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जूनी ख्यात

जुलाई-दिसम्बर 2025

(सामाजिक विज्ञान, कला एवं संस्कृति की शोध पत्रिका)

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संस्कृति भवन, एन.एच. 11

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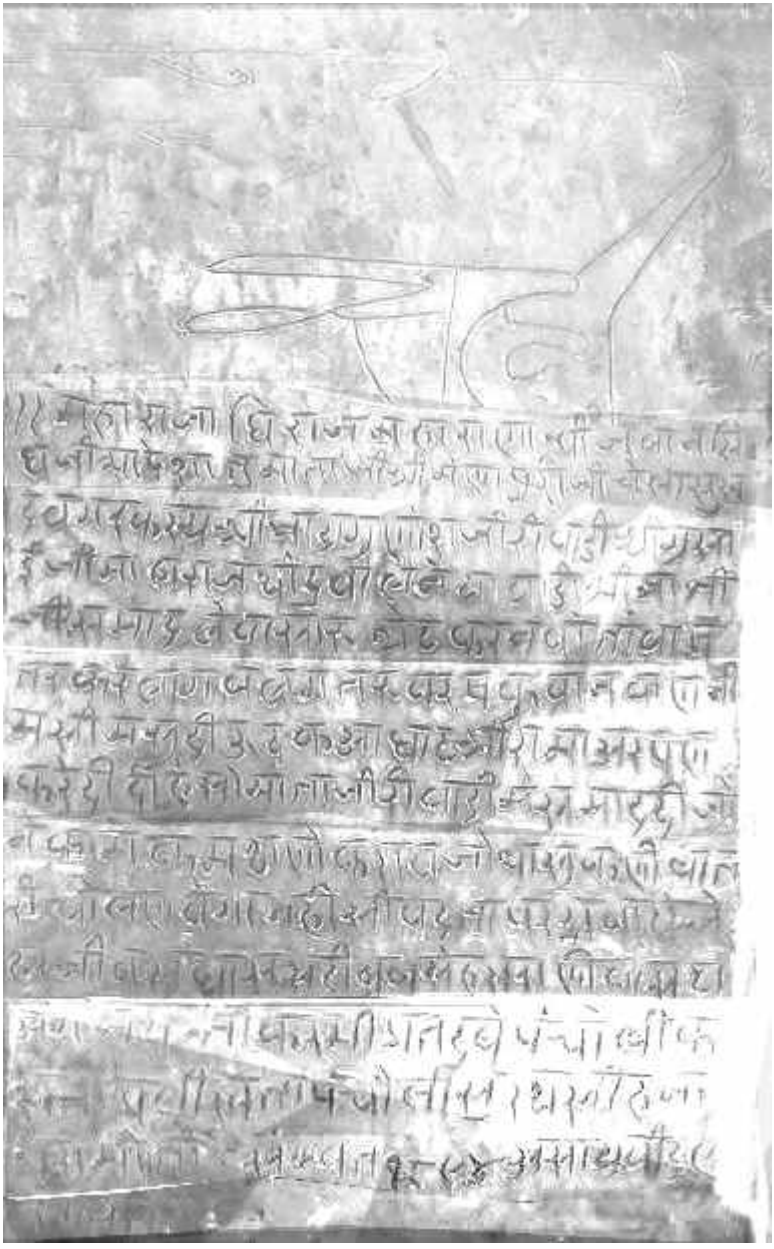

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(भाले का तीरनुमा चिह्न)

सही

।। महाराजाधिराज महाराणा श्रीजवानसि

घजी आदेशातु–

माताजी श्री मेणापुरीजी चेला सुखदेवगर कस्य–

श्री जाड़ा गुणेशजी री वाडी थी

गुसाई माहाराज थी जवीं लेने या वाडी

श्रीमाताजी रे समाद (समाधि) लेवा सारूं भेंट कर न

तांबापतर कर लाग-वलगत रूख कुवा नवाण नीम

सीम सुदी उदक आघाट श्री रामा अरपण

करे दीदी है सो माताजी री वाडी में

समाद दीजो ने काम कमठाणो कराव जो

थां सूं कणी वात री चोलण वेगा नहीं

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पंचोली सुरथसिंह जा... मोत।

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संपादकीय

जुलाई-दिसम्बर 2025 के अंक के लिए सामाजिक विज्ञान के विभिन्न विषयों के विद्वानों एवं शोधार्थियों के अनेक आलेख प्रकाशन हेतु प्राप्त हुए जिनको विषय-विशेषज्ञों की अनुशंसा पश्चात् प्रकाशित किया जा रहा है। हमारी आन्तरिक संपादकीय सदस्यों की टीम द्वारा गहन जांच के पश्चात् आपके सम्मुख रखा जा रहा है।

इस अंक के महत्त्वपूर्ण आलेखों को शामिल किया गया है। इसमें मुद्रा शास्त्र, बौद्ध धर्म, शहरीकरण, सूफी मत, डंडानाथ, आर्य समाज, राजस्थान के शहरीकरण, प्रजामंडल आन्दोलन, पंजाब के व्यापार भूमि संबंधी कानूनों से सम्बन्धित शोधपत्र हैं। इनके अतिरिक्त, डिजिटल इण्डिया, ए.आई., वस्त्र विज्ञान, शिक्षा-संगीत आदि पर भी शोध आलेख प्रकाशित हो रहे हैं। इसी क्रम में सरदार पटेल तथा गांधी विषयक आलेखों को भी स्थान दिया गया है।

इसके अलावा क्षेत्रीय इतिहास पर केन्द्रित कई नवीन विषयों पर शोधार्थियों के आलेख भी इसमें संकलित हैं। यह अंक सामाजिक विज्ञान के विभिन्न विषयों पर शोध करने वालों के लिए अत्यंत उपयोगी होगा। इस अंक के विषय विशेषज्ञ जिन्होंने आलेखों पर अपनी महत्त्वपूर्ण राय समय पर प्रेषित कर जो सहयोग दिया। उनके लिए पत्रिका परिवार आभार व्यक्त करता है।

पुरातत्त्व के क्षेत्र में शोध करने वाले पुरातत्त्वविदों एवं सर्वेक्षकों से निवेदन है कि अपने कार्य से सम्बन्धित आलेख अथवा संक्षिप्त रपट अवश्य प्रेषित करें ताकि इस विषय पर शोध करने वाले शोधार्थी लाभान्वित हो सकें।

इसके अतिरिक्त पुरातत्त्व के क्षेत्र में तमिलनाडु एवं पाकिस्तान के पख्तून क्षेत्र में हुए नवीन उत्खनन एवं सर्वेक्षण की रिपोर्टस के बारे में जानकारी संकलित की गई है।

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Coins of Kushan Rulers Found at Sonkh – A Brief Introduction

• **Dr. Sujeet Kumar Singh**

• **Dr. Shivam Singh**

This brief but systematic work examines Kushan-period coins from Sonkh (an archaeological site near Mathura). Excavated between 1966 and 1973 by Hubert Hartel, Sonkh produced 141 copper coins from Kushan levels and an additional nine coins from the apsidal temple, providing insights into the numismatic and cultural features of the region. The volume classifies and studies coins of primary Kushan rulers—Vima Kadphises, Kanishka, Huviṣka, Vāsudeva I, and his successors, based on obverse and reverse iconography, inscriptions, as well as style. These coins contain profound information reflecting political power, the religious symbolism and syncretism, specifically in representations of Shiva, Nandi, Nana, Mao, and other gods. Special focus is placed on particular numismatic findings, such as a disputed coin likely associated with Kanishka III, highlighting unresolved questions in Kushan genealogy. The richness of ritual images, including images of kings presenting oblations and of the divine figures, represents very strong relationships between different cultures from earlier to more recent periods in Kushan, and has changed over time. At the final analysis, the Sonkh coin corpus adds to our understanding of Kushan administrative presence, religious symbolism, and regional artistic content as a building of regional interest and also demonstrates the general importance of Mathura as an epicentre of Kushan culture. The results confirm the significance of sub-geographic archaeology to reconstruct ancient Indian history of politics, culture, and society.

Keywords : *Kushan coins; Sonkh; Mathura; Vima Kadphises; Kanishka; Huviṣka; Vāsudeva I; Kushan successors; numismatics; iconography.*

Introduction

The Sonkh archaeological site, located approximately 30 kilometers from Mathura Station, is an important site within the Mathura region. Under the direction of Professor Hubert Hartel of the Berlin School of Art, excavations at this mound were carried out from 1966 to 1973. As a result of these excavations, information was obtained about cultural phases ranging from the Painted Grey Ware period to the modern era. The reports published by the Archaeological Survey of India and the excavation report of Sonkh provide only very brief information regarding Kushana coins. From the Kushana-period levels (22 to 16)[1] of the Sonkh excavation, 141 Kushana copper coins were recovered, along with 9 Kushana coins[2] from the apsidal temple-2.

Table 1 : Coins of Kushana rulers

Ruler	Number of Coins
Vima Kadphises	3
Kanishka	6
Huvishka	7
Vasudeva	12
Later Kushana Rulers	17
Virasena	5
Total	150

From the Kushana levels of the Sonkh excavation, five coins of a ruler named Virasena have also been recovered.All the coins found here are circular and made of copper. Not a single coin of Kujula Kadphises, the founder of the Kushana dynasty, has been found from the Mathura region. A brief description of the coins is as follows. For the ease of study, several primary and secondary sources have been used to describe the obverse and reverse sides of the coins of Kushana rulers.

Coins of Vima Kadphises

From the Kushana levels[3] at Sonkh, one coin has been recovered from Level, and two[4] from Apsidal Temple-2, making a

total of three coins of Vima Kadphises.All three coins are of the type showing the king offering oblation at an altar (vedika) and of the "Shiva-Nandi" type. On the obverse of this type of coin, the king is depicted with tied hair, wearing a tall cap and a long coat, offering oblation into a vedika with his right hand. To the king's right is an elephant goad (ankusha), and to his left is a trident (trishula) with an axe attached.On the reverse, Shiva is depicted holding a trident in his right hand and resting his left hand on the bull Nandi. The obverse bears the legend "Basileus Oimo Kadphises", while the reverse inscription reads: Maharajasa Rajatirajasa Sarvalokeshvarasa Maheshvarasa Vima Kadphisesa.[5]

Table 2 : Coins of Vima Kadphises

S. No.	Location (Sonkh)	Shape	Dimensions (cm)	Weight (g)	Description
1	Kushana Level-2 / Sonkh	Round	2.47–2.60 × 0.45 cm	13.231	King offering oblation at altar and Shiva-Nandi type
2	Apsidal Temple-2 / Sonkh	Round	2.90–3.08 × 0.42 cm	16.920	King offering oblation at altar and Shiva-Nandi type
3	Apsidal Temple-2 / Sonkh	Round	2.69–2.74 × 0.42 cm	17.029	King offering oblation at altar and Shiva-Nandi type

Coins of Kanishka

From the Kushana levels[6] at Sonkh, 4 coins of Kanishka were found, and 2 more were recovered from the Apsidal Temple[7], making a total of 6 coins. All coins depict the king in a standing

posture along with various deities.In this type of coin, the king is shown standing and offering oblation into a vedika with his right hand. He is dressed in a long coat, trousers, and boots. Flames are seen emerging from the king's shoulders, and he holds a spear in his left hand.[8] On the reverse, various deities are depicted, showing iconographic diversity. The obverse bears the Greek legend: "Basileus Basileōn Kanishkou" (King of Kings, Kanishka), while the reverse carries the names of deities in Greek script.[9]

The names of deities found on these six coins include:

- Oado – Wind God (Vāyu)
- Oesho – Shiva
- Mao – Moon God (Chandra)
- Nana – Goddess Nana

Table 3 : Coins of Kanishka[10]

S. No.	Location (Sonkh)	Shape	Dimensions (cm)	Weight (g)	Description
1	Apsidal Temple-2	Round	2.47–2.66 × 0.47–0.58	17.381	Four-armed Oesho type
2	Apsidal Temple-2	Round	2.60–2.75 × 0.46	16.365	Mao type
3	Level-20	Round	2.62–2.75 × 0.43	15.979	Mao type
4.	Level-20	Round	2.07–2.15 × 0.32	6.709	Nana type
5.	Level-20	Round	2.40–2.57 × 0.50	15.821	Oado type
6.	Level-20	Round	2.46–2.62 × 0.32	10.723	Oado type

Coins of Huviṣka

From the Kushana levels[11] at Sonkh, five coins of Huviṣka were found, and two coins from Apsidal Temple-2[12], making a total of seven coins. Huvishka, a Kushan emperor, primarily issued bronze coins in a single denomination, with a noticeable trend of decreasing weight throughout his reign. These bronze coins feature three main obverse types (with variations) and multiple reverse deities. In contrast, Huvishka's gold coins, though fewer in number, display a wider array of deities. The three prominent obverse types are the elephant-rider, couch-recliner (Seated in paryaṅka posture), and cross-legged types (Padmāsana posture). The excavation reports provide a brief description of Huviṣka's copper coins.

Table 4: Coins of Huviṣka from Levels 20 and 16 at Sonkh

S. No.	Location (Sonkh)	Shape	Dimensions (cm)	Weight (g)	Description
1	Level-20	Round	2.20–2.34 × 0.42	9.552	Seated in paryaṅka posture, Mao type
2	Level-20	Round	2.41 × 0.43	14.878	Seated in paryaṅka posture, Unknown
3	Level-16	Round	2.10–2.25 × 0.33	6.695	Padmāsana posture, Unknown
4.	Level-20	Round	1.86–2.00 × 0.42	6.573	Padmāsana posture, Unknown
5.	Level-20	Round	2.02–2.17 × 0.45	7.389	Elephant-mounted type, Unknown

Additionally, two more coins[13] of Huviṣka were recovered from Apsidal Temple-2.

On the first coin, the obverse is unclear, while the reverse features an image of the deity Mao (the Moon god). This coin measures 2.14–2.20 × 0.30 cm and weighs 6.266 grams. From the same location, another particularly interesting coin of Huviṣka was found. It is round in shape, with a diameter of 2.15 cm and a thickness of 0.64 cm, weighing 8.696 grams. The obverse of this coin depicts a male figure wearing a short tunic, trousers, and boots. His hair is long, extending down to his shoulders. In his left hand, he holds a triangular elephant goad (ankusha), while his right-hand rests on his waist. The inscription on the obverse reads: "Huviṣkāsya". The reverse features a tree with leaves and branches. Below it, in two partially illegible lines, the following inscriptions appear: "(pu)trasya" and "na(?)kas(y)". Scholars have proposed different interpretations of this coin due to the mismatch between the obverse and reverse inscriptions: P. L. Gupta[14] believes this coin refers to a son of Huviṣka, named Kanishka, who may or may not have ascended the throne. B. N. Mukherjee[15] attributes the coin to Kanishka III, the son of Vāsudeva I. Habert Hartel[16] considers this coin to be a medallion issued on a special occasion, rather than a regular circulating coin.

Coins of Vāsudeva I

Twelve coins of Vāsudeva I were recovered from Kushana-period Level 16 at Sonkh. All coins are of the type depicting the king offering oblation into a vedika (altar) and accompanied by the figure of Śiva with Nandi (the bull). The excavation report provides only a very brief description of these coins.[17] The details of the prominent coins are as follows:

Table 5 : Coins of Vasudeva I

S. No.	Location (Sonkh)	Shape	Dimensions (cm)	Weight (g)	Description
1	Level-16	Round	2.09–2.15 × 0.34	7.882	King offering oblation at altar, with depiction of Śiva-Nandi
2	Level-16	Round	1.96–2.29 × 0.40	8.255	King offering oblation at altar, with depiction of Śiva-Nandi
3	Level-16	Round	1.76–1.97 × 0.36	6.588	King offering oblation at altar, with depiction of Śiva-Nandi
4.	Level-16	Round	1.85–2.08 × 0.35	6.654	King offering oblation at altar, with depiction of Śiva-Nandi
5.	Level-16	Round	1.86 × 2.04 × 0.35	6.127	King offering oblation at altar, with depiction of Śiva-Nandi
6.	Level-16	Round	1.80 × 2.00 × 0.35	6.196	King offering oblation at altar, with depiction of Śiva-Nandi

Coins of the Successors of Vāsudeva I

From the Kushana-period levels at Sonkh, a total of 117 copper coins[18] of the later Kushana rulers were recovered. All these coins depict the king in standing posture, often shown offering oblation into a vedika (altar). The reverse of these coins commonly features depictions of Aesho (Śiva) and Ardokhsho (Lakṣmī). The report briefly discusses these coins. Key examples are described below:

Table 6 : Coins of Later Kushana Rulers

S. No.	Location (Sonkh)	Shape	Dimensions (cm)	Weight (g)	Description
1	Level-16	Round	1.83–1.94 × 0.32	5.938	Standing king, Śiva-Nandi type
2	Level-16	Round	2.00–2.16 × 0.31	5.904	King offering oblation at altar, depiction of Śiva-Nandi
3	Level-16	Round	2.10–2.30 × 0.45 / 0.36	9.756	King offering oblation at altar, depiction of Śiva-Nandi
4.	Level-16	Round	1.78–1.93 × 0.71	5.682	King offering oblation at altar, depiction of Śiva-Nandi
5.	Level-16	Round	1.89–1.94 × 0.37	6.322	Standing king, depiction of Ardokhsho (Lakṣmī)

6.	Level-16	Round	1.69–2.03 × 0.37	7.875	Standing king, depiction of Ardokhsho (Lakṣmī)
7.	Level-16	Round	1.89–2.06 × 0.45	7.177	Standing king, depiction of Ardokhsho (Lakṣmī)

Conclusion

The findings from the Sonkh excavation shed important light on the Kushana period, especially through the discovery of numerous copper coins attributed to various Kushana rulers. These coins serve as crucial artifacts for understanding the political authority, religious beliefs, and artistic expressions of the Kushana dynasty. The imagery on the coins, featuring kings performing rituals and depictions of gods such as Shiva, Nandi, and Lakshmi, illustrates the blend of cultural and religious influences during this era. Differences in coin inscriptions and designs help scholars establish the sequence of rulers and their respective reigns.The ongoing scholarly discussion about some coins, particularly those linked to potential successors like Kanishka III, reflects the complexity of Kushana royal lineage and highlights the need for further detailed studies in numismatics and archaeology In summary, the Sonkh coin discoveries significantly enhance our knowledge of Kushana history and emphasize the value of regional archaeological investigations in piecing together India's ancient past.

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Dr. Sujeet Kumar Singh
Assistant Professor,
Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture & Archaeology,
Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi

Dr. Shivam Singh
Former Research Scholar,
Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture & Archaeology,
Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi

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Revisiting Buddhist Transmission in India-Thailand Relations

● Dr. Karmveer Singh

The spread of Buddhism and the patterns of intra-Asian interactions in antiquity have long been central themes in scholarly discourse. Earlier studies often examined the movement of the Buddhist doctrine primarily within the framework of early contacts between South Asia and Southeast Asia. It is now generally agreed that the transmission of Buddhism was not a unidirectional process; on the contrary, it was a multifarious process. The diffusion of Buddhism did not involve religious teachings alone it also entailed the spread of artistic traditions, literary forms, ritual objects, intellectual ideas and even technological knowledge (Sen 2014, p. xii). Communities across Southeast Asia assimilated a wide range of these cultural elements, which in turn reshaped significant aspects of their socio-cultural life. Buddhist values, ethical principles, rituals and practices gradually became integral to the belief system of societies that came into contact with the Dharma. This article explores the historical trajectory of Buddhism's spread to Thailand and examines the cultural exchanges between India and Thailand facilitated by the doctrine. It posits that Buddhism has long functioned as a cultural bridge, linking the peoples and traditions of both countries, and continues to serve as a vibrant medium of cross-cultural engagement in the present day.

Transmission of Buddhism and Indo-Thai Cultural Interactions

India and Thailand share a long-standing history of spiritual and cultural engagement that predates the beginning of the Christian era aswell as the formation of the Thai nation-state. Over the course of these interactions, elements of Indian religion, philosophy, language, literature, artistic traditions and social customs were transmitted to

the region and gradually adopted to local cultural context. Buddhism has consistently occupied a central position in this multi-faceted process of cultural exchange. Nevertheless, the precise period and specific locations associated with the earliest arrival of Buddhism in Thailand remain subjects of academic debate. According to the Sri Lankan chronicle *Mahavamsa*, the Mauryan emperor Asoka dispatched a mission led by the Theras Sona and Uttara to propogae the Buddha's teachings in *Suvarnabhumi* (Geiger 1912: 82). However, the exact geographical identification of Suvarnabhumi continues to be contested. Classical Indian texts in both Sanskrit and Pali, as well as accounts by foreign travellers, used the terms Suvarnabhumi and Suvarnadvipa in a broad sense to denote regions of Southeast Asia emcompassing present-day Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Malaya and Indonesia (Singh 2022: 79). Generally, *Suvarnabhumi* is identified with the ancient land of the Mons, and especially with the town of Thaton (Coedes 1968: 17). While Thai scholars believe that this land of Suvarnabhumi is in Thailand and Nakhon Pathom (in Sanskrit Nagara Prathma which means 'first city') was its capital. For them, Nakhon Pathom (situated about 50 km. west of Bangkok in Central Thailand) is the place or first place in Southeast Asia where the Doctrine was spread by Theras, Sona and Uttara (Kusalasaya 1965; Jermsawatdi 1979: 20-21). In support of their arguments, they cite archaeological objects excavated from this ancient town, stone inscriptions, literary sources and popular Thai beliefs.

Prominent among the Buddhist antiquities discovered from this town is the great stupa which the Thai called Phra Pathom Chedi (Prathma Chaitya) popularly believed to have been built in commemoration of the visit of Asokan missionaries Sona and Uttara. Thai people consider this stupa as a sacred place where Buddha's relics given by Asoka were placed when it was constructed in third century B.C.E. (Jermsawatdi 1979: 21). The present Phra Pathom Chedi is a new one which was restored in the mid of the Eighteenth century during the reign of King Mongkut or Rama IV. It is also believed that the original structure of the Stupa bore close resemblance to the great stupa at Sanchi, built by Asoka. It seems that the original structure of the Phra Pathom Chedi was contemporary with the spread of the Doctrine by Indian missionaries- Sona and Uttara (Ibid). Many archaeological objects unearthed in excavations at Nakhon Pathom and in the

surrounding areas also indicate early connections with India. The Prominent among them was the Dharma Chakra or Wheel of the Law with figures of crouching deer. In Buddhism, the symbol of Dharmachakra symbolizes the First Sermon given by Buddha in the Deer Park at Sarnath. Along with the Dharma Chakra, other objects including Pali canon inscribed stones, carved altar *(asana)* and the Buddha's footprints represent the period when the Buddha was not worshiped in human form but only through symbols. In India, the images of Buddha first appeared during the Kushana period when a new school of Buddhist art popularly known as the Gandhara School of Art was born. On the basis of these objects, it is believed that the original stupa at Nakhon Pathom which was decorated by these sculptures belonged to an earlier period when the image of Buddha was unknown in Indian iconography, i.e., before the beginning of the Common Era (Majumdar 1963: 254). In view of Thai scholars, these archaeological remains prove that Buddhism reached Thailand in Third century B.C.E and it was the original doctrine (known as Theravada or Hinayana Buddhism) propagated by Indian missionaries sent by Asoka (Rajanubhab 1962; Kusalasaya 1965 and Jermsawatdi 1979). According to Nicolas Revire, the myth of *Suvarnabhumi* and Southeast Asian Buddhist nations' claim of historical connection with the Asokan mission reflects the great prestige of the *Mahavamsa* and the unbroken tradition of the Mahavihara (Revire 2018: 196-97).

Apart from the archaeological remains related to symbolic worship or the early phase of Buddhism, a large number of the Buddha's images, sculptures and artefacts have also been found from different parts of Thailand which mark the different stages of growth of Buddhism in the country. Though it is difficult to say certain about the arrival and expansion of Buddhism in the region of Southeast Asia as a whole and Thailand in particular. The form of the doctrine has also been varied at different stages of time and in different areas. In the early centuries of the Common Era, the major part of Thailand was subject to the kingdom of Funan (Majumdar 1963: 253), which held power in mainland Southeast Asia from the first to sixth century C.E. The Funanese rulers patronised Brahmanism, but Buddhism also flourished under their rule. As known from the *History of the Liang*, that, a Chinese embassy was sent to Funan between 535 and 545 C.E. to ask the king to

collect Buddhist texts and to send Buddhist teachers to China. On the request of his Chinese counterpart, the Funanese king sent an Indian (from Ujjayini) named Paramartha or Gunaratna, who was then living in Funan. Gunaratna, carrying 240 bundles of Buddhist texts with him, arrived in China in 546 C.E. (Coedes 1968: 60). It suggests that the kingdom of Funan also served as an intermediate station between Buddhist learning centres in China and India.

After the fall of Funanese Empire, a large part of Thailand (mostly Central part) was placed under the rule of the Buddhist Mon kingdom of *Dvaravati* which a Chinese traveller Huien Tsang refers to as *Tu-ho-lo-po-to* situated between Isanapura (Cambodia) and Sriksetra (Burma) (Sastri 1949: 65). The Chinese name for this kingdom was interpreted as representing the Sanskrit name Dvaravati meaning 'which has gates', and it was confirmed by two inscribed silver coins discovered from Nakhon Pathom which probably was its capital (Indrawooth 2007: 66). Buddhism in the central Thailand during the Dvaravati period was influenced by Buddhism of Krishna-Godavari valleys under the Ikshavaku dynasty as well by the Buddhists of western India based at Valabhi under the patronage of the Saka-Kshatrapas and the Maitrakas (Ibid: 80-81). The Buddhist sculptures of Dvaravati age also reflect the influence of Gupta style and Amaravati School of art. Art historians see resemblance between the images of Buddha seated in *Pralambapada-asana* which have been found from several Dvaravati sites (such as Wat Pra Men and Hermit's Cave at Khao Ngu Mountain) and the Buddha images found at the cave temples of Ajanta and Ellora (Indrawooth 2007 82; Chaturawong 2009: 55-77). According to Majumdar, the early Buddhist images of Dvaravati period exhibit a very close resemblance to the Gupta art, and the face of these images is typically Indian. Although, the later images have a more mongoloid face, they also show Indian influence with more or less local modifications (Majumdar1963: 254). The remains of stupas, religious objects, sculptures, votive tablets and terracotta bowls inscribed in Pali with the words *Ye Dhamma*, amulets, stone bas-reliefs, coinage system, Pali and Sanskrit inscriptions found from Nakhon Pathom, U-Thong, Ku Bua, Ku Muang, Dong Khon and other sites testify the importance of Dvaravati as a centre of Buddhism and its close connection with Indian beliefs, art, rituals and philosophy (Indrawooth 2007).

As far as the form of Buddhism is concerned, it is believed that Buddhism that arrived in Thailand first time was Theravada Buddhism or the original doctrine. With the growth of Mahayana Buddhism in India especially during the reign of king Kanishka in the second half of the first century C.E., the sect also spread to other parts of the world. Probably in the fifth century, Mahayana sect was introduced in Sumatra by the missionaries from Kashmir, and from there the faith reached to Java and Kambuja (Kusalasaya 1965: 12). With the advent of Pala dynasty in Bengal and Magadha round the middle of the eighth century, the Mahayana Buddhism was encouraged and patronised. Probably under the influence of Pala rulers and the teachers of Nalanda, Mahayana sect established a definite foothold in Southeast Asia (Prapandvidya 2014: 12). As mentioned above, the Pala rulers had maintained linkages with the Shailendra rulers of Srivijayan Empire, who gave encouragement and support to the propagation of Mahayana sect throughout the island-country of Southeast Asia including the southern part of Thailand. A large number of archaeological evidences which were found at different parts of south Thailand including the great stupa at Nakhon Si Thammarat which the Thai call Phra Mahadhatu (Maha-Tat), Chaiya (Jaya) stupa, sculptures and votive tablets of Buddha and Bodhisattvas also attested the prevalence of Mahayana Buddhism here (Kusalasaya 1965: 13; Jermsawatdi 1979: 25-26). A Sanskrit inscription, known as Wat Sema Muang Inscription, dated 775 C.E., which describes the images of Boddhisattvas, also indicates that Vajrayana Buddhism was practiced in southern Thailand (Prapandvidya 2014: 13-14).

With the extension of Khmer supremacy over the Lower Menam (Chao Phraya River) valley with its chief centre at Lopburi (then called as 'Lavo'), Khmer art and culture began to spread in central Thailand from the beginning of the eleventh century (Le May 1954: 142-153). The whole of modern Thailand was brought under the Khmer dominion. Being adherents of Mahayana Buddhism with a strong mixture of Brahmanism especially Saivism, the Khmer kings greatly contributed to propagate the tenets of Mahayana sect in Thailand. A number of religious monuments and sculptures of Buddha, Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara (also known as Lokesvara) and other deities of Mahayana pantheon, belong to the Khmer style of art, (in Thailand also known as The School of Lopburi), have been found at Lopburi, Phimai, Si-Thep and other regions which point to

the spread of Mahayana Buddhism in Thailand during this period (Jermsawatdi 1979: 27-28). The remains of Phimai (earlier known as Vimaya) temple and Phimai Inscription suggest that this ancient town was a great centre of Mahayana sect. Vajrayana Buddhism with the tenet of Vijnanavada and Sunyavada was prominent here (Prapandvidya 2014: 8-19). It should be noted that Theravada Buddhism was already existed on a firm basis in Thailand when the Mahayana School was popularised during the Khmer rule. There are no indications that the Mahayana superseded the Theravada in any way, even the both flourished side by side. Not only different sects of Buddhism, Brahmanism also co-existed peacefully. As Le May mentioned, the Khmer kings tolerated and patronised all forms of Indian religion, whether Mahayana or Hinayana Buddhism, Brahmanism, or pure Yogism. They themselves sometimes inclined to the one, sometimes to the other, and in all probability Brahmanism and Buddhism often flourished together (Le May 1954: 146). Some scholars are of the opinion that much of the Brahmanic influence, such as religious and cultural rites especially in the court circles, which still survives in Thailand, transmitted from Cambodia to the Thais during this period (Kusalasaya 1965: 18).

Before the independent Thai kingdom came into existence, Indian influence through its religions, culture, rituals, art and architecture, language and literature were already existed in Thailand. Though it is difficult to say certain about the route and timing of cultural transmission from India to Thailand, but the history of cultural interaction, directly or indirectly, between the two countries, cannot be negated. It is also a fact that along with trade Buddhism played a vital role in bringing closer India and Thailand culturally, socially and economically in ancient times.

Buddhism in Independent Thai Kingdom

In the last quarter of the thirteenth century the Thais established their first independent kingdom with its capital at Sukhothai or Sukhodaya, overthrowing the lordship of the Khmers. Probably around the same time, a new phase of Buddhism in Thailand also commenced with the introduction of Singhalese or Sri Lankan Theravada Buddhism, also known as Lankavamsa. Nakhon-Si-Thammarat was the first place in Thailand where the Singhalese sect was propgated, and from there it spread to the Sukhothai. Under the

patronage of King Ram Khamhaeng (c. 1279-1298 C.E.), this new form of Buddhism was propagated in the Sukhothai kingdom, and since then became very popular among the Thai people (Kusalasaya 1965: 19-20). There were two sections of monks in the Sukhothai kingdom, called Gamavasi (town-dwellers) and Arannavasi (forest-dwellers). The Singhalese Buddhism reached its peak of progress in the reign of King Mahadhammaraja Leuthai or Lithai, grandson of Ram Khamhaeng. He established a new system of administration for the Buddhist Order in accordance with the Singhalese structure, and for that purpose invited a venerable Sri Lankan monk at his capital. Apart from building several Buddhist edifices and monasteries, he composed Buddhist texts, the famous of them is Traibhaumikatha, dealing with the Buddhist cosmology. Also, he was the first Thai king who left the throne temporarily and entered the Holy Order or Bhikkhu Sangha for some time (WBU 2002: 66-69). This noble example was also followed by several Thai kings of Ayutthaya and the Rattanakosin (Bangkok) periods. Now, it has become customary for the Thai youths to accept monkhood for at least a short period (of three or four months) in their lives. One of the major achievements of King Lithai was composition of Buddhist texts, the prominent of them is Traibhaumikatha, the Buddhist cosmology (Prapandvidya 2009: 48). We also came to learn from the inscription of Wat Sri Chum that during his reign, a monk titled Sri Sraddharajacualamaniratnalankadipa reached at Colamandala (in India) on his way to Sri Lanka and visited Dhanyakataka, ancient name of Amaravati. According to the inscription, the Dhanyakataka stupa was destroyed by the Taruk (it may mean 'the Turks') (Ibid). After the death of king Lithai, the Sukhothai kingdom, however could not survive for a long period and finally it was annexed to Ayutthaya kingdom. But the Singhalese Buddhism continued to flourish in the country under the patronage of Thai kings of both Ayutthaya and Rattanakosin (Bangkok) periods and still remains dominant until today.

It can be said that in their long history of existence the Thais seem to have been pre-dominantly Buddhists, no matter which form of Buddhism they follow. All the Thai monarchs in the recorded history of present-day Thailand have been adherents of Buddhism, and the doctrine has received support and patronage from the royal court (Kusalasaya 1965: 22). The Thai king is constitutionally stipulated to be a "Buddhist" and the "upholder" of the faith. It is

the constitutional duty of the state to provide support and protection to Buddhism, which is the religion observed by the majority (approximately more than ninety percent) of Thai people. For centuries, the teachings of Buddha have been rooted deeply in the Thai society and have shaped the Thai way of life and enriched their art, architecture, literature and knowledge system (Payutto 2000: 14-16). Indeed, Buddhism has become an integral part of Thailand's identity. Owing to the deep influence of Buddhism over the lives of Thai people, the country is called by many foreigners as "The Land of Yellow Robes" (yellow robes are the garments of Buddhist monks (Kusalasaya 1965: 6). In the words of Venerable Buddhadasa, a highly respected Thai monk, "Without Buddhism, we might be unable to be what we are now. Without Buddhism, there would neither be lay devotees, upasakas and upasikas, nor monks and novices, Bhikkus and Samaneras. Indeed, without Buddhism, there would be no knowledge to overcome sufferings and to make ourselves calm and quiet" (Sachdev 1996: 146).

Being adherents of Buddhism, Thai people have been, directly or indirectly, connected with India- the historical homeland of Buddhism, for centuries even before the establishment of independent Thai kingdom. Apart from trading activities, exchange of ideas, art and culture through the regular visits of traders, monks, pilgrims and students, has been a regular process of interaction between the two countries. During this course of cross-cultural interaction, Indian religion, art, languages, literature, rituals and customs heavily influenced Thai society and culture, no matter when and how, directly or indirectly, Thai people came into contact with Indian cultural elements. Thanks to the welcoming nature of Thai people who welcomed the new ideas and cultural tenets coming from India and adopted them according to their own needs and necessities. Buddhism has always been a vital link between the communities and cultures of India and Thailand from historical times to the modern era. As statistics exhibit, every year, thousands of Buddhist pilgrims consisting both monks and lay devotees from Thailand visit Buddhist sites in India to pay homage to the fully Enlightened One. Some of the popular sites are: Bodh Gaya (where Buddha attained enlightenment), Sarnath (where Buddha turned the Wheel of the Law), Kushinagar (where Buddha attained mahaparinirvana). For instance, in 2019, nearly 160,000 Thai tourists came to India,

and most of them visited Buddhist sites (MEA 2021). The Royal Thai family members and political dignitaries also regularly visit Holy Places of Buddhism in India. Her Royal Highness Princess Mahachakri Sirindhorn is a regular visitor to India. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Mahavajiralongkorn (now his majesty the King of Thailand) accompanied by royal family members and other prominent figures even piloted a special Buddhist pilgrimage flight from Bangkok to Bodh Gaya in 2010 (Kumar 2010). There are beautiful Wat Thai temple and monastery at Sarnath and Bodh Gaya which support Buddhist Pilgrimage and strengthen spiritual ties between India and Thailand.

In summary, Buddhism- widely regarded as a tradition rooted in compassion, peace and humanistic values (Rahula 1974)- spread from India across Asia largely due to the universal appeal of its ethical and philosophical principles. Thailand constitutes an important region where Buddhism took diverse forms at different junctures of its historical development. From their earliest exposure to the Buddha's teachings and accompanying elements of Indian culture, the Thai people selectively integrated these influences in accordance with their societal needs and cultural contexts. As a result, Buddhism has long functioned as a central cultural link between India and Thailand.

In the contemporary period, India's renewed focus on restoring its Buddhist heritage and utilising the "Buddha connect" within its foreign policy underscores the relevance of strengthened cooperation with Thailand- a country where Buddhism has not only flourished historically but remains a dominant socio-cultural force. Thailand's considerable experience in the conservation and promotion of Buddhist heritage offers valuable insights for India's heritage revival initiatives and its broader civilizational engagement with Southeast Asia. Furthermore, drawing upon their shared Buddhist legacy, India and Thailand are well placed to jointly advance interfaith dialogue, cross-cultural exchange and the creation of transnational knowledge networks across South and Southeast Asia.

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Dr. Karmveer Singh

Assistant Professor

Department of History and Indian Culture

University of Rajasthan, Jaipur (India)

Email: karmveerjnu@gmail.com

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Urbanisation in the Early-Medieval Rajasthan : Some Reflections

• Om Prakash Singh

The mainstream historiography of northern India for the early-medieval period presents a picture of urban decay and decline due to several factors including fall of empires and foreign invasions, loss of long-distance trade and the social disorder of the Kali Age. It has been suggested, on the basis of archaeological remains and inscriptional and literary evidence, that the expansion of agrarian economy, mainly due to land grants, adversely impacted the growth of urban centres in the northern India during the early-medieval times.[1] This was coupled with decline in trade and paucity of coins. This type of historiography suggests that land grants led to a new socio-economic formation known as the Indian feudalism. Such grants enjoyed by the landed intermediaries resulted in the emergence of self sufficient and close village economy leading to decline of the typical features of urbanisation such as trade, especially long-distance trade with the Roman empire, handicrafts and use of metallic money. It has also been suggested that, the process of urbanisation and trade revived after the Turkish invasion towards the end of the tenth century.[2]

It is further suggested that the process is true for the region of Rajasthan as well where urbanisation started around 300 BC, reaching its peak during the Saka-Kusana period before witnessing a gradual decline by the end of the fourth century AD. This is illustrated as such by R. S. Sharma[3] citing the archaeological excavation data from Noh in Bharatpur district, Bairat and Rairh in Jaipur district, Nagari in Chittorgarh district, and Rangmahal, near Suratgarh, in Sri Ganganagar district of Rajasthan. All these sites have produced rich cultural evidence for urban way of life beginning with the third century BC that includes wide variety metal tools and metallurgical

centres; rich pottery culture including PGW, NBPW and Rangmahal ware; variety of coins including punch-marked coins, Malava coins, Mitra coins, Greek and Indo-Greek coins; structural remains of baked bricks besides ring wells and soak pits; amongst others.

The archaeological evidence from Rajasthan supports Sharma's opinion partially. However, fresh evidence and insights defy the pattern of the Gangetic plain. The site of Sambhar[4] or Sakambhari, located in Jaipur district, has to tell a different story. It was the first capital of the Chauhan kings. The site was first excavated in 1884 and then in 1936-38. The excavation has yielded rich material culture though the finds are not listed period wise. The repertoire includes about 200 coins, including six silver punch-marked coins. Limited number of gold objects were also found. Copper objects of the site include a bell, a spoon, small jars and small circular dish, finger and ear rings, a nail extractor and an awl. Iron objects from the site are also numerous, such as hatchets, scraper, double edged daggers, sickles, chisels and crucibles, all from a blacksmith's shop. Eight terracotta dices, all numbered, are interesting finds of the site besides a large number of terracotta figurines of animals and birds. Moulded plaques which were meant to be nailed to wall surface were found in abundance from here. On the basis of antiquities and coins the site of Sambhar seems to have been occupied continuously without any break from about second century BC to about tenth century AD, though the most prosperous period here seems to have been during the Kushana period.[5]

Nagar or Karkota Nagar, located in the Tonk district, is another such site which was very rich in bricks and coins. Although over 6000 coins were found here, only 229[6] of them are identifiable and ascribable to forty different kings. The oldest of these coins bear the legend Jaya Malavana and range in date from the first to the third-fourth century AD. Besides coins, large variety of copper objects, beads of semi-precious stones and shell objects were also found from Nagar. Beads in finished and semi-finished stage from the site indicate that Nagar was a bead manufacturing centre. On the basis of coins, a fragmentary inscription and structural remains, the sit seems to have been in in existence from about fourth century BC to about tenth century AD, though its most prosperous period was the second to fourth century AD. The glory of Nagar was revived under the Guhilas of Chatsu in the seventh century AD and its prosperity

continued upto tenth century AD which is clear from the Mandika Tal inscription dated 987 AD.[7]

Cross reginal references for urban growth in Andhra and Tamil Nadu have have suggested some factors responsible for the process of urbanisation in the early-medieval times and most of these are available in the case of early-medieval Rajasthan as well.[8] It has been suggested that several factors were responsible for the growth of urbanisation at any place during early-medieval times, such as: (i) the geographical location a place; (ii) trade; (iii) importance of the place as a centre of political and administrative activities; and (iv) religious importance of the place. And all these factors appear to be in operation during the early-medieval Rajasthan. Besides archaeological evidence not suggesting a general trend of deurbanization in Rajasthan, it has been suggested that after the seventh century AD, with the emergence of Rajput dynasties and religious centres coupled with channelisation of agrarian surplus leading to the growth of market economy at regional and local level became more intense culminating into the rise of numerous towns with a higher degree of the process of urbanisation.[9]

Seventh century onwards marks the emergence of new Rajput clans such as the Pratiharas, the Chauhans, the Guhilas, the Parmaras and the Chalukyas who founded their kingdoms with new capitals. The capitals were usually fortified which later grew into towns. Thus Ajmer, Ranthambhor, Nadol and Jalor became the capitals of the Chauhanas and Chandravati, Arthuna and Barmer flourished as the capitals of the Parmaras.[10] Sometimes the seats of feudal lords and provincial governors also developed into towns. Merchants and traders from near and distant places settled in these towns in large numbers. Sometimes fortresses located on the hilltops also developed on towns in course of time. One can mention the names of Ranthambhore, Naraina, Mandalgarh and Jalor in this category whereas Hanumangarh grew in the deserts.[11]

Religious centres of Rajasthan, during the early-medieval times, also acted as the nucleus of settlements around which towns developed later. These were mostly related to brahmanism and Jainism. Thus Bijaulia, Harshanatha, Menal, Revasa and Ghotarasi were related to Brahmanism whereas Nana, Mungthala, Phalodhi, Abu, Madara, Jiravala were associated with Jainism.[12] Some places

were related to both Brahmanism and Jainism. Such places also acted as centres of learning where a large number of pilgrims visited from near and distant places and they gradually transformed into towns.

Flourishing trade and commerce was another reason for the growth of urbanisation during the early-medieval times in Rajasthan. There has been considerable trade across the desert and there have existed several trade and pilgrimage routes across Rajasthan. For example, by about tenth to thirteenth century, there are various references to trade routes connecting urban settlements like Pali, Jalor, Barmer, Nadol, Bhillamal, Lodrava, Nagda, Arbuda and Aghatpur (Ahar). Pali in western Rajasthan received trade goods from far off lands like Kashmir, Central Asia, China, Iran, Iraq, Arabia, Africa, etc.[13] With the prospering trade the towns associated with them also became prominent. Thus, Shergarh, ancient Koshavardhan, became an important centre of trade, industry and agriculture whereas Sambhar and Didwana became important towns on account of salt industry. Some of the towns of the early-medieval times might have served as carvan cities. Thus Nagor, Jalor, Sancher, Didwana and Bhunamal seem to be such carvan cities which flourished due to trade along particular cities.[14] This process of urbanisation was operating at the regional, local and supra-local level in almost every part of Rajasthan. Thus early-medieval Rajasthan boasts of proliferation of hierarchised local centres of exchange situated within the domains of emergent Rajput lineages within the spatial agrarian context.[15]

These towns were named in various ways.[16] Some, like Chittor, Visalapur and Ajmer were named after the founding rulers. Some others were named after the deities around which they sprang. Hence Sakambhari and Ambavati derive their names from the deities of the same name. Towns were also named after the tribes such as Bhillamala after the Bhills, Nagaur after the Nagas and Takshakgadha (Toda Raisingh) after the Takshakas. Towns like Jangalkupa and Kiratakupa were probably named after the deep wells of the region.

There is no doubt that the archaeological map of the region, available so far, emphatically suggests that the process of urbanisation begins in Rajasthan as early as the fourth-third century BC. This process attains its peak during the Kusana period and it is profusely illustrated in the material culture of the times. Then

there is a gradual decline in the material remains associated with urbanisation and most of the early historic urban sites witness a decline in the region, like elsewhere in the country. It is true that few of them, like Sambhar and Nagar, remained continuously occupied till tenth century, AD but post-Kusana period life was not the same at these sites. The signs of the decline are very clear. On the other hand, sites like Ahar, Bairat and Rairh lost their urban character before the Gupta period.

So as far as the archaeological evidence of the region is concerned, the opinion of R. S. Sharma holds ground the region witnessed beginning of urbanisation in the fourth-third century BC which reached its zenith during the Kusana times and after that there is a gradual decline of these urban centres. Sharma's view about the role of land grants for deurbanization, decline of trade and paucity of coins has already been questioned by several scholars.[17] But his view about re-emergence of urbanisation in the tenth century after the Turkish invasion is also no longer tenable. And this can be established on the basis of evidence from Rajasthan where due to several socio-religious and politico-economic factors the urban milieu of Rajasthan was growing and flourishing. Establishment of various Rajput dynasties resulting into multiple centres of power, emergence of religious and commercial centres and pulsating trading network was contributing to the burgeoning urban settlements in the early-medieval Rajasthan. There may be some gaps in this hypothesis due to unfriendly archaeological data, but these gaps should fill up with excavation of more archaeological sites in the region.

Notes and References

1. Historians like R. S. Sharma, *Urban Decay in India (c. 300-1000)*, New Delhi: 1987 and B. N. S. Yadav, *Society and Culture in Northern India, In the Twelfth Century,* Allahabad: 1973, are the principal advocates of this historiography.
2. R. S. Sharma, op. cit., p. 133.
3. Ibid., pp. 60-62.
4. Astha Dibyopama and Vasant Shinde, 'Early Historic Archaeology of Rajasthan; Recent Perspectives', *Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute,* Vol. 75, 2015, pp. 97-112.
5. Ibid., p. 100.

