
4. The notion of fearlessness as 'bhayashunyata' is found in the second Volume of the Bengali book entitled 'Mahatma Gandhi' written by Nirmal Kumar Bose.

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Communal Violence and the Law in India – A Legal Perspectives

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Abstract : *India has a composite culture where people of all religions, caste and communities are equal before the law as enshrined in the Indian constitution. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948 recognizes that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights without any distinction of any kind including religion. Communal violence tends to create internal disturbance, destroy the basic fabric and threatens the unity and integrity of the nation, the supreme law of the land, mandates the Central Government and the State Government to take effective measures to suppress communal violence perpetrated on such a magnitude and dimension which threatens the secular fabric and unity and integrity of the nation.*

Key words: Communal Violence, Human Rights, Offences, Criminal Justice System.

Introduction: India has a composite culture where people of all religions, caste and communities are equal before the law as enshrined in the Indian constitution. Everyone has a right freely to practice his religious belief. The Constitution dovetails freedom of religion on the one hand and secularism on the other hand. Secularism is one of the basic features of the Indian constitution and Communal violence is anti-secular activity. It is the duty of the State to prevent communal violence that tends to create

internal disturbance, destroy secular fabric and threaten the unity and integrity of the nation.

Communalism is a malady which erodes the society. It is the manifestation of anti-secular belief and may lead to communal violence. On communal violence there is no exact law except two Bills introduced in 2005 and 2011 respectively. Pre-independence period casualty

Table 1: Pre-independence period casualty[1]

Years	Killed	Injured
1921-25	3116	1638
1926-30	495	4054
1931-35	561	3379
1936-40	75	794
1941-45	243	952
1946	15735	13734
1947	5,00,000 Approx.	

The post-independence era has not been better. The instances of communal violence have increased since independence. There were 60 incidents of communal violence in 1981 which took the toll of many lives. In 1985 more than three hundred people were killed in 525 communal riots. During 1986-89, there were 2,086 communal riots in the country leading to death of more than one thousand persons and more than twelve thousand people were injured during the said riots. On demolition of disputed Babri Mosque in December, 1992 about two thousand people were killed and eight thousand were injured. The historical verdict of the Apex Court on 9th November, 2019, the outbreak of riot in Gujarat in 2002 took the life of more than 1200 persons and the loss of worth rupees 687.72 crores was officially estimated. Similarly during 2005-2009 while 648 people were killed and 11,278 were injured in 4,030 incidents of communal violence. 36.2% of all the casualties in India since 1954, according to the United Nations Human Development Report, 2004 have occurred between 1990 and 2002. The Ministry of Home Affairs in its Annual Report, 2009-10 has mentioned that while 826 communal incidents took place in 2009 in which 125 persons were killed, 943 communal incidents took place in 2008 and in that 167 persons died.

Table 2: Conviction in Communal Violence[2]

Post-independence year	Court cases	Conviction	Conviction to tried case trial	Convictions to Registered conviction
1957 Hospet (KA)	47	25	53.2%	--
1964 Rourkela	27	4	14.8%	--
1967 (Gorakhpur)	56	16	58.8%	27.3%
1980	125	6	4.8%	1.5%
1983	146	--	2%	0%
1984 (Bhiwadi)	185	4	2.2%	0.7%
1985 Kalyan	63	0	0%	0%
1985 Ahmedabad	63	0	0	0
1989 Bhagalpur	251	29	11.6%	3.5%
1992-93 (Bombay)	42	8	19.1	0.4%
2012 (Gujarat)*	20,000	9		

Communalism was a blight on the body politics because the nationalist saw nation-ness as natural – the heritage of every people – given by birth.[3] The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948 recognizes that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights without any distinction of any kind including religion. Everyone has the right to lie and security of person and no one shall be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

The National Human Rights Commission of India observed that it is the primary and inescapable responsibility of State to protect the right to life, liberty, equality and dignity of all. It is also the responsibility of the State to ensure that such rights are not violated either through overt acts or through abetment or negligence.

The Constitution of India imposes a duty on the Union to protect State against internal disturbance.[4] When communal violence tends to create internal disturbance, destroy the basic fabric and threatens the unity and integrity of the nation, the supreme law of the land, mandates the Central Government and the State Government to take effective measures to suppress communal violence perpetrated on such a magnitude and dimension which threatens the secular fabric and unity and integrity of the nation.

Communal Violence in India: India is a pluralistic society where people of all religious, caste and communities are equal before the law as enshrined in the Indian constitution. Everyone has a right freely to practice his religious belief. It belongs

equally to Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis, Jews and Sikhs and all are equal under the law. Only Hindus cannot live in this country as a first rate citizens while others can live as second-rate citizens. In this country, all citizens are entitled to live as first-rate citizens.[5]

India witnessed a holocaust in the form of religious riots at the time of partition which had engulfed the subcontinent in religious madness. Religion in fact binds spiritual nature of man to supernatural being and it includes worship, belief, faith, devotion etc.

Causes of Communal violence in India: The spell of communal madness most likely happening during festivals, procession through prohibited route, or due to eve teasing or economic rivalry and politics. Social tensions give loss of lives and property and fear in interaction and movement. The framers of the Article 15 of Indian constitution wanted to dismantle the structure of social discrimination perpetuated by the caste system and also the possibility of religious discrimination in India. First, it is political. The Ministers give their views on communal violence and they unduly influence local officers dealing with a situation and thereby undermine the respect and dignity of civil and political administration and demoralize them. Secondly, the crime statistics confirm that six local factors influence the quality of riots statistics:

(i) The corruption of the local police;

(ii) The perceived power of those who initiated the riot that the greater the power the greater the reluctance of the police to register case;

(iii) Where policemen were injured or fired their weapons and the level of financial compensation offered to riot victim by the State or Central government;

(iv) In the annual crime reports in India, the communal riots are not listed separately but include in the general category of riot together with union and the student related violence;

(v) The Indian Home Ministry does in fact collect town level statistics on death injuries and property damages after riots; it receives reports forwarded to New Delhi by each states Home Ministry and by its own intelligence agencies.

Existing Legal framework: Indian Penal Code, 1860: For the sake of clarity and convenience various offences related to work covered by the Penal Code have been divided as under:

(i) Offences against public tranquility

(ii) Office against religion

(iii) Specific offences against human body and property.

Clause 11 of the Bill, Offence under the Indian Penal Code, 1860 the following provided in:

(a) Schedule II, Part A of this Bill; or

(b) Schedule II, Part B of this Bill, when committed against any person belonging to a group by virtue of his or her membership to that group, shall be deemed to be offences of communal and targeted violence under this Bill and shall be dealt with accordingly.

Schedule II, Part A is as below:

The Indian Penal Code, 1860 Section	**Description of offence**
153B	Imputations, assertions prejudicial to national integration.
295	Injuring or defiling place of worship with the intent to insult the religion of any class.
295A	Deliberate and malicious acts intending to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs.
296	Disturbing religious assembly
297	Trepassing on burial places etc.
298	Uttering words etc. with deliberate intent to wound religious feelings of any person.

Schedule II, Part B, comprises the following section comprise 120, 141, 142, 144, 145, 146, 148, 149, 150-157, 322, 324, 336, 337, 302, 307, 375, 376, 397, 435, 436 of Indian Penal Code 1860 and the Bombay Police Act, 1951, Section 353.

Public tranquility: Chapter VIII of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 deals with offences against public tranquility. This chapter comprises twenty sections from 141 to 160. The formation of unlawful assembly may assume various dimensions and accordingly provisions for punishment have been made.

Offences relating to Religion: Chapter XV of Indian Penal Code 1860 entitled as "Of offences relating to Religion" containing four sections. However, Section 505 though it fall under the Chapter XXII entitled "Criminal Intimidation Insult and Annoyance" but it has been discussed here only the main reason for these sections in Indian Penal Code to curb the factors that are responsible for inciting religious animosities and which is in accordance with the declarations of religious toleration of the government, which is necessary to prevent religious riots and crusades."[6]

Specific offences against Human Body and Property: Rapes during communal tension are quite rampant. The accused is chargesheeted for offences like any other rape case. In Sister Meena Lalita Borwa v. State of Orissa[7] in the month of December 2007 communal violence broke out in Kandhamal district, Orissa and while tension continued to prevail in the said area, Swami Laxmanananda Saraswati was murdered in August 2008, once again, resulting in large scale violence in Kandhamal district and other parts of Orissa. During such violence, Sister Meena Lalita Borwa was sexually assaulted, raped and paraded naked by a mob of 40-50 persons. The case was registered for the commission of offence under sections 147, 148, 324, 354, 355, 294, 376 (2) (g) read with Sections 149 of the Indian Penal Code 1860.

Judicial responses: The Best Bakery case is very significant juncture in the analysis of the Gujarat Pogrom surcharged by communal frenzy which occurred after the burning of a compartment of railway train at Godhra Railway station on 27th February 2002. On this from first day of March 2002 massive violence and arson by unruly mob of 1000-1500 people took the life of several persons. The Trial Court and the High Court of Gujarat acquitted the entire accused persons who were indicated for various charges under section 147, 148, 149, 188, 504, 342, 427, 436, 395, 307 and 302 of Indian Penal Code, 1860. When the appeal in Zahira Habibullah H Sheikh v. State of Gujarat[8] reached at Supreme Court, the court opined that the present appeals have several unusual features. The order for retrial was permitted because question raised by the State of Gujarat itself which related to threat and coercion of witnesses and improper conduct of trial by the public prosecutor. The role of the investigating agency itself was found to be perfunctory and not impartial. The parties made rival contentions. The accused persons alleged their false implication, the victims' relatives. The way in which the trail has been conducted demonstrates the trial judge remained as a mute spectator when justice as sacrificed at the altar of the temple of justice leaving the poor victims of communal violence and murder in perils. The Supreme Court shows that there are evils exist where the society is heterogeneous. Dangerous repercussions and reactive effect on the society brought then it is the constitutional duty of state to protect its entire citizen from communal violence.

In Amjad Khan v. State[9] the communal riot had broken out in the town of Katna in Madhya Pradesh between Sindhi refugee and local Muslims. Muslims shops were looted and some Muslims lives were lost. The mob beat upon the closed doors of the shop of the accused with lathis. Before the mob could break into the shop, the accused fired two shots from his gun, which resulted in the death of the man in the riotous crowd. The Supreme Court held under Sections 102 and 105 of the Penal Code the

right of private defence was available to him against mob.

In Babu Rao Patel v. State (Delhi Administration),[10] the Supreme Court was faced with the ask of distinguishing speech violative Section 153A from political thesis and historical truth. The Supreme Court examining two articles held that the first entitled 'A Tale of Two Communalisms' was an undigested attempt to promote feelings of enmity, hatred and ill-will between the Hindu and Muslims communities'. The reference to the alleged Muslims traditions of rape, loot, violence and murder and the alleged terror struck into the hearts of Hindu minority in a neighbouring country by periodical killings.

Role of Criminal Justice System: 'Law should not sit simply, while those who defy it go free and those who seek its protection lose hope'.[11] The Criminal Justice System plays a crucial role in attainment of truth. Justice forms the cornerstone of each nation's law. The Constitution of India and the criminal justice system have a reciprocal relationship. The constitution sets certain ideals directly on State to securing justice to the people and maintaining unity and integrity of the nation. The main objective of criminal justice system is to create social harmony and maintain order by enforcing the laws and curbing their violations. It comprises communal violence cases the role of police, public prosecutor, judiciary etc. These agencies constantly depend on the constitutional support to their principles and procedures.

Role of the State: India is big country comprising the 28 States. No country in the world has a greater diversity of group life, "when State came into existence, when man felt the necessity of State, it has no fix date of the circumstances surrounding the dawn of political consciousness". The most popular theory is known as Social contract theory. Social contract theory is based on "human life was solitary, poor, nasty, and brutish and short". So the State is formed.

Role of State as Night watchmen: The night watchmen state of classical liberal theory, limited to the functioning of protecting all its citizens against violence. Right to life, liberty and property were once considered to be inalienable rights under the Indian Constitution,[12] each one of these rights was considered to be inextricably bound to the other and none would exist without the other. Of late, right to property parted company with the other two rights under the Indian Constitution and took the position of a statutory right.

Role of State to do Justice: According to John Rawls, the State is emerged to do justice. For this State have to follow two principles that are commonly known as two principles of justice: (i) each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive basic liberty compatible with a similar liberty after others; and (ii) social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both, (a) reasonably expected to be to everyone's advantage, and (b) attached to positions and office upon to all under conditions of fair equality of opportunity. India is secular and democratic country. The security of India is the prime concern of the Union of India. Public order or law and order fall in the domain of the State.

Role of State in prosecution in Communal Violence Offender: As per the allegation made by National Human Right Commission on Gujarat government on Gujarat riots (2002) as follows:

(i) The State Administration had not suppressed communal violence with legal and rightful penal power.

(ii) The State failed to protect rights to life, liberty, equality and dignity as laid down in the Constitution.

(iii) The State failure to identify local factors and players for participating in the violence.

In the matter of Commission of offence and for ensuring that the offenders are booked, the primary responsibility is of the State and it is for the State to ensure that the offenders are booked and the victims are not made to suffer.

Compensation and Rehabilitation of Victims of Communal Violence: The compensation to victims of communal violence is a matter of concern. The victim protection jurisprudence developed in United Nations General Assembly 1985 by adopting a 'Declaration of the Basic Principles of Justice for the Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power'[13] was included, the immediate family members as well as it applied to everyone irrespective of race, religion, nationality, language, age, colour, cultural belief and cover the protection programs for victims of crime and abuse of power. A victim of crime is a person who suffers any loss or injury as a result of the crime. In the case of grievous hurt, the victim would be the person on whom the hurt was inflicted although, there would be other family members, and friends who may also indirectly suffered the trauma.

Compensation under Public Law: The public law proceeding serves a different

purpose than a private law proceedings. The relief of monetary compensation as exemplary damage, in proceeding under Article 32 by Supreme Court or under Article 226 by the High Court, for established infringement of the indefeasible right guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution is a remedy available in public law. The purpose of public law is not only to civilize public power but also to assure the citizen that they live under a legal system which aims to protect their interests and preserve their rights.

In communal violence incidents, which violence become national issue then Central Government grants ex gratia compensatory relief. Otherwise, the victim thinks they have no remedy because a criminal justice system does not provide any legal tools to be compensated.

Compensation and Reparation under Communal Violence Bill, 2005: Communal violence Bill, 2005 provides the duty of each State to establish funds for the victims of communal violence. According to the Scheme of this Bill, there are two types of funds (i) State fund (ii) District fund. According to Clause 49 (1) every State government has to establish a fund to be called the State Communal Disturbance Relief and Rehabilitation Fund and there shall be credited thereto-

(i) All money received from the Central Government;

(ii) All money received from the State Government ;

(iii) All money received by way of gifts or donations, from a public sector undertaking or a local authority or an individual or a private voluntary organization;

(iv) Amounts received as aid from the International Organisations or organizations in India where necessary in terms of the existing regulations governing such aid, for the rehabilitation or welfare of victims of communal violence.

Clause 4 provides that the assistance from the district fund may not be given to those victims or to legal heirs if the victim itself is involved in the commission of any offence under the provisions of this Bill.

Remedy and Reparation under Bill, 2011: Any person who has suffered physical, mental, psychological or monetary harm or harm to his or her property as a result of the commission of any offence under this Bill, or when death has occurred as a consequence thereof, the next of kin of such deceased person shall be entitled to remedy and reparations including compensation, restitution and rehabilitation.[14] The State Government in co-ordination with the Chief Secretary of the State, the Inspector General of Police, Superintendents of Police or Commissioner of Police, as the case may

be, the Collector shall ensure that any entitled persons, whose life, liberty or property is threatened or where he or she apprehends such threat, is immediately provided security including creating police outposts and pickets in the vicinity of the affected area and providing temporary relocation, if necessary.[15]

Conclusion: India is pluralistic society where people of different caste, creed and religion reside. The constitution makers gave a dynamic and vibrant secular constitution which extends equal protection to each and everyone without any discrimination and extends equal right to profess any religion. Justice – social, economic and political inhere in every aspect. India is thus not a country of any particular belief and faith instead everyone having belief and faith in any religion is accepted in this constitutional scheme and has equal citizenship rights. Despite its unique tradition of tolerance, India has witnessed several communal violence in pre-independence and post-independence era too.

Communal violence, hostility or antagonism between different race and religion was unknown to Indian history despite people of different culture and religion resides since long. Communalism is malady, a social disease, which erodes the fabric of society by creating an artificial tension between different communities.

The communal violence is in common parlance, confrontation between two or more communally identified groups. But the communal violence has not yet been treated as distinct offence rather it is treated as social tension. The Communal Violence (Prevention, Control and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2005 is punishable and under Clause (19) of the Section 3 (c) of the Prevention of Communal and Targeted Violence (Access to Justice and Reparation) Bill, 2011.

In view of the above, the following suggestions may be given

1. Any offence which is actuated with the feeling of religion, caste, race, should be treated as a case of communal violence- an offence of discrimination.
2. The community motivated offences should be treated distinctly and should not be treated at par with any other ordinary offence while awarding the sentence under the penal laws.
3. The offences having element of religion, caste or race should be treated as aggravated category of traditional offence.
4. Whenever an offence was actuated with communal motive this may be treated as an aggravating circumstances for imposing enhanced sentence upon the accused.
5. The investigative branch of police should be separated from political interference

and get autonomy in matters of investigation.

6. The Trial court should exercise its power given under section 311 of the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973 and Section 165 of the Evidence Act, 1872.
7. The media should refrain from spreading sensations in the community by becoming a more responsible fourth column of the State.
8. The duty should be imposed upon the State by making effective law to protect the witnesses from being threatened or coerced either by an individual and also a provision for the insurance of such witnesses may be resorted to.
9. Where the state itself is found to be involved in outbreak of communal violence, it may be a ground of imposition of president rule under Article 356 of the Constitution of India.
10. The victims of the communal violence must be adequately compensated and an effective rehabilitation policy must be made.

End Note:

1. "Casualties of Death", *The Hindustan Times*, (1989, August 8) Delhi.
2. Steven I.Wilkinson, *Votes and Violence – Electoral Competition and Communal Riots in India*, 2005 Cambridge University Press: Printed by Replika Press (P) Ltd., India, p. 89.
3. Theodore Morrison, 'Muhammedan Movements', in J. Cumming (eds.). 2006. Political India, London, 1932, as referred by Gyanendra Pandey, *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, India, at p. 2.
4. See, Article 355, Constitution of India.
5. Arumugam Seervai v. State of Tamil Nadu, [2011] (6) SCC 405
6. Queen Empress v. Imam Ali, [1888] ILR 10 All 150 (FB)
7. 2010 Cr LJ 2779 (SC)
8. (2004) 4 SCC 158, popularly known as Best Bakery case also includes the cases as Zahira Habibullah Sheikh (3) v. State of Gujarat , [2005] 4 SCC 292; Zahira Habibullah Sheikh (4) v. State of Gujarat, [2005] 4 SCC 294; Zahira Habibullah Sheikh (5) v. State of Gujarat , [2006] 3 SCC 374
9. AIR 1952 SC 165
10. AIR 1980 SC 763
11. *Jennison v. Baker*, [1972] 1 AllER 1997.
12. Article 13 (2)
13. 39 YUN 743 (1985, 29th November) General Assembly Resolution 40/345.
14. See, Clause 87(1) of the Bill, 2011.
15. *Ibid* 89(1).

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Jawaharlal Nehru's Attitude towards Science and Technology

Roshani Rai

Abstract : *Jawaharlal Nehru, who is counted amongst the greatest and the most outstanding world figures of the twentieth century, was the principal architect of modern India. The second President of India and the great philosopher-statesman, Dr. Sarvapalli Radha Krishnan also once stated about Jawaharlal Nehru: "No homage is necessary for him. Modern India is the greatest monument which he has built for himself." Since scientific spirit formed the basis of Nehru's attitude towards life, he stated: "It is now patent that without science and technology we cannot progress," and that "modern life is an offspring of science and technology." Therefore, this paper seeks to study how Nehru's scientific spirit and his love of science and commitment to science played an influential role in guiding his policies in the fields of agricultural production, industrial development and advancement of science and technological developments after he became the first Prime Minister of independent India.*

Keywords: Jawaharlal Nehru, modern India, scientific spirit, science, science and technology, atomic energy, planning, agriculture, industry, technological development.

Introduction: Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, an astute statesman, an ardent nationalist, a great visionary, a true democrat, a modern nation builder was one of the most outstanding and influential figures of the twentieth century and the first Prime Minister of independent India. As India's Prime Minister he emerged as a world leader and a great statesman.

After 1947 the responsibility of shaping the destiny of India fell upon the shoulders of Jawaharlal Nehru. Nehru, a great statesman and a visionary considered science as an essential and basic element of development and progress. While addressing the Indian Science Congress at Calcutta on 26th December, 1937 he said: "It was science alone that can solve the problems of hunger and poverty, of insanitation and illiteracy, of superstition and deadening customs and traditions, of vast resources running to waste, of a rich country inhabited by starving people" (Nehru 1948: 176). Therefore, Nehru saw science and technology as critically important instruments for solving economic and social problems (Morehouse 1987: 294). He was convinced of the fact that, it was the scientific method alone that offered hope to mankind and an ending of the agony of the world (Nehru 1948:179). Independence, in fact gave Nehru the opportunity to translate into action this formed conviction that science was crucial to the solution of India's socio-economic problems. Due to his incessant efforts, clear vision and an unyielding commitment, science and technology in India would not have been developed as a major force for bringing about social and economic change.

Scientific Spirit of Nehru: Scientific spirit formed the basis of Nehru's attitude towards life and he clearly articulated his views on scientific and technological development. He was convinced that the methods and approach of science have revolutionized human life more than anything else in the long course of history, and have opened doors and avenues of further and even radical change, leading up to the very portals of what has long been considered the unknown (Nehru 2004: 19). Nehru wrote:

> "it is the scientific approach, the adventurous and yet critical temper of science, the search for truth and new knowledge, the refusal to accept anything without testing and trial, the capacity to change previous conclusions in the face of new evidence, the reliance on observed fact and not on pre-conceived theory, the hard discipline of the mind- all this is necessary, not merely for the application of science but for life itself and the solution of its many problems" (Nehru 2004: 570).

Nehru believed that science was a great force in the present age. One should imbibe the spirit of science and think on scientific lines. Underlining the importance of science, he further pointed out that "the scientific approach and temper are, or should be, a way of life, a process of thinking, a method of acting and associating with our fellow men" (Nehru 2004: 570). Therefore, for Nehru the scientific method was the only right method of approach to life's problems, and in India it was even more important than elsewhere because she was backward with science.

Nehru's scientific temper and approach clashed with that of organized religion which according to him produced narrowness and intolerance, credulity and superstitions,

emotionalism and irrationalism which tend to close and limit the mind of man, and to produce a temper of a dependent, unfree person (Nehru 2004: 571). Highlighting some of the negative aspects of religion, Nehru wrote in his Discovery of India:

> "Religion, as I saw practised, and accepted even by thinking minds, whether it was Hinduism or Islam or Buddhism or Christianity, did not attract me. It seemed to be closely associated with superstitious practises and dogmatic beliefs, and behind it lay a method of approach to life's problems which was certainly not that of science. There was an element of magic about it, an uncritical credulousness, a reliance on the supernatural" (Nehru 2004: 13).

Nehru emphatically accepted that he "was still less interested in the supernatural or problems of a future life. Science and the problems of today and of our present life attracted me far more" (Nehru 2004: 10). Bhagat Singh, India's iconic revolutionary called Nehru a revolutionary who stood for a radical change and not mere reforms for his scientific and rational vision (cited in Habib 2016: 29-40).

Though Nehru had deep understanding of science and its application for mankind, he believed in the advancement of science combined with moral and ethical values and warned against the unrestrained use of science and technology. Emphasizing on the culture of technology, Nehru said:

> "It has become inevitable for us to fit in with the modern world of science and technology and it will be dangerous for us to imagine that we can live apart from it. It will be equally dangerous for us to think that we should accept technology without those basic values which are of the essence of civilized man" (Jawaharlal Nehru's Speeches, Vol 4 1964: 170).

Nehru was afraid that if science gets divorced completely from the realm of morality and ethics, then it may be used for evil purposes. He therefore, wanted science to grow, develop and use for the good of humanity, and did not want the human values to technology lose its ground. He showed his keen interest in meeting scientists and discussing about innovation and development of science, and extended his fullest support for the development and advancement in the field of science and technology.

Modern Scientific and Technological Development: While Nehru possessed a real and considerable commitment to science and modern technology as major forces in the twentieth century world crucial to India's growth and future prosperity, he made enormous contribution in the development of science and technology which made India self-reliant. His spirited advocacy of the importance of science to India's future development is to be found in the annual parliamentary debates on motions to grant funds for different scientific purposes (Morehouse 1987: 291).

The Government's commitment to science and technology for the well-being of society was articulated in the Science Policy Resolution which was adopted by the Parliament on 4 March 1958 at the instance of Jawaharlal Nehru. The Resolution stated:

> "The key to national prosperity, apart from the spirit of the people lies, in the modern age, in the effective combination of three factors, technology, raw materials and capital, of which the first is perhaps the most important, since the creation and adoption of new scientific techniques can, in fact, make up for a deficiency in natural resources, and reduce the demands on capital. But technology can only grow out of the study of science and its applications...." (cited in Menon & Sharma 1989: 364)

India already had a strong foundation of science at the time of independence as the works of some eminent scientists like C.V. Raman, J.C. Bose, S.N. Bose, MeghnadSaha, Ashutosh Mukherjee and many others had demonstrated. The spirit of newly-independent India was animated by a deep faith in scientific development (Menon & Sharma 1989: 363).

Nehru was primarily responsible for setting up a large chain of laboratories which covered the key areas of physical, chemical and biological science and technology. It was due to the enthusiastic support of Nehru and the dynamic leadership of S.S. Bhatnagar that these national laboratories came into rapid being under the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research. Nehru also established five Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) on the model of Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The objective of founding these institutes was, in Nehru's words, "to provide scientists and technologists of the highest calibre, who would engage in research, design and development, to help..... towards self-reliance in technological needs" (Menon & Sharma 1989: 367).

Nehru laid the strong foundation of atomic research. For the development in the field of atomic energy, Nehru obtained the services of Homi Bhabha, who had already founded the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR) in 1945. As a head of the country's Atomic Energy Programme, he formulated a self-propelled and self-reliant atomic energy programme for India. The Atomic Energy Commission was established on 10 August, 1948, in the Department of Scientific Research under the direct charge of Nehru 'to institutionalize and expand scientific research activities in atomic physics'. In 1954, separate Department of Atomic Energy was created which was directly under the Prime Minister and Homi Bhabha as Secretary

Both Nehru and Bhabha had a strong belief in the power of science and technology as a tool of economic and social change. Considering his scientific temper, Nehru wanted to direct science for developmental purposes. But the nuclear energy was a twofold technology which could be used for both constructive and destructive

purposes. Expressing his views on the atom bomb he said: "The use of the atom bomb, if properly made, will lead to world peace, otherwise the world will be ruined" (Gopal 1982: 228).He knew that the India would develop her scientific researches and hoped that Indian scientists would use the atomic force for constructive purposes. But again, Nehru was firm enough to say that if India was threatened, she would inevitably try to defend herself by all means at her disposal. But he hoped India, in common with other countries would prevent the use of atomic bombs.(cited in Ghose 2009: 431-440).

A careful study of Nehru's speeches and policy declarations clearly suggest that he did not exclude the nuclear option forever. Credit goes to Nehru for having laid the strong foundations of atomic research so that when the country decided to exercise the nuclear option it could do so without much hardship and hindrance. In 1954, Nehru inaugurated the Atomic Energy Establishment at Trombay. There, he named country's first swimming pool type reactor as Apsara. This was constructed with the help of Canada and the continuous co-operation of the United Kingdom, the United States and France. The Zeralina the first indigenous reactor, designed, engineered and constructed by Indian engineers reached criticality in January 1961. In 1962 the Atomic Energy Act was further amended which gave the Atomic Energy Commission and Department of Atomic Energy the full responsibility for planning, research, design and development, including the erection of atomic reactors and power generation for peaceful purposes (Singh 1989: 38). This laid a strong foundation for the development of atomic energy programmes in India. Expressing hope in the atomic energy he said: "The world is bound to change within the coming few years and I hope that atomic energy will be used in constructive power to uplift mankind" (Singh 1989: 231).

Another scientific field in which Nehru made a substantial contribution is defence research. He was influenced in this area by Lord Blackett, a leading figure in Britain involved in the application of scientific methods to operational problems of war during the second world war. Thus, Nehru decided to set up a scientific structure to advise on defence matters. D.S. Kothari was the first scientist to head this structure. The Defence Research and Development Organization was started in 1959 by joining together various technical branches under the Ministry of Defence. Although the real growth of this organization to its present size took place between the mid- 1960s and mid-1980s, but the basic structure for development of this area had already been designed by Nehru (Menon & Sharma 1989: 364).

Space research was another important area in which a strong base was laid by Nehru. Space research was placed under the jurisdiction of the Department of Atomic Energy in 1961. The Director of Department of Atomic Energy Homi Bhabha, then established the Indian National Committee for Space Research (INCOSPAR) with Dr. Vikram

Sarabhai as Chairman in 1962 and established a Rocket Launching Facility at Thumba. A year later, the first rocket was launched.

Nehru also underlined the importance of trained scientific manpower for the rapid development of science and technology in India. According to Homi Bhabha who estimated that, "about 1 percent or less of our scientific manpower is being utilized at present, though even that is not being properly organized". Nehru considered the training of scientists and utilization of scientific talents as his first priority in all schemes of development. The Scientific Manpower Committee was established in April 1947 which became a precursor of the National Register for Scientific and Technical Personnel under the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research. A scientist's pool was formed later to attract Indian scientists who were abroad and to provide them short-term placement on their return to India (Singh 1989: 35). Nehru also put scientists fully in charge of science departments as he was of the opinion that the scientists had a primary role in it and administrators a secondary played a secondary role. He wanted the scientists to come out of the government way of looking at things and to make them work outside the government scheme of things (Morehouse 1987: 293).

During the stewardship of Nehru, the expenditure on scientific research rose from Rs 24 million in 1947 to Rs 550 million in 1964. It was largely because of the farsightedness and able leadership of Nehru that India is one of the leading countries of the world with one of the largest reservoir of trained scientific manpower in the world and occupies a position among those countries, which are highly advanced in the use of atom power for peaceful purposes.

Industrial Development and Agricultural Production: Nehru's great zeal for science and scientific approach to life was evident when he stated: "whenever the chance offers I say something about the importance of science and its off-shoot, technology. I think, we should realize that modern life is an offspring of science and technology" (cited in Bhabha 1978: 48). It was apparent to him that political freedom had to make social liberation secure and certain and that was achievable only through economic growth and this invariably demands the complete use of science and technology to achieve profitable results and make use of unused natural resources of the land. He wanted to transform the Indian economy to one based on modern science and technology.

Nehru brought science into planning as he was of the firm belief that science was an inextricable part of social, political and economic structure of the world. According to Nehru, if India was to progress, she must develop heavy engineering and machine-making industry, scientific research institutes, and electric power to develop India industrially and his vision was operationalized through the planning process which

also owes its existence to Nehru's vision. The Planning Commission was set up after independence in 1950 with Nehru as its first Chairman, and he continued to remain so, as Prime Minister of India, until his death in May 1964 (Menon & Sharma 1989: 365). Nehru ensured that science was made an integral unit of economic planning and this exercise began with the planning of science and technology. Professor P.C. Mahalanobis, the eminent statistician of India was closely associated with Nehru in the work of the Planning Commission and scientific matters generally, and in January, 1955, he became a de facto member of the Commission (Morehouse 1987: 290)

Though Nehru devoted utmost importance to heavy industries, he also understood the significance of small scale or cottage industries. According to Nehru, we have to develop the village and cottage industry in a big way, and while trying to develop both the industry, one should not forget the human factor. For, we are not merely out to get more money and more production, but we ultimately want better human beings (Jawaharlal Nehru's Speeches Vol 2 1963: 84). During Nehru's time, huge steel and iron, coal, oil refineries, and ship-building industries were set up which provided a strong industrial foundation to the country. Nehru was farsighted enough to foresee that the development of industries would have a powerful impact on the Indian economy which was essential for a modern nation, and the industries should be developed by the application of science and technology as he wrote in 1934: "I want to increase the wealth of India and the standards of living of the Indian people and it seems to me that this can only be done by the application of science to industry, resulting in large-scale industrialization" (Nehru1934: 36). The mature industrial structure that we inherit today, is in no small part due to the foresight of Nehru who also bequeathed to us the scientific and technological capacity development today.

Though Nehru firmly believed that "rapid industrialization is essential to relieve the pressure on land to combat poverty and raise standards of living, for defence and variety of other purposes," yet it would be pertinent to look back what he said in both the Houses of the Parliament in 1952:

> "We certainly attach importance to industry; but in the present context we attach far greater importance to agriculture. If our agricultural foundation is not strong then the industry we seek to build will not have strong basis either. Apart from that, the situation in the country today is such that, if our food front cracks up, everything else will crack up, too. Therefore, we dare not weaken our food front" (Jawaharlal Nehru's Speeches Vol 2 1963: 89).

Nehru laid the greatest stress on agriculture because it was only on the basis of agricultural prosperity that India could make industrial progress (Jawaharlal Nehru's Speeches Vol 2 1963: 94). Again, in a speech at a meeting of the National Development

Council held at New Delhi on November 8th 1963, Nehru said: "Agriculture is more important than anything else because agricultural production sets the tone to all economic progress" (Jawaharlal Nehru Selected Speeches Vol.5 1968: 110). Through planning he not only wanted to raise the living standards and bring prosperity to the people of India, but he also had the reason to make India one of the foremost countries of the world.

Homi J. Bhabha (1978) pointed out that modern agriculture with high levels of production attained for example in America, whereby less than 10 % of the population produces more than enough for the whole, is equally based on modern science and technology, for it depends on machinery for sowing and reaping, on the production of better strains by scientific breeding, and on abundant use of fertilizer, which itself is a product of the chemical industry. "After all," Nehru said, "how has agriculture grown in many other countries greatly? It is because of the application of science and technology. If modern life depends so much on science and technology, then we must seize hold of them, understand them and apply them" (cited in Bhabha 1978: 49). Adhering to this formula, the First Five Year Plan (1951-1956) accorded the highest priority to agriculture including irrigation and power and community development projects and about 44.6 % of the total outlay was allocated for their development. However, in the Second Five Year Plan (1956-61), attention was shifted from agriculture to industry and only about 21% of the actual plan expenditure was spent for agricultural development (Prabha et al 2015: 41-47). Thus, industry and mining obtained 183% of the total plan outlay and in addition transport and communication department got 28.9 % and irrigation and power 10% (Roy 1965: 104-105). It has been said that Nehru laid the foundations for the technological reforms in agriculture, the basis of the Green Revolution, which made India food surplus in a remarkably short period (Mukherjee & Mukherjee 2015: 77). Daniel Thorner, one of the fervent observers of Indian agriculture since independence observed:

> "It is sometimes said that the (initial) Five Year Plans neglected agriculture. This change cannot be taken seriously. The facts are that in India's first twenty-one years of independence more has been done to foster change in agriculture and more change has actually taken place than in the preceding two hundred years" (cited in Mukherjee & Mukherjee 2015: 77-78).

By and large, Nehru perhaps felt that he had no option but to give higher priority to basic industries steel, coal, oil and machine building, in order to build the foundations of a modern, self-reliant Indian economy, without which even agricultural development was not possible beyond a point and which was indispensable not only for rapid economic development but also for safeguarding the country's independence

and society (Rajnayer 1975: 31). If today India is not much reliant on the advanced and developed countries not merely in the economic field, but that also in that of defence supplies, if India has become self-sufficient in food production, it is due to modernization of agriculture. This was possible due to the attention paid to the modernization of the economy during Nehru era.

Failures of Nehru's Science and Technology Policy: Though Jawaharlal Nehru made enormous contribution in the field of science and technology which made India strong and self-reliant, yet his policies in the allied fields were not free from criticism and failures were visible in few areas.

While Nehru was of the strong opinion that science alone could resolve the issues of hunger and poverty, insanitation and illiteracy, superstition and deadening customs and traditions, with vast resources running waste in a sick country inhabited by starving people, but astonishingly he never gave serious attention to the eradication of these ills which still afflict the country. He failed to take steps for the betterment of the poor (Radhakrishna 2009: 157-164).

Planning according to Nehru meant economic and social development. He ensured that science was made an integral part of economic planning and this process began with the planning of science and technology. Nonetheless, his model of development is not without criticism. It has been said that he spoke mainly of science but hardly about technology and more emphasis was attached to heavy industry which was not labour intensive. Though he talked about developing village and cottage industry, he did not give much attention to its growth and development. It is also believed that the indigenous technology did not develop sufficiently due to his blind following of west and western technology (Singh 2002: 251).

Though Nehru was convinced of the importance of science, inevitably science came to be Government-controlled, his personal interest and his association with a handful of Indian scientific leaders impeded the development of any effective instruments for fashioning in some coherent and continuing manner government policy towards science and the scientific community (Morehouse 1987: 303). By giving importance and pre-eminence to the scientists and the scientific establishments like national laboratories, the position of universities was downgraded and stripped of trained talent and the scientists acquired elitist traits who failed to understand and try to solve the manifold problems facing the country. The lack of proper communication and linkage between laboratories, universities and the user industry has also been regarded as a lacuna in the field of scientific research during Nehru's times and that the full benefits did not reach the society (cited in Singh 2002: 251).

Conclusion: Nevertheless, the failures should not underrate Nehru's contributions and achievements in the field of science and technology which had far-reachingimpact in the building of the Indian nation. Jawaharlal Nehru, a true man of India's destiny and builder of our great nation and creator of modern India was a universally respected world statesman. He understood and recognized the importance of science in transforming an economy of scarcity into one of profusion, and from traditionalism to modernism, the path which the whole world is now following. He had full appreciation of the scientific revolution which transformed the world. Nehru believed that the creation of a vast and firm scientific managerial and technical foundation was essential to India's progress and prosperity at all levels, and under his Premiership Indian Institutes of Technology were established to provide highly competent and qualified scientists and technologists who would help in building a self-reliant and technological India. He wanted to use science and technology not only for economic progress, but even more as an instrument to free the Indian mind from the shackles of prejudice and superstition, and for this reason he emphasized the need of developing scientific temper (Kaul 1992: 174). He firmly believed that scientific method and approach alone can revolutionize human life. Nehru realized that the economic development based on a strong industrial base and attainment of self-sufficiency in the field of agriculture and food production was possible only through the fullest application of science and technology. Though Nehru was against nuclear weapons, but he formulated an aggressive science and nuclear policy as he was of the firm conviction that nuclear technology had a part to play in national development and also reduce dependence on foreign personnel, material and machinery. These ceaseless efforts made by Nehru carved a place of prominence not only for himself, but also for India and her people as a whole. The progress in the field of science and technology which has been possible today is altogether due to the vision, farsightedness and tireless efforts of the first Prime Minister of India.

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Problems of Urbanisation On Governance: A Review Of Silchar Town

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Abstract : *The fast rate of urbanization due to the massive inflow of people from rural to urban areas which makes the cities as large centers for investment has come around with a number of social and economic as well as civic problems. With the massive growth of population as well the growing role of urban centers, the role administration has become utmost important to regulate the life of the common masses. The present paper is concentrated on understanding the challenges faced by urban governance due to rapid and unplanned urbanization of Silchar town. A field survey was conducted amongst280 numbers of residents from different occupational backgrounds who are being selected from 14 numbers of wards under Silchar municipality as well as20 members of the Municipal Board i.e. both elected and employed for obtaining their views towards mitigating the effect of rapid urbanization of the town. The study reveals that ever growing problems on urban governance can be resolved by efficient leadership of the Board and coordination between the district administration and the Municipal Boardin general and active participation of the common people in all affairs of the town in particular.*

Keywords: urbanization, migration, municipal board, governance

Introduction: With the advent of economic liberalization and globalization, the urban centers of almost all the cities in general have emerged as the hubs around which India's economy would gravitate (Sharma, 2014). As a consequence of industrialization, people

have started moving towards the industrial areas in search of employment which has led to the growth of towns and cities. It, thus, induces migration from countryside to cities. With the onset of the process of urbanization, villages near the urban units and even the remote villages tend to enter the orbit of a town or a city (Thompson, 1935).

The word 'urbanization' literally refers to a process of absorption of people in densely populated habitats and making the spatial units to lose the rural character with a rapid shift of occupations from primary to non-primary sectors (Maheshwari, 2006). The density of population in urban areas increases due to inflow of people from less industrialized regions to more industrialized areas. Hence, urbanization, simply defined as the shift from a rural to an urban society, is an essential outcome of migration that goes hand in hand with the industrial and technological development of urban settlements. Furthermore, urbanization is also the result of socio - political and cultural development of an urban area.

Due to the rapid growth of urban centers which are the fetching centers for large investment, specialized services, amenities and their effective and efficient functioning assumes added importance. The concepts of urbanisation as well as urban governance accordingly become more pertinent and critical in this context as the ability of a nation to pursue its economic goals depends upon its competence to govern towns and cities effectively and efficiently. Thus, urban planning and management of urban affairs are essential parameters of urban development. The aim of all planning is the creation of suitable environment for the common masses by providing them all the basic amenities of life (Mondal, 1998).

However, due to the rapid pace of urbanization, there has been a growing disparity between people's aspirations and their civic needs on one hand, and actual performance as rendered by the civic administration on the other. The main objective of all the civic administration is to provide assurance that the basic infrastructure and civic amenities are available to the town dwellers. But the rapid population growth or urbanization results in worsening of the civic services and amenities which has given rise to multifarious problems and degradation of the quality of life of the urban dwellers in most of the cities(Singh, 1998).

Therefore, it is utmost essential that appropriate environment for the dwellers of the town as well as villages are created by the local govt. which would facilitate to exert a pull on investment, provide employment and ensure a better quality of life for all the dwellers irrespective of town or rural areas (Guha, 2009). However, the success and efficiency of an administration depends both upon the efficiency of its personnel and also upon its proper organizational set up and effective governance. Thus, it becomes clear that in all sectors of public interventions and service delivery, until and unless

the state of governance is 'good', service or product delivery will not be proper. If urban centers have been termed as engines of economic growth, urban governance can rightly be called wheels of such engines (HSMI, 2001). In this present era of democratic politics, the urban government in the country has been passing through major series of crises resulting from unplanned urbanization of the cities such as crisis of leadership, crisis of administration and civic management, crisis of finances and above all crisis of public confidence (Shrivastawa, 1980). Under such circumstances, an effort to study the challenges faced by urban governance incivic management of the town will certainly help in identifying the remedies to the problems suffered by the town dwellers.

Silchar, the head-quarter of Cachar district is located in the southern part of state Assam. The state of Assam is experiencing population inflow, both internal and external since decades. Better livelihood opportunity was the main reason behind migration of population in Assam. Silchar, the second largest city of the state of Assam, has emerged as a center for education opportunity, medical facility, employment and business prospect and hence attracting people from other areas to Silchar.The decadal growth of population in Silchar town which was 27% and 55% respectively between 1991-2001 and 2001-2011 was higher than the respective national growth rate of 21.54% and 17.64% respectively. In other words, Silchar town has experienced rapid urbanization during the last two decades.

As a result of rapid urbanization, there emerged the problems of high density of population due to inflow of rural population, inadequacy of the facilities of roads, traffic management, housing, sewerage and drainage, drinking water, health, hygiene and good environment. The issues of urbanization, if, thus, not being given proper attention in time, may give rise to multifarious civic problems and hence, there is a growing need for better urban governance. The objective of this research paper is to analyze the major problems suffered by the town dwellers as well as the challenges faced by the Board members in the governance of Municipal Board to mitigate the problems developed due to rapid urbanization of Silchar town.

Review of Related Studies: Review of literature reveals that substantial research has been carried out on urbanization and migration related issues. Suhartini and Jones (2019) presented a study on theoretical and contextual framework of urbanization, the complexity of urban development and the importance of urban governance in addressing urban issues and challenges. Impacts and consequences of rapid urbanization such as informal settlements was explored with a focus on developing countries and mid-sized cities, especially in Asia. The chapter argues that the role of urban governance in providing basic urban services in developing countries is complex

and multidimensional, cutting across key planning and management constructs such as formal, informal and hybrid governance arrangements.

World Cities Report 2016 demonstrated that the current urbanization model is unsustainable in many respects. It conveys a clear message that the pattern of urbanization needs to change in order to better respond to the challenges of our time, to address issues such as inequality, climate change, informality, insecurity, and the unsustainable forms of urban expansion.

Venkatesham (2015) reported that urbanization is the result of rural migration and is the result of modernization, industrialization, and the sociological process of rationalization. It was reported that urban migration is rapidly encroaching the precious agricultural land. Further, lack of employment, education among the rural immigrants resulted in the increase in beggary, thefts, burglaries and other social evils.

Rituraj Neog (2014) reported that larger towns in Assam has experienced higher rate of migration compared to smaller towns resulting from both rural to urban and urban to urban migration. Jiboye (2011) studied the issues and challenges for effective urban governance in Nigeria and reported that urban population explosion has been necessitated by the features of globalization and industrialization. Uncontrolled growth of cities led to a degraded environment and poor living standard of the people.

Newman (2002) reported that urban growth should contribute towards sustainable development of environment sustainable in order to take care of the present needs without compromising the ability of future generation to meet its own needs.

According to William (2002) sustainable development could be achieved through forms of governing that are empowering and also sensitive to the needs of future generations. Gille 2011 presented that requirements for achieving sustainable development require stakeholders' participation and collaborative approach to policy-making and implementation.

Methodology: To achieve the objective of the present study, a survey was conducted amongst the selected300 numbers of respondents through a structured questionnaire. There are total number of 28 wards comprising of 19,652 (nineteen thousand six hundred fifty two) households under Silchar Municipality (collected from office of Silchar Municipal Board). For the purpose identifying the problems of urbanization in Silchar town, 14 (fourteen) wards were selected keeping in view the size of the population of the wards. From each of the fourteen wards, twenty respondents were selected on the basis of purposive sampling keeping in view their age, education, administrative position and organizational activities. Apart from this, 20 members of Silchar Municipal Board, both elected and appointed are also being interviewed

in order to understand the major challenges being faced urban local governance for mitigating the problems of the town dwellers.

Data Analysis and Interpretation: The scenario of the urban life of Silchar town began to be affected by different dimensions of urbanization which is the result of perpetual growth in population and continuous process of shifting of rural population towards the urban centre.There has been growing imbalance between people's aspirations and their civic needs on the one hand and actual performance rendered by the Municipal administrationof the town on the other. Consequently, the residents of the town are facing enormous civic problems which have deteriorated the standard of living of the town dwellers as a whole.

Problems of Urbanisation on Town Dwellers: The problems which become evident from the survey of the present research work are enumerated in the following sections with the help of some tables.

a. Roads, and Traffic Management:

The road condition in Silchar is causing great concern to all. Except a few, most of the roads of the town are worn-out, narrow which creates the problem of traffic congestion having no space for free movement of the vehicles. The quantity of different kinds of vehicles which are running through the narrow roads in the town has increased several folds during the last 100 years. But the conditions of road have not improved substantially.An entire generation has now grown up in the town which has not seen decent roads and proper traffic regulatory mechanism in Silchar town. Besides, the lack of any road repair works over the years has created big potholes and pits in the roads. There are footpaths in some roads but the unevenly set slabs having wide gap in between serve as death traps for the pedestrians.The perceptions of the respondents in the present study about the conditions of roads and traffic regulation in Silchar town are being shown with the help of the Table 1.

Table 1: Respondents' opinion about road and traffic condition of Silchar town

Particulars	Yes (%)	No (%)	Not aware (%)
Construction of new road in your locality	46.67%	48.15%	5.18%
Repair of old roads in your locality	61.85%	32.96%	5.19%

Particulars	Yes (%)	No (%)	Not aware (%)
Do you face traffic congestion while going to your work place	95.37%	4.63%	-
Poor condition and inadequate width of road is the main reason behind traffic congestion	96.67%	3.33%	-
Lack of traffic awareness, and absence of adequate traffic police is responsible for traffic congestion	94.44%	5.56%	-

b. Drainage and Water Logging Problem

Water logging is another serious civic problem being regularly faced by the urban dwellers in the town. Silchar is a town of heavy rainfall with annual average rainfall of about 3400 mm(DDMAC, 2012). During the monsoon season, most of the areas of the town remain waterlogged. It was found in the present study that the area of Silchar town is approximately 15.75 sq. km. whereas the lengths of existing lined and unlined drains are about 8.79 km(DDMAC, 2012).

Due to urbanization population of Silchar town has increased drastically. However, the drainage and sewerage facility did not develop at the same pace which can be capable to drain increased discharge of the town. The opinion of the respondents with respect to the problems of drainage and water logging obstacle are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Water logging and damaging of road

Particulars	Yes (%)	No (%)
Water logging and deterioration of roads during heavy rain	87.41%	12.59%

In the present study, the respondents have also been asked about the consequences which they used to face as a result of problem of blockage in the drains and water logging in their area. This is illustrated in the Table 3.

Table 3: Effects of water logging and drainage problem

Particulars of the consequence of Water Logging	% of respondent
Cannot go to work	8.52%
Children cannot go to school	11.11%
Do not get proper foodstuffs	1.11%

Do not get medical treatment	0.00%
All of the above problems are faced	74.07%
Does not affect life	5.19%

c. Waste Removal and Sanitation:

There is insufficient conservancy and garbage disposal system in Silchar town causing serious unhygienic condition throughout the town. Due to unplanned growth of the town, both commercial and residential units co-exist. However, the collection system of waste is not designed to collect presorted waste and as a result commercial and residential waste gets mixed up. Improper methods of solid and liquid waste management pose a great threat to urban ecology and environment in the town. The perception of the respondents with respect to the problems of sanitation and waste removal facility as being provided by Silchar Municipality is outlined in Table4.

Table 4: Respondents' opinion about effect of urbanization on sanitation and sewerage

Particulars	Yes (%)	No (%)
Rapid rate of urbanisation results in poor sanitation facilities in town	83.70%	16.30%
Is there any waste collection facility available in your locality	29.63%	70.37%
Household face problems concerning the sewerage systems	43.70%	56.30%

From the field survey, it is being found that 42% respondents have access to garbage collection facility on daily basis by means of garbage cart and only 8% of the respondents argued that they have garbage dumpster near home. At present, most of the sewer of the town is drained untreated into the adjacent nullahs or khads. There is no provision for the treatment of sewer produced by the town. The collection and transportation of solid waste needs to be made more effective as every crude dump is an environmental disaster causing health risks from flies, rats and air pollution from deliberate or accidental burning. The disposal should be swift to avoid pollution of surface and ground water. Urbanization replaces the vegetations with impervious services which reduce the infiltration area where ground water can occur and thus resulting in a greater flow of water in streams which in turn raises the chances of more severe flooding. Moreover, as storm water flows over surfaces of the town, it picks up potential pollutants like pesticides, bacteria from human and animal waste which is detrimental to animals, plants as well as human beings.

Major ecological consequences of rapid urban explosion are air and water pollution as well as destruction of natural habitats. The depletion of urban environment causes disastrous effects on health and standard of living of urban dwellers. The large number of motor vehicles and industrial pollution, however, makes the quality of air extremely poor. According to World Health Organization, the concentration of suspended particles should be less than 90 micrograms per cubic meter. In fact, such high concentration of particles damages human health directly which in turn causes various diseases.

It is known that the core aspect of democracy is general public and hence encouragement of mass participation in local affairs of governance is the key to successful implementation of grass-root democracy. In this regard, the ward committee system is said to play a vital role in participatory governance which implies that "the people shall govern" and thus signifies the notion of grass- root democracy. In fact, local government is regarded as the level of government closest to the people and hence, development of ward committees is the appropriate way to ensure that citizens could give their input to the functioning of municipal administration. The committees are meant to be an institutionalized channel of communication and interaction between residents of the ward and the municipality. Indeed, ward committees provide opportunity to the community members to express their needs, their opinions on issues of service delivery that affect their lives and thus draw attention of the Chairman of the Board via commissioner of the respective ward.

Thus, the service delivery mechanism of every municipality can run successfully only when the residents are well aware of their civic duties and perform accordingly as responsible residents of the municipal area. The residents of the town should take care of their respective area in terms of cleaning, maintenance and overall improvement. In order to assess the extent of their participation, the respondents are asked about some particular facts which are shown in the following table.

Table 5: Respondents' awareness, opinion and participation in Swachh Bharat Abhiyan

Particulars	Yes (%)	No (%)
Aware of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan	100%	0%
Swachh Bharat Abhiyan is a good initiative by Central Govt.	94.44%	5.56%
Respondents' participation in Swachh Bharat Abhiyan	19.26%	80.74%

From the above table it appears that 100% of the town dwellers are aware of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. Besides, 94.44% of the respondents considered it as a good initiative of the Central Government towards maintaining a clean and suitable administration

for the town dwellers. However, only 19.26% of the respondents are being found in the present research work who have participated in the campaign on Swachhata Abhiyan being organized in this town. Apart from this, the respondents are also being asked about their modes of participation in the regular affairs of municipal administration in Silchar town which is recorded below.

Table 6: Modes of participation in the regular affairs of municipal administration in Silchar town

Particulars	% respondents
By forming committees or clubs in respective localities	24.81%
Regular visit to ward Commissioner's office for catering the demand of locality	28.89%
Protesting the mismanagement and discrepancies of Board	9.26%
Not interested in this affair	37.04%

From the above table it appears that 24.81% of the respondents participate in the affair of urban governance by forming committees in respective localities of their area. 28.89% of the residents participate in the affair of urban governance through regular visit to the office of the ward commissioner for catering the demand or complaints of particular locality concerned, whereas 9.26% of the respondents argued that they participate in the affair of urban governance through effectively protesting against the mismanagement of the Board through newspaper, meetings and strikes. However, it is evident from the table that majority of respondents (37.04%) is not interested to participate in the affairs of Silchar Municipal Board.

Dilemmas on Urban Governance: The management of civic administration as well as the complexities faced by the municipality in service delivery mechanism is understood on the basis of the experienced views of those municipal functionaries who participate regularly in the decision-making process of urban local governments, namely the elected members and the appointed authorities, i.e., the executive officer, and other staff. Hence,in order to ascertain what are the major crises being faced by the urban governance towards mitigating the urban problems, the present paper also examines the opinions of the members of Board collected through analytical discussions from the field visits and tries to find out the remedial measures of the phenomenon of urbanization.

From the discussions with the Board members it is being found that due to rapid growth of population, spatial planning of the town for managing its unplanned growth

is a major challenge being faced by the Board. The board members have pointedthe issue of migration due to rapid development of the town,as an important challenge before the Board with respect to the governance of service delivery approach to the residents of the town. With regard to thegovernance of waste collection services, it is being commented by the officials of the Board that the absence of adequate number of vehicles and garbage collectors poses severe crises to the service deliveryof the town by SMB. Therefore, the waste generated by the households is not being made possible to collect directly from the households on a regular basis due to this scarcity of adequate numbers of infrastructure.

From the analytical discussions with the members of the Board, it is being found that there is a general feeling of discontent amongst some elected members on their participation in municipal matters. The members had argued that they have contested in municipal elections with the intention that to contribute actively insofar as the development of their ward is concerned. But, throughout carrying their work activities, they feel that the work practices are too complex and not easy to comprehend. Unfortunately, the influential members prefer to ignore their grievances in this regard. Therefore, the other members lose their interest in municipal matters because of the lack of incentives offered by the State government. In this situation, it becomes difficult for them to be accountable to the citizens who have elected them and vested their faith in them.

However, all the Board members have specified the main obstacle for service delivery of the Board is the poor financial condition of SMB. Overall expenditure of the Board is increasing at a higher rate and unfortunately a major portion of total expenditure is incurred on salary and other administrative expenses. There is continuous rise in liabilities of the municipality due to the widening gap between revenue and expenditure. Besides, revision of taxes, through the self-assessment that is the Unit Area Method, was also not being implemented by Silchar Municipal Board. From the study of office records of the Municipality, it is evident that there were maximum instances of short deposit and non-deposit of receipts by the collectors on time which implies lack of internal controls in revenue collection. Allegations have been made by the Deputy Director of TACP cell of the Board that the assessments made by the municipality were not fair and even. This on the other hand, results in non-provision of adequate civic amenities to the residents of the town since the Board is utilising lesser proportions of their own resources on obligatory functions. Moreover, the management of own funds by the SMB was also found to be mostly unsatisfactory. Indeed, except preparing for annual budgets, financial planning and management is almost lacking in Silchar municipality. As a result, for carrying out their allocated functions, the Board is mostly constrained to rely on Government grants. From the study it is also

being found that more than 80% of the revenues collected by the municipality are spent on the establishment. As a result, the tax payers are not provided with their minimum needs of amenities. It is, therefore, suggested that the civic services should be maintained by local taxes as well as establishment should be downsized as far as possible. Government grants should not only be utilized for the maintenance of establishment sections of the town.

It has also been found that lack of funds has paralyzed the different schemes of development like sewerage expansion, laying of new pipe lines, management of toxic wastes and disposal of garbage and the urban development agencies have failed to cater to the basic needs of the town dwellers in a satisfied manner. In the present study, it is further being observed that the different branches of S.M.B do not give a helping hand to each other for providing speedy service to public. Normally it has been seen that various agencies or department shrugs off its shoulders and put the blame or responsibility upon the other. The officials of one department hardly feel that their coordination and help will result in the smooth and speedy functioning of the other department. Sometimes these agencies unduly interfere in each other jurisdiction thereby hampering pace of development and adding to the hassles of the public.

Besides, due to lack of man power, there were procedural lapses in the Board in maintenance of records as well as insufficient collection of taxes/fees resulting in huge arrears of receipts which adversely affected the generation of revenues. Silchar Municipal Board has failed to maximize the local revenue potential due to their chronic deficiencies. Furthermore, the expenditure is also growing at a faster rate than the revenue resulting in municipal fiscal gaps. This situation of financial constraints has led to increased dependence on the state governments for aid.

It is also being observed throughout the field visits being made in the Board that there exists inefficiency amongst the officials of the accounts branch in the management of their finances as the records of financial gadgets such as Balance Sheets, Income and Expenditure Statements, Statements of Cash flows and Receipt and Payment Accounts are not systematically maintained on accrual basis, which affects adversely the delivery of basic civic services to the residents of the town. As the Asset registers were not maintained, the assets of the Board could not be monitored in proper manner and thereby leading to the mismanagement of assets. Moreover, as some of the assets were revenue generating, the Board in this context could not also be able to keep track of the revenue generated by such assets, which would also lead to misappropriation of revenue generated by such assets. Some of the important observations noted in this regard include: deficiencies in the procedure for determining the cost of services; low cost recovery from taxes, non-taxes; high outstanding dues of previous years and high

dependence on external sources of finance. The Municipal Board derives its income mainly from taxes and fees. At present most of the householders pay taxes at the rate as being assessed 20-25 years ago. The rate of tax is also minimum which can also be considered as a vital constraint in revenue generation of SMB.

The remedy to this present situation lies in augmenting the local revenues. On the whole, the states may assign any of the taxes on the State List either in whole or in part to local bodies which enables the state government to exercise degree of supervision and control over the affairs of the local bodies. From the survey of office gadgets of S.M.B., it appears that there were no development plans of short-term, mid-term or long-term during the last few years of municipal activities. They were interested only in day-to-day activities rather than restructuring the town into a modern town by undertaking various constructive developmental works which are of permanent in nature and the utility of which could be made available for social and economic development of the inhabitants of Silchar town.

From an overall observation of the office gadgets of SMB, it is being found that for the last five years together; the management of finances of the municipal government was in a depressed condition. An important reason for this would be that the municipal body in Silchar town is not found to follow the best principle of public finance, i.e., assessment of revenue based on the expenditure needs of citizens by spending more on civic amenities and facilities which is based on the chance of getting more revenue that creates a paradoxical situation for the Board. Indeed, the only alternative left to this problem is that the municipal body by leaving aside petty politics must exploit fully the existing sources of revenue through showing strong will power and at the same time the government should expedite finalization of the recommendations of the State Finance Commission. The practice of estimating the amount of revenue to be mobilized based on expenditure need is almost lacking and only haphazard and arbitrary techniques are normally being employed for the purpose. Within this, there is no relationship between revenues and expenditures of the municipalities. This situation is to be corrected at the earliest by making them to follow effective budgetary principles.

Concluding Observation: Development is one of those phenomena that may bring about major changes in the way of life of people in the country. Rapid growth of population, migration vis a vis urbanization may also bring about changes. With modern economic development getting accelerated, the pace of urbanization, too, is becoming rapid. It is quite natural when people in a locality begin to live together, certain civic problems arise which needs to be governed efficiently. The unplanned urbanization, if not given

due attention in time, is bound to give rise to multifarious problems, even injustice and disorderliness. Hence, there is the need for a proper assessment of existing facilities and planning and drawing up of schemes based on present and future demand. In this context, perspective urban planning is an important remedy to the problems of urban local governments in which the municipal authorities will have to plan allocation of land for various uses, particularly for housing the population, and to ensure that the basic infrastructure services such as roads, drainage and sanitation, hygiene and waste disposal are well planned and provided to all the residents of the town.

Besides this, it may also be remarked that the efficient functioning of the municipal Board depends to a large extent on the conscious and effective participation of the dwellers of the town in maintaining a clean and pollution free town. In this context, development of inclusive mechanism by urban municipal administration has important intrinsic value that is rooted in enabling people to exercise voice and influence in the processes that concern them. In fact, the mechanism for inclusive governance requires a great deal of strategic vision, leadership and efficacy of the municipal employees so as to motivate the confidence of general masses towards the affairs of urban municipal management.

Furthermore, residents of the town must also come forward altogether and volunteer their services for cleaning the roads of the locality. Indeed, the dwellers of the town should be first of all conscious of living a hygienic life not only in their own personal homes but also in community perspective. In this regard, the members of various ward development committee should spread awareness among the other inhabitants of the locality on proper upholding of the area of their locality in particular and overall maintenance of the municipal roads in general by not throwing garbage in the main sides of the road. This, in turn, could help the Board in speedy and early recovery of the problems relating to unplanned urbanization of Silchar town.

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Teachers' Attitude towards Choice Based Credit System at U.G. Level Colleges

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Abstract: In the present study the investigator attempts to study the attitude of U.G. level teachers towards choice based credit system. CBCS is the solution for the transformation of an education system from the traditional 'teacher oriented education' to a 'student-centred education'. For this purpose sample of 262 college teachers were randomly selected. To collect the data, attitude towards CBCS scale (reliability = 0.839) developed by Bindumal (2015) was used. Descriptive statistics had been applied for data analysis. Also inferential statistics like 't'-test and ANOVA had been applied to find out the result and inference. The study reveals that U.G. level teachers have a favourable attitude towards CBCS. Arts and Science teachers significantly differ in their attitude towards CBCS, but Male and Female, Rural and Urban & Teaching Experience wise college teachers do not differ significantly in their attitude towards CBCS.

Key Words: Attitude towards CBCS, Undergraduate Teachers.

Introduction: Choice Based Credit System is an academic curriculum reform of Indian higher education. At present in India 404 State Universities, 126 Deemed-to-be Universities, 50 Central Universities, 340 Private Universities prevail (01/11/2019 UGC list). Besides, there are many higher education institutions. To reach at the

level of excellence several committees and commissions like University Education Commission (1948-49), Mudaliar Commission (1952-54), Kothari Commission (1964-66), Ramamurthy Committee (1990) were set up. The committees and commission gave emphasis on curriculum and evaluation system and its reform. They recommended comprehensive continuous revaluation and credit system.

To bring higher education in one umbrella, for all round development of learners, 11th five years plan, Knowledge Commission report (2008-2009), Yashpal Committee report (2009) and Association of Indian Universities (AIU) introduced CBCS i.e. Choice Based Credit System that has brought a radical change in higher education. This CBCS had already started in developed countries. In European Countries it is European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), in Australia it is National Qualification Framework, and the Credit Accumulation and Transfer System in the UK.

This powerful system of courses helps the students to improve the interdisciplinary approach in education. This system provides flexibility to the students in the selections of the subject of study and permit students to move from one institution to another of their choice anywhere in the globe and the expertise is unevenly distributed among the universities and the students must be given the choice to move freely between the universities to take up the choice based credit, provided by those institutions. It is the more autonomy is given to the students in this system. CBCS is an upgrades educational and occupational aspiration of the upcoming generation.

On reviewing literature it was observed by the researchers that level of attitude of students & teachers towards choice based credit system in higher education (Roy, Khanam & Devi 2013; Deuri 2015; Bindumal 2015; Bhat 2017; Katoch 2017; Chahal & Manan 2017). It is also seen that there are some studies conducted on the empirical study to measure the perception of management students (Sumitha, Krihnamurthy & Winfred 2016). Locates the urgent problems of the CBCS implementation in higher education institutions of India, comprehensive discussion the components of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) and concludes with suggestions for making CBCS more practical for the Indian education system (Tazien 2017). A number of research works found dealing with the definition, features, advantages & disadvantages, pros & cons and problems & challenges of CBCS. (Clementking & Sulaiman 2010; Clementking, Muhammad, Shah & Ahmad 2013; Chaubey 2015; Kaur & Sharma 2016; Khanna 2016; Aparna 2017; Ghosh & Sarkar 2017; Mishra 2017; Mir 2017). Hence, from the above studies, it is clear that most of the papers are based on the concept of CBCS.

Choice Based Credit System is a new paradigm shift in Indian Higher Education System. It is a new system that has been introduced in our higher level institution as

per the recommendations of UGC. The main aim of the present study is to find out the attitude of U.G. level teachers' towards CBCS. Hence the study is entitled as **"Teachers' Attitude Towards Choice Based Credit System at U.G. level Colleges."**

The objective of the study is to find out the attitude of U.G. level teachers towards Choice Based Credit System.

Hypothesis: $H_0$1: There is no significant difference between male and female teachers in their overall and dimension-wise attitude towards Choice Based Credit System.

$H_0$2: There is no significant difference between the teachers of rural institutes and urban institutes in their overall and dimension-wise attitude towards Choice Based Credit System.

$H_0$3: There is no significant difference between arts and science teachers in their overall and dimension-wise attitude towards Choice Based Credit System.

$H_0$4: There is no significant difference between less than 5 years, between 5-15 years and more than 15 years experienced teachers in their overall and dimension-wise attitude towards Choice Based Credit System.

Method: Descriptive research methodology with survey technique had been used in the present study. The present study was quantitative in nature.

Participant: The present study analysed U.G. level teachers' attitude towards CBCS programme in three Universities in West Bengal i.e. Vidyasagar University, Calcutta University & Burdwan University. For the present study, the researcher selected the undergraduate level of Govt. college, Govt. Aided college & Autonomous college. So, the teachers at U.G. level of Vidyasagar University, Calcutta University & Burdwan University are the target population of the study.

Sampling procedures: The researcher had used stratified random sampling technique for the present study. By this technique the population was divided into some subgroups (strata) to collect representative sample. The sample was selected randomly from the different colleges of Purba Medinipur, Paschim Medinipur, Howrha, Hooghly and Kolkata districts. There are so many colleges under Vidyasagar University, Calcutta University & Burdwan University. So from there 262 teachers were randomly selected as samples for this study.

Measurement approaches: Attitude Scale (Attitude towards CBCS): A scale has been

made to measure the attitude of college teachers. It is a five point Liker's method scale. The scale was developed by Bindumal, 2015. The scale is based on 6 (curricular activities, co-curricular activities, examination system, teacher-student relationship, professional anxiety and implementation of CBCS) dimensions. The language of the scale is English. This scale has been transferred to Bengali medium by the help of English and Bengali language teachers for data collection. It has 38 items which are divided into positive and negative. Among those items the researcher modified a few items for his research work

Dimension wise distribution of items: In the present study 38 items were selected, for the final scale. Out of these, 9 items were included under the dimension Curricular Activities, 4 items were included under the dimension Co-Curricular Activities, 11 items were included under the dimension examination system, 6 items were included under the dimension teacher-student relationship, 4 items were included under the dimension professional anxiety and 4 items were included under the dimension implementation of CBCS.

Scoring Procedure: For scoring of the questionnaire (attitude towards CBCS), numerical values were assigned to the five categories of the responses as: Strongly Agree=5, Agree=4, Undecided=3, Disagree=2, Strongly Disagree=1 for positive items and reverse for negative items.

Reliability: Cronbach's Alpha value of reliability of Attitude towards CBCS scale was found out to be.839. The value suggests that scale is confidently reliable. The reliability statistics of Attitude towards CBCS scale is presented in table 1.

Table 1: Reliability statistics of Attitude towards CBCS scale

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.842	.839	38

Summary of item statistics of Attitude towards CBCS scale is mention in following table 2.

Table 2: Summary Item Statistics of Attitude towards CBCS

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Item Means	3.234	2.195	3.870	1.676	1.763	.215	38

Item total statistics of Attitude towards CBCS scale is presented in table 3.

Table 3: Item Total Statistics

Number of Items	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Item-01	120.408	234.687	.287	.292	.839
Item -02	119.313	222.982	.628	.590	.829
Item -03	119.324	225.982	.543	.486	.832
Item -04	120.294	240.116	.129	.281	.843
Item -05	119.290	232.421	.427	.412	.836
Item -06	119.218	234.868	.303	.294	.838
Item -07	119.412	242.918	.098	.306	.842
Item -08	119.561	239.795	.187	.259	.841
Item -09	119.431	242.737	.047	.240	.845
Item -10	119.389	235.220	.291	.369	.839
Item -11	119.351	237.072	.230	.248	.840
Item -12	119.004	236.808	.290	.297	.839
Item -13	120.328	234.773	.352	.325	.837
Item -14	119.725	236.461	.216	.293	.841
Item -15	120.206	225.666	.478	.501	.833
Item -16	119.721	227.137	.452	.431	.834
Item -17	120.126	260.923	-.443	.403	.858
Item -18	119.294	234.101	.339	.325	.838
Item -19	119.218	233.910	.345	.423	.837
Item -20	119.275	227.150	.572	.572	.832
Item -21	119.294	231.312	.451	.474	.835
Item -22	119.477	235.024	.262	.303	.840
Item -23	119.912	225.000	.522	.477	.832
Item -24	120.679	253.222	-.269	.325	.852
Item -25	119.504	230.964	.392	.400	.836
Item -26	119.256	232.375	.395	.466	.836
Item -27	119.882	228.733	.417	.375	.835

Number of Items	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Item -28	119.191	226.561	.567	.552	.832
Item -29	120.115	234.654	.304	.347	.838
Item -30	119.187	230.773	.455	.457	.835
Item -31	120.534	237.323	.195	.208	.842
Item -32	119.206	236.218	.283	.348	.839
Item -33	119.992	231.494	.345	.329	.837
Item -34	119.210	243.523	.035	.238	.845
Item -35	119.740	225.373	.547	.444	.832
Item -36	120.481	231.431	.380	.321	.836
Item -37	119.500	220.098	.661	.597	.828
Item -38	119.290	229.647	.507	.468	.834

The scale statistics of items of Attitude towards CBCS is mention in following table 4.

Table 4: Scale statistics of Attitude towards CBCS

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
122.874	245.697	15.6747	38

Validity: The researcher established the content validity of the Attitude towards CBCS scale. The items included in the Attitude towards CBCS scale have been prepared on the basis of experts checking and experts' opinion or suggestions.

Categorization of Attitude Score: A teacher who scored more than 114 will have a favorable overall attitude (>= 50% of Maximum) and scored less than 144 will have an unfavorable (<50% score) overall attitude towards CBCS. The mean score is calculated out of maximum possible total score of 190 (38 X 5).

Procedure of Data Collection: The researcher had collected data from U.G. level college teachers by one scale (scale on attitude of college teachers towards CBCS, Bindumal, 2015). The researcher collected the data individually from 262 U.G. level teachers by one questionnaire. At the same time he collected data by interview method.

Procedure of Date Analysis: The data was analyzed by the following quantitative method as per objectives of the study. Descriptive statistics had been applied for data analysis. Also inferential statistics like 't' test and ANOVA had been applied to find out the results and inference. Data was analyzed by MS-Excel 2007 and SPSS software both.

3. Results: Descriptive Statistics:

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics for the Score on Attitude towards CBCS

Attitude towards CBCS	N	Range	Mean	Std. Error of Mean	Std. Deviation
	262	78	122.8740	0.96839	15.67472

From the analysis of descriptive statistics of the 'Attitude towards CBCS' (Table 5), it can be observed that the mean score is 122.8740 with standard deviation of 15.67472. Here, the mean score is calculated out of maximum possible total score of 190 (38X 5) taking all questionnaire items together, indicating the existence of favourable Attitude towards CBCS among the U.G. level teachers.

Analysis of the overall and dimension-wise Attitude towards CBCS of U.G. Teachers: Overall and different dimensions of Attitude towards CBCS such as curricular activities, co-curricular activities, examination system, teacher-student relationship, professional anxiety and implementation of CBCS are analysed under the variables such as Gender, Locality of college, Department and Experience.

Testing of $H_0$1:

Table 6: Independent Samples Test of Attitude towards CBCS: Gender

Subject	Groups	N	Mean	S.D.	df	t	Sig
Attitude towards CBCS	male	262	121.9500	15.34091	260	1.196#	0.233
	female		124.3235	16.15406			

Not significant at 0.05 level

Table 6 shows the independent samples test of Attitude towards CBCS of U. G. level teacher based on gender. The result of t-test reveals that the calculated t value is not significant at 0.05 level (t_{260}= 1.196, P= 0.233). The null hypothesis is not rejected. So it can be stated that there is no significant difference between male and female teachers

in their attitude towards Choice Based Credit System.

Table 7: Dimension-wise Independent Samples Test of Attitude towards CBCS: Gender

Subject	Groups	N	Mean	S.D.	df	t	Sig
Curricular Activities	male	262	29.4875	4.41693	260	0.585#	0.559
	female		29.8137	4.38433			
Co-Curricular Activities	male	262	13.2438	2.59353	260	1.446#	0.149
	female		13.7059	2.40704			
Examination System	male	262	34.2938	4.73525	260	1,659#	0.098
	female		35.3039	4.91470			
Teacher-Student Relationship	male	262	19.9875	4.12690	260	0.622#	0.535
	female		20.3039	3.83777			
Professional Anxiety	male	262	12.5438	2.27882	260	0.083#	0.934
	female		12.5686	2.48365			
Implementation of CBCS	male	262	12.3938	3.11841	260	0.573#	0.567
	female		12.6275	3.37411			

Not significant at 0.05 level

Table 7 shows the Dimension-wise independent samples test of Attitude towards CBCS of U.G. level teacher based on gender. The result of t-test reveals that the calculated t value is not significant at 0.05 level (t_{260}= 0.585, P= 0.559). The null hypothesis is not rejected. So it can be stated that there is no significant difference between male and female teachers in their attitude towards Curricular Activities in the Choice Based Credit System.

The result of t-test reveals that the calculated t value is not significant at 0.05 level (t_{260}= 1.446, P= 0.149). The null hypothesis is not rejected. So it can be stated that there is no significant difference between male and female teachers in their attitude towards Co-Curricular Activities in the Choice Based Credit System.

The result of t-test reveals that the calculated t value is not significant at 0.05 level (t_{260}= 1.659, P= 0.098). The null hypothesis is not rejected. So it can be stated that there is

no significant difference between male and female teachers in their attitude towards Examination System in the Choice Based Credit System.

The result of t-test reveals that the calculated t value is not significant at 0.05 level (t_{260}= 0.622, P= 0.535). The null hypothesis is not rejected. So it can be stated that there is no significant difference between male and female teachers in their attitude towards Teacher-Student Relationship in the Choice Based Credit System.

The result of t-test reveals that the calculated t value is not significant at 0.05 level (t_{260}= 0.083, P= 0.934). The null hypothesis is not rejected. So it can be stated that there is no significant difference between male and female teachers in their attitude towards Professional Anxiety in the Choice Based Credit System.

The result of t-test reveals that the calculated t value is not significant at 0.05 level (t_{260}= 0.573, P= 0.567). The null hypothesis is not rejected. So it can be stated that there is no significant difference between male and female teachers in their attitude towards Implementation of CBCS in the Choice Based Credit System.

Testing of $H_0$2:

Table 8: Independent Samples Test of Attitude towards CBCS: Locality of College

Subject	Groups	N	Mean	S.D.	df	t	Sig
Attitude towards CBCS	rural	262	122.9726	15.12839	260	0.114#	0.909
	urban		122.7500	16.40195			

Not significant at 0.05 level

Table 8 shows the independent samples test of Attitude towards CBCS of U.G. level teacher based on locality of college. The result of t-test reveals that the calculated t value is not significant at 0.05 level (t_{260}= 0.114, P= 0.909). The null hypothesis is not rejected. So it can be stated that there is no significant difference between teachers of rural institutes and urban institutes in their attitude towards Choice Based Credit System.

Table 9: Dimension-wise Independent Samples Test of Attitude towards CBCS: Locality of College

Subject	Groups	N	Mean	S.D.	df	t	Sig
Curricular Activities	rural	262	29.6575	4.30467	260	0.177#	0.859
	urban		29.5603	4.53257			

Subject	Groups	N	Mean	S.D.	df	t	Sig
Co-Curricular Activities	rural	262	13.5479	2.44126	260	0.892#	0.373
	urban		13.2672	2.63540			
Examination System	rural	262	34.4932	4.75793	260	0.729#	0.466
	urban		34.9310	4.91090			
Teacher-Student Relationship	rural	262	20.1507	3.98850	260	0.181#	0.857
	urban		20.0603	4.05889			
Professional Anxiety	rural	262	12.6096	2.24491	260	0.432#	0.666
	urban		12.4828	2.49689			
Implementation of CBCS	rural	262	12.5137	3.07209	260	0.163#	0.870
	urban		12.4483	3.40165			

Not significant at 0.05 level

Table 9 shows the Dimension-wise independent samples test of Attitude towards CBCS of U.G. level teacher based on locality of college. The result of t-test reveals that the calculated t value is not significant at 0.05 level (t_{260}= 0.177, P= 0.859). The null hypothesis is not rejected. So it can be stated that there is no significant difference between teachers of rural institutes and urban institutes in their attitude towards Curricular Activities in the Choice Based Credit System.

The result of t-test reveals that the calculated t value is not significant at 0.05 level (t_{260}= 0.892, P= 0.373). The null hypothesis is not rejected. So it can be stated that there is no significant difference between teachers of rural institutes and urban institutes in their attitude towards Co-Curricular Activities in the Choice Based Credit System.

The result of t-test reveals that the calculated t value is not significant at 0.05 level (t_{260}= 0.729, P= 0.466). The null hypothesis is not rejected. So it can be stated that there is no significant difference between teachers of rural institutes and urban institutes in their attitude towards Examination System in the Choice Based Credit System.

The result of t-test reveals that the calculated t value is not significant at 0.05 level (t_{260}= 0.181, P= 0.857). The null hypothesis is not rejected. So it can be stated that there is no significant difference between teachers of rural institutes and urban institutes in their

attitude towards Teacher-Student Relationship in the Choice Based Credit System.

The result of t-test reveals that the calculated t value is not significant at 0.05 level (t_{260}= 0.432, P= 0.666). The null hypothesis is not rejected. So it can be stated that there is no significant difference between teachers of rural institutes and urban institutes in their attitude towards Professional Anxiety in the Choice Based Credit System.

The result of t-test reveals that the calculated t value is not significant at 0.05 level (t_{260}= 0.163, P= 0.870). The null hypothesis is not rejected. So it can be stated that there is no significant difference between teachers of rural institutes and urban institutes in their attitude towards Implementation of CBCS in the Choice Based Credit System.

Testing of H03:

Table 10: Independent Samples Test of Attitude towards CBCS: Department

Subject	Groups	N	Mean	S.D.	df	t	Sig
Attitude towards CBCS	arts	262	125.7688	14.39961	260	3.841*	0.000
	science		118.3333	16.56510			

* Significant at 0.05 level

Table 10 shows the independent samples test of Attitude towards CBCS of U.G. level teacher based on department. The result of t-test reveals that the calculated t value is significant at 0.05 level (t_{260}= 3.841, P <0.001). The null hypothesis is rejected. So it can be stated that there is significant difference between arts and science teachers in their attitude towards Choice Based Credit System.

Table 11: Dimension-wise Independent Samples Test of Attitude towards CBCS: Department

Subject	Groups	N	Mean	S.D.	df	t	Sig
Curricular Activities	arts	262	30.1813	4.51256	260	2.642*	0.009
	science		28.7255	4.07882			
Co-Curricular Activities	arts	262	13.8438	2.57356	260	3.438*	0.001
	science		12.7647	2.31729			

Subject	Groups	N	Mean	S.D.	df	t	Sig
Examination System	arts	262	35.2188	4.55528	260	2.253*	0.025
	science		33.8529	5.12497			
Teacher-Student Relationship	arts	262	20.8125	3.70141	260	3.628*	0.000
	science		19.0098	4.24613			
Professional Anxiety	arts	262	12.8500	2.14036	260	2.579*	0.010
	science		12.0882	2.60275			
Implementation of CBCS	arts	262	12.8625	2.94923	260	2.403*	0.017
	science		11.8922	3.52897			

*Significant at 0.05 level

Table 11 shows the Dimension-wise independent samples test of Attitude towards CBCS of U.G. level teacher based on department. The result of t-test reveals that the calculated t value is significant at 0.05 level (t_{260}= 2.642, P= 0.009). The null hypothesis is rejected. So it can be stated that there is significant difference between arts and science teachers in their attitude towards Curricular Activities in the Choice Based Credit System.

The result of t-test reveals that the calculated t value is significant at 0.05 level (t_{260}= 3.438, P= 0.001). The null hypothesis is rejected. So it can be stated that there is significant difference between arts and science teachers in their attitude towards Co-Curricular Activities in the Choice Based Credit System.

The result of t-test reveals that the calculated t value is significant at 0.05 level (t_{260}= 2.253, P= 0.025). The null hypothesis is rejected. So it can be stated that there is significant difference between arts and science teachers in their attitude towards Examination System in the Choice Based Credit System.

The result of t-test reveals that the calculated t value is significant at 0.05 level (t_{260}= 3.628, P <0.001). The null hypothesis is rejected. So it can be stated that there is significant difference between arts and science teachers in their attitude towards Teacher-Student Relationship in the Choice Based Credit System.

The result of t-test reveals that the calculated t value is significant at 0.05 level (t_{260}= 2.579, P= 0.010). The null hypothesis is rejected. So it can be stated that there is significant

difference between arts and science teachers in their attitude towards Professional Anxiety in the Choice Based Credit System.

The result of t-test reveals that the calculated t value is significant at 0.05 level (t_{260}= 2.403, P= 0.017). The null hypothesis is rejected. So it can be stated that there is significant difference between arts and science teachers in their attitude towards Implementation of CBCS in the Choice Based Credit System.

Testing of $H_0$4:

Table 12: ANOVA result based on Attitude towards CBCS: Experience

Subject	Groups	N	Mean	S.D.	df	t	Sig
Attitude towards CBCS	Less Than 5 Years	262	123.8600	13.91026	261	1.114#	0.330
	5 -15 Years		123.2719	17.11610			
	More Than 15 Years		119.8750	15.51886			

Not significant at 0.05 level

Table 12 indicates that Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of Attitude towards CBCS based on Experience. From the table 12 found that the result of the calculated F value is not significant at 0.05 level (F_{261}= 1.114, P= 0.330). The null hypothesis is not rejected. Thus, from one way single factor ANOVA test, it can be concluded that there is no significant difference present among less than 5 years, between 5-15 years and more than 15 years experienced teachers in their attitude towards Choice Based Credit System.

Table 13: Dimension-wise ANOVA result based on Attitude towards CBCS: Experience

Subject	Groups	N	Mean	S.D.	df	t	Sig
Curricular Activities	Less than 5 years	262	30.0400	4.10449	261	0.846#	0.430
	5 -15 years		29.4474	4.58179			
	More than 15 years		29.1250	4.55989			

Subject	Groups	N	Mean	S.D.	df	t	Sig
Co-Curricular Activities	Less than 5 years	262	13.7500	2.45104	261	1.671#	0.190
	5 -15 years		13.3246	2.64239			
	More than 15 years		12.9792	2.36544			
Examination System	Less than 5 years	262	34.6700	4.57939	261	0.516#	0.598
	5 -15 years		34.9474	5.07788			
	More than 15 years		34.1042	4.73664			
Teacher-Student Relationship	Less than 5 years	262	20.0900	4.02792	261	2.610#	0.076
	5 -15 years		20.5877	4.00401			
	More than 15 years		19.0208	3.86192			
Professional Anxiety	Less than 5 years	262	12.7400	2.20018	261	0.602#	0.548
	5 -15 years		12.4912	2.41765			
	More than 15 years		12.3125	2.53617			
Implementation of CBCS	Less than 5 years	262	12.5700	3.06909	261	0.088#	0.915
	5 -15 years		12.4737	3.24572			
	More than 15 years		12.3333	3.49671			

Not significant at 0.05 level

Table 13 indicates that dimension-wise Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of Attitude towards CBCS based on Experience. From the table 13 found that the result of the calculated F value of Attitude towards Curricular Activities in the CBCS is not significant at 0.05 level (F_{261}= 0.846, P= 0.430). The null hypothesis is not rejected. Thus, from one way single factor ANOVA test, it can be concluded that there is no significant difference present among less than 5 years, between 5-15 years and more than 15 years experienced teachers in their attitude towards Curricular Activities in the Choice Based Credit System.