6. Ibid., pp. 102-102.
7. Ibid., p. 102.
8. B. D. Chattopadhyaya, *The Making of Early Medieval India,* New Deli;1994, p. 168.
9. K. C. Jain, 'Urbanization in Rajasthan from 700 to 1200 AD', *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress,* 1981, Vol. 42, pp.115-119.
10. Ibid., p. 116.
11. Ibid., p. 117.
12. Ibid., p. 117.
13. Rima Hooja, *A History of Rajasthan,* New Delhi: 2006, p. 264.
14. K. C. Jain, op. cit., p. 118.
15. B. D. Chattopadhyay, op. cit., p. 119.
16. K. C. Jain, op. cit., p.119.
17. See relevant chapters in B. D. Chattopadhyay, op. cit.; R. Champaklakshmi, *Trade, Ideology and Urbanisation; South India 300 BC to AD1300*, New Delhi: 1996; Ranabir Chakravarti, *Exploring Early India: Upto c. AD 1300,* New Delhi: 2010; Bhairabi Prasad Sahu, *The Making of Regions in Indian History; Society, State and Identity in Premodern Odisha,* New Delhi:2020 for a detailed discussion of various regions.

Om Prakash Singh
Professor
Department of History
Delhi College of Arts and Commerce
(University of Delhi)
Netaji Nagar, New Delhi-110023

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Social Groups and Social Relations : Reflections of Sufis of Bihar during Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries

• **Tabir Kalam**

Islam lays stress on equality and brotherhood in faith. It emphasises the importance of piety and devotion rather than birth or colour as criterion for greatness and nearness to God. In theory of Islamic society rank was to be determined not by aristocratic descent but by the degree of faith and piety. The most devout of the believers is the most worthy in the sight of God, with the spread of Islam and the coming of a large number of new peoples into its folds, the ideals of early Islam began to disappear. The new people brought with them many of their own social and cultural practices. Thus, inspite of the theoretical emphasis on ideal Islam and its total rejection of distinction based on race, colour, creed or casts, one finds that in actual practice Islam in the south Asia has been profoundly influenced by the Hindu casts system. This paper examines the idea of sufis of Bihar on social groups and social relations of Muslim society during thirteen and fourteenth centuries Bihar.

Ziauddin Barani has discussed at length, the distinction between persons of low birth and high birth, learned, illiterate, wise and foolish, master and slave, artisans, merchants, darwesh, clerks, soldiers, cultivators etc. He also refers to the mystics, astrologers, wrestlers, musicians, dancers etc. He makes distinction on the basis of poverty, occupation, and economic interest, birth and education among Muslim society of Medieval India.[1] Here, divisions in the society in medieval India may roughly be put into three categories, *ahle-i-suyuf* (men of the sword), *ahl-i-qalam* (men of the pen) and *awam-i-khalq* (common people). The upper groups on the top

of the social order were the governing class, military aristocracy and relatives of the kings. Next to them were men of the pen, comprising theologians and litterateurs, mashaikhs (sufi saints) and *sadat* (Syeds). At the bottom of the ladder was *awam-i-khalq*. Comprising peasants, bankers, clerks, money lenders, merchants, slaves etc.[2]

The upper two group *ahl-i-suyuf* and *ahl-i-qalam* were mainly concerned with administration. *Ahl-i-suyuf* was the members of the aristocracy, amirs, malik, sipahsalar, muqta, kotwal etc. The *ahl-i-qalam* was engaged in the work of administration or literary works. In this group ulama, mashaikh, qazi, imam, muhtasib etc, were included. They were incharge of the judicial and also ecclesiastical functions, and guided the masses for moral, religious and educational purposes.[3] As Muslim rule was established in India on the basis of military conquest, consolidation of the empire was in the hands of the ahl-i-suyuf. However, the king and aristocracy were fully dependent on *ahl-i-qalam* and with the mutual cooperation of these two broad groups; the government was in a position to function smoothly.

In Khwan-i-Pur Naimat again Yahya Maneri in the context of a discussion on existence and knowledge mentioned that "whenever there is excellence in lineage as for example, the descendent of the apostle and those of shaikhs, outstanding knowledge is not a necessary condition for praises, so that our praise only the person who posses it. If such a person possessed knowledge then that would be on excellence heaped upon another."[4] Here the saint clearly gave them a special hierarchical position which seems to contradict the prophet Mohammad's direction regarding egalitarianism. The prophet's instruction was that society should be determined by the degree of faith and piety.

Shaikh Husam-ud-din, the fifteenth century Chisti saint of Manikpur who was tutored in tasawwuf- in Bengal, would not permitted his disciple, Syed Hamid Raza to do any favours to him because he was a Syed. However, this was interpreted by the disciple as having denied him the good fortune of serving his murshid (spiritual guide). One night this great Manikpuri saint while descending from a stair case in his house discovered that Syed Hamid had put his head and some portions of his body in one of the niches of staircase. He hoped that his pir would put his leg on his body and head. However, the pir realized the situation and immediately jumped over to avoid putting

his leg on the body and head of murid. In this way pir deliberately avoided it and discerned the whole game. Hazrat Hiusamuddin had a serious scruple about giving his shirt to his disciple, as the disciple happened to be descendent of the prophet and he would have to raise the shirt above his head. He decided to provide him with the sarawil (a kind of trouser) for while using it his syed disciple would have to bring it down to his own feet. Hamid Raza was as much anxious to humiliate himself before his pir as the latter was anxious to honour the former as being Syed. Syed Hamid instead of folding it round his legs put the sarawil on his head as a turban.

In a piri- muridi relationship the murid had to pledge absolute, submission and devotion to his spiritual guide.[5] We find clear-cut distinction being made in even disciple hood as a syed, murid not being allowed to serve his pir. It is thus, possible to visualize of a situation in which a murid, who may not be a syed and who may be the most pious among the disciples of his pir is denied the right to take the charge of khalifa (successor) on account of his descent. To put this in another way, we can say that for the sufi descent from the prophet could be regarded as a privilege over the piety of an individual, which would of course, be is direct contradiction of the prophet's teaching.

In his malfuzat, Sharfudinh Yahya Maneri while discussing the syeds and the respect and esteem they commanded, observed that a syed should be polite. He should not be harsh and impolite towards anyone. He should not have any vanity.[6] Yahaya Maneri in his discussion of syeds only stressed the behaviours of syeds and makes no mention of the rest of Muslim society and how they should conduct themselves. One of his majlis of Sharfuddin Yahya Maneri observed the reason of some people of Hindustan not having much respect for the syeds, was that some of them (syeds) had become causes of disturbances and did not line up to the moral standard that were expected of them.[7] On another occasion, he said "we are lovers of those who love the prophet's family and at war, with its enemies.[8]

The *ulama* come to acquire a prominent place in a measure second to syeds in the Muslim society of the time. This class was the most potent force in controlling and remolding the society. They occupied commanding places both in secular and religious affairs.[9] As a rule they had undergone a course of training in Muslim law, logic, Arabic letters, and the religious literature of Islam in general,

namely tafsir, hadith etc.[10] Although the Quran emphasizes their position is general way as a separate class of Muslims inviting people of path of goodness, no special provision was made for them in the holy book.[11] The prophet was reported to have asked, honour the ulama, for they are the successors of the prophets.[12] Abdur Rashid opines while discussing ulama that the status enjoyed by the ulama in Muslims society can be gleaned from the tradition of the prophet, as recorded in the Tarikh-i-Fakhrunddin Mubarak Shahi. The ulama are the heirs of the prophet on the day of resurrection; the ink used by the scholars will out-weigh and turn the scale. The world exists on account of the piety of the learned. The laws of shariat are enforced by them, and things illegal and not mentioned by the shariat are suppressed by them. The religion of God stand firm due to them. The best kings and the best nobles are those who visit the doors of the ulama and the worst ulama are those who visit the doors of the kings and the nobles. The ulama are much superior in dignity and status to the others.[13]

Ulama have been classified in the literature of the period into two categories.[14] *ulama-i-akhirat* and *ulama-i-dunya.* This classification is based not on the standard of knowledge, but their approach to mundane affairs and the maintenance of the high standards of conduct. The ulama-i-dunya, gave importance to worldly affairs. They were experts in shrouding away their irresponsible statements and actions.[15] Sharfuddin Yahya Maneri while discussing knowledge in a letter to his murid, Shaikh Umar observed that the knowledge is not that which would take you to the courts of kings or make you judges (qazi) and administrators (muftis), what is meant by acquiring the knowledge is that it should enlighten you about the world hereafter and take you to the path of God.[16] Amir Khusrau depicts the worldly ulama as sycophants who surrounded the sultan and maliks, and gave their opinions on the shariat.[17] Sharfuddin Yahya Maneri wrote and spoke openly against the worldly ulama as robbers, highway farer who danced at the threshold of the king and agent of shaitan (evil). He is his letter to Shaikh Umar advised "Always keep in mind that you should distance yourself from the worldly Ulama as you would, distance yourself from the Satan."[18] In other letter he mentioned once a darwesh asked Satan as to why he was not doing any work, the shaitan replied that his task was already being fulfilled by worldly ulama and that's why he is free.[19]

But the Sufis of the period also appreciated the ulama who were on the right path. Sharfuddin Yahya Maneri in his letter to Shamsuddin observed. "It is obligatory to be away from ignorance and the ignorant, similarly it is necessary to be in the company of the ulama and receive their grace. Ulama here mean not the worldly *ulama* but *ulama-i-akherat*.[20] And in another letter to Shamsuddin, Sharfuddin Yahya Maneri prays that his disciple be saved from the worldly *ulama* and should find solace in the company of *ulama-i-akharat*. There are numerous instances as well the rigidity of the ulama.[21] Ahmad Bihari and Shaikh Aazkakvi the two Bihari saints fell victims to the wrath of the *ulama* at Delhi. Yahya Maneri the spiritual guide of those saints expressed his disgust at their unjust execution.[22]

The position of *qazis* in the sultanate period is also referred to, in Sufi literature. Sharfuddin Yahya Maneri spoke disparagingly about the *qazis* of his days. He distinguished between three types of *qazis* and opined that the qazi who accepted bribes secured his place in hell. Once he said oppression is worse than infidelity. It is therefore, forbidden to look at one who practices oppression and injustice but not at one who is an infidel.[23] Nizamuddin Aaulia while discussing justice declared that "if people do justice or show grace to each other God's grace descends upon them. If they are unjust to each other, God does justice to them, it means bad for him."[24]

Sharfuddin Yahya Maneri once observed, in a reply to a question of Maulana Karimuddin that "if a *qazi,* on the testimony of two witnesses issues an order which is contrary to what actually happened, that order of his, is lawful both according to the external law and in the sight of God so that in the later part of the life the person concerned can't be accused on account of that, if a man claims that he has married a particular woman, but, infact, they have not been married, yet produced two witnesses, issued a decree of validity of the marriage, then the situation is that, in the external forum if there is a degree of validity the matter stands established. All the external usage appears to be lawful. In the internal forum also, if an application is made to decree to the qazi then, in the sight of God, there would be nothing blame worthy. Later on, the (Yahya Maneri) added: As for the qazi, he simply issued his decree in accordance with legal, procedure in force. Afterward, if something at variance with his decree' comes to light *qazi* has no authority to

retract his decree. He accepts the testimony of the witness: he does not rescind his decree. In this answer the shaikh strengthens the positions of qazi who, on the basis of testimony of two witnesses can give the judgment and he could only reply on the witness. The shaikh also gave an example which is of the same nature, this happened at the time of Prophet Mohammad, but prophet did not retreat from his judgment.[25]

In the letter to Hamiduddin and Sadruddin of Sonargaon, Sharfuddin Yahya Maneri expressed his surprise at their accepting the ports of *qazi* and *naib qazi*.[26] The shaikh once observed that there was a city in which a shaikh and a wise man were good friends, when the qazi of the city died, the wise man was called to fill this post and the wise man accepted that post. Once the slave girl of the shaikh, as a matter of routine went to the wise man's house to get some wheat grounded. When the shaikh came to know of this he took the flour from him and asked one of his murid (disciple) to take the flour around the city and tell people that it had been grounded in the qazi's house and asked them whether they would be willing to accept it. However, no one was willing to accept it and in the end, it had to be dumped into the river.[27] Sharfuddin Yayha Maneri has used this incident to show the state of the qazis of that time. Here in this anecdote Yahya Maneri depict the post of qazi as being such in the society that nobody accepted that flour which was grounded in the qazi's house.

However, the same Sufi saints also appreciated the works of those qazis who were just, and did not look for any material gain and implement the shariat faithfully such ulama according to the Sufis would go to heaven because of their faithfulness. In a letter to his murid Hamid Millat, Shfruddin Yahya Maneri while discussing the position of qazi advised to keep distance retreat from qazis the position and avoid discussing and reading books on administrative and judicial matters to extent as it was possible.[28]

The Sufi literature also provides us with details about the piri-muridi relationship which no faithful could escape in the period under our study. This relationship enjoined complete obedience to the pir on the part of the murid. It was thus, a very special kind of relationship. Upon entering this relationship the murid had to comply with every order that the pir might issue. It was through such a relationship that the goal of spirituality was attained. The

closeness of relationship also meant that the pir and murid experience together many ups and downs that the paths of spirituality bring with them. While discussing the power of a darwesh, Sharfuddin Yahya Maneri observed that it so happens that this group (darwesh) while following its own path attains a particular stage where in human qualities leaves him completely and it is endowed with an angelic disposition when it happens, it enables to tackle each task with angelic power.[29] However, it was necessary for the pir to have the knowledge of shariat. It was essential for pir and murid to understand the shariat in order to follow the correct path of Sufism, and if he was not aware of the shariat he cannot attain the reality, and it was also not advisable for anybody for anybody to follow the mystic life without the proper knowledge of shariat. The pir must be a man of insight and spiritual attainment and should have vast knowledge of divine mysteries.[30]

Sharfuddin Yahya Maneri observed that "it is enough for master (*pir*) to teach his disciple (*murid*) about the commandments of God (*Allah*) and ask them to follow their way of tariqat and warn them about the difficulties on the way of tariqat. For the murid, the saint also advised that the murid should be absolutely devoted to his pir, which means that the murid should identify his deen (religion) with that of his master, so much so that the murid should not blink an eye even if he thinks that the command of pir is against the tenets of his (murid's) 'deen'. As a matter of fact the murid should have the same faith and conviction on his pir's command as he has on revelation.[31] Here, the position of pir clearly indicated as a guide and murid is liable to follow him without having even a slight scruple about the pir's move. The pir has attained the profound knowledge and he is well aware about the tariqat. It may be possible that the murid is not mature enough to judge the order of his pir. On an another occasion Yahya Maneri observed "it is necessary for a murid to follow the steps and sayings of his pir with heart and mind in order to carry out the principles meant for spreading the religion."[32]

In the letter to his disciple Yahaya Maneri writes that you (Shamsuddin) have said boastfulness prevents me from writing anything. If you send me something then I shall be able to reply what is this blissfulness? Write whatever happens to you and what you are doing whenever you have the opportunity to do so. One of the obligations imposed on members of this group is that a disciple

should not conceal anything from his spiritual guide, no matter how shameful it might be. If a patient does not explain his symptoms to his physician how can he help him? Or if he gives him false account of his symptom, what the doctor will be able to do? How will the patient get well again? In short, a disciple should be as open with his spiritual guide as a patient is with his physician.[33]

In another letter while discussing the true devotion of *murid* he observed "it your action and you deeds are is accordance with the pleasure and commands of the *pir* then you are his true devotee. But it is not the case and you are guided by your own opinion and judgments then you do not have a true devotion.[34] And it is necessary for a murid to follow his pir without any doubt on the pir's knowledge to attain success and reform; if he (murid) is doubtful about his pir's knowledge then he can't be a true devotee.

In the whole sphere of pir's and murids relationship the position of pir is that of a guide and the position of murid is that of the follower of his pir. The Sufi literature of the region under study, does not have any mention of any woman, who attained the position of pir only one reference can be found in the letters of Abdul Quaddus Gangohi addressed to a pious talented Afghan lady, Babu Khatun. Women have traditionally been relegated to the position of mere subordinates of men. They are totally depends on men in every stage of their life. There have been justifications of their subordinate positions by a major section of the male-dominated society on the ground that women are naturally weak and inferior therefore, they are not fit to be entrusted with any responsible work.

Shaikh Nasiruddin Chiragh Delhawi once observed that "some women are very efficient in the religious sphere. He cites the examples of Rabia Basri in this regard."[35] A pious and chaste lady of these times would be named such a lady if she belong to the lower scales of society was respected.[36] Shaikh Jamaluddin of Hansi, had a maid servant who was a modest and virtuous lady. She used to relay messages between Shaikh Jamul-ud-din and Baba Farid, the latter called her as mother of momins.[37] Some women had attained a state of conscious spirituality perhaps far ahead of male members but it was not permissible for them to assume the position of religious guide or pir, and initiate neophytes by the usual method of giving or placing hand on hand.[38] Sharfuddin Yahya Maneri also warns that some women are rahbar(guide) while other were ruhbar

(highway robber, the former encouraged and helped their husbands to pursue the path of truth devotion and submission and the latter intercepting the road of truth and leading the husbands astray from the right way. Therefore, in the case of latter talaq (divorce) is permissible.[39]

The dowry formed an important term of marriage and there are some references to it in the Sufi literature of the area under review. Sipahsalar, Ali Usman accepted 40000 tankas in marriage of his son. When Yahya Maneri came to know of this dowry, he exclaimed "God be praised: matters have reached to this extent" Then should be no idea of 'nam-o- nang' (Name & prestige). The saint similarly said to the sipahsalar that when his son would have a daughter they would say her mother fetched 40,000 tankas.[40]

Slavery existed in Islam right from the establishment of Islamic rule in Arabia. In India, after the establishment of Muslims rule and conquest of Hindu lands, the prisoners of war had been sold in the market and bought by purchasers. The slaves occupied the lowest rung in the social hierarchy. Afif mentioned that under the Sultan Firoz Shah, the employment of slaves reached its zenith. Firoz Shah ordered all the muqtis to collect slaves wherever the/ could be found and send the best to the royal court. In this way their numbers increased so much that it was beyond description.[41]

The liberation of slaves in Islam was looked upon as the highest act of virtue entitling its master to a special reward in the next world. They were to be regarded as members of the family. A slave was sometimes preferred to a son.[42] Sharfuddin Yahya Maneri gives references to slaves; once he quoted hadith that a slave came to the Prophet Muhammad and complained that his master Abuzar Ghaffari had beaten him up. After listening to the complaint Prophet condemned the act of Abuzar Ghaffari and ordered that it is the duty of a master to feed and clothe his slaves because this is his master's duty to do so. If he is unable to feed and clothe his slaves it is better to sell them.[43] Sometimes, slaves also supported their masters which are evident by Amir Hassan Sijzi's narration where he narrates that Maulana Noor Turk had a slave who was engaged in cotton dressing. He gave one dirham daily to his master. Maulana Noor Turk and that was the only means of the latter's livelihood.[44]

Nizamuddin Aaulia observed that Shaikh Usman Khaki had

a slave girl.[45] He had planned to go outside the city but was very concerned about his slave girl and so he decided to hand her over his pir, because that was the safest place for the slave girl. Shariat suggests that slaves should be treated humanely, granting them dignified position. The egalitarian structure and religious brotherhood provided the slave in many cases with opportunities to rise in social scales and brought them to the highest position in the state.

Yahya Maneri observed that once a darwesh bought a slave and asked what should 'I call you, the slave replied, whatever you wish, the darwesh again asked what should I give you for clothing, the slave replied whatever you wish. Then darwesh realised that the slave was actually his master in a sense who has come, to teach him what discipleship is all about.[46] A very little mention is made of slavery in the Sufi literature of Bihar. One finds only few instances where references to the way that one should treat slaves are made. This is in sharp contrast to the numerous references that have been made to the proper statements of slaves by Sufis from Delhi like Nizamuddin Auliya and Nasiruddin Chiragh Dehlwai. While dealing with the Sufi literature of Bihar it is evident that the ideals for social groups and social relations are same regardless of regions. The ideas propounded by the Sufis of Delhi resonate very similar in the regional Sufi literature. Most of the ideals propounded by Suhrawardi Sufis of Bihar are very close to the ideal of main stream Sufism with regional variations.

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Tabir Kalam
Professor
Department of History, Faculty of Social Sciences
Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, U.P. India 221005
email. tabirkalam@gmail.com, Mobile: +919415644571

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Danda Nata In Odisha : A Comparative Saga of Ritual and Performance

- **Mr. Dibya Ranjan Tripathy**
- **Dr. Santosh Kumar Mallik**

Danda Nata, a spiritual folk tradition from Odisha, is characterized by its rigorous physical trials and ascetic practices that highlight devotion, endurance, and community spirit. While rooted in the worship of Lord Shiva, the practice varies significantly across different regions of Odisha, such as Boudh, Ganjam, Kandhamal, and Kalahandi, each adapting the ritual to its cultural, geographical, and social contexts. This study explores these regional variations, focusing on how Danda Nata serves as both a journey of personal spiritual awakening and a communal religious experience. It examines the role of geographical and social factors, such as tribal vs. non-tribal participation and the integration of local deities, in shaping the ritual's expression. The research also highlights Danda Nata's connection to other Odia folk dances like Gotipua, Chhau, and Prahallada Nataka, emphasizing its unique focus on asceticism and physical endurance. The study's findings suggest that Danda Nata plays a crucial role in community bonding, ensuring cultural continuity and facilitating spiritual devotion across generations. The research contributes to a deeper understanding of how traditional folk rituals like Danda Nata adapt to changing cultural landscapes while retaining their profound spiritual significance. Future research could explore lesser-known regional performances, particularly in Kandhamal and Kalahandi, and compare these practices with similar folk traditions outside Odisha.

Keywords : *Danda Nata, Odisha, regional variations, folk dance, spiritual devotion*

1. Introduction

Danda Nata, a vibrant and spiritual folk tradition from Odisha, has long been a symbol of devotion, endurance, and community spirit. Known for its rigorous physical trials and ascetic practices, it is a cultural expression deeply embedded in the religious life of Odisha. Despite sharing a common devotion to Lord Shiva, the practice of Danda Nata varies widely across the state, with each region adapting the ritual to its own cultural, geographical, and social contexts. From the tribal-centric rituals of Boudh to the more Brahmin-influenced practices of Ganjam, Danda Nata represents both a journey of personal spiritual awakening and a collective community experience. By examining the nuances of Danda Nata across different districts i.e. Boudh, Ganjam, Kandhamal, and Kalahandi this study seeks to understand how such folk traditions evolve, adapt, and continue to thrive within the changing landscapes of Odisha's cultural heritage.

Danda Nata holds profound significance not only as a religious act of devotion to Lord Shiva but also as a vital component of community identity. It serves as a unique intersection of spirituality and social cohesion, where participants undergo physical feats like fire-walking, rolling in dust, carrying heavy poles (Danda), and fasting, as expressions of spiritual discipline and penance. These performances, although originating in rural Odisha, have expanded across the state, demonstrating their adaptability to different cultural contexts, from tribal traditions in Boudh to more ritualistic practices in Ganjam. The involvement of both tribal and non-tribal communities further enhances the social relevance of the tradition, highlighting its role in fostering unity and collective devotion. As a collective ritual, Danda Nata reinforces a deep sense of community, where even the audience plays a crucial role in the spiritual atmosphere. In the words of the renowned folklorist Vikram Seth:

"The dance of life is a celebration of endurance, and in its rhythms, we find the sacred pulse that unites us all." This quote resonates deeply with the essence of Danda Nata, where the dance is not merely a performance but a sacred act of penance and spiritual purification, embodying both personal sacrifice and collective devotion. The endurance shown by participants is symbolic of the broader human quest for spiritual transcendence and the unity that

emerges from shared cultural expressions. Through this paper, we will explore how Danda Nata has evolved across Odisha, comparing its regional variations and understanding the role it plays in preserving cultural identity, social cohesion, and religious devotion. The study will also examine the interaction between Danda Nata and other folk dance traditions of Odisha, shedding light on their shared roots and unique cultural significance.

1.1. Research Problem

The research problem centers on the comparative analysis of Danda Nata performances across various regions of Odisha, including Boudh, Ganjam, Kandhamal, Kalahandi, and other parts of the state. Despite being rooted in devotion to Lord Shiva, Danda Nata shows significant regional variations in its rituals, performance styles, and cultural significance. These differences are influenced by factors such as tribal versus non-tribal participation, local deities, and regional agricultural practices. In Boudh, the ritual is self-conducted by tribal communities without Brahmin involvement, focusing on personal spiritual endurance, while in Ganjam, Brahminical elements and the worship of local deities like Jagannath and Gajalaxmi are integrated into the performance. Kandhamal and Kalahandi further contribute unique interpretations that reflect local customs. The study aims to explore how these regional practices reflect local identities, community dynamics, and religious beliefs, while also investigating the connection between Danda Nata and other Odia folk dance traditions like Gotipua, Chhau, and Prahallada Nataka, to highlight shared cultural values of devotion, endurance, and community.

1.2. Objectives

i. To analyze regional variations in Danda Nata practices and rituals.

ii. To explore the connection between Danda Nata and other folk dances like Gotipua, Chhau, and Prahallada Nataka.

1.3. Relevance of study

The relevance of this study lies in its ability to enhance the understanding of Odisha's diverse cultural expressions and their profound impact on the religious and social structures within the state. By exploring the variations of Danda Nata across different

regions, the research provides valuable insights into how local customs, traditions, and religious beliefs shape the practice of folk rituals. These regional adaptations not only reflect the unique cultural identities of communities in Boudh, Ganjam, Kandhamal, and Kalahandi, but also shed light on the role such rituals play in fostering social cohesion and community bonding. Additionally, the study emphasizes the importance of these cultural practices in preserving and transmitting religious values, spiritual devotion, and collective identity across generations. Through this comparative analysis, the research contributes to a deeper understanding of how folk traditions like Danda Nata intertwine with the broader social and religious fabric of Odisha, showcasing the adaptability and resilience of these cultural expressions in contemporary societ

2. Research Methodology

2.1. Comparative Approach

The research employs a comparative approach to analyze the ritual practices and regional expressions of Danda Nata across various districts of Odisha, including Boudh, Ganjam, Kandhamal, Kalahandi, and others. This approach allows for an in-depth examination of both the commonalities and variations in how the ritual is performed in these distinct regions. Danda Nata, while originating as a devotional practice centered on Lord Shiva, manifests differently depending on regional cultural influences, social structures, and environmental contexts. For example, in Boudh, Danda Nata is primarily led by tribal communities and focuses heavily on individual spiritual endurance through ascetic practices like fire-walking, fasting, and carrying the Bana (wooden pole). In contrast, Ganjam sees a Brahminical influence, with priests playing a significant role in the ritual, incorporating regional deities like Jagannath and Gajalaxmi into the performance alongside Shiva (Tripathy et al., 2024). By comparing these diverse performances, this research highlights how Danda Nata adapts its core religious themes of devotion and purification to reflect local customs, agricultural practices, and community participation dynamics. This comparative approach not only underscores the diversity of ritual expressions but also reveals how Danda Nata remains a central cultural and religious performance across Odisha (Bag & Biswal, 2015).

2.2. Data Collection

The study employs a multi-method approach to data collection, which combines field studies, interviews with practitioners, and a literature review on regional folklore and religious traditions. Field studies will involve direct observation of Danda Nata performances in various regions, allowing the researcher to capture the nuances of the ritual in real-time. Observing the physical endurance activities (such as firewalking, carrying Bana, and fasting) and the involvement of the community will offer insights into the regional expressions of the ritual. Additionally, interviews with practitioners, including dancers, religious leaders, and community members, will provide qualitative data on the significance of these practices in local contexts. These interviews will allow for a deeper understanding of the spiritual, social, and cultural meanings associated with Danda Nata. The literature review will focus on existing academic research, folklore collections, and religious texts related to Danda Nata and other regional traditions. This secondary data will offer historical and contextual insights into how the ritual has evolved over time and the influences of tribal and Brahminical traditions on its practice (Mishra, 2008). Combining primary data (from fieldwork and interviews) with secondary sources will provide a comprehensive understanding of the ritual's regional variations and its broader cultural implications.

2.3. Analytical Framework

The analytical framework for this study is based on qualitative analysis, focusing on the cultural, social, and ritualistic dimensions of Danda Nata. This approach seeks to examine how the ritual serves as both a religious practice and a social event within the communities where it is performed. The cultural dimension involves analyzing the symbolic meanings behind the rituals, such as the spiritual significance of physical endurance (e.g., fire-walking, fasting) and the role of ritual stages (e.g., Dhuli, Pani, Bana, Agni, and Suanga) in the overall spiritual journey of the participants. The social dimension focuses on how Danda Nata fosters community cohesion, with participants and observers coming together to celebrate shared beliefs and values. The ritualistic dimension is concerned with the specific rituals and practices involved, including the choreography, the involvement of Brahmin priests in some

regions, and the differences in the treatment of sacred objects like the Bana. This qualitative analysis will be informed by the ethnographic method, focusing on the lived experiences of practitioners and the social context of the rituals (Pradhan, 2014). By analyzing the ritual across these dimensions, the study will uncover not only the physical aspects of Danda Nata but also the deeper spiritual and social meanings that sustain its practice across generations. This framework ensures a nuanced understanding of Danda Nata as a dynamic and evolving cultural phenomenon, deeply embedded in the religious and social fabric of Odisha.

3. Results

3.1. Regional Variations in Danda Nata

The comparative analysis of Danda Nata across different regions of Odisha reveals significant regional variations in the ritual's execution, reflecting local customs, community dynamics, and religious practices. In Boudh, Danda Nata is predominantly a tribal-centric performance, with the rituals conducted by tribal communities in a self-conducted manner. This version emphasizes personal endurance and spiritual purification through rigorous physical feats such as fire-walking, fasting, and carrying the Danda (a long wooden pole). The absence of Brahmin involvement and the focus on the individual's spiritual journey highlight the deeply personal connection that participants have with the divine, aligning with the region's strong tribal traditions (Majhi, 2024). This emphasis on asceticism underscores the community's belief in self-sufficiency and spiritual self-realization, where physical trials are seen as a means of direct communion with the divine (Bag & Biswal, 2015).

In Ganjam, on the other hand, Danda Nata takes on a more community-based form, characterized by Brahmin involvement and the worship of local deities like Gajalaxmi and Jagannath, alongside Lord Shiva. This practice blends tribal and mainstream Hindu elements, reflecting the syncretic nature of the region's religious culture. In Ganjam, the ritual includes Brahminical rites, such as chanting of Vedic mantras and the performing of rituals by priests, adding a layer of ritualistic purity that is not found in Boudh's self-conducted performance (Choudhury, 2016). The inclusion of deities

like Jagannath, who is central to the region's religious practices, further links the Danda Nata to the broader Odisha temple culture, making it a more communal event (Tripathy et al., 2024).

Regions like Kandhamal and Kalahandi present lesser-known variations of Danda Nata, where the rituals align closely with local customs and agricultural practices. These regions integrate tribal influences, with rituals performed primarily by local communities, but also adapt the rituals to their agricultural cycles. In Kandhamal, the performance is often timed with the harvest season, which adds an additional layer of agrarian symbolism to the practice. Participants in these areas often include both men and women from tribal and non-tribal communities, which highlights the inclusive nature of the rituals. The involvement of local deities, specific to each region, as well as the use of musical instruments, dance styles, and attire specific to the district, further marks the regional distinctiveness of Danda Nata in these areas (Choudhury, 2016).

3.2. Cultural Expressions

In addition to the ritualistic variations, Danda Nata displays notable differences in its cultural expressions across regions. These differences are manifested in music, dance, attire, and the role of regional deities. In Boudh, the musical accompaniment is often tribal in nature, utilizing traditional drums and instruments specific to the tribal communities, which creates a distinct rhythmic atmosphere that supports the intense physical acts performed during the ritual (Mishra, 2008). The dancers often wear simple, rustic attire, which aligns with the ascetic nature of the ritual. In contrast, in Ganjam, the use of classical instruments such as the tabla and flute reflects the Hindu influence, with dancers donning more elaborate costumes that blend traditional Odia and Brahminical elements. The attire in Ganjam incorporates symbolic representations of the deities worshipped, such as Jagannath, with dancers wearing costumes that evoke the symbolism of divinity (Pradhan, 2014).

The ritual phases of Danda Nata i.e Dhuli, Pani, Bana, Agni, and Suanga carry deep symbolic significance across regions. The Dhuli (dust) phase in Boudh represents purification through physical endurance, while in Ganjam, the Agni (fire) phase is more elaborate, often involving communal fire-walking, symbolizing the purification of the community as a whole. The Bana (Forest) phase

symbolizes the strength and endurance of the participants, with different regions attributing various ritualistic meanings to the pole, which is often treated as a sacred object (Bag, 2014). In Kandhamal and Kalahandi, the Suanga (Theatrical Performance) phase involves Dance ,drama,song offerings to both local deities and agricultural spirits, linking the ritual to agrarian beliefs and ensuring fertility and abundance in the coming year (Dash, 2016).

3.3. Comparative Analysis with Folk Dances

When comparing Danda Nata to other folk dances of Odisha, such as Gotipua, Chhau, and Prahallada Nataka, certain thematic similarities and distinctions emerge. Much like Gotipua, which is a devotional dance dedicated to Lord Jagannath, Danda Nata shares the central theme of devotion. Both practices involve performing artists who demonstrate spiritual dedication and physical discipline. However, while Gotipua focuses on the aesthetic beauty of dance, Danda Nata is more centered on the asceticism and physical trials required to achieve spiritual purification and enlightenment (Bag & Biswal, 2015). Chhau, which blends martial arts and storytelling, shares a focus on physical endurance and performance but differs in its narrative-driven approach. In contrast, Danda Nata remains primarily a ritual focused on personal sacrifice and spiritual growth, with less emphasis on storytelling or martial prowess (Pradhan, 2014).

Additionally, Prahallada Nataka, a folk theater tradition, also shares the devotional theme of Danda Nata but is more narrative and drama-based, focusing on the divine intervention of Lord Vishnu in the story of Prahallada. While both traditions convey devotion and spirituality, Danda Nata focuses more on individual ascetic practices as a means of attaining spiritual purification through physical acts of endurance (Dash, 2016). Thus, Danda Nata stands apart from other forms of devotional and folk performance in Odisha by emphasizing asceticism and ritual purification over narrative storytelling or aesthetic performance.

4. Discussions

4.1. Cultural Significance

Danda Nata serves as a profound reflection of regional

identities and religious practices, encapsulating the diverse cultural and spiritual landscapes of Odisha. The ritual, rooted in devotion to Lord Shiva, is performed across multiple districts in the state, yet its expression varies based on local customs, beliefs, and social structures. In Boudh, for instance, the ritual is deeply intertwined with tribal practices, where participants, primarily from tribal communities, engage in self-conducted acts of penance and endurance, emphasizing the individual's spiritual journey. This is in stark contrast to Ganjam, where Brahminical influence intertwines with local practices, leading to a more communal performance that involves regional deities like Jagannath and Gajalaxmi. Such variations underscore how Danda Nata reflects the regional identities of Odisha's diverse communities, each adapting the ritual to their unique religious practices and cultural values (Bag & Biswal, 2015; Tripathy et al., 2024).

Geographical factors also play a crucial role in shaping the rituals and cultural context of Danda Nata. In coastal regions like Ganjam, where the sea and agricultural cycles dominate life, Danda Nata is often linked to fertility and prosperity, with rituals timed to align with the agricultural calendar (Choudhury, 2016). In contrast, the hilly regions of Kandhamal and Kalahandi see a more isolated practice of the ritual, with tribal communities engaging in it as a deeply personal spiritual trial, underscoring the influence of local customs and the isolation of these regions. These geographical distinctions highlight how Danda Nata, while fundamentally the same in its devotion to Lord Shiva, transforms based on the environmental and social contexts in which it is practiced, further reinforcing the regional diversity within Odisha's cultural and religious landscape.

4.2. Religious Implications

At the heart of Danda Nata is the devotion to Lord Shiva, but the ritual also carries deep religious implications regarding the invocation of other deities. While the Shiva aspect remains central, regional variations introduce other deities into the ritualistic framework. In Ganjam, for example, the worship of Jagannath and Gajalaxmi alongside Lord Shiva reflects the syncretic nature of the region's religious practices. This fusion of Hindu and tribal beliefs speaks to the interconnectedness of Odisha's religious

traditions, where tribal customs and mainstream Hindu practices converge (Dash, 2016). In Boudh, however, the ritual remains more focused on personal penance to Shiva, without the infusion of other regional deities, highlighting the tribal focus on individual spiritual purification rather than communal religious practices (Majhi, 2024). The varying levels of deity invocation across regions emphasize the fluidity of religious practices, as communities adapt and evolve the ritual to reflect their own beliefs and needs.

Furthermore, tribal and non-tribal participation in Danda Nata, particularly in Boudh and Ganjam, reveals the social and cultural dynamics that influence the performance. In Boudh, tribal communities engage in the ritual as a self-contained spiritual experience, where participation is driven by personal faith rather than communal or formalized religious instruction. On the other hand, in Ganjam, the participation of non-tribal communities and the involvement of Brahmin priests point to a more formalized ritual structure, where the community plays an active role in supporting and witnessing the ritual, thus making it more of a communal affair. These distinctions underscore how Danda Nata not only functions as a religious rite but also serves as a marker of social organization and cultural identity in different parts of Odisha.

4.3. Folk Dance Connection

Danda Nata occupies a unique place within the broader spectrum of Odisha's folk dances, emphasizing penance, purification, and ascetic practices. Unlike other folk dances such as Gotipua, Chhau, and Prahallada Nataka, which are primarily performance-driven and artistic in nature, Danda Nata is more rooted in the ritualistic and devotional aspects. Gotipua, for example, is a devotional dance traditionally performed by young boys in the worship of Lord Jagannath, characterized by graceful movements and aesthetic expressions. While it shares a spiritual goal, its focus is on artistic beauty rather than physical endurance or penance (Bag, 2014). Similarly, Chhau involves elements of martial arts and storytelling, with its focus on narrative and martial prowess. Though Chhau also incorporates devotional themes, it is more performative and theatrical, focusing on storytelling and symbolism through dance, unlike Danda Nata, which emphasizes spiritual endurance through physical trials (Pradhan, 2014).

Prahallada Nataka, a folk theater tradition, shares a common spiritual core with Danda Nata, as both are devotional and involve divine intervention. However, Prahallada Nataka is largely a narrative-driven performance that dramatizes the story of Prahallada, a devotee of Lord Vishnu, whereas Danda Nata is a ritual of purification focused on the participant's physical endurance and personal penance (Dash, 2016). While all these forms share the devotional themes of surrender to the divine and spiritual growth, Danda Nata stands apart by centering its practice on asceticism, self-discipline, and the physical demonstration of devotion rather than on narrative or artistic expression. The ritual's focus on individual spiritual transformation through penance and endurance thus positions it uniquely within the family of Odisha's folk traditions, emphasizing the internalization of spirituality over the externalization seen in other dance forms.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, Danda Nata reflects both shared religious elements and regional variations, showcasing its deep connection to the worship of Lord Shiva while adapting to local customs and cultural contexts. The ritual, through its distinct phases and performances, plays a vital role in fostering community bonding, ensuring cultural continuity, and facilitating spiritual devotion across different parts of Odisha. The diversity of its expressions—from tribal-centric practices in Boudh to Brahmin-influenced rituals in Ganjam—highlights the syncretism between tribal customs and mainstream Hinduism, emphasizing how these diverse traditions coexist and evolve. Danda Nata serves as a powerful vehicle for cultural preservation, reinforcing the ties within communities and ensuring the continuity of ancient practices in modern times. Furthermore, the ritual's adaptability underscores its role in maintaining social cohesion and religious identity. Future research could further explore the lesser-known regional performances in Kandhamal and Kalahandi, where unique adaptations of the ritual are practiced, as well as expand the scope of the study to include cross-regional comparative studies with similar folk traditions outside Odisha, which could offer a broader perspective on the dynamics of folk religious rituals in India.

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Mr. Dibya Ranjan Tripathy
Ph.D Research Scholar
School of History, Gangadhar Meher University
Sambalpur, Odisha
email: tripathydibya090@gmail.com

Dr. Santosh Kumar Mallik
Assistant Professor
School Of History
Gangadhar Meher University, Sambalpur, Odisha

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Endowments To The Non-Sikhs By The Sons of Ranjit Singh In The Punjab

• **Dr. Meera Nagpal**

Dharmarth grants, as was the term used in Punjab during the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century, was known by various terms in ancient times and medieval times. For instance, in ancient India revenue-free grants were known as *brahmadeya*, *agrahara*.[1] The Turks in the thirteenth century gave away subsistence allowances and land grants to the needy, the learned, persons of noble lineage and religious institutions and used the terms like *milk*, *wazifā, in'ām* and *augāf*.[2] The Mughals not only brought about a change in the nature of these grants but also terminology, calling them *milk, amlak* and *suyurghal* but it's the term *madad-i-ma'āsh,* 'aid for subsistence', which the term used frequently in official documents.[3]

Death of Aurangzeb in 1707 led to the weakening of the Mughal authority and as a result there were Afghan invasions of Ahmad Shah Abdali in the middle of the eighteenth century. These circumstances led to the creation of a vacuum in the political condition of Punjab which led to the rise of large number of independent principalities in the Punjab during the late eighteenth century under the Sikh, Muslim and the Hindu rulers who can also be called new rulers rulers of Punjab. These chiefs and rulers followed the example of Mughals in giving away grants. Ranjit Singh (1790-1839) after unifying the Panjab in the nineteenth century too followed a catholic outlook like his predecessors. Religious grants were during this time were known as *dharmarth*, which means, land revenue alienated in favor of a religious personage or institution by a ruler or a subordinate acting in his place, by way of religious duty.[4]

Punjab was annexed to the British Empire in 1849 after the defeat in second Anglo-Sikh War when Dalip Singh was the Maharaja. But the decade prior to it, after Ranjit Singh's death in 1839, was marked by feud for throne and bloodshed as a result of rivalry between factions. Yet inspite of the same, the general functioning of the government continued. Hence, endowments and land-revenue assignments to the religious section of the society, being a part of the same were, undoubtedly, alienated by the successors of Ranjit Singh who followed his example.

The present paper deals with the *dharmarth* grants given by the successors of Ranjit Singh like Kharak Singh, Sher Singh and Dalip Singh to the Non-Sikhs ie the Hindu and Muslim individuals and institutions till the annexation of Punjab in 1849. Yet it not only highlights the endowments given by the new Maharajas but also by them as Princes and sons of Maharaja Ranjit Singh besides the grants given by the other Princes like Tara Singh, Peshora Singh, Kashmira Singh and his grandsons like Nau Nihal Singh and Partab Singh. Hence, the grants by new Maharajas as princes during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh have also been included which will throw light on their inclinations and preferences for certain cults and classes of the society which were non-Sikhs.

Brahmans as a class of the non-Sikhs religious section of the society received considerably lavish grants from the new Maharajas and princes of the Lahore State. The first category in the same includes the the *purohits* who were attached to the royal family as family *purohits*. These religious personages enjoyed munificent grants not only from their patron, Ranjit Singh, but also from the successors of Ranjit Singh. For instance, Sukha Nand and his sons, Kanhiya Lal and Devi Ditta, purohits of Ranjit Singh, received grants worth 2,885 rupees in parganas Batala, Dinanagar and Shaikhupura from the successors of Ranjit Singh. For instance, Devi Datta, received a well and later half a village in grant from Sher Singh in 1840 and 1841, respectively.[5] The Head *Pandits* at Court, Madhusudan and his son Radhakishen who were already enjoying grants under Ranjit Singh received additional grants worth 2,600 rupees from the successors of Ranjit Singh. Pandit Madhusudan is known to have received generous alienation of two villages worth 875 rupees in Sheikh Bhatti from Dalip Singh in 1848.[6]

It is interesting to note here that the *purohits* of relatives' families were also given grants by the successors of Ranjit Singh. Prince Kharak Singh is known to have endowed Dharm Chand, the purohit of his father-in-law Jaimal Singh Kanhiya, in 1823 with a well worth 50 rupees in Amritsar. Kunwar Nau Nihal Singh, the son of Kharak Singh, is known to have given five grants worth 875 rupees between 1833 to 1837 to the purohits of the above-mentioned family which was his maternal family in various parganas like Talwandi, Pindi Gheb, Peshawar and Amritsar to purohits Dharam Chand, Dhanpat and Hemraj. For instance, Dharam Chand, who received grants from both Kharak Singh and Nau Nihal Singh, received village Ferozwala worth 300 rupees in Pargana Pindi Gheb of Rawal Pindi from Nau Nihal Singh in 1833. Interestingly, Tara Singh, brother of Sher Singh, also endowed one of the purohits of the above-mentioned family. Lal Chand was assigned twenty-five ghumaons of land worth sixty rupees in village Maddipur in Taluqa Dorangla of Pargana Dinanagar in 1812. The document mentioning the grant also bears the seal of the grantor.[7]

Brahmans belonging a particular place were also given dharmarth grants. For instance, Kashmiri brahmans like Kashi Ram, Ishwar Das and Parkash Das were given cash grants in Lahore by Kharak Singh, Sher Singh and Dalip Singh worth sixty rupees, one hundred and eighty rupees and one hundred and fifty rupees in 1837, 1841 and 1845, respectively.[8]

Grants to brahman women by the sons of Ranjit Singh are also available. For instance, in the year 1839 Kharak Singh assigned a cash grant of one rupee and four annas a month as diet to Musammat Dharnu though she received the payment of twelve rupees and eight annas on yearly basis in Shaikhupura.[9] Even brahman widows found patrons in the family of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. For instance, Kunwar Partab Singh, son of Sher Singh, assigned grants in kind worth seven rupees to each brahman widow, Lachmi, Jhandu and Musammat Devi in 1841.[10] The same grantor is known to have assigned similar grants to other brahman widows, namely Hakimi, Parloo and Buhujan, in Ilaqa Haripur of Hazara.[11] Grants to the other relatives of deceased brahmans were also given by the scions of Ranjit Singh's dynasty. For instance, Dalip Singh gave village Lohgarh in Amritsar district worth 1,000 rupees to Devki Nandan and the other relatives of one deceased brahman, Birbhan. It must

be mentioned that the grantee was a part of the institution called Temple of Sudamapuri and College of Sanskrit Literature that was attached to the former and was under the control of Lehna Singh Majithia.[12]

At times, the successors and princes gave grants to the brahmans for their livelihood so that they could learn shāstras, the religious books of Hindus or teach children. For example, Prince Kharak Singh granted cash grants upto 123 rupees in Shaikhupura to Jai Dial, Kashiram, Hardial and Jawahar for the said purpose. Similarly, the same grantor assigned a cash grant of twenty rupees to Sundar Das and Sobha Ram for instructing children.[13]

At times the grants to the brahmans were assigned on specific occasions by the men of Ranjit Singh's family. Pilgrimage to a holy place by the grantor was an appropriate reason for the same. Prince Kharak Singh granted a well worth one hundred rupees to Kanhiya Lal in pargana Batala in 1826 on occasion of his visit to Kurukshetra.[14] Lunar eclipse was another occasion for grants to brahmans. Sher Singh gave a grant worth 225 rupees in Gurdaspur to Choha, a *brahman*, on occasion of lunar eclipse in 1821.[15] Prince Partab Singh was performing his devotions and distributing alms to *brahmans*, for it was the first day of Asauj, and the monthly festival of Sankrant when he was murdered after his father, Sher Singh's, assassination.[16]

Among the Hindus the *brahmans* were the only class to have managed to garner the maximum attention from all the successors of Ranjit Singh as the list of grantors also includes the names of Nau Nihal Singh, Partab Singh, Peshora Singh and Tara Singh, besides the more prominent ones like Kharak Singh, Sher Singh, Dalip Singh and Nau Nihal Singh. A total of 26,166 rupees were given to *brahmans* by the sons, grandsons and successors of Ranjit Singh.