The result of the calculated F value of Attitude towards Co-Curricular Activities in the CBCS is not significant at 0.05 level (F_{261}= 1.671, P= 0.190). The null hypothesis is not rejected. Thus, from one way single factor ANOVA test, it can be concluded that there is no significant difference present among less than 5 years, between 5-15 years and more than 15 years experienced teachers in their attitude towards Co-Curricular Activities in the Choice Based Credit System.

The result of the calculated F value of Attitude towards Examination System in the CBCS is not significant at 0.05 level (F_{261}= 0.516, P= 0.598). The null hypothesis is not rejected. Thus, from one way single factor ANOVA test, it can be concluded that there is no significant difference present among less than 5 years, between 5-15 years and more than 15 years experienced teachers in their attitude towards Examination System in the Choice Based Credit System.

The result of the calculated F value of Attitude towards Teacher-student Relationship in the CBCS is not significant at 0.05 level (F_{261}= 2.610, P= 0.076). The null hypothesis is not rejected. Thus, from one way single factor ANOVA test, it can be concluded that there is no significant difference present among less than 5 years, between 5-15 years and more than 15 years experienced teachers in their attitude towards Teacher-Student Relationship in the Choice Based Credit System.

The result of the calculated F value of Attitude towards Professional Anxiety in the CBCS is not significant at 0.05 level (F_{261}= 0.602, P= 0.548). The null hypothesis is not rejected. Thus, from one way single factor ANOVA test, it can be concluded that there is no significant difference present among less than 5 years, between 5-15 years and more than 15 years experienced teachers in their attitude towards Professional Anxiety in the Choice Based Credit System.

The result of the calculated F value of Attitude towards Implementation of CBCS in the CBCS is not significant at 0.05 level (F_{261}= 0.088, P= 0.915). The null hypothesis is not rejected. Thus, from one way single factor ANOVA test, it can be concluded that there is no significant difference present among less than 5 years, between 5-15 years and more than 15 years experienced teachers in their attitude towards Implementation of CBCS in the Choice Based Credit System.

Discussion: From the whole review, analysis, interpretation and findings, the following conclusion can be arrived. The study also reveals that U.G. level teachers have a favourable Attitude towards Choice Based Credit System. Gender wise teachers do not differ significantly in their Attitude towards CBCS. But female college teachers' attitude is higher than male college teachers' Attitude towards CBCS. Locality of College wise U.G. level college teachers do not differ significantly in their Attitude

towards CBCS. Department wise U.G. level college teachers is significantly differ in their Attitude towards CBCS and arts teachers attitude is higher than science teacher of Attitude towards CBCS. Teaching experience wise U.G. level college teachers do not differ significantly in their Attitude towards CBCS. It means that teaching experience do not affect the attitude of teachers toward Choice Based Credit System. The same findings have been seen in other research studies: Katoch (2017) & Bindumal (2015).

The study conducted by the researcher regarding the attitude towards CBCS of U.G. level teachers clearly reveals that U.G. level teachers have a favourable Attitude. Continuous and comprehensive assessment is an integral part of CBCS. For continuous assessment system in semester system the duration to complete the course is increasing rapidly. The assessment is done through various means including: written test, MCQ based quiz, presentations, project, field visits, seminars and group discussion/activities, workshops etc. In all these activities the work loads of the teachers have increased. Proper guidance, workshop and orientation programmes should be organized to provide proper guidance to teachers. The same findings have been seen in other research studies: Clementking & Sulaiman (2010); Clementking, Muhammad, Shah & Ahmad (2013); Chaubey (2015); Kaur & Sharma (2016); Khanna (2016); Aparna (2017); Ghosh & Sarkar (2017); Mishra (2017); Mir(2017).

Every aspect of CBCS should be explained clearly to the students. In CBCS, time is very short, so syllabus should be prepared accordingly. Infrastructure should be provided to every department and library also has to be modernized with more books, internet and other facilities. Periodical review of the syllabus of CBCS has to be conducted to avail the feedback from teachers and students.

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Education of a Special Class: Anglo Indians of British Bengal

Sweta Dey

Abstract : *Anglo Indian or Eurasian community was unique as it was the product of the imperial enterprise and to that extent they were inimitable since their origin. The education of this class drew comparatively less attention of the historians as this community was not a mainstream category of population. The different layers between the 'pure white' and 'marginal white' made it a more intrinsic class to converse. The education especially the elementary education of this community of Bengal evolved in its own way leaving the void to investigate many a questions for extensive research. There were several official reports which show that Anglo Indians were treated as a special category that needed special attention and care in the segment of education. European schools which were established to cater for the need of this class were unique in their structure, management, composition and curriculum. The education especially the elementary education of this class was first left upon the philanthropy of the Evangelicals and eventually they were taken into the fold of the mainstream education providing it with a special consideration. This paper by using both qualitative and quantitative sources seeks to investigate the concealed agendas of educational policy of the Anglo Indians and how far these were guided by the imperial interest.*

Keywords : Education, Anglo-Indians, Eurasians, Colonial Bengal, European schools, Agenda, Imperialism.

Introduction: In the closing years of the eighteenth-century social life of the Europeans in India gradually started to change with the enlargement of their numbers, the prospect of a more settled and assured life in India and the political victory of the Europeans over the Indian rulers (Ghosh 1998, 148). In course of time, many European males formed alliance with the local Indian women and the off springs of such alliances were regarded as Anglo-Indians. This segment of population was unique as it was the direct product of the imperial enterprise and unique since their origin. There were also a number of agenda behind the formation of educational policy of the Anglo Indians of Bengal. The education especially the elementary education of this community in Bengal evolved in its own way. This resulted into immense scope for research.

Aims and Methodology: Objective of this paper is to identify the motives and aims behind the education of the Anglo Indian community of British Bengal. A number of questions come up, namely, why the education of the Anglo Indians were treated in a special way? Was this class homogenous in nature? Was there any special purpose for creation of the educational policies for this class? Whether the policy was guided by the imperial interest? This article intends to investigate development of the Anglo Indian schools with focus on composition, structure and distinctiveness of the schools. The present paper, therefore, would try to trace the changing principles and practices behind the elementary education of the Anglo Indians of Bengal. Both qualitative and quantitative methods are followed in this study.

Anglo-Indians of Colonial Bengal: First of all it is necessary to understand the position of the Anglo-Indians in the British regime. They were treated as a special class. Because of their European descent they used English as their mother tongue and were imbibed with British culture. Originally, they were treated as British, but gradually the 'pure white' British subjects distinguished themselves from the 'impure' Anglo-Indians. They were considered to be lower in status than the 'pure white' British residents in India. The term 'half-caste' was also used to refer to the Anglo Indians or the Eurasians because of their inferior position in the European society (Andrews 2005: 5).

At the beginning of British regime there was less amount of complication in the European society of Bengal and the terms 'European', 'Eurasian' and 'Anglo–Indian' were used interchangeably. After 1833 the term 'Eurasian' gained popularity (Andrews 2005: 5). The definition of Anglo-Indians varied over time. It became crucial to the Anglo-Indians to maintain their identity and continue to enjoy the privilege as 'white race' because of their British ancestry. Initially in the eighteenth century Warren Hastings used the term 'Anglo-Indian' to refer to 'both the British in India and their Indian-born

children' (D'Souza 1976: 5-6). A century later, the first official Code of Regulation for European Schools of 1883–85 defined Europeans in the following way, 'to signify any person of European descent, pure or mixed, who retained European habits and modes of life' (Andrews 2005: 5). There was a second definition, which sought to solve the complexities of the European society of the contemporary Bengal. In fact the term 'European' included a large variety of population in which there were many layers within the concept of pure and impure. However, on the whole 'European' referred to the people in India, who had some European descent and who maintained European mode of living. The term Anglo-Indian was officially adopted by Lord Hardinge in the Census of 1911 (Andrews 2005: 5). By this time there had been apparent class-based discrimination for designating the status of Europeans. Except for the high officials and well to do administrators, all other people of European descent or mixed blood were ranked down to the status of Anglo-Indians. The heterogeneity and resemblance with the ruling class made the Anglo-Indians an exceptional and significant section of population in British Bengal.

Education for the Anglo-Indians: It became necessary to educate the Anglo-Indians as a special class. Because of the heterogeneity of this class, the colonial authority had no choice but to treat them as a unique group. The salary which an educated native would find sufficient proved inadequate for the Anglo-Indian community because of their European social habits and traditions. More intimate knowledge of the languages, character and customs of the British gave these people further advantage over the natives in many occupations. On the other hand, the lack of proficiency in the Indian vernaculars became a disadvantage for the Eurasians and domiciled Europeans. At the same time there were many employments for which a well-educated young Eurasian or European was especially suited and were readily employed. While there was no lack of useful employment for the well-educated Europeans or Eurasians, livelihood depended entirely on their education. It was not expected that an uneducated European would support himself by working as a day labourer or a peasant. As a result he would turn into to an idle and mischievous member of the English community. This prompted the colonial state to take a special interest in the education of this class. As poverty and other disadvantages under which the domiciled European and Eurasian classes suffered, made it difficult or even impossible for them to provide adequate education to their children. It called for the state's assistance to resolve matters amicably (The Imperial Gazetteer of India 1909: 433-435).

European schools were established in Bengal in the middle of the eighteenth century. These schools were not only for the Europeans or English children, but were

predominantly for the children of Eurasians or Anglo-Indians. These schools taught with a foreign curriculum i.e. western literature and science in a foreign language. However, European schools in Bengal were slow to take deep root (D'Souza 1976: vii). The basic aim of these schools was two-fold, viz., to employ the educated Anglo-Indians in subordinate positions in the government services and to spread Christianity among the natives (Andrews 2005: 126-127). At the beginning the schools for the Anglo-Indians were invariably attached to the Church because of their religious undertone. These schools were of various types as the Anglo-Indians of Bengal did not form a homogenous group. There were many layers in them. Different schools were formed to serve different purposes. For example, there were evening schools serving the lower class of pupils; city and hill station boarding schools meant for the high-class pupils; and the city based schools, such as, La Martiniere, St. Xavier's, St. James, Loreto House, Pratt Memorial etc. were for the eminent Anglo-Indians of Bengal (De 2003: 7).

The British government initially was reluctant to their cause and left it to the philanthropy of the missionaries. Schools for the Europeans were opened in Bengal during the eighteenth century. Charity school was opened in 1731 at Cossipore and the great Calcutta Free School was established in 1800. Subjects taught at these institutions were Scripture, Latin, Mathematics, Indian History, Political Economy, Geography and English language, Grammar and Literature (Sen 2017: 88). These schools were for the children of converted Indian Christians, of the British, of the Anglo-Indians and the Portuguese. This type of education became popular not only with Anglo-Indian parents, but also with the native parents of all communities (D'Souza 1976: viii). The lack of complexities within the European society of eighteenth century Bengal kept the education of this class straight and simple. It is worth mentioning that Company officials often sent their mixed-blood offspring to England for education, especially those who could afford. The children of fair complexions had higher chances to mix with the colour-conscious English society.

With the beginning of the nineteenth century, a superior racist feeling was formed among the English people of Bengal and they often refused to accept the children of the Anglo-Indian community as Europeans (Gist and Wright 1973: 114). With the emergence of imperialism in Bengal the concept of 'pure white' and 'mixed white' started to come up. This constant conflict between the 'pure' and 'mixed' hindered the growth of education of this community in the first half of the nineteenth century.

European education received an impetus after the Indian Revolt of 1857, when the British government wanted to reward the Anglo-Indian community for their loyalty towards the Company. British in Bengal established political and economic monopoly in the nineteenth century and became conscious of their position in society and were

reluctant to accept any mixed people in their English society. As a result the Anglo-Indians were marginalized in Bengal.

Motivation behind the education of the Anglo-Indians had a number of agendas for different agencies. The church, the India Office, the Government of India, the Eurasians and Anglo-Indian Association had expressed their concern with separate but explicit rationales. The Imperial Gazetteer of India, 1909 suggested that the principles which prevailed at Home (England) had obvious influence on the administrative system in India. The Victorian era in Britain largely influenced the educational policies for India (Aziz 1976: 228). Education which the British desired to promote in the colonies had to be liberally supported by the authorities in their Home country first. The later years of the eighteenth century and the early part of the nineteenth century witnessed a period of general apathy towards education in England in general, and among the English people in particular (Caldecott 1901: 237-240). The Victorian England initially failed to give due wieghtage to education and consequently education in India was not given importance by the Home government.

British commercial success was due to the industrial revolution in the middle of the nineteenth century. Gradually competition grew and monopoly of markets by the English disappeared quickly. At the end of the sixties of the nineteenth century, with the onset of great industrial depression, much distress was brought in to the working classes of England. Unemployment became a reality. By 1869 and 1870 there started an agitation for state-aided emigration of the unemployed people to the colonies. Such economic crises, it was argued, could reappear in future and such waves of emigration would not only relieve misery at home and benefit the colonies but would also help to persuade the working classes to share the general belief in imperialism (Aziz 1976, 6-8).

By the end of the nineteenth century it was no longer considered to be England's duty to train Asia and Africa in the arts of civilization and good governance (Aziz 1976: 2). They had become uncertain of themselves, afraid of their own opinions, doubtful of the true teaching of their consciences. They doubted if they had any longer any moral right to rule anyone (Townsend 1888). This constant conflict of viability of ruling the colonies and changing policies in England influenced the mindset of the colonial policy makers in India. The importance and significance of colonies like India changed over times and the policies altered accordingly. With the changing situation the English started to consider education as a means to control and maintain their hegemony over the colonies. It was no longer for the need or right of the Anglo-Indian community of Bengal but it was for the imperial interest which guided the Home Government to frame the educational policies of the Anglo-Indian community in accordance with the

changing situation and demand.

The British government in India had to deal with the actual situation in the country on one hand and on the other follow orders of the Home Government. The necessity of getting obedient and loyal servants for the administration became foremost. The India office wanted to train the children of the Anglo-Indian community in a manner which would give them the best opportunity of becoming good citizens in the land of their adoption (Danvers Report, 1878 cited in Anderson 2011). The colonial administrators having faith in Filtration theory depended much upon the English educated elite native and the Anglo-Indians. As long as the Anglo-Indian class served these interests they were in tune with the greater imperial concern. The Anglo-Indian class no longer was considered as harmless for the empire with the turn of the second half of the nineteenth century, when they started to demand more honour and individuality in the society.

Although the English East India Company had an initial reluctance towards education, but the missionaries pledged with an Evangelical mission wanted to convert the Indian heathens into Christianity by way of educating them. The missionaries saw education as one of the main ways to bring the natives under the Christian faith (Sarwar 2012: 37-47). To the missionaries education always meant Christian education rather than secular education. The overall goal of the Christian missionaries was proselytisation. The primary area and purpose included activities like working in day and boarding schools, training centres for different crafts and night classes for working boys and girls etc [Mukherjee (nee Ghosh) 2013: 33-34]. It had a wo far reaching influence and of deepest significance, especially in relation to evangelicalism of the upper classes and for building up of a new system of Christian thought process in India (Sanders 1917: 73-74).

Martin Carnoy, a labor economist with a special interest in the relation between the economy and the educational system, tried to prove that British administration succeeded in enforcing cultural imperialism through the missionaries (Carnoy 1974: 3). He argued that procuring of resources, developing manpower, harnessing energy, occupying new lands and building trading operations overseas were not possible without the ideology of the 'white man's burden' and it was the missionaries and their reformist zeal that confirmed this ideology (Rao 2014: 8). It became obligatory for the British administrators to add a notion of civilizing mission to the colonies for the purpose of easy retention of colonies and for providing an ideological justification for that. The alliances of the company's government and missionary enterprise had been celebrated in 1813 in the context of missionary educational programme through the Charter Act of 1813. The government started to provide educational grants towards

the assistance of missionaries in Bengal under the name of Grant-in Aid system (The Imperial Gazetteer of India 1909: 409-41). The Missionaries became the major influence in the field of education of the Anglo Indian community. They were a group of people who would openly embrace Christianity along with the Euro-centric education. The Evangelists realized that the other sections of population were reluctant to the conversion into Christianity. Conversion was the prime goal for the missionaries. Anglo Indian community was whole heartedly ready for conversion to become a 'true white' in every sense of the term. For this reason the missionaries never lost interest in imparting such education to this community in Bengal.

Between the 1830s and the 1860s, there had been a general consensus amongst missionaries that Christianity, western scholarship and European civilization were all intertwined with each other. During this period alliance between the missionaries and the imperial rulers was quite strong. Alexander Duff, being one of the prominent missionaries of the nineteenth century believed that 'Christianity has never taught rulers to oppress, so it will never teach subjects to rebel' (Bellenoit 2007: 25-26). This clearly points out the evangelical-imperial tie-up. This bond ran smooth until the missionaries started to sympathize with the cause of the natives.

Parimala V. Rao argued that from the very beginning missionaries often fought for the rights of the local population (Rao 2014, 9-10). Hayden Bellenoit emphasized that the missionaries often held up Indian socio-political realities and opposed the policies of the colonial state. After 1857, the imperial confidence was shaken, which also influenced the missionary realm. Missionaries became more conscious of their religious aims and involved in pursue of Indian tradition and knowledge (Proceedings of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal 1873: 113). The financial aassistance came from the state with a rider attached to it. It became mandatory for schools receiving grants-in-aid to conform to the curriculum of fixed by the government. Although missionaries had high ambitions and vigor but they lacked in financial capacity. Without the financial support it was not possible for them to continue and broaden their mission. There was a constant tussle between the colonial government and the missionaries in respect to grant-in-aid for the missionary institutions (Martineau 1858: 112).

The Anglo Indians suffered for the repressive policies of the British, since they regarded themselves as English or 'pure white' community. The Anglo-Indian community formed East Indian Club in 1825 in order to unite and protest against this. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century most people of the Anglo-Indian Associations of Bengal protested against the facts that the colonial government recognized Anglo-Indians sometimes as Europeans and sometimes as natives. Depending on the purpose of the government they were debarred from all superior and coveted offices. They

insisted on equal status and privilege with equal educational opportunity as of the 'pure' Europeans. In fulfilling that aim they formed separate schools like Parental Academy and the Calcutta Grammar school for themselves. Nonetheless, these schools were not eligible for any financial assistance from the government (Preetham 2006: 220-225) and had to struggle for existence. By analyzing the needs and aims of different concerned agencies, it can be concluded that every group had their own interest, which made the progress of Anglo-Indian education in Bengal complicated and slow.

Anglo-Indian Schools: The European (Anglo-Indian) schools were distinct from the other schools in its formation, administration, student composition and curriculum. The Director of Public Instruction of Bengal in his Report for 1862–63 had listed many European schools and it became evident from the list, that there were more unaided schools than aided ones. Interestingly more girls' schools were aided compared to the boys' schools. The Roman Catholic institutions were entirely excluded from financial aid (D'Souza 1976: 30-31). From the census reports of Calcutta of 1877, it appears that on 31 March, 1877, there were about 3,500 European and East Indian children belonging to school-going age in the town. Out of which 2,942 children were attending schools aided by the Government (Home Department, Edn File Nos 45–48, 1878).

The term 'European Education' was not generally used to specify schools meant for the children of the European employees of the railways but there were also mentions of certain European Schools for the State-managed railway employees (Railway Department, File No. E34SC23/1-5, 1934). East Indian Railway Company tried to meet the need. At first most of the European schools were established on the plains until the company founded its own schools on the hills at Musoorie (Oak Grove) in 1888 and at Dow Hill in 1879. The hill schools provided education targeted for the children of wealthier railway men. European perspective supported the idea that the bracing air of the hills would improve the health and morality of the children. These hill schools being elite schools were originated to educate the 'pure whites' instead of the Anglo Indians. These hill schools with their high fees successfully maintained their elite nature of the students by eliminating the prospect of mixing the 'low' whites with the 'pure' ones.

In 1885-1886 the compulsory subjects taught at the elementary level at all European schools comprised reading, writing and arithmetic. In addition to this, some special subjects could be taught to individual students. The students studying the same elementary subjects formed one class. Three elementary subjects were compulsory for all pupils from standard I to standard VII. English was compulsory for boys and

needlework for the girls (Code of Regulations 1885:7). No grants were provided to any standard, unless English in boys' school and needlework in girls' schools were taken up. It was required for all standards to study diligently and it was expected that students in each successive year acquire increased fluency and excellence in the subjects studied. In standard III and upwards two sets of books were provided, of which one was to be on historical or biographical theme. The School Inspector could take examination on any of the subjects and could test the knowledge of the student by asking questions on any of the subjects studied (Code of Regulations 1885: 39-41). The detailed curriculum of the European schools confirms the unique and advanced standard of these schools in comparison to other schools of Bengal where rote learning was insisted.

In 1888 a European school was one in which at least four-fifths of the pupils were of European or of Indo-European descent. The standard of European Schools exhibited the following features. The Primary stage comprised standards I to IV. Standards V and VI were regarded as the Middle stage and finally standards VII to IX were treated as the High stage. Grants for girls were same as that of boys, but an additional grant of Rs. 5 was awarded for good plain needle work (Home Department, Edn Nos. 170 – 189, 1888).

The Bengal code for European schools was revised in 1895 to ensure that standards in the primary, middle and high school classes were satisfactory. The Committee drew up a new course of instruction and as the vast majority of European children in India were born, lived and died in India; the study of Indian history and an Indian vernacular was made compulsory in all European schools (D'Souza 1976, 132-133). However, this failed to reach out to the small or poor population, as it was not able to make arrangements for the schooling of their children even though assisted by the Government. The quality of the teaching was not always satisfactory and there was a dearth of adequate supply of well-qualified instructors. Sufficient attention was not paid to the important subject of vernacular languages even after the recommendation of the Committee (The Imperial Gazetteer of India 1909, 433-435).

The primary, middle and high school examinations were held for the purpose of judging the progress of students. They were rigorously tested at definite junctures of their school career, namely, on completion of the course of instruction for primary, middle, and high school standards respectively. At the primary school examination, questions were set for each subject, up to the standard IV. These examinations were held annually, and certificates were given to all those qualified in the examinations. A fee was charged for admission to the examinations and that amount was determined by the Department. There were provisions for the awarding special grants or for the

payment of fees for the poor scholars (Revised Code of Regulations 1897: 17-21). This distinct curriculum and examination standard are enough to confirm the distinctiveness and Euro-centric pattern of European school education.

In 1902 Lord Curzon, on the recommendation of a Conference of Directors of Public Instruction held at Simla (1901), appointed a Code Revision Committee to revise the Bengal Code for European Schools of 1895, so that it may be adapted for whole of India and Burma. This Committee advocated for a uniform policy for European schools similar to that outlined in the Government of India Resolution of 1904. Their views were included in the Revised Code for European Schools of 1905. This had a tremendous impact on the qualitative improvement of the education provided in European schools (D'Souza 1976, 137). An Inspector of School was appointed in each Province to inspect European schools. A training college was established to train teachers for these schools. Stipends were provided for the students taking the training. The systems of offering grants-in-aid and scholarships were revised on a more liberal basis (The Imperial Gazetteer of India 1909: 433-435).

Code of Regulation for European Schools in India and Burma, 1905 specified compulsory subjects like Spelling, Analysis and Grammar, Tables, Notation and Numeration, Arithmetic, Mental Arithmetic, Geography, History, Domestic Economy, Needlework (for girls only), Object lessons and Drill. Subjects like Latin, French, German and Vernacular were offered as Optional subjects (Proceedings of the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, 1905: 318). Since many unskilled labourers failed to get a decent job in England and migrated to India, it therefore became necessary to provide vocational and technical training to their children. Otherwise they would be without the prospect of employment. The demand for vocational training was long cherished by the European community. That was first complied by the Code of the 1905, which guaranteed vocational and technical subjects for the boys of this community (D'Souza 1976: 144).

With the turn of the twentieth century vocational training became increasingly part of the European schools. For example, the Catholic Male Orphanage taught special subjects, such as, Typewriting, Shorthand and Telegraphy, which involved extra expenditure (Proceedings of the Lieutenant–Governor of Bengal 1905: 339). St. Joseph's Free School, Calcutta, had special classes teaching Typewriting, Shorthand and Telegraphy. At the Loreto Day School for Girls, Bow Bazar, Calcutta, instruction was given in Typewriting and Dressmaking. The Loreto Convent School for Girls at Entally had Typewriting and Shorthand classes. The girls were also taught Household work, Domestic economy and Dressmaking. The Gouldsmith Free Day School, Calcutta, had a special class for girls where Shorthand, Typewriting and Domestic economy

were taught. Extra time was given to introduce English and Commercial Arithmetic to the pupil. At the St. Helen's School for Girls, Kurseong, students were allowed to take up one or more of the following courses: (a) Practical Domestic Economy and Cookery, (b) Nursing, (c) Dress-making and Millinery. The senior boys at St. Andrew's Colonial Homes' School, Kalimpong, were also employed on the Farm. No servants were employed for the household duties, namely, washing, cooking, mending, etc. These were also taught in the school. The idea behind this was to equip the students for colonial life in the future. After the reorganization of the Victoria Boys' School in 1897 and subsequent foundation of the Girls' Schools at Dow Hill, a carpentry class was started at the Boys' School and a Domestic Science and Cookery class was introduced for the girls. These were attended by the more senior students. Still the government spent very small amount of money in the primary education in comparison to the secondary schools, which had to depend on private philanthropy for its sustenance (General Report of Public Instruction in Bengal 1904: 102-103).

In 1906 A Earle, Director of Public Instruction, Bengal communicated that the revised code of regulations for European schools would follow a particular structure of classes and curriculum as indicated below (Proceedings of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal 1906: 338):

(a) Infant Classes (ages 5 to 8)

(b) First Class (ages 8 to 9)

(c) School Class (ages 9 to 10)

(d) Third Class (ages 10 to 11)

(e) Fourth Class (ages 11 to 12)

(f) Fifth Class (ages 12 to 13)

(g) Sixth Class (ages 13 to 14).

According to the Code of Regulations for European Schools of Bengal, 1908, it was laid down that for obtaining the recognition of an elementary or primary school, a school should at least enroll twenty to twenty-five students and should have the capability of providing efficient instruction in the subjects like Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, English composition, English Grammar, English poetry and literature, Nature observation work, Geography, History, drawing, an Indian vernacular, hand work, needlework (for girls only) and Music. No recognized school was, however, allowed to offer instruction in any of these courses, unless it could match the standard of the Department that there was a demand for this supplementary instruction and that it could be carried on efficiently without prejudice to the work of the institution as an elementary school.

No student without passing the final examination of the elementary school was to be admitted to any of these supplementary courses without the express permission of the Inspector (Code of Regulations 1908: 5-6). The procedure and conditions of the elementary school certificate examination was also indicated in the Regulations. The standard of passing was to be determined by the examiners, who would be guided by the consideration that the candidate had been taught the subject knowledgably and that at the same time he had derived substantial benefit from the study. Each school would have to submit its curriculum annually to the Inspector, and it would be the duty of the Inspector to see that the courses laid down in each subject were sufficient for the purpose of the certificate examination. The examination should be partly oral, and interestingly, no text-books in English or in the vernacular could be prescribed for examination (Code of Regulations 1908: 14).

The Code of Regulation of 1910 recommended that there was to be elementary and secondary schools for the Europeans of Bengal. The former planned to teach a boy up to 14 years of age (Article 18) and the latter up to 18 years of age (Article 20). The termination point for the secondary course was to be the Cambridge Senior school certificate examination (Article 95). The termination of the elementary education was to be through the Elementary School Certificate Examination that was to be held conjointly by the school and the department (Proceedings of the Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal 1911: 24). The Code of 1910 recommended that the examination should be of a simple nature and should be such that it would be possible to test whether a candidate had been taught the subject knowledgibly and at the same time derived substantial benefit from it or not (Proceedings of the Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal 1911: 39). In this way the British government started to manage the European schools and standardized them on their own aspiration. In 1911, a special grant of fifty lakhs of rupees was assigned for education by the British government in India following the visit of King George to India. Out of this three lakhs were set aside for the education of the Anglo-Indians. But the impact of the World War I brought many things to a standstill and the education of this community were no exception. The education of the Europeans suffered also as a result of lack of well-trained teachers and practical orientation (Sen 2017: 91).

Sir Spencer Harcourt Butler, summoned an All India Conference of European Education at Simla in 1912, where he accepted that the government of India had been indifferent to the education of the domiciled European community. Butler described the European education as 'half-sister of Indian education' (D'Souza 1976: 150). The Conference recommended that European education should cease to be a Provincial subject and that it should be taken under Central Control. The suggestion was repeatedly made in

the succeeding years with little results. The Domiciled Community in India submitted their report in 1912 under the president ship of Sir Harcourt Butler. The code made provisions for admission of a certain percentage of Indians to European schools and also suggested that free education should be provided in the European schools. But in the matter of compulsion, Butler felt some more time would be required (Report of the Conference of the Domiciled Community in India 1920, 2-3).

Interestingly, Anglo-Indian schools were not included in the purview of the Sadler Commission of 1917; yet the Commission referred to it in passing; a fact that easily sums up the importance of the European schools and their social and political importance in the population of the Bengal Presidency (D'Souza 1976, 161-162). During this time vocational training again sought attention of the government. On 31 March, 1918, there were seventy two students on the rolls of the Commercial and Technical classes attached to the Young Women's Christian Association in Calcutta. A commercial class affiliated to the Government Commercial Institute was started at the La Matriniere for Boys' School in Calcutta in 1918. There were forty-nine students on the rolls of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway Apprentices' Night School at Kharagpur. At Dow Hill School a special Domestic Science Block was arranged and the subjects were made compulsory for all girls in the upper classes. It was felt that this training should be available to every girl in the school and that girls in the lower classes should be taught, at least, the rudiments of cookery, laundry work, dressmaking, needlework, household management, nursing of the sick etc. There were three students in the Dow Hill School undergoing a special training in domestic science and eleven at the St. Helen's Convent School. Special classes for probationary nurses for sick were held at the Entally Covent and at St. Andrew's Colonial Homes, Kalimpong. The Calcutta Free School and the St. Andrew's Colonial Homes, Kalimpong, also held special classes for the training of children's nurses (Proceedings of the Hon'ble the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal 1919: 16-17). All these vocational courses were aimed at increasing the employability of boys and making the girls conversant with feminine virtues. However, one of the greatest faults in the European schools, according to the Inspector of European schools, was that vocational courses had been generally organized, more in academic manner (D'Souza 1976: 161-162).

The Government of India Act in 1919 in general relegated the subject of education to the provinces. European education was reserved for the consideration of the central government. Mr. Ingels believed that as far as the education of Anglo-Indians was concerned, it was an Imperial matter and not a transferred subject. He was apprehensive of the fact whether the Bengal Government would be able deal with it. He was doubtful if the Corporation would be able to finance one side and not the other, unless they

asked the Government to make provision for it (Government of Bengal 1920: 30). The Enquiry Committee Reports (1919-1920) of Calcutta Domiciled Community saw this as an opportunity when efficient and the best possible education could be imparted to the 'low Europeans' in India, thereby helping them earn a wage for livelihood of persons with European habits and manners (De 2003: 237).

According to this report, in Calcutta a huge sum was spent through societies like the Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor, the Indo-British Institution, the Roman Catholic, Institutions and Endowments for the benefit of the Poor White Community. Domiciled Enquiry Committee (1919-1920) reported that Rs. 1,12,017 annually was provided for the educational assistance of 643 children by these philanthropic societies (De 2003: 234-35). The report also advised some measures for improvement of the educational condition of this community. It recommended that Preparatory schools, especially at the moufossil stations may be established. The negligence in establishing such schools accounted for more than anything else for the educational backwardness of domiciled children as compared to children of the same age in England. It was suggested that the preparatory schools should appoint their ablest teachers in the lowest classes (Calcutta Domiciled Community Enquiry Committee Reports 1919-1920: 105). Primary education of a simple and practical kind was prescribed for the children of the domiciled community. Appropriate vocational training or workshop training for both boys and girls was to supplement the general education course. Often boys and girls from the poor white community had to quit schools at tender ages and take up jobs. Their general education was curtailed and the jobs that they secured at a younger age offered low salaries and had very little prospects too (De, 2003: 238). This justified the importance of the Preparatory schools as institutions of skill training, which the children of the domiciled community mostly needed. Interestingly, these schools were not meant for the children of the elite Europeans as they were seldom forced to quit education for employment or for earning a livelihood.

The privileged position enjoyed by the European schools, was challenged by the growth of a new type of privately owned and managed schools popularly known as the Indian Public School. These schools claimed to be much more closely modeled on the English Public Schools than the Anglo-Indian schools. The Doon School, the father of the Indian Public School, was opened with seventy boys in September, 1935 and was formally inaugurated by Lord Willingdon, the Viceroy, on 27 October, 1936 (D'Souza 1976: 40-41). Indian Public schools became popular ensuring a feeling of superiority among the English because the European schools had lost their race specific student composition and many white men were not willing to let their children study along with the non- European community (Railway Department, No. E34SC23/1-5: 1934).

The political and economic upheaval caused by the World War II unsettled the position of Europeans in Bengal. The Barnes Commission, constituted in 1944, recommended that the Anglo-Indian schools should be preserved as a separate entity, and should have a closer connection with the stream of Indian life and culture (D'Souza 1976: 217-220). The distinctive features of Anglo-Indian schools with regard to their social standing, ethos, tones, atmosphere, immediate goals, disciplines, school leaving examination, curricula and methods, syllabi and textbooks, medium of instruction and overall cultural pattern is to be maintained, so that they may be distinguished from the normal government schools. Problems with the education of the European schools were heterogeneous in many ways. European school was a race specific institution. But that did not imply that the pupils from the domiciled community were supposed to be transformed by education into legitimate members of the British colonizing community. By following the school curricula it could be argued that European schools did not intend to make European and domiciled European children 'European' in the usual sense of the term. It intended to relegate them into a social position that might be 'respectable' enough in some ways, but was essentially subaltern (Mizutani 2011: 117). Admission of children from middle and upper class families of India into the Anglo-Indian schools served as a blessing in many ways. They provided a much needed intellectual stimulus to the somewhat easy-going 'European' children. The fees collected from them helped the schools financially. They broke down the barrier between the European children from their native classmates and urged to incorporate the Indian languages and Indian culture in the schools (D'Souza 1976: 172).

Conclusion: The disadvantage faced by the Anglo-Indian schools was financial. They had to depend on fees and contributions. The absence of a pre-conceived plan for the establishment of schools, the lack of co-operation and often the unhealthy competition among Christian denominational sects had negative impact and adverse consequences for such schools. The overall education policy of the British was framed in colonial terms (Dey 2019: 44). The elementary education policy of the Anglo Indians of Bengal was also resolved to meet up the colonial interest. They were neither given equal status in the native society nor did they have any place in the European society. They were always slotted as a special category and education was one such tool that was used to preserve the uniqueness of the community, which was essential for the imperial concern.

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Education as Medium to Transform Cultural Values

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Abstract: *Education is considered as the best means to condition or de-condition any society. The basic principle underlying Indian education was to acknowledge the fact that the self is separate from the body, mind or senses and all pleasures are sought for the satisfaction of these faculties. Indian civilization reached its glory banking on these philosophies but the modern educational system adapted from the West contradicts these indigenous principles. The questioning culture was replaced by a commanding culture. The new system proposed, defined and validated ideas which were to be accepted unquestioned by the masses. Accumulation of data deemed worthy for the entire population and reproducing them on demand became the new name of genius. This mad race hypnotized the masses to believe data as ultimate knowledge, truth as a static principle, knowledge as receivable from external agencies; thereby leading to the mediocrity of society.*

Keywords: civilization, education, liberation, methodology, patronage, values.

Introduction: The proven remains of Indian civilization dates back to ten thousand years and despite numerous foreign invasions, the culture and values survived and continually flourished. Indian culture and ethos respected diversity as most of its ancient philosophies believe the truth to be evolving and constructible by an individual in unique manner. The experiences and realities faced by individuals are stored in the

huge reservoir of memory, they act as reference points to give meaningful insights to any occurrence and since the reference points are different, perceived truths are different. As new data or experiences are acquired/ stored, they act as further reference points evolving and modifying constructed truth.

The very foundations of Indian civilization were laid on the belief that salvation is the ultimate goal of mankind and one has to strive lifelong to find a unique way for his liberation. This required in-depth understanding of the mind-body coordination and many enlightened beings devoted their entire life experimenting with this phenomenon. Numerous schools practicing various techniques and methodologies were established since time immemorial but they all aimed at the same fundamental goal of liberation. The teachings were incorporated in the life processes of the masses through various means. Thus, a system of living was devised that prepared every individual to face the daily chores, besides building a sound foundation to experiment with the realities that lie beyond the senses.

Transmission of this scientific living procedure required internship under expert guidance which resulted in growth of the indigenous Gurukul system of education whereby the child was guided by a committed Guru. The child was kept away from the comforts of his home, was given similar tasks and responsibilities as other students irrespective of his family status, his talents were nurtured for an ideal vocation and he was taught to perform his functions independently which prepared him as a valuable individual besides developing the other faculties of mind to perceive dimensions beyond the physical. Self-realization was the basic feature on which education was based and this foundation developed strong, moral and ethical citizens who valued their character and culture over petty external luxuries.

Objectives of the Study: Education assists individuals to explore the truth and construct realities based on experiences. The traditional Indian educational system acknowledged the changeable nature of perceived knowledge and encouraged construction, deconstruction and reconstruction of realities based on present perceptions. This was possible as the culture of questioning existed since time immemorial. The modern educational system introduced by the British believes in imposition of facts as knowledge. The present study discusses how the modern educational system transformed the indigenous cultural values of India.

Education and Culture of Questioning: The Indian education system was based on the premise that truth is evolving, changeable and subjective and so it encouraged questioning. The earliest literature shows that questioning was a basic tenant of this

culture and people holding supreme power and position like Lord Krishna, King Judhistira, Yama or the lord of death, Yajnavalkya etc. were not spared by lesser mortals and were subjected to innumerable questions pertinent to lives which they were obliged to answer. It is mentioned in Bhagavad Gita that Lord Krishna was questioned by Arjuna during the battle at Kurukshetra. The epic Mahabharata shows that King Yudhistira was questioned by a petty bird when he visited a lake to drink water. It is said in Katho Upanisad that little Nachiketa asked questions to Yama, the Lord of Death and it is mentioned Brihadaranyaka Upanishad that Maitreyi put up questions to Yajnavalkya on the absolute self. The process of questioning continued until the questioner was convinced with explanations or logic of the answerer, so that the knowledge about the subject matter became crystal clear.

Traditionally no absolute path was suggested to be holistically pervasive. Pre-supposition in any field was discouraged and throughout history, enlightened beings have critically analyzed any knowledge before accepting it. In Indian culture commandments were seldom given which resulted in questions directed to any uplifted soul whom the masses had access to. For generations people sacrificed riches and material comforts in order to find answers to questions that were pertinent to contemporary societies. It can easily be comprehended that the progress of knowledge was possible due to openness towards new ideas brought forward as a result of meaningful questioning.

Social stratification through the caste system existed but wealth or power did not have the luxury to command the quality of truth flowing into the masses. Knowledge was independent in its purest form and available to all who had thirst for it. Whosoever had a question was allowed to express his views openly before the experts, where his doubts were either cleared through logic / examples / natural laws or his arguments were publicly accepted. This is also evident from the fact that millions of gods having different specialties or proficiencies are mentioned in the ancient scriptures and one was given the liberty to choose or worship any of the gods according to his liking irrespective of the belief of the contemporary rulers.

Inherited Values Through Education: Education is used as a means of developing an individual physically, mentally and emotionally to take control over his life and become a responsible member of the society. The phenomenon becomes even more significant as values are internalised in the process. The basic principle underlying Indian education was to acknowledge the fact that the self is separate from the body; mind or senses; and all pleasures are sought for the satisfaction of these faculties. Sorrow is the inevitable byproduct that pleasure seeker receives due to his actions

and true knowledge is the vehicle on which an enlightened soul can embark upon the journey known as life. Education is a formal means by which inherited values and knowledge is passed on. The teachers ensured that each student had thoroughly internalised the values through practical methodologies. The ideal students, in turn, became reference points in their societies to pass on the learning thus inherited.

However, most learning was informal and was acquired by every individual across generations by observing the prevailing norms and practices. The culture and traditions were designed in such a manner that all institutions formally or informally reminded the citizens about ethics, morality, sacrifice, virtues and, above all, attainment of liberation or moksha. This formed an orientation or structural guide for all experiences that are faced by men. The epics, fables, music, chanting of mantras, folklore, daily rituals, marriage rituals and even last rites were scientifically designed to remind all about these values. This tradition continued without much modification for centuries. The general population was unaware of the values which they had subconsciously absorbed formally or informally but their reference points were firmly rested on these values. Even the most ignorant members of the society were informally inducted into these cultural values. This perpetual process was successfully performed by societies to ensure the glory that India commanded till the advent of foreign invasions which specifically targeted its belief systems.

Overwriting Inherited Values Through Education: Education is considered as the best means to condition or de-condition any society. The Islamic invaders were able to rule the land but were unable to destabilize the prevalent value system or educational setup since spreading of religion got their priority over education. The number of institutions was considerably reduced and the free flow of indigenous knowledge was disrupted in certain parts but since no alternate system was proposed for all, dissemination of values through educational set up continued. "The first efforts to destabilize the system were undertaken by the English invaders who proposed the mass education system to replace the existing system" (Deb 2014: 203). Education has long been held by the West as one of the best ways to 'civilize' the Indians and to assimilate them into the dominant culture. "The conquerors viewed education as a means through which Indian culture could be eliminated" (Van Otten and Tsutsui 1984: 138). Thus, came the minutes of Macaulay which led to the introduction of formal education of the West. The questioning culture was replaced by a commanding culture. The new system proposed, defined and validated ideas, which were to be accepted unquestioned by masses. A large section of contemporary elites also supported the new proposal of the English, removing possible obstacles that could have come otherwise.

Power, political patronage, racial and religious beliefs became the reference point of

curriculum formation and students in classrooms were conditioned to accept all that was taught to be the ultimate truth without questioning. People sitting at the apex of the decision-making bodies decided how much information was to be given; at which stage of life it is to be received; through which medium it can be given; and finally the acquisition of how much information can satisfactorily be accepted as a success. Uniformity became the new norm of society and selective information was disseminated in the name of education. The information was processed and presented in such a manner so as to establish supremacy of the Western culture, pinpointing ignorance of Indian masses. The new system predicted a bright future for all who followed it and finally those who did not follow it suffered the consequences. To make matters worse, all formal employment sectors were directly linked with outcome of acceptance of the new system of education. "The introduction of marks centric education resulted in a situation where more data recollected and presented in a comprehendible manner by the evaluators ensured more grades" (Culp 1929: 364). The system became transformed in such a way that grades became the sole criterion for measurement of success and modification of behavior. Values became secondary. The learners were neither encouraged to put forward a counter argument against the propagated knowledge nor were they made curious enough to investigate the truth for themselves. All academic success was measured in the yardstick of grades obtained. The students were forced to adopt the prevalent system or be branded as a failure in life to suffer the consequences.

Conclusion: The Indian value system is a result of direct and indirect assimilation of the Indian educational system. It aimed to break the bondage of the mind and proposed perceptions or inferences of the self to become the sources of valid knowledge. Internalisation through practice and validation through self-trial was proposed which removed all doubts regarding the quality of acquired knowledge. Enlightened beings were accessible to the masses and they readily answered any queries that became an obstacle in self-realization. There was a passion for education and uplifted souls travelled across the country to design methodologies to assimilate these proven principles in the everyday practice of people.

Indian civilization reached its glory in the fields of architecture, music, art and craft, economics, trade and commerce, social administration and justice, etc. banking on these philosophies. The modern educational system adapted from the West, contradicts these indigenous principles. Introspection, realisation, sense perception or inference slowly lost their relevance in the mad race for grades. Accumulation of data deemed worthy for the entire population and reproducing them on demand became the new

name of genius. This mad race hypnotised the masses into belief in data as ultimate knowledge, truth as a static principle, knowledge as receivable from external agencies; thereby leading to the mediocrity of the society. From the Government data available today on mass education, it can safely be concluded that new system of education has been successful in the process of overwriting of inherited values.

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Attitude towards E-learning of Higher Secondary school students of Birbhum District in West Bengal

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Abstract: *The study has highlighted the attitude towards e-learning of higher secondary school students of Birbhum District in West Bengal. At the backdrop of present ICT-based learning in Education, like E-Learning, as effective alternative tools of education have been given vent and an effort has been made to relate student's Attitude towards it. In this regard, it may be considered a little footstep. From this angle of vision, the objectives of this study have been stated and the gravity of this problem has been unfolded. Based on different researches made on Attitude Towards E-Learning a review has been made. The descriptive survey method was used for the present study. A random sampling technique was chosen to collect the sample. The sample consisted of 120 students of ten Higher Secondary Schools of Birbhum district in West Bengal. Here Standardized questionnaire (ATES-RD) is used to collect data from the sample and to interpret the collected data with the statistically 'T'-test is used. The collected data is analyzed through Mean, Standard Deviation, Z-score, and 'T'-test (large independent sample). In course of the comparison, it was revealed that most students have the average attitude towards E-Learning and there is no significant difference among the Male & Female, Rural & Urban, and Arts & Science Students in their level of Attitude Towards e-learning at higher secondary level school.*

Keywords: Attitude, E-Learning, Higher Secondary Students.

Introduction: Education is the way of learning and knowing, which is not confined to our school textbooks only. Thus learning is a universal process and continues throughout our life, in one or the other way. Besides the traditional way, technology is also playing an important role in education. Hence, technological amalgamation is today's reality in educationaround the world. Technology makes the people enable to take the education out of the premises of schools to their homes and computer shops or internet cafés etc. These unconventional methods of learning are definitely challenging to our traditional model of classroom learning in education. We can use these emerging technologies to leverage the additional benefits of reaching larger masses and support our education system with a new approach(Chopra, N. 2013).[(1)] Some of the most highly significant innovations of learningare several tools of ICT, such as e-learning and virtual education, the best alternatives to the traditional educational module. But long before the internet was launched, the developmental phase of ICT passed through some stages. The invention of the first testing machine in 1924 was such a kind of example.The students were enabled to test themselves by this device. Then, in 1954, the renowned professor of Harvard University, BF Skinner invented his famous "teaching machine" that enabled the educational institutions to administer programmed instruction to their students. However, the first computer-based educational training program was begun to introduce to the world in the year of 1960. The first MAC (Media Access Control) in the 1980s enabled individuals to have personal computers in their homes for making it easier for students to learn about particular subjects and to develop certain kinds of skill sets. At that time distance courses were being offered to provide students with education on particular subjects or skills. The virtual learning mode of education started tothrive truly and after that people easily can access the vast wealth of online information available and the e-learning opportunities. E-learning can be considered in general as the process of learning occurred by communication with a wide range of contents delivered digitally to learners with the support of electronic services. This learning process includes extensive use of the information and communication-related technologies to assist and enable learners to restructure their knowledge. E-learning can thus incorporate theoretically with all the other types of the learning process (Thakkar, S. and Joshi, H. 2017).[(2)] Just ase-learning is deliberated as a powerful tool of ICT for educational changes and reforms. People become known for computers and the Internet in the 20th century. Then the people get access to world-class learning experiences, wide information, and skills. The business sectors also began to use the e-learning method to train their employees after the year 2000.

E-Learning systems are properly established on the need of 21st-century people. Computer enhanced learning is named E-learning. Computers play a big role in

learning and also in education. The role of computers in supporting the cause of education is in different ways. Presently information technology is used as the medium and learning tool in education. Currently, teachers are well equipped with the enhanced skills and abilitiesof modern classroom-based computer technology by proper use of the various type of web 2.0 tools to enhance their institutional effectiveness. E-learning systems provide more flexible means of communicating which enables students to interact easily with others. E-learning system has three main areas, a) improving access to education and training, b) enhancing the quality of teaching and learning and c) the need for higher education institutions to maintain a competitive advantage in changing market places for students.

Beginning of the Study: Now the present system of education has become a lot dependent on E-learning. In this study, the researcher eager to see,the attitude towards E-Learning of the students of higher secondary schools. So, first of all, one has to know the meaning of attitude. It is nothing but adispositional readiness on the part of a person to respond to certain situations, persons, or objects. In educational research attitude testing is becoming essential gradually to achieve some purposes such as, 'to what extent the desired attitudes have been developed in the learners', 'to enable the learners in developingthe necessaryattitudes', 'to help the teachers to realizelearners' attitudes predispose the person to take action, 'to help the teacher in good teaching and instruction' and 'to help the learners in their future career plans'. In measuring the attitudes of learners, a teacher should know the appropriate scales which include various dimension, viz. degree, direction, and intensity (Bhuvaneswari, A. S and Padmanaban. T. 2012).[3] Further, in this study the researcher keen to know, if the students can use successfully the E-learning tools, i.e. computer, mobile, internet, educational app, etc. to solve their present educational problem. Are they can use all e-learning items properly? Do the teachers who are well trained and educated, can able to teach e-learning in the educational institution? Are the students use to take it positively this innovation in modern society.Why does the attitude need to be developed? What is the attitude of present learners towardse-learning?On thisbasis, some queries raised in the researcher's mind, those are –Who are better, either male or female students, to use e-learning in the higher secondary level? Which streams are doing the better performance, either science or arts stream students, to proper use of e-learning in the higher secondary level? Which area is doing well, either urban or rural students, to use the e-learning material properly at the higher secondary level?And in this course of study, the researcher tries to find out the answer to these queries.

Justification of the Study: The study has the potential to reveal the following aspects-

• Male or Female – which one provides a better power of concentration and better use of e-learning.

• Urban or Rural – which environment helps the students achieving a topmost position.

• Better scope of grooming to use of e-learning.

Statement of the Problem: Attitude towards E-Learning of Higher Secondary School Students of Birbhum District in West Bengal.

Objectives: 1. To compare the attitude towards e-learning among the higher secondary level male and female students of Birbhum District in West Bengal.

2. To compare the attitude towards e-learning among rural and urban students of higher secondary levelof Birbhum District in West Bengal.

3. To compare the attitude towards e-learning among arts and science students of higher secondary levelof Birbhum District in West Bengal.

Delimitations: 1. The study has been delimited to only higher secondary school students.

2. The study has been delimited to only Birbhum District.

3. The study has been delimited to only arts and science students.

4. The study has been delimited to only 10 higher secondary level schools.

5. The study has been delimited to only 120 samples.

Significance of the study: E-learning (Electronic Learning) emerged as a new tool that has the potential to enhance and support the traditional learning system. It is the outcome of the internet which has gifted education with flexibility in time, place, and need-oriented learning. It has become an integral part of the learning used by every educational organization. It is a useful tool of the education system that enables to students achieved more too various authentic sources. This learning enables to students better performance of his study and upcoming situation of life. This learning system is sustainable for time, effort, and cost. Thus, it provides accessibility for individuals who wish to learn at their own pace, place, and time. It provides a platform for virtual learning and uninterrupted learning through distance mode but reduces the distance between the teacher and the taught. These learning tools help to solve the situational problem very first and it helps to gather knowledge very quickly. In this modern

situation, this tool is an innovative thing, it attracts all learner for learning. Different researchers have different views on the use and effects of e-learning. The usage of technology is a replacement rather than a supplement to traditional textbooks. It is found that the technology is more useful than traditional media. So the process of e-learning and its applications are unlimited in the field of education.

Review of Related Literature: Alshaiekh, L. H. and Singh, S. (2018) conducted a study on Female Students' Attitude Towards E-Learning in Saudi Higher Education. The study aimed to discuss the factors that influence e-learning in Saudi higher education, especially for female learning. The present studyadopted the survey method and used random sampling to identify the sample of 381 female students in Al-Baha University. The questionnaire was taken for collecting data and for analyzing the data the researcher used SPSS software. The findings of the study established that the attitude of the female University students was positively related to e-learning and demonstrated that Usefulness, Flexibility, Interactivity, and University Support were critical determination of female student's attitudes towards E-learning.(4)

Khirade, S. K. (2017) conducts a study entitled,A Study of an Attitude Towards E-Learning among the Graduate Students. The objectives of the study were to find out the attitude towards e-learning among the students of graduate-level, compare the attitude of the male and female students towards e-learning at the graduate level, to find out the correlation between the attitude towards e-learning of male and female students at the graduate level. The present study used a survey method and employed a standardized test (Attitude Towards E-Learning) for collecting and measuring the data. The present studies were used statistical measures 'T' test. The present study sample sizes of 128 students were randomly selected. The finding of the study as it is found that 1.5 % of students have an Extremely High-Level attitude towards e-learning. The study has found that 44.53 % of students have the average attitude towards e-learning at graduate level. In addition to that 45.45 % of male students and also 43.54 % of female students have an average attitude towards e-learning. The studyalso has found that only 7 % of students have an extremelylow-level of attitude towards e-learning at graduate level. It is revealed from the study that there is no significant difference in the attitude towards e-learning among the male and female students at the graduate level. The correlation of the attitudes towards e-learning between male and female students was found 0.194 only.(5)

Konwar, I. H. (2011) conducted a study on Attitude of College Students Towards E-Learning with Special Reference to North Lakhimpur of Lakhimpur District, Assam. The objectives of the study were to ascertain the attitude of college students towards

e-learning concerning gender and locality. This study was based on the survey method and collected data using a quantitative research technique. The study was conducted on 200 college students who were selected randomly. The total sample was selected from the Lakhimpur district. The scale to measure attitude towards e-learning was developed by Dimpal Rani and was used in the study as a tool to collect the data. Descriptive statistics were used to interpret the data and it used five-point Likert techniques. The major finding(s) of the present study showed that college students have positive attitudes towards e-learning. There exists no significant difference in attitude towards e-learning between male and female college students and there was no significant difference in attitude towards e-learning between urban and rural college students.[6]

Knowledge Gap: For many years several researchers have investigated and several studies have been done on the use of e-learning in secondary school students, use of e-learning in female student, use of e-learning in university librarian, lab administrators as well as communication with other institutions, etc. and their relationship with other variables such as awareness, attitudes, impact, importance, academic achievement, etc. In the above section, the review and findings related to those that have been mentioned. Here little work has been done on attitudes towards the use of e-learning in higher secondary school students. So there is a gap of knowledge existing in this area in the use of e-learning in higher secondary school students. Keeping in this view, 'Attitude towards E-Learning of Higher Secondary School Students of Birbhum District in West Bengal' was chosen as the problem of the study.

Hypothesis: I. H_{01}- There is no significant difference between higher secondary level male and female students on attitudes towards e-learning.

II. H_{02} - There is no significant difference between rural and urban students of higher secondary level on attitude towards e-learning.

III. H_{03} - There is no significant difference between arts and science students of higher secondary levelon attitude towards e-learning.

Methodology

Research Design: In the present study, the descriptive survey method is used for collecting data and here the researcher has used a standardized questionnaire to collect data from students and Mean, SD, Z-score, and 'T'-test (large independence sample) have been used for analyzing these data.

Figure-1 showing the design of the study –

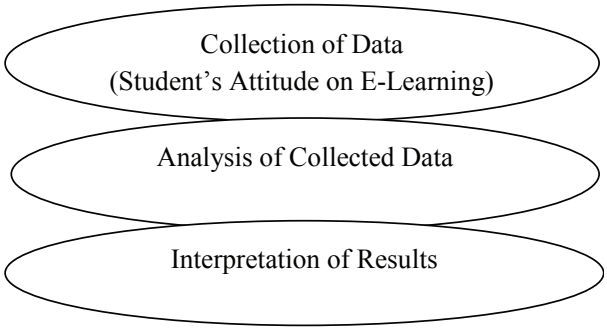


Fig. – 1:Research Design

Population: 12th standard students of Higher Secondary Schoolof Birbhum District in West Bengal.

Sample and Sampling Techniques: 120 students of TenHigher Secondary School Students of Birbhum district in West Bengal and random sampling technique is chosen to collect the sample.

Tools: Here Standardized questionnaire (ATES-RD) is used to collect data from the sample andto interpret the collection of data with a statistically 'T'-test (large independence sample) is used.

Statistical Techniques:

The collected data is analyzed through Mean, Standard Deviation, Z-score, and 'T'-test (large independence sample).

Data Collection Procedure:

After the preparation for collecting data, the researcher used a standardized questionnaire of E-Learning. After that, the researcher randomly selected 10H.S. school on Dubrajpur block of Birbhum district in West Bengal and personally visited the 12th classes of those H.S. school on Dubrajpur block. Then 12thclass students of those schools were selected randomly and the questionnaire was distributed among them. The researcher told them to fill in their entries instruction and then carefully read the general instruction given on the front page. Then go through each statement carefully and decide their answer on five points alternatives answer, viz., and put a tick-mark (√) in the cell of the alternative which is nearest to their answer.

Results

Data Analysis and Interpretation: The next step is, the process of research after the collection of data; organize it, analysis and interpretation of the data, formulation of conclusion and to get a meaningful picture out of the collected raw information. The use of Z-Score norms for standardizing the collected Manual data regarding Attitude Towards E-Learning Scale (ATETS-RD) is the following. Data analysis and interpretation are given below:

Table 1: Profile showing level of Attitude Towards E-Learning

S.N	Range of Z-Score	Grade	Level of E-Learning	Number of students	Percentage
1	+2.01 and above	A	Extremely High	2	1.67%
2	+1.26 to +2.00	B	High	16	13.33%
3	+0.51 to +1.25	C	Above Average	19	15.83%
4	-0.50 to +0.50	D	Average	44	36.67%
5	-1.25 to -0.51	E	Below Average	30	25%
6	-2.00 to -1.26	F	Low	6	5%
7	-2.01 and below	G	Extremely Low	3	2.50%
			Total	120	100%

Graph 1: Presenting Percentage level of Attitude towards E-learning with Pie-Graph

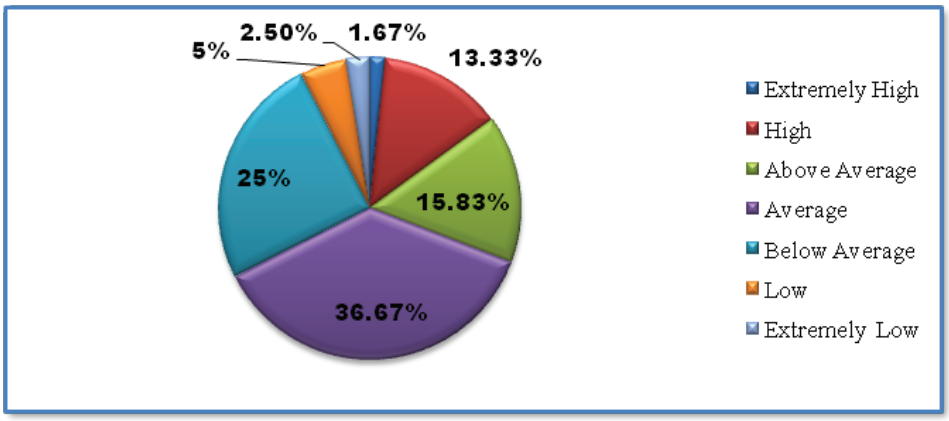


Fig-2: Presenting Percentage level of Attitude towards E-learning with Pie-Graph

Based on the manual, the Z-score is used here to classify the student on attitude towards e-learning. According to the above table and pie chart, we can ensure that 1.67% of students belong to Extremely High Level of E-Learning,13.33% students belong to High Level of E-Learning, 15.83% students belong to Above Average Level of E-Learning, 36.67% students belong to Average level of E-Learning, 25% students belong to Below Average Level of E-Learning, 5% students belong to Low Level of E-Learning, 2.50% students belong to Extremely Low Level of E-Learning.

Hypothesis - 1

Table 2: Table of Male and Female students

Sl. No	Gender	N	Mean	SD	SEd	T- ratio	Critical Value		Significance
1	Male	76	238.54	22.69	4.14	0.79	0.01	0.05	Accepted
2	Female	44	235.25	21.38			2.58	1.96	

The above table shows, the hypothesis is accepted at 0.05 & 0.01 levels of significance. There is no significant difference between male and femalestudents of highersecondary level on attitude towards e-learning of Birbhum district in West Bengal.

Graph 2: Male and Female significant figure

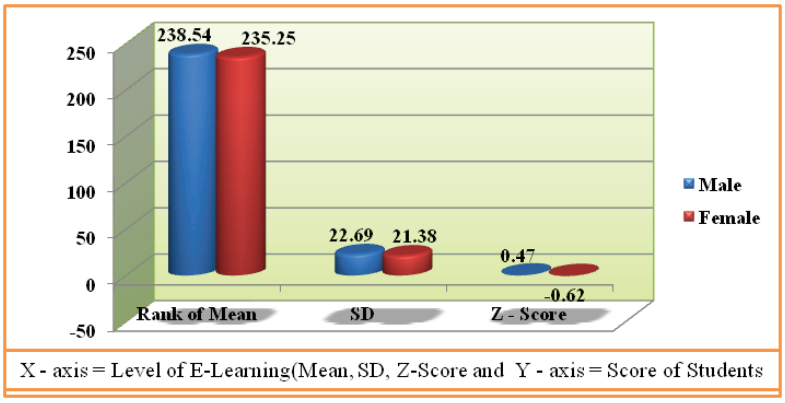


Fig-3: Presenting Male and Female Significant Figure

Hypothesis - 2

Table 3: Table of rural and urban students

Sl. No	Gender	N	Mean	SD	SEd	T-ratio	Critical Value		Significance
1	Rural	77	237.25	23.27	4.08	0.059	0.01	0.05	Accepted
2	Urban	43	237.49	20.37			2.58	1.96	

The above table shows, the hypothesis is accepted at 0.05 & 0.01 levels of significance. There is no significant difference between rural and urban students of higher secondary level on attitude towards e-learning of Birbhum district in West Bengal.

Graph 3: Rural and Urban Comparison figure

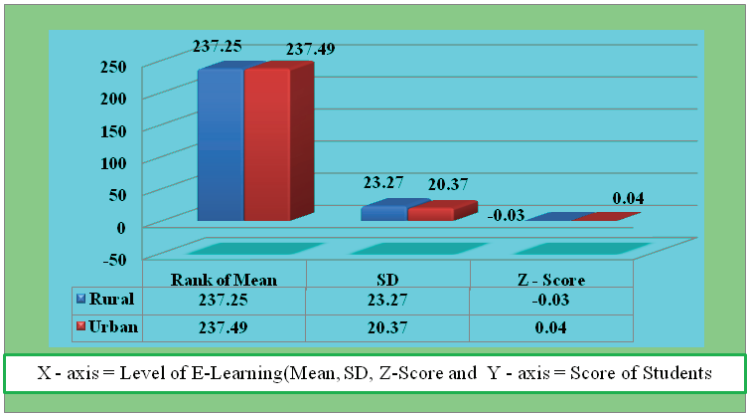


Fig 4: Presenting Rural and Urban Comparison Figure

Hypothesis - 3

Table 4: Table of arts and science students

Sl. No	Gender	N	Mean	SD	SEd	T-ratio	Critical Value		Significance
1	Arts	85	236.26	22.44	4.37	0.85	0.01	0.05	Accepted
2	Science	35	239.97	21.34			2.58	1.96	

The above table shows, the hypothesis is accepted at 0.05 & 0.01 levels of significance. There is no significant difference between arts and science students of higher secondary level on attitude towards e-learning of Birbhum district in West Bengal.

Graph 4: Arts and Science Comparison figure

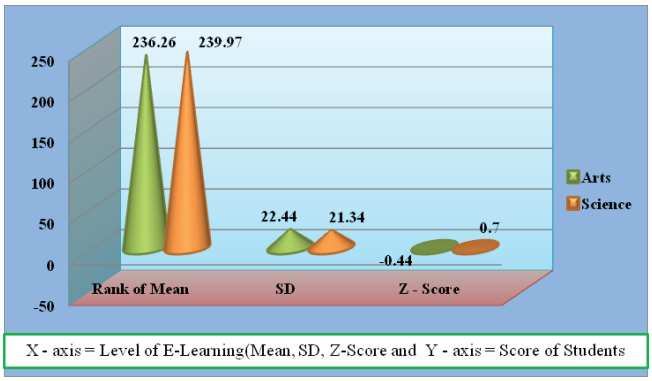


Fig 5: Presenting Arts and Science Comparison Figure

Research Findings: The major findings of the study revealed that 1.62% of students have extremely high and 2.50% of students have an extremely low-Level attitude towards e-learning. In this study it has been found that 30.83% of students have a positive attitude towards e-learning, 32.50% of students have negative attitudes towards e-learning and 36.67% of students have average attitudes towards e-learning. It is also found that all hypotheses are accepted at 0.05 & 0.01 levels of confidence. There are no significant differences between male & female students, rural& urban students, and arts & science students of higher secondary level on attitude towards e-learning.

Conclusion & Interpretation: In developing countries like India, it is quite challenging to maintain the quantity and quality ratio with the present vast young population. That's why India as like all developing economics around the world started to adopt ICT tools like e-learning, virtual learning in education to meet the growing demand and aspiration. So, the implementation of the e-learning strategy is very much significant in this direction to control the quality of a largequantity of mass. The emergence of this unconventional approach in education helps the students in developing motivation and confidence to reach the global standard; as well it helps to accelerate the level of education.

From the present study, it can be revealed that the attitude of the higher secondary school students towards e-learning is independent with regard to gender, locality, and stream. It is conducted to compare attitudes towards e-learning among the male & female, rural & urban, and arts & science students at the higher secondary level. The result of the present study revealed that most students found the average attitude towards e-learning and there are no significant differences among the male & female, rural & urban, and arts & science students in their level of attitude towards e-learning at higher secondary level school. It may be the fact that the students started to develop a positive attitude towards e-learning due to various initiatives taken by the education sector for its advancement in this modern digital era. Therefore, the present study suggests a greater probability of e-learning that they will accept it, as the attitudes towards e-learning have been found to be moderate among higher secondary school students and it is expected that they will use the e-learning strategy for their learning. From this study, it may be concluded that higher secondary school students are ready to take the opportunity of e-learning mode. However, the above assertions require more systematic analysis and verification.

Suggestion for the Further Study: The following study may be undertaken by the researcher to further strengthen the research area of Attitude towards E-Learning at higher secondary level school students. This research was conducted considering a particular block as a sample. Similar researches could be conducted to focus on every block of this District or could be conducted to focus on every District of this State and streamline the most preferred courses. The research findings could also be compared with other blocks and districts to determine the value and attitude of the e-learning of students or teachers or parents. This would help in obtaining the emphasis on various factors such as technology, the course structures, and availabilities, etc.

The present study is limited to higher secondary level students of the Dubrajpur block. A similar study can be extended to different educational levels and different sampling areas such as Schools Teachers, College Teachers, University Teachers, Parents, Administrative Person, and other Service Man.

Similar studies can be conducted for a large sample for a longer duration representing different districts to ensure the validity of the study.

- It will be a better study if more variations are created in the target group.
- For collecting information other techniques such as interview, observation may be used to create varieties in the method.
- Multiple techniques for data collection could be employed in the future. If possible some qualitative research methods like phenomenology, technography, case-studies, etc. may be used.

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মুক্তির ছাড়পত্র – বার্ধক্য

শর্মিষ্ঠা ঘোষ

সারসংক্ষেপ : *মানব জীবন শৈশব, কৈশোর, যৌবন, প্রৌঢ়ত্ব এবং পরিশেষে বার্ধক্যের দ্বারপ্রান্তে এসে উপস্থিত হয়। সাধারণভাবে 'বৃদ্ধ' শব্দটির মধ্যে ক্ষয়, অক্ষমতা, দুর্বলতা, দুঃখ এই ধরণের কিছু নঞর্থক চিন্তা সম্পৃক্ত থাকে। কারণ বৃদ্ধ বলতেই আমরা এক অক্ষম, দুঃখজর্জরিত, বা দুর্বল মানুষকে বুঝে থাকি। ফলত মানব জীবনে এই পর্যায় উপস্থিত হওয়ার পূর্ব থেকেই অনেক মানুষ 'বার্ধক্যে উপনীত হলে অক্ষম হয়ে পড়বে, সবাই অবহেলা করবে' এই ভেবে অবসাদ গ্রস্ত হয়ে পড়ে। বৌদ্ধ দর্শনে বার্ধক্যকে দুঃখ বলা হয় এবং এই দুঃখ থেকে মুক্তির উপায়ও নির্দেশ করা হয়েছে। কিন্তু বার্ধক্য শুধু নঞর্থক এক অবস্থা নয় বা বার্ধক্য এক দুঃখজনক অবস্থা নয়, বার্ধক্য মানব জীবনের এক অনিবার্য পরিণতি, একটি পর্যায় বা স্তর। বার্ধক্যে বেশ কিছু সমস্যা অবশ্যই আছে, যাকে আমরা বার্ধক্যে দুঃখ বলতে পারি। এই দুঃখগুলি কিভাবে জয় করা যাবে তার জন্য সমাজকে যেমন এগিয়ে আসতে হবে, ঠিক তেমনি বৃদ্ধব্যক্তিদের নিজেদেরও তার উপায় বার করতে হবে। বার্ধক্য মানুষকে পরিণত করে সুসংস্কৃত হতে, সুমার্জিত হতে, সুসংশোধিত হতে; একটি পরিপূর্ণ মানুষ হতে সাহায্য করে। শারীরিক অক্ষমতাকে জয় করতে হবে, বার্ধক্যের নতুন ফসল অভিজ্ঞতা– যা বৃদ্ধব্যক্তির গভীরতর জীবনবোধ জাগ্রত করে, তার নিরিখে বৃদ্ধব্যক্তিকে নিজের মূল্যায়ন করতে হবে। তাই বার্ধক্যকে দুঃখ ভেবে তা থেকে মুক্তির কামনা নয়, বরং বার্ধক্য যে নতুন জীবনবোধ*

নিয়ে আসে তা বৃদ্ধব্যক্তিকে দেয় মুক্তির ছাড়পত্র। সংসারের ছোটখাটো বন্ধন বৃদ্ধব্যক্তিকে আর আবদ্ধ করতে পারে না, সমাজের মঙ্গলার্থে তার সম্মুখে উন্মুক্ত হয়ে যায় সুবিশাল দ্বার। শারীরিক অক্ষমতাকে জয় করে মনের শক্তির দ্বারা সে এগিয়ে যাবে ঐ সুবিশাল দ্বার দিয়ে সমাজের কল্যাণ করতে, এতদিনের সঞ্চিত অভিজ্ঞতা, জীবনবোধকে কাজে লাগানোর উত্তম সময় হল বার্ধক্য। এই প্রবন্ধে দেখার চেষ্টা করেছি বার্ধক্য অবহেলার নয়, দুঃখের নয়, জীবন যেহেতু ঈশ্বরের দান, আর এই জীবনের এক গুরুত্বপূর্ণ অংশ হল বার্ধক্য। এই বার্ধক্যই মানবজীবনকে সম্পূর্ণ বা পূর্ণতর করে তোলে।

মূলশব্দ : জরা, রসায়নতন্ত্র, দুঃখ, অক্ষমতা, আয়ুর্বেদ, বার্ধক্য, মুক্তি

ভূমিকা : বিগত কয়েক দশকের মধ্যেই সারা জগতে বার্ধক্যের সামাজিক তাৎপর্য নিয়ে গভীর চিন্তা ভাবনা গবেষণা পরিকল্পনার দরুণ কর্মচাঞ্চল্য স্বতঃস্ফূর্তভাবে জেগে উঠেছে। ভারতবর্ষেও বর্তমান দিনে বার্ধক্য সংক্রান্ত আলোচনা একটি চর্চিত বিষয়। এখন প্রশ্ন হল বর্তমান দিনে বার্ধক্য বলতে কি বোঝানো হয়? সাধারণভাবে বলা যায়, বার্ধক্য একটি স্বাভাবিক জৈবিক ঘটনা এবং মন্থর আনুক্রমিক গতিতে এগিয়ে আসা দৈহিক অবক্ষয় যার ফলে বয়স বৃদ্ধির সাথে সাথে কর্মক্ষমতা এবং প্রতিরোধ ক্ষমতা হ্রাস পায়। এর অবধারিত পরিণতি হচ্ছে মৃত্যু। সংখ্যাতাত্ত্বিক দিক থেকে মানুষের অবসরগ্রহণের বয়সকে বার্ধক্যের সূত্রপাত বলে মনে করা হয়। দীর্ঘকাল যাবৎ ৬০ বছর বয়সকেই অবসরগ্রহণের বয়স বলে গণ্য করা হয়ে থাকে। বর্তমান দিনে ভারতবর্ষেও ৬০ বছর বয়সকে বার্ধক্যের সূচক হিসাবে মান্য করা হয়। ভারতবর্ষে স্বাধীনতার পরবর্তী সময়ে চিকিৎসা বিজ্ঞানের উন্নতি, বিভিন্ন ঔষধের আবিষ্কারের ফলে মানুষের গড় আয়ু বৃদ্ধি, তার ফলে সমাজে বৃদ্ধব্যক্তিদের সংখ্যা ক্রমশ বৃদ্ধি পাচ্ছে।[(i)] দেখা যায় ভারতে ১৯২০ সাল থেকে বার্ষিক মৃত্যুর হার কমতে থাকে এবং ১৯৭০ সাল থেকে জন্মহার নিয়ন্ত্রিত হয় (Devis 1951, 28), ফলে একদিকে মানুষের গড় আয়ু বৃদ্ধি পায় আর অন্যদিকে বৃদ্ধব্যক্তিদের গড় অনুপাত বৃদ্ধি পায়। এই প্রসঙ্গে বলা হয়েছে, "on the other hand, the percentage of aged population 60+ has risen to well over 6 percent since the year 1981. It was found to be 7.4 percent(nearly 77 million) of the total population constitute the aged in the age group 60+ in 2001.[(ii)] বর্তমানে কী রাজনৈতিক, কী সামাজিক, কী পারিবারিক– সকল দৃষ্টিকোণ থেকেই বার্ধক্যে উপনীত ব্যক্তি সমাজে এক অভূতপূর্ব গুরুত্ব আকর্ষণ করে থাকে। তবে বার্ধক্য নিয়ে শুধুমাত্র বর্তমান দিনেই চিন্তা-ভাবনা হয়েছে, তা নয়। হাজার হাজার বছর পূর্বে ভারতবর্ষের বৈদিক সভ্যতা ও সংস্কৃতির মধ্যেও বার্ধক্য নিয়ে চিন্তা-ভাবনা করতে দেখা যায়।[(iii)] প্রাচীন শাস্ত্রগুলির মধ্যে বৌদ্ধ ধর্ম বা দর্শনে বার্ধক্য নিয়ে সর্বাপেক্ষা বেশি আলোচনা করতে দেখা যায়। কারণ কার্যকারণ তত্ত্বে বিশ্বাসী গৌতম বুদ্ধ মানব জীবনকে দুঃখের হাত থেকে কি ভাবে পরিত্রান পাওয়া যায় তার অনুসন্ধানের জন্য দুঃখের স্বরূপ উদ্ঘাটন ও তা থেকে মুক্তির পথ অন্বেষণ করেছেন। বৌদ্ধ দর্শনে বার্ধক্য এক প্রকার দুঃখ,[(iv)] তাই বার্ধক্যরূপ দুঃখ কি এবং এই দুঃখ থেকে কিভাবে

মুক্তি সম্ভব তার বিশদ আলোচনা পাওয়া যায়। বৌদ্ধদর্শনে বার্ধক্যকে কেন দুঃখ বলা হয়? বার্ধক্য কি সত্যিই দুঃখ?– এই সকল প্রশ্নের উত্তর পরিষ্কার হয় যদি বার্ধক্য লক্ষণ আলোচনা করা হয় (চৌধুরী ১৯৯৭; ৩১)। বার্ধক্য কোন দুঃখ নয়, বার্ধক্য দেহের ধর্ম,[v] মানব জীবনের অনিবার্য এক পর্যায়। তবে বার্ধক্যের কিছু সমস্যা অবশ্যই আছে। বার্ধক্যের সমস্যা হল শারীরিক ক্ষমতা হ্রাস, রূপহানি[vi] প্রভৃতি। ভারতবর্ষে বর্তমান দিনে যৌথ পরিবারগুলি ভেঙে যাওয়ায় একক পরিবারগুলিতে বৃদ্ধ-বৃদ্ধাব্যক্তিদের সমস্যা আরও বৃদ্ধি পেয়েছে। এ প্রসঙ্গে সমাজতত্ত্ববিদ প্রশান্ত রায় বলেছেন– "এক দিকে যৌথ পরিবার ভেঙে যাওয়া, অন্য দিকে চাকরি সূত্রে ছেলেমেয়েদের বাইরে চলে যাওয়া বয়স্কদের একাকিত্ব বাড়িয়ে তুলছে। আর দুষ্কৃতীরা এই সুযোগটিরই সদ্ব্যবহার করছে। অশক্ত, মানসিক ভাবে কিছুটা ভেঙে পড়া বৃদ্ধ-বৃদ্ধাদের আস্থা অর্জন করা, নিশানা করাও সহজ। দুষ্কৃতীরা এখন এই অঙ্কটা কষেই এগোচ্ছে। কারণ তারা জানে যে এ ক্ষেত্রে প্রতিরোধের সম্ভাবনা খুবই কম"।[vii] আধুনিক যুগে বৃদ্ধদের সংখ্যানুপাত বৃদ্ধি পেয়েছে এবং একক পরিবারে বসবাসের জন্য পরিবার ও সমাজে তাদের কর্তৃত্ব কমেছে সঙ্গে সঙ্গে নিঃসঙ্গতা ও নিরাপত্তাহীনতা বৃদ্ধি পেয়েছে। এই নিঃসঙ্গতা, নিরাপত্তাহীনতা কাটিয়ে ওঠার জন্য বৃদ্ধব্যক্তিদের শারীরিক ও মানসিক ভাবে সুস্থ ও সবল থাকতে হবে এবং এটা তখনই সম্ভব যখন একজন বৃদ্ধ ব্যক্তি অনুভব করবে যে, বার্ধক্য কোন অবহেলার বিষয় নয়, বার্ধক্য দুঃখ নয়; বার্ধক্য মানব জীবনের একটি স্তর মাত্র, বার্ধক্যই জীবনকে পূর্ণ করে। এই বার্ধক্যের ঐশ্বর্য, বা মূলধন অভিজ্ঞতা (বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় ১৪১০; ৪৫৪), যা সমাজের মঙ্গলার্থে কাজে লাগাতে গেলে বার্ধক্যে সুস্থ থাকা খুব প্রয়োজন। এই সুস্থ থাকার উপায় ভারতের প্রাচীন শাস্ত্র আয়ুর্বেদে (নাগ ২০০৩; ৯) উল্লেখ করা হয়েছে। তাই বার্ধক্যকে দুঃখ ভেবে তার থেকে মুক্তির অন্বেষণ নয়। বরং বার্ধক্যে পাওয়া যায় একপ্রকার মুক্তির ছাড়পত্র, কারণ বার্ধক্যে পরিবারের বন্ধন কিছুটা শিথিল হয়ে যায় (*Verma* 1988, 76)। তাই ঝুলিতে সঞ্চিত অভিজ্ঞতাকে কাজে লাগানোর সময় হল বার্ধক্য (চট্টোপাধ্যায়, রচনাবলী ৫৪), পরের জন্য, সমাজের জন্য স্বাধীনভাবে কিছু করার সময়ই হল বার্ধক্য। ভারতীয় সংস্কৃতিতে প্রাচীন যুগের বিভিন্ন শাস্ত্রে বার্ধক্যের অভিজ্ঞতাকে কাজে লাগানোর দৃষ্টান্ত পাওয়া যায় (সিদ্ধান্তবাগীশ, মহাভারতম্)। এখনকার মনীষীদের (বঙ্কিমচন্দ্র চট্টোপাধ্যায়, রবীন্দ্রনাথ ঠাকুর) কণ্ঠেও এই কথাগুলি ধ্বনিত হতে দেখা যায়। সুতরাং বার্ধক্য কোন নৈরাশ্যজনক অবস্থা নয়, বার্ধক্য জীবনকে এক নতুন রূপ দেয়। এই প্রবন্ধে বার্ধক্যের এই নতুন রূপের আস্বাদ নেওয়ার চেষ্টা করবো।

সৃষ্টি রহস্যে জরা বা বার্ধক্য অবশ্যম্ভাবী, এই চিরন্তন সত্য মানুষ বর্তমানে অনেকাংশেই গ্রহণ করে নিয়েছেন, তাই বিভিন্ন ক্ষেত্রে বার্ধক্য নিয়ে প্রচুর গবেষণা চলছে (বর্ধন ১৯৮৭; ১৪)। বার্ধক্যে বিভিন্ন সমস্যা আছে, এই সমস্যা আর সমাধান নিয়ে মনোবিদ্যায়, পরিসংখ্যানমূলক তত্ত্বের নিরিখে, সমাজতত্ত্বের নিরিখে বিভিন্ন রকমের গবেষণা চলছে; এবং এই বিষয়ে বিভিন্ন গ্রন্থ, দেশীয় ও আন্তর্জাতিক ক্ষেত্রে বিভিন্ন পত্রিকায় বিভিন্ন প্রবন্ধও প্রকাশিত হতে দেখা যাচ্ছে। তবে উক্ত প্রবন্ধে ভারতের প্রাচীনশাস্ত্র ও বর্তমান ভারতীয় সমাজের নিরিখে বার্ধক্যের মুক্তির এক দার্শনিক প্রেক্ষিত দেওয়া হয়েছে। তবে এই মুক্তি দুঃখ থেকে মুক্তি নয়, যৌবন বা প্রৌঢ়ত্বে যে সুকঠিন দায়িত্ববোধ থাকে তা থেকে মুক্তি। জীবনের অধিকাংশ সময় অতিবাহিত

হওয়ার ফলে যে অভিজ্ঞতা সঞ্চিত হয়, তার আলোয় যে নতুন জীবনবোধ জাগ্রত হয়তা বার্ধক্যকে দেয় জীবনে এগিয়ে চলার এক মুক্তির ছাড়পত্র। প্রকৃতপক্ষে এই প্রবন্ধটির মূল উদ্দেশ্য : 'বার্ধক্য' জীবনের শেষ স্তর হলেও এই স্তরেই মানব জীবন পূর্ণতা পায়; 'বার্ধক্য' দুঃখ নয়, অবহেলার নয়, অপ্রয়োজনীয় নয় এই উপলব্ধি করানো। বর্তমান সমাজে বৃদ্ধব্যক্তিদের সংখ্যানুপাত বৃদ্ধি পাচ্ছে এবং তারা ভীষণভাবে একাকীত্ব ও নিঃসঙ্গতায় ভুগছেন, এমতাবস্থায় বৃদ্ধ-বৃদ্ধাব্যক্তিদের মনোবল অক্ষুণ্ণ রাখা খুবই প্রয়োজনীয় বিষয়; আর এই মনোবল অক্ষুণ্ণ রাখার জন্য কাজ করা প্রয়োজন, নিজের সক্ষমতা বজায় রাখা প্রয়োজন। বার্ধক্য মানবজীবনের একটি স্তর মাত্র; কিছু সমস্যা আছে, তাই বলে বার্ধক্য দুঃখ নয়। বার্ধক্য জীবনকে পূর্ণ করে, গভীরতা দেয়, অভিজ্ঞতার দরুণ বার্ধক্যে নতুন দৃষ্টিভঙ্গী লব্ধ হয়। আর এই দৃষ্টিভঙ্গী-ই "মুক্তির ছাড়পত্র" বহন করে নিয়ে আসে। 'মুক্তির ছাড়পত্র-বার্ধক্য' প্রবন্ধটি একটি গবেষণামূলক প্রবন্ধ, এটি মুখ্যত বিশ্লেষণাত্মক অভিজ্ঞতামূলক একটি গবেষণা।এই গবেষণার কাজটি মূলত মুখ্য উৎস (primary source) ও গৌণ উৎসের (secondary source) উপর নির্ভর করে এবং কিছু জাতীয় ও আন্তর্জাতিক পত্রিকা থেকে বিভিন্ন তথ্য নিয়ে বিশ্লেষণ করা হয়েছে।