The individuals and institutions of Vaishnava cult were also endowed with handsome grants by the successors of Ranjit Singh. Hari Narain, Jagan Nath and Raja Ram, the descendants of Baba Ramthamman, a famous *bairāgī*, were given grants worth 950 rupees by Kharak Singh. The first grant that was given to the descendants of the said *bairāgī* by Kharak Singh was as a prince when in 1811 village Marolikand in Taluqa Faridabad of Pargana Fatehpur in

Pakpattan was assigned. The same was worth 800 rupees and was mentioned in the Sanad of the then Maharaja, Ranjit Singh, wherein he mentions the gift being made by the prince in ardas.[17] Sher Singh is known to have given land grants worth 1,219 rupees in wazīri Parol and Bangahal to Lachmangir and Bahadurgir, bairāgīs of Kulu, in 1843.[18] Individual bairāgīs like Charan Das, Purushottam Das, Shivram, Devi Das, Jwalagir, Abnashi Das, Ugar Das and Ganga Ram are also some of the individuals of the sect who are known to have received grants in Sialkot, Amritsar, Hoshiarpur, Wazirabad, Dera Ismail Khan and Wadni.[19]

At least seven references of grants to thākurdwāras by the successors of Ranjit Singh are available.[20] The celebrated Vaishnava shrine at Pindori received grants of pieces of land worth 190 rupees in Dinanagar and Talibpur from Sher Singh, as prince and as ruler, between 1829 and 1842.[21] For instance, village Keso Kalal was offered in bhet to Mahant Narotam Das by Maharaja Sher Singh in 1842.[22] Prince Tara Singh also had great respect and regard for the Mahant of Pindori, he endowed Mahant Narotam Das with a well and a Persian wheel in 1823.[23]

In fact, the donor unleashed a curse of becoming a leper on the one who ever tries to confiscate it.[24]

Kharak Singh, as a prince, is known to have endowed a thākurdwāra at Shahbazpur in Pargana Shakargarh with a piece of land and a garden in village Naroti in the same Pargana. The same was assigned to Dial Das of the above-said institution for the benefit of his prayers.[25] Interestingly, in one of the grants made in 1840 to a thākurdwāra in Fatehgarh in Pargana Batala, Kharak Singh assigned daily allowance of ration which included wheat, dal, ghee and sugar to Mahant Ram Das of the said institution. The quantity of each commodity was also specified.[26] Hence, the thākurdwāras and Vaishnava bairāgīs were quite popular with Kharak Singh, Sher Singh, Dalip Singh and Nau Nihal Singh who gave them grants worth 4,299 rupees. Hence, institutions of the cult that were endowed by the above-mentioned grantors were located in Fatehgarh in Pargana Batala, Shahbazpur in Pargana Shakargarh and Pindori.

The individuals and establishments related to the cult of Shaiva were generously endowed by the successors of Ranjit Singh. Kharak Singh assigned a cash grant in Lahore to Jogi Joshi Nath.[27] Infact,

even as a prince, Kharak Singh played a magnanimous grantor to the Shaivas. For instance, the Jogīs of Tilla Gorakh Nath at Jhelum received two grants worth 750 rupees by Kharak Singh in 1814 and 1830.

Both the grants were given to Pir Isha Nath, the mahant, in Pargana Kaniala in Gujrat and in fact one of the villages granted had been out of cultivation for sometime and was to be brought into order.[28] It is pertinent to note here that Jogis attached to the establishments were supported heavily by the grantors under study as shown above. More evidence to support the same is hereby cited as a grant of Kharak Singh is available from 1839 when village Melwan, worth 525 rupees, in Nurpur of district Kangra was assigned for support of Jogi Jagannath of Shivala Dhuniram along with Prithi Nath and Sindhia Nath.[29]

Dalip Singh, too if on one side had assigned a meagre cash grant of thirty-two rupees to one Jogi Ganesh Nath in Lahore then on the other he assigned a village that was worth the handsome amount of 900 rupees to Jogi Hoshiar Nath in Phillaur.[30] Besides the rulers Kharak Singh and Dalip Singh, grants of Princes Nau Nihal Singh and Pertab Singh to jogīs are also available. Dalpat Gir, Pitamber Bharti and Baba Muthia jogīs were given small pieces of land by Prince Partab Singh, in 1841.[31]

In case of shivālas, the priests attached were given assignments. For instance, Pujari of a shivāla at Bandkhandi was endowed with half a village worth 200 rupees in Hajipur.[32] Similarly, there is one grant of Sher Singh of endowment to Shivala wherein he granted 4 annas a day to Jai Murari, the incharge of the shivāla of Mahadev at Batala. The special affinity that Sher Singh had for this institution was because it was in immediate vicinity of the house in which the grantor stayed for as long as he resided in Batala.[33]

There is just one grant to a shivāla by a prince and the same belong to Nau Nihal Singh who assigned a piece of land worth 150 rupees in Tehsil Pindi Gheb to Rajnath for the establishment in 1836.[34] It might be of interest to note that the grant was not only given for the maintenance of the shivāla but also for feeding the cows. Kharak Singh granted cash worth 118 rupees in Dinanagar to Kahn Chand in 1834 out of which fourteen rupees were to be spent on the fodder for cows.[35] Though we came across only one grant

of Sher Singh for the Shaiva cult yet the successors of Ranjit Singh were more generous to the Shaivas than the Vaishnavas.

The devidwāras received grants worth 1,915 rupees by the successors of Ranjit Singh. The temples dedicated to Goddess in her various forms, Sheetla Mata, Kalkaji and Bhadrakali were primarily endowed by the grantors. There is an example of a handsome grant by Sher Singh to Amir Chand, the priest of the temple of Goddess Sheetla, of a village in Sheikhupura and it was worth 400 rupees.[36] In 1842 the same grantor assigned 1 rupees a day to Sant Ram, the incharge of Temple of Kalka in Batala. The same institution was endowed by the same grantor in 1840 also with a village.[37] Institutions dedicated to Maa Bhadrakali were also endowed by the successors. For instance, Temple of Bhadrakali in Lahore received a generous grant of a village worth 720 rupees in Shaikhupura from Dalip Singh in 1845. Kanhiya Lal, a sāhukār of Lahore who had built this temple, used to get the proceeds collected and used it for the expenses of sadābart.[38]

Diwan Bhawani Das built a Devi temple at Dinanagar which was given a grant of twenty-five rupees for performance of religious services at the temple by Dalip Singh in 1848.[39] The grant to a Devidwara could be given for a specific purpose or an activity too. For instance, Sher Singh granted twelve rupees per year for oil for burning of lamp in the temple of Devi in 1839.[40] Sher Singh who is known to have assigned only one grant to the Shaiva cult has given more grants to the Shakta cult whereas no grant by Kharak Singh is founbd which has been made assigned to the latter cult.

Surprisingly, a grant for sun worship was also given by the successors of Ranjit Singh. Dalip Singh gave grant for Sun worship. Out of the total amount granted fifteen rupees and six annas were to be spent on making gold image of Sun God.[41] The practice of tuladān was also performed by the successors of Ranjit Singh. In fact, Prince Partab Singh was being weighed in a garden against grain and silver to be given away in charity when he was murdered by Lehna Singh Sandhanwalia.[42]

In certain cases the temples were endowed if they were built by the grantor or his relative. For instance, Ram Sahai, the priest of a shivāla, was given cash grant of eighty-six rupees in 1827 by Kharak Singh. The said institution was built by the grantor and contained accommodation for travellers as well.[43] In another similar case a shivāla was built by Kunwar Nau Nihal Singh in 1840 at

Wazirabad and to support the expenses of the same Dalip Singh assigned villages and wells worth 800 rupees in Pargana Sialkot to Shambhu Nath and Mathura Nath.[44]

Thus, we can see that atleast 41,254 rupees were endowed in favour of Hindu establishments and individuals with the maximum amount coming from Dalip Singh who gave grants worth 15,282 rupees, followed by Kharak Singh and Sher Singh.

Islamic institutions and personages too were endowed by the successors of Ranjit Singh. Taking the case of Islamic institutions first, we have a few references of mosques being supported by the men of Ranjit Singh's family. For instance, Kharak Singh is known to have patronized mosques in Kalanaur and Shaikhupura. For the former, Dargahi Shah and Shah Muhammad were assigned a cash grant of fifty rupees in Dinanagar. The grant was continued by the British after annexation as Kalanaur contained a large Muslim.[45] The other mosque that was endowed by Kharak Singh was in Shaikhupura for which Qazi Muhammad Yar was granted wheat in 1837. The establishment was built by a slave girl of Rani Nakain, the mother of Kharak Singh. The grant was later commuted into monthly cash grant of one rupee and twelve annas.[46] Another son to give grant to a mosque was Prince Peshora Singh who gave a piece of land worth two rupees and three annas in village Dhinda Khurd of Taluqa Gujrat to Muhammad Bakhsh Qureshi for a mosque.[47]

The khānqāhs and the people attached have also been endowed with grants. The only grantor to the said category is Sher Singh who is known to have assigned grants as a prince and later as a ruler. The sayyads of Khānqāh of Sayyad Muhammad Fazil Khan at Batala was patronized twice by Prince Sher Singh, in 1830 and 1839,

with grants worth eighty rupees in Batala. The first grant was assigned in 1830 when a well worth fifty rupees in Pargana Batala was assigned to Najatullah Khan 'out of favour'. A garden worth thirty rupees was assigned in the same pargana to Sayyad Hussain Shah in 1839.[48] Another Khānqāh to be supported by Sher Singh was Khānqāh of Badri Diwan in village Mausaina which was assigned separate plots of land in pargana Batala worth 250 rupees in 1842.[49]

In comparison to mosques and khānqāhs, there is only one reference of grant to a dargāh, it was given by Prince Kharak Singh who gave a grant of land worth ninety rupees in village Ghalar

of Pargana Sialkot for the mazār of Shaikh Chuhar Bandagi in Wazirabad in 1824.[50] There is no evidence of grant to any takiya by any of the successors, sons or grandsons of Ranjit Singh.

The Muslim individuals were also given grants by the successors of Ranjit Singh. The sayyads found their patron in Sher Singh. Grants worth 120 rupees are known to be given to Bahadur Ali Shah and Kamruddin in form of cash and grain by the said grantor. In fact one of these grants was confirmed by Dalip Singh later in 1847 when fifty maunds of grain and ten rupees were assigned to Bahadur Ali Shah.[51] Dalip Singh granted twelve and a half bighas of land to Amir Bakhsh, a Sayyad.[52]

Prince Nau Nihal Singh gave a cash grant of 60 rupees to Hussain Shah, a sayyad.[53]

Grants to Qureshis were given by Sher Singh only out of the sons and grandsons of Ranjit Singh. Qureshi Umar Bakhsh was given cash worth 300 rupees in Lahore for his subsistence.[54] The shaikhs found their patron in Sher Singh and Dalip Singh. Former is known to have assigned a cash grant of fifty rupees to Ahmad Ali in Lahore in 1843. The latter gave grant to Muhammad Hussain, a shaikh, of cash and grain worth eighteen rupees and ten annas in Sialkot in 1846. Interestingly, a portion of the grain was specifically assigned for the daily feed of the pigeons.[55] There is one instance of a qāzi being endowed and the same was done by Kharak Singh in 1839 when he assigned a plot of land worth 360 rupees in Peshawar to Qāzi Fazel Ahmed Khan of Peshawar.[56]

Muslim darveshes and faqīrs were also given grants by Kharak Singh and Dalip Singh.[57] Dogar faqīrs received the maximum amount of grants. Kharak Singh gave seven grants worth 917 rupees to dogar faqīrs Imam Shah and Lal Shah in Gujranwala between the years 1808 and 1829. The various grants assigned included two villages, half a village, a well and an out of repair well half of the entire grant was lying waste and was brought under cultivation by Imam Shah.[58]. Like the dogar faqīrs, even the Gujjar Muslims were given grants by Ranjit Singh's successors. Dalip

Singh gave a cash grant worth 25 rupees in Gujranwala to Rode Khan, a Gujjar, in charity.[59] As grantor, the most generous to the Muslim grantees and establishments was Kharak Singh.

The purpose for giving dharmarth grants could be several. Sher

Singh gave a grant of one rupee per day to a brahman of Kaleshwar in 1841 so that he prays to God and seek blessings for the ruler.[60] Grants were given not only for the subsistence of the holy men but also for providing fodder to the animals.[61] During Dalip Singh's reign, cash grant of forty-one rupees, eleven annas and nine paise were alientated for providing fodder for two hundred cows.[62] The said ruler is also known to have assigned wheat for daily feed of pigeons when he given a cash and grain in grant to Muhammad Hussain, a Sheikh, in 1846.[63]

There were certain occasions when grants were given especially occasions like marriage and death. Kharak Singh gave a well worth sixty rupees in Taran Taran to Purushottam Das on account of marriage of Kunwar Nau Nihal Singh.[64] Death was an important occasion for making grants. Grant of a village worth 250 rupees in Sanehwal in Ludhiana to Moti Ram Purohit, a brahman of Pehowa, was made in 1839 on the occasion of funeral obsequies being performed immediately after the death of Ranjit Singh.[65]

Grants were also given on the thirteenth day of a relative's death. Dalip Singh is also said to have given a well worth one hundred rupees in Amritsar to Bhagwan Das in 1845 on the thirteenth day after the demise of his maternal uncle, Jawahar Singh.[66] Sati performed by a sardār's wives was also an occasion for the grant. Dalip Singh gave village Muttewal worth 300 rupees in Hoshiarpur to Mutsaddi Ram on account of two wives of Sardar Jawahar Singh performing Sati on his death.[67] Pilgrimage to a holy place by the grantor was an appropriate occasion making an endowment. Kharak Singh, as a prince, granted a well to Kanhiya Lal in pargana Batala in 1826 on occasion of his visit to Kurukshetra.[68] Lunar eclipse was another occasion for giving grants. Sher Singh gave a grant to a brahman, on occasion of lunar eclipse in 1821.[69] Prince Partab Singh was distributing alms to brahmans, for it was the first day of Asauj, and the monthly festival of Sankrant when he was murdered.[70]

Though the grants given by the princes were upheld without a formal sanad by the ruler yet there is an example where Ranjit Singh endorsed the grant of a prince to Raja Ram, a bairāgi, as the ruler's sanad dated 1811 mentioned that "the village has been granted by Prince Kharak Singh in ardās."[71]

The princes at times gave grants out of their patrimonial

property. There is an instance where Sher Singh gave a cash grant from Batala to Misr Hoshiara in 1822. Batala was the patrimonial property of the prince which descended to him from his grandmother Sada Kaur.[72]

In retrospect, one can see that the princes and successors of Ranjit Singh were quite generous to Hindu and Islamic personages and establishments which indicates towards their secularity. Hence, the entire list of grantors also includes the names of Partab Singh, Peshora Singh and Tara Singh, besides the more prominent ones like Kharak Singh, Sher Singh, Dalip Singh and Nau Nihal Singh. Among them its Kharak Singh, Sher Singh, Dalip Singh, Peshora Singh, Nau Nihal Singh and Partab Singh who gave grants to both Hindu and Muslim religious systems in Punjab inspite of being Sikhs themselves. Among all the successors, the maximum amount of grants to the said religious systems was given by Dalip Singh followed by Kharak Singh and Sher Singh. Among the non-Sikhs, brahmans constituted one class that received the maximum grants from the above-mentioned grantors and hence managed to garner the attention of all the successors of Ranjit Singh, seven sons and grandsons of former as total of 26,166 rupees were given to brahmans. Grants to brahman widows are also available. The purohits who were attached to the royal family enjoyed munificent grants from the successors of Ranjit Singh. The purohits of relatives' family were also given grants by them. The occasions for making grants to brahmans were going on pilgrimage, lunar eclipse and Sankrant.

The Vaishnava sect received considerable alienations from the grantors under review. Some of the establishments received grants from the grantor when he was a prince and later as a ruler too. For example, the celebrated Vaishnava shrine at Pindori received grants from Sher Singh, as prince and as ruler, between 1829 and 1842. The cult of Shiva was generously endowed. Infact even as a prince, Kharak Singh played a magnanimous grantor to shaivas. Sher Singh who is known to have assigned only one grant to the Shaiva cult has given more grants to the Shakta cult whereas no grant by Kharak Singh is found for the cult mentioned. The grants for sun worship were also given by the successors of Ranjit Singh. They even followed the practice of tuladān.

Among the Muslims institutions: mosques and khānqāhs were endowed by the successors. The Khānqāhs and the people attached have also been endowed with grants. The only grantor to the said category is Sher Singh who is known to have assigned grants as a prince and later as a ruler. There is only one reference of grant to a dargāh that too by Prince Kharak Singh and no reference of any grant to a taqia is available. Among the Muslim individuals, sayyads, qureshis, shaikhs, darveshes and Dogar faqīrs were given support by Kharak Singh, Sher Singh, Dalip Singh, Nau Nihal Singh and Peshora Singh.

At times individuals were given grants because they were attached to an establishment. Some of the institutions or individuals supported were involved in social service like serving food to people or imparting education to children. In certain cases the establishments that were given endowments were built by the grantor himself or by a relative or a person known to him.

The purpose for giving dharmarth grants was expecting the grantee to pray for the welfare of grantor. Grants were given not only for the subsistence of the holy men but also for providing fodder to the animals. The occasions like marriage and death were also marked by giving grants. Sati performed by a sardār's wives was also an occasion of grant. Pilgrimage to a holy place by the grantor or the special days like Lunar eclipse or Sankrant were also occasions for giving grants. Sometimes the ruler endorsed the grant given by the prince by way of issuing a sanad. The princes at times gave grants out of their patrimonial property.

A study of the various grants given by the sons and successors of Ranjit Singh's family to the Non-Sikhs reveal that the assignments were given in places like Amritsar, Batala, Chakrali, Dera Ismail Khan, Dharamkot, Dinanagar, Doda, Dorangla, Faridabad, Fatehpur, Fatehgarh, Gugera, Gujranwala, Gujrat, Hafizabad, Hajipur, Hajra, Hariana, Hasanabdal, Hoshiarpur, Huzur, Jalandhar, Jeswan, Jhang, Kallah, Kaniala, Khokhowal, Khudian, Leiah, Ludhiana, Mankera, Mukerian, Muttewal, Nakodar, Narot, Pakpattan, Pasroor, Peshawar, Phillaur, Pindi Gheb, Qasur, Rahon, Raja Sansi, Ramnagar, Rawalpindi, Rohtas, Sanehwal, Sayyadwala, Shaikhupura, Shahpur, Shakargarh, Sialkot, Sourian, Sujanpur, Talibpur, Talwandi, Taran Taran, Thandari, Una and Wazirabad.

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Dr. Meera Nagpal
Assistant Professor
Panjab University
Regional Centre Ludhiana, Punjab

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A Comparative Study between Swami Narayan Sect of Gujarat and Arya Samaj as Social-Reform Institutions in Modern Indian Historical Scene

• **Dr. Meghna Sharma**

The Swami Narayan sect of Gujarat was a puritanical movement founded by a famous Bhakta who took that name---his original name was Ghanshyama. He was also known as Swami Sahajanand. A contemporary of Ram Mohan Roy, the Swami was born in 1781 and died about 1830. His departure from his Brahmin family at an early age, his wanderings and searches for a guru, or spiritual guide, his final success in locating an ascetic worthy of following (Swami Ramananda), his bodily and spiritual experimentation---all of this closely resembled the early career of Dayanand Saraswati, founder of the Arya Samaj.

Swami Narayana's social reform doctrine was based on humanitarianism and the religious premise of the equal accessibility of salvation to all, through Bhakti. It is convenient to contrast the Swami Narayana Sect with the Arya Samaj because Dayananda Saraswati himself challenged the teachings and practices of the Swami Narayanas, which he found flourishing in Gujarat in the 1870's. He condemned the idolatry, temple worship, pilgrimages and other religious practices of the sect and wrote a refutation of its beliefs.

The Arya Samaj Movement of social reform was a mass movement which got its inspiration from the Vedas. Hence its teachings were more deeply imprinted on the minds of the masses than any other movement of India. The influence of the movement over the masses was so imminent that it was treated as a 'serious threat' to the British power in india.

Keywords : *Puritanical movement, Social reform doctrine, Humanitarianism, Salvation, Mass movement*

Records exists for certain Hindu movements of protest of the traditional type flourishing in the nineteenth century which indicate the contrast in inspiration and influence between them and the western-inspired religious and social reform movements.

Initiated by diverse, yet typical, Hindu reformers manifesting the spirit of Bhakti, their relationships to the mainstream of the modern social reform movement, deserve at least a passing notice.

The Swami Narayan sect of Gujarat was a puritanical movement founded by a famous Bhakta who took that name---his original name was Ghanshyama. He was also known as Swami Sahajanand. A contemporary of Ram Mohan Roy, the Swami was born in 1781 and died about 1830. His departure from his Brahmin family at an early age, his wanderings and searches for a guru, or spiritual guide, his final success in locating an ascetic worthy of following (Swami Ramananda), his bodily and spiritual experimentation---all of this closely resembled the early career of Dayanand Saraswati, founder of the Arya Samaj.[1]

The differences between the two men as religious leaders and reformers, appeared only in their mature years when their respective teachings and organizational methods diverged widely.

Swami Narayana never provided an exegetical exposition of theology in any way comparable to Dayanand's, and his influence rested therefore on personal example, parables and brief statements of faith, and the legendary lustre of his personality. With a fervent faith in his special relationship to a theistic God, he encouraged his followers to regard him as an incarnation of the Divine, compared it to Krishna. Although typically tolerant of different faiths, Swami Narayana made two exceptions and attacked vigourously the monistic teaching of Shankara and the atheism of the Jain religion, whose stronghold was in Gujarat. His conception of God was simple in the extreme : "He is the creator, Preserver and Sustainer of the Universe. He is the one who gives the reward for good as well as evil deeds, and He is also the Saviour of those who trust themselves to His care. He incarnates Himself out of His infinite mercy again and again in history, and faith in the Incarnate one brings grace and salvation." [2]

The Swami offered a moral code, which sought to rid the Vaishnavism of his day of many of its lax or vicious practices and guide the faithful into righteous personal lives. Instead of laying down universal moral prescriptions, however, Swami Narayana limited his code to his own followers, gathered into a Satsang, or Holy Fellowship, led by a disciplined group of Sadhus, religious ascetics. The first duty of a Satsangi was to follow the commands of the leader of the movement; then followed belief in God and the requirements of pure community life, which included strict observance of caste exclusiveness and rules of personal conduct and diet. Like other Bhakti movements, the Swami Narayan sect welcomed Shudras and untouchables, although it excluded them from contacts with higher caste followers----except at yearly conventions of the Satsang, where lower castes and untouchables were temporarily accepted as equals. The Swami was "in no sense a social revolutionary"[3]

He did not set out to subvert the Hindu social order. But he led campaigns against infanticide and against sati, and he urged better treatment for widows. He was not content to ignore lower castes, untouchables and tribals and did his part in the historic process of Aryanisation[4] by propagating among them Brahmanic rules of diet (abstention from meat and alcohol), and conduct (a "pure life" in place of lawlessness, adultery, tolerance of physical uncleanliness, and so forth.).

Swami Narayana's social reform doctrine was based on humanitarianism and the religious premise of the equal accessibility of salvation to all, through Bhakti. It is convenient to contrast the Swami Narayana Sect with the Arya Samaj because Dayananda Saraswati himself challenged the teachings and practices of the Swami Narayanas, which he found flourishing in Gujarat in the 1870's. He condemned the idolatry, temple worship, pilgrimages and other religious practices of the sect and wrote a refutation of its beliefs. [5]

In broad terms, the differences between the Swami Narayana Sect and the Arya Samaj represented the sharp contrasts between traditional and modern Hindu religious and social reform movements. One sought to purge Hinduism of its degenerate forms by a rededication to God in the Bhakti spirit; the other sought

purification of belief as well as practices by establishing virtually a new religion, the Vedic Faith, based on a reasoned interpretation of the Vedas. One ignored the challenges to Hindu faith embodied in Christianity, Islam and western knowledge; the other met all those challenges and set up a systematic creed that could accommodate scientific knowledge and thus app.ealed to English-educated men and women.

Swami Narayana wanted to establish a religious cult limited to the scope of his personal contacts; Dayanand had a universal religion in mind but concentrated first on unifying and strengthening the entire Aryan nation. The former organized his following under the leadership of Sadhus; the latter organized the Arya Samaj using secular leadership and set up a legal body to administer his estate and carry out his programme.

In social reform the Swami Narayanas made few amendments in social practices, and those were based on a mild humanitarianism; the Arya Samaj replaced the existing Hindu Dharma with a completely renovated Vedic dharma, which incorporated all the major reforms upheld in Western-educated circles.

Social Reform by Arya Samaj and its Impact upon Contemporary India :

The Arya Samaj Movement of social reform was a mass movement which got its inspiration from the Vedas. Hence its teachings were more deeply imprinted on the minds of the masses than any other movement of India. The influence of the movement over the masses was so imminent that it was treated as a 'serious threat' to the British power in India.[6] The attempts to abolish evils like child marriage and movements like widow-remarriage were the results of private efforts been put in by Swamiji and his successors. It was only after these movements got popular and started gaining support from the traders and the intelligentsia that the state government attempted to enforce laws to prevent childmarriage and recognize widow-remarriage. Swamiji's object in finding the Arya Samaj was to organize a society which would devote itself to bettering and raising mankind especially to Hindu community.[7]

We cannot forget taking the name of Harbilas Sarda and his

efforts in remedying the social ills of the society.[8] Social reforms could also be initiated by public opinion but Harbilas Sarda undertook the task of Legislation for the social reforms. It was his belief that people would give up the evil customs only due to the fear of being penalised. Lord Dalhousie made first attempt to legalise widow-remarriage but could not succeed. In the year 1856, Lord Canning passed an Act according to which even Hindu widows could remarry and this marriage was not considered to be illegal. But still, Hindu society was not ready to accept it.[9]

It was only after Harbilas Sarda appeared on the scene that situations changed a bit. And we need not say that Anti Child Marriage Act (1929) and Hindu Widows Right of Inheritance Bill (1930), were the expression of his endeavour. Another great success of Arya Samaj was enforcement of Arya Marriage Validation Act No.19 of 1937 and afterwards its inclusion, as it is, in the Hindu Marriage Law of 1955.

On 26th Dec. 1904, Gulabdevi Maheshwari established Arya Stri Samaj at Ajmer, for the first time in Rajasthan.[10] In October 1906, Stri Arya Samaj was established at Bharatpur.[11] The Delhi session of Hindu Mahasabha was held on 13th to 15th March 1926 under the chairmanship of Raja Narendra Nath. He, by mentioning 'Yatra Naryastu Poojyante'...' of Manu, asked Hindus- 'Tell me how can you follow the orders of Manu by forcibly keeping your daughters and sisters illiterate, in widowhood and under veil (Purdah).'[12]

Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya, making a leer on the orthodox said that, "each reformist step which has the possiblities of strengthening Hindu community, is displeasing to the Pandas and Purohits (i.e Hindu priests). Tell me what is the majesty of Sanatan-Dharma (i.e the traditional region) in keeping child widows under widowhood and not attempting to let them free off this kind of a sinful life?"[13]

Articles like 'Rishi Dayanand Aur Stri Samaj' and 'Striyon ki Samaj mein kya Swatantrata Honi Chahiye?' by Pandit Harish Chandra Sharma, a minister of Arya Samaj Jaipur, also indicated towards the problems of women and the necessity of feminist reforms.[14]

Arya Samaj was perhaps the most significant among all the reform movements running in India, in the later half of the

nineteenth century. It had opposed the system of keeping widows under torture and considering them as a curse upon the society. It raised voice against the sinful treatment of Hindu society towards widows and also professed in favour of widow remarriages. Smt. Chameli Devi was remarried to Lala Nannuramji Parvasi, following the Vedic customs and methods.[15]

Brahmacharini Sarla Kumari Sharda, who was a graduate from Baroda, in her article 'Bharat mein Veerangnayon ki Zaroorat Hai' gave examples of European and ancient Indian women and asked the women of India to be aware and bold.[16] Birla brothers gave a donation of Rs. 3 lac for the progress of youth and specially for the upliftment of the women of Rajasthan.[17]

Devendra Kumari from Amargarh (Karauli) wrote letters to editor 'Mera Stri Sansar se Kuch Vinary', in which she asked women to be aware for her rights.[18] Dr. Purnakala Sharda talked about problems of religion and caste in her article 'Kya Gita ka Sandesh Phir Nahin Sunaoge?'[19] Kaushalya Devi ji 'Kranti' (Bhopal) published that the progress of women was the progress of the whole nation and society.

In this way current paper investigates a comparative study between above mentioned social reform institutions and concludes that the institutions related to Arya Samaj, alongwith its letters and journals, blew the bugle of feminist reforms in Rajasthan which became the base for further reformists to do more in this sphere.

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Dr. Meghna Sharma
Associate Professor and Head
Department of History
Maharaja Ganga Singh University
Bikaner, Rajasthan

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Cultivation And Trade of Cotton Crop In Colonial Punjab
(C. 1860 A.D.–C. 1900 A.D)

• **Nitish Sachdeva**

Cotton, popularly called 'The White Gold', has always been one of the significant commercial crops in Punjab since time immemorial. Punjab, with all its fecundity owing to the alluvial nature of its soil, has always been an ideal nurturing ground for the cultivation of this crop. Consequently, the cultivation of cotton has always shaped not only the agricultural economy in particular but also the trade patterns of Punjab in general. This paper aims to delve deep into cotton cultivation during colonial rule to bring out the interesting fact that cotton during the above-mentioned period was more or less a strategic commodity. The British promoted cotton cultivation in Punjab owing to their vested interests in taking raw cotton for their textile mills, in addition to bringing about the commercialisation of agriculture. In this research, our main objective is to understand the cultivation, production, and trade of the cotton crop in Punjab, as well as the steps taken by the British to improve cotton cultivation and the quality.

Keywords : *Cotton, Punjab, Agriculture, Export,*

Introduction

Today, there are many Industries in India, but the Cotton industry is one of the oldest industries of India. The trade and production of cotton clothes have been taking place in India since ancient times. The demand for Indian cotton clothing in the foreign market has been present since ancient times. Even in the medieval period, this industry was in good condition. In modern times, when European companies came to India to do business, Indian cotton textiles were one of their main demands. Following the establishment

of the British Raj, significant changes occurred in India's cotton industry. Cotton textiles were probably the biggest manufacturing sector of eighteenth-century India and certainly the most important export commodity.[1] In the 19th century, the Industrial Revolution and India's trade associated with the global economy led to a rapid change in the cultivation and cotton industry of India. While modern cotton industries were being established in India. while on the other hand, traditional cotton industries, that relied on manual labour, were being destroyed. In this research, we aim to understand the condition of cotton cultivation in Punjab during the Second half of the nineteenth century and the efforts made by the British to improve and develop it.

Cotton fabric is made from the natural fibre of cotton plants, so cotton is an essential commodity for cotton fabrics. Punjab is a prosperous region of India, and its land is very fertile. In the nineteenth century, Punjab was mainly an agricultural province. Its soil was fertile and productive. Primitive methods were used for cultivation. Crops mainly depended on rain. The Persian wheel and charsa were commonly used for irrigation. Before the establishment of the British Raj in Punjab, Maharaja Ranjit Singh developed agriculture because his revenue was dependent upon it.[2] At that time, cotton was cultivated in a greater number of plain areas in Punjab. But the quality of cotton was not superior. In the nineteenth century, the Indian textile industry used short-staple (short fibre) and pre-mature quality of Indian cotton.[3] This type of Indian Cotton was not much valued in the European market. When the American Civil War broke out in 1861, the supply of American cotton to Great Britain was stopped.[4] Consequently the demand of Indian cotton got increased for Britain and their Cotton textile industry. At the same time, in western India, many traders got an opportunity to earn money. The enterprising ones took off for the villages and convinced the farmers of western India to switch over the particular long variety of staples, suitable for the English mills. Soon the Indian farmers had converted, and with prices booming, several traders made huge profits in the 1860s by supplying the cotton to Lancashire.[5]

In western India, for improvement, the cultivation of cotton was not only supported by the British government but also by some Indian traders, who invested in this field to produce better-quality

cotton for export to England. In Punjab, the situation was different at that time. After the annexation of the Punjab, the British made numerous efforts to improve the quality and production of cotton. In the early years of the annexation, cotton production was not uniform in all regions of Punjab. In the 1850s, the Jalandhar and Hoshiarpur districts did not produce a sufficient amount of cotton, and what was produced was insufficient for local consumption. Jalandhar district imported cotton from the North-West province. In Hoshiarpur, the staple of cotton was finer than that of the cis-Sutlej, but cotton was not extensively grown in this district. Hoshiarpur imported cotton from Patiala, Jind, and the cis-Sutlej states. On the other side, Jhung and Peshawar exported cotton to other regions. Merchants from Kabul largely purchased cotton from Jhung, and Peshawar exported it to Swat, Bajour, and *Kashgar*.[6] According to British reports, in the early years of annexation, the value of exported cotton piece goods from Jhung to Afghanistan was 2,00,000 rupees annually.[7] The cotton of Punjab had a short but strong fibre. However, improved varieties existed in some districts, such as Khadir or Riverian, the cotton of the Delhi division, and the Narma cotton of Rawalpindi and neighbouring districts. According to the report of the Deputy Commissioner of Jhung, this cotton was believed to be of Egyptian origin. This cotton had red flowers and green seeds, distinguishing it from the commoner variety, which had yellow and grey seeds. According to the report of Shahpur district, a staple with fine quality was called Khurni and a common kind was called bagar. In some regions of Punjab, superior quality indigenous cotton was sown.[8] The Deputy Commissioner of Umballa writes, "The indigenous cotton of the Roopur and Moranda Parganas is superior, and I find that it is known in Karachi as 'Kooralee' cotton, and fetches a higher price than ordinary Punjab cotton; it is cleaned better and fairer packed."[9]

Cotton was picked around November and December. The pods did not all ripen at the same time, and it was therefore necessary to go over the field several times. This work was chiefly performed by women. They were usually paid by giving them a portion, generally one-tenth of the cotton they picked. After the pods were collected the next process was ginning (separating the cotton fibre from seeds). Fibre was extracted from seeds by a small hand machine. This consisted of two rollers, one of which was generally of iron

and the other of wood. But in some districts, both rollers were stated to be of wood. Through a spiral turn at the end of the iron roller, which engages a projection of the wooden roller. The two were made to revolve in opposite directions. As a result, the fibre was pulled from the seeds through these rollers, and the seeds that could not pass through the rollers were left behind. This machine, which was called belnas, was capable of ginning about 12 seers of cotton in a day.[10]

I

To improve Cotton cultivation in Punjab, the Colonial government took a sample of cotton seeds, stems, leaves, and fibre of the cotton plant grown in Punjab, together with the soil from which it was taken and sent it for a scientific experiment to Professor Mallet, a chemical professor in America.[11] The Agri-Horticulture Society of Punjab came into existence in early 1851.[12] This society made many efforts to improve the agriculture of Punjab and to improve the quality and production of cotton. This society introduced American and Egyptian cotton seeds for cultivation in Punjab. The Agri-horticulture society introduced New Orleans cotton seeds for cultivation. this seed produced the longest staple, and this was more valued in Europe than the short-staple of Indian cotton.[13]

The British made efforts to grow different kinds of cotton seeds in different areas of Punjab, so that they could know which seeds could produce more quantity of cotton with good quality. In 1866, the Colonial Government of Bombay sent New Orleans seed for sowing in Punjab with introductory information on the new seed and a sample of grown cotton.[14] The government of Bombay demanded the response report of the cultivation of new seed in Shahpur district from the Punjab government. Punjab replied that "If any European or native cotton dealer should consider it worthwhile, on inspecting the enclosed sample of cotton to offer a good price for it, all difficulties would be overcome and the raising of this cotton would become much more popular."[15] In 1867, a sample of Egyptian cotton seeds was grown by Mr Atchinson in Lahore and Nabhi Baksh at Bhagbanpura, and the report of Egyptian cotton seeds grown here was satisfactory to the government.[16] In the Rawalpindi district, Egyptian Cotton seeds were also distributed and sown.[17] In 1867,

the British were also ordered five Maunds Hinganghat cotton seeds from Nagpur for the experiment in Rawalpindi for sowing in March and April 1868.[18] But the experiment of Hinganghat cotton in Punjab having failed, no general attempt was made to repeat it. A maund of this seed was sown in the Shimla district, but the crop failed from having been sown too late.[19] The British also implemented Mr Login's experiment of Cotton cultivation by the Egyptian Method in Punjab. The first prominent feature in the new system of cultivation, as compared with the native system, was thin sowing, so that the plants can draw the necessary nourishment from the soil. Second, careful cultivation, in the form of plentiful ploughing, manuring, watering (when needed) and weeding. By using this method, the yield and quality of cotton have been much improved.[20] Captain Corbyn, Deputy Commissioner of Shahpur, translated the substance of Mr Login's instruction regarding the new mode of cultivation and distributed it through this office to make the people acquainted with the new method.[21]

For the development and improvement of Agriculture in Punjab by the British, they developed the largest canal system of the world for irrigation in Punjab at that time. In 1888, the total area of irrigated land in Punjab by canals was 2,934,436 acres, after the decade it had increased to 5,305,748 acres in 1898.[22] In 1888, the area of the Cotton-cultivated land in Punjab irrigated by Canals was 231,900 acres. It was increased by 13.6 per cent in 1889.[23] Due to the development of the canal system, a large area of Punjab was brought under agriculture. It also had an impact on cotton cultivation. All these efforts made by the Colonial Government improved the quality of cotton in Punjab, but the cultivated land under the cotton crop always fluctuated. The reason behind the fluctuation in cotton cultivated land was drought, flood, unseasonal rain and Insects on the crop. Another important factor was that the cost of cotton cultivation in some places of Punjab was very high. Cotton was grown primarily in the agriculturally more prosperous areas such as canal colonies and central Punjab, where irrigation was assured and harvest was less dependent on rain. The backwards areas of West Punjab and South-east Punjab did not grow this crop in any quantity.

The cotton crop required heavy investment in terms of seed, manure, labour, irrigation, etc., which meant that it could only be

cultivated when there was relative certainty of securing a decent return on investment.[24] So, where the cost of cultivation and risk was high people take no interest in cotton cultivation. During the year 1870-1871 total area of Punjab province under cotton cultivation was 706,906 acres; out of this, 107,653-acres area alone in the Rawalpindi division was under cotton cultivation. It was approx. 15 per cent of the whole cotton cultivated area of Punjab. It was the highest among other regions of Punjab after the Delhi division.[25] The cotton crop of 1878-1879 was destroyed by the flood of 1878. Due to this flood in many divisions of Punjab, there was a considerable falling off in the land under cotton cultivation. In 1879, cotton-cultivated land in the Rawalpindi division was 121,659 acres; in the next year, it was 88,321 acres. It was a 28 per cent decrease from the previous year due to the heavy rain. But same years in the Derajat division, it was considerably increased from 81,868 acres to 124,655 acres. It was approx. 35 per cent increase from the previous year. In the Dera Ghazi Khan district of Derajat division, it was increased from 62,558 acres to 107,187 acres from 1879 to 1880. It was approx. 42 per cent increase in one year.[26] Dera Ghazi Khan where the cotton crop was largely dependent on Canals. There are figures of some years from the Punjab Administration report and the Revenue administration report, which tell us that the land under cotton cultivation in Punjab was continued to fluctuate. Here we give a table which shows the land under cotton cultivation in different years.

Table. 1[27]

Cultivated land in Acres under the Cotton Crop in Punjab from 1881-1890

Year	Acres	Percentage Change approx.
1880	777,041	
1881	786,030	+ 1.15
1882	890,037	+ 13.23
1883	860,631	- 3.30
1884	792,996	- 7.85
1885	1,035,614	+ 30.59
1886	1,089,300	+ 5.18

1887	643,815	- 40.89
1888	756,300	+ 17.47
1889	964,000	+ 27.46
1890	871,100	- 10
Average	**860,624**	

In the Cotton reports of the same years, somewhat different figures were shown as follows–

Table. 2

Cultivated land in Acres under the Cotton Crop from 1880-1883

Year	**Acres**
1880	806,380
1881	761,729
1882	918,265
1883	898,818

Source : *Monograph on Cotton Manufacturers of the Punjab,* Lahore: 1884, p.1

The discrepancy was probably due to the exclusion in some cases, and the inclusion in others, of lands which were sown with cotton, but of which the crop failed to come to maturity. It may be assumed, however, that the average under cotton in Punjab amounts in most years to somewhat over 800,000 acres, and also that it is tending to increase.[28] The cotton cultivated area again increased in 1895-1896, during this year the total cultivated land under the cotton crop was 1,054,199 acres. But it was again declined 1,054,199 (1895-186) acres to 735,127 acres in 1899-1900.[29]

II

Now we talk about the Production and yield of the cotton crop. Due to the fluctuation in land under the cotton cultivation, the fluctuation in the yield or outturn of the cotton crop was natural. For instance, in 1870-1871, the area under the cotton cultivated land in Punjab was 706,906 acres, and the outturn of the cleaned cotton was estimated as 685,854 *maunds*. In 1885-1886, the area under cotton cultivation was 1,089,300 acres and the outturn of cleaned cotton was estimated as 1,167,797 *maunds*.[30] The average

production of cleaned cotton from per acre of land in 1874-1875 was 80 lbs. According to the Cotton report, it increased 103 lbs in 1882-1883. But it was declined from 103 lbs to 83 lbs in 1894-1895.[31] The average outturn of uncleaned cotton was significantly increased than cleaned cotton. In 1879-1880, the average outturn of uncleaned cotton from per acre of land was 138 lbs after the decade it was 326 lbs in 1889-1890. Some places in Punjab where the yield was good, but the area was not increased. F.A. Robertson in his report on a Cotton crop, "Throughout the province it may be said that the crop grown on irrigated lands was everywhere good, while that grown in lands entirely dependent on rain was poor."[32] Sometimes in Punjab, the average produce from per acre of land was more than in neighbouring states. For example, in 1879-1880, the average production of cleaned cotton from per acre was nearly 90 lbs, and in the North-West province for the same year, it was 62.5 lbs.[33]

During the time of the American Civil War, the demand for Indian cotton rapidly increased, and this factor led to an increase in the price of cotton. This also had an impact on the Punjab cotton price. Before the American Civil War, the price of cotton in Punjab was nearly 8 to 10 rupees per maund, but it was increased to Rs. 22 per maund in 1862. When the Civil War ended, the cotton boom rapidly collapsed; consequently, the price of cotton quickly declined. In Amritsar, the price of per maund cotton fell from Rs. 35 to Rs. 12 and in Delhi from Rs. 32 to Rs. 7.[34] From 1870-1900, there were no considerable changes in the price of Cotton. The consumers of crops such as Jute and cotton were the manufacturing industries, whether domestic or foreign, which could attempt to organise a more efficient control on the production and price level of these raw materials. Their capital was fixed in particular industries; sudden fluctuation in prices could prove disastrous. Since they too could not always effectively control the demand for their manufactured products, which was a function of worldwide market forces, they tried to control, wherever they could, the rate and price of the supply of raw materials. In Bengal, where jute was a major commercial non-food crop succeeded in control was achieved very considerably through a network reaching down to the village, both the quantity and the price of raw jute. In Punjab, however, there is no evidence of either the same degree or type of control, even in

the case of cotton.[35] Despite this, from 1870 to 1900, there were no considerable changes in the average price of cleaned cotton. For instance, in 1870, the average price of cleaned cotton per maund was Rs. 17-1-10 and in 1900 it was Rs. 16-0-7.[36]

During the American Civil War, the export of cotton from Punjab was rapidly increased. In 1861, nearly 40 per cent of the total outturn was exported.[37] Punjab exported cotton to Calcutta, Delhi, North-west province, and Sindh. Punjab largely exports cotton to Calcutta and Karachi. Usually, Surplus Cotton was brought to Ambala from Amritsar and Ludhiana for export to Calcutta. Punjab also imported the cotton, of course, intended not for local consumption, but for export to Calcutta.[38] The Cotton report of Punjab shows that the export of raw cotton during the year 1879-1880 was 403,789 maunds, and from this 180,780 maunds were exported to Calcutta and 107,661 maunds to *Sindh*.[39] Exports of cotton from the province were largely carried by Railways. For instance, between 1882-1883 export of raw cotton from Punjab was 152,568 maunds, and from this, 103,816 maunds were carried by railways to other states, and 41,425 maunds were exported to Karachi by country boats.[40] Punjab also exports cotton to foreign countries like Kabul, Bajour, Tirah and Sewestan. During the Second Anglo-Afghan War in 1878-1880, demand of cotton piece goods was increased in Kabul and Sewestan, because it was consumed by the army. It's also had an impact on the export of raw cotton from Punjab.[41] Here we show the variation of the exports of raw cotton to foreign countries between 1876-1877 to 1879-1880.

Table. 3

Foreign exports of Raw Cotton between 1877-1880 in Maunds

Years	Export In Maunds	Value in Rupees
1876-1877	6,401	1,36,555
1877-1878	11,534	2,00,433
1878-1879	11,036	1,90,482
1879-1880	11,054	1,81,338

(Source : *Report on The Administration of the Punjab and its Dependencies for 1879-1880,* p. 102.)