দুঃখ থেকে মুক্তি: ভারতীয় প্রাচীনশাস্ত্রে বার্ধক্যকে দুঃখ বলে সেই দুঃখ থেকে মুক্তির পথ অন্বেষণ করা হয়েছে। বার্ধক্যকে কেন দুঃখ বলা হয়?– এই প্রশ্নের উত্তর জানতে হলে বার্ধক্য কাকে বলে জানতে হবে। হাজার হাজার বছর পূর্বে ঋগ্বেদে এই প্রশ্নের উত্তর পাওয়া যায়। ঋগ্বেদের প্রথম মন্ডলের ১৭৯তম সূক্তের ১ম ঋকে লোপামুদ্রা বলেছেন– "জরা শরীরের সৌন্দর্য নাশ করিতেছে"। এছাড়াও অন্যত্র বলা হয়েছে– "জরা যেরূপ রূপ বিনাশ করে তুমি সেইরূপ শম্বরের নগরসমূহ বিনাশ করিয়াছিলে" (৪/১৬/১৩)। যৌবন বা কৈশোরের রূপ বার্ধক্যে থাকে না, তাই ঋগ্বেদে বার বার-ই বলতে দেখা যায় বার্ধক্য যৌবনের রূপের বিনাশ সাধন করে। ঋগ্বেদে জরা শক্তি, রূপ ক্ষয় করে বলে জরা প্রদানকারী ভগবান ইন্দ্রের কাছে জরা থেকে রক্ষা করার প্রার্থনা করতে দেখা যায়।[viii] সুতরাং উপরের আলোচনা থেকে আমরা জানতে পারি, ঋগ্বেদ অনুযায়ী জরা বা বার্ধক্য হল মানব জীবনের শেষ পর্যায়, যখন পুত্রের পুত্র উৎপাদন হয়, শরীর ও রূপ জীর্ণ হয় এবং মানবদেহে এই জরা প্রদানকারী দেবতা হল ইন্দ্র।

গীতার ত্রয়োদশ অধ্যায়ে দেখতে পাওয়া যায় যে, মানুষের শরীরকে ক্ষেত্ররূপে উল্লেখ করে, সেই ক্ষেত্র প্রসঙ্গে জরার আলোচনা করেছেন ভগবান শ্রীকৃষ্ণ। সেখানে তিনি ক্ষেত্রের গুণ বা বৈশিষ্ট্য বলতে গিয়ে জরার উল্লেখ করেছেন। তিনি মোক্ষ সাক্ষাৎকারের অনুকূল পন্থা হিসাবে যাকে নির্দেশ করেছেন, সেটি হল ইন্দ্রিয়ার্থ বিষয়ে বৈরাগ্য, অহংকার না থাকা এবং জন্ম মৃত্যু জরা ব্যধিরূপ দুঃখাদি দোষের অনুদর্শন। এই দোষের অনুদর্শন প্রসঙ্গে আমরা জরার কথা পাই, সেখানে ব্যবহৃত 'জরা'র ব্যাখ্যা দিতে গিয়ে মধুসূদন সরস্বতী বলেন –

প্রজ্ঞাশক্তি তেজোনিরোধপরপরিভবাদিরূপায়াং
ব্যাধিনাং জ্বারাতিসারাদি রূপানাং।। (গীতা ১৩/৬-৮)

অর্থাৎ প্রজ্ঞা বা জ্ঞান, শক্তি এবং তেজ ক্ষয় হওয়া এবং পরপরিভব প্রাপ্ত হওয়া অর্থাৎ অন্যের নিকট পরাভূত হওয়া বা নির্ভরশীল হওয়ার অবস্থাকেই জরা বলে অভিহিত করা হয়েছে।

ঋগ্বেদ এবং শ্রীমৎভাগবদ্ গীতা এই উভয় ক্ষেত্রেই দেখতে পাওয়া যাচ্ছে যে, জরা বলতে শারীরিক পরিবর্তনকেই চিহ্নিত করা হচ্ছে, যে অবস্থায় শরীরের মধ্য নানা ধরণের পরিবর্তন পরিলক্ষিত হয় এবং এই পরিবর্তনের অভিমুখ কিন্তু ক্ষয়ের দিকে। অর্থাৎ বার্ধক্য জীবনের এমন একটি পর্যায় যেখানে ব্যক্তির শরীরের মধ্যে বিভিন্ন ধরণের পরিবর্তন ঘটতে থাকে যার ফলে, তার শক্তি হ্রাস পায়।

প্রাচীন ভারতে বিভিন্ন সম্প্রদায়ের মধ্যে বৌদ্ধ দর্শনে সব থেকে বেশী বার্ধক্য নিয়ে আলোচনা পাওয়া যায় এবং এই বৌদ্ধ দর্শনে বার্ধক্য বা জরাকে দুঃখ বলা হয়েছে। বুদ্ধদেবের জীবনদর্শনের একটি প্রধান দিক দুঃখসত্য। তাঁর জীবন ও বাণীতে দুঃখের একটি নির্মম কঠোর রূপ অত্যন্ত স্পষ্ট হয়ে উঠেছে। জাতক নিদানে উল্লিখিত হয়েছে; মহাভিনিষ্ক্রমণের প্রাককালে যে তিনটি দৃশ্য রাজকুমার সিদ্ধার্থের জীবনে পরিবর্তন করে দিয়েছিল তার একটি হল জরাগ্রস্ত ব্যক্তির দর্শন। নগর পরিভ্রমণ কালে তাঁর চোখে পড়ে মানব জীবনের তিনটি অবস্থা– ব্যাধি, জরা ও মৃত্যু। সিদ্ধার্থ নগর ভ্রমণ করতে গিয়ে এক জরাগ্রস্ত ব্যক্তিকে দেখে যখন সারথিকে প্রশ্ন করেন যে, 'এ ব্যক্তি কে?' কুমারের প্রশ্নের উত্তরে সারথি বলেন– "ইহা রূপবিনাশক, বলহানিকর, শোকেরআকর, সকল সন্তোষের অপহারক, স্মৃতিনাশক, ইন্দ্রিয়গণের রিপু – ইহার নাম জরা। এই জরা দ্বারাই এই ব্যক্তি জীর্ণ হইয়াছে"[১]। সারথি আরও জানায় জরা অবশ্যম্ভাবী, আজ যে শিশু, তারপর যুবা, তারপর সেও একদিন জরাপ্রাপ্ত হবে। এই সকল কথা শুনে এবং আনন্দিত জনগণকে দেখে কুমার সেই ক্ষণেই চিন্তিত হয়ে বলেছিলেন, মানুষ প্রত্যক্ষ করছে যে, জরা মানব জীবনে অনিবার্য; এই জরা মানুষের স্মৃতি, রূপ, শক্তি বিনাশ করে; তবু মানুষ আনন্দিত হচ্ছে, কোন উৎকণ্ঠা নেই![ix] চিরকাল রাজ ঐশ্বর্য্য ও রাজসুখে বড় হওয়া সিদ্ধার্থ এই দৃশ্য দেখে কাতর হয়ে পড়ে এবং মানুষের জীবনে দুঃখের অবশ্যম্ভবতাকে অনুভব করে। তাই তিনি গৃহত্যাগ করেন এই দুঃখের হাত থেকে সংসারকে কিভাবে পরিত্রাণ দেওয়া যায় তার অনুসন্ধান করতে। কার্যকারণ তত্ত্বে বিশ্বাসী বুদ্ধদেব এই জন্য প্রথমে দুঃখের স্বরূপ নির্ধারণ করেন ও তার কারণ অনুসন্ধানে প্রয়াসী হন। পারিপার্শ্বিক জগৎ ও জীবন সম্পর্কে কোন তত্ত্ব আলোচনার দ্বারা দুঃখমুক্তি সম্ভব নয়। উদাহরণ স্বরূপ বলা যায় কোন মানুষের দেহে যদি শরবিদ্ধ হয়, তবে দেহ থেকে শরটিকে না সরিয়ে, কে কতদূর থেকে তা নিক্ষেপ করেছে, সেটি দেহের মধ্যে কতটা গেঁথে আছে, তার গতিবেগ কেমন ছিল তা বিচার করা মূর্খামি বলে গণ্য হবে, তেমনি দুঃখ জর্জরিত মানুষের পক্ষেও দুঃখমুক্তির চেষ্টা না করে কেবল নিষ্ফল তত্ত্বালোচনা করাও সমানভাবেই মূর্খতার পরিচায়ক। মানুষের দুঃখ মোচনকেই এজন্য বুদ্ধদেব তাঁর জীবনের মহান ও একমাত্র ব্রত রূপে গণ্য করেন এবং দুঃখ নিবৃত্তির অন্বেষণে শুরু করেন। এই দুঃখকে দুভাগে ভাগ করা যায়– শারীরিক ও মানসিক দুঃখ। জন্ম, জরা, ব্যাধি, মৃত্যু হলো শারীরিক দুঃখ এবং প্রিয়বিচ্ছেদ, অপ্রিয় সংযোগ, ঈপ্সিতের অপ্রাপ্তি ও পঞ্চ উপাদান স্কন্ধ হলো মানসিক দুঃখ। অর্থাৎ জরা এক প্রকার শারীরিক দুঃখ।

এবারে প্রশ্ন হল বৌদ্ধ মতে এই দুঃখরূপ জরা কী? এই বিষয়ে গৌতম বুদ্ধের মত বিভিন্ন নিকায়গুলিতে

পাওয়া যায়। দীঘনিকায় বলা হয়েছে *"In what ever beings, of what ever group of beings there is aging, decrepitude, broken teeth, gray hair, wrinkled skin, shrinking with age, decay of the sense faculties that monks, is called aging" (Mahasatipatthana Sutta 22.17)*। এর থেকে বোঝা যায় যে, সমস্ত প্রাণীজগৎ সে যে শ্রেণীরই হোক, যে অবস্থায় শরীর জরাজীর্ণ হয়, দাঁত পড়ে যায়, চুল পেকে যায়, চামড়া কুঁচকে যায় এবং বিভিন্ন ইন্দ্রিয় গুলো তার ক্ষমতা হারায় তাকেই বার্ধক্য বলা হয়। মঝ্ঝিম নিকায় (Saccavibhanga Sutta 141.12) গ্রন্থেও একই ভাবে বার্ধক্য কি তা বলা হয়েছে। বুদ্ধের ভাষায় "যাতে সংতে সংসত্তানং তম্হিতম্হি সত্তনিকায়ে জরাজীরণতা খন্ডিচ্চং পলিচ্চং বলিত্তচতা আয়ুনো সংহানি ইন্দ্রিয়ানং পরিপাকো"[২]। অর্থাৎ জরা হচ্ছে এক প্রকার জীর্ণতা, বয়সের ভারে শরীরের মধ্যে ভাঙনধরা, শরীরের অঙ্গ-প্রত্যঙ্গ শিথিল হয়ে যাওয়া। জরাগ্রস্ত হলে ব্যক্তির শরীরের উপরশিরা-উপশিরা ভেসে উঠে, গাত্রচর্ম শিথিল ও শুষ্ক হয়ে যায়। আয়ু শেষ হয়ে আসে, ইন্দ্রিয়সমূহ পরিপক্ক হয়। যেমন চোখের দৃষ্টিশক্তি কমে যায়, কর্ণের শ্রবণশক্তি কমে যায়, নাসিকা কুঞ্চিত হয়, জিহ্বায় রস আস্বাদন ক্ষমতা কমে যায়, দেহ নামক যন্ত্র বিকল হয়ে পড়ে। গৌতম বুদ্ধ জরার যে বিবরণ দিয়েছেন তাতে দেখা যায় জরা হচ্ছে শরীরের ক্রমাগত ক্ষয় হতে থাকা বা ধীরে ধীরে ক্ষয় হওয়া, শরীরের সমস্ত অঙ্গপ্রত্যঙ্গগুলো স্বাভাবিক কাজকর্ম করার ক্ষমতা হারানো এবং তা আর ফিরে পাওয়ার আশা না থাকা। সেই জন্য এই অবস্থাকে জীবনের অন্তিম লগ্ন বলা হয়। অর্থাৎ যিনি বৃদ্ধ, বয়স্ক, বয়সের ভারে ভারাক্রান্ত তিনি জীবনের শেষ সময়ে উপনীত।

জরা বা বার্ধক্যের স্বরূপ বিষয়ে গৌতম বুদ্ধ তাঁর শিষ্যদের কাছে গল্পগাথার মাধ্যমেও নানা উপদেশ দিয়েছেন। ধর্ম্মপদের জরাবর্গে ১৪৮ নম্বর গাথায় গৌতম বুদ্ধ উপদেশ দিয়েছিলেন–

পরিজিন্নমিদং রূপং রোগনিড়ড়ং পভঙ্গুরং

ভিজ্জতি পূতিসন্দেহো মরণন্তং হি জীবিতং।।১৪৮।।

অর্থাৎ এই শরীর ব্যাধির আশ্রয়স্থল, ভঙ্গুর, পূঁতি বস্তুপিন্ড রূপ এই দেহ ভেঙে যায়; মৃত্যুতেই জীবনের অবসান হয়। এই শরীরের কোন স্থায়িত্ব নেই। সময়ই মানুষকে দুর্বার গতিতে নিয়ে যায় শৈশব থেকে বাল্য, বাল্য থেকে যৌবন, আর যৌবন থেকে বার্ধক্য, আর বার্ধক্য থেকে বিনাশের দিকে, মৃত্যুর দেশে। তাই অনিত্যতা দেহের ধর্ম। রোগ, শোক, জরা, যন্ত্রণা দেহেরই নিত্যসঙ্গী। প্রাণীদের জীবন, মৃত্যুর আগে পর্যন্তই বিদ্যমান এবং মৃত্যুতেই জীবনের পরিসমাপ্তি। ধম্মপদের অন্য একটি গাথায় গৌতম বুদ্ধ তার বৈমাত্রেয় ভ্রাতা নন্দের পত্নী রূপনন্দাকে বলেছিলেন – "দেহ যেন অস্থি দ্বারা তৈরী এক নগর, যার বাইরের দিক রক্তমাংসের প্রলেপ। এই নগরের মধ্যে অবস্থান করছে জরা, মৃত্যু, অভিমান আর কাপট্য"।।১৫০।। কাঠ দিয়ে কাঠামো প্রস্তুত করে লতা দিয়ে বেঁধে মাটির প্রলেপ দিয়ে যেমন শস্যভান্ডার প্রস্তুত করে তাতে ধান, মুগ প্রভৃতি শস্য রাখা হয়, তেমনি সত্যিকারের দৃষ্টি দিয়ে এই দেহের গভীরে তাকালে দেখা যাবে একটা হাড়ের কাঠামোর উপর চামড়ার আবরণ দিয়ে ও রক্তমাংসর প্রলেপ দিয়ে এই স্থূল দেহ গঠিত। এই দেহকে আশ্রয় করে আছে ব্যাধি, জরা ও মৃত্যু।

এ প্রসঙ্গে তিনি জরাবর্গে অপর একটি গাথায় বলেছেন –

জীবন্তি বে রাজরথা সুচিত্তা অথো সরীরম্পি জরং উপেতি

সতঞ্চ ধম্মো ন জরং উপেতি, সন্তো হবে সব্‌ভি পবেদয়ন্তি।।১৫১।।

এর অর্থ হল – সুচিত্রিত রাজার রথও এক সময় জীর্ণ হয়ে যায়, তেমনি মানব শরীরও জরাগ্রস্ত হয়। কিন্তু সৎপুরুষের ধর্মের ক্ষয় নেই, সাধুরা পরস্পর ধর্মালাপে রত থাকেন। এর দ্বারা বোঝানো হয় যে, জরা কাউকেই রেহাই দেয় না। এই সমস্ত উপদেশ দ্বারা গৌতম বুদ্ধ তাঁর শিষ্যদের বোঝাতে চেয়েছেন যে, জরা হল এক দুঃখদায়ক অবস্থা, যার কবল থেকে রাজাও রক্ষা করতে পারে না। গৃহত্যাগের পূর্বে গৌতম বুদ্ধ যখন পিতার কাছ থেকে গৃহত্যাগের অনুমতি নিতে যান, তখন পিতা বলেন যে, 'এ বয়স ধর্মাচরণের নয়', তখন তিনি তাঁর পিতাকে উত্তরে বলেছিলেন যে, যদি চারটি বিষয় রোধ করতে পারেন তবে সে ধর্মাচরণ থেকে বিরত থাকবে; এই চারটি বিষয় হল জরা, ব্যধি, মৃত্যু ও বিপত্তি।[xi] কোন রাজা জরা, মৃত্যু, ব্যধি থেকে কোন ব্যক্তিকে পরিত্রাণ দিতে পারে না। গৌতম বুদ্ধ জীবনের এই অবশ্যম্ভাবী দুঃখ থেকে জীবজগৎকে মুক্তি দিতে চেয়েছিলেন। তাই তিনি দুঃখের কারণ নির্ণয় করে, তা থেকে মুক্তি কিভাবে সম্ভব সেই পথের অন্বেষণ করেছিলেন। তাঁর মতে জরা রূপ দুঃখের কারণ জন্ম। জন্ম না থাকলে জরা-মরণও থাকে না। আমরা সংসারে জন্মগ্রহণ না করলে সাংসারিক দুঃখ যন্ত্রণা ভোগ করতে হতো না, বার্ধক্য ও তার পরিণতি রূপে মৃত্যুও আসতো না। এইজন্যই বলা হয়েছে – "জাতি পচ্চয়া জরামরণং"। বৌদ্ধ ধর্মে পুনঃ পুনঃ জন্ম, মৃত্যু প্রবাহকে সংসার বলা হয়। গৌতম বুদ্ধ এই সংসার প্রবাহর ১২টি কারণের উল্লেখ করেছেন, যাকে দ্বাদশনিদান বলা হয়। যেমন – অবিদ্যা-সংস্কার-বিজ্ঞান-নামরূপ-ষড়ায়ড়ন-স্পর্শ-বেদনা-তৃষ্ণা-উপাদান-ভব-জাতি বা জন্ম-জরা-মরণ। এই দ্বাদশনিদানচক্রের শুরুতে অবিদ্যা আর শেষে আছে বার্ধক্য জনিত মৃত্যু। যখন প্রকৃত জ্ঞান হয় তখন অবিদ্যা চলে যায়। অবিদ্যা নিরোধ হলে সংস্কার নিরোধ হয়, সংস্কার নিরোধ হলে বিজ্ঞানের নিরোধ হয়, এইভাবে বিজ্ঞান জন্য নামরূপ, নামরূপ জন্য ষড়ায়তন, ষড়ায়তন জন্য স্পর্শ, স্পর্শ জন্য বেদনা, বেদনা জন্য তৃষ্ণা, তৃষ্ণা জন্য উপাদান, উপাদান জন্য ভব, ভব নিরোধ হলে জন্ম নিরোধ হবে, আর জন্ম নিরোধ হলে জরা, মরণ নিরোধ হবে। এর থেকে বোঝা যায়, অবিদ্যা দূর হলেই এই পুনর্জন্ম চক্রের এই বন্ধন থেকে মুক্তি লাভ সম্ভব হয়। বৌদ্ধ মতে অষ্টাঙ্গিক মার্গ পালন করলে অবিদ্যা দূরীভূত হয় এবং পুনর্জন্মের এই চক্র থেকে মুক্তি পাওয়া সম্ভব হয়। সুতরাং অষ্টাঙ্গিক মার্গই জরারূপ দুঃখের নিরোধের পথ।

বৌদ্ধ দর্শনে জরারূপ দুঃখের অবসান করতে জন্ম-মৃত্যুরূপ প্রবাহের বিনাশের কথা বলা হয়েছে। অবিদ্যার নাশ এবং তার ফলে জন্ম মৃত্যুরূপ প্রবাহের বিনাশ সাধন ঘটবে। তবে সমাজে অবস্থিত সকল মানুষের পক্ষে এটি কখনই সম্ভব নয়, আর যদি সম্ভব হয় সেক্ষেত্রে সমাজ বলে কিছুই অবশিষ্ট থাকবে না এক সময়। এক্ষেত্রে দেখা যায় যে, অনেকে দুঃখের এইরূপ বিনাশ সাধনকে বৌদ্ধধর্মের হীনবল হয়ে পড়ার কারণ রূপে উল্লেখ করেছেন।[xii] কারণ জন্ম মৃত্যু প্রবাহর বিনাশ ঘটলে, সমাজেরও বিনাশ ঘটবে। তাই এইরূপে জরারূপ দুঃখের নাশ বেশির ভাগ সাধারণ মানুষের কাছে কাম্য নয়। বাস্তব ক্ষেত্রে সাধারণ মানুষ

মুক্তি বা নির্বাণের দিকে তেমন ভাবে আকৃষ্ট হয় না। তারা সাধারণ ভাবে জীবন যাপন করে বাঁচতে চায়, এই পৃথিবীর সৌন্দর্যকে উপভোগ করতে চায়। সাধারণ মানুষ অনেকেই বার্ধক্যে উপনীত হওয়ার পূর্বেই (যেহেতু বার্ধক্যে শারীরিক ক্ষমতা হ্রাস পায়) বার্ধক্যকে দুঃখজনক অবস্থা বলে কল্পনা করে নেয় এবং তার ফলে তারা বার্ধক্যে উপনীত হয়ে হতাশাগ্রস্থ হয়ে পড়েন। কিন্তু বার্ধক্য মানবজীবনের একটি দৈহিক অনিবার্য স্তর মাত্র। বার্ধক্যে পূর্বের শক্তি, রূপ হয়তো থাকে না; এছাড়াও বার্ধক্যে আরও কিছু সমস্যা থাকে। মানবজীবনের প্রত্যেক স্তরেই কিছু না কিছু সমস্যা থাকে, যেমন শৈশব, শৈশবেও বিভিন্ন রকম সমস্যা থাকে। ঠিক তেমনই বার্ধক্যেও বিভিন্ন সমস্যা থাকে, তাই বলে বার্ধক্য দুঃখ নয়। বরং বার্ধক্য মানব জীবনের এক অবশ্যম্ভব পরিণতি একথা মেনে নিয়েও বার্ধক্যে কিভাবে সুস্থ থাকা যায় তার চেষ্টা করাই শ্রেয়। অর্থাৎ বার্ধক্যকে দুঃখ মনে করে তা থেকে মুক্তির পথ অন্বেষণ না করে, বার্ধক্যের দুঃখ অক্ষমতাকে কি ভাবে দূরীভূত করা যায় তার চেষ্টা করাই ভালো। ভারতের প্রাচীন শাস্ত্র আয়ুর্বেদে সে সম্পর্কে বহু আলোচনা পাওয়া যায়।

বার্ধক্যে সুস্থ থাকার উপায়: যে শাস্ত্র দ্বারা আয়ুর বিষয় জানতে পারা যায়, তার নাম আয়ুর্বেদ। এ প্রসঙ্গে বলা যায় যে, কোন ব্যক্তির সুখায়ু কি দুঃখায়ু, হিতায়ু কি অহিতায়ু, তার আয়ুর পরিমাণ অর্থাৎ তিনি স্বল্পায়ু, মধ্যায়ু না দীর্ঘায়ু? তিনি জীবনে সুখী কি দুঃখী? তিনি স্বাস্থ্যবান হয়ে জীবনযাত্রা নির্বাহ করবেন, না রোগযুক্ত আয়ু ভোগ করবেন? যে শাস্ত্র পাঠ করে এই সকল বিষয় সম্বন্ধে পুংখাণুপুংখরূপে বিচার করা যায় এবং অবগত হতে পারা যায় তার নাম আয়ুর্বেদ শাস্ত্র। অর্থাৎ আয়ুর্বেদ শাস্ত্রে মানুষের আয়ু সংক্রান্ত আলোচনা করা হয়েছে। আয়ুর্বেদ অনুসারে সমস্ত সৃষ্টির মূলে কারণ হিসাবে বিদ্যমান ৯টি দ্রব্য। এগুলি হল পঞ্চ মহাভূত, মন, কাল, আত্মা এবং দিক। এই পঞ্চমহাভূত যে কোন সৃষ্ট বস্তুর প্রকাশের মূল ভিত্তি। এই সমস্ত সৃষ্ট বস্তুর সমন্বয়েই জগৎ বা বিশ্ব গঠিত হয়। এই বিশ্বের নিয়ন্ত্রক হিসাবে যে দুটি মূল দ্রব্য কাজ করে তা হল কাল ও দিক। এই সমস্ত দ্রব্যের মধ্যে কালের সঙ্গে মানুষের যে ক্রিয়া প্রতিক্রিয়া হয়, যার শুরু গর্ভাবস্থায় এবং পরিসমাপ্তি মৃত্যু, তাই আয়ু নামে পরিচিত। কালের প্রতিক্রিয়া বশতই আয়ু থাকাকালীন সময়ে মানুষের শরীরে নানা ধরণের পরিবর্তন দেখা দেয় এবং এই পরিবর্তন গুলো স্বাভাবিক ও কোনভাবেই তার ব্যতিক্রম হয় না। শরীরের মধ্যে যে যে পরিবর্তন পরিলক্ষিত হয় তদানুসারে মানুষের আয়ুষ্কালকে তিনটি অংশে ভাগ করা হয়ে থাকে আয়ুর্বেদে। চরকসংহিতা বলা হয়েছে–"বাল্য, মধ্য, ও জীর্ণ বা বার্দ্ধক্য ভেদে মানবের অবস্থা বিভক্ত হইয়া থাকে, সেই অবস্থা আবার কালের পরিমাণ বিশেষ দ্বারা নির্ণীত হয়। আয়ুর্বেদ শাস্ত্রে বলা হয়েছে জরা বা বার্ধক্যে ত্রিধাতুর সাম্যাবস্থার বিনাশ ঘটে, তাই শরীর জীর্ণ হয়, বিভিন্ন রোগের উদ্বেগ ঘটে। যদিও চরক সংহিতায় বলা হয়েছে –

কালস্য পরিণামেন জরামৃত্যুনিমিত্তজাঃ।
রোগাঃ স্বাভাবিকা দৃষ্টাঃ স্বভাবো নিষ্প্রতিক্রিয়ঃ।।

অর্থাৎ জরা মৃত্যু প্রভৃতি অনিমিত্তজ বিকার, যা কালপরিণামে উপস্থিত হয়। এগুলি স্বাভাবিক রোগ বলে

নির্দিষ্ট স্বভাবের প্রতিকার করা যায় না, এই সকল স্বাভাবিক রোগের কোন চিকিৎসা হয় না। এ থেকে অনুমান করা যায় যে জরা নামক স্বাভাবিক ব্যাধির কথা বলা হয়েছে তাকে সম্পূর্ণরূপে দূরীভূত করা সম্ভব নয়। অর্থাৎ জরা মানব জীবনের এক অবশ্যম্ভব পরিণতি, যাকে রোধ করা সম্ভব নয়। আয়ুর্বেদ মতে জরা বা বার্ধক্যের অন্যতম কারণ হল কাল। কালই দৈহিক পরিবর্তন সাধন করে, যার অবশ্যম্ভব পরিণতি হল বার্ধক্য। একটি বিশেষ কাল প্রাপ্ত হবার পর থেকেই বৃদ্ধাবস্থার সূচনা ঘটে এবং এই বৃদ্ধাবস্থা কখনও খুব ধীরে ধীরে আসে আবার কখনো অতিদ্রুত গতিতে এগিয়ে আসে। এই হার নির্ভর করে চারপাশের পরিবেশের উপকরণের উপরে। এর থেকে বলা যায় যে, কাল বা সময়কে ধরে রাখা যায় না, একই ভাবে বার্ধক্যকেও রোধ করা যায় না। তবে চারপাশের পরিস্থিতিকে অনুকূল করে বার্ধক্যকে ধীর গতি সম্পন্ন করা সম্ভব। বার্ধক্যে শারীরিক ও মানসিকভাবে সুস্থ থাকার কথা আয়ুর্বেদে বলা হয়েছে।

আয়ুর্বেদ শাস্ত্রে বলা হয়েছে কাঠ, পাথর, লোহার দ্বারা একটা কল নির্মিত হয় ও বাতাস, আগুন ও জল দ্বারা সেই কল চলতে থাকে, সেইরকম রস, রক্ত, মাংস, মেদ, অস্থি, মজ্জা ও শুক্র – এই সাতটি উপকরণের দ্বারা দেহ গঠিত হয়, আর বায়ু, পিত্ত ও কফ এই ত্রিধাতুর দ্বারা এই দেহ চালিত হয় অর্থাৎ আভ্যন্তরীণ কাজকর্ম নির্বাহ হয়। এই তিন ধাতুর প্রকৃতস্থ অবস্থায় শরীর কর্মপটু ও সজীব থাকে। কিন্তু ত্রিধাতুর অনিয়ম হলে শরীর অসুস্থ হয়। বার্ধক্যে এই ত্রিধাতুর অনিয়ম দেখা যায়। চরক সংহিতায় বলা হয়েছে, "জীর্ণ বা বার্দ্ধক্যাবস্থায় ধাতু, ইন্দ্রিয়, বল, বীর্য্য, পৌরুষ, পরাক্রম, গ্রহণ, ধারণ, স্মরণ, বচন, ও বিজ্ঞান ক্রমশ ক্ষয়প্রাপ্ত হইতে থাকে, ধাতুগুণভ্রংশ এবং বায়ু প্রধান হইয়া, শতবর্ষ পর্যন্ত এই অবস্থা থাকে"।[৩] সুতরাং দেখা যায় চরক সংহিতা অনুযায়ী ৬০ বছরের পর মানবজীবনে বার্ধক্য আসে। এই অবস্থায় ধাতু, ইন্দ্রিয়, বল, বীর্য্য প্রমুখ ক্ষয় প্রাপ্ত হয় এবং বায়ু প্রাধান্য পায়। এ প্রসঙ্গে বলা হয়েছ, *"In the later years, we see Vayu aattacking the bones and memory of the elderly. simply by considering age factors, a person can stay healthy and balanced, avoiding the problems that caome with age"*.[৪] শুশ্রুতসংহিতায়ও বলা হয়েছে – "বয়স তিন প্রকার বাল্য, মধ্য ও বার্ধক্য। সত্তর বৎসরের পর ধাতু প্রভৃতি দিন দিন ক্ষয়প্রাপ্ত হইতে থাকে, তখন বলি পলিত ও কাস শ্বাস প্রভৃতি উপদ্রব আসিয়া দেখা দেয়, কোন কার্য্য করিবার সামর্থ্য থাকে না এবং শরীর জীর্ণগৃহের ন্যায় অবসন্ন হইয়া পড়ে। এই অবস্থাকে বার্ধক্য বলে। বাল্যকালে শ্লেষ্মা, মধ্যবয়সে পিত্ত এবং বার্ধক্যে বায়ু বৃদ্ধি পায়, চিকিৎসা করিবার সময়ে এই বিষয় স্মরণ রাখা আবশ্যক"।[৫] শুশ্রুতসংহিতায় দেখা যাচ্ছে মানব জীবনে ৭০ বৎসর বয়সে বার্ধক্য আসার কথা বলা হয়েছে। তবে এখানেও বার্ধক্যে ধাতু প্রভৃতি ক্ষয়প্রাপ্ত ও বায়ুর প্রাধান্যের কথা বলা হয়েছে। বায়ু বৃদ্ধি পাওয়াতে ধাতু সাম্যবস্থার নাশ হয়। পূর্বেই বলা হয়েছে ধাতুর সাম্যাবস্থা নাশই সকল রোগের কারণ। এ প্রসঙ্গে বলা হয়েছে *"These three governing principles are nothing but energy themselves, they can be influenced –increased or decreased – by like or opposite energies. Heat increases pitta, dryness increases vata, and liquid increases kapha, etc. Thus imbalance is the continued experience of some stimulus – mental, emotional, or physical, real*

or imagined that overwhelms the body's ability to maintain its identity, its vata-pitta-kahpa ratio or prakruti. Amongst these Tridosas, Kahpa governs Balya, Pitta governs Madhya and Vata governs Vardhyaka".[৬] বার্ধক্যে যে ধাতুর বৈষম্য ঘটে তা নিচের এই সারণীর মাধ্যমে দেখতে পারি :

দোষ	বাল্যাবস্থা	মধ্যাবস্থা	বার্ধক্যাবস্থা
কফা	উচ্চ	সাধারণ	নিম্ন
পিত্ত	সাধারণ	উচ্চ	সাধারণ
বায়ু	নিম্ন	নিম্ন	উচ্চ

সুতরাং দেখা যাচ্ছে চরক ও শুশ্রুত সংহিতার মতে জরা বা বার্ধক্য নামক স্বাভাবিক অবস্থার কারণ ত্রিধাতুর বৈষম্য। বার্ধক্যে মূলত বায়ুর প্রাধান্য ঘটে। চরক সংহিতায় বার বার বলতে দেখা যায় শরীরস্থ বায়ু প্রকুপিত হলে শরীর নানাবিধ রোগ দ্বারা আক্রান্ত হয়; তখন শারীরিক বল, বর্ণ, সুখ, ও আয়ু প্রভৃতির বিঘ্ন উপস্থিত হয়। তাহলে দেখা যায় কাল বার্ধক্যের কারণ, কালকে নিয়ন্ত্রণ করা সম্ভব নয় তাই বার্ধক্যকে রোধ করাও সম্ভব নয়, বার্ধক্য অনিবার্য স্বাভাবিক রোগ। তবে বার্ধক্যের অক্ষমতা বা ক্ষয়ের কারণ ত্রিধাতুর অসাম্য বা বায়ুর প্রাধান্য, যাকে কিছুটা রোধ করা যায়। তাই বার্ধক্যের শারীরিক ও মানসিক ক্ষয়কে কিছুটা দমন করা সম্ভব হয়।

আয়ুর্বেদ শাস্ত্রে বার্ধক্যে সুস্থ জীবনযাপন করার জন্য পৃথক একটি তন্ত্র রয়েছে, যাকে রসায়ন তন্ত্র বলা হয়। প্রকৃতপক্ষে ব্রহ্মা আয়ুর্বেদকে আটটি তন্ত্রে ভাগ করেছিলেন, যথা– শল্য, শালাক্য, কায়চিকিৎসা, ভূতবিদ্যা, কৌমারভৃত্য, অগদ, রসায়ন ও বাজীকরণ। এর মধ্যে রসায়নতন্ত্রে জরাবিনাশক বিবরণ লিপিবদ্ধ আছে, এপ্রসঙ্গে বলা হয়েছে *"Ayurveda is known to consider the phenomenon of aging from entirely a new angle. It also elaborates a comprehensive clinical discipline called Rasayana Tantra entirely devoted to the study of aging and its prevention with the help of Rasayana therapy".*[৭] অর্থাৎ আয়ুর্বেদ শাস্ত্রে বলা হয়েছে যে তন্ত্রে জরা ব্যাধি বিনাশক ভেষজসমূহের বিবরণ লিপিবদ্ধ আছে এবং বয়ঃস্থাপন, আয়ুবর্ধন মেধাজনন ও রোগ নিবারণ যাহার প্রতিপাদ্য বিষয় তাহাকে রসায়নতন্ত্র বলে। প্রাচীন কালেই অকাল বার্ধক্য বলিপলিত ব্যাধি দূর করার উদ্দেশ্যে এই রসায়ন তন্ত্রের আবির্ভাব।

আয়ুর্বেদশাস্ত্রের মূলত দুটি বিষয়– ১) প্রত্যেক ব্যক্তির সুস্থস্বাস্থ্যের জন্য পরিচর্যা করা, ও ২) অসুস্থ ব্যক্তির রোগ সারিয়ে তোলা। রসায়ন চিকিৎসা পদ্ধতিতে ব্যক্তির সুস্বাস্থ্য লাভের কথাই বলা হয়েছে। আয়ুর্বেদ শাস্ত্রে বার্ধক্যকে যেহেতু একপ্রকার রোগ বলা হয়েছে সেহেতু তার প্রতিষেধকের কথাও বলা হয়েছে। রসায়ন চিকিৎসাতে এ প্রসঙ্গে বহু আলোচনা করা হয়েছে। যেমন -

অভয়ামলকীয় রসায়নপাদে চ্যবনপ্রাশের উল্লেখ করা হয়েছে, এই চ্যবনপ্রাশ সেবন করলে বায়ুর অনুলোমতা সম্পাদিত হয়। ফলে জরাগ্রস্ত ব্যক্তি নবযৌবন লাভ করে। চরকসংহিতায় চ্যবনপ্রাশ প্রস্তুত করার পদ্ধতি

সম্বন্ধে বলা হয়েছে – "বেলগাছ, গণিয়ারীছাল, শোণাছাল, গাম্ভারীছাল, পারুলছাল, চারিপ্রকার পর্ণী অর্থাৎ শালপর্ণী, পৃশ্নিপর্ণী (চাকুলে), মুদ্গপর্ণী (মুগানি) মাষপর্ণী (মাষানি), পিপুল, গোক্ষুর, বৃহতীদ্বয় অর্থাৎ বৃহতি ও কন্টকারী, কাঁকড়াশৃঙ্গী, ভূম্যালকী (ভূই আমলা), দ্রাক্ষা (কিসমিস), জীবন্তী, পুষ্কর (কুড়), অগুরু, হরীতকী, গুলঞ্চ, ঋদ্ধি, জীবক, শঠী, মুথা, পুনর্নবা, মেদা, ছোট এলাচ, নীলোৎপল, রক্তচন্দন, ভূমিকুষ্মান্ড, বাসকমূল, কাকোলী ও কাকনাসিকা– ইহাদের প্রত্যেকের একপল করিয়া লইবে এবং শ্লথ পুঁটলিবদ্ধ গোটা আমলকী পাঁচশত লইবে। এই সমুদয় একত্রে চৌষট্টি সের জলে সিদ্ধ করিয়া ষোল সের থাকিতে নামাইয়া ক্কাথ ছাঁকিয়া লইবে এবং পুঁটলিবদ্ধ আমলকী সকল খুলিয়া বীজ ফেলিয়া দিয়া ছয়পল ঘৃত ও ছয়পল তিল তৈল একত্রে মিশাইয়া ভাজিয়া তাহা ঐ ক্কাথে পুনর্বার পাক করিবে। পরে মিছরি অর্ধতুলা (স ছয়সের বা পঞ্চাশ পল) তাহাতে মিশ্রিত করিবে। লেহবৎ হইলে বংশলোচন চার পল, পিপুল দুই পল এবং গুড়ত্বক বা দারুচিনি, ছোট এলাচি, তেজপত্র ও নাগকেশর প্রত্যেকে এক এক পল উত্তমরূপে চূর্ণ করিয়া প্রক্ষেপ দিবে। ইহার নাম চ্যবনপ্রাশ"।[৮] অভয়ামলকীয় রসায়নপাদে এই রকম ছয় প্রকার দৃষ্টফল রসায়নযোগের কথা বলা হয়েছে, এই রসায়ন সেবনে বৃদ্ধ ব্যক্তি পুনর্বার যুবত্ব প্রাপ্ত হয়, শত বৎসর নীরোগে জীবিত থাকা যায়।

চরকসংহিতায় দ্বিতীয় রসায়নপাদ প্রাণকামীয় রসায়নপাদেও কি ভাবে দীর্ঘায়ু লাভ করা যায় সে কথা বলা হয়েছে। এই রসায়ন সম্পর্কে বলা হয়েছে–"এই রসায়ন দ্বিতীয় অমৃতের ন্যায় দেবতাদিগেরও হিতকর, অচিন্ত্য ও অদ্ভুত প্রভাব, আয়ুষ্য অরোগ্যকর, বয়ঃস্থাপন, নিদ্রা, তন্দ্রা, শ্রম, ক্লম, আলস্য ও দৌর্বল্যহর; বায়ুপিত্ত ও কফের সমতাসাধক, স্থৈর্যকর, মাংস শৈথিল্যহর, অন্তরাগ্নির উদ্দীপনকর, এবং প্রভাব বর্ণ ও স্বরের উৎকর্ষজনক"।[৯] এই সকল রসায়ন সেবনের ফলে ত্রিধাতু সমতা লাভ করে। বার্ধক্যজনিত রোগের কারণ যেহেতু ত্রিধাতুর অসমতা, তাই এই রসায়ন সেবনে বার্ধক্য জনিত রোগ থেকে কিছুটা নিরাময় সম্ভব, অর্থাৎ বার্ধক্যে সুস্থ ও সক্ষম থাকা সম্ভব এবং এই রসায়ন সেবনে মানুষ দীর্ঘায়ু লাভ করে। এছাড়া আরও চ্যবনপ্রাশ ও রসায়নের উল্লেখ আছে যা সেবনে বার্ধক্যে সুস্থ ও সক্ষম থাকা সম্ভব।

শুশ্রুত সংহিতায়ও বার্ধক্যে দৈহিক অক্ষমতা থেকে মুক্তি পাওয়ার জন্য, স্মৃতিশক্তি অক্ষুন্ন রাখার জন্য একাধিক চিকিৎসা, ঔষধ, মালিশের কথা বলা হয়েছে।[(xiii)]

বার্ধক্যে উপনীত ব্যক্তির জীবনের উদ্দেশ্য: বার্ধক্য মানব জীবনের এক অনিবার্য পরিণতি যা সম্পূর্ণ রোধ করা সম্ভব নয়; একথা ঠিক, তাই বলে বার্ধক্য দুঃখ[(xiv)] বলে পরিত্যজ্য নয়। বৌদ্ধ দর্শনে বার্ধক্যকে দুঃখ মনে করে সেই দুঃখ থেকে মুক্তি পাওয়ার কথা বলা হয়েছে, বাস্তব ক্ষেত্রে তা প্রয়োগ করা সম্ভব নয়। তার থেকে বার্ধক্যে কি ভাবে সুস্থ জীবন যাপন করা যায় সে দিকে দৃষ্টিপাত করাই শ্রেয়। প্রাচীন আয়ুর্বেদ শাস্ত্র এই নিয়ে বিষদ আলোচনা করা হয়েছে। এ কথা আমরা কখনই অস্বীকার করতে পারি না যে, বার্ধক্যবশত শারীরিক ও মানসিক ক্ষয় উপস্থিত হয়, আয়ুর্বেদ শাস্ত্র অনুযায়ী এই ক্ষয়কে ধীর গতি করে, সক্ষমতা বজায় রাখা সম্ভব। এখন প্রশ্ন হল একজন বৃদ্ধ মানুষ জীবনের শেষ প্রান্তে, মৃত্যুর মুখে দাঁড়িয়ে বার্ধক্যে

কি উদ্দেশ্যে সুস্থভাবে বাঁচতে চাইবে? সাধারণভাবে একজন বৃদ্ধব্যক্তি মনে করেন সমাজে তার প্রয়োজন ফুরিয়েছে, যেহেতু তিনি শারীরিক ভাবে অক্ষম হয়ে পড়েছেন। সেক্ষেত্রে তাঁর জীবনের উদ্দেশ্য কি হবে– এটা একটা বড় প্রশ্ন।