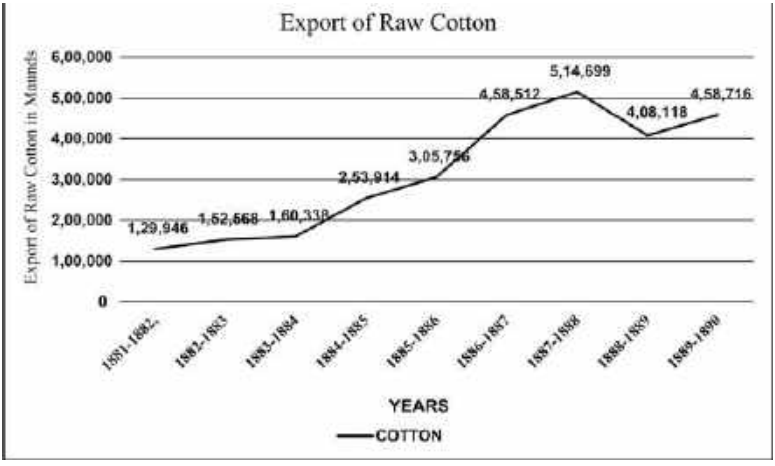
The export of a cotton crop between 1870-1890 increased four-fold. The cotton reports of Punjab indicated that in 1870-71

Punjab exports 107,941 maunds raw cotton, and it was increased 403,789 maunds in 1879-1880.[42] In 1881-1882 it was declined from 403,789 maunds to 129,946 maunds. Due to the lack of demand and competition from other regions like Khandesh and Berar all these factors were responsible for the decline in cotton export of Punjab. But in 1889-1890 it was again increased four-fold. Himadri Banerjee in his work, Agrarian society of the Punjab 1849-1901, gives detail of cotton export between 1881-1890: -

Table. 4

Export of Raw Cotton between 1881-1890

(Source- Himadri Banerjee, Agrarian society of the Punjab 1849-1901,



p.73, also cited in Mridula Mukherjee, Colonializing Agriculture the Myth of Punjab Exceptionalism, p.56.)

After 1890, while Bombay the principal cotton market in India, purchased a cotton from other provinces. As a result, the export trade of Punjab fell from 201,590 maunds in 1890-1891 to only 51,864 maunds in 1891-1892. In the next year, demand was again increased from Bombay and other foreign markets. The export trade gradually increased 6 lakhs of rupee (1891-1892) to 36 lakhs rupees (1892-1893).[43] The cotton crop of 1895 exceeded that of 1894 both in area and outturn, The cultivated land under the cotton crop during the year 1895-1896 was 1,054,199 acres, and the export of cotton crop rise from 39 lakhs rupees (1894-1895) to 112 lakhs rupees (1895-1896).[44] All these agricultural changes during the colonial

rule and efforts done by the Colonial government, led to a rapid changes in the agrarian economy of Punjab.

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Nitish Sachdeva

Assistant Professor

Sahibzada Zorawar Singh Government College, Raikot, Punjab

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Vijay Singh Pathik and the Bijolia Peasant Movement : Agrarian Resistance, Nationalism, and Political Consciousness in Princely Rajasthan

● **Vatsal Gurjar**

This article explores the significant role of Vijay Singh Pathik in leading the Bijolia Peasant Movement in Rajasthan, highlighting the agrarian resistance and rising political consciousness among peasants in the princely states. The movement emerged against longstanding structural and socio-economic injustices faced by farmers, notably the oppressive begar system and unfair levies. Under Pathik's visionary leadership, the peasant panchayats gained unprecedented recognition as legitimate negotiating bodies, achieving parity with state and jagirdar representatives. The Bijolia Agreement, reached in 1922 after intense negotiation, brought substantial reforms including the abolition of the most burdensome forms of begar, transfer of administrative authority to elected panchayats, and formalization of tax arrangements. This settlement not only resolved pressing agrarian issues but also inspired similar movements elsewhere, marking a pivotal moment in the political mobilization of rural Rajasthan's peasantry.

Keywords : *Pathik, Bijolia, agrarian resistance, structural injustie,colonial India,begar,panchayat, princely states, political consciousness, Bijolia Agreement, land settlement, nationalism, peasant negotiation, Rajasthan Seva Sangh, Lag Bag*

Colonial Rajasthan and Structural Context

The Mughal decline fuelled rivalry among the rulers of Rajasthan, who began competing fiercely, leading to frequent wars for territorial control. "Civil wars broke out in every state, and both

sides did not hesitate to seek help from foreigners to succeed."[1] Amid this turmoil, the Marathas entered Rajasthan, exploiting it for revenue through plunder. Maratha dominance fuelled chaos in the region. Due to lawlessness, disorder, economic difficulties, military weakness, and Maratha invasions, the economic conditions of Rajputana worsened day by day, and ultimately, to free themselves from the Marathas, the Rajputs accepted the subjugation of the British."[2]. The company regime signed treaties with most of the states of Rajputana in 1818. Some clauses of these treaties were distinctive, but most of the conditions were generally similar[3] like - Mutual friendship, cooperation, and unity of interests were established between both parties; the British government took responsibility for the defense of the princely states, in return for which the states accepted British subordination. With this British hegemony, the hardships of Rajasthan's princely subjects increased manifolds. The deeply entrenched feudal system also sharpened the popular distress. In this feudal regime, the peasants were subjected to an array of additional levies, known collectively as lag-bag, alongside the imposition of begar. Constraints such as the absence of a free press, restrictions on public expression, denial of civil liberties, and tight administrative control prevented the emergence of unified resistance. However, from the late 19th century to the mid 1910s, sporadic uprisings arose across the region but were crushed by the joint action of the British and princely authorities.

Early Peasant Discontent in Bijolia

The Bijola Thikana was not untouched by the economic distress which prevailed in the Rajputana. The exploitative taxation system forced the peasants to pay high taxes. Beyond regular land rent there were extra levies, numbering 74–84, leaving Bijolia's farmers with barely 13% of their produce. If he did not earn a little by selling his animals' ghee, even daily subsistence would be difficult.[4] Besides, the rent and expenses under the Koonta and Lata systems the peasants also faced Talwar Bandhai tax imposed by Rao Krishnadas and the Chanvari tax imposed in 1903 by Rao Prithvi Singh measures which served to impoverish the peasantry. Although resentment brewed, but the peasants lacked means to organise. However, in such circumstances, it was decided that Nanji Patel and Thakuri Patel would go to Udaipur to present the peasants' grievances to Maharana Fatehsingh, so that they could get

justice.[5] At this juncture, notable local leaders—Sadhu Sitaram Das, Brahmadev, and Fateh Lal—emerged at the forefront of the agitation. This was the initial stage of the movement and the delegation sent to Maharana failed to achieve its objectives.

The movement is conventionally divided into three distinct phases. The first phase (1897–1915) corresponds to the period prior to the arrival of Vijay Singh Pathik. During these years, the movement was in its formative stage, characterized by localized resistance and limited organizational coordination. The second phase (1916–1928) marks the leadership of Vijay Singh Pathik, under whom the struggle attained unprecedented momentum. This period witnessed the consolidation of peasant unity, the adoption of innovative methods of nonviolent resistance, and the achievement of significant milestones that placed the Bijolia uprising at a national stage. The third phase (1929–1941) commenced after the conclusion of Vijay Singh Pathik's leadership and the dissolution of the Rajasthan Sewa Sangh. In this stage, the movement became primarily centered on the peasants' efforts to reclaim their Malbhoomi (unirrigated agricultural lands), reflecting a shift from expansive political agitation to a more specific socio-economic struggle. The focus of my paper would be on the role of Pathik in mobilsing the peasantry. In 1916, local leaders allied with Vijay Singh Pathik (born Bhoop Singh), marked a new phase in the Bijolia movement. The movement spread beyond Mewar with greater political awareness, wider mobilisation, and innovative protest methods.

Political Formations of Vijay Singh Pathik

Bijolia was a first class Thikana of Mewar where feudal exploitation was rampant and protests were suppressed brutally. As the despair grew beyond limits, Doongar Singh Bhati of Mohi, then working as the naib munsarim in Bijolia, suggested to Sadhu Sitaram Das that if Pathik's services could be enlisted, the Bijolia movement could gain momentum.[6] Following this, both Sadhu Sitaram Das and Magan lal invited Pathik. Pathik accepted this request and decided to move to Bijoliya. After coming to Bijolia,he began the groundwork for a solid movement. Pathik started teaching at a local school. At weekly Vidya Pracharini Sabha meetings, he inspired people through speeches and built a cadre of dedicated workers. By day Pathik taught children and by night he toured villages,

mobilising farmers against exploitation. He began to turn informal farmer gatherings into organised assemblies, petitioning the state and Thikana against heavy lag-bag taxes. His deep rapport with villagers and sharp leadership soon made him Uparmāl's beloved leader[7]. Threatened by the work of political awakening initiated by Pathik, arrest warrants were issued against him, forcing him to leave Bijolia. So, from 1917 onwards, Pathik camped in nearby areas of Gwalior and Kota states to plan the movement. Once, while camping in the Patiyaal area of Singoli Pargana in Gwalior State, he was called in secret to Umaji Ka Kheda village in Bijolia, where he stayed in hiding. Here, Pathik prepared a list of various taxes imposed by the Thikana[8].

To fight the colonial and feudal structure Pathik started focusing on the formation of the peasant organizations. In that same vein, on the new moon day of the month of Sawan, Samvat 1975 (1918 CE), Pathik decided that the farmers' organisation, as a unified body, would begin the formation of village-level panchayats in the Thikana. To publicise this meeting for the organisation in each village, Pathik wrote the following heartfelt and purposeful lines along with the notice for the assembly:

हरियाली मावस सुखद सुभ मुहूर्त को जान लो
स्वतंत्रता के अर्थ, प्रण धर्मयुद्ध का ठान लो।[9]

Through these organizations, Pathik actively linked peasant struggles with nationalist ideals. He trained farmers in nonviolent endurance, built a strong panchayat network, and insisted on funding the movement through peasants' own contributions. Alongside Pathik, activists—such as Sadhu Sitaram Das, Manikya Lal Verma, Bhanwar Lal Swarnkar, and Premchand Bhil etc mobilised a substantial cadre of village-level workers. Through the coordination of these activists and the panchayats, farmers' assemblies became powerful forums, resonating as the voice of the oppressed rural population.What had once been dismissed by the Thikana as the futile cries of a desperate, powerless peasantry had now, under Pathik's leadership, been kindled into a sustained and organised resistance.[10] Pathik also reached out to Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, informing him of the ongoing Bijolia satyagraha and requesting the support of Vidyarthi's influential newspaper, Pratap. On behalf of the Bijolia peasants, he

sent Vidyarthi a rakhi, symbolising solidarity and brotherhood.[11] As a result of Pathik's efforts Vidyarthi began publishing reports on Bijolia's plight, drawing national attention. This was for the first time that anyone in Bijola used publicity in newspapers as a tool to expose the predicament of the peasantry in the princely states. Thus, Bijolia was made a national movement by Pathik. Infuriated by this, the Thikana used intimidation, bribery, repression, and violence. In response, on Pathik's advice the panchayat adopted disciplined satyagraha: avoiding the town, boycotting liquor, suspending social ceremonies, and leaving Bijolia's land uncultivated while surviving on limited farming in nearby states. Pathik announced rent strike and for four years, the Thikana lost land revenue and court cases, liquor sales ceased, and social life was halted, driving it into deep debt.

Pathik also attended sessions of the Indian National Congress to draw national attention. In 1918; Pathik went to attend the Congress session in Delhi. At the 1919 Amritsar Congress session, Pathik urged the inclusion of a Bijolia-specific resolution in the agenda-setting committee. Although Tilak introduced and supported the resolution—alongside Mr. Kelkar—it was blocked by Madan Mohan Malviya and Mahatma Gandhi, who favored non-interference in the affairs of princely states. Nonetheless, this drew the attention of national leaders to Bijolia's struggles.[12] In 1919, Pathik established Rajasthan Sewa Sangh in Wardha to deal with the problems of the princely states. Here, with the financial support from Jamnalal Bajaj and the collaboration of Ramnarayan Chaudhary and Kesari Singh Barhat, he established the weekly newspaper Rajasthan Kesari, focusing on the issues plaguing the princely states. In December 1920, at the Nagpur Congress session he organised an exhibition depicting the atrocities perpetrated by the princely states. This was the first instance in which British India witnessed the oppressive system sustained by colonial protection. Even British officials acknowledged the grim realities presented.[13] These efforts by Sewa Sangh brought the question of princely people into limelight. Congress, in the same session, expanded its objective to include the liberation of all India, including the princely states, as its goal and authorized representation from those regions. The following year, at the Ahmedabad Congress session, Pathik met Gandhi. These participations invigorated the Bijolia movement, inspiring renewed vigor and confidence among its members.

To sustain morale of the peasants, Pathik facilitated frequent lectures by national leaders. In March 1921, Rajputana's eminent leader, Arjun Lal Sethi, addressed multiple gatherings in Bijolia, emphasizing the necessity for responsible governance.[14] Along with the national attention that the bijolia movement got in the sessions of the Congress and via various newspapers across the country, the rent strike undertaken under Pathik's leadership led to the collapse of Bijolia's financial stability. It severely undermined the finances of the Thikana. However, under Pathik and the Seva Sangh, peasant unity remained intact. In the end,at the Thikana's request, intensive negotiations—lasting fifteen days—were held in Ajmer between the Thikana and peasant representatives, with Pathik as mediator.

The Bijolia Agreement

It is to be noted that it was time of the Non Cooperation Movement and the Bijolia movement too had spread to new areas like Barwa, Antari, Begun, Bhainsrorgarh, Bassi, Parsoli, Khairad, and Amargarh .The British linked this surge of rural activism to both the Non-Cooperation Movement and the Russian Revolution, privately acknowledging that its true epicenter was Bijolia. The colonial government feared that the agitation could engulf the entire Rajputana region. The seriousness with which the British administration regarded the crisis is underscored by the fact that Sir A.G.G. Holland personally toured the affected areas to explore potential solutions. On 1 February, the Parsoli farmers' panchayat presented Holland with a formal list of grievances—chief among them the illegal lag-bag (extra taxes) and begar (forced labour). The very next day, Parsoli's Thakur reached a notably liberal settlement with his cultivators[15]—marking the first such formal agreement between ruler and subjects in the history of Mewar.[16]

Within this backdrop, the AGG traveled with a full official retinue to negotiate with Bijolia's peasants which was unprecedented Under Pathik's leadership, this became a symbolic and strategic victory for the peasants.[17] The farmers' panchayat was recognised as the legitimate negotiating body and representatives of the Rajasthan Seva Sangh were appointed as lead negotiators at the panchayat's request. Farmers were accorded equal seating alongside the representatives of the Maharana and the local jagirdar—an unprecedented act of parity in a deeply hierarchical society.

Ramnarayan Chaudhary, Pathik's close associate in the peasant movement, described this power: "Just as Gandhi was the leader of the people of India, Pathik was the Gandhi of Rajasthan. At his call, if the people of Rajasthan had four hands each, all would have been raised at once. His name was so powerful that we needed no publicity for meetings; just a single word from a worker brought crowds like ants to sugar. Pathik was a living god to the Bijolia farmers."[18] The panchayats were granted authority to adjudicate certain disputes, and it was agreed that farmers could independently operate their own schools. The issue of begar was debated at length. The agreement abolished its most oppressive and burdensome forms. In the future, should a state official visit a village, begar would be provided only for reasonable payment. The agreement also abolished the authority of the government-appointed Patel, transferring this power to the elected panchayat. Certain levies—such as Chhatund, Talwar Bandhai, and Noot Barad—remained unresolved; on these, Holland intended to consult Vijay Singh Pathik personally in Ajmer. In the end, an accord was reached and formally accepted by the farmers, who endorsed it with thunderous cries of "Vande Mataram."[19] On 17 February 1922, in Ajmer, and later in Abu, Holland and Pathik met to resolve the outstanding issues related to Chhatund, Talwar Bandhai, and Noot Barad, thereby completing the settlement process. The Bijolia settlement inspired hope and enthusiasm in agitating farmers in other regions. Over the next three months, Pathik sent representatives to ensure the farmers adhered to the agreement and further strengthened the panchayat structure. The settlement was finally formalised on June 11, 1922.The Thikana was to collect tax as per the new arrangements. According to the agreement, Mewar's assistant settlement officer, Mahendra Singh Ranawat, undertook the permanent land settlement in October 1922, completing it only by early 1927.

The speech given by AGG after the settlement describes how important the Bijola movement became for the British. AGG said- "Remember, what you do here will affect the future of India. If your stance is one of defying state authority and spreading unrest, you will harm the real interests of India."[20] That is, the government viewed the Bijolia movement from both a national and an international perspective. Perhaps it was fear that the peasant agitations would merge with the Non-Cooperation Movement of British India,

which made the British authorities pressure the Mewar State into signing the 1922 Bijolia Agreement.[21] The British also tried to link the movement to Bolshevik ideology which was wrong. Although Pathik, the architect of the movement, was influenced by socialist and egalitarian principles, the peasant movement was based on Gandhi's technique of satyagraha, with no place for violent struggle. The peasants' demands were for the abolition of extra taxes and forced labour; they were demanding neither independence nor the end of feudalism. Their emotional attachment to the rajas was well known, and yet British officers continued to portray Bijolia's farmers as communists and a threat to the social order.[22]

The Bijolia Agreement, negotiated under the leadership of Vijay Singh Pathik, marked a decisive moment in the political and agrarian history of Rajasthan. For the first time, the entrenched authority of the princely state of Mewar and its British overlords was compelled to sit across the negotiating table with the peasantry—acknowledging their grievances rather than dismissing them. Pathik's steadfast leadership, strategic vision, and ability to organise mass resistance elevated the demands of the Bijolia tenants from mere local disturbances to a matter of political consequence. The agreement, though a moral and symbolic victory, faltered in its implementation. The local Thikana authorities, deeply invested in maintaining feudal privilege, recoiled from the spirit of reform. They refused to enact the promised reliefs and continued to extract oppressive taxes, betraying the negotiated settlement. This breach of faith dealt a heavy blow to peasant morale, for the anticipated respite from exploitation never materialised.Pathik's subsequent arrest proved catastrophic to the movement's momentum. As its architect, his absence created a strategic vacuum. Without his organisational prowess and moral authority, the peasants lacked a unifying figure to direct protests, counter propaganda, and sustain negotiations. Leaderless and fragmented, the agitation became vulnerable to suppression through force, intimidation, and administrative measures. In historical retrospect, the Bijolia Agreement stands as both a triumph and a tragedy. It demonstrated that collective rural action could compel princely and colonial powers to acknowledge popular demands, yet it also exposed how entrenched interests, aided by the removal of key leadership, could swiftly dismantle such gains.

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Vatsal Gurjar

Researcher – Department of History,
University of Kota, Kota, Rajasthan
Emal-vatsalgurjar123@gmail.com
Mob No-9460174553

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Balancing Development And Tribal Rights : Towards Inclusive Growth And Participatory Governance In India

Dr. Shweta Rani • Guddu Kumar

Development must uplift every segment of society, yet India's tribal communities 8.6% of the population disproportionately suffer project-induced displacement from dams, industries, and SEZs. This paper examines the resulting alienation from land and forests, violations of constitutional protections, and exacerbated poverty. Although the Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (1996) and the Forest Rights Act (2006) offer legal safeguards, implementation gaps persist. We advocate a participatory, rights-based development paradigm that aligns national growth with tribal welfare. Key measures include securing land and forest tenure, ensuring Free, Prior and Informed Consent, and enforcing minimum wages and social protections in tribal areas. By exploring the forests-poverty nexus, land rights, and systemic marginalization, the study contributes to the debate on equitable development. Finally, it recommends a contextual, people-centered approach empowering tribal decision-making at every project stage to balance economic progress with cultural integrity and sustainable livelihoods.

Keywords : *Balance Development, Governance, Inclusive, India, Tribal Rights*

Introduction

Development is essential for national progress, but its benefits must reach every community equitably. India's tribal population about 8.6 percent of the total has paradoxically borne the greatest burdens of large-scale projects such as dams, industrial zones, and

SEZs, suffering mass displacement and loss of livelihoods. This paper examines the social, economic, and cultural fallout of such displacement, evaluates legal safeguards like PESA (1996) and the Forest Rights Act (2006), and highlights persistent implementation gaps that leave tribal lands vulnerable, deepen poverty, and erode cultural identity.

Given these challenges, we advocate a participatory, rights-based development model that empowers tribal communities through Free, Prior and Informed Consent, secure land and forest tenure, and enforceable social protections including minimum wages and compensation standards. By exploring the forests-poverty nexus and systemic marginalization, this research contributes to the broader dialogue on inclusive growth. It concludes that a contextual, people-centered approach rooted in tribal leadership at every stage of project planning can harmonize national development goals with the well-being and rights of India's indigenous populations.

Scheduled Tribes In India: Geographical Undertanding

Scheduled Tribes (STs), 705 distinct communities recognized under Article 342 of the Indian Constitution comprise about 8.6 percent of India's population (2011 Census). Table 1 illustrates the absolute number and percentages of Scheduled Tribes in India and their rate of change from 2001 to 2011. They occupy forested, hilly, and remote regions and have historically been marginalized by limited resource access, education, and governance participation (fig. 1 and table 2). Over 45 percent of STs live below the poverty line versus 21 percent of the general population while their literacy rate stands at 59 percent compared to 73 percent nationally.

Table 1 : State of Scheduled Tribes in India (2001-2011)

Scheduled Tribes Population and Decadal Change by Residence : Census 2011

Scheduled Tribes Population: 2011			Decadal Change 2001-2011		
Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
104,281,034	93,819,162	10,461,872	23.7	21.3	49.7

Percentage of Scheduled Tribes to Total Population : Census 2001 – 2011

Percentage of Scheduled Tribes Population: 2001			Percentage of Scheduled Tribes Population: 2011		
Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
8.2	10.4	2.4	8.6	11.3	2.8

Source: Census of India 2001 & 2011

Table 2 : Major Tribes of India and its Distribution across States

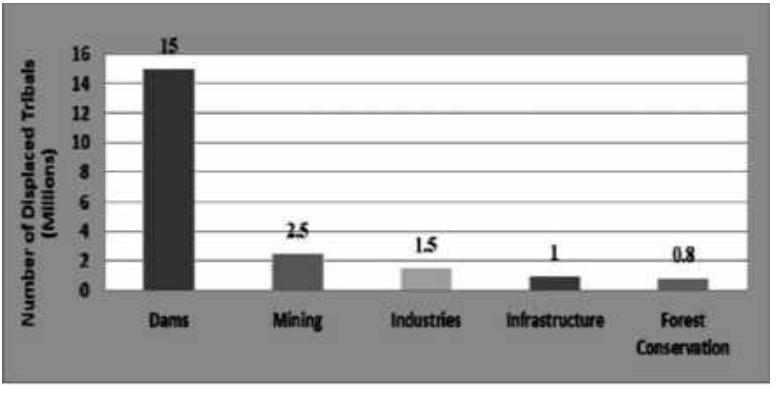
Central India	Northeast India	Southern India	Western India	Andaman & Nicobar Islands
Gond, Bhil, Santhal, Oraon, Munda.	Naga, Khasi, Garo, Mizo, Bodo, Apatani.	Irula, Toda, Kattunayakan, Chenchu.	Garasia, Dhodia, Warli, Bhil.	Great Andamanese, Onge, Jarawa, Sentinalese.

Source : Census of India 2011

Displacement of Scheduled Tribes In India

Figure 2 and 3 depicts the total number of tribals displaced and the nature of developmental initiatives.

Figure 2 : Total Displacement of Tribal Population: 20.8 million



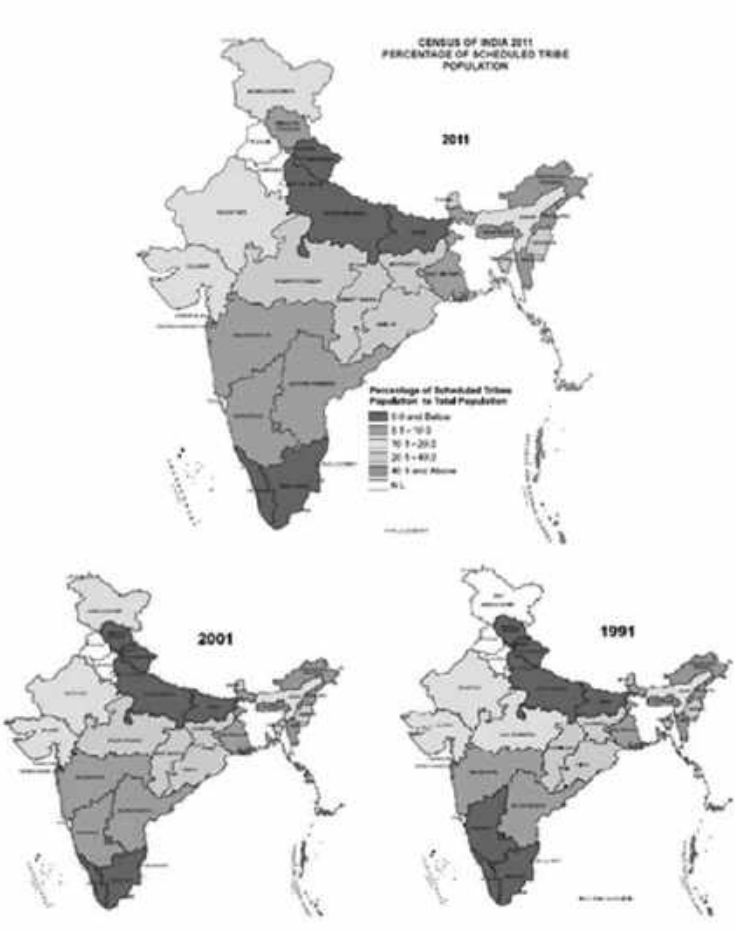
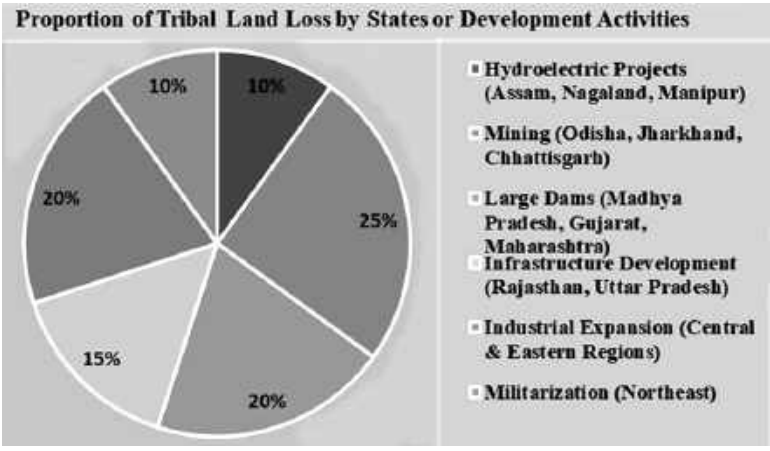


Figure 1: Decadal Distribution of Scheduled Tribes in India

Figure 3 : Compositional Structure of Development-Induced Tribal Land Loss



Regions With Highest Displacement

Central India stands as the epicentre of tribal displacement and home to a significant portion of India's tribal population, including major tribes such as Gonds, Bhils, Baigas, and Santhals. These regions are rich in natural resources, making them a hub for large-scale development projects.

1. **Central India: States-Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and parts of Maharashtra.**

   Key Development Project: Sardar Sarovar Dam (Narmada Valley Project), Indira Sagar Dam and Bargi Dam (Madhya Pradesh), Large share of India's coal, iron ore, bauxite, and other mineral reserves.

Central India, home to Gonds, Bhils, Baigas, and Santhals is the epicentre of tribal displacement driven by resource exploitation. The Sardar Sarovar Dam across Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Gujarat uprooted over 200,000 Bhil and Gond families, disrupting agriculture, fishing, and forest-based livelihoods amid delayed, inadequate rehabilitation. In Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand, vast coal, iron-ore, and bauxite mining especially at Korba seizes tribal land without proper PESA (1996) or Forest Rights Act (2006) compliance, destroying forests and non-timber products while causing pollution, land degradation, and water scarcity that further devastate tribal habitats.

2. Eastern India: States-Odisha, Jharkhand and West Bengal

Key Development Project: Mining and Industrial Projects (e.g., POSCO and Vedanta projects in Odisha) have led to extensive displacement, Rich in natural resources, particularly coal, bauxite, and iron ore, tribal communities e.g., Dongria Kondh and Santhal have faced significant disruptions due to these projects.

Large-scale development projects mining, industry, and infrastructure in Odisha have devastated tribal societies such as the Dongria Kondh and Santhal. Plans like the POSCO steel plant in Jagatsinghpur threatened to displace 22,000 people, and Vedanta's bauxite mining in the Niyamgiri Hills clashed with the Dongria Kondh's land, prompting India's Supreme Court in 2013 to uphold Gram Sabha rejections. Iron ore extraction in Keonjhar and Sundargarh has caused deforestation, pollution, water scarcity, respiratory illness, inadequate resettlement, leaving many tribal families without sustainable livelihoods.

3. Western India: States- Rajasthan and Gujarat

Key Development Project: Projects like the Indira Gandhi Canal and Sardar Sarovar Dam have resulted in the displacement of tribal populations, including Bhil and Garasia communities.

Large irrigation and hydroelectric schemes like the Indira Gandhi Canal and Sardar Sarovar Dam have displaced vast tribal populations, especially Bhil and Garasia communities. In Rajasthan, the canal's route through the Thar Desert and Punjab destroyed traditional grazing lands and forest habitats, forcing Garasia to abandon pastoralism and forest livelihoods. The Sardar Sarovar reservoir submerged fertile fields and forests along the Narmada, uprooting around 200,000 mainly tribal residents and resettling them on marginal land.

4. Northeastern India: States-Assam, Nagaland and Manipur

Key Development Project: Tribal displacement has occurred due to hydroelectric projects, road construction, and militarization.

Hydroelectric dams, roads, and militarization in Assam, Nagaland, and Manipur have displaced indigenous communities, eroding tribal cultures in a socio-political landscape. The Subansiri Lower Hydroelectric Project submerged tribal lands along the Assam–Arunachal Pradesh border, while the Loktak dam on Loktak Lake disrupted Meitei and Zeliangrong livelihoods in fishing and farming. Infrastructure schemes like the India–Myanmar–Thailand highway drove deforestation and land grabs, fracturing villages.

Adverse Cosequences Of Displacement

The forced displacement of India's Scheduled Tribes under large-scale development schemes produces a cascade of interlinked adversities social, economic, cultural, psychological, health-related, ecological, and institutional that deepen vulnerability and disrupt lifeways both immediately and over generations. These effects are explained below in detail:

1. Loss of Livelihood

Displaced tribes lose access to agricultural fields, forests, rivers and grazing grounds that sustained farming, hunting, fishing, and gathering. Divorced from these natural assets, families face sudden income gaps without adequate vocational training or culturally appropriate alternatives. Attempts to shift to industrial or urban jobs falter amid skill mismatches and linguistic or social barriers.

2. Cultural and Social Disintegration

Ancestral lands embody tribal spiritual beliefs, oral histories, and ecological know-how. Relocation severs ties to sacred sites groves, riverbanks, hills eroding traditional knowledge systems, ceremonies, and languages. At the same time, the breakdown of tightly knit clan and kinship networks increases social isolation, weakens communal safety nets, and accelerates the loss of collective identity.

3. Economic Implications

Beyond immediate resource loss, displacement consigns many families to underdeveloped resettlement areas lacking schools, clinics, markets, and reliable transport. Unemployment and underemployment rise sharply, driving households into debt cycles as they borrow to meet basic needs.

4. Health Impacts

Traditional forest diets wild fruits, tubers, game and fish give way to poor rations or unfamiliar staples, triggering micronutrient deficiencies, anaemia, and stunted growth. Overcrowded, unsanitary resettlement camps amplify waterborne diseases, respiratory infections, and other preventable ailments. Limited healthcare access compounds morbidity and heightens maternal and child mortality.

Existing Legal Safeguards And Their Implementation

Category	Legal Safeguard/ Policy	Key Provisions	Implementation Challenges	Recommendations
Constitutional Safeguards	Fifth Schedule	Administration of scheduled areas; restricts land transfer to non-tribals.	Land transfer restrictions often bypassed.	Strengthen the role and powers of Tribal Advisory Councils.
	Sixth Schedule	Provides autonomy to tribal councils in north-eastern states for governance and resource management.	Limited decision-making powers; inconsistent implementation across states.	Expands and standardize powers of tribal councils; build capacity through training.
Land Acquisition	Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation, and Resettlement Act (LARR), 2013	Fair compensation, consent (70-80%), and detailed rehabilitation plans.	Consent clauses often bypassed; delays in compensation.	Enforce the consent clause rigorously; establish grievance redress mechanisms to address compensation.

Forest Right	Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006	Grants land and forest resource rights to tribes; safeguards against eviction without legal process.	Delayed recognition of claims; frequent rejection of valid claims.	Simplify claim procedures; involve tribal represent-atives in decision-making.
Local Governance	Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA), 1996	Empowers Gram Sabhas to govern local resources, approve development projects, and manage forests.	Decisions made without consulting Gram Sabhas; poor capacity-building among tribal populations.	Mandate Gram Sabha consultations for all projects; conduct training for tribal communities.
Environ-mental Protection	Environ-ment Protection Act, 1986	Mandates Environ-mental Impact Assessments (EIAs) and public hearings for tribal projects.	Superficial consul-tations; EIAs often conducted inade-quately or hastily to expedite projects.	Strengthen public hearing processes; ensure independent oversight for EIAs to incorporate genuine tribal concerns.

Advocating Participatory And Rights-Based Approaches For Tribal Communities

The participatory and rights-based approach that involves decision-making processes with the involvement of tribal communities while guaranteeing their rights and sustainable development. Such

approaches respect and integrate the voices, needs, and aspirations of tribal populations in developmental planning.

Key Elements of Participatory and Rights-Based Approaches

Aspect	Description
Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (EPIC)	Ensures tribal communities have the right to give or withhold consent for projects affecting their lands, resources, and livelihoods.
Community Participation	Involving tribal communities in planning, implementation, and monitoring of development projects.
Recognition of Cultural Identity	Respects and preserves the unique cultural, spiritual, and social tribal ties with their lands and forests.
Transparency and Accountability	Ensures clear, open processes in decision-making and the equitable distribution of benefits.

Recommendations for Implementation of Participatory Rights-Based Approaches

Area	Recommendation
Legislative Strengthening	Amend laws to explicitly require participatory processes, in land acquisition and developmental projects.
Monitoring and Evaluation	Establish independent oversight mechanisms, to monitor and evaluate the implementation of participatory and rights-based policies.
Stakeholder Collaboration	Foster partnerships between government agencies, NGOs, and tribal communities to co-create solutions and rights protection.
Awareness Campaigns	Mass awareness programs to educate tribal communities about their legal rights.

Benefit Sharing	Ensure equitable sharing of benefits from development projects, such as revenue-sharing models for mining or renewable energy projects in tribal areas.
Digital Platforms	Technology to create platforms for grievance redressal and information about ongoing and proposed projects.

Benefits of Participatory and Rights-Based Approach

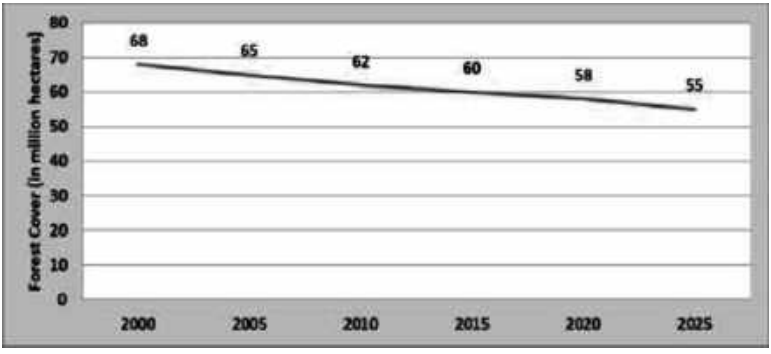
Area	Recommendation
Sustainable Development	Aligns development projects with environmental and cultural sustainability by incorporating tribal knowledge.
Conflict Reduction	Reduces conflicts emerging from displacement or resource exploitation through consent.
Empowerment	Strengthening the self-governance and decision-making strength of tribal communities.
Equity	Positive impacts of development are shared equitably.

Inclusive and equitable development can be achieved through participatory and rights-based approaches. Tribal community empowerment and respect for their rights are necessary for development, which can both be sustainable and just in character, as development should be compatible with economic advancement and social-cultural preservation.

Exploring The Interface Between Forests And Poverty

Forests and poverty are intertwined: disadvantaged communities depend on forests for food, fuel, timber, and non-timber products. When access is restricted or resources degrade (as evident from fig. 4 depicting the declining trends in forest cover from 68 million hectares in 2000 to 55 million hectares in 2025), livelihoods collapse. Effective policies must therefore both safeguard sustainable forest management and secure community access to these vital resources for poverty alleviation.

Figure 4 : Trends in Forest Cover in Tribal-Dominated Areas



Source: Forest Survey of India (2025)

Role of Forests in Livelihoods

Forests lie at the heart of livelihoods for millions especially in rural and tribal societies by supplying food, fuelwood, fodder, and income from non-timber forest products (NTFPs) such as honey, resins, and medicinal plants. As vital safety nets, forests buffer communities against economic shocks and natural disasters, providing emergency food and cash when crops fail or markets collapse. Beyond these material benefits, forests hold profound cultural and spiritual significance for many indigenous groups, anchoring their identity and well-being.

Ecologically, forests regulate water cycles, maintain soil fertility, and moderate local climates services that underpin agriculture and other livelihoods in impoverished regions. Yet this dependence also breeds vulnerability: degradation or loss of forest cover can immediately and catastrophically undercut community survival.

Policy and Governance Gaps

Many anti-poverty initiatives inadvertently exclude forests from their scope, while conservation policies often restrict community access without offering sustainable alternatives. This disconnect turns well-intentioned programs into long-term poverty traps and accelerates environmental degradation.

Recommendations for Sustainable Forest-Poverty Policies

1. Secure Rights and Tenure – Fully implement and legally enforce the Forest Rights Act; simplify land tenure procedures to legitimize community claims.
2. Sustainable Resource Management – Promote agroforestry, community-managed forest schemes, and low-impact harvesting, pair strict environmental regulations with adaptation strategies.
3. Forest-Based Livelihoods – Support NTFP value-addition, community ecotourism, and Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) to generate steady incomes. Prioritize women's empowerment programs, given their central role in resource collection.
4. Strengthen Local Governance – Empower Gram Sabhas under PESA with technical training and decision-making authority over forests.
5. Climate Resilience and Conservation – Integrate climate-smart forestry practices to sustain ecosystem services under shifting climatic conditions.

The Role of Forests in Poverty Alleviation

Equitable forest management and benefit-sharing can turn forests into engines of steady income, employment, and food security, especially when women key resource gatherers are empowered through targeted programs. Securing forest rights redresses historical injustices and promotes social equity. Because the forest–poverty nexus is complex, holistic policies must combine community participation, secure tenure, and sustainable practices. Aligning conservation with development goals ensures resilient ecosystems and thriving forest-dependent communities for generations.

A Contextual Approach To Development

A contextual approach to development recognizes that "one size fits all" solutions often fall short when communities differ in their socio-economic conditions, cultural norms, and ecological realities. Instead, this method tailor's interventions to local environments, ensuring relevance and enhancing impact.

Core Principles of Contextual Approach

1. **Community Participation :** Engaging residents in design, implementation, and evaluation builds ownership, aligns projects with genuine needs, and strengthens local capacities.
2. **Cultural Sensitivity :** Respecting traditions, beliefs, and social norms prevents resistance and preserves community cohesion.
3. **Environmental Stewardship :** Integrating sustainable practices— such as soil-conservation, native species restoration, or renewable energy—safeguards ecosystem services essential to local livelihoods.
4. **Equity and Inclusivity :** Prioritizing women, indigenous groups, and the economically marginalized ensures benefits reach those most in need and addresses systemic barriers.
5. **Flexibility and Adaptability :** Embedding feedback loops and iterative design allows programs to evolve in response to shifting circumstances, emergent challenges, and community insights.

Advantages of Contextual Approach Development

1. Greater Effectiveness: Tailored solutions resonate more deeply, yielding measurable improvements in living standards and resilience.
2. Long-Term Sustainability: Building on indigenous knowledge and existing structures fosters self-reliance and durability beyond project lifespans.
3. Conflict Reduction: By valuing local voices and cultures, contextual development minimizes tensions that arise from top-down impositions.

Challenges in Contextual Development

Conflicting stakeholder interests—between communities, political actors, and external funders—can impede consensus. Aligning diverse local goals with broader national or global targets (e.g., climate mitigation) further complicates planning.

Recommendations for Implementation

1. **Comprehensive Participatory Assessments :** Conduct collaborative appraisals of social, cultural, economic, and environmental conditions before launching initiatives.
2. **Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration :** Bring together local

governments, NGOs, community leaders, and the private sector to co-create and share ownership of programs.

3. **Policy Coherence:** Harmonize local, state, and national frameworks to support context-sensitive approaches while meeting wider objectives like climate resilience and poverty reduction.
4. **Adaptive Monitoring and Evaluation:** Develop real-time tracking systems that incorporate community feedback and environmental indicators to guide course corrections.

Conclusion

Balancing India's development with tribal welfare demands a paradigm shift those honours both economic progress and the rights of Scheduled Tribes. Strengthening and enforcing laws like the Forest Rights Act (2006) and PESA (1996), alongside tribal representation in decision-making, can bridge the gap between policy and practice. A truly inclusive model prioritizes cultural preservation, equal resource access, and economic empowerment through participatory governance, skills training, and community-led initiatives aligned with national goals. Overcoming systemic barriers—bureaucratic inertia, low awareness, and vested interests—is essential. By recognizing tribal contributions and ensuring their voices shape development, India can build a more just, egalitarian society in which its tribal communities prosper with dignity alongside the nation's broader progress.

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Dr. Shweta Rani
Assistant Professor
(Senior Grade),
Department of Geography,
Dyal Singh College,
University of Delhi,
Lodhi Road, New Delhi, India

Guddu Kumar
Ph.D. Research Scholar,
Department of Geography,
Delhi School of Economics,
University of Delhi, Delhi, India
Corresponding Author's
Email: g.kumar.dse@gmail.com

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Land Laws and Inclusion of Scheduled Caste People in Punjab: A Reality Check

• **Dr. Harjinder Singh**

Scheduled Caste people are largely deprived from land ownership in Punjab. Their share (3.20%) in ownership of agricultural land reflects the reality. Different governments in colonial period and after independence enact different laws for land reforms but there is no change in the condition of Scheduled Caste people of Punjab. The major goal of British government for land reforms is to get as much money as they can from agriculture through taxes. By their laws and policies they legally prohibited SCs to buy agricultural land especially by the Punjab Alienation of Land Act, 1901. In post independence the major goal of Government of India and Punjab is to dismantle feudal systems, abolish Zamindari and Jagirdari systems, to achieve socio-economic justice, equitable distribution of land and increase the productivity of farming. As for as the Scheduled Caste people are concerned, Punjab Village Common Lands (Regulation) Act, 1961 and Punjab Land Ceiling Act, 1972 are enormously considerable as these acts have some provisions to give land to SCs of Punjab. In Punjab both the central and state government succeeded to increase the production of agriculture but failed to bring any socio-economic change or equitable land distribution. SCs are still landless, dependent on the fields of landowning upper caste people for labour and collecting green forage for their cattles. As a result they faced exploitation and humiliation when they enter into their fields. The large difference between population of SCs (31.94%) and their share in agricultural land (3.20%) shows the landlessness of SCs in Punjab.

Keywords : *Alienation, Zamindari, Jagirdari, Dismantle, Ceiling.*

Introduction

Caste always plays a crucial role in every sphere of life in India. So the use and control of "agricultural land" is not an exception. Scheduled Caste (SC) people for long been excluded from the land rights and also denied access to the Shamlati Agricultural Land. Their status about ownership of land is miserable in Punjab in comparison to other states of India. As per the Census of India 2011 Punjab has the highest percentage (31.94%) of Scheduled Castes population in India but they own only 3.20% of agricultural land. Majority of SC population (73.33%) in Punjab is living in rural areas but only 6.02% of them are cultivators (Census of India, 2011). Governments have enacted a number of legislations during the British period and after Independence for land reforms and to manage Shamlati lands in the state. Punjab Alienation of Land Act, 1901, Punjab Village Common Lands (Regulation) Act, 1961 and Punjab Land Ceiling Act, 1972 are very significant and decisive laws as they concerned incredibly with SCs of Punjab. But apart from all these land reforms Scheduled Caste people are still landless and dependent on landlords for labour and green fodder for their cattles. The present paper focuses on actual implementation of different land laws especially Punjab Alienation of Land Act, 1901, Punjab Village Common Lands (Regulation) Act, 1961 and Punjab Land Ceiling Act, 1972 and their role on exclusion and inclusion of Scheduled Caste people of Punjab.

Punjab is one of the agriculturally developed states of India. Agriculture is the backbone of the rural population of Punjab. The total cultivable area of Punjab is 4.2 million hectares which constitutes only 3% of the net area sown in the country. About thirty six percent of its workforce is dependent on farming for employment (Singh & Sidhu et. all, 2011). Land is not only a means of production, but it is also a symbol of status in Punjab. Agriculture is not a profitable occupation these days but land is still a matter of dignity in Punjab and power still revolves around land in Punjab. Land played a significant role to make jats community a dominant caste in Punjab. Jats were earlier considered pastoral and lower castes and became dominent after the coming of Persian wheel in sixteenth and seventeenth century and green revolution in 1960s. After the entry of Persian wheel in agrarian field, it expands the agrarian land and helped jats to become settler from pastoral. Further green revolution after 1960s significantly developed agriculture and

improved the conditions of Jats. Therefore, land played an important role in the upliftment of social status of jats to become a dominant caste in Punjab (Habib, 1996 & Ram, n. d.).

Starting from the colonial period to till date, various statutes have been brought for the land reforms and management of Common Property Resources. Some of the important legislations in colonial period include Punjab Civil Code 1854, Punjab Laws Act 1872, and Punjab Alienation of Land Act 1901. The Punjab Alienation of Land Act, 1901 impacted SCs enormously as it created 'agricultural tribe' category and permitted only the members of this category to buy or sell land (Islam, 1995 & Ahir, 1992). There were many reasons to pass this Act and one major reason for the passing of this Act was the transfer of land to urban moneylenders. Land was continuously transferred from agrarian hands to non-agrarian urban money lenders because heavy taxes were imposed by British government on peasants. As a result the peasantry of Punjab was unable to fulfill their daily needs and the natural calamities which occurred from time to time also increased their problems. They were helpless and were left with only option to borrow money from the urban money lenders. The rate of interest imposed on the debt was also very high and peasants were not in a position to return the money to the moneylenders. Therefore, they were under heavy debts and were exploited by the rich moneylenders which made their condition more miserable. With the passage of time moneylenders started grabbing their land whenever peasants failed to pay the debts. The central government had demanded details of the transferred land from the local government. The then Lieutenant- Governor, James Lyall ordered all his revenue officers to submit their reports. The Deputy Commissioner of Gurdaspur, Deputy Commissioner of Shahpur, and Deputy Commissioner of Montgomery district expressed the similar views that the rural peasants have lost their land to the urban moneylenders. The reports of these officers revealed the transfer of land from the agrarian to the non-agrarian hands (Bhatia, 1987, pp. 228-229; Barrier, 1965; Cassan, 2015, p. 106). It was also a massive loss to the British government as it led to the reduction in agrarian revenue. The British government decided to stop this practice and the outcome of their decision was the Punjab Alienation of land Act 1901. Although, it may have protected some landowners frsom becoming landless, it also barred landless castes especially Scheduled Castes who were not categorized as agricultural tribes, from acquiring land. So the Colonial policies in Punjab were also responsible to make the

SCs landless, especially Punjab Alienation of Land Act, 1901. Ahir explained that there were Punjab Customary Laws which prohibited the Scheduled Castes to use the Shamlat land. Under this Law, the Shamlat land could be shared only by Zamindars (hereditary land-owning communities). The non-Zamindars were called 'kaminas' because they belonged to the lower castes that were not entitled to acquire land. Due to this, they could not build their 'pucca' (concrete) houses on the land they reside. They always remained fearful because the Zamindars may turn them out anytime (Ahir, 1992, p. 40). Ram also favours the argument and stated that dalits were not allowed to build pucca houses because the land on which they stayed did not belong to them. It belonged to the Jat Sikhs (Ram, 2004, p. 899). Even Balbir Singh Madhopuri a Punjabi writer also explained in his autobiography that SCs were not allowed to purchase land on their own name. If they want to purchase land they could do so only on the names of so called upper caste landlords or they can buy land verbally (Madhopuri, 2010). This exposed the reality of dependency of the Scheduled Castes on the Jats for the use and purchase of land even when they were economically sound enough to purchase land.

After independence, to eliminate intermediaries and landlordism, the government of India passed an Act in 1950 by first Constitutional Amendment and gave instructions to the states to pass that Act and make rules and regulation to implement it. The different states passed laws to abolish landlordism according to their situation. The first state which worked in this direction was Uttar Pradesh. Punjab brought the Punjab Abolition of Village Cess (Kuri Kamini) Act in 1950. It was a great relief to the landless workers who had to pay a customary cess to the landlords just because they belonged to a particular section of the society which was poor and was considered as low caste. The Act abolished the Beggar system (Pawar & Rajender, 1994, p, 94), under which the Scheduled Caste people were either to pay a customary cess, or to work without wages (Beggar) in the fields of Zamindars.

In Patiala and East Punjab State Union (PEPSU) an ordinance was issued in 1950 for abolition of Biswedari. In October 1952, the institution of Zaildari system was abolished and in 1953, a bill was passed for the abolition of Jagirdari system in the State (Gill 1989, p. A-79). Both in Punjab and PEPSU, Occupancy Acts were also passed for vesting property rights to the Occupancy Tenants.[1] "The Punjab Occupancy Tenants (Vesting of Property Rights) Act, 1952

and PEPSU Occupancy Tenants (Vesting of proprietary Rights) Act, 1953" did not merely gave full proprietary rights over the land they were cultivating but also gave them the same rights in the village common lands which the proprietors have possessed all along. The final shape to the tenancy legislation was given by the PEPSU Tenancy and Agriculture Lands Act, 1955 and in Punjab by Punjab Security of Land Tenure Act, 1953 which was amended in 1955. Under these Acts, occupancy tenants got the ownership rights and the maximum rent was fixed as 1/3 of the gross production. But the landowners had the right to eject tenants-at-will[2] and take over land up to 30 standard acres (up to 40 standard acres in case of displaced person in PEPSU and 50 standard acres in Punjab) (Sinha & Pushpendra, 2000 & Gill 1989).

Punjab Village Common Lands (Regulation) Act, 1961 was passed with a view to regulate the Village Common Lands. According to Common Lands Act 1961, it was the responsibility of the Village Panchayat that common land resources should be used for the benefit of the village individuals' particularly landless poor. As per the Punjab Village Common Lands (Regulation) Act 1961, 1/3 part of the total Panchayati Cultivable Land has been reserved for Scheduled Castes of the concerned village. Panchayati Agricultural Land is a Village Common Land which is given to the people of the concerned village through auction for the purpose of cultivation. Panchayat organizes an auction every year to allot land to the person who offer highest amount of the bid (Punjab Village Common Lands (Regulation) Act 1961).

The Act provides detailed description about the use of Common Land and the money earned from its auction but it is

1. Occupancy tenants was land tenure system in which agreement or contact was fixed between landlord and tenants. The rent on the land is also fixed. The tenants enjoyed permanent and heritable rights on land. They had a security of land and could claim compensation from the landlords for any improvement affected on the land.
2. Tenants at will was property tenure between tenant and landlord without any written agreement or contract. Either the tenant or the landlords can terminate it at any time. It does not specify the length of tenant's duration or the exchange of payment. This was favoured in landlord and they exploited the tenants.

claimed that it has not been implemented properly. Although, 1/3 of the Shamlat Cultivable Land is reserved for the Scheduled Castes of the village (Punjab Village Common Lands (Regulation) Act 1961, Punjab Village Common Lands (Regulation) Rule, 1964), but in reality, the landowners (Jats) often grab the land by fielding dummy Scheduled Caste candidates. Although Government of Punjab issued letter from time to time to prohibit the proxy cultivation but the Scheduled Castes hardly benefitted in reality and hold the reserved land in the government records only (Director of Rural Development and Panchayat Officer on vide letter number 15/12/2010 Dated 23/02/2023). In reality, the land is cultivated by the people of upper caste. The struggle of the Scheduled Castes for their share in the Common Land and seemingly endless conflicts over the Common Land in different villages of Punjab between landless Scheduled Castes and the landowning dominating communities like Jat Sikh reflects the reality of the Act. Atrocities were inflicted on the Scheduled Caste people by landlords whenever they protested illegal possession and opposed the use of dummy candidates. Sometimes SCs faced social boycott when they tried to get their share of common land (Singh, 2009). As per the unpublished Ph. D thesis of Singh (2024) who collected data of 200 respondents from 20 villages of 5 districts namely Ludhiana, Barnala, Sangrur, Patiala and Barnala revealed that implementation of the Act has been fully achieved only in 45 percent of selected villages, partially in 30 percent of the villages (partially means either SCs got less fertile land or got less than 1/3 part of reserve land) and 25 percent of the Scheduled Caste people of the selected villages are still yearning for ripening the benefits of 1/3 ownership rights of Panchayati Shamlati Cultivable land (Singh, 2024). Mishra (2016) also elaborate in his study that in majority of the villages SCs are still struggling to get their share of common land rights (Mishra, 2016, p. 1 & Singh, 2009, p. 25). Conflicts have erupted over land ownership between Scheduled Castes and landlords in 30 percent of the selected villages for getting the possession of 1/3 reserve land. Rest of the village got the land peacefully after completing legal formalities. Atrocities were inflicted on the Scheduled Caste people by landlords when they protested against illegal possession and oppose the use of dummy candidates. The role of administration is also very negative in favour of landlords where conflicts occurred between landlords and landless SC people. Therefore study revealed that Punjab Village Common Lands (Regulation) Act, 1961 is very important for SCs of the Punjab

but due to its improper implementation they are still struggling to get their reserve Shamlati cultivable land. They started movements in different villages of Punjab for implementation of the Act (Singh, 2024). Similar ideas also expressed by Dahiya (2022) and Mahil (2019) that conflicts occurred in different villages of Punjab when SCs started their movement to get basic common land rights. In one such conflict in Jhaloor village of Sangrur district, landowning upper caste people killed 72 year SC lady Gurdev Kaur. In many villages, social boycott is also imposed on SCs when they assert their voice for common land rights (Dahiya, 2022 & Mahil, 2019).

The Punjab Land Ceiling Act 1972 is also an important legislation in the series of the land reforms in Punjab. Following the guidelines of the Central Land Reforms Committee announced on August 3, 1971, Punjab legislature enacted Punjab Land Reform Act, 1972 (Man, 1993). This act was also beneficial for the Scheduled Castes because it incorporated provisions to provide surplus land to the Scheduled Caste people of Punjab. So the Scheduled Castes are now demanding the implementation of this Act along with Punjab Village Common Land (Regulation) Act, 1961. According to this Act, a new level of ceiling was fixed in Punjab (including PEPSU area) at seven hectares for double cropping land under assured irrigation, 11 hectares for one crop land under assured irrigation, 20.5 hectares of Barani (Barren) land and for other types of land at 21.8 hectares. The ceiling has been applied to a family as a unit rather than to an individual member. As per this act, the above mentioned ceilings applied to a family of five but when the number of family members exceeds five, the permissible area for each member in excess of five, subject to the condition that additional land shall be allowed for not more than five such members (Punjab Land Ceiling Act, 1972). This Act is in favour of the Scheduled Castes as priority has been given to the landless agricultural labourers, particularly those belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes while allotting land (Sinha & Pushpendra, 2000, p. 34). But this could not happen on the ground level due to lack of political will and allegedly biased government machinery against the Scheduled Castes. Lack of proper implementation of this Act forced the Scheduled Castes to depend on the landowning communities in Punjab. But, now people of the Schedule Castes are raising their voice and have started struggle for the implementation of this Act. Given the scenario of increased value of land with the passage of time, the Scheduled Castes have also demanded that the lands of those having more than ten acres

should be acquired and distributed among the landless Scheduled Castes. Different Community Based Organizations especially Zameen Prapti Sangarsh Committee and Krantikari Pendu Mazdoor Union (Punjab) have played an important role in bringing awareness among the Scheduled Caste people about their land rights.

Conclusion

It is discovered from the above discussion that Scheduled Caste people are exploited, deprived and excluded in every sphere of life but their condition is more miserable in the field of land ownership in Punjab. In colonial period the aim of Britishers was to extract as much money as they can from people through taxes. For this they also enacted a number of legislations which totally ignored the Scheduled Caste people of Punjab. In fact, Punjab Alienation of Land Act, 1901 legally prohibited Scheduled Caste people to buy agricultural land even if they have enough money to buy it. In brief, colonial policies also played a discriminatory role by depriving Government of Punjab brought different legislations and Acts for land reforms to improve agriculture and abolish the system of Zamindari and Jagirdari. Punjab Village Common Lands (Regulation) Act, 1961 and Punjab Land Ceiling Act, 1972 directly dealt with Scheduled Caste people and make some provisions to provide some land to SCs of Punjab. The former Act reserved 1/3 part of Shamlati cultivable land to SCs of Punjab and latter Act enforced maximum limit of holding of agricultural land in favour of SCs of Punjab. SCs are dependent on the fields of landlords for labour and green forage for their cattle and consequently faced exploitation and humiliation when they enter into their fields. As a result Scheduled Caste people in different parts of Punjab started struggle to get back their reserve Shamlati cultivable land and also implementation of Punjab Land Ceiling Act, 1972 with maximum limit of holding agricultural land of 10 acres (double cropping land). In some villages, SCs get success to implement Punjab Village Common Lands (Regulation) Act, 1961 but the Act of 1972 is still not implemented. In majority of the villages in Punjab, the dominating landowning caste (Jat Sikh) is cultivating the share of SCs in Shamlati cultivable land. In this whole scenario, Scheduled Caste people are totally ignored which is revealed by their mere share in agricultural land (only 3.20). To uphold the Scheduled Caste people of Punjab and make them to live a dignified life, government must implement the Punjab Village Common Lands (Regulation)

Act 1961 and Punjab Land Ceiling Act, 1972 as the land in Punjab is not only a means of production but, it is also a symbol of status.

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Dr. Harjinder Singh

Assistant Professor (Political Science)
Sahibzada Zorawar Singh, Government
College, Burj Hari Singh, Raikot (Ludhiana)

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Partition and Fragmented Lives: Re-reading Jibanananda Das's Novel Jalpai Hati (1948)

• **Tapas Sarkar**

This research paper argues for a critical re-evaluation of the Bengali literary response to the 1947 Partition by centring the late prose fiction of Jibanananda Das. While Das's direct engagement with Partition is often considered limited to some of his poems, this study contends that his novel, written in the immediate aftermath, such as Jalpai Hati, constitutes a significant, albeit under-explored, archive of the era's complexities. Challenging the scholarly consensus that Bengali literature of the period was largely silent or sentimental about Partition, this paper positions Das's novel as a meticulous mirror of the age's socio-cultural and psychological turmoil. The paper demonstrates how his novel navigates two primary thematic domains: the nostalgic evocation of a shared, undivided past (pre-Partition life and memory) and the profound dislocations of the present (post-Partition identity crisis, homelessness, and trauma). By interpreting the novel through a dedicated Partition lens, this study illuminates Das's nuanced documentation of the independence struggle and its devastating consequences. It also reveals how his prose fiction gives voice to the anxieties, suffering, and psychological bewilderment that defined the period, thereby offering a vital literary corrective to conventional historical narratives and affirming the role of literature as an indispensable intellectual resource for understanding the enduring legacy of 1947.

Keywords : *The 1947 Partition, Partition Literature, Bengali Novel, Trauma, Identity, and Divided Home*

Introduction

The genesis of modern South Asia is indelibly marked by the twin events of Independence and the cataclysmic Partition of

1947. This was not merely a political redrawing of borders but a profound and violent division that tore through the very soul of the subcontinent. The arbitrary line drawn by Sir Cyril Radcliffe, which carved the new nations of India and Pakistan out of the British Raj, did not follow the natural contours of geography or culture. As Read and Fisher poignantly note, "In both Bengal and the Punjab, any dividing line was bound to run through densely populated areas, cutting through road and rail communications, irrigation schemes, electric power systems and even individual landholdings" (483). This crucial description belies the human catastrophe it unleashed as the division was not just of land, but of people, memory, and a shared civilizational fabric.

The bifurcation of Punjab and Bengal, the two provinces most severely affected, shattered a deeply intertwined ecosystem of culture, history, and tradition. It fractured linguistic continuums, disrupted centuries-old syncretic traditions, and rendered shared memories suddenly partisan. A land where Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh communities had coexisted for generations was now violently reconfigured into a homeland for Muslims (Pakistan) and a secular-but-Hindu-majority India. This political redefinition instilled a deep and enduring conflict within individual and collective identities. Overnight, neighbours became strange, and a person's very sense of self was forced into the rigid binaries of new nationalities. This crisis of identity, born in the fires of 1947, did not end with that generation; it became a hereditary trauma, passed down through collective memory and influencing the social, cultural, and even political dynamics of the independent nations for decades to come. However, the traumatic experiences of Partition were not just historical events; they were deeply personal, psychological wounds that demanded expression. The horrific aftermath- unprecedented communal violence, mass killings, the systematic abduction and sexual assault of women, and the desperate, uncertain flight of millions of refugees, which gave rise to a new and urgent discourse in South Asian studies. This discourse sought to understand not only the political causes but also the human cost. For an extended period, survivors carried their pain in silent, private memories, a burden too heavy for words. It was through the realm of creative literature that this collective anguish found its most powerful voice. A new genre of Partition Literature emerged, serving as both a testament to suffering and a site for mourning and working through the trauma.

The narratives of the Partition were not limited to the literature of particular countries; rather, different forms in different languages were found across the subcontinent. Regarding this, the most affected regions- Punjab, Bihar, Bengal, and the Northeast regions were found representing the contemporary complexities through their mother tongue in native literature. On the other hand, as the Indian continent had been divided into India and Pakistan (East Pakistan and West Pakistan), there had been a shift in the writings from both continents, which was clearly shown in their literature. Some prominent Pakistani writers, such as Saadat Hasan Manto, Faiz Ahmad Faiz, Sahir Ludhianvi, and Saifuddin Saif, who wrote in Urdu, where Bapsi Sidhwa gave strength to novels in English. From India's Punjab, Amrita Pritam, Khushwant Singh, Bhishma Sahni, Manohar Malgonkar, Chaman Lahal, Jasodhara Bagchi wrote excessively on the same subject, whereas, from the Bengal region, one can include Manik Bandopadhyay, Sulil Sen, Dibyendu Palit, Sunil Gangopadhyay, Shamaresh Basu, Narendranath Mitra, and other writers. Writers from different areas and languages (Hindi, Urdu, Panjabi, and Bengali) wrote on the turmoil, existence and brutalities of the Partition.

Among the many literary works that grapple with this crisis, Jibanananda Das's novel Jalpai Hati (1948) stands as a remarkable and poignant testament. Written in the immediate shadow of the events, the novel is steeped in the raw, historical circumstances of its time. More than a mere chronicle, it encapsulates the harrowing memories and the profound psychological trauma of the division. The narrative delves into the complex identity struggles of its characters, who find themselves unmoored by the new political reality. It illustrates the profound challenges of this civilisational crisis, where the problem of defining home becomes the central, agonising subject. Through its contemporary events and crises, Jalpai Hati does not just document history; it gives voice to the inner landscape of a people whose world has been irrevocably broken, capturing the crisis of the division in all its human complexity. As writer cum critic, Urvashi Butalia has emphasised in her oral histories of Partition and its narrative, the personal is political, highlighting this context as she writes:

> These other aspects- what had happened to the millions of people who had to live through this time, what we might call the 'human

> dimensions' of this history- somehow seemed to have a 'lesser' status in it. Perhaps this was because they had to do with difficult things: loss and sharing, friendship and enmity, grief and joy, with a painful regret and nostalgia for loss of home, country and friends, and with an equally strong determination to create them afresh. These were difficult things to capture 'factually'. Yet, could it really be that they had no place in the history of Partition? Why then did they live on so vividly in individual and collective memory? (6-7)

Butalia argues that while the political and factual accounts of treaties and border-drawing were prioritised, the intimate, emotional experiences of millions, encompassing trauma, loss, nostalgia, and resilience, were deemed too subjective and difficult to quantify, thus granting them a "lesser" status. She also challenges this hierarchy by posing a pivotal question: if these personal stories were truly insignificant, why have they persisted so vividly in collective and individual memory? Where the enduring power of these memories itself proves their essential place in a complete historical understanding, asserting that the true legacy of the Partition is etched not just in political documents, but in the indelible emotional scars and spirit of its people. In this context, literature like Das's post-partition novel ensures that the intimate, human stories of this great upheaval are never forgotten, rather continuing to shape our understanding of its enduring legacy.

Das was a Bengali writer whose work was deeply shaped by the Partition of India. His writing clearly reflects that time and can be studied in many ways, especially his poem "1046-47", making it a key part of Bengali literature about the Partition. In a way, reading his work is like stepping back into that era. In this context, regarding his poetry, Sisir Kumar Das states that the poem is "bewildered and exasperated, speaks with a feeling of sin" (377). Today, Jibanananda Das is a renowned Bengali poet, author, and essayist; however, his later novels are deeply marked by the themes and context of the Partition of India. His body of work offers an explicit reflection on this period and can be analysed from numerous perspectives, solidifying its place within the distinct genre of Bengali Partition literature. To read Das is, in many ways, to return to the atmosphere of that tumultuous age. He wrote 19 novels from 1926 to 1948 (Mitra 51 & 69). Among them, four were written in the pivotal year of 1948: Malloban, Sutirtha, Basamatir Upakhyan, and Jalpai

Hati. These novels provide a chronological exploration of the era. Malloban is set in Bengal of the 1930s, before the Partition. Sutirtha and Basamatir Upakhyan are set directly during the Partition. Jalpai Hati addresses the struggles and suffering in the Partition's aftermath. The Partition scholar and critic Tapati Chakravarty, in her essay "The Paradox of a Fleeting Presence," considers Jalpai Hati as a partition novel of Das (275), as written on the complex time period of 1947. Debesh Roy has included Basamatir Upakhyan as a partition narrative in Raktamanir Hare: Volume 1. Debiprashad Bandopadhyay, in the book Jibanananda Rachanabali- Part-II, mentions Jalpai Hati and Basamatir Upakhyan as novels reflecting contemporary history and turmoil of the Partition (10). The novel Sutirtha is also replete with independence struggle as well as the crux of the Partition. The present study will specifically focus on Jalpai Hati, as the novel stands as a powerful and authentic testament to that complex time and masterfully captures the contemporary historical context, along with the haunting memories and profound trauma that defined the contemporary experience.

Partition, Identity, and the Crisis of Home in the novel Jalpai Hati

Das wrote his novel, Jalpai Hati, after the complex period of the Partition in 1948, along with the other three novels- Sutirtha, Basamatir Upakhyan and Malloban. The novel was serialised in the Shiladity magazine in the 1980s (1388-1389, Bangla) (Bandopadhyay 11), and was published earlier by Pratikshan Publishers in Jibanananda Samagra Vol-1 in 1957. This was the first novel of Das in the period of 1948. The novel significantly represents the political turmoil of the Partition of Bengal- divided home, riots, killing, abduction, rape, fractured nationalism, and division of Bengali identity. Thus, contemporary time creates a problematic and conflictual identity as quintessentially represented in the novel.

The narrative of Jalpai Hati is not completely based on the city of Kolkata; rather, the plots of the novel move from one place to another, from Kolkata to Jalpai Hati and vice versa. Kolkata is located in the western part of Bengal, where Jalpai Hati is a fictional place located in East Bengal (now Bangladesh) during the 1940s. The contemporary political crisis, economic instability, social unrest, and

complexities of the Indian continent led to the turmoil of the period. Therefore, the crux of historical contexts and problematic status of memory encircle the novel. Border becomes a physical division, where, in the mind, the two Bengals remain undivided. The socio-political demography of the border areas of both Bengals keeps people struggling with a complex history, memory, and identity for generations, which has also been interpreted in the novel.

The consequences of the Direct-Action Day, which is also known as the 1946 Calcutta Killing, are drastically remembered and rewritten in the novel. The consequent turmoil due to the contemporary riots and political unrest makes life more problematic. The relationship of Jiten Dasgupta with the Norwegian-origin Anglo-Indian Mrs. Martin represents a complex cultural identity during the complex age of the Partition. On one side, the reason for the Partition is considered the dirty politics of the British Government's divide-and-rule policy, and on the other hand, continuous riots based on religion keep rising, exacerbating the contemporary crisis.

In the novel, there is the problem of displacement, homelessness, and poor profession for livelihood, especially in teaching in colleges, due to the Partition complex, particularly in East Bengal. There is a concept of 'Padmar Eipar' (this side of the Padma river) and 'Padmar Oipare' (the other side of the Padma river) (Das, Jalpai Hati 414), where 'Padmar Eipar' refers to the Indian continent of Bengal (Kolkata-centric) and 'Padmar Oipare' to the Bangladesh continent of Bengal (Dhaka-centric). As there was no identical border between these two continents during the complex period, the Padma River was a significant mark to divide these two continents. Later, the border of these two continents was made alongside the Padma River. The Padma River, before entering Bangladesh, is called the Ganges River in India (till the border of West Bengal and Bangladesh). Though today, most of the river is in Bangladesh, some parts are still part of the Indian continent, and there is a plentiful amount of geographical, cultural, and livelihood identities. In the 1940s, this connection was more identical and inseparable as represented through the protagonist of the novel, Nitish.

Jalpai Hati represents the partition suffering of multiple lives and families. Nisith's family is such a victim. He is jobless, less valued, and less wealthy, a father of a son and two daughters. Among

his daughters, Ranu is lost in uncertainty, and Vanu is severely ill with tuberculosis. His son Harit is misguided, who never listens to his parents; rather, he is a man of free will revolutionist who has bad habits, friends from different circles, and travels to distant places. Nisith's wife, Sumana, is always ill with anaemia; she is unable to take care of the house. In such a situation, Nisith is hung between two divided Bengals, one in Jalpai Hati and the other in Kolkata. The novel progresses in parallel between Kolkata and Jalpai Hati, illustrating the various mentalities and the crux situation of people living in these two locations that share the same heritage during the crucial period of Indian Independence. Thus, the intricacy of the Partition and its impact on the people of Jalpai Hati are depicted in the novel.

At the same time, Nisith's son, Harit, is a character who represents the contemporary surge of the 'lost generation' , who is directly affected by the Partition crisis. He is lost in society for the society's cause, which is indicated by most of his character narration. His separation from his own family and roaming here and there represent a young man's uncertain and aimless struggling identity of the complex age.

Nitish's daughter Vanu, with her ill health, is victimised in multiple stages, "No country for her, no society, no one, neither she has life nor death" (Das, Jalpai Hati 438; my trans.). Her identity as a woman is less valued, less accepted, and less recognised; she is simply a victim. Ranu, another daughter of Nitish, is also a victim of such a society, who, at the beginning of the novel, is lost. Nobody knows whether she is alive or dead. Nitish's wife, Sumana, is also a victim who pays for that suffering with the end of her life at the end of the novel. But the situation of Jiten's wife is quite well-off and safe. In fact, what is common in the crisis of partition is that women from the lower and lower middle classes suffer more insecurity and oppression than the upper middle and upper classes.

There has been an upsurge in religious conflicts in the novel. That outrage, sometimes, becomes too complex for an individual to decide what is wrong or what is right. Rather, he goes through a period of darkness. In Jalpai Hati, Nitish's daughter Ranu is lost; some of his neighbours blame Muslims. In the beginning, Nitish ignores, but at the end, some kind of obscurity comes into his mind when he is forced to believe it as communal. Though he does not

want to blame them (Muslims), he changes his decision. In fact, this kind of social issue is common during the riots, and in the 1940s riots of Bengal, a similar narrative can be found.

There have been problems of displacement, livelihood, economy, and other social issues in the novel. Nishith and his family are victims of such a situation; he is losing everything, as the narrator states:

> Almost all of them have now left- are leaving; even the home of Jalpai Hati has left the heart of Nishith. There has been a pretension of adieu several times earlier. But at that time, there were difficulties in taking that decision because of the turmoil everywhere, in Jalpai Hati, on Earth, in the history of Nishith's life . (Das, Jalpai Hati 442; my trans.)

The above excerpt indicates how the contemporary crisis suffocated the people's lives in a village of East Bengal, which is more complex and a distortion of the self in the character of Nishith. His separation from his family shows hopelessness, homelessness, joblessness, segregation, and uncertainty of life. Here, Nishith is not a single voice; rather, he is the collective voice of the common people of such a crucial period of history. In the initial reading, if a reader reads this novel, it seems to be an individual struggle and journey. When the novel is seen from the contemporary historical context, the perspectives and sufferings speak of the life of that era.

Politics and power have been dominant in society; crime is justified, hidden, or vanished with such power. During the Partition, common people suffered the most. Ranu's disappearance is also conspired by such power, which remained unresolved till the end of the novel. Ranu is victimised in different ways, as many people of Jalpai Hati claim many possible reasons for her disappearance. Some believe that Ranu is kidnapped by the Muslims, she is imprisoned in a mosque, she is taken away by the rioters of Kolkata, she is raped and killed by her own community, from the higher class, politically powerful people. The fact remains unknown. Ranu remains a victim.

The continuous riots, political outrage, and social unrest based on religion, land, economy, and everything were encircled by the contemporary partition conflict. After the August killing of 1946, people of Bengal on both sides of the Padma were living in complex situations. People of both religions lived together in a complex existence, which can be seen in the novel. Yet, beyond that complex

existence, there is a voice of harmony as seen in the conversations of the characters in a college committee gathering at Harlalbabu's house, where the protagonist, Nishith, is also a member. There are talks of the culture of the people of two religions, the question of co-existence, and concerns regarding the formation of Bangladesh after the Partition, yet there is a tone of communal harmony in the voice of Himanshu Chakravarty (Das, Jalpai Hati 459). Among the members, there are different types of discussions on the formation of Bangladesh from different political perspectives- The Congress, the Muslim League, the Communist, and the socialist. There is a fear among the members that some among them are members of Jamat Ul Ulema, because, after the Partition, the country will be run by 'Sharia law' . Some of them strongly oppose that kind of discussion, as the border partition has not happened yet. The members of the Hindu community want to know about the Sharia law. Due to the communal flow of their talk, the Muslim members want to talk about the matter later. Thus, while talking of common issues during the partition, the people of Jalpai Hati willingly or unwillingly get involved with the contemporary political conflicts. Rather, there emerges a conflict of identities based on religion, culture, and tradition. In such a situation, the education system gets disrupted and is less valued. No funds from the Government, no donation, because nobody knew which portion of Bengal would be under whom (East Pakistan or India). There is a vague sense of permanent home, livelihood, and Bengali identity.

In Harit's voice, there is no hope. Sumana does not find any solace or help from her child; rather, Harit's behaviour makes her feel more remorseful. To her, her son is lost in the struggle of life, of Independence, of the Partition. The concern of the lost generation can be found several times in the voice of Sumana when she finds no hope in the present generation (Das, Jalpai Hati 476). These are all the consequences of the contemporary conflictual independence due to the political instability in the society. She is fearful about the present unsettled political crisis. Sumana's fear indicates the unstable socio-political society of Bengal just after the Partition.

Throughout the conversation between Sumana and Archana, there is a context of how the Britishers have been taken away from the country by the Congress; whether the British army has left the country or not, the country gained independence on 15th August.

This happiness is unbelievable. Are they truly free after the division in the name of Independence? Maybe Harit's ignorance towards that happiness is the answer to this question, which is actually that the Partition should not have happened in the name of independence in 1947; as Sumana says, "Even after 15th August, his (Harit's) heart has become dark" (Das, Jalpai Hati 478; my trans.). There has been a conflict of identity among the new generation, even after freedom. There is an illusion of freedom with a rootless, shelterless, and hopeless identity. The anguish of that suffering is again heard in Sumana's voice:

> There is no peace in freedom. Children are in a wretched condition. He (Nishith) has left college destroying the home in Jalpai Hati- which is not for us he has lost there (Kolkata). To live, I need to drink others' blood, yet there is no blood in the body. I am dying little by little, yet there is no end. The Independence of our country has led us into trouble. You (Archana) and Mahim Babu are healthy, aren't you enjoying the Independence. (Das, Jalpai Hati 478; my trans.)

This excerpt hints at the crucial life of contemporary crisis. Though Archana replies to Sumana with mockery that they are happy and enjoying the period. In reality, there is suffering in that period, which is explicit at the end of the novel. There is no peace even after independence; there is no peace in the heart, nor in the body, as there is extreme scarcity of food, clothing, and shelter.

The contemporary political structure in the novel is somehow fragmented. On one side, under the leadership of Gandhiji and newly sworn-in prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru, the Congress party believes in constructing the newly independent country in whatever possible way, as many characters such as Sulekha, Julekha, and others believe in that, who support the Congress. At the same time, there are other political party members who blame the Congress for their capitalist mindset and do not think equally about the common lower-class people- labourers, farmers, carpenters, cobblers, and other economically weak communities. Concurrently, there is a character like Harit who states himself neither as a supporter of the Congress nor of the Communist, nor Socialist, who resembles the protagonist Sutirtha in Das's other novel Sutirtha. Rather, he is independent and wants to form a new political party for change in

society, though at the end of the novel, he is not successful. Harit is neither one of them. There is a question of Harit's identity in politics till the end, just as with Nisith; both are asked for their political position again and again. Archana and Namita ask Nisith; Harit is asked by Archana, Sulekha, Julekha, and Sumana, though till the end of the novel, they remain politically unlabeled individuals with a common man's identity. Thus, there is a lack of hope and certainty in an individual's belief in contemporary politics that emerged in the Partition crisis.

Harit's voice is seen as a critic of contemporary politics; he has left Congress. At the same time, he is criticising the Communists; he does not believe in giving extra value to Marx; to him, Marx is not worthy of having that much value. Archana seems quite hopeful about the present political party, as there is no other option. The society of the country is not freed from the struggles of its own political conflicts because politics is driven by the economically powerful higher authority. Therefore, there is a question of freedom in such a society. This is the reason Harit refrains himself joining any political party. He claims that though good and wise people are trying to lead the country, it has not been happening because;

> Their, with their (higher authority's) opportunistic people, in the industrialisation of the country, there is no taste of freedom even today. The British is dismantling us covering the politics of bondage and freedom, it is like a tree, made by a witch, there is no root at a one place, no land (country), no power of the politician, no politics, nothing at all, the entire earth is swallowing the entire earth. The darkness is devouring the dark. (Das, Jalpai Hati 482; my trans.)

Freedom from the British seems to be getting enslaved by a hierarchical society based on economic power or politics. In this context, the conspiracy of the British regarding the partitioning intention and Indian independence is nothing but merely transferring power to another power.

In the novel, Jalpai Hati is a town that is located in the newly formed Pakistan (East Pakistan). But, it does not seem like a separate country from the Indian Union. There is no separation in the hearts of Archana, Harit, or Nisith. Especially two protagonist characters Nisith and Harit do not believe in the separation, rather they are more concern about their daily living and resolving the

contemporary suffering of the society, while reading the text it seems that though there are two countries there will be no separation, no boundaries, they will live in Jalpai Hati and Kolkata as usual; there are contexts of shifting their home to Kolkata but can they live in Kolkata? This is all about the need of life in the contemporary struggling age of the Partition, where the identity as a Bengali is still stronger even after the division.

There is a sense of indifference regarding the present partition crisis, nor of the fruitfulness of independence in both the protagonist characters. It does not look like they are concerned. Whether they do not want to think of it or want to escape from it by not giving a direct reaction. Rather, they are struggling. Nisith does not confirm where he will stay in Jalpai Hati till the end of the novel, nor does he identify as a citizen of the newly formed Pakistan or the Indian Union. Not even the people in the Indian Union ask him where he wants to live. Maybe it is because of the new division. Though Archana assures that once Nisith gets settled in Kolkata, he will take his family to Kolkata, just as her husband is trying to get settled from Jalpai Hati to Kolkata. Archana also asks Harit if he wants to go to Kolkata. Harit wants to go to Kolkata for political purposes, not for resettlement. Most importantly, Archana and Harit both promise to live in the Jalpai Hati town till the end of the novel, and Nisith had to return to his native land, Jalpai Hati.

Throughout the novel, the narratives circulate between two centres, Kolkata and Jalpai Hati, with two protagonists, Nisith and his son Harit; rather, reflecting two newly formed independent nations, India and Pakistan (East Pakistan). Since the beginning, Nisith has been in Kolkata, where Harit is in Jalpai Hati, struggling with the contemporary crisis, but at the end of the novel, they meet in Jalpai Hati, not with different national identities at all, but rather for their family reunion. The idea of different nations, separate lands, and borders is merely an existing sense to them. What is more significant here is the return to the land where they belong, which cannot be divided by making borders or different countries; at least, the ending of the novel conveys such a message. This is another question of whether Nisith's family, Archana's, or Julekha's moves later to the Indian Union or not. But, till the end, they do not lose their root, which is Jalpai Hati town, as their ancestral native identity.

The taste of independence does not seem optimistic to Harit, neither in Jalpai Hati nor in Kolkata. He believes that Independence has been acquired, but people will devour each other, destroying. Harit has seen the same very closely in Kolkata. Therefore, Harit requests his neighbours not to move to Kolkata; there is no difference; everywhere is crisis, struggle, and suffering. Yet the West (Indian Union) is in quest of them. The narrator, with a voice uncertain, expresses:

> Their heart has no such condition to listen to Harit. They want to go to the West; will they stay stuck at the shore of Padma? … there is no home in Kolkata, no job, no food. Death is there- yet like orphan children (with rickets disease) they are moving to the narrow lane and footpaths of Kolkata. (Das, Jalpai Hati 565; my trans.)

Some of the people of Jalpai Hati are determined to be displaced, even with the known uncertainty of the future, and some of them are trying to resolve the issue by staying in their homeland, including the protagonist Harit. There is a sense of turmoil and hopelessness in the concept of home. Thus, the problem of displacement and resettlement is delineated in the novel, representing the factual crisis of the age.

No violence based on religion is referred to in the narrative; rather, people from each community are living in harmony within the town. There is harmony, which can be seen at the end of the novel. Instead, there are people of political and economic power from both communities who try to manipulate the weaker people. Such characters are Naren Mittir, Montaj, and their goons. Or, are they really bad people? This is a question. However, the contemporary crisis of the Partition and the Independence struggle has made them so, maybe a distorted practice of freedom that contributed to the freedom struggle; Sumana and Archana think this way. It is such a contradictory society of that age.

Problematic migration has been a significant issue in the border areas of the independent countries, which is deliberately shown in the novel. When Archana asks Harit if his father gets a job in Kolkata, will he settle there from here or not? In reply, Harit says that his mother will go, but will stay here. Archana also believes that nobody can live in Jalpai Hati for long. She assures that her death will be in the Union (India), after twenty-five years (Das, Jalpai Hati 593). The conversation between Archana and Harit shows the instability of their home and future. The place where their

generation has been living for a long time has suddenly become their land, but with a different nation. Neither can they reject their earlier identity as Indian, nor can they easily accept the newly formed nation of Pakistan. Though sometimes, they want to stay back there, their heart and the situation sometimes become contradictory to their real existence. There arises the question of nation, native land, homeland, and especially an identity as a Bengali; as there are two Bengali identities that have been born by the Partition in the name of 1947 Independence- one is Bengali from Kolkata of the Indian Union, and the other is from Jalpai Hati of newly formed East Pakistan. This problem is still relevant to both divided regions.

Staying back in the root, or migrating, or settling in future; these are the conditions that circle around the people of Jalpai Hati. However, with hope and confidence, Harit states that "This country is now Pakistan. Sulekha has accepted that. They love this place" (Das, Jalpai Hati 594; my trans.). On the other hand, Archana has a strong belief that Sulekha also will leave Jalpai Hati; she claims that she also wants to stay in Jalpai Hati, but the desire to stay in the homeland and the ability to stay for the same are these two things (Das, Jalpai Hati 594). Thus, there is a vagueness of permanent home, though till the end of the novel, they stay in Jalpai Hati. With this complex situation, to find new hope, Nisith is seen leaving his homeland, Jalpai Hati; but, at the end, he returns in failure to his home only to lose his daughter and wife, which Harit understands from his experience as he claims, "Baba will return to this Desh" (Das, Jalpai Hati 601; my trans.). Here, desh is Jalpai Hati, a place of emotion, not a newly formed nation, East Pakistan. The village, Jalpai Hati as desh is emotionally connected with them. The political division or the formation of different nations has created a problem with the identity of the desh. There prevails a sense of trauma for the existing problems of resettlement and rehabilitation.

Empirically, the division is sudden to the people of Jalpai Hati; they had not even expected that Jalpai Hati would be separated from mainland India. Therefore, maybe Nitish cannot take it seriously, as he is struggling for his job. They are not prepared; therefore, Julekha's family is unable to decide, nor Harit's, nor Archna's. The aftermath of the Partition is full of uncertainty, vagueness, and clueless, which can be found in Harit's statement when he says:

> Nisith Babu's escape from Pakistan to the Indian Union is a discovery to us; he himself does not know that he is in

> the Union, nor did he know that he had been in Pakistan. Neither Pakistan nor the Union, nor any politics, he is in a different reason of his own. He has been in Kolkata for four to five years in search of a job. His college at Jalpai Hati does not provide him with a worthy salary, his family has cheated him, … (Das, Jalpai Hati 607; my trans.)

Nisith's struggle is more life-centric; in the pursuit of life, he is in a complex life that is interconnected with the contemporary Partition crux, border, nationalism, motherland, and the Independence struggle. On the other hand, Harit is in trouble; neither can he get out of Jalpai Hati, nor can he join his fellow people who are in Kolkata; therefore, his revolution is a failure because of the division of the land in 1947. Harit's return to Jalpai Hati can be metaphorically seen as his opportunity to choose his motherland, or it can be assumed as a question of how creating division of a country into two parts is unjustified. It is a complex time in the history of the Indian continent. Can Harit choose his true homeland now? Kolkata or Jalpai Hati- Pakistan or the Indian Union? Harit, in reality, cannot. On one side, he promises Archana that he will stay at Jalpai Hati till her death; contradictorily, he is concerned about his revolution in Kolkata. This paradoxical situation can, therefore, be seen metaphorically in the voice of Julekha when she keeps asking Harit, "Who is your mother? Have you known her?" (Das, Jalpai Hati 612; my trans.), which indicates Harit's indifference to his own ill mother, at the same time to his homeland, Jalpai Hati, or his failure to take care of his decision due to the Partition crisis.

Nisith's return with failure, in the end, to his homeland, Jalpai Hati, represents how the life of the partitioned Bengal is full of misery, hopelessness, and helplessness, focusing on the dark side of society and politics. There is a sense of negation toward migration in the novel's narrative, but it gives multiple references to people's migration from East Bengal and hints that many people will migrate to the Indian Union soon, which is a vision that can be interpreted from the present context of the border crisis. There is no direct violence, riots, or fanaticism that has been shown as recent experience in the novel; of course, there are past experiences of riots followed by the Partition. There are complexities of life and living on both sides of the newly formed nations; the crisis is more socially, politically, and economically driven; among all these complexities, contemporary political turmoil and the Partition-created crises regarding home, nation, and nationalism have become

the centre of the novel. As Debjani Sengupta observes, "Bengali literature based on Partition experiences is therefore also different, especially in its responses to 1947, not simply as an event, but as a metaphor, or a trauma, or a site of enunciation for the problems of rehabilitation and resettlement" (188).

Conclusion

Das's novel Jalpai Hati stands as a profound and authentic literary testament to the human catastrophe of the 1947 Partition. Moving beyond the high politics of border-drawing and treaties, the novel plunges into the intimate, psychological, and social wreckage left in the wake of this turmoil period. It masterfully captures the enduring crisis of identity that Butalia identifies as the true, often-ignored legacy of Partition, which was etched not in documents, but in the emotional scars and collective memory of a people. The novel's power lies in its intricate portrayal of how a political division violently reconfigured the very fabric of everyday life. Through the fractured journeys of the protagonist Nisith and his son Harit, Das illustrates that the Partition was not a single event but an ongoing state of crisis. The arbitrary border between India and East Pakistan created a chasm in the continuous cultural and emotional landscape of Bengal, rendering the concepts of home, nation, and belonging profoundly unstable. The characters' constant movement between Kolkata and the fictional East Bengal town of Jalpai Hati mirrors the psychological limbo of millions, torn between a lost ancestral home and an uncertain future in a new nation. Thus, the novel powerfully documents the multifaceted trauma of this upheaval: the economic desperation and professional ruin faced by Nisith; the "lost generation" of Harit, whose idealism is crushed by the new political realities; and the specific victimisation of women like Vanu, Ranu, and Sumana, whose suffering underscores the gendered nature of the violence and displacement. The novel reveals that the struggle was not merely against communal fanaticism, but against a deeper structural collapse- a world where livelihood, family, and tradition were irrevocably shattered and fragmented. Ultimately, the novel challenges the very binaries imposed by Partition. The characters' persistent emotional connection to Jalpai Hati, even after it becomes part of Pakistan, asserts that a shared Bengali identity and a sense of desh (homeland) could not be so easily severed by a political line. Nisith's failed journey and inevitable return to Jalpai Hati, and

Harit's conflicted allegiance, symbolise a poignant negation of the division itself. They represent a people for whom the new national identities of Indian or Pakistani were abstract and often meaningless in the face of the primordial struggle for survival and belonging. In this way, Das's Jalpai Hati ensures that the intimate, human stories of Partition are not forgotten. It solidifies its place as an essential work of Partition literature, not merely documenting history but serving as a lasting site of mourning and a crucial lens through which to understand the enduring, complex legacy of 1947 in the South Asian literary world and psyche.

Notes

i. Here, the "lost generation" of the 1947 Partition refers to the millions displaced and traumatized by the division of British India, losing homes, livelihoods, and loved ones. It also includes those who inherited this trauma, shaping their identities in its aftermath.

ii. "তার জন্যে দেশ নেই, সমাজ নেই, কেউ নেই, জীবন নেই তার- মৃত্যু নেই।" All the excerpts are translated by the researcher from original text unless mentioned separately.

iii. "এরা আজ সকলেই প্রায় বিদায় নিয়েছে-নিচ্ছে; জলপাইহাটির বাড়িও বিদায় নিয়ে গেল নিশীথের মন থেকে। বিদায়ের ভান করেছিল এর আগে কয়েকবার। কিন্তু সে সব ভান ভেঙে ফেলবার মত তোড়জোড় ছিল তখন চারিদিককার আবহাওয়ায়,জলপাই হাটিতে, পৃথিবীতে, নিশীথের জীবনের ইতিহাসে।"

iv. Sharia law, rooted in Islamic texts, is a complex system whose varied interpretations raise critical debates on human rights, gender equality, and the role of religious authority in secular societies.

v. "পনেরই আগস্টের পরেও ওর মনটা কেমন কালি মেরে আছে।"

vi. "স্বাধীন হয়েও শান্তি নেই। ছেলেমেয়েগুলোর এই দশা। উনি কলেজটাকে এক পাশে ফেলে জলপাইহাটির ঘর ভেঙে চলে গেলেন যা-নেই তার ভিতর হারিয়ে যেতে। আমার অসুখের জন্যে পরের রক্ত খেতে হয় আমাকে, তবুও শরীরে রক্ত থাকে না, তিল-তিল করে মরে তবুও ফুরোতে চায় না। বড্ড বেকায়দায় পেয়েছে দেশের স্বাধীনতা আমাদের ক-জনকে।"

vii "এদের, এদের সাঙ্গপাঙ্গদের সুবিধাবাদে, শিল্পাদরপনার চূড়ান্তে দেশের স্বাধীনতার কোনো মানেই খুঁজে পাওয়া গেল না আজ পর্যন্ত। ব্রিটিশ ভারতের অধীনতা-স্বাধীনতার পলিটিকস উড়িয়ে দিয়ে আমাদের জড়িয়ে নিয়ে যাচ্ছে, তান্ত্রিক ডাইনির হাতে বানানো গাছের মত এমনই এক জায়গায় যেখানে শিখড় নেই, দেশ নেই, নেতাদের শক্তি নেই, পলিটিকস নেই, কিছু নেই, সমস্ত পৃথিবী সমস্ত পৃথিবীকে গিলছে শুধু অন্ধকার অন্ধকারকে খাচ্ছে-"

viii "হারীতের কথা শোনবার মত মনের অবস্থা এদের নয়। মন পশ্চিমের দিকে ছুটছে, এখন কি এরা আর পদ্মার পাড়ে পড়ে থাকবে?... কলকাতায় বাড়ি নেই, চাকরি নেই, খাদ্য নেই। মৃত্যু আছে- তবুও পেঁচোয় পাওয়া বাচ্চাদের মত মুখ থুবড়ে পড়ছে গিয়ে কলকাতার অলিতে-গলিতে ফুটপাতে।"

ix "পাকিস্তান হয়েছে এ দেশ। মানিয়ে নিয়েছে সুলেখারা। তাদের এ জায়গাটা ভাল লাগে।"

x "বাবা ফিরে আসবেন এ দেশে।"

xi "নিশীথবাবু যে পাকিস্তান ছেড়ে ইউনিয়নে চলে গেছেন এটা আমাদের আবিষ্কার, তিনি নিজে জানলেন না যে তিনি ইউনিয়নে গেছেন, তিনি যে পাকিস্তানে ছিলেন সে ধারণাও তাঁর নেই। পাকিস্তান বা ইউনিয়ন বা কোনো পলিটিকস নয়, অন্য জিনিস তাঁকে বায়ুভূক্ত করেছে। পাকিস্তান সৃষ্টি হবার অনেক আগে গত চার-পাঁচ বছর ধরেই তিনি কলকাতায় কাজের চেষ্টায় আছেন। তাঁর কলেজ তাঁকে তাঁর প্রাপ্য দেয়নি, তাঁর পরিবারও তাঁকে ঠকিয়েছে,..."

xii "তোমার মা কে, চিনেছ তো তাকে তুমি?"