ভারতীয় সংস্কৃতিতে বৃদ্ধব্যক্তিদের বরাবরই এক সম্মানের আসনে বসানো হয়, প্রাচীন বিভিন্ন শাস্ত্রেও বৃদ্ধব্যক্তিদের সম্মান প্রদর্শনে করতে দেখা যায়, বৃদ্ধদের জন্য একাধিক সুযোগ সুবিধা উল্লেখ করতে দেখতে পাওয়া যায়। এর মূল কারণ বার্ধক্যের মূল ধন অভিজ্ঞতা। এই অভিজ্ঞতাকে সমাজ ও পরিবারের মঙ্গলার্থে কাজে লাগানোর দৃষ্টান্ত পাওয়া যায়। কাজেই বৃদ্ধ হলেই তাঁর প্রয়োজন ফুরায়, একথা ঠিক নয়। প্রাচীনকালে ভারতবর্ষে যৌথ পরিবার ব্যবস্থা থাকার দরুন পরিবারের কর্তা বা কর্তী হতেন পরিবারের বয়োঃজেষ্ঠ্য বৃদ্ধব্যক্তিগণ, পরিবারে তাঁদের অভিজ্ঞতাকে যথেষ্ট মূল্য দেওয়া হত। সমাজেও বৃদ্ধ-বৃদ্ধাব্যক্তিদের অভিজ্ঞতাকে কাজে লাগাতে দেখা যায়।[xv] জীবনের অনেকটা সময় অতিবাহিত করার ফলে বার্ধক্যে মানুষের কাছে যে ধন থাকে সেটি হল অভিজ্ঞতা, যা মানুষ অন্য কোন ভাবে অর্জন করতে পারে না। অভিজ্ঞতা সময় বা কালের দান, বৃদ্ধ ব্যক্তিরাই একমাত্র এই অভিজ্ঞতা অর্জন করতে পারে। প্রাচীনকালে বৃদ্ধব্যক্তিরা গৃহের প্রতি সকল কর্তব্য কর্ম সমাধান করে, পুত্রের হাতে সকল দায়িত্ব সমর্পণ করে বনে গমন করতেন। এ প্রসঙ্গে বলা হয়েছে– *"Having already satisfied his worldly interests, the vanaprasthi is advised to be motivated not by sex or procreative and acquisitive desires and other allurements of life. He is to live a life of retirement from family obligations, but not from social obligations".*[১০] বানপ্রস্থাশ্রমে বনে গমন করে এক কঠোর সংযমের মধ্যে জীবন যাপন করার কথা বলা হয়েছে, এছাড়াও বলা হয়েছে এই স্তরে পরিবারের প্রতি সকল কর্তব্য সম্পন্ন করলেও সমাজের প্রতি সকল কর্তব্য সম্পন্ন করা হয় না। অর্থাৎ বার্ধক্যে জীবন যাপন কেবল নিজের জন্য নয়, সমাজের মঙ্গলার্থে নিজের অভিজ্ঞতাকে কাজে লাগানোর উত্তম সময়। ভারতীয় শাস্ত্রে তাই বার বার বানপ্রস্থাশ্রমের প্রয়োজনীয়তা কথা বলা হয়েছে। বানপ্রস্থাশ্রমের পরবর্তী স্তর সন্ন্যাসাশ্রম। এই আশ্রম প্রসঙ্গে রাধাকৃষ্ণন বলেছেন – *"The sannyasin is a super-social man, a parivrajaka, a wandering teacher who influences spirit standards though he may live apart from society".*[১১] সুতরাং দেখা যাচ্ছে জীবনের শেষ দুটি স্তর বানপ্রস্থ ও সন্ন্যাস আশ্রম সামাজিক প্রয়োজনীয়তা আছে। মনুর সমাজব্যবস্থায়ও বৃদ্ধব্যক্তিকে সামাজিক দায়িত্ব ও কর্তব্য পালন করতে দেখা যায়। সামাজিক দায়িত্ব বলতে নিজের মূল্যবান অভিজ্ঞতাকে সমাজের উন্নয়নের কাজে লাগানোর দায়িত্বের কথা বলা হয়েছে।

অষ্টাদশ ঊনবিংশ শতকে বঙ্কিমচন্দ্রের মুখেও এই একই কথা শুনতে পাওয়া যায়। বঙ্কিমচন্দ্রের মতে প্রকৃত কাজ হল পরের জন্য কোনো কাজ করা। আর বার্ধক্যই হল সেই কাজের প্রকৃত সময়। এ প্রসঙ্গে তিনি বলেছেন–"যৌবন কর্মের সময় বটে, কিন্তু তখন কাজ ভালো হয় না, একে বুদ্ধি অপরিপক্ক, তাহাতে আবার রাগ, দ্বেষ, ভোগাসক্তি এবং স্ত্রীগণের অনুসন্ধানে তাহা সতত হীনপ্রভ; এজন্য মনুষ্য যৌবনে সচরাচর কার্য্যক্ষম হয় না। যৌবন অতীতে মনুষ্য বহুদর্শী, স্থিরবুদ্ধি, লব্ধপ্রতিষ্ঠ এবং ভোগাসক্তির অনধীন, এজন্য

সেই কার্যকারিতার সময়। এইজন্য আমার পরামর্শ যে, বুড়া হইয়াছি বলিয়া, কেহ স্বকার্য্য পরিত্যাগ করিয়া মুনিবৃত্তির ভান করিবে না। বার্ধক্যেও বিষয় চিন্তা করিবে"।[১২] বঙ্কিমচন্দ্রের এই উপলব্ধি 'একা' নিবন্ধেও দেখতে পাওয়া যায়। "এই গভীরতর উপলব্ধি আসলে বঙ্কিমেরই প্রৌঢ় ঋতুর ফসল। এর মধ্যে আছে একদিকে উপনিষদের আত্মজ্ঞান বা আত্মপ্রসার, অপরদিকে পাশ্চাত্য মানবপ্রেমের এক অপূর্ব সমন্বয়। যৌবনের আনন্দ আশার রঙিন কাচেঁর অপেক্ষা রাখে। ভিত্তিহীন যুক্তিহীন অলীক স্বপ্ন রচনায় বিভোর যৌবনে যে স্ফূর্তির যোগান থাকে, বেশি বয়সে তা আর থাকে না বটে, কিন্তু পরিবর্তে এই সংসারের যে কঠিন অভিজ্ঞতা সংগৃহীত হয় তাই থেকে মানুষ আরো লাভবান হতে পারে"।[১৩] একথা সত্য যে, একজন ব্যক্তির বয়োবৃদ্ধির সঙ্গে সঙ্গে গভীরতর জীবনবোধ জাগ্রত হয়। যৌবনে অনেক বন্ধনের মধ্যে কাজ করতে হয়, আর সে সময় অভিজ্ঞতা কম থাকায় সেই গভীর জীবনবোধ জাগ্রত হয় না। অপরদিকে বার্ধক্যে পারিবারিক ও সামাজিক বন্ধন কিছুটা শিথিল হয়ে পড়ে এবং জীবনে অনেক অভিজ্ঞতা সঞ্চিত হয়ে থাকে। ফলে বার্ধক্য কাজের উপযুক্ত সময়, যখন ব্যক্তি পরের জন্য কিছু করতে পারে। বঙ্কিমচন্দ্রের মতে যৌবনে নিজের জন্য কাজ করা হয়েছে, বার্ধক্য নিজের অভিজ্ঞতা ও জীবনবোধকে সমাজের কল্যাণে লাগানোর সময়।[(xvi)] একথা শুনে কেউ কেউ প্রশ্ন করতে পারে যে, বার্ধক্যে কি নিজের কাজ থাকে না? নিজের কাজ কি শেষ হয়ে যায়? কমলাকান্তরূপী বঙ্কিমচন্দ্র বলেছেন যে, মানুষের জীবনের আয়ু লক্ষবর্ষ হলেও নিজের কাজ করা শেষ হবে না। তাই তিনি বলেছেন –"বার্দ্ধক্যে আপনার কাজ ফুরাইয়াছে বিবেচনা করিয়া পরহিতে রত হও। এই মুনিবৃত্তি যথার্থ মুনিবৃত্তি। এই মুনিবৃত্তি অবলম্বন কর"।[১৪] বঙ্কিমচন্দ্র বার বার বলেছেন পরের জন্য কাজ করেই আনন্দ পাওয়া যায়। তাই আমরা বলতে পারি বার্ধক্যে আনন্দ পাওয়ার পথ হল পরের জন্য কিছু করা। তিনি যেন বলতে চেয়েছেন বার্ধক্য মানব জীবনের এক অনিবার্য অবস্থা, তাকে দুঃখ ভেবে সমাজ থেকে দূরে না থেকে, বরং বার্ধক্যের অভিজ্ঞতাকে সমাজের মঙ্গলের কাজে লাগানো। তাই তিনি নিজে বলেছেন "বৃদ্ধ তার অভিজ্ঞতা ও ভূয়োদর্শনের সাহায্যে মানব কল্যাণে আত্মনিয়োগ করতে পারে। এই হল যথার্থ মুনিবৃত্তি"।[১৫] সমাজের জন্য কাজের করার মাধ্যমেই বার্ধক্যের প্রকৃত আনন্দ উপভোগ করা যায়। সুতরাং বঙ্কিমচন্দ্রের মতে নিজেকে মানবকল্যাণে আত্মনিয়োগ করার সময়ই বার্ধক্য। তার প্রধান কারণ বার্ধক্য এমন একটা সময় সে অভিজ্ঞতায় পরিপূর্ণ, সমাজকে তাঁর মূল্যবান মতামত দিতে সে সক্ষম।

অষ্টাদশ ঊনবিংশ শতকের অপর এক মনীষী রবীন্দ্রনাথ ঠাকুর, যিনি জীবনের শেষ (৮০ বছর পর্যন্ত) সময়ে উপনীত হয়ে উপলব্ধি করেছেন যে, বার্ধক্য মানব জীবনের এক পরিণত অবস্থা। এ প্রসঙ্গে 'আরোগ্য' প্রবন্ধে তিনি বলেছেন-"যৌবনের তেজ যখন প্রখর ছিল, ভাবতুম বার্ধক্যটা একটা অভাবাত্মক দশা অর্থাৎ ক্রমে ক্রমে সমস্ত শক্তি হ্রাস হয়ে সেই দশা মৃত্যু সূচনা করে। কিন্তু আজ আমি এর ভাবাত্মক দিকটি ক্রমশ উপলব্ধি করতে পারছি। সত্তার যে বহিরঙ্গ, যাকে আমরা অহং নাম দিতে পারি, তার থেকে শ্রদ্ধা ক্রমশ শিথিল হয়ে আসছে। ঠিক মনে হচ্ছে, যেমন পরিণত ফল তার বাহিরের খোসাতে আর আসক্ত হয়ে থাকে না, সেই খোসাটা ক্রমশ তার পরে নিরর্থক হয়ে ওঠে। তখন তার প্রধান সম্পদ হয় ভিতরের শস্য। কাঁচা অবস্থায় সেই শস্যের পরিণত রূপ সে অনুভব করতে পারে না, এইজন্যে তাকে বিশ্বাস করে না। তখন সে

আপনার বাহিরের পরিচয়েই বাহিরে পরিচিত হতে চেষ্টা করে, সেখানে কোনো আঘাত পেলে সে পরম ক্ষোভের বিষয় বলে মনে করে। বৃদ্ধ বয়সে তার বিপরীত দশা ঘটে। সে অন্তরের পূর্ণতার মধ্যে আপনাকে যত উপলব্ধি করতে পারে ততই একটা পরম আশ্বাস লাভ করে এবং ততই বাহিরের ক্ষতি অথবা অসম্মান আর ক্ষুব্ধ করতে পারে না''।[১৬] কবি বার্ধক্যে অন্তরের পূর্ণতার কথা বলেছেন। অভিজ্ঞতার দরুণ বার্ধক্যে এই পূর্ণতা প্রাপ্তি ঘটে থাকে। তখন বাইরের ছোটখাটো বিষয় তাকে স্পর্শ করতে পারে না, তাই বার্ধক্য কাজ করার সময়, অবসাদগ্রস্ত হয়ে থেমে যাওয়ার সময় নয়। কবি নিজে তাই জীবনের শেষ বয়সে উপনীত হয়েও কাজ করে গেছেন। তাই বলা যায় বার্ধক্য দুঃখ নয়, বার্ধক্য অন্তরের পূর্ণতাকে উপলব্ধি করার সময়।

উপসংহার: উপরের আলোচনা থেকে একথা বলতে পারা যায়, বার্ধক্য মানব জীবনের অনিবার্য পরিণতি, একে রোধ করা সম্ভব নয়। মানব জীবনের প্রত্যেক পর্যায়ে কিছু না কিছু পরিবর্তন ঘটে থাকে, বার্ধক্য যেহেতু জীবনের শেষ পর্যায় সেহেতু এই স্তরেও শারীরিক ও মানসিক কিছু পরিবর্তন ঘটে থাকে। বার্ধক্যে শারীরিক ও মানসিক পরিবর্তন মূলত শারীরিক ও মানসিক শক্তি ক্ষয়কে সূচিত করে থাকে। এটি মানব জীবনের অনিবার্য পরিণতি, তাই বার্ধক্য নিয়ে দুঃখ করে কোন লাভ নেই। জীবন গতিময়, আর এই এগিয়ে চলার নামই জীবন। জরা বা বার্ধক্য যেমন অনিবার্য, বার্ধক্যের পরই মৃত্যুও জীবনে অনিবার্য। জরা ও মৃত্যুকে দুঃখ ভেবে এই জগৎ সংসার থেকে অবসাদগ্রস্থ হওয়া মূর্খতা। প্রকৃতপক্ষে এই জগৎ আনন্দময়, এই জগতে দুঃখ আছে আবার সুখও আছে, পূর্ণতা আছে আবার অপূর্ণতাও আছে। এইসব নিয়ে জগত সংসার সুন্দর, আনন্দময়। বার্ধক্যে শারীরিক ক্ষয় হয়, আয়ুর্বেদ শাস্ত্রে এই ক্ষয় রোধের কথা বলা হলেও ক্ষয়ের সম্পূর্ণ রোধ করা কোন ভাবেই সম্ভব নয়। বার্ধক্যে এই সকল নঞর্থক দিক যেমন আছে, একইভাবে বার্ধক্যের সদর্থক দিকও আছে। বার্ধক্যের শারীরিক ক্ষয়, রূপের বিনাশ যেমন আছে, তেমনই অভিজ্ঞতা দ্বারা অন্তরের পূর্ণতাও আছে; আর এই অন্তরের পূর্ণতাই বার্ধক্যের সদর্থক দিক। উপনিষদে জগৎ ও জীবনকে আনন্দময় বলা হয়েছে – ''আনন্দাদ্ধ্যেব খল্বিমানি ভূতানি জায়ন্তে, আনন্দেন জাতানি জীবন্তি, আনন্দং প্রয়ন্ত্যভিসংবিশন্তি চ''। রবীন্দ্রনাথ ঠাকুরও বলেছেন জীবনে সুখ ও দুঃখ দুটোই আছে, এই দুটো একত্রে আনন্দ। একইভাবে বলা যায় জীবনও আছে, মৃত্যুও আছে, এদের মধ্যে জরাও আছে – এইসব নিয়েই জীবন আর জীবন আনন্দময় ঈশ্বরের দান। দুঃখ আছে তো জীবন সচল, সবুজ, দুঃখহীন সুখ তো শুধু মরুভূমি। একই ভাবে জরাহীন জীবনও মরুভূমি সম। কবির মতে 'শোকহীন হৃদিহীন সুখস্বর্গভূমি' কাম্য নয়। স্বর্গ তাঁর কাছে পরিত্যজ্য কারণ সেখানে দুঃখ নেই, ব্যথা নেই। কবির ভাষায় –

থাকো স্বর্গে হাস্য মুখে, করো সুধাপান
দেবগণ। স্বর্গ তোমাদেরই সুখস্থান –
মোরা পরবাসী, মর্ত্যভূমি স্বর্গ নহে,
সে যে মাতৃভূমি-তাই তার চক্ষে বহে
অশ্রুজলধারা, যদি দুদিনের পরে

কেহ তার ছেড়ে যায় দু'দন্ডের তরে।
স্বর্গে তব বহুক অমৃত,
মর্তে থাক সুখে দুঃখে অনন্তনিশ্চিন্ত
প্রেমধারা"। (স্বর্গ হইতে বিদায়, চিত্রা)

সুতরাং সুখ, দুঃখ নিয়েই যেমন জগৎ সংসার তেমনই যৌবনের তেজ, রূপ, বার্ধক্যের শারীরিক অক্ষমতা, অভিজ্ঞতা দ্বারা প্রাপ্ত বিজ্ঞতা– এই নিয়েই জীবন। সব নিয়েই জীবনের পূর্ণতা, তাই বার্ধক্য কোনভাবেই পরিত্যজ্য নয়, জীবনের একটি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ অংশ। অভিজ্ঞতা ও ঘাত-প্রতিঘাতের মাধ্যমে বার্ধক্য জীবন সেই সার্থক উপলব্ধির আলোয় নিজেকে ও সংসারকে দীপ্তিমান করে তোলে। তাই বার্ধক্য দুঃখ নয়, বার্ধক্যই মানব জীবনে পূর্ণতা আনে, মানুষকে পরিণত করে। যৌবনে অনেক দায়িত্ব, কর্তব্য, উচ্চাকাঙ্খা থাকে, অনেক প্রতিকূলতা থাকে যেমন, তেমন-ই থাকে অস্থিরতা। যৌবনে অভিজ্ঞতা কম থাকায় একের পর এক বাঁধা বন্ধন এসে উপস্থিত হয়; বার্ধক্য নিয়ে আসে এই সকল বাঁধা বন্ধন থেকে মুক্তি, এ মুক্তি মনের, স্বাধীন চিন্তার, মুক্ত ভাবনার ছাড়পত্র।

বর্তমান দিনে সমাজবিজ্ঞানে বার্ধক্যসংক্রান্ত কিছু মতবাদ দেখতে পাওয়া যায়, এর মধ্যে প্রধান দুটি হল: নিবৃত্তিমূলক মতবাদ ও প্রবৃত্তিমূলক মতবাদ। সমাজ মনে করে, বার্ধক্যের দিকে অগ্রসর হওয়ার সাথে সাথে মানুষের দায়দায়িত্ব কর্মভার কমিয়ে দেওয়া দরকার। এই নিবৃত্তিমূলক (Disengagement)[১৭] মতবাদ বৃদ্ধ মানুষকে সমাজ থেকে ধীরে ধীরে বিছিন্ন করে দেয়। এই মতবাদের প্রবক্তা কামিং এবং হেনরী মনে করেন, জরা ব্যাধি ও মৃত্যুজনিত ঘটনাগুলি বৃদ্ধব্যক্তিদের মনে সামাজিক সম্পর্কবোধের শিথিলতা জাগ্রত করে থাকে। নিবৃত্তিমূলক মতবাদের বিরুদ্ধ ভাবনা হল হ্যাভিংহার্স্টের প্রবৃত্তিমূলক(Activity theory)[১৮] মতবাদ। বার্ধক্যের প্রবৃত্তিমূলক চিন্তাধারায় বিশ্বাস করা হয় যে, পরিণত বয়সের এই বিশেষ পর্যায়ে মানুষ জীবনে 'স্বর্ণযুগ' সৃষ্টি করতে পারে। সেই সময়ে মানুষকে তৃপ্তিদায়ক কাজকর্মের দায়দায়িত্ব থেকে বাধ্যতামূলকভাবে নিবৃত্তি করলে বার্ধক্যের অতৃপ্তি এবং অস্বস্তি বৃদ্ধি পায়। ফলে বার্ধক্য স্বাধীন চিন্তা বিকশিত করার সময়। বঙ্কিম চন্দ্র যেমন বলেছেন বুদ্ধি অপরিপক্ক, তার উপরে রাগ, দ্বেষ, ভোগ থাকে তাই যৌবন সঠিক কাজের সময় নয়, যৌবন নিজের কাজের সময়। বার্ধক্যই প্রকৃত কাজের সময়, কারণ বার্ধক্য অন্তরের পূর্ণতা আনে, গভীরতর জীবনবোধকে জাগ্রত করে। ভারতীয় সমাজের প্রেক্ষিতে বা আদর্শের প্রেক্ষিতে বার্ধক্যের যে চিত্র আমরা পেয়েছি তাতে দেখা যায় যে, ভারতীয় সমাজে বার্ধক্য সম্পর্কে প্রবৃত্তিমূলক(Activity theory) মতবাদটি সর্বাপেক্ষা গুরুত্ব পেয়েছে এবং তাতেই সমাজ ও বার্ধক্যে উপনীত মানুষ উভয়েরই সুবিধা। ভারতীয় সংস্কৃতিতে এই উদাহরণই বার বার পাওয়া গেছে। বার্ধক্য মানুষের মনোজগতে এক বিশাল পরিবর্তন সাধিত করে। শারীরিক অক্ষমতাকে জয় করে, মনের ইচ্ছাশক্তিকে অসীম অনন্ত গুণে বর্ধিত করার কুরুক্ষেত্র হল বার্ধক্য। এই কুরুক্ষেত্র যুদ্ধে সমাজের বৃদ্ধব্যক্তিগণ পান্ডবপক্ষ, আর একদিন তাঁরা এই যুদ্ধে বিজয়ী হবেই।

প্রান্তটীকা

[i] The 2001 census has shown that the elderly population (60+) of India accounted for 77 million and census 2011 projections indicate that elderly popilation has crossed the 100 million mark. It took more than 100 years for the aged population to double in most of the countries in the world, but in India it has doubled in just 20years. (Agewell study on Human Rights of older personsin India, April 2011)

[ii] Citation: Bhagat, R.B and K. Kumar, 2011, 'Aging in India: Trend and Patterns' in Aging in India : Some Emergine Issues, Edited by K.N.S Yadava and Alok Kumar, Manak Publication, New Delhi, p 20

[iii] অথর্ববেদ সংহিতায় বলা হয়েছে–

স্বপ্নো বৈ তন্দ্রীর্নিধতিঃ পাপানো নাম দেবতাঃ।
জরা খালত্যং পালিতং শরীরমনু প্রাবিশন।। (১১/৪/৫/৯)

এর অর্থ হল– "নিদ্রা, অলসতা, পাপদেবতা নিধতি (দুর্গতি), ব্রক্ষ্ম হত্যাদি পাপদেবতা পুরুষ শরীরে প্রবেশ করেছে; সেরূপ জরা, চিত্ত ও চক্ষুরাদির স্খলন, পলিতত্ব প্রভৃতির অভিমানী দেবগণ শরীরে প্রবেশ করেছিল"।৭ এই শ্লোকে দেখতে পাওয়া যায় জরা বা বার্ধক্যে চিত্তের স্খলন হয়, দৃষ্টিশক্তি দুর্বল হয়ে পড়ে, দেহে পলিতত্ব দেখা দেয় তাই এখানে বার্ধক্যকে পাপদেবতার সাথে তুলনা করা হয়েছে।

[iv] "যত প্রকার দুঃখ আছে সেগুলিকে সংক্ষিপ্ত করিয়া বুদ্ধ ৮টি পর্যায়ভুক্ত করিয়াছেন, যেমন জন্ম দুঃখ, জরা দুঃখ, ব্যাধি দুঃখ, অপ্রিয় সংযোগ দুঃখ, প্রিয় বিচ্ছেদ দুঃখ, ঈপ্সিতের অপ্রাপ্তি দুঃখ এবং পঞ্চোপাদান স্কন্ধময় এই দেহ ও মন দুঃখময়"। গৌতম বুদ্ধের ধর্ম ও দর্শন, সুকোমল চৌধুরী,পৃঃ২৮

[v] ছান্দোগ্য উপনিষদে বলা হয়েছে –"স ব্রূয়ান্নাস্য জরয়ৈতজ্জীর্যতি ন বধেনাস্য হন্যতে এতৎ সত্যং ব্রক্ষ্মপুরমস্মিন কামাঃ সমাহিতা এষ আত্মাপহতপাপ্মা বিজরো বিমৃত্যুর্বিশোকো বিজিঘৎসোহপিপাসঃ সত্যকামঃ সত্যসংকল্পো··· (৮/১/৫)। অর্থাৎ দেহই অনিত্য, আত্মা নয়। দেহ জরাযুক্ত হলে যেমন আত্মা জরাযুক্ত হয় না, তেমনি দেহের বিনাশে আত্মার বিনাশ হয় না।

[vi] ঋগ্বেদ সংহিতায় বলা হয়েছে, "জরা যেরূপ রূপ বিনাশ করে তুমি সেইরূপ শম্বরের নগরসমূহ বিনাশ করিয়াছিলে"(৪/১৬/১৩)

[vii] 'এই সময়' পত্রিকা, রবিবার, ৬ই জুলাই, ২০১৫

[viii] ঋগ্বেদের বলা হয়েছে – "আমাদিগের রক্ষার জন্য স্বয়ং জরারহিত, সমস্ত জগতের জরাপ্রদানকারী, সোমসিক্ত, সনাতন, তরুণবয়স্ক ইন্দ্রকে আহ্বান করিতেছি"(২/১৬৩/১)।

[ix] বুদ্ধচরিত গ্রন্থে বলা হয়েছে, "জরা এইরূপ স্মৃতি, রূপ ও পরাক্রম নির্বিশেষে নষ্ট করে। লোকে এই রূপ জরাকে প্রত্যক্ষ দেখিতেছে, তথাপি কোনোরূপ উৎকণ্ঠিত হইতেছে না"। (রথীন্দ্রনাথ ঠাকুর,অশ্বঘোষের)

[x] "..... some one is old, aged, burdend with years, advanced in life, come to the last stage"(Majjhima Nikaya, Ratthapala Sutta 82.32)।

[xi] "হে রাজন, আপনি যদি এই চারিটি বিষয়ে আমার প্রতিভূ হন, তাহা হইলেই আমি তপোবনের আশ্রয় গ্রহণ করিব না"।। (৫/৩৪) "জীবন আমার মরণান্তক হইবে না। রোগ আমার স্বাস্থ্য হরণ করিবে না। জরা যৌবনকে আকর্ষণ করিবে না। বিপত্তি আমার সম্পত্তি হরণ করিবে না"।। (৫/৩৫) এর দ্বারা বোঝা যায় যে জরা, ব্যাধি ও মৃত্যুকে রাজাও রোধ করতে পারবে না। (রথীন্দ্রনাথ ঠাকুর,অশ্বঘোষের)

[xii] "মানব জীবন অবিমিশ্র দুঃখের আধার, আর জন্ম-মৃত্যুর হাত থেকে নির্বাণ লাভ বা মুক্তি লাভ করে মহাশূণ্যে মিলিয়ে যাওয়াই ধর্মের লক্ষ্য, বৌদ্ধ ও জৈন ধর্মের এই তত্ত্ব এদের ক্রমশ হীনবল হবার অন্যতম ঐতিহাসিক কারণ"। (জয়ন্তনুজ বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়, ধর্মের ভবিষ্যৎ)

[xiii] "Old age and decay are held back for a very long time, provided, along with this treatment, the patient regularly anoints his body with anutaila, a medicinal oil of many ingredients, massages his bady with a decoction of ajakarna (Vateria idica) bathes daily in well water saturated with usara (mineral salts), uses sandal paste on his body, and observes the rules of diet and conduct". (Susruta Samhita, Priyadaranjan Ray, Hirendranath Gupta, Indian National Science Academy)

[xiv] "According to the Hindu thinkers, old age is not a pitiable age" Social philosophy of the Mahabharata and the Manu Smriti, Pratima Verma

[xv] হাজার হাজার বছর পূর্বে মহাভারতের সমাজেও দেখতে পাওয়া যায় বৃদ্ধ ব্যক্তিদের অভিজ্ঞতাকে কাজে লাগানোর কথা। নারদমুনি যুধিষ্ঠরকে বলেছেন, "হে পৃথানন্দন! আপনি ঔষধ বা কোন নিয়ম অবলম্বন করিয়া শারীরিক পীড়া এবং বৃদ্ধের উপদেশ নিয়া মানসিক পীড়া দূর করিয়া থাকেন তো?"। হরিদাস সিদ্ধান্ত বাগীশ, মহাভারতম্ (সভাপর্ব)

[xvi] এই প্রসঙ্গে তিনি বলেছেন– "যৌবনে যে কাজ করিয়াছ, সে আপনার জন্য; তারপর যৌবন গেলে যত কাজ করিবে, পরের জন্য। ইহাই আমার পরামর্শ" (বঙ্কিমচন্দ্র চট্টোপাধ্যায়, বুড়া বয়সের কথা)

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গৌড়ীয় নৃত্যে আবহ সংগীতের পর্যালোচনা

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বিভিন্ন সম্প্রদায়ের মানুষের বাস এই বাংলায়। বঙ্গে বৈদিক যুগের আগে থেকে দ্রাবিড় ও আর্য জাতির সংমিশ্রণে মিশ্র সংস্কৃতির সৃষ্টি হয়। বৌদ্ধ, জৈন, তান্ত্রিক, শৈব, বৈষ্ণব প্রভৃতি নানা সম্প্রদায়ের নৃত্য, গীত, তন্ত্রীবাদ্য, সরস্বতী বীণা, সহস্র বীণার পরিচয় পাই। শিলভদ্র, শান্তিরক্ষীত, চন্দ্রগোমিন, বাংলার পাল রাজত্বের সময় আচার্য ছিলেন নালন্দার। বল্লাল সেন, জীমূতবাহন, গৌড়পাদ, চক্রপানি দত্ত, ধোয়ী, হলায়ুধ, গোবর্ধনআচার্য, সন্ধ্যাকরনন্দী প্রমুখ বাঙালি সিদ্ধাচার্যদের গ্রন্থ মধ্যযুগের অমূল্য সম্পদ, যাতে নৃত্যগীত বাদ্যের অজস্র প্রমাণ পাই; যা 'গৌড়ীয় সংগীত' নামে প্রচলিত ছিল। গৌড়ীয় সংগীতে বাংলার প্রাচীন ছয় রাগ ও ছত্রিশ রাগিণী সহ নৃত্য ও বাদ্যের পরিচয় পাই। বৈষ্ণব পদাবলী কীর্তনগুলি এইসব প্রাচীন রাগে গাওয়া হয়। দণ্ডীনের কাব্যে ভাষার দিক থেকে গৌড়ী রীতি ও গৌড় মার্গ নামের উল্লেখ আছে। তাই সেই গৌড়ীয় সংগীত যে শাস্ত্রীয় ছিল তা কোন কোন শাস্ত্র গ্রন্থে কত খৃষ্টাব্দে রচিত হয়েছিল তার উল্লেখ করেছি। যেকোন নৃত্য গীত বাদ্য ধারা শাস্ত্রকে আশ্রয় করে গড়ে উঠেছে। তাই শাস্ত্র, ভাস্কর্য, চিত্রকলা হল নৃত্য গীতের জীবন্ত দলিল।

শব্দসূচী: গৌড়ীয় নৃত্য, গৌড়ের সংগীত, প্রবন্ধ গীতি, চর্যাগীত, মনসামঙ্গল, শৈবনৃত্য, রঙ্গমঞ্চ।

ভুমিকা: বাংলার ধ্রূপদী তথা শাস্ত্রীয় নৃত্য নেই এই ভুল ধারণার বিপরীতে গিয়ে প্রফেসর মহুয়া মুখোপাধ্যায় বাংলার নৃত্যকে পুনঃআবিষ্কার করে দেশ পত্রিকায় ১৯৯৯ সালের ৬ই মার্চ গৌড়ীয়ের জন্মসূত্র জনসমক্ষে প্রমাণ করলেন। তখন বিভিন্ন মহলে বিতর্কের ঝড় শুরু হয়েছিল। কিন্তু 'গৌড়ীয় নৃত্য ভারতীর' প্রতিষ্ঠাতা ও গৌড়ীয় নৃত্যের পুনঃআবিষ্কর্তা ডঃ মহুয়া মুখোপাধ্যায় ও সংগীত গবেষক পণ্ডিত অমিতাভ মুখোপাধ্যায় সারা বাংলা তথা ভারত ঘুরে ঘুরে বাংলার প্রাচীন মূর্তি, স্থাপত্য, ভাস্কর্য, সাহিত্য খুঁজে খুঁজে প্রকৃত তথ্য প্রমাণসহ যখন দিনের পর দিন প্রকাশ করতে শুরু করলেন তখন গৌড়ীয়ের প্রভাব বিশ্বব্যাপী প্রচার হতে শুরু করল। আর প্রতিপক্ষরাও বুঝতে পারল যে শাস্ত্রগ্রন্থ, সাহিত্য, ভাস্কর্য, চিত্রকলা গভীর অধ্যয়ন না করলে প্রকৃত জ্ঞানী, প্রকৃত গুরু, শাস্ত্রজ্ঞ পণ্ডিত হওয়া যায় না ও শাস্ত্রকে টিঁকিয়ে রাখা যায় না। শাস্ত্রীয় নৃত্যের প্রসঙ্গ আসলেই ভরতনাট্যম, কত্থক, কুচিপুড়ি, মণিপুরি, ওড়িশির কথাই সবাই একবাক্যে স্বীকার করেন কিন্তু সেই মণিপুরি বা ওড়িশি বা কুচিপুড়ির শাস্ত্রীয় অধিকার কিন্তু মাত্র অল্প কিছু বছর আগে স্বীকৃত হয়েছে। এগুলি সবই মন্দির কেন্দ্রিক নৃত্যধারা। আর প্রাচীনকাল থেকে মন্দিরে, স্থাপত্যে, ভাস্কর্যে, সাহিত্যে বাংলার মন্দির কেন্দ্রীক যে ধর্মীয় নৃত্যগীত ধারা চলে আসছে তার প্রাণবায়ুর প্রমাণ অনবরত দিয়ে চলেছে। তার স্বরূপ যে শাস্ত্রীয় ছিল এটা স্বীকার করতে অনেকেই দ্বিধাবোধ করেন, যা বড়ই বিচিত্র। বাংলা যে একসময় বঙ্গ, গৌড়, বঙ্গাল প্রভৃতি নামে প্রচলিত ছিল এবং তার রীতি, গীতি, বাদ্য, নৃত্য, সাহিত্য, শিল্প, ভাস্কর্য, রাগরাগিণী প্রভৃতি যে গৌড়ী বা গৌড়ীয় নামে পরিচিত ছিল, গৌড়ীয় নৃত্যের সাথে গৌড়ীয় সংগীত যে শাস্ত্রীয়, নিম্নে আমি তার প্রমাণ তুলে ধরব। কারণ যে কোন নৃত্য, গীত, বাদ্য প্রাচীনের ওপর আশ্রয় করে বিস্তার লাভ করে। তাই প্রাচীনের ঐতিহ্যকে আমরা কখনোই অস্বীকার করতে পারিনা। শুধু দরকার সেই ইতিহাসের, শাস্ত্রের, পুঁথির পাতা উল্টে তার গভীরতা অন্বেষণ করা। কিন্তু দুঃখের বিষয় মাইকেল মধুসুদনের কথায় বাঙালি পরধন লোভে মত্ত। যাইহোক, সাহিত্যিক মানুষরা চিরকাল সাহিত্য শিল্প রচনা করে গেছেন এবং তার কদরও করেছে কিছু সাহিত্যপ্রেমী মানুষ। বহুল জনপ্রিয় বাংলার বর্তমান হেরিটেজ সাইট বাঁকুড়ার বিষ্ণুপুরের মন্দির শিল্প, যাকে মন্দির নগরী বলা হত সেই বিষ্ণুপুরের মন্দিরের টেরাকোটাগুলি লক্ষ্য করলে বাংলার সেই ধ্রূপদী সংগীতধারাকে দেখতে পাব। আর এখানে সংগীত অর্থে কিন্তু শুধু গীত নয়, গীত বাদ্য নৃত্য তিনের সমন্বয়কে সংগীত বলা হয়েছে। কারণ ত্রয়োদশ শতকে সারঙ্গদেবের 'সংগীত রত্নাকর' গ্রন্থে আছে-

'গীতং বাদ্যং নৃত্যং ত্রয়ং সঙ্গীতসমুচতে'[১]।

তাই গীত বাদ্য নৃত্য একে অপরের পরিপূরক। গৌড়ীয় নৃত্যের সাথে গৌড়ের সংগীতও যে একে অপরের পরিপূরক হিসাবে ব্যবহৃত হচ্ছে তা প্রমাণ করাই আমার এই রচনার উদ্দেশ্য। এখানে যে যে বিষয় গুলি নিয়ে আলোচনা করা হয়েছে সেগুলি হল– ১) বাংলার এই নৃত্যকে গৌড়ীয় কেন বলা হল? ২) কোন কোন অঞ্চলে এই নৃত্য গীত বাদ্য প্রচলিত ছিল? ৩) তাকে শাস্ত্রীয় আখ্যা কেন দেওয়া হল? কোন কোন শাস্ত্রে, সাহিত্যে, ইহার প্রমান পাই? ৪) নৃত্যের সাথে ব্যবহৃত গানকে গৌড়ীয় গীত বা গৌড়ী গীত বা গীতি কেন বলা হয়েছে? ৫) মন্দির ভাস্কর্যে, চিত্রে এই নৃত্য বাদ্যের জীবন্ত মূর্তির নিদর্শন কোথায় আছে?

৬) রাগ রাগিণী, তাল সমৃদ্ধ এই প্রাচীন প্রবন্ধ গান, চর্যাপদ গীত, বৌদ্ধসঙ্গীত, মঙ্গলকাব্য গীত, পুরান সংগীত, বৈষ্ণব পদাবলি সংগীত, লোকসংগীত (বাউল, গম্ভীরা, বিষহরীর গান) গুলি কিভাবে গাওয়া হত এবং এখন তা কোন অবস্থায় আছে?