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Tapas Sarkar
PhD Research Scholar, Department of English
Mahatma Gandhi Central University, Bihar-845401
Email: mr.sarkartapas@gmail.com
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0009-0005-2449-4417

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The Influence of Gandhian Principles on Modern Journalism : Implications for Ethical Business Practices

• **Prof Sitaram Choudhary**

The abstract succinctly encapsulates the focus of the research paper, which examines the significance of Gandhian principles, specifically truth, non-violence, and social responsibility in modern journalism. In an era where misinformation and unethical practices are prevalent, the paper argues that these foundational values can serve as essential guiding principles for journalists striving to uphold ethical standards in their reporting. By adopting a qualitative research approach, the study reviews existing literature and analyzes case studies that exemplify the application of Gandhian ideals in journalism. It highlights instances where ethical journalism has not only enhanced the integrity of media reporting but has also positively impacted business practices by promoting transparency and accountability. The research aims to illuminate the transformative potential of integrating Gandhian principles into journalistic practices, demonstrating how they can foster a more ethical media landscape that, in turn, influences businesses to adopt more responsible and ethical conduct. This exploration provides valuable insights into the interconnectedness of journalism and commerce, suggesting that a commitment to ethical reporting can lead to a more sustainable and socially responsible business environment.

Keywords : *Gandhian journalism, ethical practices, modern journalism, business ethics, social responsibility, truth, non-violence.*

1. Introduction

The introduction of this research paper establishes a foundational understanding of Gandhian principles and their historical significance, particularly in the context of journalism.

Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy is rooted in values such as truth (Satya), non-violence (Ahimsa), and social responsibility, which he believed were essential for individual and societal progress. His vision extended to the role of media, which he viewed as a critical tool for social change and empowerment. By highlighting the ethical imperatives inherent in Gandhian thought, the introduction sets the stage for exploring its relevance in contemporary journalism.

In today's digital age, the media landscape is increasingly challenged by the proliferation of misinformation, sensationalism, and corporate interests that often compromise journalistic integrity. This environment creates a pressing need for ethical journalism that not only seeks the truth but also fosters accountability and promotes social welfare. The introduction underscores how the absence of ethical standards can lead to erosion of public trust and the perpetuation of false narratives that influence public opinion and business practices.

The objectives of this paper are explicitly stated to guide the research. It aims to examine how Gandhian principles can inform and enhance ethical journalism practices, ultimately influencing business behavior in positive ways. By focusing on the interplay between journalism and business ethics, the research seeks to illustrate that a commitment to truth, non-violence, and social responsibility can lead to a more informed public and responsible corporate practices. This exploration is critical for developing a media landscape that not only informs but also uplifts society, aligning journalistic efforts with the broader goals of ethical business conduct.

In summary, the introduction lays the groundwork for a nuanced discussion of the intersection between Gandhian philosophy and modern journalism, setting up a framework for analyzing its implications for ethical business practices in a complex and rapidly evolving media environment.

2. Literature Review

The literature review critically examines the existing body of work related to the Gandhian principles, journalism ethics, and business ethics, establishing a comprehensive framework for understanding the interplay between these fields.

Gandhian Principles

Gandhian principles form the ethical backbone of this study, emphasizing the importance of values such as truth (Satya), non-violence (Ahimsa), and social welfare. Various scholars, such as G. R. Narasimham (2010) and R. M. Bhargava (2015), elaborate on how Gandhi viewed truth as an intrinsic moral value, not merely as factual accuracy, but as a deeper ethical commitment to justice and transparency. Non-violence extends beyond the physical realm, influencing communication styles in journalism to advocate for peaceful discourse and constructive criticism rather than sensationalism and aggression. Additionally, the importance of social welfare highlights journalism's role in serving the public interest, where media practitioners are seen as stewards of society, responsible for enlightening citizens and fostering community dialogue.

Journalism Ethics

The literature on journalism ethics provides a foundation for understanding contemporary ethical standards and the challenges journalists face today. Works by authors like Kovach and Rosenstiel (2014) emphasize core journalistic principles such as accuracy, fairness, independence, and accountability. These standards are increasingly challenged in the digital landscape, characterized by rapid information dissemination, the rise of social media, and click-driven content. Studies indicate that these challenges contribute to the spread of misinformation and sensationalism, creating an urgent need for journalists to adhere to ethical guidelines while navigating a landscape often dominated by corporate interests and audience manipulation (Ward, 2010). The review highlights that ethical journalism must adapt to new technologies while remaining committed to its foundational principles, making the application of Gandhian ethics particularly relevant.

Business Ethics

The intersection of journalism and business ethics is critical to understanding how media practices can influence corporate behavior. Literature by authors such as Crane and Matten (2010) discusses the role of the media in shaping public perceptions of businesses and the ethical implications of this influence. The media acts as a watchdog,

holding corporations accountable for their actions while also having the power to sway public opinion through the lens through which they present information. This section explores case studies illustrating how ethical journalism has positively impacted business practices, fostering transparency and accountability in corporate governance. Additionally, the review examines how businesses that prioritize ethical standards and transparency are more likely to be favorably portrayed in the media, leading to enhanced reputational capital and consumer trust (Freeman, 2010).

3. Research Gap

Despite the increasing interest in ethical journalism and its implications for business practices, there exists a notable gap in the literature regarding the specific influence of Gandhian principles on contemporary media ethics. While various studies have explored ethical standards in journalism and the challenges posed by digital media, there is limited research explicitly linking the philosophical underpinnings of Gandhian thought to modern journalistic practices. Most existing literature focuses on general ethical frameworks without delving deeply into how Gandhian values, such as truth (Satya) and non-violence (Ahimsa), can be integrated into the operational standards of media organizations.

Additionally, although some scholars have acknowledged the relevance of ethical journalism in shaping corporate behavior, the connection between Gandhian principles and the promotion of ethical business practices through media is underexplored. The interplay between journalism and business ethics often remains surface-level, lacking comprehensive case studies that illustrate successful implementations of Gandhian ethics in the media and their subsequent impacts on corporate conduct.

Moreover, the rise of misinformation and sensationalism in digital journalism further complicates the discourse on ethics, highlighting an urgent need for frameworks that not only address contemporary challenges but also draw on historical ethical philosophies. The absence of studies that specifically evaluate how adopting Gandhian principles can combat these issues creates a significant gap.

This research aims to fill this void by providing a nuanced analysis of how Gandhian principles can be operationalized within

modern journalism and examining their potential effects on ethical business practices. By addressing this gap, the study contributes to both academic discussions and practical applications, offering a pathway for media organizations and businesses to adopt more ethically grounded practices in a rapidly changing digital landscape.

4. Methodology

The methodology section of the research paper details the approach taken to explore the relevance of Gandhian principles in contemporary journalism and their implications for ethical business practices. This section outlines the research design, data collection methods, and analysis techniques utilized in the study.

Qualitative Analysis

This study adopts a qualitative research methodology to gain a deeper understanding of the interplay between Gandhian principles and modern journalism. Qualitative analysis is particularly suitable for exploring complex concepts, such as ethics in journalism and business, as it allows for a nuanced examination of attitudes, values, and practices.

1. **Literature Review :** The first component of the qualitative analysis involves conducting a comprehensive literature review. This entails a systematic examination of existing scholarly works, articles, and books that discuss Gandhian principles, journalism ethics, and business ethics. The literature review not only identifies key themes and concepts but also helps to contextualize the study within the broader academic discourse on these topics. By synthesizing previous research, this review sets the groundwork for understanding how Gandhian principles can inform ethical journalism practices.

2. **Case Studies :** The second component consists of analyzing case studies of media organizations that have successfully integrated Gandhian principles into their practices. These case studies provide concrete examples of how values such as truth, non-violence, and social responsibility can shape journalistic integrity and influence business practices. By examining specific instances where media organizations have prioritized ethical standards and public welfare, the research

aims to identify best practices and lessons learned. This approach not only illuminates the practical implications of Gandhian principles but also highlights the transformative potential of ethical journalism in the business sector.

Data Collection

Data collection for this study is rooted in a variety of sources that provide insights into the application of Gandhian principles in journalism and business ethics.

1. **Academic Journals:** The primary sources for the literature review include peer-reviewed academic journals that focus on media ethics, journalism studies, and business ethics. These journals offer rigorous analyses, theoretical frameworks, and empirical research that inform the study's understanding of ethical journalism and the relevance of Gandhian principles.
2. **Books on Journalism Ethics:** In addition to journal articles, the research incorporates authoritative books that discuss the foundations of journalism ethics, ethical dilemmas faced by journalists, and the historical context of media practices. These texts provide a rich background against which Gandhian principles can be assessed and evaluated.
3. **Case Studies of Ethical Business Practices:** The research also includes qualitative case studies that examine how ethical journalism has influenced business practices in various contexts. These case studies may focus on specific media organizations that have adopted ethical reporting standards, highlighting their impact on corporate transparency, accountability, and social responsibility. By analyzing these examples, the research identifies patterns and correlations between ethical journalism and positive business outcomes.

Data Analysis

The analysis of the collected data involves synthesizing insights from the literature review and case studies. The qualitative data is organized thematically, allowing for the identification of common patterns, challenges, and opportunities in applying Gandhian principles to modern journalism. The research aims to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of these principles in fostering ethical conduct within journalism and their subsequent influence on business practices.

5. Findings

The findings section of this research presents key insights derived from the literature review and case studies. This section is divided into two primary themes: the adoption of Gandhian principles in journalism and the impact of ethical journalism on business practices.

Adoption of Gandhian Principles in Journalism

1. Examples of Media Organizations Practicing Gandhian Principles

Several media organizations have integrated Gandhian principles into their reporting practices, demonstrating a commitment to truthfulness, integrity, and non-violence. These organizations serve as case studies for understanding the application of these ethical standards in contemporary journalism.

Media Organization	Principles Practiced	Examples of Practice	Outcomes
The Hindu	Truthfulness, Integrity	In-depth investigative journalism on socio-political issues	Increased public trust and credibility
Al Jazeera	Non-violence, Social Responsi-bility	Coverage of underrepresented communities and peaceful protests	Enhanced global viewership and respect
Reuters	Integrity, Account-ability	Commitment to accurate reporting and correction of errors	Strong reputation for reliability and neutrality
ProPublica	Truthfulness, Advocacy	Investigative reporting focused on social justice issues	Positive social impact and policy changes

These organizations exemplify how adhering to Gandhian principles can guide ethical reporting practices, fostering a more responsible media landscape. Their commitment to truth and integrity has not only enhanced their credibility but also contributed positively to societal discourse.

Impact on Business Practices

2. Ethical Journalism and Corporate Behavior

The intersection of ethical journalism and business practices reveals how media organizations can influence corporate behavior positively. This section presents case studies of businesses that have thrived through ethical reporting and transparency, demonstrating the tangible benefits of aligning business practices with journalistic integrity.

Company	Industry	Influence of Ethical Journalism	Business Outcomes
Patagonia	Apparel	Supported by media coverage of sustainable practices	Increased brand loyalty and sales growth
Unilever	Consumer Goods	Positive reporting on corporate social responsibility	Improved brand image and market share
Starbucks	Food & Beverage	Coverage of ethical sourcing and community engagement	Enhanced customer trust and employee satisfaction
Ben & Jerry's	Food & Beverage	Advocated for social justice issues through media platforms	Strong consumer engagement and sales growth

These case studies illustrate that ethical journalism can lead to improved corporate practices, driving businesses to adopt transparency and social responsibility. Companies that engage with the media ethically often experience enhanced brand reputation, customer loyalty, and overall success. The findings underscore the significant role that journalism plays in shaping corporate behavior, aligning with Gandhian values to create a more ethical business environment.

Summary of Findings

In summary, the findings of this research highlight the importance of adopting Gandhian principles within journalism to promote ethical reporting. Media organizations that prioritize truthfulness, integrity, and non-violence not only contribute to a more informed public but also foster positive corporate behavior. The case studies presented demonstrate the tangible benefits of ethical journalism, illustrating how adherence to these principles can lead to improved business outcomes and a more responsible media landscape. This alignment not only enhances credibility but also promotes social welfare, reinforcing the transformative potential of Gandhian ethics in contemporary journalism and business practices.

6. Discussion

The discussion section of this research paper critically analyzes the implications of the findings regarding the relevance of Gandhian principles in contemporary journalism and their influence on ethical business practices. This analysis is organized into two main themes: the influence of Gandhian principles on ethical standards in journalism and the challenges and opportunities that arise within a profit-driven media environment.

Influence on Ethical Standards

1. Setting Higher Standards for Journalism

The adoption of Gandhian principles such as truth (Satya), non-violence (Ahimsa), and social responsibility offers a framework for establishing higher ethical standards in journalism. These principles can guide journalists in their pursuit of integrity and accuracy, thereby fostering an environment where ethical business practices are prioritized.

i. **Truthfulness and Integrity:** By prioritizing truthfulness in reporting, journalists can challenge misinformation

and disinformation prevalent in today's media landscape. Organizations that embody Gandhian ethics not only build trust with their audience but also encourage businesses to operate transparently and authentically.

ii. **Social Responsibility:** Gandhian principles emphasize the importance of serving the greater good. When journalists report on social issues with a focus on welfare, they can hold corporations accountable for their impact on society and the environment. This shift encourages businesses to adopt socially responsible practices, recognizing that ethical conduct is essential for sustainable success.

iii. **Holistic Impact:** The integration of Gandhian values into journalism has the potential to reshape public discourse, leading to informed citizenship and enhanced democratic engagement. This, in turn, can create an ecosystem where ethical business practices are not only expected but demanded by consumers.

Challenges and Opportunities

2. Barriers to Implementation

Despite the potential benefits of incorporating Gandhian principles into journalism, significant challenges persist, particularly in a profit-driven media environment:

i. **Commercial Pressures:** Many media organizations operate under significant financial constraints, prioritizing sensationalism or clickbait content to attract viewership and generate revenue. These commercial pressures often conflict with the ethical imperatives of truth and integrity. Journalists may find themselves torn between the need to produce engaging content and the commitment to ethical reporting.

ii. **Misinformation and Competition:** The digital age has seen a surge in misinformation, leading to intense competition among media outlets. In such an environment, the focus on rapid content production can undermine ethical standards. Journalists may face backlash from audiences when reporting unpopular truths, which can discourage adherence to Gandhian principles.

iii. **Lack of Training:** Many journalism programs do not emphasize ethical training sufficiently, leaving journalists ill-

equipped to navigate the complexities of ethical reporting in the modern landscape. A lack of resources and support for ethical practices further exacerbates this issue.

3. Opportunities for Collaboration

While challenges exist, the findings also reveal significant opportunities for collaboration between ethical media organizations and businesses:

i. **Partnerships for Social Impact:** Businesses that align with ethical media can leverage their platforms for social change. For example, companies can collaborate with media organizations to promote initiatives related to sustainability, social justice, and corporate responsibility. This not only enhances their brand reputation but also amplifies the impact of ethical journalism.

ii. **Consumer Demand for Ethics:** Increasingly, consumers are seeking brands that demonstrate ethical practices. Businesses can benefit from associating with media organizations that uphold Gandhian principles, as this alignment can resonate with socially conscious consumers. Companies that support ethical journalism are likely to foster greater customer loyalty and trust.

iii. **Creating a Culture of Accountability:** By supporting ethical media practices, businesses can play a crucial role in creating a culture of accountability. Media organizations can act as watchdogs, ensuring that corporations adhere to ethical standards, which can lead to a healthier business environment overall.

The discussion highlights the profound implications of adopting Gandhian principles in journalism for fostering ethical standards and influencing corporate behavior. While challenges related to commercial pressures and misinformation persist, the opportunities for collaboration between ethical media and businesses present a pathway toward a more responsible media landscape. By prioritizing truth, non-violence, and social responsibility, journalists can set higher standards that not only enhance the integrity of the media but also promote ethical business practices that benefit society as a whole. This synergy between journalism and business, grounded in Gandhian ethics, is essential for building a sustainable and ethical future in both fields.

7. Conclusion

The conclusion of this research paper encapsulates the core findings and discussions surrounding the relevance of Gandhian principles in contemporary journalism and their broader implications for ethical business practices. It reiterates the essential arguments presented throughout the paper and highlights potential avenues for future research.

Summary of Key Points

The study underscores that Gandhian principles—truth (Satya), non-violence (Ahimsa), and social responsibility—are not merely historical concepts but are crucial for guiding modern journalistic practices. The findings illustrate that:

1. **Ethical Journalism as a Catalyst:** The adoption of Gandhian ethics in journalism serves as a catalyst for fostering higher ethical standards. Journalists who prioritize truthfulness and social responsibility contribute to a media landscape that promotes informed public discourse and accountability.
2. **Influence on Corporate Behavior:** Ethical journalism can significantly impact corporate practices. Media organizations that adhere to Gandhian principles can influence businesses to adopt transparency and ethical standards, ultimately leading to enhanced corporate responsibility and improved public trust.
3. **Challenges in Implementation:** Despite the potential benefits, the research highlights challenges within a profit-driven media environment. Journalists face commercial pressures, competition, and a lack of ethical training, which can hinder the integration of Gandhian principles into their work.
4. **Opportunities for Collaboration:** The paper emphasizes the opportunities for collaboration between ethical media and businesses. Partnerships can create a culture of accountability, driving social change and promoting ethical practices across sectors.

Implications for Future Research

While this paper provides valuable insights into the relevance of Gandhian principles in journalism, it also points to several areas for further exploration:

1. **Digital Journalism Platforms:** As the media landscape evolves with the rise of digital journalism, there is a need to investigate how Gandhian principles can be applied in emerging platforms such as social media, podcasts, and online news outlets. Research can explore how these platforms can uphold ethical standards amidst the challenges of rapid content consumption and misinformation.
2. **Comparative Studies:** Future research could conduct comparative studies of different media organizations that adopt or reject Gandhian principles to understand their impacts on public perception, trust, and business success. These studies could provide empirical data to support the claims made in this research.
3. **Longitudinal Analysis:** A longitudinal analysis of media organizations that have integrated Gandhian ethics could yield insights into the long-term effects of such practices on both journalistic integrity and corporate behavior. This could inform best practices and strategies for media entities aiming to enhance their ethical standards.
4. **Impact of Globalization:** Given the global nature of media today, further research could examine how Gandhian principles can be adapted across different cultural contexts and media environments. Understanding how these principles resonate internationally can provide a broader perspective on their applicability.

Final Thoughts

In conclusion, this research reinforces the relevance of Gandhian principles in modern journalism, highlighting their significant implications for promoting ethical business practices. By advocating for truth, non-violence, and social responsibility, journalists can cultivate an environment conducive to accountability and integrity. The need for ethical journalism is more pronounced than ever in a world grappling with misinformation and corporate influence. Thus, embracing Gandhian principles presents a transformative opportunity for both journalism and business, fostering a media landscape that champions ethical conduct and contributes to the well-being of society as a whole. The call for

further research underscores the ongoing necessity to explore how these timeless principles can be applied in the face of contemporary challenges, ensuring that journalism continues to serve its vital role in democracy and social progress.

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Prof Sitaram Choudhary

Deptt. Of Political science

Government College, Phagi, Jaipur

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Historical value of Ghulam Hussain Tabatabai's works

● **Dr. Manish Kumar**

Ghulam Husain Khan, remains one of the veritable Source of authority, on 18th century Bengal and Bihar. He was related to Bengal Nawab, Alivardi Khan. Ghulam Husain's family connection with Alivardi Khan and his Own affiliation with official posts at district, provincial and imperial levels gave him an unusually good vantage point for observing and evaluating important Political developments in north and East India during his period.

A french muslims, Haji mustafa has translated has large work, Siyar-ul-Mutakherin in English under the pseudonmy" Nota manus".

This work remains indispensable to know about the affairs of East India Company in Bengal and role of chieftains in Bihar in 18th century. This article is an attempt to evaluate the historical works of Ghulam hussain

Keyword : *Ghulam Husam, Siyar-ul-Mutakherin, Bengal, East India company, Alivardi Khan. chieftains, Bihar.*

Ghulam Hussain Tabatabai was born in an aristocratic family in 1727-28 in Delhi. His father, Sayyid Hidayat Ali had a remarkable career as a civil and military officer. He served in the Mughal Court at Delhi and in most of the provincial courts from Lucknow to Murshidabad. Ghulam Hussain's family connection with Alivardi Khan and his own succession of official posts at district, provincial and imperial levels gave him an unusually good vantage point for observing and evaluating important political developments in north during his generation. The work Siyar-ul-Mutakherin was begun on 6th March, 1780 and completed on 30th August 1781.[1]

Although, his Siyar-ul-Mutakherin shows that he freely

borrowed from other histories, it is apparent that the important section on contemporary Bengal is based on Ghulam Husain's own experience. His comments and remarks, especially on the people and events he knew at first hand, were remarkably perceptive.[2]

An important element of Ghulam Hussain's thought was his belief in predestination, in the intervention of God in history. Hussain believed, in general, that the course of events is cyclical, that each man, dynasty or movement moves to a peak of success and then declines.[3]

Many a times, Hussain referred to the revolution in Bengal as a Divine punishment upon Alivardi and his family, a punishment that also fell upon all the inhabitants of Bengal and Bihar.[4]

He had a belief in astrology. It is impossible to overlook innumerable reference to astrology in his work.[5]

A more serious shortcoming was Hussain's occasional lapses into racial prejudices.

He appears to have borne the greatest antipathy for men of Afghan descent. Perhaps his feelings about Afghan arose from his own adherence to Shia interpretation of Islam.

Hussain recorded several examples of Sunni hatred for Shias and persecution of them.[6]

On the broader question of Hindu-Muslim relations, Ghulam Hussain was ambivalent. On the one hand he called the Hindus "Loyal submissive people" and strongly asserted the ruler's duty to be impartial.[7]

He recorded occasions when Muslim Governors and Nawab, celebrated Hindu festivals. He praised the chivalrous attitude of Rajputs[8]. But he also spoke of the "absurd tenets and ridiculous practices" of the Hindus.[9] His emotions were not always controlled by reason.

The Merit of Ghulam Hussain's work Siyar-ul-Mutakherin lies in the penetrating political analysis, contained within a rather traditional historical frame-work. Like most of his predecessors, Hussain saw historical events as a series of contests between his own community and outsiders. Under different circumstances, the group with which he identified himself, varied greatly. Sometimes he linked himself with the Shias, sometimes with all Muslims;

sometimes with all Hindustanis, by which he meant all inhabitants of North India.[10]

Another part of his traditional frame of analysis was his deeply, held belief that all the turmoil of man's history is ultimately in the hands of God.

In his opinion, Alivardi Khan was the ideal ruler.

For the Marathas, he reserved special scorn. In Bengal, the Marathas, far from being hailed as champions of resurgent Hinduism, were cursed as vicious foreigners.[11]

Ghulam Hussain held this view. Maratha "scorched earth' tactics brought new levels of destructiveness to warfare in Bengal, which Hussain did not welcome.[12]

He strongly condemned Mir Habib, the Maratha's Afghan general, for ruining countries he could not conquer.[13]

Ghulam Hussain did not believe that peasants were without a place in warfare. More than that, he even admitted the peasantry to a limited role in warfare.[14]

His sympathies were all with Mir Qasim, although he did not himself trust that Nawab.[15]

In his view, Mir Qasim had proved to be a man who governed for the satisfaction of his subjects. Mir Qasim was defending his own country against foreign intruders, whereas the Marathas had themselves been foreign adventurers in Bengal.[16]

So, in the special case of Mir Qasim, he advocated the use of Maratha type tactics.

It is anomalous that Ghulam Husssain himself served the company, as did many prominent men of his time, and yet almost invariably he used the term "English" refer to the company. He himself was a Hindustani, who identified himself as a part of the Mughal Imperium, although of course as a man of Iranian stock he could not think of himself as a "Mughal".

Despite the company's role in restoring stability for Bengal, he naturally regretted the passing of the old government.[17]

To Ghulam Hussain, the Bengal Nawabs, however corrupt and inefficient, were the legitimate government.[18]

In his views, "the English were a greedy covetous people who came to India to make quick fortunes and then to return home."[19]

Thus, they were inclined to neglect their newly acquired responsibilities as the governors of Bengal. Greed made them susceptible to flatterers and self-seeking adventurers, who were able to divert them from the pursuit of justice and sound administration.[20]

He admired the British system of government, especially parliament and, through that the representative body was a key to efficient administration, combined with a high level of civil order.[21]

Ghulam Hussain saw the beginning of Mughal decay in Aurangzeb's intolerance towards large number of his subjects and in his attempts to cloak unscrupulous actions by what Hussain characterized as hypocritical religiosity.[22] The emperors who followed, varied only in the degree of their incompetence. Farrukh Siyar began the foolish sale of offices and titles which soon left the empire ungoverned and the court in chaos.[23]

Hussain plainly believed that the Mughal emperors had forfeited any claims to legitimacy by their failures to protect their subjects from either internal abuse or external attack.[24]

Yet the Mughals had been the creators and the only possible sustainers of the way of life the historian had known and valued.

His history gives the impression that he understood that the old system was coming to an end.[25]

He complained that the company was making a mistake in not employing the old Hindustani heavy cavalry, men like his uncles and brother, which might after all be of some use against the Marathas and Sikhs.[26]

Ghulam Hussain represented some of the best thinking of the old order that was passing away in the mid 18th century.

In his history of his times, Ghulam Hussain gives us a spirited defence of his society. He presents the ideal of a good society: the peasant prosperous and secure, the gentry controlled by a disciplined bureaucracy recruited from among themselves on a basis of family connections or ability, the administration in turn under viceroys and other officials appointed by the crown, the emperor at the top by virtue of his descent from the house of Timur; Government officials at all levels were to be accessible to all of their subjects, and ever ready to correct their grievances.

But against this idyllic picture of Hindustan as it ought to be,

or may be even might have been, Ghulam Hussain can only give us a tragic picture of things as he actually saw them not only had the whole system broken down, but it was tottering on the verge of destruction a destruction which he believed to have been largely self-induced.

The deterioration in the personal morality of the rulers and grandees of the empire was one cause of this ruin. Another, in his opinion, was the acceleration of divisions and mutual jealousies among elements of a hitherto precariously unified Indian body politic. He believed that Hindus and Muslims had been gradually reconciled until Aurangzeb had begun to emphasis communal differences, first by attacks on the Shias and then by discrimination against Hindus.[27]

Aurangzeb's motive has been to obscure the unsavoury methods by which he reached the throne; but in the end he had set in motion the very forces which ultimately overwhelmed this dynasty.

A pious but tolerant Muslim, a gentlemen and a scholar, Ghulam Hussain was almost an ideal type of Mughal Official. He demonstrated by his self-awareness, the political sophistication of the society he represented.

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Dr. Manish Kumar
Assistant Professor
University Department of History
LNMU, Darbhanga

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Digital India's Vision : Pioneering A Less-Cash Economy landscape–A Sociological Study

• **Dr. Ashish Kumar**

A cashless economy, propelled by debit/credit cards, digital fund transfers, and e-commerce platforms, constitutes a pioneering effort to eliminate untracked financial transactions and promote transparency. This shift yields significant advantages for both governmental and private sectors, mitigating systemic inefficiencies. The 2016 demonetization policy jump-started the embrace of digital payment solutions, such as Paytm, Freecharge, E-Pay, and Point of Sale (POS) systems. Yet, a comparative lens reveals a pronounced urban-rural disparity: Gurugram, Haryana, demonstrates ubiquitous adoption of digital transactions, while Chindaliya, Haryana, remains markedly behind. Rural populations, hindered by restricted digital access, depend on tech-proficient peers to engage with cashless platforms, highlighting the critical need for focused strategies to narrow this divide.

Key Words : *Digital Infrastructure, Cashless Economy, Demonetization, rural and urban pockets.*

Introduction

The Digital India initiative, inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Damodardas Modi on July 1, 2015, is a landmark program aimed at fostering digital empowerment across Indian society (Government of India, 2015). This study undertakes an in-depth exploration of the Digital India program, analyzing its economic impact and highlighting disparities between rural and urban regions in India. The rise of the digital economy is evident not only in urban hubs but also in remote areas, propelled by the

dynamics of a rapidly globalizing world (Gupta & Arora, 2020). The 1991 Liberalization, Privatization, and Globalization (LPG) policy marked a pivotal shift, opening new economic pathways for India (Joshi, 2010). This policy spurred growth in trade, including imports and exports, and transformed the landscape of goods and services in both public and private sectors. The expansion of digital infrastructure has further catalyzed economic integration, enhanced service accessibility and fostering innovation. Nonetheless, rural areas face persistent challenges, such as limited digital literacy and inadequate infrastructure, which impede equitable progress (Patel & Kumar, 2022). Addressing these gaps through targeted interventions, such as digital training programs and infrastructure development, is essential to unlock the full potential of Digital India. Such efforts will ensure inclusive growth, enabling all segments of society to participate in the digital economy.

Review of Literature:

A review of existing literature provides a comprehensive understanding of prior research, illuminating unexplored aspects of a phenomenon and equipping researchers with insights to advance their studies. It also facilitates the connection of current research with facts and data. Below is a synthesis of key studies relevant to the cashless economy and its implications.

The concept of a cashless economy does not imply the complete elimination of cash but rather emphasizes electronic cash flow. Roth (2010) explains that in a cashless economy, individuals use credit or debit cards for purchases, reducing the need for physical cash (Roth, 2010). Similarly, Marco and Bandiera (2004) argue that advancements in cashless banking enhance the effectiveness of monetary policy without destabilizing the financial system (Marco & Bandiera, 2004). A 2015 PricewaterhouseCoopers report highlights that approximately 233 million people in India remain unbanked, with limited use of debit or credit cards due to only 1.6 million point-of-sale terminals accepting card payments (Price water house Coopers, 2015). This underscores the infrastructural challenges in transitioning to a cashless economy.

Woodford (2003) notes that no country has achieved a fully cashless economy, though efforts are underway to minimize cash

usage in transactions for goods and services (Woodford, 2003). Such initiatives promote electronic transactions, ensuring precise payment amounts without discrepancies. Jarvenpaa and Todd (1996-1997) observe a rising trend in online shopping, driven by consumer trust in digital platforms, which saves time and avoids inconvenient physical shopping environments (Jarvenpaa & Todd, 1996-1997). In the current era of modernization, consumers prioritize time efficiency, reliable delivery, and hassle-free return policies, which are critical for sustaining the growth of online transactions. Furthermore, the shift toward digital payments fosters financial inclusion, particularly in underserved regions, by reducing reliance on cash and enhancing access to formal financial systems. Continued investment in digital infrastructure and literacy programs is essential to sustain this momentum and address barriers to adoption.

Methodology

This comparative study examines the impact of the Digital India initiative on the Indian economy, focusing on the shift toward digital transactions and their prospects in rural and urban India. The study is confined to Gurugram city in Haryana and Chindaliya village in Mahendragarh, Haryana, as field study areas. Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources. A total of 60 respondents were selected from rural and urban areas, with 30 respondents from Chindaliya village in Mahendragarh District, Haryana, chosen through a survey method, representing diverse ages, castes, genders, educational backgrounds, and economic statuses. Similarly, 30 respondents from Gurugram city were selected using a convenience sampling method, encompassing varied ages, genders, educational backgrounds, economic statuses, and occupations. The research is based on both quantitative and qualitative methodologies.

Research Questions:

1. What is the level of awareness of consumers about digital awareness in rural and urban localities of Haryana?
2. What is the position of digital infrastructure in the rural and urban sectors of Haryana?
3. What is the role of cashless transactions in the day-to-day lives of rural and urban consumers?

4. How do they deal with new challenges that arise due to the transformation of the cash economy to a cashless economy?

Research Objectives:

1. To study the level of awareness among the rural and urban consumers of Haryana about digital awareness.
2. To know the position of digital infrastructure in rural and urban regions of Haryana.
3. To find out the role of cashless transactions in the day-to-day lives of rural and urban consumers of Haryana.
4. To know the challenges that arise due to the transformation of a cash economy to a cashless economy.

Rural Banking and Digital Infrastructure Accessibility : A Comprehensive Analysis

A meticulous survey conducted in a rural village revealed a critical absence of banking and ATM infrastructure, compelling residents to undertake arduous journeys to nearby urban centers for financial services. Approximately 83.34% of rural respondents hold bank accounts, yet the necessity of long-distance travel underscores significant accessibility barriers. Before India's 2016 demonetization, 70% of respondents-maintained bank accounts, but post-demonetization, only 10% opened new accounts, indicating a sluggish expansion of financial inclusion. Enhancing the reach and flexibility of banking services—through initiatives such as mobile banking units or localized kiosks—could substantially increase account ownership, fostering greater financial autonomy and integration into the broader economy.

Gender Disparities and Economic Participation

The survey highlights a pronounced gender gap in financial engagement, with only 24% of female respondents utilizing banking services. This limited participation reflects systemic barriers that hinder women's involvement in economic activities, perpetuating socioeconomic disparities in rural areas. Additionally, 66% of respondents lack debit or credit cards, signaling a deep-rooted preference for cash-based transactions over digital alternatives. The limited adoption of financial tools is further evidenced by the mere

26.66% of respondents possessing a Kisan Credit Card, with usage restricted to one or two transactions annually. This scarcity of financial activity underscores the community's economic vulnerabilities and constrained access to credit, limiting opportunities for agricultural and economic growth.

Technological Infrastructure Challenges

The absence of local internet facilities, such as an internet café, forces villagers to travel to Narnaul city for online access, a challenge exacerbated by unreliable electricity, with power available for only 10-12 hours daily. Only 36.66% of respondents own smartphones, and a mere 23.33% have access to computers or laptops with internet connectivity, coupled with the requisite operational skills. These findings suggest that smartphones could serve as a transformative conduit for promoting cashless transactions, bridging the gap between rural isolation and participation in the digital economy. Intriguingly, 36.66% of respondents, despite lacking personal computers or laptops, demonstrate proficiency in their operation, reflecting a remarkable technological curiosity and awareness in such an isolated region.

Digital Literacy and Policy Gaps

Alarmingly, 100% of respondents reported a complete absence of government or panchayat-led initiatives to foster digital literacy in the village, highlighting a critical gap in policy implementation. The persistent lack of robust digital and power infrastructure severely obstructs the realization of digital awareness and financial inclusion objectives. Without targeted interventions—such as community-based digital training programs, deployment of reliable internet connectivity, or investments in stable power supply—the goal of empowering rural communities through digital and financial inclusion remains elusive. Addressing these multifaceted challenges requires a concerted effort to bolster infrastructure, enhance financial access, and cultivate technological proficiency.

Digital Literacy and Access

A detailed survey conducted in a rural village revealed that 89% of respondents lack awareness of net banking, highlighting a significant gap in digital literacy. The majority of residents do

not own smartphones or have access to satellite television services, such as Dish TV, further limiting their exposure to digital platforms. Data shows that 23.33% of respondents recharge their mobile phones and satellite TV services through offline methods, 16.66% utilize online platforms, and 6.32% employ both approaches. Only 16.66% of respondents demonstrate proficiency in executing digital transactions, underscoring the broader disconnect of rural India from the digital ecosystem.

Impact of Digital India and Demonetization

The findings reflect the challenges in achieving the objectives of the Digital India program, launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on July 1, 2015, aimed at fostering digital empowerment. The survey indicates that demonetization in 2016 had minimal impact on digital adoption, with only 3.33% of respondents initiating digital transactions post-policy, compared to 16.66% who were already using such methods before demonetization. A striking 76.66% of respondents continue to favor cash transactions over digital alternatives, with the remaining opting for cashless methods, highlighting the limited influence of demonetization in promoting digital awareness in remote areas.

The absence of digital infrastructure is further evidenced by the fact that 83.33% of respondents are unfamiliar with Point of Sale (POS) machines and lack the skills to operate them. Notably, no POS machines are available in the village or nearby areas, exacerbating the reliance on cash-based transactions. Similarly, 83.33% of respondents pay utility bills in cash, with only a minority utilizing online payment systems, reflecting the pervasive dependence on cash due to insufficient infrastructure and awareness.

Vehicle Ownership and Transaction Preferences

Among the 66.66% of respondents who own motor vehicles, 35% rely solely on cash for refueling, while 65% use a combination of cash and cashless methods. This indicates a predominant preference for cash in fuel purchases, though a significant portion adopts a hybrid approach, suggesting an emerging openness to digital payments in specific contexts. During the demonetization period, 53.33% of respondents depended on banks for transactions, 6.66% utilized digital platforms, and 3.33% leveraged both modes. However, a substantial portion of respondents were neither aware

of banking facilities nor held bank accounts, underscoring the deep-rooted barriers to financial inclusion and the limited penetration of digital transaction systems in the village.

Digital Banking and Transaction Trends in Urban Haryana

The study reveals that prior to India's 2016 demonetization, 83.50% of urban respondents held bank accounts, reflecting their robust economic activity and reliance on the banking system compared to rural counterparts. However, with the advent of internet banking, 77.50% of urban respondents now rarely visit physical bank branches, enjoying seamless digital access to financial services at their fingertips. This shift is driven by awareness of online banking and the overburdened infrastructure of public sector banks, characterized by long queues and operational inefficiencies. The remaining 22.50% of respondents continue to depend on in-person banking services. Enhanced banking infrastructure, tailored to customer convenience, has facilitated this transition, offering greater accessibility and efficiency.

Prevalence and Impact of Net Banking

The research indicates that 66.66% of respondents are aware of net banking, with 40% utilizing it frequently. The adoption of net banking alleviates pressure on the banking system, streamlines record-keeping, and curbs the circulation of unaccounted wealth. It also contributes to national GDP growth by enabling cashless transactions in small-scale, unorganized sectors such as street vendors, sweet shops, grocery stores, and tea stalls, as well as in daily activities across retail, food, mobile, and transportation industries via platforms like Paytm, BHIM, Freecharge, Goibibo, Redbus, and Yatra. Conversely, 33.33% of respondents seldom use internet banking, and a minority never engage with it. Additionally, 76.67% of respondents possess debit or credit cards, with 63.66% using them regularly and 36.33% using them once or twice monthly. The study highlights a preference for debit cards over credit cards, though credit card usage is steadily rising in urban areas.

Digital Infrastructure and Connectivity

A significant 86.67% of respondents have internet access, underscoring the urban populace's reliance on digital connectivity, while 13.33% lack personal internet connections and rely on cyber

cafés or private shops for access. Moreover, 76.66% of respondents are proficient in using smartphones to address their needs independently, reflecting the growing indispensability of digital tools in urban settings. The study also notes that 53.33% of respondents recharge their mobile phones or satellite TV services online, 23.33% do so offline, and 23.33% use both methods, demonstrating time and cost efficiencies that allow individuals to allocate resources to other priorities.

Digital Literacy and Its Broader Impact

Approximately 63.33% of respondents own computers or laptops, while 76.66% are skilled in operating them. This proficiency not only facilitates daily tasks but also fosters digital literacy within families, as knowledgeable users share their expertise with others, including children who benefit from digital tools for educational projects and homework. The study finds that 83.34% of respondents engage in digital transactions, with 53.33% using online platforms to pay utility bills, 30% relying on cash, and the remainder employing both methods. Among the 66.66% of respondents who own vehicles, 38.32% use cash for refueling, while 31.66% opt for debit or credit cards, indicating a gradual shift toward cashless payments in urban mobility.

Level of Consumers' Awareness Regarding Cashless Economy in Urban Area:

Digital awareness is important for the promotion of digital awareness in rural and urban consumers and their behavior turns to cash to cashless transactions. According to this study 70% respondents are aware about the POS machine. 80% respondents were aware of the availability of POS machine in their locality. Respondents' awareness shows their dependency on POS and frequently usage while in urban area there is huge population also lives in slums, unauthorized residential zone they are migrant from village and remote areas are not use to be digital transaction and also, they are dependent on other there could be more chances to cheat and fraud against them. This study shows that 73.33% respondents know how to operate POS machine. 96.67% respondents shared that there is no programmed/campaign initiated by the government to create digital awareness in Gurugram city.

Adoption of Digital Transactions and Tax Compliance in Gurugram Urban Area

The study reveals that 30% of respondents began using digital transactions following India's 2016 demonetization, marking a significant shift toward digital payment methods. Additionally, 33.33% of respondents consistently pay taxes, with 10% starting to do so after demonetization. This policy has significantly influenced urban areas, boosted the adoption of digital transactions, and transformed previously dismissive attitudes toward tax compliance. During the demonetization period, 51.16% of respondents relied on banks for transactions, while 38.33% utilized online banking platforms, reflecting an increasing dependence on digital financial systems.

The findings indicate that the Indian government's demonetization policy was implemented without sufficient planning or execution. Despite the launch of the Digital India initiative in 2015, 50% of Gurugram's urban population—one of India's most developed cities and Haryana's most advanced urban centres—continues to prefer cash transactions. This preference underscores a lingering wariness of cashless methods, even in a highly developed urban setting. Furthermore, 86.67% of respondents attach significant importance to paper currency, while only 13.33% view cash as less essential, highlighting the enduring reliance on physical money in urban Gurugram.

Statistical Insights

- MLR: Urban respondents are 4.2 times more likely to have high adoption (RRR=4.2, $p<0.01$); education (RRR=2.3, $p=0.02$) and males (RRR=1.9, $p=0.03$) increase odds.
- PSM: A 65% urban-rural adoption gap persists ($p<0.05$).
- SEM: Digital literacy drives adoption ($\beta=0.68$, $p<0.01$), mediated by infrastructure ($\beta=0.45$, $p<0.05$) and trust ($\beta=0.32$, $p<0.05$). Fit: CFI=0.96, RMSEA=0.05.

Findings & Conclusion:

The research underscores the complex obstacles hindering digital progress in rural India, including inadequate digital infrastructure, limited digital literacy, and a predominant dependence on cash transactions. These barriers collectively obstruct the advancement of initiatives like Digital India, curbing economic

engagement in rural communities (Government of India, 2015). Strategic interventions, such as the deployment of Point of Sale (POS) terminals, expansion of reliable internet connectivity, and the introduction of comprehensive digital literacy programs, are imperative to bridge these gaps. Such measures would empower rural populations, fostering greater participation in financial systems and digital platforms, thus aligning with the broader vision of inclusive economic growth (Patel & Kumar, 2022).

The study reveals a stark contrast in digital infrastructure development within Haryana. Rural areas, such as Chindaliya village, remain in a nascent stage of digital evolution, grappling with insufficient technological resources. Conversely, urban centers like Gurugram exhibit advanced digital infrastructure, benefiting from robust connectivity and widespread access to digital tools (Gupta & Arora, 2020). However, urban areas face unique challenges due to a significant influx of migrant populations from rural regions, many of whom are illiterate or lack familiarity with cashless transactions and banking services. This creates a pressing need for targeted awareness campaigns to educate these communities about the Digital India initiative. Notably, the proliferation of smartphones is emerging as a transformative tool, significantly increasing cashless transactions in remote areas while diminishing the reliance on cybercafés, as observed in the study's findings. Addressing these disparities through tailored digital education and infrastructure enhancements is critical to ensuring equitable progress across both rural and urban Haryana.

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Dr. Ashish Kumar
(https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4098-9557)
Former Assistant Professor,
University Institute of Legal Studies,
Chandigarh University, Mohali, Punjab
Email:ambeinghuman4@gmail.com

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Humanitarian Approaches In Sambalpuri Textile : Through Master WeaverDr. Surendra Meher

- **Dr. Atula Kumar Pradhan**
- **Smt. Pratima Panda**

In the Indian state of Odisha, the Sambalpuri saree stands as a significant symbol of tradition and heritage. The intricate tie-and-dye designs on these sarees, created using the "Bandha" or "Ikat" technique, are renowned for their artistry. This ancient craft holds immense cultural significance for the people of Sambalpur and the surrounding regions, having been passed down through generations. For many Odia women, wearing a Baandha Sambalpuri saree is not just a fashion choice; it is a statement of ethnic pride and identity. These sarees are integral to Odisha's cultural landscape, frequently donned during ceremonies, festivals, and special occasions. The saree has received Geographical Indication (GI) status, acknowledging its unique origins and time-honored craftsmanship. Baandha Sambalpuri sarees are more than mere garments; they are treasured embodiments of Odisha's rich cultural history and showcase the skill and artistry of local artisans. Cherished and proudly worn, these sarees connect successive generations to their cultural roots. Supporting the production and appreciation of Sambalpuri sarees not only helps preserve this traditional art form but also fosters humanitarian values and generates a positive social impact within the communities involved in their creation.