মহাকাব্য, পুরাণ, চর্যাপদ, মঙ্গলকাব্য, বৈষ্ণব সাহিত্য প্রভৃতি প্রাচীন পুঁথিপত্রে, পুন্ড্রবর্ধন, উৎকল, বঙ্গ, গৌড়, তাম্রলিপ্ত, গঙ্গারীডি, বরেন্দ্রী প্রভৃতি জায়গার নাম বারে বারে এসেছে। তাই সেই ইতিহাস বিজড়িত সাম্রাজ্যের মধ্যে যে শাস্ত্রীয় আঞ্চলিক নৃত্য, গীত, বাদ্য, সুর, তাল, ছন্দ প্রচলিত ছিল তা দেবতার মন্দিরে, রাজপ্রাসাদের সভাগৃহে, নাট মন্দিরে রামায়ণ, মহাভারত, পুতনাবধ, মনসা মঙ্গল পালা, চন্ডীমঙ্গল, ধর্মমঙ্গল প্রভৃতি বিভিন্ন ধারার শাস্ত্রীয় পালাগান, নাটক, কীর্তন, রাগরাগিনী, পাঁচালী গান, কথকতা, নৃত্যনাট্য সহযোগে পরিবেশিত হত। খোলা মঞ্চে গ্রাম্য এলাকায় সাধারণ জনসমাজে যেসব সংগীতপালা হত তা কখনো অসুর বধ, কখনো যোগীপাল ভোগীপালের গীত, কখনো জয়দেবের পালাগান, কখনো কৃষ্ণযাত্রা, কেষ্টযাত্রা, রাসপালা, চৈতন্যচরিতামৃত, পুতুলনাচের পালা, মনসার ভাসান পালা, চণ্ডীর গান, ষষ্ঠীর পালা, গোপীচন্দ্রের গান, ময়নামতির গান, চন্দ্রাবতির রামায়ন গীত প্রভৃতি। আবার কখনো সাধারণ মানুষের লৌকিক সুখ দুঃখের গান যেমন - আদি গান, ধুয়া গান, প্রবন্ধ গান, পাঁচালী, কবিগান, তরজা, কথকথা, কুশান নাচের গান, বিষহরীর গান, ঘুম পাড়ানি গান, শস্য উৎসবের গান, বাউল, পটুয়া সঙ্গীত, পুতুল নাচের গান, ধর্মের গান, টুসু, ভাদু গান, বাউল, কীর্তন, ভাটিয়ালি প্রভৃতি নানা লৌকিক গানও প্রচলিত ছিল।

গৌড়ীয় নৃত্যে বাংলার দেবদাসী ধারা, গৌড়ীয় নৃত্যে বৈষ্ণব দর্শন প্রভৃতি বিষয় নিয়ে গবেষণাতে গীত, বাদ্যের কথা কিছু কিছু এলেও গৌড়ীয় নৃত্যকে সামনে রেখে বাংলার সংগীত ধারাকে নৃত্যের আঙ্গিনায় পর্যালোচনা করা এর আগে খুব একটা হয়নি। আমার এই গবেষণালব্ধ কাজের ফলে প্রাচীন, মধ্য ও আধুনিক যুগের সংস্কৃতিমুখর বাঙালির নৃত্যের তালে তালে ব্যবহৃত সংগীত (গীত, নৃত্য ও বাদ্যযন্ত্র) ধারা কে তুলে ধরার চেষ্টা করেছি। এর ফলে বর্তমান প্রজন্ম গৌড়ীয় নৃত্য তথা বাংলার শাস্ত্রীয় নৃত্যের পাশাপাশি আঞ্চলিক নৃত্য, গীত, বাদ্য শিক্ষণ সম্পর্কে আগ্রহী হবে। বাংলার প্রাচীন শাস্ত্র, সাহিত্য, পুঁথির মধ্যে যে গুপ্তধন আছে সেই স্বর্ণময় সম্পদকে এগিয়ে নিয়ে যেতে গর্ববোধ করবে। নতুনভাবে আঞ্চলিক নৃত্যগুলি নিয়ে ভাবনা চিন্তার মাধ্যমে তা শাস্ত্রের আঙ্গিনার মধ্যে তুলে ধরার প্রয়াস শুরু হবে। এর ফলে বাংলার বুক থেকে হারিয়ে যাওয়া বা লুপ্ত হতে বসা সংগীত (গীত, বাদ্য ও নৃত্য) ধারাকে শাস্ত্রের আঙ্গিনায় নবরুপ দেওয়ার প্রচেষ্টা শুরু হতে পারে। যেমন ভাবে ছৌ নাচ, ক্ষত্রীয় নাচ বর্তমানে সরকারি স্বীকৃতি লাভের ফলে সম্মানের জায়গা পেয়েছে, ঠিক সেভাবেই স্বদেশীয় সরকারি পৃষ্ঠপোষকতার মাধ্যমে কুশান নাচ, নাচনী নাচ, বাউল নাচ, গম্ভীরা, কীর্তন নাচ, প্রভৃতি প্রাচীন গুরু পরম্পরাগত নৃত্য গীত ধারা গুলিকে শাস্ত্রের মণিকোঠায় তুলে ধরে বাংলার পুরাতন সঙ্গীত (গীত, বাদ্য, নৃত্য) ও সংস্কৃতির ঐতিহ্য শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান থেকে শুরু করে সকল শ্রেণীর মানুষের মধ্যে বিস্তার ঘটানো সম্ভব হবে।

ক) ভৌগোলিক সীমানা: বাংলার নৃত্যগীত ধারা যে সব অঞ্চলের মধ্যে প্রচলিত ছিল তা বারে বারে

পরিবর্তিত হয়েছে। আনুমানিক খৃষ্টপূর্ব দ্বিতীয় শতকের ভরতের বিখ্যাত সঙ্গীত শাস্ত্রগ্রন্থ 'নাট্যশাস্ত্র' তে উল্লেখ আছে বাংলার রাগরাগিনী, নৃত্য, গীত, বাদ্যের কথা। তার মানে এই ধারা 'নাট্যশাস্ত্রের'ও পূর্ববর্তী। 'ঐতরেয় আরণ্যকে' বঙ্গ ও মগধের উল্লেখ মেলে। খ্রিস্টপূর্ব সপ্তম শতাব্দীতে পাণিনির 'অষ্টাধ্যায়ীতে' ষষ্ঠ অধ্যায়ে 'অরিস্থ্য গৌড় পূর্বে চ' সূত্রে গৌড়পুর, বঙ্গ, ও মগধের উল্লেখ পাই। 'পতঞ্জলি মহাভাষ্যে' অঙ্গরাজ ও বঙ্গরাজ কথা গুলির উল্লেখ আছে। মহাভাষ্যকার কাত্যায়ন 'অঙ্গাঃ, বঙ্গাঃ, সুহ্মাঃ, পুন্ড্রাঃ' শব্দ গুলির পরিচয় দিয়েছেন। 'রামায়ণেও' অঙ্গ বঙ্গের কথা উল্লেখ আছে। পঞ্চম শতকের বৎস্যায়নের 'কামসূত্রে' গৌড় দেশের মেয়েদের নাম পাওয়া যায় –

"মৃদু ভাষিন্যোনুরাগবত্যো মৃদঙ্গশ্চ গৌড্য[২]।"

'নাট্যশাস্ত্রে' চার প্রকার নাট্য ও নৃত্যের কথা আছে; যারমধ্যে 'ওড্রমাগধী' ধারা থেকে গৌড়ীয় ও ওড়িশির উদ্ভব হয়েছে। গৌড়বঙ্গের ঐতিহাসিক অবস্থান লক্ষ্য করলে ওড্রমাগধীর কথা পাই যা সমগ্র বঙ্গ ও তার পাশাপাশি অঞ্চলকে নির্দেশ করে। 'নাট্যশাস্ত্র' গ্রন্থে ওড্রমাগধীর অন্তর্গত অঞ্চলগুলি হল-অঙ্গ, বঙ্গ, কলিঙ্গ, নেপাল, পুণ্ড্র, বৎস, তাম্রলিপ্তক, প্রাগজ্যোতিষ, ভার্গব, মার্গব, পুলিন্দ, ওড্রমাগধ, অন্তর্গিরি, বহির্গিরি, প্লবঙ্গম, মল্লবর্তক, মালদা, ব্রহ্মোত্তর, বিদেহ প্রভৃতি।

"অঙ্গা বঙ্গা উৎকলিঙ্গা বৎসাশ্চৈবৌড্রমাগধাঃ[৩]।।"

অঙ্গা বা অঙ্গ অর্থাৎ বর্তমান ভাগলপুর জেলার অন্তর্গত মুঙ্গের। বঙ্গ বলতে বঙ্গ দেশের মধ্যভাগ। পৌণ্ড্র অর্থাৎ উত্তরবঙ্গ জেলার রাজশাহী ও বগুড়া অঞ্চল। অন্তঃগিরি ও বহিঃগিরি বলতে বিহারের রাজমহল পাহাড় এলাকা ও বীরভূম জেলার অন্তর্গত অঞ্চল সমূহ। প্রবঙ্গ ও মালদা বলতে বোঝায় বর্তমান পশ্চিমবঙ্গ, বাংলাদেশ ও মালদহ অঞ্চল। পুরুলিয়ার ও তার পার্শ্ববর্তী অঞ্চল মল্লবর্তক। মুর্শিদাবাদের পার্শ্ববর্তী এলাকা হল ব্রহ্মোত্তর। সিকিম ও ভুটানের অঞ্চলগুলি ভার্গবা। তমলুক, দক্ষিণ মেদিনীপুর, হুগলীর কিছু এলাকা, ও বাঁকুড়াকে প্রাংগ বলে[২]।

মধ্যযুগে সমগ্র বাঙালিকে 'গৌড়ীয়া' শব্দের মাধ্যমে বোঝানো হত। পাঠানরা যখন ভারতবর্ষে আসে তখনো সমগ্র বাংলা গৌড় নামে পরিচিত ছিল। এইসব প্রাচীন সাহিত্য থেকে আমি গৌড়ের সংগীতের ভৌগলিক ইতিহাস খোঁজার চেষ্টা করেছি এবং আমার এই প্রবন্ধে তুলে ধরেছি।

খ) গৌড়ীয় নৃত্য গীতের উৎস ও নামকরণ: আনুমানিক হিসেবে অনেকে সম্রাট শশাঙ্কের রাজত্বকাল থেকে গৌড়বঙ্গ কথাটির অস্তিত্ব স্বীকার করেছেন, যা পঞ্চম থেকে ষষ্ঠ খ্রিস্টাব্দের সময়কালকে ধরা হয়। গৌড়রাজ শশাঙ্ক নিজেকে 'গৌড়াধিপ' বলে পরিচয় দিয়েছেন। বাংলার সুলতানরা নিজেদেরকে 'গৌড়েশ্বর' বলতেন। গৌড়ের নাম কখনো গঙ্গোত্রী কখনো বঙ্গ কখনো গৌড়বঙ্গ কখনো বা বাংলা এভাবে বিভিন্ন সময়ে বিভিন্ন নামে পরিবর্তিত হয়েছে। মিথিলা, গৌড়, কান্যকুব্জ, উৎকল, সারস্বত এই পাঁচ ভাগেও একসময় বিভক্ত ছিল গৌড় সিমানা। পাঁচজন রাজা এই পাঁচটি জায়গার অধীশ্বর ছিলেন। কিন্তু সর্বপ্রধান যিনি তাকে পঞ্চ গৌড়ের অধিকর্তা রূপে 'পঞ্চ গৌড়েশ্বর' বলা হত। 'নাট্যশাস্ত্রে' গৌড়ী রীতি, গৌড়ী গীতি, গৌড়ী রাগ এর

নাম পাই। বর্তমান মালদহের কাছে গৌড়ের সুলতানদের ধ্বংসপ্রাপ্ত গৌড় নগরীর পরিচয় পাওয়া যায়। গৌড়ী নামে সাহিত্য রচনার রীতি লক্ষ্য করা যায় দন্ডিনের 'কাব্যাদর্শে', যা ষষ্ঠ শতকের রচনা। মতঙ্গের 'বৃহদ্দেশী' গ্রন্থে, বানভট্টের লেখাতে গৌড়ী রীতির পরিচয় পাই। 'বৃহৎদ্ধর্ম পুরাণে' গৌড় রাজ (গৌড়) কে গান্ধারের কিঙ্কর বলা হয়েছে। এই পুরানেই কামোদের ভার্যা স্বরূপ গৌড়ীর উল্লেখ আছে। 'অগ্নিপুরাণে' গৌড়ীয় রীতি, কাব্যসংগীত, গৌড় দেশজাত ভাষা সম্পর্কে আলোচনা আছে। শারঙ্গদেব সংগীত রত্নাকরে কৌশিক জাতি রাগের বিভিন্ন মিশ্ররাগ রূপে গৌড়কৌশিক, গৌড়কৌশিকমধ্যম প্রকৃতির রাগের পরিচয় দিয়েছেন। আচার্য কাশ্যপমুনি-শুদ্ধা, ভিন্না, ভিন্নকা, গৌড়ী বা গৌড়ীকা ও রাগরীতি, সাধারণী, ভাষা, অন্তর ভাষা, বিভাষা প্রভৃতি গীতির কথা বলেছেন। নারদের 'সংগীত মকরন্দ' গ্রন্থে-বঙ্গাল (বঙ্গালী) রাগ, রাগ ও রাগিনীর বর্ণনা আছে। 'পার্শ্বদেব' (৭-৯ম শতক) গৌড়, তুরস্কগৌড় প্রভৃতি দেশী রাগের ব্যাখ্যা দিয়েছেন। বৌদ্ধগ্রন্থ- 'সম্যুত্তনিকায়' ও 'থেরগাথাভাষ্যে' প্রাচীন ভারতে বৌদ্ধ যুগে ৮৮ টি প্রধান জাতির নৃত্য গীত ও বাদ্যের আলোচনা আছে যেখানে গৌড় ও বঙ্গ নামক দুটি জাতির সংগীতের কথা আছে। 'ভাগবত ও বাংলা সাহিত্য'তে গৌড় এবং উৎকলে কৃষ্ণভক্তি মূলক গীতের পরিচয় পাই –

'গৌড় – উৎকলাদি দেশে মাধবের গণ।
সবে কৃষ্ণ ভক্তি- প্রেমভক্তি – পরায়ন।'[৪]।

'উজ্জ্বলনীলমণি' গ্রন্থ এবং 'ভক্তিরসামৃতসিন্ধু', নাটকচন্দ্রিকা এবং রাধাকৃষ্ণগনোদ্দেশদীপিকা, বিদগ্ধমাধব, ললিতমাধব, নারদপঞ্চমসারসংহিতা, জীব গোস্বামীর 'গোপালচম্পু' গ্রন্থ, কৃষ্ণদাস কবিরাজের ষোড়শ শতকের 'গোবিন্দলীলামৃত' গ্রন্থ, ওড়িয়া শাস্ত্রের সংগীত গ্রন্থ 'অভিনয় চন্দ্রিকা'তে ভারতের প্রচলিত সংগীত শৈলী গুলির মধ্যে গৌড় শৈলীর উল্লেখ করেছেন। এইসব প্রাচীন গ্রন্থ, সাহিত্য, স্থাপত্য, ভাস্কর্যে বর্ণিত গৌড়বাংলার সাংগীতিক নিদর্শনের ওপর ভিত্তি করে ১০ই সেপ্টেম্বর ১৯৯৪ সালে বিখ্যাত ভারততত্ত্ববিদ প্রফেসর ব্রতীন্দ্রনাথ মুখোপাধ্যায়ের সুপরামর্শে বাংলার এই নৃত্য 'গৌড়ীয় নৃত্য' নামে গৃহীত হয়[২] এবং পুনঃপ্রতিষ্ঠা পায়। এই নৃত্যে ব্যবহৃত গীত যা ভরতের সময়কাল থেকে গৌড়ী গীতি নামে পরিচিত ছিল সেই গৌড়ীয় সংগীত সম্পর্কেই আমি এই প্রবন্ধে আলচনা করেছি।

গ) গৌড়ের সংগীত ধারা: ধর্মীয় ভাবাদর্শ প্রধান দেবতা কেন্দ্রিক গৌড়ীয় নৃত্য বৈদিক কাল থেকে শুরু করে রামায়ন, মহাভারত, হরিবংশপুরান, সংহিতা, জৈনপুরান, বৌদ্ধ গ্রন্থে উল্লেখ পাই। অর্জুন বিরাট রাজার কন্যাকে নৃত্য শিক্ষা দিয়েছিলেন তা আমরা সকলেই জানি। রাজা মহারাজাদের কন্যা থেকে শুরু করে কিন্নর কিন্নরীরাও নৃত্য, গীত, বাদ্য শিক্ষা করত। হরিবংশ পুরানে যদুকূল বংশী রমণীদের নৌকাবিলাস, পীণ্ডারক তীর্থ গমন, গোপিনীদের রাস নৃত্য ও ছাল্লিসক ক্রীড়া বা হল্লিসক ক্রীড়ার কথা জানতে পারি। সেখানে নৃত্য গীত প্রধান বিষয়। 'হরিবংশপুরানে' রমণী পঞ্চচূড়ার 'ছালিক্য রাগ' আবিষ্কারের কথা আছে। নারদ মুনিও তার সামনে গান গাহিতে গিয়ে কিভাবে অপদস্থ হয়েছিলেন তার বর্ণনা পাই। 'ধর্ম সংহিতার' একটি শ্লোকে রুদ্রদেব বা মহাদেবকে প্রদক্ষিণরত কপট রূপী মাতৃগনের হাস্যরত বিবিধ প্রকার অঙ্গভঙ্গি মস্তক সঞ্চালন সহ নৃত্য গীত বাদ্যের অপূর্ব বর্ণনা পাই, যা গৌড়ীয় নৃত্যের প্রকৃত প্রমাণ স্বরূপ বাঁকুড়ার

বিষ্ণুপুরের মদনমোহন মন্দির, জোড়বাংলা মন্দির, হংসেশ্বর মন্দিরের ভাস্কর্যে লক্ষ্য করা যায়। বাংলার নর্তেস্বর শিব-স্বর, তাল ও পদযুক্ত সঙ্গীত অর্থাৎ গান্ধর্ব সঙ্গীত বিদ্যাতে পারদর্শী এবং নৃত্য, গীত, বাদ্যের প্রাণপুরুষ ছিলেন। পাল যুগের ললিত আনন্দ তাণ্ডব ভঙ্গিমায় বহু হাত যুক্ত শিবের মূর্তি বাংলার বহু যায়গায় পাওয়া গিয়েছে। যিনি এক হাতে বীণা, এক হাতে ডমরু, ওপর দুই হাত তালি দেওয়া অবস্থায় নন্দী ষাঁড়ের ওপর নৃত্যরত। নদীমাতৃক বাংলার নৃত্য গীতে ললিত আনন্দ তাণ্ডব ভঙ্গিমা প্রকৃতিগত বৈশিষ্ট্য। তাই বাংলার শিবপুজা, গাজন, গম্ভীরা, চড়ক, ধর্মপূজায় বাদ্য সহযোগে ভক্তিভাবপূর্ণ নৃত্য গীত অপরিহার্য অঙ্গ। তাই বাংলার শিবকে 'নৃত্যপ্রিয়' বলা হয়। 'জ্ঞান সংহিতাতে' নৃত্য গীত সহযোগে পুজা পাঠের বর্ণনা পাই-

'গীত বাদ্যই স্তথা নৃত্যই রভক্তি ভাবসমনিতঃ।'

পুজনং প্রথমং যামে কৃত্যা মন্ত্রং জপে দুধঃ।। - জ্ঞান সংহিতা[৫]

প্রাচীনকাল থেকে বহু সঙ্গীতজ্ঞ বাংলার বিভিন্ন রাজার দরবারে নৃত্য, গীত, বাদ্য পরিবেশন করত ও অনেকে শিখতে আসতো। পাল রাজত্বকালে দক্ষিণ ভারতের চোল রাজারা বাংলার নৃত্য সঙ্গীত ভাস্কর্যের টানে এখানকার নৃত্যশিল্পী সংগীতজ্ঞ, দেবদাসী, চিত্রশিল্পী, ভাস্কর্যশিল্পী ও পণ্ডিত আচার্যদের এমনকি ললিত আনন্দ তাণ্ডব নৃত্যরত শিব মূর্তিও নিজের রাজ্যে নিয়ে গিয়েছিলেন। এখনকার দিনেও আমরা দেখি কুমোরটুলির দুর্গা, গণেশ, শিব নটরাজের মূর্তি প্রতিমা সারা বিশ্বের বিভিন্ন জায়গায় নিয়ে গিয়ে পুজা অর্চনা করা হয়। কলহনের 'রাজতরঙ্গিনীতে' আমরা পুণ্ড্রবর্ধন নগরের কার্তিকের মন্দিরে কমলা নামে এক রমণীর 'নাট্যশাস্ত্র' অনুসারী নৃত্যধারা দেখতে পাই, যার নৃত্য দেখে কাশ্মীরের রাজা জয়াপীড় অত্যন্ত মুগ্ধ হয়ে তাকে বিয়ে করে নিজ রাজ্যে নিয়ে যান। কারণ ভারতবর্ষের নৃত্য গীত বাদ্যের নিয়মাবলি সমৃদ্ধ প্রথম শাস্ত্রগ্রন্থ ভরতের 'নাট্যশাস্ত্র'। এই কমলা সুন্দরীকে নিয়ে বিখ্যাত গান আছে বাংলায় –

'ভাল কইরা বাজাওরে ঢাকুয়া সুন্দরী কমলা নাচে'।

'সঙ্গীতরত্নাকরের' পূর্ববর্তী লেখক নারদের লেখা 'সঙ্গীত মকরন্দ' গ্রন্থে আমরা গীত বাদ্য নৃত্যের সমন্বয় সহযোগে 'সংগীতের' উৎপত্তির কথা জানতে পারি। ভাব, অভিনয়, তাল, মান, রস সহযোগে নৃত্যের উৎপত্তি পণ্ডিত শুভঙ্করের 'সঙ্গীত দামোদর' গ্রন্থেও বলা হয়েছে যথা–গীত থেকে বাদ্যের উৎপত্তি, বাদ্য থেকে উৎপত্তি হয়েছে লয়ের, আর লয় এবং তাল সহযোগে নৃত্য পরিগঠিত হয়েছে। 'নাট্যশাস্ত্রে' ভরত 'মার্গ' ও 'দেশী' নামে সঙ্গীতের দুটি বিভাগ করেছেন। 'অভিনয় দর্পণ' গ্রন্থে নন্দীকেশ্বর বলেছেন- মুখগহ্বর থেকে গীতের বাণীর উৎপত্তি। এই গীত হস্তলক্ষন দ্বারা প্রকাশ পায়। তাল রক্ষা হয় পদদ্বয় দ্বারা, নয়ন দ্বারা ভাব প্রকাশ হয়। প্রকৃত গুরু শিষ্য পরম্পরা প্রশিক্ষণ ছাড়া এই সঙ্গীত শিক্ষা সম্ভব নয়। ' নারদ সঙ্গীতে' আছে –

'ন নাদেন বিনা গিতং ন নাদেন বিনা স্বরঃ
ন নাদেন বিনা গ্রামস্তস্মন্নাদাত্মকং জগৎ।।"

সারঙ্গদেবের 'সঙ্গীত রত্নাকরে' আমরা লাট, কর্ণাট, দ্রাবিড়, অন্ধ্র ও গৌড় এই ৫টি ভারতভূমির কথা লক্ষ্য করি যার প্রত্যেকটিতেই এলা প্রবন্ধ প্রচলিত ছিল। তাই গৌড় তথা বাংলার প্রবন্ধ গৌড়েলা নামে পরিচিত

ছিল। যেখানে গৌড়ী গীত, গৌড়ী রীতি, গৌড়ী রাগ, গৌড়ীয় ধর্ম, গৌড়ীয় পণ্ডিত, গৌড়ীয় শিল্পকলা, গৌড়ীয় বৈষ্ণব রসশাস্ত্র প্রভৃতি ধ্রপদী ধারা বয়ে চলেছে। যার বেশিরভাগটাই কীর্তন প্রধান। কীর্তন কথার অর্থ প্রশংসা অর্থাৎ দেবদেবীর প্রশংসাসূচক ধর্মীয় ভাবনাই এই গীতের প্রাধান্য বিষয়।

প্রবন্ধ গীতি: প্রবন্ধ অর্থাৎ প্রকৃষ্ট বন্ধ বা সুন্দর রচনা, যদি কোন রচনাকে বিশেষ নিয়মে আবদ্ধ করা যায় তাহলে তাকে প্রবন্ধ বলা হবে। তাই শাস্ত্রে বাংলার গৌড়েলা প্রবন্ধের পরিচয় পাই। প্রবন্ধের ছয়টি অঙ্গ বিভাগ আছে- স্বর, বিরুদ, পদ, তেনক, পাট ও তাল। প্রবন্ধ গীতি নির্দিষ্ট নিয়মে আবদ্ধ অর্থাৎ নিবদ্ধ গীতি।

স্বর : ষড়জ, রিষভ, গান্ধার, মধ্যম, পঞ্চম, ধৈবত, নিষাদ।

বিরুদ : কবির নাম গুণ স্তুতি বাচক প্রবন্ধ হল বিরুদ।

পদ : গানের বিষয় বোঝানোর জন্য পদ নামক প্রবন্ধ ব্যবহার হয়।

তেনক : প্রবন্ধ গানে মঙ্গলবাচক শব্দ রুপে তেনক বা তেন শব্দটি ব্যবহার হয়।

পাট : আনদ্ধ বা চর্ম দ্বারা আচ্ছাদিত বাদ্যের বোলকে প্রকাশ করতে পাট নামক প্রবন্ধটি ব্যবহার হয়।

তাল : নিবদ্ধ প্রবন্ধ গীতিকে তাল বলে।

প্রবন্ধ গানের জাতি পাঁচটি যথা – মেদিনী, আনন্দিনী, দিপনী, ভাবনী ও তারাবলি। আনন্দিনী পাঁচ অঙ্গ যুক্ত, দিপনী চার অঙ্গ, ভাবনী বা পাবনী তিন অঙ্গ ও তারাবলি দুই অঙ্গ যুক্ত প্রবন্ধ। প্রবন্ধের চারটি ধাতু যথা- ধ্রুব, উদগ্রাহ, মেলাপক,আভোগ। সংগীত পারিজাত গ্রন্থে আছে-

'প্রবন্ধজাতয়ঃ পঞ্চ বর্তন্তে তাঃ ক্রমেন চ।
ষড়ভিরঙ্গৈর্মেদিনী ন্যন্নন্দিনী পঞ্চভির্ভবেৎ।।
চতুর্ভি দিপনী প্রোক্তা ত্রিভিয়ঙ্গৈস্তু পাবনী।
দ্বাভ্যাং তারাবলী জাতিরঙ্গাভ্যামুপজায়তে।।'- সংগীত পারিজাত[৬]

প্রবন্ধ গানের এই অঙ্গগুলো গৌড়ীয় সঙ্গীতে বিশেষ করে কীর্তন ও বাউল অঙ্গের গান গুলিতে লক্ষ্য করা যায়। গৌড়ীয় নৃত্যে জয়দেবের 'গীতগোবিন্দ' থেকে শুরু করে রবীন্দ্রনাথের গান, বাংলার বিভিন্ন লোকসংগীতের সুর, পদ, রাগ, তাল, ও স্বর সহযোগে গীত গান ব্যবহৃত হয়। যেমন -গৌড়ীয় দশাবতার নৃত্যে জয়দেবের গীতগোবিন্দ থেকে গান নেওয়া হয়েছে। বাংলার প্রাচীন ওড্রমাগধী বৃত্তির অন্তর্গত মেদিনী জাতীয় প্রবন্ধ অনুসরণ করে বর্তমানে কীর্তনীয়ারা কীর্তন পরিবেশন করে। নীলাচলে দ্বিতীয় ও তৃতীয় বছরের রথযাত্রা উৎসবের সময় স্বয়ং মহাপ্রভু, সাত সম্প্রদায় ও বাংলার সমস্ত ভক্তরা মিলিত হয়ে খোল, চোদ্দ মৃদঙ্গ, ছাপান্ন জোড়া করতাল সহযোগে 'মহানৃত্য সঙ্কীর্তন'' করেছিলেন। আর এই সাত সম্প্রদায়ের এক এক জন মহাজন মহাপ্রভুর আদেশে রথের সম্মুখে নৃত্যগীত করেছিলেন। যার মধ্যে মহাপ্রভু 'নাট্যশাস্ত্র' অনুযায়ী উচ্চণ্ড নৃত্য ও সবশেষে স্বরূপের ধুয়াগান সহযোগে মধুর নৃত্য করেছিলেন। অদ্বৈত, নিত্যানন্দ, হরিদাস ও বক্রেশ্বর এরা মহাপ্রভুর চার সম্প্রদায়ের একজন করে নর্তক ছিলেন। চার সম্প্রদায়ের মুখ্য গায়ক ছিলেন স্বরূপ, শ্রীবাস, মুকুন্দ দত্ত ও গোবিন্দ ঘোষ। এছাড়াও প্রত্যেক সম্প্রদায়ে পাঁচ

জন করে পালি গায়েন বা দোহার ও একজন নর্তক ও দুজন মাঙ্গলিক ছিল। বাংলার অন্য সম্প্রদায়গুলির মধ্যে ছিলেন কুলীন গ্রামের, শান্তিপুরের ও শ্রীখণ্ডের এবং তাদের মুখ্য নর্তকরা হলেন সত্যরাজ, রামানন্দ, অচ্যুতানন্দ, নরহরি ও রঘুনন্দন। কীর্তি ও কীর্তন একই ধাতু হতে উৎপন্ন। কৃষ্ণকীর্তন, কালীকীর্তন এরূপ বিভিন্ন ধারার দেবদেবীর গুণগান বিষয়ক কীর্তন গান রচিত হয়েছে। ৬৪ প্রকার রস সহযোগে কীর্তন করা হয়। ছড়া জাতীয় এক শ্রেণীর লঘু সংগীত যা চৈতন্যদেবের আগে থেকে মধ্য ও পূর্ব বাংলায় প্রচলিত ছিল তা ধুয়াগান। ইহার এক বা একাধিক পদ দোহার সহযোগে গীত হয়। বৈষ্ণবদের ধর্ম প্রণালী সহজিয়া সম্প্রদায়ের প্রভাবান্বিত। সহজিয়া সম্প্রদায়ের মানুষরা কালের প্রভাবে তাদের প্রাচীন ধর্ম ভুলে বৈষ্ণব রাধাকৃষ্ণ আরাধনায় ব্রতী হয়ে ওঠে। শ্রীকৃষ্ণের এবং মহাপ্রভুর লীলা নিয়ে গৌড়ীয় সংগীতেও লীলাকির্তন বা রসকির্তন রচিত হয়েছে। পণ্ডিত শুভঙ্করের লেখা সংগীত দামোদরে আছে –

'শৃঙ্গার হাস্যকরুণ রৌদ্র বীর ভয়ানকাঃ।
বিভৎসাদ্ভুত শান্তশ্চ নবনাট্যরসাঃ স্মৃতার।।'[৭]

পদকর্তাদের গানের ভাব মাধুর্য কে প্রকাশ করার জন্য এই রস, জাতি, রাগ ও সুর সহ যে অলংকার কীর্তন গায়করা প্রয়োগ করেন তাহা আখর। প্রবন্ধ গীতে রাগ তাল বাদ্য অপরিহার্য অঙ্গ। কীর্তনের চারটি ঘরানা গরানহাটী বা গড়াণহাটী, মনোহরসাহী, রানিহাটি, মান্দারিনির মধ্যে ঝাড়খণ্ডী কীর্তন ধারা অবলুপ্ত হলেও ঝাড়খণ্ডের লৌকিক ঝুমুর গায়করা এই কীর্তন পদ্ধতি তাল সুর রাগ অনুসরণ করে গান করে। এভাবে শাস্ত্রীয় থেকে লোকসংগীতের জন্ম হয়।

চর্যা গীত: চর্যা হল আলো আঁধারি ভাষা। লুইপাদ হলেন আদি সিদ্ধাচার্য। আনুমানিক ১২শ শতকে প্রায় ২৪জন পদকর্তার রচিত ৪৭টি গান পাওয়া যায়। পটমঞ্জরী, গবড়া, গুর্জরী, অরু, বল্লডী, পটহ, বঙ্গা, কামোদ, মল্লারী, কাহ্ন গুঞ্জরি, দেশাখ, মালসী, গুবড়া, ধনসী, ভৈরবী, রামক্রী, শবরী, গৌড়ী, ভৈরব, প্রভৃতি রাগে গাওয়া হত। বর্তমানে গৌড়ীয় সংগীতে এর কিছু কিছু রাগ গাওয়া হয়। বাঙালি পদকর্তা অদ্বয়বজ্র বাংলায় 'চতুর বজ্রগীতিকা' নামে বৌদ্ধ সংকীর্তনমূলক পদ লিখেছিলেন। মৈত্রীপাদের 'গুরুমৈত্রীগীতিকা' নামে বাংলা পদাবলী আছে। আনুমানিক অষ্টম থেকে দ্বাদশ শতকের সময়কালীন বাংলায় পাল রাজত্ব কালে পাল রাজাদের মহীমা কীর্তন গাথা বা কীর্তিগাথা বা গুণগাথা কীর্তন সমগ্র বাংলায় গাওয়া হত। এছাড়াও বিভিন্ন পদকর্তাদের মধ্যে ষোড়শ শতাব্দীর বৃন্দাবন দাসের লেখাতে চর্যাপদের কথা, যোগীপাল, ভোগীপাল, মহিপাল ও ধর্মপালের গীতের কথা জানা যায়। অতীশ দীপঙ্কর নামে এক বাঙালি চর্যাপদ রচয়িতা চর্যার পদ গীত সহযোগে নাচ করতেন। নৃত্য, গীত, বাদ্য ও নাট্য সহযোগে চর্যাপদগুলি গাওয়া 'নাথসাহিত্যে' পাই –

'নাচন্তি যে গোরক্ষনাথ মাদলে করি ভর
মাটীতে না পড়ে পদ আবগ উপর[৮]।।'

চর্যাগানগুলি মৃদঙ্গ, মাদল, বীণা (হেরুক বীণা, কর্করী বীণা, তুম্বরু বীণা), বাঁশী, ঘন বাদ্য সহযোগে গীত

হত। প্রাচীন বাংলা ভাষার নিদর্শন এই চর্যার পদগুলি। চার থেকে ছয়টি পদ নিয়ে চর্যার পদগুলি রচিত। বাংলায় ত্রিনাথের গান বা ত্রিনাথের পাঁচালী যা আখ্যান মুলক গীত শোনা যায়। চর্যাপদে আমরা দেহতত্ত্ব মূলক ধারণা পাই। 'বৌদ্ধ গান ও দোঁহা' নামক গ্রন্থে যে দেশীয় ও শাস্ত্রীয় রাগ রাগিণী সম্বন্ধিত গান আছে তার মধ্যে গৌড়ীয় বা দেশাখ্য নামে দেশীয় রাগ রাগিণীর মধ্যে বঙ্গাল একটি স্বতন্ত্র ধারা। বৌদ্ধরা দেহকেই সর্বস্ব মনে করত। তেমনি বাংলার বাউল, আউল, ফকির, দরবেশ, নেড়া নেড়ি, গোঁসাইরা এই দেহতত্ত্বেরর গান যুগ যুগ ধরে গেয়ে আসছে। তারা দেহস্বরূপ মানুষে বিশ্বাসী ও সত্যসন্ধানী। এদের প্রত্যেকটি গানে এক গুপ্ত গুঢ় অর্থ আছে। লোকসংগীতের ধারার মধ্যেই প্রাচীনের ইতিহাস লুকায়িত আছে। বাউল হল বাংলার এক গুরুমুখী সংগীত ধারা। দেহ স্বরূপ ঈশ্বর নিয়ে বহু প্রাচীনকাল থেকে এই বাউলিয়াদের সাধন ভজন মূলক সঙ্গীত ধারা চলে আসছে। এদের সংগীত অত্যন্ত উচ্চশ্রেণীর মার্গ পদ্ধতিকে নির্দেশ করে। কালের করালে ইহা লোকগীতির পর্যায়ে পড়লেও পূর্বে যে ইহা শাস্ত্রের আঙ্গিনায় গণ্য হত তা বলার অপেক্ষা রাখে না। ইহারা লোক সমাজের চিত্র নিজেদের গানে তুলে ধরেন। নিজেরাই গান বাধেন, নিজেরাই গান করেন, কখনও হাতে থাকে গুবগুবি, একতারা, অন্য হাতে ঘুঙ্গুর বাজিয়ে তাল রাখেন, আর সাথে দু বাহু তুলে ঘুরে ঘুরে নাচ করেন। বিখ্যাত বাউল গায়ক লালন ফকির। আমরা রবীন্দ্রনাথের গানে লালন ফকিরের অনেক সুরের প্রভাব দেখত পাই।লালনের 'জাত গেলো জাত গেলো বলে'- এই গানটির সুর বর্তমানে গৌড়ীয় সঙ্গীতে বাবহৃত হচ্ছে। যেমন- গৌড়ীয়ে গণেশ বন্দনা–

'গণেশায় নম নমহ, আদি ব্রহ্ম নিরুপম,
পরম পুরুষ পরাৎপর হে।
খর্ব স্থূল কলেবর, গজ মুখ লম্বোদর
মহাযোগী পরম সুন্দর হে।'

পৌরাণিক কাব্যসংগীত (বৈষ্ণব, শৈব, শাক্ত নৃত্য গীত): মৌর্য যুগের সমসাময়িক কাল থেকে বাংলায় পৌরাণিক হিন্দু ধর্ম প্রভাব বিস্তার লাভ করে। আমরা ১৮টি পুরাণ ও ১৮টি উপপুরাণের নাম পাই। মালাধর বসুও সনাতন ভগবত পুরাণ আলচনা করতেন গৌড়ের সভায় পঞ্চদশ শতকে। ৭ম শতকে বাংলায় শাক্ত, বৈষ্ণব, শৈব, গাণপত্য ও সৌর এই পাঁচ শাখার ধর্মীয় আচার বিচার প্রচলিত ছিল। চতুর্থ শতকে রাজা চন্দ্রবর্ম্মার আমলে বাঁকুড়ার শুশুনিয়া পর্বতের এক গুহালিপি থেকে পাহাড়পুরের মন্দির উৎকীর্ণ ভাস্কর্যে কৃষ্ণ লীলার কাহিনী থেকে গৌড়ে বিষ্ণুপুজার কথা পাই। পাল আমলের বাংলার বহু নর্তেশ্বর মূর্তি চোল রাজাদের মন্দিরে বিগ্রহ রূপে প্রতিষ্ঠিত আছে। গৌড়দেশের অনেক বাঙালি যেমন –শ্রীকণ্ঠ শিব, উমাপতিশিব, ধ্যানশিব দক্ষিণ ভারতের চোল রাজাদের শিব আচার্য। এক সময় তামিলনাড়ুর চিদাম্বরম মন্দির ও দক্ষিণ ভারতের অন্যান্য মন্দিরগুলিতে সাম গানের পর গৌড়ীয় সংগীত ও তারপর দ্রাবিড় সংগীত গাওয়া বাধ্যতামূলক ছিল। বাঙালি শিবাচার্য বিশ্বেশ্বর শম্ভু এয়োদশ শতকে দক্ষিণ ভারতের ককাতীয় রাজবংশের গুরু ছিলেন। তাঁর প্রতিষ্ঠিত শিবমন্দিরে আট জন বাদক ও দশজন নর্তকী ছিল। এছাড়াও মঠ ও অন্নসত্রে ছিল ছয় জন নর্তকী, ১৪ জন গায়িকা ও একজন কাশ্মিরি গায়ক। 'মনসামঙ্গলে' পাই –

"পদ্মারে লইয়া কাঁখে
নাচে শিব ঘন পাকে[৮]।।"

বাংলার শক্তি আরাধনার দেবীকে নিয়েও নানান মন্ত্র, স্তোত্রগান, বন্দনামূলক গান, আগমনী, বিজয়ার গান রচিত হয়েছে যুগ যুগ ধরে যা গৌড়ীয় সংগীতের মূল উপাদান। গৌড়ীয়তে হরগৌরী তথা অর্ধ নারীশ্বর নৃত্যগীতও করা হয়। যেমন – নৃত্য – অর্ধ নারীশ্বর,তাল – দোঠুকী, রাগ – মালকোষ, ভবপ্রিতানন্দ ওঝার রচনা, গান-

'অর্ধ বক্ষ ধরিয়া স, অর্ধে পীণ পয়োধর।
বাঘাম্বর, রক্তাম্বর, ভাব ধরিছে গৌরীবেশ।'

একটি অম্বিকা স্তুতি সহ গৌড়ীয় নৃত্য যার তাল চৌতাল এবং রাগ – দেশ, গান –

'জয় মা অম্বিকে ত্রিলোক পালিকে,
কিংশুক মালিকে হর মনমোহিনী।'

বাংলার শিব বিষয়ক মালদহের গম্ভীরা গান বিখ্যাত। প্রথমে বন্দনা আকারে গান শুরু হয়, যেভাবে গৌড়ীয়তে বন্দনা করা হয়। বাংলায় প্রাচীন কাল থেকে পুতুল নাচ খুব জনপ্রিয় ছিল, যা ভরতের 'নাট্যশাস্ত্রে' উল্লেখ আছে। সুতায় পুতুলে টান দিয়ে সূত্রধররা অভিনয় দেখাত, যা থেকে পরবর্তীতে মানুষ দ্বারা সাজ সজ্জার মাধমে নাটক, যাত্রা অভিনয়ের সৃষ্টি হয়। বাৎস্যায়নের 'কামসূত্রে' নাটক অভিনয়ের উল্লেখ পাই। গাজন, ধর্মের পুজার সময় ভক্তারা বিভিন্ন দেব দেবীর সঙ সেজে এভাবেই নাটক, অভিনয়, নাচ গান সহ গম্ভীরা উৎসব পালন করে। ঘনরামের 'ধর্মমঙ্গলে' ধর্ম পুজার গাজনের সময় সারা সপ্তাহ ধরে গীত বাদ্য নৃত্য নাট্য সহ আদ্যের গম্ভীরার উল্লেখ পাই -

'গায়েন বাদেন সব গাজনের মূল।
হরিহর দেখুক আসি আদ্যের ধুমুল'[৫]।। -পাদল পালা, গৌড়েশ্বরের ধর্ম পুজা, ৫৫।

উলা গ্রামে আউল চাঁদ নামে এক গোঁসাই বা ঠাকুর বা ফকিরের নাম শোনা যায়। কৃষ্ণদাস, বিষ্ণুদাস, লক্ষ্মীকান্ত নামে তাঁর ২২জন শিষ্য ছিল। তাদের গুরুদের মহাশয় ও শিষ্যদের বরাতি বলা হত। তারা নিজেরা গম্ভীরার বন্দনা মূলক গান লিখত ও গাজনের সময় শিব মন্দিরের সামনে নৃত্যগীত করত। -'আমরা আউলের ভক্ত বিষ্ণুবাই গম্ভীরাসুদ্ধ''[৪]।

গৌড়ীয় নৃত্য শিববন্দনাতে শিবকে উদ্দেশ্য করে রবীন্দ্রনাথের একটি গান সহ ঝাঁপতালে গৌড়ীয় নৃত্য করা হয়। যেমন – 'হে নিখিল ভার ধারণ বিশ্ব বিধাতা।'

মঙ্গল কাব্য গান: মঙ্গলকাব্য কথার অর্থ শুভ বা মঙ্গলজনক কাব্যগীত। প্রত্যেকটি মঙ্গলকাব্য গীত ও পালাগান আকারে গাওয়া হয়। মধ্যযুগে লৌকিক, পৌরাণিক ও বৈষ্ণব এই তিন নামের মঙ্গল সুচক কাব্য পাওয়া যায়। যেমন- ধর্মমঙ্গল, মনসামঙ্গল, চৈতন্যমঙ্গল, রসিকমঙ্গল, অদ্বৈত্যমঙ্গল, জগৎমঙ্গল, সূর্যমঙ্গল

আরও অনেক মঙ্গল কাব্য। একজন মুল গায়েন, কয়েকজন দোহার ও বায়েন সহযোগে, বাদ্যের তালে তালে মন্দিরা, চামর, খোল ও তানপুরা সহযোগে নাচ গান অভিনয় করতে থাকে। ষোড়শ শতকের দিকে অনেক মঙ্গল কাব্য রচনা হয় যার মধ্যে চণ্ডী মঙ্গল কাব্য অন্যতম। চৈতন্য ভাগবতেও চণ্ডীর বন্দনা আছে। বৃন্দাবন দাস বাঙ্গালীর মঙ্গল চণ্ডীর পুজা রাত্রি সহজগে গান করার কথা বর্ণনা করেছেন। এই রাত্রি জাগরণ গীত বা পাঁচালীকে চট্টগ্রাম অঞ্চলে 'জাগরণ গান' বলা হয়। মঙ্গলকাব্য পালার গায়করা ঢিমালয় বা মধ্যলয় বা ধীরলয়ে টানা টানা সুরে গান গায় পাঁচালীর ঢঙে। তাই মনসামঙ্গল কাব্যগানগুলিকে মনসার পাঁচালীও বলা হয়। একতাল, দোঠুকি তেওট প্রভৃতি নানা কঠিন তালে রাগ আলাপচারী বন্দনা সহ পালা গায়করা গান ধরে সাথে নৃত্য ও অভিনয় করে, নানা রকম সঙ সাজে চরিত্র অনুযায়ী। মঙ্গল কাব্যের বেশিরভাগ দেবীরা মর্ত্যে পুজা প্রচারের জন্য স্বর্গের নর্তকিকে নাচে তালভঙ্গ করে অভিশাপ দিয়ে মর্ত্যে মানুষ রূপে পাঠায়। বাংলার প্রতি ঘরে ঘরে চণ্ডী পুজার সাথে দুজন বিখ্যাত কবির চণ্ডীমঙ্গল কাব্য গীত হত। রাঢ় বাংলার কবিকঙ্কনের গীত ও গৌড়ের কবি মানিক দত্তের গীত খুবই জনপ্রিয় ছিল।

'গাইল মানিক দত্ত নোতুন গীত।।'
অষ্ট দিন অভয়া বারিতে কর স্থিতি।
নাট গীত যন্ত্র সমেত লাভ ব্রিহিতি।।

.....

বায়েন তাম্বুর দিনু সম্প্রদা গোছায়া[৫]।।'- চণ্ডী মঙ্গল, মানিক দত্ত(মালদহ নিবাসী)

একটি গৌড়ীয় চণ্ডী বন্দনা গীত যা কালিকাপুরাণ থেকে নেওয়া মিশ্র রাগ ও অন্যান্য রাগের সংমিশ্রণে দোঠুকি তাল সহযোগে নৃত্য করা হয়। প্রথমে বন্দনা গেয়ে তারপর গানটি শুরু হয়। গানটি হল-

'নমস্তে চণ্ডীকে চণ্ডী, চণ্ড মুণ্ড বিনাশিনী,
নমস্তে কালিকে কাল, মহাভয় বিনাশিনী।
প্রণমামি জগদ্ধাত্রীং জগত পালনকারিণী,
.....জগত সৃষ্টি বিধায়িনী।
.....।'

ঘনরামের 'ধর্মমঙ্গল' কাব্যে এবং রামাই পণ্ডিতের 'শূন্যপুরানে' ধর্মঠাকুরের পূজাপদ্ধতি, গাজন, সন্ন্যাস সন্ন্যাসিনীদের বাদ্য সহযোগে গীত বাদ্য নৃত্য নাট্যের পরিচয় পাই–

"পুষ্পাঞ্জলি গীত পণ্ডিত রাম এ গান।
নাট গীত করে গতি এ চারি চৌপর রাতি
তামর অঙ্গুরি লইএ করে"।। – টিকা পারণ, রামাই পণ্ডিত[৪]
'পুলকে প্রণাম খাটে, পদ্য বাদ্য গীত নাটে,
যোগ যজ্ঞে জাগিল যামিনী[৫]।। '- ঘনরাম, ৫ম সর্গ,

মনসামঙ্গল কাব্যে আমরা বেহুলার ঠোঁট থেকে মৃদঙ্গের বোলের সাথে পায়ে তাল দিয়ে নানা রাগ আলাপচারি সহ গান ও নৃত্যের পরিচয় পাই। ঐ যুগে নৃত্য গীতে পারদর্শী তিনজন বাঙালি বধূরও নাম পাই –বেহুলা, পদ্মাবতী ও বিদ্যুৎপ্রভা। এছাড়াও সেক শুভোদয়া নামে এক বাঙালি গৃহবধূর সংগীতেরও পরিচয় পাই। নদীমাতৃক বাংলার আনাচে কানাচে প্রচুর সাপের উৎপাতের হাত থেকে বাঁচতে সর্প দেবী মনসার গীতের মাধ্যমে মনসার পুজা করা হয় যাকে মনসার গান বা মনসার ভাসান গান বা বিষহরীর গান বা পদ্মার গানও বলা হয়।

রাগ রাগিণী: ওড্রমাগধীর অন্তর্গত গৌড়ীয় সংগীত ভারতী ও কৈশিকী বৃত্তি অনুসরণ করে। বাকপ্রধান ভারতীয় নারীদের সাজসজ্জা,বেশভূষাযুক্ত শৃঙ্গার বা আদি রসাত্মক বহুনৃত্যগীত, কামকলা সুকোমলবৃত্তি কৈশিকীর সৌন্দর্য গৌড়ীয় সংগীতকে নাট্যশাস্ত্র কাল থেকে অত্যন্ত গুরুত্বপূর্ণ আকর্ষণীয় করে তুলেছে। এই সংগীতে যে রাগগুলি ব্যবহার হয় সেগুলি হল– মালব, বসন্ত, দেশাগ, গোণ্ডকিরি, দেশবরাটী, বিভাস, কর্ণাট, রামকিরী, গুর্জরী, ভৈরবী, মালবশ্রী, বেলাবেলী, কেদার, বঙ্গাল বরাটী, ভাটীয়ালী, শ্রী, বঙ্গাল, পটমঞ্জরী, সিন্ধোড়া, মেঘগৌড়, মালবগৌড়, মালীগৌড়, গৌড়গিরি, বীভাশষকহূ, কোড়া, দেশ প্রভৃতি। নারায়ণ দেবের পদ্মাপুরাণে ধানসী রাগ, পটমঞ্জরি, করুণ ভাটিয়ালি, বেলওয়াড়ি, সুহি বা সুই বা সুহই রাগ, বড়াটী, নটমল্লার, গান্ধার প্রভৃতি রাগের নাম পাই। নাট্যশাস্ত্রের' ভারতী ও কৈশিকী বৃত্তি অনুযায়ী কীর্তনিয়ারা মহাজনদের রচিত পদাবলী রাগ তাল সুর নৃত্য অভিনয় সহযোগে বিভিন্ন পালা কীর্তন গান করত। টীকাকার পুজারি গোস্বামীর 'বাল বোধিনি' টীকায় রামকিরী, গুর্জরী, বসন্ত, মালব রাগ ও তালের কথা বলেছেন-

'গীতন্যাস্য মালবরাগ রূপক তাল ইত্যাহ মালবেতি।
তস্য লক্ষণং যথা।'[৬]

জয়দেবের 'গীতগোবিন্দ' রাগ তাল সমৃদ্ধ বৈষ্ণব রসশাস্ত্র। একতাল, অষ্টতাল সহ বিভিন্ন রাগে তিনি পদ রচনা করেছিলেন। 'গীতগোবিন্দের' যে গানটি দশাবতার নৃত্য রূপে গীত হয় তা রূপক তালে মালব রাগে জয়দেব রচনা করেছেন। যথা-

'মালবরাগেন রূপকতালেন চ গীয়তে –
প্রলয়পয়োধিজলে ধৃত বানসি বেদং।
বিহিত বহিত্র চরিত্রম খেদম্।।
কেশব, ধৃত মীনশরীর, জয় জগদীশ হরে।।'৫।। ধ্রবম্।[৯]

'সঙ্গীত রাগ কল্পদ্রুম' গ্রন্থে পুত্র রাগ, স্ত্রী রাগ এবং রাগের স্বর ও গাহিবার সময়ের উল্লেখ আছে। যথা

১) অথ বঙ্গাল রাগ স্ত্রিয়ঃ

'মৃগীনী মনরঞ্জিনৌ প্রতাপী হংসিকা বরী।
বঙ্গালো ভৈরবপুত্রস্তন্য ভারজ্যাঃ প্রকীরত্তিতাঃ।। '

বঙ্গাল বা শুদ্ধ বঙ্গাল রাগে বর্তমানে গৌড়ীয়তে শিব আলাপচারী ব্রহ্মতালে গাওয়া হয়। মিশ্র বঙ্গাল রাগে গাওয়া হয় সরস্বতী বন্দনা, যেমন- 'ভবল কমল পরে রে। ও কে বিহরেয়া মরি,বিমল রজত তনু সুষমা সুন্দরি, হেরিকি রুপ মাধুরি''।

গৌড় সারঙ্গঃ -

'ঋষভাংশ গ্রহ ন্যাসং গৌড়সারঙ্গ এব চ।
গৌড়া সারঙ্গ – সংযুক্তা পুরীয়া সা সংমিশ্রিতা।
দিবসান্তে সদা জ্ঞেরো গৌড়সারঙ্গ ঈরিতঃ।
রে গ ম প ধ নি সা রে গ ম প ধ নি সা।।'

দিনের শেষ ভাগে গৌড় সারঙ্গ রাগ গাওয়া হয় উপরোক্ত স্বর প্রয়োগ করে। গৌড়করী রাগ গাওয়া হত এই স্বর প্রয়োগ করে - ''গ ম প ধ নি সা রে সা নি নি ধ প ম গ গ ম প গ গ ম প নি সা ধ রে গ ম নি সা রে গ ম সা'।।'

আচার্য মতঙ্গ যে চার প্রকার গীতের কথা বলেছেন তার মধ্যে গমক যুক্ত রাগ সঙ্গীত ছিল গৌড়ী গীতি। গৌড়ে গ্রামরাগ গৌড়পঞ্চম উদ্ভটনাট্যে প্রয়োগ হত। বর্তমানে বাংলার বিভিন্ন গানে এমনকি গৌড়ীয় নৃত্যে ব্যবহৃত গানে এই রাগ গুলি ব্যবহার হচ্ছে।

নৃত্য গীতে রাগ তালের প্রয়োগ-

১) নৃত্য – নটরাজ, গান – 'নৃত্যের তালে তালে, হে নটরাজ'।

২) তাল – মিশ্র, রাগ – মিশ্র, নৃত্য - বন্দনা মঙ্গলাচরণ।

৩) তাল – তেওড়া, রাগ – মালকোশ, নৃত্য – অর্ধনারীশ্বর।

৪) তাল – মিশ্র, রাগ – মিশ্র, নৃত্য – কালিতারা।

৫) তাল- ঝাঁপতাল, রাগ- ইমন, নৃত্য- চণ্ডীবন্দনা, গান – 'বন্দো নারায়ণী ভৈরবী ভবানী, নগেন্দ্র নন্দিনী চণ্ডী'',(বর্তমানে প্রয়োগ- ছৌ নৃত্য, চতুর্ভুজ প্রহরণ মূষিক বাহন)।

৬) তাল – রূপক, রাগ- ভূপালী, নৃত্য-আলাপচারী,,

৭) রাগ- দুর্গা, নৃত্য - বলরাম অবতার,

৮) রাগ- খাম্বাজ, নৃত্য -লীলাকীর্তন ও পুতনাবধ, গান- 'ধরিয়া মোহন বেশ পরম সুন্দরী''।

মিশ্র খাম্বাজ রাগে বর্তমানে একটি গান- 'কাঙ্গাল বলিয়া করিও না হেলা, আমি পথের ভিখারী নহি গো।'

৯) রাগ- বিলাবল বা মিশ্র বিলাবল, তাল – ঝাঁপতাল, নৃত্য- গণেশ বন্দনা,

১০) রাগ- ভৈরবী, নৃত্য – দশমহাবিদ্যা,

১১) রাগ- গৌড়, নৃত্য -হরিহর আলাপচারী।

মার্গ নৃত্য :- মার্গ অর্থাৎ পথ, প্রাচীন ধারার পথের ওপর নির্ভর করে গৌড়ীয় নৃত্যের পুনঃনির্মাণ ঘটেছে।

সেই মার্গগুলি হল – বন্দনা, মঙ্গলাচরণ, আলাপচারী, মহাজনপদ নৃত্য, লীলাকীর্তন নৃত্য, পালানৃত্য, দশাবতার নৃত্য। নৃত্য শুরুর পদ্ধতি- পৃথিবী, মাটি, দেবদেবী ও দিক বন্দনা সংগীত– মঙ্গল সূচক শুভ তাল স্বর আলাপ সহযোগে নৃত্য গীত– শুদ্ধ নৃত্য সহযোগে আলাপচারী– জয়দেব, চণ্ডীদাস প্রভৃতি মহান মানুষদের লেখা পদ গান সহযোগে মহাজনপদ নৃত্য– তারপর দেব দেবীর প্রশংসাসূচক লীলা কীর্তন (গীত, বাদ্য, নৃত্য)– বিভিন্ন পৌরাণিক কাহিনি অবলম্বনে পালা নৃত্য, গীত– সাত্ত্বিক ভাব যুক্ত দশা বা অন্তঃ ভাব নৃত্য হয়।

প্রতিপাদ্য সঙ্গীত বাক্তিত্ব : বাংলায় জয়দেব, বিদ্যাপতি, ঘনরাম চক্রবর্তী, রামাই পণ্ডিত, বিজয় গুপ্ত, কেতকা দাস ক্ষেমানন্দ, মুকুন্দ রাম, কবি কঙ্কণ, রূপ রাম চক্রবর্তী, জগজ্জীবন, দ্বিজ রাম দাস, নারায়ন দেব, বংশী দাস, চন্ডীদাস, কৃত্তিবাস, মালাধর বসু, কাশীরাম দাস, মাধব আচার্য, বিপ্রদাস, ভারতচন্দ্র, লোচন দাস, কৃষ্ণদাস কবিরাজ, মালাধর বসু, নরোত্তম দাস ঠাকুর এইসব বৈষ্ণব পদকর্তা দের সংগীতের পরিচয় পাই। মধ্যযুগের মূঘল সংস্কৃতির সাথে মিশ্রণের পাশাপাশি বাংলায় নিজস্ব ধারায় সংস্কৃতি গড়ে উঠেছিল। ইংরেজ শাসনকালে বাংলার শিল্প সংস্কৃতির চর্চা কিছুটা কম হলেও একেবারে থেমে থাকেনি। এই যুগে বহু মহামানব, সাহিত্যিক, সঙ্গীতজ্ঞ, নৃত্যশিল্পী, বাদক, চারুশিল্পীর কথা পাওয়া যায়। রবীন্দ্রনাথ, মধুসূদন, নজরুল, নটী বিনোদিনী, গিরিশচন্দ্র ঘোষ, সলিল চৌধুরী, প্রমুখ বহু শিল্প রসিকের নাম পাওয়া যায়।

সাহিত্য, ভাস্কর্য ও চিত্রকলায় গৌড়ীয় বাদ্যযন্ত্র :- বাংলার পোড়া মাটি, ইট, বেলে পাথর, ও মাকড়া পাথরের কারুকার্যখচিত মন্দির, নাটমণ্ডপ, রাজপ্রাসাদের সভাগৃহ, বৌদ্ধবিহারে যে নৃত্য গীত বাদ্য, পালাগান ও কথকতার আসর বসতো আজ তা ভগ্নপ্রায় অবস্থায় দাড়িয়ে। হংসেশ্বরী মন্দির, সিদ্ধেশ্বর মন্দির, আদিনা মসজিদ যা আদ্যনাথের মন্দির, বিষ্ণুপুরের শ্যামরায় মন্দির, জোড়বাংলা মন্দির, এছাড়াও দেউল, রাসমঞ্চ, নাটমন্দির প্রভৃতিতে নৃত্যরত বাদক বাদিকার মূর্তি খোদিত আছে। কেউ বীণা বাজাচ্ছে, কেউ মৃদঙ্গ, কেউ আবার সরার ওপর নৃত্যরত অবস্থায় বাঁশী বাজাচ্ছে। তারা সবাই অলংকার, বেশভূষায় সজ্জিত। বাংলার শৈব মূর্তিগুলি দেখলে তাণ্ডব ও লাস্য নৃতরত শিবের হাতে বাদ্য সহযোগে ছবি পাই। পাল যুগের বার হাতের নন্দী ষাঁড়ের ওপর বীণা হাতে নৃত্যপরা শিবের মূর্তি পাওয়া গিয়েছে, যেখানে শিবের দুই হাত মাথার উপর তালি দেওয়া অবস্থায় অপর দুই হাত বীণা ধারণরত। নৃত্ত ও নৃত্যে পারদর্শী শিবের ললিত আনন্দ তাণ্ডব নৃত্যের ভঙ্গিমা যুক্ত নৃত্যপরা মূর্তিটি ঢাকা জেলার ভরেল্লা থেকে পাওয়া গিয়েছে। বাংলার এই মূর্তির পাদদেশে খদিত শিলালেখ থেকে নটরাজের নর্তেশ্বর নামটি পাওয়া যায়, অর্থাৎ যিনি তাণ্ডব ও লাস্য নৃত্যে পারদর্শী। পঞ্চদশ শতকের বিজয় গুপ্তের 'মনসামঙ্গল' কাব্যে শিবের ডমরু, মৃদঙ্গ, ধুমধুমি, প্রভৃতি বাদ্যের নাম পাই যা আজও গৌড়ীয় নৃত্যের শিববন্দনা সংগীতে ব্যবহার হয়।

ঋকবেদেও ঢাক, মন্দিরা সহ নৃত্যের কথা আছে। চারভাগে বিভক্ত এই বাদ্যের গঠন এবং বাজানোর পদ্ধতি বিভিন্ন প্রকার। ১) আনদ্ধবাদ্য যা চর্ম দ্বারা আচ্ছাদিত ২) ঘনবাদ্য যা মুলত ধাতু নির্মিত ৩) ততবাদ্য

যা তার নির্মিত ৪) সুষির বাদ্য যা ফুঁ দিয়ে বাজাতে হয়। ১) আনদ্ধ বাদ্যঃ-ঢাক, ঢোল, পাখোয়াজ, মৃদঙ্গ বা শ্রীখোল, দুন্দুভি বা ধামসা, ডমরু। ২) ঘন বাদ্যঃ- কাঁসর, করতাল, মন্দিরা, ঘণ্টা ৩) তত বাদ্যঃ সেতার, সরোদ, বীণা, এসরাজ, বেহালা, দোতারা, গুবগুবি, তানপুরা ৪) সুষির বাদ্যঃ সানাই, শঙ্খ, রামশিঙ্গা, বাঁশি, শিঙ্গা। এছাড়াও গাল বাদ্য, ভাণ্ড বাদ্য, প্রভৃতি।

শ্রী বিজন বিহারী ভট্টাচার্য সঙ্কলিত ও সম্পাদিত 'মনসামঙ্গলে' আমরা বেহুলা লখিন্দরের বিয়ের সময় ঢাক, খোল, দণ্ডা ভেরি শাঁখ ঘণ্টা প্রভৃতি হাজার বাদ্য যন্ত্রের ব্যাবহার লক্ষ্য করি নিম্নোক্ত শ্লোকে –

'বেহুলা লখিন্দরে ---সুত্র বান্ধে করে
সঘনে পড়ে জয়ধ্বনি।
বাজে খোল দণ্ডা---ভেরি শঙ্খ ঘণ্টা
হরিষ শুনিয়া বাজনি।।
বেহুলা সুন্দরি---মঙ্গলিল হাড়ি
লখাই ঢাকে সপ্তবার।
হাজার বাজনা---পড়িল ঝঞ্ঝনা
আনন্দ হইল সবাকারে।।'[১০]

অপর একটি শ্লোকে দেবসভায় বেহুলার নৃত্য, গীত, সহ নানা বাদ্যের পরিচয় পাই-

'দেবতা সভায় গিয়া---মৃদঙ্গ মন্দিরা লইয়া
নৃত্য করে বেহুলা নাচনী
.....
ঘন ঘন তাল রাখে---অঞ্চলে বয়ান ঢাকে
হাসি হাসি বদন দেখায়
মুখে গায় মিষ্ট বোল ---খদির কাষ্ঠের খোল
তাথই তাথই ঘন বায়।।
.....
নাহি হায় তাল ভঙ্গ ---মনে বড় বাড়ে রঙ্গ
প্রমত্ত ময়ূরী যেন ফিরে।।
রঙ্গে ভঙ্গে হস্ত নাড়ে ---ত্রিভঙ্গ হইয়া পড়ে
এইরুপে নাচে বিনোদিনী।
নৃত্য গীতে মন মোহে--- যতেক দেবতা কহে
ভাল নাচে বেহুলা নাচনী।।'[১০]

ক্ষমানন্দের এই শ্লোক বেহুলা নামে নাচনীর অপূর্ব নৃত্য ভঙ্গিমার চলন, মুখের মিষ্ট হাসি, অপূর্ব কণ্ঠ ও বাদ্যে নিপূনা (মৃদঙ্গ, মন্দিরা, কাংস্য, করতাল, খদির কাষ্ঠের খোল) এবং পায়ের নুপুরের তালে তালে

আসাধারণ নৃত্য পটীয়সীতার পরিচয় দেয়। বিভিন্ন মন্দিরের স্থাপত্যে আজও তা লক্ষ্য করা যায়। এই মনসামঙ্গল পালা মৃদঙ্গ, খোল, করতাল, কাঁসর, ঘণ্টা, শঙ্খ, চামর সহযোগে আজও বাংলার বিভিন্ন গ্রামে উৎসব অনুষ্ঠানে সারা রাত্রি ব্যাপি গীত হয়। রামাই পণ্ডিতের শূন্যপুরানে দেখা যায় গাল বাদ্য, শিঙ্গা, খমক, ভেরি, দুন্দুভি, জয়ঢাক, দামামা, উলুধ্বনি, শঙ্খ ধ্বনি ও গীত সহযোগে ধর্মঠাকুরের পূজার কথা আছে। আর তাতে তাল রাখছে ডমরু বাদ্য। যেমন –

‘সিঙ্গা এত গান গীত ডুম্বুরে ধর এ তাল।
ধম ধি আইআ শিব বাজাইছে গাল।।’
‘বাজে এ ঘন সিঙ্গা, খমক ভেরি লিঙ্গা,
দুন্দুভি জয়ঢাক দামামা৫।’ শূন্য পুরান – রামাই পণ্ডিত,
মানিক গাঙ্গুলির ও ঘন রামের ‘ধর্মমঙ্গল’ গ্রন্থে পাই
‘কত পদ্য বাদ্য বাজে আদ্যের গাজনে
ঢাক ঢোল সিঙ্গা কাড়া একাকার ময়।।’- ঘনরাম, ৫ম সর্গ।
‘ঢাক ঢোল সানি কাশী, শঙ্খ ঘণ্টা বীণা বাঁশী,
কাড়া পোড়া তূরী ভেরী বাজে।।’ - রঞ্জায় শালে ভর, মানিক গাঙ্গুলি। ২৪।[৫]

তাল : সংগীতের গুরুত্বপূর্ণ অঙ্গ হল তাল, যা সময়ের একক। তালবিহীন সংগীতের সৌন্দর্য প্রকাশ পায় না। তাল ছাড়া সঙ্গীত অনিবদ্ধ সঙ্গীত। ‘সঙ্গীত রত্নাকরে’ তালের একটি শ্লোক হল– ‘গীতং– বাদ্যং তথা নৃত্যং যত স্থানে প্রতিষ্ঠিতম[৫]’’। শিব ও পার্বতীর মিলিত তাণ্ডব ও লাস্য নৃত্যই গৌড়ীয় নৃত্য তথা অন্যান্য শাস্ত্রীয় নৃত্যের উপাদান। হরিনায়কের একটি শ্লোক হল–

‘সময়স্য সমত্বে ন ব্যঞ্জকত্বে ন চাধিকম,
তালয় ত্যে ষ সঙ্গীতং যত্তাল নিগদ্যতে[৮]।’

গৌড়ীয়তে বর্ণকাল বা মাত্রা দ্বারা তালকে পরিমাপ করা হয়। ৬৪ বর্ণ কাল পর্যন্ত তাল গৌড়ীয় সঙ্গীতে দেখা যায়। গীত বাদ্য নৃত্যে ব্যবহৃত তালের গতি তিন প্রকার যথা দ্রুত, মধ্য ও বিলম্বিত। এই লয় বোঝানোর জন্য হাত বা অঙ্গুলি সঞ্চালন দ্বারা কখনো সশব্দ কখনো নিঃশব্দ ক্রিয়া ব্যবহার হয়। এই সশব্দ ও নিঃশব্দ ক্রিয়াগুলিকে হিন্দুস্থানি সঙ্গীতে বলা হয় তাল ও ফাঁক আর বাংলায় বলা হয় তাল ও কাল, বা কোশী বা কুশী বা ফাঁক বা ছুট। এই তালি দেওয়ার রীতি প্রাচীন কালে গুহামানবের কাল থেকে চলে আসছে, তারা তাল রক্ষার জন্য হাতে তালি দিত বা কোন কাঠের দণ্ড দিয়ে মাটিতে বা পাথরে আঘাত করে শব্দ উৎপাদন করত। চৈতন্য মহাপ্রভু নিজেও হাতে তালি দিয়ে গাইতেন ও নৃত্য করতেন যা সম্পূর্ণ বাংলার শাস্ত্রীয় রাগ তালকে অবলম্বন করে। ‘চৈতন্য ভাগবতে’ পাই – ‘দিশা দেখান প্রভু হাতে তালি দিয়া’। গৌড়ীয় সংগীতে ব্যবহৃত তালের অবয়ব স্বরূপ আটটি অঙ্গ। যথা –

লঘু- ৪ বর্ণ কাল, গুরু- ৮, প্লুত – ১২, দ্রুত – ২, অনুদ্রুত -১, লঘুবিরাম - ৫, দ্রুতবিরাম –৩, কাকপদ –

১৬ বর্ণ কাল। গৌড়ীয় সংগীতে তালের আবর্তনের তিনটি বিভাগ যথা – শুদ্ধ, সালগ ও সংকীর্ণ।

শুদ্ধ – একটি তালের সাহায্যে এক আবর্তন।

সালগ- দুটি তালের একত্র সহযোগে এক আবর্তন।

সংকীর্ণ – দুয়ের অধিক তালের সহযোগে যদি এক আবর্তন হয় তাহলে সংকীর্ণ তাল। আবার এই গৌড়ীয় সংগীতে তাল ফেরতা হিসেবে সালগ ও সংকীর্ণ ব্যবহার হয়।

গৌড়ীয় সংগীতের যতি হল পাঁচ প্রকার যা লয় প্রত্যাবর্তনের নিয়ম মেনে চলে। যতিগুলি হল – সমা, স্রোতগতা, গোপুচ্ছা, পিপিলিকা, মৃদঙ্গা। গৌড়ীয় সংগীতে শ্রীখোল অত্যন্ত গুরুত্বপূর্ণ বিষয়। যা প্রাচীন হরিতকাকৃতি ও যবাকৃতি মৃদঙ্গ-এর সাথে মিল পাওয়া যায়। এই শ্রীখোল বা মৃদঙ্গ বৈষ্ণব সাধকদের সংগীত তথা ভজন সংকীর্তনের অত্যন্ত গুরুত্বপূর্ণ বাদ্যযন্ত্র। এই বাদ্যে লওয়া, তেহাই, প্রস্তুতি, পরন, লহর, ছক্কা, মাতন,মাথত, হাত, ঘাঁত, প্যাঁচ, প্রবন্ধ, উত্থান, হাতুটি একপদী, দ্বিপদী, ত্রিপদী, চক্রধার প্রভৃতি বোল বাণী সহযোগে বাজানো হয়। এই বাদ্যে তাল বাজানোর নির্দিষ্ট নিয়ম আছে। এই তালের দুটি অঙ্গ যথা– ছুট ও জোড়া। তালাঘাত বা জোড়া বোঝানো হয় ছুটের হাফ মাত্রা অর্ধমাত্রা ব্যবধানে পর পর দুটি তালাঘাত পড়লে। এই তালি দেওয়ার রীতি দ্বাদশ শতকে গোবর্ধন আচার্যের 'আর্যাসপ্তশতীতে' পাই–'কৃত হসিত হস্ত তালং[৮]।" ছুট হল নিঃশব্দ ক্রিয়া অর্থাৎ কোন শব্দ হয় না বা তালি পড়েনা। এই ফাঁক দেখানো হয় একটি তালাঘাতের পর অপর একটি তালাঘাত পড়ার পূর্বমাত্রা পর্যন্ত হাত সঞ্চালনা করে নিঃশব্দ ক্রিয়া দেখানোর মাধ্যমে। এই ফাঁক মাত্রার সমষ্টিকে ছুট বলে। গৌড়ীয় সংগীতে ছুট বা নিঃশব্দ ক্রিয়াগুলি যেভাবে দেখানো হয় তার ওপর ভিত্তি করে কাল, কোশী নাম দেওয়া হয়েছে। যখন হাতে তালি দেওয়ার সময় হাত যে অবস্থায় থাকুকনা কেন তার ঠিক নয় দশ ইঞ্চি উপরে উলম্ব ভাবে উঠিয়ে যে ক্রিয়া দেখান হয় তাকে কাল বা ছুটকোশী বলে। কোশীর অপর এক অর্থ বাংলায় কোল বোঝায়। নিঃশব্দ ক্রিয়া বোঝানোর সময় যখন হাতটিকে কোলের কাছে টেনে নেওয়া হয় তখন কোশী বা কোল কোশী বলে। গৌড় বাংলার অনেক তালের নামের শেষে কোশী ব্যবহার হয়, যেমন– দশকোশী। এই হস্ত সঞ্চালন ও কুঞ্চন এর মাধ্যমে বহু তালের সৃষ্টি হয়েছে। নরহরি চক্রবর্তীর লেখা 'গীত চন্দ্রোদয়' গ্রন্থে ১০১ টি তালের নাম পাওয়া যায়, যা বাংলার নিজস্ব তাল। বাদ্য সম্পর্কে জ্ঞানদাস বলছেন-

'দৃমিকি দৃমিকি তাতা থৈয়া থৈয়া মাদল মৃদঙ্গ বাজে'। [১১]

জয়দেবের 'গীতগোবিন্দ' গ্রন্থে নির্দিষ্ট ছন্দ যুক্ত রূপক, একতালী, যতি, নিসার, অষ্টতালী প্রভৃতি তালের নাম পাওয়া যায়। এছাড়াও বিভিন্ন তালের সমন্বয়ে গুচ্ছতালের সৃষ্টি হয়েছে। যেমন– আদিতাল গুচ্ছ ৮ টি তাল নিয়ে গঠিত, ব্রহ্মতাল গুচ্ছ ৪, পঞ্চতাল গুচ্ছ ৫টি এবং রুদ্রতাল গুচ্ছ ১১ টি তাল নিয়ে গঠিত। জয়দেবের 'গীতগোবিন্দ' গ্রন্থে অষ্টতালে গাওয়া একটি গীত হল – 'বদসি যদি কিঞ্চিদপি দন্ত রুচি কৌমুদী।' এই গানটি কীর্তন গায়করা প্রাচীনকাল থেকে গেয়ে আসছে 'বদসি অষ্ট তাল' নামে আটটি তালের ওপর ভিত্তি করে। অষ্টতাল গুলি হল –

আড় – ।০। - বিভাগ – ৪/২/৪ – ১০ মাত্রা

দোজ – ।।। - ৪/৪/৪ - ১২,

যতি – ০।।। - ২/৪/৪/৪ – ১৪,

শশীশেখর -।।০।।। - ৪/৪/ ২/৪/৪/৪ - ১২,

গঞ্জন -।।।। - ৪/৪/৪/৪ - ১৬

রূপক – ০। - ২/৪ - ৬

সোম -।।০ S – ৪/৪/২/৬ - ১৬

বিষমপঞ্চ- ০।।০। - ২/৪/৪/২/৪ – ১৬

গৌড়ীয় সংগীতে ব্যবহৃত তালগুলির নির্দিষ্ট বোল বাণী আছে। এছাড়াও আছে নির্দিষ্ট তাল লিপি চিহ্ন। হিন্দুস্থানি সংগীতের ন্যায় সোম তালি খালির চিহ্ন আছে।

সম - +

এক মাত্রার চিহ্ন -।

অর্ধ মাত্রার চিহ্ন –ু

তালের বিভাগের চিহ্ন -/

আঘাত বোঝাতে- ২,৩, ৪ প্রভৃতি সংখ্যা ব্যবহার হয়।

ফাঁক – ০

কালের চিহ্ন – . (ডট)

গৌড়ীয় সংগীতে ব্যবহৃত তাল গুলির নির্দিষ্ট আটটি জাতি থাকলেও মূল প্রধান ৫ টি জাতি ব্যবহৃত হয়। যথা –

একাকী - ১ বর্ণ কাল, পক্ষিণী – ২, ত্রস্য -৩, চতুরস্র -৪, খণ্ড -৫, ঋতু -৬, মিশ্র – ৭, সঙ্কীর্ণ -৯ বর্ণ কাল।

একাকী, পক্ষিণী, ঋতু এই ৩ টি জাতি গৌড়ীয়তে থাকলেও হিন্দুস্থানিতে নেই। 'নাট্যশাস্ত্রে' ৫টি জাতির উল্লেখ আছে। গৌড়ীয় সংগীতে ব্যবহৃত তালের নির্দিষ্ট ছন্দ, অলংকার, গমক, গ্রহপ্রাণ, মান, লঘু, গুরু ভেদ রয়েছে। গ্রহপ্রাণ– তালগুলি কখন আরম্ভ হবে বা গীত বাদ্য নৃত্যে তাল কখন শুরু হবে অর্থাৎ তালের আগে না পরে গীত শুরু হবে তা বোঝাতে গ্রহপ্রাণ ব্যবহার হয়। ইহার ৩ টি বিভাগ যথা– সমগ্রহ, অতীত গ্রহ ও অনাগত গ্রহ।

সমগ্রহ –গীত, নৃত্য যদি তাল থেকে শুরু হয় তখন সমগ্রহ।

অতীত গ্রহ – যদি তালের আগে গীত নৃত্য শুরু হয় তাহলে অতীত গ্রহ।

অনাগত – তাল শুরু হওয়ার পর যদি গীত ও নৃত্য শুরু হয় তখন অনাগত গ্রহ। অতীত ও অনাগত উভয়ের মিশ্রণে বিষম গ্রহ।

লওয়া – গৌড়ীয় সংগীতে তালের যে বোল বাণী ব্যবহৃত হয় তাকে হিন্দুস্থানি সংগীতে ঠেকা ও গৌড়ীয়তে লওয়া বলে। কীর্তনে গুরু লওয়া ও লঘু লওয়া ব্যবহৃত হয়।

অলংকার – অন্যান্য সঙ্গীতের মত গৌড়ীয় সংগীতেও তালের বর্ণ কাল বা মাত্রাকে দ্বিগুণ তিনগুণ ও চারগুণ আকারে আবর্তিত করে বিভিন্ন ছন্দে বোল বাণী রচিত হয়, যা অলংকার নামে পরিচিত। এই অলংকার সংগীতের সৌন্দর্য বৃদ্ধি করে। বর্তমানে প্রচলিত কয়েকটি তাল হল –

বড় দশকোষী – ২৮ মাত্রা, ছোট দশকোষী – ১৪, আড় -২০, দোজ – ২৪, যতি -২৮, শশীশেখর – ৪৪, মদনদোলা – ৪৪, ইন্দ্রভাস – ৫২, গঞ্জন – ৩২, রূপক – ১২, বীরবিক্রম – ৩৬, বিষমপঞ্চম – ৩২,মহামণ্ঠক – ৪৮, কন্দর্প – ২৮, ছোট লোফা - ৬,বৃহৎ লোফা -৬,পঞ্চতাল- ৬, আদিতাল – ৪, ধামালি – ৮ ও ১৬, মধ্যম দাসপাহিরা -১৬, ছোট দাসপাহিরা – ৮, এক তাল – ১৬, বড় তেওট – ২৮ প্রভৃতি।

১) লোফা তাল – ১ টি তাল ও ১ টি ফাঁক। ছন্দ – ৩/৩ অর্থাৎ ৬ মাত্রা বা বর্ণ কাল।

গুরু লওয়া

+	।	.		০	।	.
ঝা	গে	দা	।	দা	ঘি	না

লঘু লওয়া

+	।	.		০	।	.
তা	খি	তা	।	তা	খেটা	তিনি

২) ঝুর্ঝটি তাল - ২ টি আঘাত ও ২ টি ফাঁক। ছন্দ – ৩/৩/৩/৩ অর্থাৎ ১২ মাত্রা।

গুরু লওয়া

+	।	.	০	।	.	২	।	.	০	।	.	
জা	জা	ঝি	।	না	ঝি	নি	।	জা	ঝি	নী	।	ঝে	না	ঙ

লঘু লওয়া

+	।	.	০	।	.	২	।	.	০	।	.	
তা	আক	থি	।	না	থি	নি	।	তা	থি	নি	।	থেই	গুর	গুর

৩) গণেশ তাল : 'গণেশতাল সংজাতঃ সঙ্গীতে পরিভাষিতঃ।।' তালের চিহ্ন - ০ ০।। ((((। ইতি

গনেশতালঃ। [রাগ কল্পদ্রুম, ৩৬]। এছাড়াও ললিত প্যারী, ব্রহ্মতাল, রুদ্রতাল, মিশ্রতাল, সিংহতাল, গজলীল তাল, বীজয়, গজঝম্প, ষটতাল প্রভৃতি।

চ) রঙ্গমঞ্চ : মঞ্চ শব্দের অর্থ মাচা। বাঁশ, কাঠ, কলার গাছ দিয়ে পাঁচ ছয় হাত উচু করে বাঁশের মাচা তৈরি করে তার উপর কাঠের পাটাতন তৈরি করা হয়। এই উচ্চ আসনে শিল্পীরা নৃত্যগীত পরিবেশন করত[২]। 'নাট্যশাস্ত্র' গ্রন্থে আমরা রঙ্গমঞ্চের নাম পাই। বর্তমানে যাকে আমরা গ্যালারি বলি। হাজার হাজার মানুষ মঞ্চের নির্দিষ্ট আসনে বসে মঞ্চের আনন্দ উপভোগ করতে পারে। ওড্রমাগধীর রঙ্গমঞ্চ পরিক্রমা হবে উত্তর দিক থেকে ও প্রবেশ দুয়ার হবে দক্ষিণ দিকে। 'নাট্যশাস্ত্রে' আছে মর্তবাসীর রঙ্গালয় ৩২ হাত চওড়া ও ৬৪ হাত লম্বা হতে হবে। নৃত্যনাট্য, গান সহজে শোনার জন্য রঙ্গমঞ্চ মধ্যম আকারের তৈরি করা দরকার। বাৎস্যায়নের 'কামসুত্রে', জাতকে দলগত নাটক অভিনয়ের কথা আছে। যেভাবে চণ্ডীমণ্ডপ, দুর্গামণ্ডপে, শিবালয় মন্দির প্রাঙ্গণে মধ্যযুগে বাংলায় নৃত্যগীত নাটক, যাত্রা অভিনয় হত। এইসব রঙ্গমঞ্চকে 'সমাজ মণ্ডল' ও বলা হত। এছাড়াও যখন আলাদা নাট্যমণ্ডপ নির্মাণ করার কথা আসত তখন আগে ভূমি পরীক্ষা করে বাস্তুশাস্ত্র গণনা করে লাঙ্গল দিয়ে কর্ষণ করে মাটি শোধন করে ভূমি পরিমাপ করা হয়। গৃহস্থাপন দ্বারা ভিত্তিপ্রস্তর হয় ও শেষে স্তম্ভস্থাপন ও আচার্যদের দ্বারা অনুষ্ঠান করা হয়। ঘন রামের 'ধর্মমঙ্গল' কাব্যে গৌড়ের নাটমঞ্চ, নাটমন্দির, রাসমঞ্চ ও রঙ্গমঞ্চের কথা আছে। যেমন –

'সাজায়ে কদলী – মঞ্চে,
কাটারি পাতিয়ে সঞ্চে,
ভর দিয়া এল ধর্ম বাটে[৫]।'

গম্ভীরা বা চড়কের সময় বা দোলের সময়ে রাসমঞ্চ, নাট্যমঞ্চ তৈরি পদ্ধতি এখনও আমরা দেখতে পাই।

উপসংহার : গৌড়ীয় নৃত্য গীত বাদ্য ভরতেরও পূর্বে বলা চলে বহু প্রাচীনকাল থেকে চলে আসছে। শাস্ত্রকারদের রচনা সমাজের ওপর নির্ভর করে দাঁড়িয়ে আছে। ভাস্কর্য তখনি প্রাণ পায় যখন তা স্বচক্ষে খোদিত হয়। যুগে যুগে বিদেশি জাতি তুর্কি, বর্গি, মোঘলদের আক্রমণের দ্বারা বাঙালি জাতির ঐতিহ্য বার বার ভূলুণ্ঠিত হয়েছিল কিন্তু সম্পূর্ণ ধ্বংস করতে পারেনি তার কলেবরকে। তাই আজও বাংলার বিভিন্ন জায়গার মন্দিরের দেউল, ভাস্কর্য, চিত্রকলার ধ্বংসাবশেষ লক্ষ্য করলে প্রাচীন সেই সভ্যতার ইতিহাস বার বার মাথা চাড়া দিয়ে উঠে জানান দেয় তার গৌরবোজ্জ্বল অধ্যায়ের কথা। আমার এই প্রবন্ধ সেই বিরাট ইতিহাসের ক্ষুদ্র সংস্করণ মাত্র। গৌড়ের শাস্ত্রকাররা যে ধরনের গৌড়ী গীত, গৌড়ী রীতি, নৃত্য, স্বরলিপি, আলাপচারী রাগ, রাগিণী, বাদ্য, তাল, ঠেকা বিভাগ করে গিয়েছেন তা আজও বাংলার বিভিন্ন গুরু শিষ্য পরম্পরার সংগীত ধারার মধ্যে লক্ষ্য করা যায়। আমার এই প্রবন্ধের ফলে বাংলার নিজস্ব শাস্ত্রীয় ধারা যে গৌড়ীয় সংগীত তা বাংলার মানুষ জানতে পারবে এবং বিশ্বের দরবারে গর্ব করতে পারবে। বহু স্কলার এই বিষয় নিয়ে গবেষণা করে নতুন নতুন দিক বাংলা তথা বিশ্বের মানুষের সামনে উন্মোচন ঘটাতে পারবে।

গ্রন্থপঞ্জী:

ব্যাসদেব, কৃ. এবং বসু, ন. ১৯৭৩. সঙ্গীত রাগ কল্পদ্রুম, ভারতীয় প্রাচীন সঙ্গীত – শাস্ত্রালোচনা ও সংস্কৃত, হিন্দী, গুজরাতী, মারাঠী, কর্ণাটী, তামিল, বাঙ্গালা, উড়িয়া, আরব্য, পারস্য, পেগুয়ান, ইংরাজী ও রাজপুতানার নানা প্রাদেশিক ভাষায় প্রচলিত নানা সুবের প্রাচীন গান সংগ্রহ. শ্রী রামকমল সিংহ, বঙ্গীয় সাহিত্য পরিষৎ - মন্দির, আপার সার্কুলার রোড, কলিকাতা ২৪৩।

সেনগুপ্ত, প., বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়, মা. ও মুখোপাধ্যায়, ম. ২০০৪. গৌড়ীয় নৃত্যঃ নিবন্ধগুচ্ছ. দি এশিয়াটিক সোসাইটি, ১, পার্ক স্ট্রীট, কলকাতা- ৭০০০১৬।

বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়, সু. ও চক্রবর্ত্তী, ছ. ১৯৫৬. ভরত নাট্যশাস্ত্র, প্রথম এবং দ্বিতীয় খণ্ড, বঙ্গানুবাদ – নবপত্র প্রকাশন, ৮, পটুয়াটোলা লেন, কলিকাতা ৯।

চট্টোপাধ্যায়, গী. ১৩৬৯ জন্মাষ্টমী. ভাগবত ও বাঙলা সাহিত্য, কবি ও কবিতা, ১০, রাজা রাজকৃষ্ণ ষ্ট্রীট, কলিকাতা ৬।

দাস, শ. ও পালিত, হ. মাঘ ১৩২০. আদ্যের গম্ভীরা বাঙ্গালার ধম্ম ও সামাজিক ইতিহাসের এক অধ্যায়. স্টূডেন্টস লাইব্রেরী, ৬৭, কলেজ ষ্ট্রীট,কলকাতা।

খগেন্দ্রনাথ, মি. আষাঢ়- ১৩৫২. কীর্তন, বিশ্বভারতী গ্রন্থালয় ২, বঙ্কিম চ্যাটার্জি ষ্ট্রীট, কলিকাতা।

মুখোপাধ্যায়, ম. অক্টোবর ২০১৯. সংগীত দামোদর, অনুবাদ. দি এশিয়াটিক সোসাইটি, ১, পার্ক ষ্ট্রীট, কলকাতা ৭০০০১৬।

মুখোপাধ্যায়, ম. ২০১৭. গৌড়ীয় নৃত্য প্রাচীন বাংলার শাস্ত্রীয় নৃত্যধারা. দি এশিয়াটিক সোসাইটি, ১, পার্ক ষ্ট্রীট, কলকাতা ৭০০০১৬।

ভট্টাচার্য, বি. ১৩১২. শ্রী শ্রী গীতগোবিন্দ, (মহাকবি জয়দেবের মূল গ্রন্থের পদ্যানুবাদ), বিশ্বকোষ প্রেস, ৫, রামধন মিত্র লেন, শ্যামপুকুর, কলিকাতা।

ভট্টাচার্য, বি. ১৯৬১. মনসামঙ্গল, সাহিত্য অকাদেমী, নিউ দিল্লী।

মজুমদার, বি. জ্ঞানদাস ও তাঁহার পদাবলী, ভাগবতরত্ন, শতাব্দী গ্রন্থ ভবন, ৯৩, মহাত্মা গান্ধী রোড, কলিকাতা -৭।

লেখক পরিচিতি:

[১]পি. এইচ. ডি. গবেষক

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4. The grammatical categories in a gloss must be abbreviated

For example,

a) adʒ ɔnek brʃʈi hoyeʧʰe.
today lot rain be-pr.pf.3rd
'Today there was heavy shower.'

b) boneder ʧʰobi.
sister-gen.pl. picture
'Sisters' picture.'

5. The abbreviations must be given in a separate list.

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