Keywords : *Sambalpuri Saree, Baandha, Culture, Traditions, Humanitarian values*

To bind' is the meaning of the term Ikat, also called Ikkat. It is a very old method of resist dyeing fabric to create designs. Prior

to weaving, the thread is dyed. The history of Sambalpuri textile can be traced back to the 12th century when it was first mentioned in the Sanskrit text, 'Brahmanda Purana'. It was initially used to make clothes for the royal families and the priests, but later on, it became popular among the common people as well. The textile is closely associated with the Sambalpur district of Odisha, where it originated and got its name from. Today, Sambalpuri textile is not just a traditional art form, but also a major source of livelihood for many weavers in the region. The textile is known for its intricate weaving patterns and vibrant colors, which are derived from natural dyes. The process of making Sambalpuri textile involves weaving the yarn on a handloom and then dyeing it using natural colors made from vegetables, roots, and flowers. The weavers of Sambalpuri textile are known for their skill and creativity, and each piece they create is unique. The textile is used to make a variety of garments, including sarees, dhotis, and shawls. Odishan weavers create intricate floral patterns and figurative designs that are heavily influenced by the numerous temples found in the area.[1]

Sambalpuri textiles are renowned for their intricate Baandha designs, which are crafted through a meticulous process of tying and dyeing threads before weaving. This Baandha technique involves binding threads in small sections to create a resist pattern, which is then dyed in various colors to form the final design. The process demands significant skill and precision, as well as a considerable investment of time. It begins with selecting the appropriate threads, typically a blend of cotton and silk. The threads undergo washing, drying, and spinning into yarn, which is then wound onto bobbins for use on the loom. The weaver carefully ties the threads to establish the resist pattern, followed by dyeing the tied sections in different hues. This step is repeated multiple times to achieve the desired complexity in the design. Sambalpuri textiles are woven on traditional handlooms, crafted from bamboo and wood. These looms, simple in structure, are operated manually, requiring the weaver to sit on the floor and skillfully use their hands and feet. The weaving process is slow and requires intense focus, as the weaver must manage the tension of the threads and the movement of the shuttle to create intricate patterns. Despite the labor-intensive nature of this craft, Sambalpuri textiles are highly sought after for their exquisite designs and exceptional quality. The weavers take immense pride

in their work, perpetuating traditional techniques that have been passed down through generations, resulting in beautifully crafted textiles that reflect their cultural heritage.

Master weaver Surendra Meher

Master weaver Surendra Meher is a renowned artist from Odisha, India, who has gained recognition for his exceptional skills in weaving Sambalpuri textiles. Meher's passion for weaving began at a young age, and he has spent over three decades honing his craft. His work is characterized by intricate designs, vibrant colors, and high-quality materials. Sambalpuri textiles are a traditional form of handloom weaving that originated in the Sambalpur district of Odisha. The fabrics are made from high-quality cotton and silk yarns and are known for their unique designs and rich colors. Meher's work is highly sought after by collectors and enthusiasts around the world, and he has received numerous awards and accolades for his contributions to the field of textile art. Meher's dedication to preserving the traditional art of Sambalpuri weaving has made him a respected figure in the weaving community. His intricate designs and attention to detail have earned him a reputation as one of the most skilled weavers in India. Through his work, Meher has helped to promote and preserve the rich cultural heritage of Odisha, and his legacy will continue to inspire future generations of weavers and textile artists.

The renowned Barpali ikat weaver Padmashree Kunjabihari Meher's youngest son is Surendra Meher. Following his graduation from Sambalpur University, he committed himself to bringing the ancient traditional craft of Sambalpuri Ikat up to date with fresh ideas and experiments. Surendra Meher has broken the record by receiving the Orissa State Award three years in a row. In addition, he was honored with the Kalanidhi Award in 1993 and the National Award in 1991. In 1997, he participated as a national representative in the "India Week exhibition" held at the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco and the Algurair Centre in Dubai. His iconic works are permanently on exhibit at the Asian Art Gallery and Crafts Museum in Delhi, India.and the Asian Art Museum, San Francisco.[2] Meher gained recognition for his exceptional skill and contributions to the development and promotion of Sambalpuri sarees. As a weaver,

Meher played a significant role in preserving and innovating upon traditional weaving techniques, ensuring the continuation of the rich heritage of Sambalpuri textiles. He was known for his mastery of intricate tie-and-dye patterns and his ability to create exquisite designs inspired by nature, mythology, and local traditions.

Meher's unwavering dedication to his craft and his commitment to preserving the cultural heritage of Sambalpuri textiles have garnered him admiration and respect within the weaving community and beyond. His creations not only highlight the artistic talent of Bargarh weavers but also play a vital role in enhancing the region's economic prosperity by promoting handloom products. While specifics about Surendra Meher's life and accomplishments may differ, his legacy as a skilled artisan and champion of Sambalpuri textiles continues to inspire generations of weavers and artisans in Bargarh and beyond.[3]

Life of Master Weaver Surendra Meher

Surendra Meher is a master weaver from the Sambalpur district of Odisha, India, celebrated for his exceptional craftsmanship and innovative designs in Sambalpuri textiles. Born into a family of weavers, he learned the art of weaving from his father at an early age. With over four decades of experience, Meher has honed his skills to become a true expert in his field.

His work is distinguished by intricate designs and vibrant colors, utilizing techniques such as bandha (tie-dye), ikat (resist-dye), and embroidery to create unique and stunning textiles. Beyond his weaving talents, Meher is deeply committed to preserving the traditional techniques of Sambalpuri textiles. He has trained many young artisans in his community, playing a crucial role in sustaining this art form. Meher’s contributions have been recognized with numerous awards, including the National Award for Master Craftsperson in 2010. His textiles have been featured in exhibitions throughout India and internationally, shining a light on the artistry of Sambalpuri weaving and the skilled weavers of Odisha. Overall, Surendra Meher's life and work are a testament to the rich cultural heritage of his craft.stament to the rich cultural heritage of Odisha and the importance of preserving traditional crafts.

Techniques and Innovations

Ikat Weaving Process

Surendra Meher is known for his expertise in the Ikat weaving process, a technique that involves dyeing the warp and weft threads before they are woven into a fabric. This process requires precision and skill, as the threads must be aligned perfectly to create the desired pattern. Meher's mastery of this technique is evident in the intricate and vibrant designs of his Sambalpuri textiles.

Design Motifs and Patterns

Meher's Sambalpuri textiles are characterized by their unique design motifs and patterns, which are inspired by the natural world and traditional tribal art. These designs include geometric shapes, floral patterns, and animal motifs, all of which are meticulously woven into the fabric using the Ikat technique. Meher's ability to combine traditional designs with modern sensibilities has made his textiles highly sought after by fashion designers and collectors alike.

Color Usage and Dyes

Meher's use of color is another hallmark of his Sambalpuri textiles. He employs a wide range of natural dyes, including indigo, madder, and pomegranate, to create a vivid and varied color palette. Meher's skill in dyeing and weaving allows him to create complex color combinations and gradients, resulting in textiles that are both visually stunning and technically impressive.

In summary, Surendra Meher's mastery of the Ikat weaving process, his unique design motifs and patterns, and his use of natural dyes and color make his Sambalpuri textiles truly exceptional.[4]

Sambalpuri Textile and Humanitarian Approaches

Sambalpuri textile is a traditional handloom art form that originated in the western part of Odisha, India. Known for its intricate designs and vibrant colors, this textile craft employs a unique tie-dyeing technique. Sambalpuri textiles are highly prized for their beauty and quality, often used to create sarees, dress materials, and various clothing items. In recent years, there has been a growing interest in leveraging Sambalpuri textiles to promote humanitarian

causes. Many organizations and individuals are using this traditional art form to raise awareness about issues such as poverty, gender inequality, and environmental degradation. By utilizing Sambalpuri textiles as a medium for their messages, these groups can reach a broader audience and engage people in a meaningful way.[5]

History of Sambalpuri Textile

Origins and Evolution

Sambalpuri textile is a traditional handwoven fabric made by the weavers of Sambalpur, a city in the Indian state of Odisha. The history of Sambalpuri textile can be traced back to the 12th century when it was first mentioned in the scriptures of the Jagannath Temple in Puri. The fabric was originally made for the royalty and the aristocracy.

Over the years, the weaving techniques and designs of Sambalpuri textile have evolved. The weavers use a variety of natural fibers such as cotton, silk, and tussar to create the fabric. The process of making Sambalpuri textile involves dyeing the threads before weaving them on a handloom. The unique feature of Sambalpuri textile is the use of the "ikat" technique, where the threads are dyed in a specific pattern before weaving to create intricate designs.

Cultural Significance

Sambalpuri textile holds great cultural significance in the state of Odisha. It is an integral part of the state's cultural heritage and is worn during festivals, weddings, and other important occasions. The fabric is also used to make traditional sarees, dress materials, and other clothing items.

Sambalpuri textile is not just a piece of fabric, but it represents the rich cultural heritage of Odisha. The intricate designs and patterns on the fabric are a testament to the skill and creativity of the weavers.

Geographical Indication Status

In 2009, Sambalpuri textile was granted the Geographical Indication (GI) status by the Government of India. The GI status

ensures that only the weavers of Sambalpur can use the term "Sambalpuri" to describe the fabric. This has helped in protecting the traditional craft from imitations and has also provided a boost to the local economy.

The GI status has also helped in promoting the art of Sambalpuri textile weaving to a wider audience. It has enabled the weavers to showcase their skills and creativity to the world and has helped in preserving the rich cultural heritage of Odisha.

Sambalpuri Textile Techniques

Sambalpuri textiles are known for their unique weaving techniques and intricate designs. The textiles are made using a traditional process called ikat, which involves dyeing the yarn before weaving. This technique results in a beautiful and distinct pattern that is unique to Sambalpuri textiles.

Ikat Weaving Process

The process of ikat weaving involves tying and dyeing the yarn before it is woven. The yarn is tied in specific patterns to create the desired design. The tied yarn is then dyed in a series of colors, with the tied areas resisting the dye and creating the pattern. Once the yarn is dyed, it is woven into the final textile.

Design Motifs

Sambalpuri textiles feature a variety of design motifs, including animals, birds, flowers, and geometric patterns. These motifs are often inspired by nature and the local culture. The designs are created using the ikat weaving process and are unique to each textile.

Color Dyeing Methods

Sambalpuri textiles are known for their vibrant colors, which are achieved using natural dyes. The dyes are made from a variety of sources, including plants, roots, and flowers. Each color is carefully chosen to complement the design of the textile. The dyeing process is time-consuming and requires skill and expertise to achieve the desired results.[6]

Humanitarian Approaches in Textile Production

Fair Trade Practices

Sambalpuri textiles are produced using fair trade practices that ensure that the artisans who create them receive fair compensation for their work. These practices are designed to promote social and environmental sustainability, as well as economic development in the communities where the textiles are produced. Fair trade practices help to ensure that the artisans who create Sambalpuri textiles are able to earn a living wage and support their families.

Sustainable Manufacturing

Sambalpuri textiles are produced using sustainable manufacturing methods that minimize their impact on the environment. These methods include the use of natural dyes, which are derived from plants and other organic materials, as well as the use of renewable energy sources. Sustainable manufacturing practices help to reduce the environmental footprint of textile production and promote the long-term health and well-being of the planet.

Artisan Welfare Initiatives

Sambalpuri textile production is supported by a range of artisan welfare initiatives that help to promote the well-being of the artisans who create these textiles. These initiatives include access to healthcare, education, and other social services, as well as training and support for artisan entrepreneurship. Artisan welfare initiatives help to ensure that the artisans who create Sambalpuri textiles are able to thrive and build sustainable livelihoods for themselves and their families.

Preservation of Heritage

Sambalpuri textile is an important part of the cultural heritage of the region. The textile has been passed down from generation to generation, and it is an integral part of the identity of the people of Sambalpur. By preserving the traditional weaving techniques and designs, Sambalpuri textile has helped to keep the cultural heritage of the region alive. The textile has also gained recognition at the national and international level, which has helped to raise awareness about the cultural richness of the region.

Community Development Programs

Sambalpuri textile has been used as a tool for community development programs in the region. Many organizations have worked with weavers to improve their skills, provide them with access to markets, and promote their products. These programs have helped to create a sustainable livelihood for weavers and their families. In addition, some organizations have used the proceeds from the sale of Sambalpuri textile to fund community development projects such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure development.

In conclusion, Sambalpuri textile has had a significant impact on the local communities in the Sambalpur district of Odisha. The textile has provided a source of income for many families, preserved the cultural heritage of the region, and promoted community development programs. The continued support and promotion of Sambalpuri textile can help to ensure that these benefits are sustained for future generations.[7]

Conclusion

Surendra Meher's impact on Sambalpuri textiles exemplifies the dynamic nature of traditional arts. His skillful blend of respect for the past with a forward-thinking vision guarantees that Sambalpuri textiles remain a vibrant and evolving form of artistic expression. Through his dedication, the intricate beauty and rich cultural heritage of these textiles continue to be celebrated and preserved for future generations.

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Field Study to Barpali, interview with Master weaver Dr. Surendra Meher- Dt.12.02.2022

Field Study to Barpali, interview with Master weaver Dr. Surendra Meher- Dt.12.02.2022, depiction of Humanitarian approaches through the messages of Mahima Goswami.

Field Study to Barpali, interview with Master weaver Dr. Surendra Meher- Dt.12.02.2022, depiction of Humanitarian approaches through the messages of Lord Krishna in Bhagvat Gita.

Dr. Atula Kumar Pradhan
Assistant Professor & Head
School of History
Gangadhar Meher University, Sambalpur, Odisha

Smt. Pratima Panda
Ph.d Research Scholar
Gangadhar Meher University, Sambalpur
Lecturer in History Women's College, Rayagada, Odisha

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A Comprehensive Study of the Operational Performance and Schemes of Karnataka State Financial Corporation

• **CMA. Dr. Trinesha. T.R.**

• **Dr. Ramesha. M.C**

India is one of the fastest-growing economies in the world, and since the implementation of the New Economic Policy (NEP) in 1991, the country has focused on Liberalization, Privatization, and Globalization (LPG), which has significantly boosted the role of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). Over the past five decades, MSMEs have been a key driver of socio-economic development, contributing to the creation of flexible, innovative, and competitive industrial structures. They play a vital role in the growth of the national economy by generating employment and fostering industrial progress. Karnataka is one of the topmost five industrial states in India, with a strong base of large and medium-scale enterprises that has created a vibrant small-scale sector. This has provided considerable employment opportunities and spurred economic development in the state. The Karnataka State Financial Corporation (KSFC) plays a dynamic role in supporting MSMEs by catering to their long-term and short-term financial needs. KSFC assists in setting up new micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs)., as well as in the expansion, modernization, besides diversification of existing ones, thereby contributing to the overall industrial growth of Karnataka. The main focus of this study is to examine the operational performance of KSFC in providing monetary assistance through various schemes. The paper aims to explore the different schemes offered by KSFC and assess their influence

on the development of MSMEs in the state. The study aims to assess the effectiveness of these financial support mechanisms and provide insights into how KSFC has contributed to the growth and development of the MSME sector in Karnataka.

Keywords : *Single Window Scheme, Management Information Systems, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Performance, Micro Finance, Disbursements.*

1. Introduction

The Karnataka State Financial Corporation (KSFC) is committed to supporting the ambitions of entrepreneurs by offering comprehensive financial assistance. It plays a vital role in fostering industrial growth by providing funding to small and medium-scale industries (SMEs) across Karnataka,

contributing to the nation's self-sufficiency. The primary aim of State Financial Corporations (SFCs), like KSFC, is to substitute the development of SMEs, enhancing regional industrial progress. KSFC offers a variety of financial services, including long-term and short-term credits, capital lease, installment credit finance, trade banking, and other monetary services. The corporation's financial assistance covers a wide array of industrial and service segments. As a Category One trade banker approved by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), KSFC's, Trade Banking Division handles activities such as public issue management, loan syndication, bill discounting, contribution to non-convertible unsecured bond, and factorization services.

KSFC's sources of funds include share capital, credit lines from the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), commercial banks, fixed deposits, seed capital, and recoveries from previous loans, as well as income generated from its financial services. The corporation provides long-term loans for various purposes, such as establishing new firms, expanding existing ones, modernizing businesses, upgrading technology, and addressing working capital needs.

One of the most significant impacts of KSFC is its contribution to the empowerment of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). The financial assistance provided by KSFC has led to substantial improvements in the production, employment, and

productivity of MSMEs in Karnataka, driving positive growth. In summary, KSFC has been a key player in promoting industrial development and boosting the state's domestic product through its support for the MSME sector.

2. Objectives of the study

Following are the objectives of the study

1. Studying the various schemes and provisions of KSFC
2. Examines the operational performance of the KSFC

3. Methodology

The present paper recommends to highlight the various schemes and operational performance of the Karnataka State Finance Corporation. Secondary data is used for this study. The secondary information has been collected from the operative statistics and yearly reports of the Karnataka State Financial Corporation and website.

4. Loan Dispersed by KSFC through Single Window Scheme

The Single Window Scheme (SWS) has been in effect at the Corporation since 1991. In 1997, the scheme underwent a comprehensive review, and several checks and balances were introduced to ensure the quality of credit dispensation. Since then, there has been a significant improvement in the quality of Working Capital Term Loan (WCTL) accounts approved by the Corporation.

The scheme's primary objective is to provide timely and adequate working capital assistance, along with a term loan for fixed assets, to MSMEs establishing new projects with KSFC's support. The scheme is applicable to new MSMEs engaged in manufacturing activities, with a total project outlay (including working capital requirements) not exceeding Rs. 100 lakhs. The minimum assistance provided is Rs. 2.00 lakhs per unit, while the maximum assistance is Rs. 30.00 lakhs per unit. The WCTL component should generally not exceed the term loan component. If there are valid reasons to exceed this limit, explicit approval from the next higher level loan sanctioning authority must be obtained.

Table : 1
Loan Dispersed by KSFC through Single Window Scheme

Year	No. of MSMEs	Amount Disbursed (Rs. in Lakhs)	% Of the total Amount Disbursed
2019-2020	48	1479.80	25.89
2020-2021	27	877	15.34
2021-2022	32	1455.40	25.46
2022-2023	19	890.75	15.58
2023-2024	19	1012.20	17.71
Total	145	5715.15	100
Average	29	1143.03	
CAGR		-0.0731	-7.313%

Source : Published Annual Reports of KSFC.

It can be seen from the above table that the data on loans distributed by the Karnataka State Financial Corporation (KSFC) under its Single Window Scheme from 2019 to 2024 shows a declining trend in both the number of MSMEs receiving loans and the total loan amount disbursed. A total of Rs. 5715.15 lakhs were disbursed to 145 Micro Small Medium enterprises, with an average loan of Rs. 1143.03 lakhs per MSME. The highest loan disbursement occurred in 2019-2020, while subsequent years saw a decrease, with 2020-2021 experiencing the lowest disbursement. The Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) for loan disbursed is -7.313%, indicating a reduction over time. This decline suggests potential issues such as reduced demand for loans or a shift in the economic environment, highlighting the need for KSFC to re-evaluate its approach to better support MSMEs.

5. Interest Subsidy Scheme for Women Entrepreneurs.

Women entrepreneurs are recognized as key drivers of growth and vital contributors to the Indian economy. KSFC actively encourages women entrepreneurs to establish new units in both the manufacturing and service sectors, as well as to expand, modernize, or diversify existing units. The minimum loan size for all activities is Rs. 5.00 lakhs, except for current units undergoing expansion or modernization, with the maximum loan size set at Rs. 200.00 lakhs. The unit must be owned by women entrepreneurs, and in the case

of partnership firms or companies, women partners or directors must collectively hold at least 51 percent of the shares. KSFC will provide loans at the applicable normal interest rate, which the promoters are required to pay. However, the effective interest rate for the borrower will be 4 percent per annum. The difference between KSFC's normal lending rate (e.g., 10 percent) and the effective interest rate of 4 percent will be reimbursed monthly by the Karnataka State Women Development Corporation. To qualify for this interest subsidy, entrepreneurs must remain prompt in repaying installments. The interest subsidy will be available for a period of five years from the date of the first loan disbursement, including the moratorium period.

Table : 2

Interest Subsidy Scheme for Women Entrepreneurs

Year	Number	Amount Disbursed (Rs.in.Lakhs)	% Of the total
2019-2020	239	21402.85	18.70
2020-2021	147	12480.15	10.90
2021-2022	133	14297.20	12.49
2022-2023	246	34842.30	30.44
2023-2024	258	31422.75	27.45
Total	1023	114445.25	100
Average	204.6	22889.05	
CAGR		0.0798	7.97%

Source: Published Annual Reports of KSFC

The table highlights the assistance provided by the Karnataka State Financial Corporation (KSFC) to women entrepreneurs from 2019-2020 to 2023-2024. Over this five-year period, KSFC supported a total of 1,023 women entrepreneurs, with a total loan disbursement of Rs. 114,445.25 lakhs. The average annual disbursement was approximately Rs. 22,889.05 lakhs, benefiting an average of 204.6 women entrepreneurs. While there were fluctuations in the number of women supported and the loan amounts disbursed each year, the overall trend shows a steady increase in the total amount distributed, with a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 7.97%. The most significant growth occurred in 2022-2023, and the total support to

women entrepreneurs further increased in 2023-2024. Despite the fluctuations in specific years, the data reflects KSFC's growing commitment to empowering women entrepreneurs, with continued growth in financial support over the years.

6. Interest Subsidy Scheme of Government of Karnataka for SC/ST Entrepreneurs by KSFC

The Government of Karnataka (GoK) has introduced an Interest Subsidy Scheme to support SC/ST entrepreneurs in establishing or expanding micro and small-scale industrial, service, or business units. This scheme also covers the modernization of existing units. The loan must be fully owned by SC/ST entrepreneurs and is available for a minimum amount of Rs. 20 lakhs, with an extreme loan limit of Rs. 10 crores, which includes both term loans and a one-time working capital of up to Rs. 50 lakhs. The repayment period is up to eight years, plus a moratorium, for loans up to Rs. 5 crores, and up to 10 years for loans above Rs. 5 crores but less than Rs. 10 crores. The actual interest rate is set at 4 percent. The Government of Karnataka will repay the variance between the normal lending rate of the Karnataka State Financial Corporation (KSFC) and the actual rate of 4 percent. The interest subsidy is applicable for a period of eight years, starting from the first loan disbursement, which includes the moratorium period.

Table : 3

Interest Subsidy Scheme of Government of Karnataka for SC/ ST Entrepreneurs by KSFC

Year	Number	Amount Disbursed (Rs.in.Lakhs)	% Of the total
2019-2020	221	14792	13.74
2020-2021	192	16102	14.96
2021-2022	177	16460.58	15.29
2022-2023	268	28665.02	26.64
2023-2024	269	31567.29	29.34
Total	1127	107586.89	100
Average	225.4	21517.37	
CAGR		0.1637	16.3843

Source : Published Annual Reports of KSFC

The Interest Subsidy Scheme for SC/ST Industrialists in Karnataka, disbursed by KSFC, has shown significant growth from 2019-2020 to 2023-2024. The total amount disbursed has steadily increased, from Rs. 14,792 lakhs in 2019-2020 to Rs. 31,567.29 lakhs in 2023-2024. The number of beneficiaries has also grown, with 269 units receiving loans in 2023-2024, the highest in the five-year period. The scheme's impact is reflected in the rising percentage of total disbursement, with 2023-2024 contributing the largest share (29.34%). Over the five years, Rs. 107,586.89 lakhs were disbursed to 1,127 entrepreneurs, averaging Rs. 21,517.37 lakh per year. The Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of both the amount disbursed and the number of units is around 16 percent, indicating a strong upward trend in both financial support and participation. The scheme has successfully expanded its outreach and support for SC/ST entrepreneurs in the state.

7. Gross Sanctions, Disbursements and Credit Recovery of MSMEs by KSFC

During FY2023-24, the Corporation sanctioned loans totaling Rs.827.13 crores, covering 653 units, compared to Rs.901.10 crores for 710 cases in FY2022-23. As of 31st March 2024, the cumulative loan sanctions amounted to Rs.20,507.86 crores, benefiting 1,76,486 units.

For the same period, the Corporation disbursed Rs.613.04 crores, an increase from Rs.445.81 crores in FY2022-23. By 31st March 2024, the cumulative disbursement reached Rs.15,835.14 crores.

In FY2023-24, the Corporation recovered Rs.820.85 crores, up from Rs.763.26 crores in FY2022-23. Additionally, Rs.55.60 crores were recovered from bad debts [(D-III) (pre-MOU), D-III (Prudential), and (MR)] during FY2023-24.

Table: 4.
Annual growth rates of sanctions, dispersements and credit recovery. (Amount in Rs. crores)

Year	Grass sanctions During the year		Disburse-ments	Annual growth rate	Recovery	Annual growth rate
	During the year	Amount				
2014-15	1092	672.15	553.62	---	814	---
2015-16	1111	731.94	566.36	2.30	841.10	3.32
2016-17	1059	733.43	614.38	8.47	884.73	5.18
2017-18	1037	842.13	561.21	-8.65	787.91	-10.94
2018-19	1056	1098.73	665.90	18.65	736.35	-6.54
2019-20	710	667.81	727.90	9.31	720.85	-2.10
2020-21	445	401.66	432.96	-40.51	638.68	-11.39
2021-22	461	493.25	386.46	-10.74	741.89	16.15
2022-23	710	901.10	445.81	15.35	763.71	2.94
2023-24	653	827.13	613.04	37.51	820.85	7.48

Source: Published Annual Reports of KSFC

The data on Gross Sanctions, Disbursements, and Recovery to MSMEs by KSFC from 2014-15 to 2023-24 shows fluctuations influenced by economic conditions, including the impact of the pandemic. While the number of sanctioned units and disbursements peaked in some years, they dropped significantly in 2020-21. However, recovery has been steady since 2021-22, indicating improved loan repayment performance. Despite volatility, both

sanctions and disbursements have shown growth in recent years, with significant recovery in 2022-23 and 2023-24. Overall, the data highlights a positive trend in KSFC's support for MSMEs, with signs of recovery post-pandemic and a brighter outlook for the future.

8. Scheme for Micro Finance Activity

To be eligible for this scheme, Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs) must be registered as Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) and have been operational for at least five years or have a proven track record of managing a successful micro-credit program for a minimum of three years. The MFI should have obtained a rating from reputable agencies like CRISIL, CARE, ICRA, or M-CRIL, with an acceptable venture grade rating that remains valid. Additionally, the MFI must have secured a term loan from SIDBI.

The MFI must have been profitable for the past two years and exclusively serve women members. It should have a minimum outreach of 3,000 members and maintain a transparent and efficient system for accounting, Management Information Systems (MIS), and internal audits. The MFI's loan portfolio should be low risk, with its accounts audited by a Chartered Accountant firm. A separate accounting and monitoring system should be established for its microfinance operations.

The MFI must demonstrate consistent growth in its loan portfolio, membership, and net worth, and have plans to diversify its resource base further. It should also have a capable and sufficient staff to ensure proper loan appraisal, management, and monitoring. The term loan provided by the Corporation must be utilized within Karnataka for non-farm activities. The total revelation to any individual MFI by the Corporation shall not exceed Rs. 500 lakhs at any time.

9. Credit Linked Capital Subsidy Scheme

The goal of the scheme is to support the technological advancement of small-scale units or those transitioning to medium-scale units in designated products or sub-sectors. This is achieved by offering a 15 percent capital subsidy on loans taken for machinery purchases. The machinery must align with the schedule for introducing proven technologies, as approved under the scheme. The maximum subsidy available is Rs. 15 lakhs, with an investment ceiling of Rs. 100 lakhs.

10. Interest Subsidy Scheme for First-Generation Entrepreneurs

The scheme aims to provide first-generation entrepreneurs with affordable financing to establish micro and small enterprises. Projects with a total cost of up to Rs. 100 lakhs, initiated by individuals, partnership firms, or companies registered under the Companies Act for the first time, are suitable for financial support. This assistance is offered as a 6 percent interest subsidy, resulting in an effective interest rate of 8 percent.

11. Conclusion

The Karnataka State Financial Corporation (KSFC) has played a essential role in the expansion of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Karnataka, offering a wide range of financial assistance to foster industrial growth and empowerment across various sectors. Through schemes like the Single Window Scheme, support for women entrepreneurs, and the Interest Subsidy Scheme for SC/ST entrepreneurs, KSFC has contributed significantly to improving the operational capacities and financial sustainability of MSMEs in the state. The corporation's financial support has led to increased production, employment, and profitability, thereby enhancing the state's economic growth.

While the data indicates a decline in the loan disbursement under the Single Window Scheme, the increase in support for women and SC/ST entrepreneurs demonstrates KSFC's commitment to inclusive growth and social equity. The upward trend in the interest subsidy scheme for SC/ST entrepreneurs and the growing support for women entrepreneurs reflect KSFC's strategic focus on underrepresented groups, contributing to regional and national economic progress.

Additionally, the consistent growth in gross sanctions, disbursements, and recoveries over the years, especially in the post-pandemic period, highlights KSFC's ability to adapt to changing economic conditions and ensure sustainable financial assistance. The corporation's role in the recovery of bad debts and its continued focus on modernizing and expanding the MSME sector ensures long-term industrial growth and economic self-sufficiency. KSFC has been a key player in supporting the MSME sector in Karnataka, and its various schemes and financial assistance mechanisms have had a positive impact on the socio-economic development of the state. However, to further enhance its effectiveness, KSFC needs to

address the declining trend in some of its schemes and explore new approaches to better meet the needs of MSMEs in an ever-changing economic landscape.

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CMA. Dr. Trinesha. T.R.
Associate Professor of Commerce,
Government First Grade College,
Pandavapura. Mandya-571434
thimakapura.triensha617@gmail.com
M. 8105951451

Dr. Ramesha.M.C
Associate Professor of Economics
Government First Grade College
Pandavapura. Mandya-571434
reachrameshmc@gmail.com
M. 9113857743

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Frozen in Function : A Quantitative Study of Teacher Educator Freezing in Uttarakhand's Teacher Education Institutions

• **Dr. Narendra Singh Rana**

This study investigates the phenomenon of teacher educator freezing in Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) of Uttarakhand, India. Using a sample of 278 teacher educators from both elementary and secondary TEIs, the study categorizes freezing into high, average, and low levels, and further analyzes five key aspects: teaching, organizational, social, professional, and ethical. The findings indicate that a significant proportion of educators experience average levels of freezing, with notable differences across institutional types and locales, but not across gender or educational level. The study highlights systemic factors contributing to educator stagnation and offers implications for institutional improvement and policy reform.

KeyWords : *Teacher Educator Freezing, Teacher Education Institutions, Uttarakhand, Gender, Locale, Institutional Type.*

Introduction

In the evolving landscape of teacher education, the phenomenon of "freezing"—a state of professional stagnation or disengagement—has emerged as a critical concern. Teacher educators play a pivotal role in shaping future teachers, and their ability to innovate and adapt is essential to maintaining the quality of teacher education. However, systemic, institutional, and personal constraints often contribute to varying levels of professional immobility, termed here as "freezing." This study explores the prevalence and nature of teacher educator freezing in Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) located in the Indian state of Uttarakhand and examines how it varies across institutional and demographic variables.

Contemporary research emphasizes the psychological and institutional factors influencing teacher engagement. Studies by **Borman & Dowling (2021)** and **Day & Gu** (2020) highlight how lack of autonomy, rigid administrative structures, and insufficient professional development contribute to burnout and stagnation among educators. Indian research, such as that by **Sharma & Mehta (2023)**, notes the growing disparities between government and self-financed institutions in terms of work conditions and teacher satisfaction.

Chaurasia (2022) observed that systemic inertia in Indian higher education hampers innovation and leads to educator frustration, particularly in less-resourced states like Uttarakhand. **Misra and Singh (2021)**, in their study of TEIs in the hills of Uttarakhand, emphasized how institutional climate, limited autonomy, and low research opportunities foster stagnation and reduced motivation among teacher educators.

Kumar and Tiwari (2023) provided evidence of academic burnout and career stagnation among Indian college faculty due to lack of institutional support and recognition, especially in urban, self-financed institutions. **Darling-Hammond et al. (2017)** argued that continuous professional development and collaborative institutional culture are key to preventing stagnation among teacher educators globally.

Ingersoll and Strong (2019) noted that induction and mentoring programs significantly lower feelings of professional isolation and disengagement among faculty, suggesting similar interventions could reduce freezing in Indian TEIs. Furthermore, **Pathak & Rani (2021)** highlighted that workload pressure, administrative overload, and unclear job roles are often reported by educators in urban TEIs, particularly in Uttarakhand.

However, despite this growing literature on educator burnout and institutional challenges, the construct of "teacher educator freezing"—distinct from general burnout or stress—remains under-explored in both global and Indian contexts. This study addresses that gap with specific reference to Uttarakhand.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the Teacher Educator Freezing in the Teacher Education Institutions of Uttarakhand.

2. To compare the Teacher Educator Freezing with respect to the following background variables:

- Gender (Male, Female)
- Type of Institution (Government Financed, Self-Financed)
- Level of Institution (Elementary, Secondary)
- Locale of Institution (Urban, Rural)

Hypotheses

1. There is variation in teacher educator freezing in Teacher Education Institutions in Uttarakhand.
2. There is no significant difference in teacher educator freezing with reference to: Gender, Type of Institution, Level of Institution & Locale of Institution.

Research Methodology

Primary data was collected from teacher educators working in Elementary and Secondary TEIs across Uttarakhand.

Sample:

The sample included 278 teacher educators from Uttarakhand.

Table 1- Sample of the study

Variable	Categories	N
Gender	Male / Female	144 / 134
Type of Institution	Government / Self-Financed	146 / 132
Level of Institution	Elementary / Secondary	44 / 234
Locale	Urban / Rural	183 / 95

Tool Used :

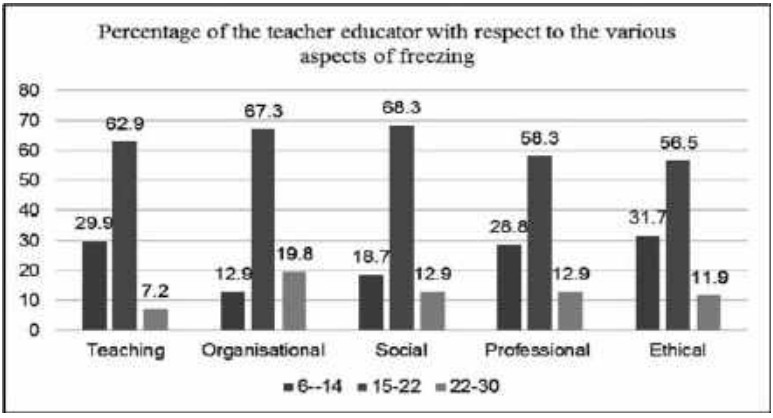
A Teacher Educator Freezing Scale (self-constructed) was administered, measuring five aspects: Teaching, Organizational, Social, Professional, and Ethical.

Statistical Techniques :

Descriptive statistics, t-tests, and percentage analysis were used for interpretation.

Results and Analysis

Overall Freezing Levels : – High: 29.9% – Average : 57.2% – Low : 12.9%



Graph 1 : Various levels of different aspects of the teacher educator freezing in the Teacher Education institutions

The variation in teacher educator freezing across different aspects highlights the complex challenges faced by teacher educators.

Table 2 - t-Test Analysis

Variable	Category Comparison	t-value	Significance ($p < .05$)	Interpretation
Gender	Male vs Female	1.12	Not Significant	No significant difference
Type of Institution	Govt. vs Self-Financed	2.73	Significant	Self-financed higher freezing
Level of Institution	Elementary vs Secondary	0.98	Not Significant	No significant difference
Locale	Urban vs Rural	2.15	Significant	Urban higher freezing

Interpretation of t-Test Results:

Gender: The t-value of 1.12 indicates no statistically significant difference in freezing levels between male and female teacher educators.

Type of Institution : A significant difference is observed (t = 2.73), suggesting that teacher educators in self-financed institutions experience higher levels of freezing compared to those in government institutions. This may be attributed to unstable work conditions, lack of support, or insufficient professional growth opportunities.

Level of Institution : With a t-value of 0.98, there is no significant difference between elementary and secondary teacher educators in terms of freezing.

Locale : A significant t-value of 2.15 implies that urban educators report more freezing, possibly due to institutional overload, bureaucratic procedures, or limited autonomy in urban setups.

Discussion

The study reveals that institutional variables, especially type of institution and locale, significantly impact teacher educator freezing in Uttarakhand. Gender and level of institution do not exhibit substantial influence. Self-financed institutions appear to exert more pressure, resulting in higher professional stagnation. Likewise, urban institutions—with their administrative complexities—contribute more to teaching and social freezing than rural ones.

Conclusion

This study confirms the existence of varying levels of teacher educator freezing in Uttarakhand's TEIs. The most prominent freezing is seen in ethical and teaching domains, especially among educators in self-financed and urban institutions. Institutional support, equitable workload distribution, and targeted professional development programs are recommended to reduce professional stagnation and enhance educator engagement.

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Dr. Narendra Singh Rana
Assistant Professor (B.Ed.)
T.S.R. Government Degree College Nainidanda,
Pauri Garhwal, Uttarakhand
narendrarana001@gmail.com
Contact Number: 9756491475

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Ideology and Medium : A Creative Journey

Sunil Babasaheb Ningule • Prashant Kuwar • Dr. Megha Atrey Purohit

Across sculpture, painting, video art and installation art, Shakuntala Kulkarni has done much to become a distinctive artist of Indian contemporary art. She has done extensive research on difficult subjects such as tradition, urbanization and the role of women in society. This paper highlights the artistic evolution of one of India's leading contemporary artists, from her early attempts at painting to her later studies in installation art. It looks at how the artist's creative journey reflects a deep connection with her personal identity, cultural history and social narratives. Her career shows a progression from vibrant, subtle paintings to rigorous, immersive installation works, pushing boundaries both conceptually and visually.

The exploration of the female form, which symbolized a dialogue between society and the self, was deeply rooted in her paintings even as early as her career. Whether they were vibrant canvases or intricate mixed-media pieces, her work used light, shadow, texture, and colour to create layers of meaning. But the limitations of two-dimensional mediums led her to a more dynamic interaction with space over time. This paper will also analyse an important work of her installation art that tackles contemporary feminist issues using a combination of sculpture and performance. This is not only an influential speech but also a significant event in her creative development. Through it, the artist questions the nature of art itself and challenges the audience to reconsider their assumptions about space, form and narrative. The paper concludes with a discussion of the broader context of Indian contemporary art, including how its transition from painting to installation art reflects significant changes in the global art scene. The references provided for the analysis are carefully selected from Marathi and English literature.

Keyword : *Sculpture, Painting , Installation, Contemporary art, Transformation*

Introduction

Shakuntala Kulkarni began her art education in a traditional environment, where she developed her skills and gained a basic understanding of various art techniques. Born in Mumbai, Kulkarni's early interest in art was influenced by the rich cultural surroundings she was exposed to. She completed her undergraduate studies at the Sir J.J. School of Art in Mumbai, a prestigious institution known for its emphasis on traditional art forms. Kulkarni developed strong technical abilities in drawing, painting and sculpture during her time at Sir J.J. School of Art.

Shakuntala Kulkarni's art is distinctive as it deals deeply with themes of tradition and the hardships of contemporary life. Her first works focused on the female form and used vibrant colours and symbolic images to explore the role of women in Indian society. She expanded her themes, moving from painting to installation art, reflecting her growing concern with urbanisation, gender politics and the interaction between the body and space.

Institutional art has evolved significantly as a genre over the past few decades, allowing artists to find new ways to interact with space and audience. Within this evolution, Shakuntala Kulkarni has emerged as a key figure, known for creating immersive and thought-provoking environments with her distinctive approach. Her installations challenge conventional art, while also engaging with personal, cultural and environmental issues. This article comprehensively analyses Kulkarni's installation art and focuses on three of his major works, which showcase his innovative use of space and material. We aim to highlight the thematic depth and artistic significance of Kulkarni's contribution to contemporary art through this installation.

Methodology

This essay is based on an analysis of Shakuntala Kulkarni's paintings and installations. The entirety of the data included in the paper came from secondary sources. Analyzing the artist's creative process, theme evolution, media shifts, and artwork structure is the main goal of the study. The artist's official website, art gallery

archives, art reviews, and art history publications were all thoroughly examined for this purpose. Lastly, the reference books offered have greatly advanced our knowledge of the artist's medium, subject matter, and style.

Tables 1 and 2, which include thorough descriptions of a few of the artist's paintings and installations, serve as the study's main foundation. The study analysis is created by methodically classifying the data in these tables, including title, year of creation, media, size, and duration. Primary sources, such as in-person interviews with the artist, on-site observations, or physical inspection of the works, are unavailable because this study is solely dependent on secondary sources. Additionally, the breadth of the research is somewhat constrained by the small number of works in the tables.

Thematic and artistic analysis

Kulkarni's installations are characterized by their innovative use of space and materials, creating immersive environments that challenge the traditional boundaries of art. Her work often uses minimalist aesthetics to focus on the interplay between light, texture, and form. By integrating natural materials with modern techniques, Kulkarni bridges the gap between the tangible and the ephemeral, inviting viewers to experience art in a new and dynamic way.

Echoes of Silence: exemplifies Kulkarni's ability to evoke emotional and intellectual responses through simple yet profound means. The use of translucent fabrics and intricate embroidery creates a delicate, introspective environment that encourages the viewer to contemplate themes of memory and absence.

Resonant Landscapes: Demonstrates Kulkarni's skill in combining tactile and digital elements to create a rich, multi-sensory experience. The combination of natural materials with digital projections not only enhances the visual impact of the installation but also emphasises the fluid and interconnected nature of the natural and built environments.

Caryatid - A Viewpoint: The static rhythm of the vertical pillars and fences helped create the experience of fragmented space and controlled the movement and vision of the audience. It also helped create a zone of constraint for questioning, sometimes prying gazes that could frame and pierce the female body, thereby addressing

issues such as fear and isolation experienced by women in a male-dominated society. The articulation of physical space was explored at a different level. In fact, the viewer designed (defined) the entire physical and temporal space by moving between the pillars, thus transforming the role of the viewer into that of an actor.

Early exhibitions and recognition

Following his formal education, Kulkarni began his professional journey as an artist. His early exhibitions showcased a variety of works that reflected his evolving style and thematic interests. These early shows played a significant role in establishing his presence in the art community and attracted the attention of critics and collectors. Kulkarni's ability to integrate traditional motifs with contemporary themes set him apart from his peers and marked the beginning of his artistic identity.

Development of artistic style

As Kulkarni's career progressed, she began experimenting with installation art, a departure from her earlier focus on traditional mediums. This shift allowed her to explore new ways of engaging with space and material, resulting in immersive and thought-provoking installations. Her works began to reflect complex themes such as memory, identity, and environmental concerns, demonstrating her innovative approach to contemporary art. This period of experimentation and evolution was significant in defining her artistic identity and establishing her reputation as a leading contemporary artist.

The journey from painting to installation art

Kulkarni's shift from painting to installation art represents a change not only in medium but also in artistic philosophy. This section will examine how his initial focus on the two-dimensional canvas gradually transformed into a more expansive and spatially detailed form of expression. The reasons behind this shift will be explored, such as the limitations he may have felt in expressing certain socio-political issues through painting alone.

Table 1

Structure of artist Shakuntala Kulkarni's painting works

Sr. No.	Title	Period			Size	Year of artwork	Usable Materials
		Up to 25 years	From 25 to 50	51 to present			
1.	And when she roars the universe trembles			✓	4 feet × 6 feet	2007	Mixed medium on canvas
2.	Untitled		✓		76 × 57 cm	1988-89	Water colour medium on paper

Painting

Shakuntala Kulkarni's early paintings depict deep social and cultural contexts towards women. Her paintings clearly show the blend of the rules of traditional society and the complexities of modern life with the female figure. Her choice of colours, texture of figures, and background elements highlight the issues faced by Indian women.

Shakuntala's work has evolved through many transformations over the decades. Beginning with painting, drawing and graphics, she moved into sculptural installations and sculptures in unconventional materials, working with traditional artisans. She has been associated with theatre and film, and furthering this interest, she has explored the mediums of video and photo-performance. Her noted recent works include the multi-channel video performance and several cane sculptures seen for the first time in her exhibition at this gallery, titled 'Of Bodies, Amour and Cages'. She continues to work on an ongoing series of cane sculptures.

Shakuntala will undoubtedly continue to explore different mediums to express her evolving concerns. This exhibition of her

paintings has given us a chance to focus on an essential element of the artist's creative processes. It once again underlines, if underlining is needed, the power and versatility of the oldest medium at our disposal-drawing.

Artist : Shakuntala Kulkarni

Title : And when she roars the universe trembles

Year : 2007

Medium : Mixed media on canvas

Estimated size : 4 feet x 6 feet

Image Rights : https://www.gallerychemould.com/exhibitions/82-and-when-she-roared-the-universe-quaked-shakuntala-kulkarni/

And when she roars the universe trembles: Shakuntala Kulkarni sees the woman's creative and constructive body in this painting as a site of both "otherness" and empowerment. She confronts the limitations of epic, "timeless" stories and their cultural representations, angrily breaking them or subverting them, especially in relation to women's embodied identity, by adopting her unfamiliar body, terrifying paradoxes and a vocabulary of sculptural gestures.

Kulkarni strongly resists the fantasy of an "eternal" and "natural" order, which is uniformly arranged to maintain stability. She also rejects the reductionism of speaking from the position (all men are perpetrators, all women are victims), just as she deliberately avoids representing an "acceptable" female body. Hence, women who have aborted the fetus from their wombs, which can cause deep wounds to others, in Kulkarni's work; they scream and tremble; they are strangely (sometimes comically) "excessive" and are serious, disciplined, messianic warriors.

Artist : Shakuntala Kulkarni

Title: Untitled Year :1988-89

Medium : Watercolour on paper

Estimated size : 76 x 57 cm

Image Rights : https://jnaf.org/artist/shakuntala-kulkarni/

Untitled : This painting represents his transformative approach, conveying deep social and personal messages through the use of colours. Kulkarni was obsessed with colour, form and abstraction in the early years of her career, as most second-year artists are. In the mid-80s, her concerns shifted from the human plight to gender-specific body politics. Since then, Kulkarni has expanded her perspective to look at violations of the body in public and private spaces, in addition to offering glimpses of the lives of urban women.

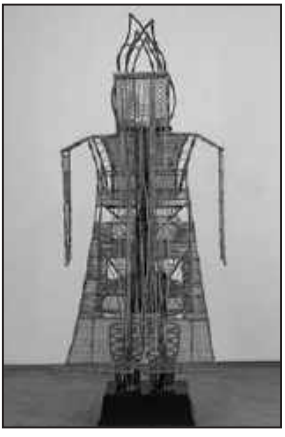
Through colours, he has depicted the inner sensitivity of a woman and her reaction to the outside world. The blend and spread of colours in this painting has special significance, which reveals the unseen layers of a woman's soul.

Table 2

Structure of artist Shakuntala Kulkarni's painting works

Sr. No.	Title	Period			Size	Year of artwork	Usable Materials
		Up to 25 years	From 25 to 50	51 to present			
1.	Head Gears			✓	Variable each	2012	Weaving threads and wooden stand

Installation Art Shakuntala Kulkarni's installation art gave a new direction to her art journey. Through installation art she established a direct dialogue with the audience. In this medium she has presented deep and wide social issues through sculptures, videos, and performance arts.



Artist : **Shakuntala Kulkarni**

Title : **Head Gears**

Year : 2012

Material : Thread weaving and wooden stand

Size : Variable each

Image Credit: http://www.shakuntalakulkarni.com/bodies-armour-cages.html

Head Gears 2012 : The body of citizens, especially female citizens, faces pervasive threats as we live through an era of increasing terror and violence. No longer confined to declared battlefields and conflict zones, these forces have infiltrated both public and intimate spaces, civilian and domestic contexts. The bodily self can be humiliated, subjugated, imprisoned, controlled by religious order, dictatorial whim, or popular sentiment. It can

be denied the right to mobility and expression. A body in need of protection has to resort to Armor: an outer skin that cannot be easily dented or pierced, an armoured body can extend its capabilities through mailed fists, spiked helmets, radiation-proof bodysuits, or enhanced fight/flight reflexes. But the body pays the price of this protection with its freedom. The Armor becomes a cage, protected by an exoskeleton, yet trapped within it.

Influence on contemporary art

More than Kulkarni's personal achievements, her impact on contemporary art is widespread. She has influenced other artists by making innovative use of space and materials and has contributed to the development of institutional art. Scholars have written articles and critical studies on her work, highlighting her important role in the contemporary art discourse. Kulkarni is an important figure in the ongoing dialogue between cultural heritage and contemporary artistic expression as she can combine traditional and modern methods.

Shakuntala Kulkarni's journey from the beginning of her art education to her career as a prominent artist reflects the depth of her vision and the social issues she raises. Her journey from painting to installation art marks a significant shift, where she established a deeper connection with the audience through space, form, and interactive elements rather than just being confined to the canvas. Her art, especially her installation art, holds a significant place in the Indian art world. This research paper is an attempt to understand various aspects of her art journey and highlight her approach to art.

Conclusion

Shakuntala Kulkarni's journey from the beginning of her art education to her career as a leading artist reflects the depth of her vision and the social issues she raised. His journey from painting to installation art marks a significant shift, where he establishes a deeper connection with the audience through space, form and interactive elements rather than being confined to the canvas. His art, especially his installation art, holds an important place in the Indian art world. This research paper is an attempt to understand the various aspects of his art journey and highlight his approach towards art.

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Sunil Babasaheb Ningule
PhD Research Scholar, (Visual Art)
Banasthali Vidyapeeth, Banasthali

Prashant Kuwar
PhD Research Scholar, (Visual Art)
Music and Fine Arts, Central Universuty of Karnataka

Dr. Megha Atrey Purohit
Assistant Professor, (Visual Art)
Banasthali Vidyapeeth, Banasthali

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An Ethnographic Study of Bodo Marriage Songs : Themes, Traditions and their Cultural Significance

• Rajib Daimary

The Bodos are a large ethnic group of northeastern India. They are very rich in terms of folk literature and culture. Among them, a variety of oral traditions and colourful cultures have existed since ancient times. This paper will study the marriage songs of the Bodos. There will be studies about how their marriage songs have been passed down and used in society. Marriage songs are an essential part of the oral tradition. Marriage songs can have a significant impact on society. It plays an enormous role in society. Marriage is a social institution of human society. Marriage songs of various themes can be found in the Bodo society. The purpose of the paper is to provide information about marriage songs and to explore their role in society. Apart from these, the paper will also provide insight into the social and cultural significance of the Bodos, helping to preserve their oral tradition.

Keywords : *Bodo community, Marriage songs, Oral tradition, Cultural identity, Indigenous heritage*

Introduction :

The Bodo is one of the largest ethnic groups of Assam, a northeastern state of India. Presently, the Bodos are primarily concentrated in the BTR (Bodoland Territorial Region) region of Assam. Apart from this, the Bodo people are also spread across the states of Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, and Tripura, among others, in Northeast India. Additionally, the Bodo people are also found in West Bengal, a state located on the western border of Assam. They have their language, colourful culture, customs, traditions, and so on. Their language is also known as Bodo or

Boro. The Bodo language belongs to the Tibeto-Burman branch of the Sino-Tibetan language family.

Humans live in a society. They create different cultures, traditions, and customs in society. Marriage is a social institution of civilised society. It is a sacred union between a man and a woman, marking the beginning of a new life together. Through marriage, the two families establish a new relationship. That is why British anthropologist Lucy Mair said, "marriage has been defined as a union between a man and a woman such that children born to the woman are recognised legitimate offspring of both parents. Marriage creates new social relationships and reciprocal rights between the spouses, between each and the kin of the other, and establishes what will be the rights and status of the children when they are born. Every society has recognised procedures for creating such relationships and rights, and for making it known that they have been created." (Quoted in K. Brahma, 2015, p. 16)

The word 'haba' is used in Bodo to mean the word 'marriage' or 'wedding' in English. The word 'haba' is formed by the union of the two words 'ha' and 'ba.' 'Ha' is a noun, which means soil or earth, and 'ba' is a verb, which means to bear on the back. However, it means to bear the soil or earth, i.e., to take the great responsibility of the new married life. Thus, in the Bodo wedding, the Barlampha explains to the bride and bridegroom the primary purpose of the marriage by dancing as "Nwi phisaphwr ang jerwi bikhungao hakhwo badwng bibdinw nwnswrbw be mulugkhwo badw songsarkhwo badw." (Hello dear, just as I have carried the earth on my back, so do you.) However, in simple terms, it means that you, the newly married couple, must unite to bring a new person into the world and continue it. Marriage is an integral part of human life.

Marriage is a significant part of social life, which can be likened to a festival. There appeared to be mutual support among the Bodos at the wedding. When someone gets married in the village, everyone comes together to help with the preparations. It signifies the mutual understanding and solidarity among them. The marriage song is an integral part of the Bodo marriage ceremony. It occupies a vital place in the field of folk literature. Wedding songs have been a prevalent part of Bodo society since ancient times.

Discussion :

There are six marriage systems among the Bodos. These are–

(i) Swngnanwi laynay haba (Marriage according to standard practice or arranged marriage)

(ii) Gwrzia haba (Marriage by Service)

(iii) Kharsonnay haba (Entering the bride into the house of the bridegroom before the settlement of marriage)

(iv) Dongkha haba (Marrying a widow by social custom and settlement at her home forever)

(v) Bwnanwi khalamnay haba (Marriage by stealing a bride)

(vi) Dwnkharlaynanwi zanay haba (Elopement Marriage).

The most widely accepted and popularly respected marriage of the Bodo society is the *'Swngnanwi Laynay Haba'* (Marriage according to standard practice or arranged marriage). Hence, they celebrate this marriage by dancing and singing songs. It is through this marriage system that the customs of Bodo society regarding marriage come to appear. The main religion of the Bodos is the *Bathwo*. This marriage ceremony is conducted according to the rituals of the Bathwo religion. These customs help in recognising the Bodos as a community with a beautiful, unique culture in the world. Men and women of both sexes take an active part in the marriage of the Bodos. During this marriage ceremony, they play traditional musical instruments, including the Siphung (a long bamboo flute), Zotha (cymbals), Gongona (a jaw harp), and Khawang, and dance merrily to a variety of songs. On the day of the wedding, the bridegroom's family is happy that they have found the bride, while the bride's family is sad that they have to send their daughter to someone else's new family. The marriage songs of the Bodos can be divided into the following categories.

Joking Songs:

Joking songs occupy a significant place in the Bodo wedding. The Bodo wedding is also a place for fun, accompanied by an abundance of food. Therefore, joking songs can also be found at Bodo weddings. At the wedding, the bride's party jokes at the groom's party and the groom's party jokes at the bride's party. Joking songs can be divided into some categories. Like- Joking to Bwirathi, Joking to Barlampha, Joking to Bridegroom, etc.

Joking to Bwirathi :

Bwirathi occupies a vital place in the Bodo wedding. Swngnanwi laynay haba, or arranged marriage of the Bodos, does not take place without Bwirathi. The groom's party takes four women with them when they go to bring the bride. They wear red-coloured Dokhona (a long piece of cloth that Bodo women wrap around their bodies, i.e., the main garment of Bodo women) and Zwmgra (an attire used by Bodo women to cover the upper body or chest). They are called Bwirathi. Two are unmarried, and the other two are married. The married Bwirathis are referred to as 'Gor Bwirathi' and the unmarried Bwirathis are referred to as 'Aytha Bwirathi.' Only women who are experienced or skilled in household chores are selected as Bwirathis. At the wedding, their primary function is to cut the betel nuts and distribute them to the people of the bride's party. The bridesmaids sing the following song to jokes Bwirathi-

Oi bŏirathi lolia,
Nŏnni babaṅcin goy khaonaykhou
Zalia zalia,
Zalia-zalia. (Brahma, 1960, p. 26)

English rendering:

Oh, bride's woman,
The gentle shake
Of your waist
Cannot induce us to take
The betel which you split
In idleness. No, of it
We will not partake. (Ibid, p. 159)

At the wedding, the bridesmaids sing songs based on the Bwirathi's appearance to joke with them.

Wi lagwphwr ragao ragao hay
Ragao ragao,
Bwirathi zanayphwra hathay haraorao.
(Brahma, 2007, p. 6)

English rendering :

Hey friends
They have uneven teeth.
That becomes bwirathi.

Joking to Barlampha: Barlampha also plays a central role in the Bodo wedding. The person who dances in the wedding on behalf of the bridegroom's party is called the Barlampha. The widower does not get to take charge of the Barlampha. It is associated with the folk beliefs of the Bodos. His responsibility in the marriage is not less; he must be present from the beginning to the end of the marriage. However, he leads the bridegroom's party. The bridesmaids sing the following song to mock the Barlampha–

Barlamphani athinga thengon gon nubay,
Barlamphani udwikhwo bambur bur nubay.

(Ibid, p. 6)

English rendering:

Hey Barlampha, your calf is tiny.
Hey Barlampha, you are pot-bellied.

Then, they sing the following song to make fun of Barlampha.

Bwirathiphwr hay bwirathiphwr
May mwthini bilai,
Barlampha zanay houaphwra
Binanaophwrni phisay. (Ibid, p. 6)

English rendering:

Hey bwirathi, hey bwirathi
Paddy leaves of a handful of string,
The men who became barlampha were the husbands of the sisters.

Joking to the Bridegroom :

In the Bodo wedding, the bridegroom is joked at by the bride's party as much as possible. Sometimes they joke by complaining about the things given by the bridegroom. Rice beer and pork are essential in the Bodo wedding. They sing songs to the bridegroom, telling him that the rice beer offered by the bridegroom is not of good quality, and the pork too. It is how the song unfolds–

Haba zińlap zińlap,
Canba gŏlaoni dinao.

Ukhum becani cilimala,
Ŏi houa gŏdan, nŏnni zoualay
Melema-melema.
Enzur mukhani gŏmŏthiṅ,
Ŏi hŏua gŏdan, nŏnni zŏualay
Khŏithiṅ thiṅ.
Maru dubcaṅni olodor,
Ŏi hŏua gŏdan, nŏṅni habani
Oma burŏini bedor. (Op. Cit., p. 24)

English rendering:

Your marriage has taken place
In the season of long days, oh new man!
There is the centipede on the leaves,
And your wine is sour, oh young man!
There is the cockroach
Nestling on the wall of the hut;
Oh, new man. (Ibid, p. 157)

Apart from this, songs related to the groom's appearance, body shape, etc., are also found in Bodo folk songs. Such as-

Nŏlŏ barini daobo gŏlŏnda
Zŏṅha zawŏiya udŏi gŏlŏnda. (Ibid, p. 23)

English rendering:

Like the pod-bellied crane
Of the marshy land,
Our son-in-law also
Is pod-bellied. (Ibid, p. 156)

Hazŏ khoroni ayŏi dŏi rou rou
Zŏṅha zawoya ayo gucthi zarourou. (Ibid, p. 23)

English rendering:

Down flows the river from the Bhutan hills.
It makes a murmuring noise on the way.
The red lips of our son-in-law,
Oh, how fine they are! (Ibid, p. 156)

Hazŏ khoroni dŏi ra ra

Zŏṅni zawoya ayo gamca zira ra. (Ibid, p. 23)

English rendering:

With murmuring sound,
The river flows
Down the Bhutan hills.
Look there,
Our son-in-law has put on
A worn-out *dhoti*. (Ibid, p. 157)

Praising the Bride : The bride's side at the wedding is also seen singing songs in praise of the bride. They sing a song praising the bride's appearance and family lineage.

Daoboni gaṅ daokhani gaṅ

Laṅ jawyŏi laṅ,

Aṅni phisaya zwlwi mwjaṅ. (Narzi, 2003, p-47)

English rendering:

Feather of crane, feather of crow
Take son-in-law
My daughter belongs to a good family lineage.
Aizwni lay tharai lay,
Lay zawyŏi lay
Aṅni phisaya delay lay. (Ibid, p. 47)

English rendering :

My daughter has leaves like a queen (beautiful)
Her face is long like the leaves of a cardamom plant,
Oh Son-in-law! My daughter is clean like a leaf.

In the above two songs, the bride is praised by the older women of the bride's village. They compared the bride to the birds and plants of nature and asked the bridegroom to take the bride.

Advising Songs : Advising songs are also found in Bodo wedding songs. The bridegroom and bride are advised to lead a happy life in this vast world by sharing and understanding each other's sorrows and joys equally.

Advice to Bride : Advice is very important in a person's life. Sometimes someone's advice can help make a person's life successful. The human being must control the mind, body, and mouth. Otherwise, they will suffer. Therefore, during the farewell, the bride's parents advise the bride through songs, so that life can be led well. Such as–

Atiṅ gazŏb hatai orzŏb
Akhaini paoa zaiakoi
Atiṅni paoa zaiakŏi
Raizŏ patalkou zahŏido
Aiŏi zahŏidŏ.
Kŏizima tŏbŏ kŏdŏizŏ
Mancia taiŏ go giatizŏn
Dagabcŏi aiŏi dagabcŏi
Nŏma nŏmpaia dao omabadi
Homna horbai
Laoti goṅce paga dŏṅce
Gotai kabai.
Harca houanŏ horakŏi horakŏi.

(Narzi, 1957, pp.23-24)

English rendering:

Keep your space to the measure of your feet;
Tighten up the teeth as well.
Your motion of the hand is not proper.
Your motion of the feet is not to the standard.
OH, young bride! You must live
A domestic life against the waves of the world.
The ants prepare their food store
With the help of their saliva;
Men do live in the midst of their near and dear.
You should not weep, young bride,
Your parents have given you up
Like a hen or a sow.

They have given you a stick and a rope

To lead your life in this world. (Ibid, p. 24)

Advice to Bridegroom : Bodo society is a male-dominated society. After marriage in a male-dominated society, the entire responsibility of a woman lies with the man. The man has the right to control the woman. If the woman misbehaves, the man has the right to control her. Hence, the following song is sung in the marriage ceremony while advising the bridegroom:

Laothi gongse
Phaga dwngse
Hwlangbay dwi apha,
Nwngninw dhwrwmswi
Dantharna zayw
Sitharna zayw. (Basumatary, 2012, p.122)

English rendering :

We have left a rope and a stick for you
It is your wish
Even if you cut her
It is your wish
Even if you kill her.

If, for some reason, the wife is hurt by the husband's beating, the husband has the responsibility of healing her. If any of the limbs are broken due to the beating, it will be the husband's loss because it will require money to recover. Thus, the older women of the bride's village sing the following song, advising the bridegroom while presenting the bride so that the bridegroom can properly run the family after marriage.

Khŏinakhou liṅnanŏi akhayao homnanŏi
Hŏbay dinŏi dŏhŏrŏm khŏrŏm nŏṅnŏ gothay nanŏi
Akhaykhou buphay athiṅkhou buphay
Nŏṅninŏ dŏhŏrŏm, bayba zagŏn nŏṅninŏ hani.
Malaynŏ hathor bimani conaphithor.
Gothaybay nŏṅnŏ, dŏhŏrŏm khŏrŏm nŏṅni,

Phokthi gŏia gian gŏia, danay lunay gŏia
Theobŏ laṅŏbŏla nŏṅnŏ, dŏhŏrŏm khŏrŏm nŏṅni.
(Op. Cit., p. 31)

English rendering:

We have handed the bride over to you.
Take her home,
But be mindful of duties.
If you break limbs,
The loss will be your own.
For she is your life's partner.
Others may not rate her high,
But she is a jewel to her mother.
Look to heaven and act accordingly.
She is now completely in your charge.
She is not accomplished in ways of devotion and wisdom,
And spinning and weaving, she knows not.
Yet you have selected her yourself.
Now stand by your selection,
In all virtue. (Ibid, pp. 165-166)

Coaxing and Pleasing the Bride : It is not easy for a bride to leave her home forever on her wedding day. The bride grieves for having to leave her parents, brothers, sisters, and relatives. The weeping bride is coaxed by her parents, who forbid her to weep. In ancient times, the Bodos did not give their daughters to non-Bodo men. They sent their daughters to Bodo Man only. Hence, the bride's parents sing the following song–

Manŏ gabdŏṅ ayŏi manŏ gabdŏṅ
Dagabcŏi ayŏi dagabcŏi.
Mephal houanŏ horakhŏi,
Harca houanŏ horakhŏi.
Raizŏ zanŏcŏ Boro houanŏ hordŏn
Ayŏi hordŏn. (Ibid, p. 28)

English rendering :

Why do you weep, dear?
Don't you weep, girlie.
You have been married not to an outcaste
But to a right and Bodo youth proper,
To lead a proper family life. (Ibid, p. 162)

When the bride is seen crying in sorrow, the bridegroom's party also sings such a song.

Nŏi laṅnŏcŏi laṅnŏcŏi dao gograni
Dao zŏkhou
Dagabcŏi ayŏi dagabcŏi phica hinzao.
Nŏṅkhou butharnŏ citharnŏ laṅakhŏi
Laṅdŏn nŏṅkhou maoŏi daṅŏi raizŏ zanŏ
Hŏi hŏi. (Ibid, p. 29)

English rendering:

Away we take you girl,
We take you away from the sty.
Weep you not.
You will not be killed or cut to pieces;
No, not for that we take you away.
You will accompany us
To lead a smooth family life. (Ibid, p. 163)

Blessings to Bride and Groom : Blessing songs for the bride and groom can also be found in the Bodo wedding song. Blessing is essential for human beings to lead a fulfilling life. That is why the people who come to the wedding bless the bride and groom. So that they can lead a peaceful life. The blessing to the bride and groom is seen in the following song–

Cŏrzigiri onnayao
Anan gocayni bŏrao
Zuli gŏdan zulini dinao
Roṅzadŏ aiphŏr roṅzadŏ aphaphŏr.

Daoma daoca hali hali
Manci zathikhoubŏ bidinŏ khalamhordŏṅcŏi zuli.
Roṅzadŏ aphaphŏr roṅzadŏ aiphŏr.
Bŏr hŏlaṅ bŏr hŏlaṅ zuli gŏdankhou
Rayzŏ zathŏṅcŏi alŏ alŏ. (Ibid, pp. 26-27)

English rendering:

Through the grace of the creator,
A young pair will be united.
Rejoice, oh, you men and women.
The fowls that fly in the air
Live in pairs.
Men and women should do the same;
Rejoice and make marry
And bless the couple newly wedded.

(Ibid, pp. 161)

The following song is sung to bless the bride and the groom as well.

Thuribarini cen dedre
Ayo zŏṅha amŏkhia dodredre.
Dinŏiniphray zuli zabay
Zaowŏi amŏkha gazŏla zŏn,
Anan gocayni onnayao zŏi zathŏṅ
zuli gŏdana zŏi zathŏṅ. (Ibid, p. 27)

English rendering:

Our girl is beautiful.
From today, she is united.
To this our son-in-law.
May God bless the couple,
The newly married couple;
May they thrive! (Ibid, p. 160)

Conclusion :

This study has attempted to provide an insight into the marriage songs of the Bodos, through which a picture of Bodo cultural and social life is revealed. As part of the oral tradition, Bodo folk songs play a significant role in reflecting gender roles, communal values, and marriage-related rituals. Folk songs not only serve as expressions of joy and celebration, but they also serve as a medium for spreading cultural knowledge and strengthening social norms from one generation to the next. These songs were traditionally sung at Bodo weddings. But nowadays, the folk singing, dancing, and performances in Bodo weddings have begun to disappear. Instead of performing traditional musical instruments like Siphung (a long bamboo flute) and Gongwna (a jaw harp), among others, at weddings, they began playing at band parties. One no longer gets to see fun, dance, and singing like they used to. However, instead of dancing and performing with Siphung (a long bamboo flute) and Gongwna (jaw harp), etc., dancing and singing can now also be seen, as evidenced by the creation of a stage and the performance of a modern song by a singer. It is the effect of globalisation and socio-cultural transformation. But we must try to preserve these songs. Marriage songs are deeply intertwined with the social life of the Bodos, encompassing their social and cultural values and beliefs. Nowadays, many Bodo marriage songs have become extinct. Therefore, these songs should be preserved and passed on to future generations by making audio recordings of the tunes. Researchers will have to come forward in this work. These songs are invaluable assets of the Bodo community, contributing to the cultural identity of Northeast India.

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Rajib Daimary
Research Scholar
Dept. of Bodo, Gauhati University, Assam, India
E-mail: rajibdaimari112@gmail.com
Contact No: 9101458779 (Call),
7086451605 (WhatsApp)

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VFX and Resurgence of Super Action Bengali Thrillers: A Study of Dev's Filmography with Focus on *Khadaan* and *Raghu Dakat*

Rosona Khatun • Mohammad Reyaz

A surge in action-packed thrillers has helped revitalise commercial Indian Bengali film industry, driven by increased production scales, the growth of Bengali language OTT platforms, and the integration of pan-Indian visual effects. Bengali action thrillers have garnered a 35% rise in revenue over the past two years, and the audience preferences on Bengali OTT platforms have grown by 50% overall, according to reports. While Bollywood and other Indian regional films like Telugu and Tamil have captured the audience imaginations for last few decades through high-octane super action thrillers, Bengali film industry has been rather late to catch the bus. More famous for cinematic geniuses of Satyajit Ray, Ritwik Ghatak, and Mrinal Sen, among others, Bengali film industry was facing the apathy of distributors in recent years who promoted Bollywood films over Bengali films for greater revenues. This article analyses the filmography of Bengali film superstar Deepak Adhikari, popular as Dev, whose recent box-office successes have reignited interests in Bengali language action flicks. It particularly examines Khadaan (2024) and Raghu Dakat (2025), released between 2021 to 2025, as case studies to analyse how Dev's characters portray masculinity, and utilise VFX, with high production budgets, contributing to this trend towards the super-action thriller genre in Indian Bengali films.

Keywords : *Action Thriller, Bengali Cinema, Indian film, Dev, Khadaan, Raghu Dakat¸ Mithun Chakraborty*

Introduction

Action thriller films have evolved in the recent decade into

high-octane, super action drama with excessive use of VFX, rapid sequences, hyper-real plots and combat oriented portrayal of heroes who are macho and hyper masculine on screen. While Bollywood and other Indian regional films like Telugu and Tamil have exploited this genre in the last two decades to give one after another commercial hits, Bengali film industry was rather slow to catch up. Super-action thrillers emerged in Indian Bengali cinema, influenced by the spectacle style globally, as well as stylistic trends from other Indian regional film industries, and pan-Indian commercial patterns. Both direct industrial borrowings (such as remakes and stylistic templates) and subtle influences from Indian action film conventions encourage Bengali filmmakers to expand the vocabulary of action films (Chakrabarti, 2024; Shaon, 2024). Indian Bengali super action films currently blend traditional art film visuals with a move towards hyper-real, spectacle-focused imagery (Huq & Mukherjee, 2020).

In the decades after independence, Satyajit Ray, Ritwik Ghatak, and Mrinal Sen promoted Indian Bengali cinema worldwide (Pati & Ganguly, 1996). However, this popularity waned in recent years. Popular Bengali films were losing out for want of captivating storyline and lacklustre acting, besides the apathy from distributors who preferred big banner, and star-studded Hindi films for greater revenues, forcing the state government recently to order all multiplexes and cinema halls to compulsorily screen at least one Bengali film daily, including in prime showtimes (Thakur, 2025). But these also reflected the shifting public sentiments, tastes, and industrial conditions that influence the types of films released and their audiences across different decades (Gooptu, 2013; Guha, 2016).

While Bollywood and other regional film industries rapidly adapted to new realities post-globalisation catering to mass audience taste, Bengali films focussed on time-tested formula of storytelling, melodrama, perspectives on partition, and soft romanticism in film narratives. In the 1980s and 1990s, Indian Bengali action heroes were constructed through industrial, technological, and aesthetic influences as well as evolving notions of masculinity and class representations (Mukherjee & Bakshi, 2020). Meanwhile, Bollywood and other Indian regional film industries tend to focus on high-octane thriller films. Telugu and Tamil films such as Baahubali:

The Beginning (2015), Baahubali 2: The Conclusion (2017), KGF: Chapter 1 (2018), RRR (2022), and KGF: Chapter 2 (2022) have developed into super-action thrillers that draw large audiences.

Adrenaline-rushing action thrillers have, however, rejuvenated the Bengali film industry in recent years by bringing the audience back to the theatre. Like elsewhere, hyperreal actions and spectacles in Indian Bengali films have worked as a marketing strategy, promoting violence and firearms as attractions for large audiences (Mandal, 2008). Since last few years, there is a noticeable shift from previous patriotic or historical themes to hyperreal spectacle and a focus on gun-fights, imitating other Indian languages' movies. These commercial films emphasise digital slow motion, blood aesthetics, and advanced weaponry, while historical auteur incorporated recurring visual motifs (Huq & Mukherjee, 2020). Now, an emerging urban thriller genre that reinterprets place, policing, and the city as key narrative elements exists alongside VFX-induced super-action scenes (Mukherjee & Bakshi, 2020).

Deepak Adhikari, popular as Dev, an actor, producer, turned politician, was famous for romantic and soft stories early on his career very much like Salman Khan or Shahrukh Khan in Bollywood. But in recent years, he has transitioned into a rowdy, macho, super-action hero. Like Dev, another Bengali film actor Jeet has also portrayed rugged and muscular heroes in recent blockbusters like Raavan (2022) and Changiz (2023). However, Jeet's films have still not used the hyperreal action scenes, visual effects, or violent plot developments like those in Dev's films. This article focuses on two of Dev's films released between January 2021 to October 2025—Khadaan [Mine] (2024) and Raghu Dakat [Raghu Dacoit] (2025) -- as case studies to foreground how super-action thrillers are helping Bengali film industry (sometimes known as Tollywood)to give commercial hits and bringing the audience back to the cinema halls.

Super Action Thrillers and Indian Film Industry

With substantial budget, multilingual dubbing, and investments in production quality that enable widespread distribution beyond their home markets, the Tamil and Telugu film industries serve as the foundation for the modern blockbuster model (Bhattacharya, 2020; Raj & Sreekumar, 2023). The Tamil and Telugu film Baahubali: The Beginning (2015) has become a blockbuster super-action thriller in

the Indian regional film industry, released pan-India and dubbed into various languages to reach to a large audience base.In line with the regional blockbuster model and pan-Indian ambitions, the Tamil and Telugu film industries produce large-scale films that incorporate VFX-enhanced set pieces (Raj & Sreekumar, 2023).

Malayalam and Kannada films often prioritise craftsmanship, regional stories, and distinctive visual styles; many recent Kannada films emphasise ambitious production values while maintaining regional aesthetics (Quadros, 2023). Malayalam films based on traditional visual representations of localised storytelling, like Ajagajantharam [Difference between a goat and an elephant] (2021), Bramayugam [The Age of Madness] (2024), Mirage [Disambiguation] (2025), etc., have portrayed super-action thrillers, depicting heroes as well as fascinating youth, and have attracted larger audiences (Jalarajan, 2024).

Bollywood or Hindi language films, the most popular in the Indian subcontinent, was too quick to adopt to this emerging sub-genre with hyper real action sequences by super hero like protagonists, portraying VFX-heavy effects, and telling violent, gun-toting stories, like Ek Tha Tiger (2012), Jawan (2023), Pathan (2023), besides remakes of regional blockbusters, such as Ghajini (2008), Singham (2011), and Rowdy Rathore (2012), and other such films influenced by South Indian cinema (Janjić, 2010; Shafiq et al., 2020). Many popular Bollywood stars focused on super-action thrillers and portray themselves as "macho men" (Chowdhary, 2021).

A significant period in the 1980s and 1990s saw the rise of popular films influenced by action heroes when male spectacles and action heroes defined a key commercial element (Bhattacharya, 2020; Chakrabarti, 2024). However, later industry and aesthetic shifts reduced the prominence of large-scale commercial action films when audience' preferred romantic, comedy, and light-hearted animated films. OTT platforms and new production houses expanded Bengali content in the 2010s, and commercially aggressive, hyper-action titles emerged in the late 2010s and continued into the 2020s. The number of Indian Bengali films produced in the late 2000s and early 2010s -- production reportedly tripled between 2006 and 2012 -- caused a structural change that broadened commercial possibilities (Mazumder, 2014). In this decade, Mithun Chakraborty

became popular as a common man's hero, delivering powerful dialogues, and fighting against social and political corruptions that found reverberations in semi-urban and rural pockets of the state in particular (Bhattacharya, 2020). His one dialogue, "Marbo ekhane lash porbe shoshane (Hit you here, and the body will land up in the crematorium)" in MLA Fatakeshto (2006) became quite famous. His unbelievable action flicks, taking revenge from villains for personal losses, crimes committed and corruptions, where one kick of the hero would throw five men in different directions was once a rage as it echoed the frustrations of the society. His other action thrillers included Barood (Gunpowder) (2004), Cheetah (Leopard) (2005), Minister Fatakeshto (2007), and Satyameba Jayate [Truth alone triumphs] (2008), among others. Larger-scale production, hyper-action aesthetics, and marketing techniques associated with the revival of mass entertainment forms began to be incorporated into modern commercial Indian Bengali films as well (Chakraborty, 2019).

Dev's Filmography and Box Office Performance

In discussing films of Dev, we need to understand his filmography and how he had previously portrayed himself. In his early career, he often portrayed romantic leads who shared action scenes with the heroines' fathers or villains. In 2006-2007, Dev was first introduced as a new-generation star in Indian Bengali cinema. His early films, based on love stories such as Premer Kahini [Tale of Love] (2008), Challenge (2009), Bol Na Tui Amar [Tell me, you're mine] (2010), Paglu [Crazy] (2011), Khokababu (2012), and others, portrayed him as a lover, an innocent village boy, or underdog protagonists. These films were mostly influenced by other regional language films or Bollywood productions in India. During this decade, Indian Bengali films focused on love stories to attract large audiences, especially the young generation, as multiplex culture began to emerge in West Bengal (Hill & Athique, 2013). By the mid-2010s, action films started to appear in Indian Bengali cinema, with the Dev playing the roles of muscular protagonists showcasing his physical strength and a "macho man" image in films such as Rangbaaz [Swagger] (2013), Yoddha [The Warrior] (2014), Zulfiqar (2016), and Chaamp (2017). These films reflected his physical appearance and strong personality, helping him become

a superstar in Bengali cinema. In this era, he also entered politics under the All India Trinamool Congress (AITC) and was elected as a Member of Parliament from the Ghatal constituency in West Bengal. He simultaneously started his production house with his film Chaamp (2017), where he played the role of a boxer.

In early 2020s, Dev did few more family-oriented films playing a caring son, a humble individual, and someone sensitive to social issues. His films showcased his good personality, which contributed to their commercial and critical success, appealing to audiences of all age groups. Specifically, Tonic (2021) and Projapati [Butterfly] (2022) are his highly successful films from this period. However, as other mega stars in other states started making super action thrillers, Dev too jumped on the bandwagon.

High Octane, Super Action Bengali Thrillers: Khadaan & Raghu Dakat

This article foregrounds the return of super-action thrillers in Indian Bengali films, predominantly produced and starring Dev, through a qualitative approach using narrative analysis. This method involved content and textual analysis of the technical and promotional concepts of Dev's films. This paper focused on the timeline from January 2021 to October 2025, during which Dev starred in twelve films as a hero, but only three films portrayed him as an action hero such as Abhijit Sen's Pradhan [Leader] (2023), Soojit Rino Dutta's Khadaan [Mine] (2024) and Dhrubo Banerjee's Raghu Dakat [Raghu Dacoit] (2025). This paper analyses Khadaan and Raghu Dakat as case studies to elaborateon the portrayal of Dev in these Bengali-language super action thrillers.

Soojit Rino Dutta's film Khadaan (2024) depicts the grim reality of the coal mining industry, revealing the darker side of human ambition and greed. Dev plays two roles: Shyam Mahato, a father, and Madhu, the son of Shyam and Jamuna. Shyam crossed the Indian border as a refugee and began working in the coal mining industry in the Damodar Valley. Shyam and Mohan Das (played by Jisshu Sengupta) worked together in the local coal mine, known as Khadaan, and quickly rose through the ranks while navigating a dangerous world of politics, syndicates, and deception. This coal mining industry, located in the Adivasi area, and Shyam was disinclined to grab lands from poor Adivasi villagers; this issue

led to conflict with Balai Mandi (played by Anirban Chakarbarti). Shyam gains the support of local politician Shahzaad Siddique (played by Sujan Neel Mukherjee) and takes control of the local coal mining industry. But Shyam is arrested for the accusation of murder of a police officer and a mysterious death in jail.A few years later, Shyam's son, Madhu, joined the coal mine owned by Mohan Das, who became a prominent figure in the coal mining industry by now. Madhu suspected him to be behind his father's death, and seeks revenge from him.

Shyam's character is portrayed as a cunning, muscular troublemaker with an indomitable spirit who is determined to achieve his ambitions by any means. Khadaan begins with a dramatic soundtrack that emphasises masculinity, and when Dev's character Shyam is first introduced, his appearance and physique showcase a macho man persona. Ituses the VFX in action sequences for greater impact, giving a super-action thrilling imagination of the protagonist and the plot. The hyper-real spectacles of Khadaan with Dev in adrenaline-rushing actions scenes help establishing him in the league of super-hero like figures.

Khadaan is a remake of a Kannada language film KGF: Chapter 1 (2018), which portrayed Rocky (played by Yash) as a superhit action hero. Khadaan depicts Dev's characters with fast-paced action scenes that are intercut throughout the film, showcasing his intensity and unfiltered energy. Other male characters,such as Mohan Das (played by Jisshu Sengupta), represented in cool, composed demeanour that provides a striking contrast to Dev's extravagant personality as a super action hero.

The other film taken for this study, Dhrubo Banerjee's Raghu Dakat, was released in 2025 on the occasion of Durga Puja. It is not a historical biopic of Raghu Dakat focusing on his social sacrifices or his devotion to Sadhak Ramprasad. Raghu Dakat is depicted in an imaginary village in Bengal where a cruel king, Ahindra Barman (played by Anirban Bhattacharya), forces farmers to cultivate indigo and imposes overwhelming taxes on them with the support of British administrators. Raghab Dutta, alias Raghu (played by Dev) is a dacoit who raids wealthy zaminadars (feudal lords) to help poor farmers. He entered the ruthless world of dacoits with help from his admirable Dakat Maa (played by Roopa Ganguly). Raghu and his fellow dacoits help impoverished villagers to survive the harsh

indigo cultivation laws. Ahindra Barman conspires to kill Raghu Dakat and his fellow dacoits, but Raghu escapes safely with some of his companions. Meanwhile, Gunja (played by Sohini Sarkar), his best friend, wants to rescue Raghu Dakat's love, Soudamini/ Mini (played by Idhika Paul), but Gunja is murdered and Soudamini is kidnapped by Ahindra Barman's men. When Raghu Dakat learns of these events, he rescues Soudamini and kills both the local British administrator and Ahindra Barman.

In this film, Raghu Dakat is the messiah, or the anointed one, who rescues poor villagers. Dev's appearance in the early scenes emphasised his muscular build and the exaggerated features of the character, highlighting his role as a saviour of the down trodden. Dev's character is shown with a red tilak on his forehead, symbolising his religious faith, and his costume, which is heavy and dark in colour, was designed to portray him as a warrior hero. Scenes in this film portray hyperreal stunts, such as Raghu Dakat's sword-firing and its weight. VFX is used as visual text to portray Raghu Dakat's character as a super action hero, illustrating his horse riding stunts and action sequences.

Conclusion

Historically, Indian Bengali audiences have watched masculinised hero stories connected to local socio-politics and class deprivation. However, this concept has evolved due to the influence of Hollywood, Bollywood, and other regional language films in India. Shifting themes in Indian Bengali films highlight Bengali audiences' changing preferences. As the super-action thriller genre has become the formula for getting audiences to the cinema halls across different languages, Bengali film industry (Tollywood) too is slowly adapting to the same. Deepak Adhikari (alias Dev) that way has emerged as among the forerunners,and a risk-taker to not only portray the roles of super-hero like macho man characters but also produce such films himself. Films like Khadaan (Dutta, 2024) and Raghu Dakat (Banerjee, 2025) stand out from other Bengali-language films, taking Dev to the league of actors like Salman Khan, Yash, and Prabhasfrom other states.

He is also pioneering the usage of VFX in Bengali films besides using techniques like fast-paced sequences and storytelling. Dev thus is gradually transitioning from a romantic and social

reformer hero to a super action hero within the Indian Bengali film industry although he faced some criticisms from within his party for highlighting corruptions in the mining industry (in Khadaan), and many dubbed him as commercially hit actor but not someone with great acting skills (The Telegraph online, 2025). His admirers, however, point out his positive roles in giving blockbuster hits that has helped Bengali cinema regain audience faithmanifested from box office successes (Das, 2025). Consequently, revenue from Bengali action thrillers has risen by 35%over the past two years, and viewership on Bengali OTT platforms for these films has surged by 50% (Banerjee, 2021).

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Rosona Khatun

State Aided College

Teacher at Netaji Satabarshiki Mahavidyalaya, WBSU, India, and PhD Scholar at Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Aliah University, Kolkata

Email: rosona786@gmail.com

https://orcid.org/0009-0006-8800-4920

Mohammad Reyaz

Assistant Professor at Aliah University, Kolkata.

Email: reyaz@aliah.ac.in

https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3527-4795

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Teesta River Water Dispute : An In-Depth Analysis

Aastha Yadav • Dr. Archana Gupta

The Teesta River has long been a point of conflict between Bangladesh and India, as it is essential to both countries. The importance of this transboundary river affects bilateral relations and has historical, environmental, political, and geopolitical implications. The article examines the history, present problems, and possible solutions of the Teesta issue. Despite numerous agreements, competing water claims have continued to exist. Complicating matters in this issue are environmental problems such as siltation, seasonal shortages of water along with political dynamics, specifically domestic politics in India and Bangladesh's connections with China. The article highlights alternatives such as reservoir development, river interlinking projects, cooperative water management approaches and it underlines the need for a holistic strategy to settle the conflict. Improving bilateral ties, maintaining regional peace, and promoting sustainable development for both nations depend on resolving the Teesta conflict.

Keywords : *transboundary river, agreements, JRC.*

The Teesta river is a transboundary river and has a great geographical significance, it starts from the Himalayas and flows through the Indian subcontinent from the states of Sikkim and West Bengal before it enters Bangladesh. It then empties into the Bay of Bengal. This river stretches for about 414 km and plays a crucial role in the areas it passes through, after flowing through the border of India and Bangladesh it runs for nearly 121 km in Bangladesh. Teesta river supports many ecosystems and provides a living for people along its banks.

Economic importance of the river is quite notable. The floodplains of the Teesta river play a key role in Bangladesh's

agriculture. It accounts for almost 14% of all the cropped land in the nation. This region supports about 73% of the local population's livelihoods. It marks the importance of the Teesta river for food security and a stable economy in Bangladesh. In India, particularly in the North Bengal region, the river is essential for farming and irrigation projects. Teesta water irrigates many districts, which boosts agricultural production.

Historical Context of the Dispute

The maritime enterprises and commercial entities with their headquarters located in Calcutta and operations centered around the Calcutta port felt compelled to use the waters of the Teesta River and the Ganges River, from where the water disputes originated. There are conflicting and overlapping claims made by Bangladesh and India on the waters and effects of their barrages. The Joint River Commission (JRC) was established in 1972 to address issues related to water sharing between the two nations. It illustrates the continued necessity of collaborative water management.

Ad hoc agreements in 1983 provided Bangladesh 36% of the Teesta's water, India with 39%, and left 25% unallocated.

Even after later changes and bilateral talks, a lasting solution could not be found. The interim agreements often failed to handle the changing needs and problems faced by both the nations, which led to disputes.

Bangladesh constructed a barrage on the river in 1990 with the goal of enhancing irrigation in the nation's northern region. However, Bangladesh's access to water has been reduced as a result of India's construction of the larger Gajoldoba Barrage on the Teesta River, which fulfills West Bengal's agriculture and electricity demands.

A significant shift occurred in 2011 when an interim agreement proposed that Bangladesh should receive 37.5% and India should receive 42.5% of the water from the Teesta. But this idea was not approved by the Indian states of West Bengal and Sikkim, particularly by the chief minister of West Bengal, Mamata Banarjee. The agreement was set aside. This disagreement highlighted that India's internal politics can make it hard to negotiate with other countries.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi made a significant announce-

ment on 22 June 2024, during Sheikh Hasina's most recent visit to India marking that a technical team would soon be sent to Bangladesh to talk about Teesta river management and protection. This reignited rumors regarding the long-awaited Teesta water sharing deal, a crucial bilateral accord that has been delayed for more than ten years. Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra responded to Modi's remarks by stating that rather than a clear water-sharing deal, the meeting's main goal was to manage the river's water flows. Mamata Banerjee was not amused by this. In a letter to Modi dated June 24, she stated her strong disapproval and insisted that the state government be included in any discussions on the sharing of Teesta water in order to guarantee that their interests be taken into account.

Environmental Challenges

The building of hydroelectric dams on the Teesta River has caused a range of environmental problems such as heavy siltation, erosion, and land loss. Although the construction of these dams has increased agricultural productivity and generated hydroelectricity, the harm to the environment has also increased. The populations and ecosystems downstream have been impacted by the altered river flow.

Demands to obtain more of the Teesta's waters have increased as a result of Bangladesh's periodic water shortage, which occurs during the dry months of December through May. A shortage of water during some seasons causes farming to be disrupted, which impacts crop output and local food security. This issue highlights the need for a more equitable and sustainable method of sharing water.

Moreover, the Teesta River's flow is distinguished by lower water flow during the dry season and enhanced flooding during the monsoon season. This unpredictability has severely harmed cattle, crops, and human settlements, bringing out the pressing need for better water management techniques. Sustaining livelihoods in the region requires the implementation of efficient flood control measures and methods to offset the effects of the drought.

Political Dynamics of the dispute

The position of West Bengal has made it very difficult to reach a water-sharing agreement. Afraid of water shortages in her

state, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee seeks a 75:25 split between Bangladesh and India. Her stance demonstrates the competing interests and local political forces that impede communication. However, Bangladesh takes a distinct stance on this issue. It repeatedly emphasizes the need for a just and consistent sharing by requesting a guarantee of 50% of the Teesta's water flow. The nation has also explored alternative solutions, such as the construction of reservoirs, to address the water issue more effectively and mitigate the consequences of intermittent water scarcity. Bangladesh's position stems from the necessity of securing water for its agricultural output and overall development.

The problem was brought back to attention in March 2023 by India's proposal to construct two more canals in order to redirect water from the Teesta River. India allegedly made a promise in 2010 at the 37th Joint River Commission (JRC) conference not to build significant water diversion structures upstream of the Gajoldoba Barrage, with the exception of small irrigation, drinking water, and industrial uses. This action reportedly violates that guarantee. Dhaka was therefore getting ready to send an official complaint letter to New Delhi. Due to shifting political circumstances, the issue was temporarily put on hold.

Relations between Bangladesh and India have been strained by the impasse over the Teesta river. Politics at the local level have made things more difficult. Wider attempts to forge closer connections and cooperate in other areas have been impeded by the inability to come to an agreement. In order to improve mutual trust and cooperation between the two nations, this conflict must be resolved.

Geopolitical Considerations

Bangladesh-China Relations: India is concerned about Bangladesh's expanding ties with China, particularly its requests for financial support for water management initiatives. Given the strategic implications of China's involvement, India must address the Teesta issue quickly. India needs to resolve the water-sharing issue and establish closer ties with Bangladesh in order to offset China's influence in the region.

In 2022, Bangladesh started collaborating with China on a project to build a multipurpose barrage on the Teesta River and

to dredge and embank parts of the river to create a single, more manageable channel with a higher water level. This project is significant for China as part of its Belt and Road Initiative, of which Bangladesh is a participant. However, progress on the project has been delayed due to India's concerns. India fears that the project could bring China within 100 km of its border and even closer to the strategically sensitive Siliguri Corridor, which is the India's sole land link to its politically delicate north-east region.

Regional Security Dynamics: Bangladesh endeavors to maintain positive relations with both China and India in terms of regional security dynamics. Projects that could lead to security problems are avoided. Resolving the Teesta issue could increase regional stability and strengthen ties between Bangladesh and India. Cooperation in the area of water management may also benefit economic expansion and security.

Possible solutions

Constructing reservoirs is one potential solution. In order to store monsoon water for usage during the dry season, Bangladesh has suggested building reservoirs in the northern part of West Bengal. This tactic may help prevent seasonal water shortages, but there are growing worries about siltation and evaporation-related water loss. Such reservoirs need to be thoroughly evaluated to determine their viability and any environmental effects.

Another possible solution could be connecting the rivers. To increase the flow of water, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has proposed joining the Teesta to other rivers, such as the Torsa. The goal of this river-linking project is to increase the region's water supply. However, more research is required to determine its viability, effects on the environment, and potential benefits. These initiatives also require extensive planning and funding.

The Teesta River water conflict could also be resolved by implementing collaborative water management initiatives. Subramaniam Jaishankar, India's Minister of External Affairs, is in favour of a comprehensive strategy for water management. This method involves managing shared rivers and considers the entire river basin. Plans for water management are combined with broader commitments to combat climate change. Nations might collaborate on initiatives to prevent floods, lessen droughts, and save the environment.

Conclusion

The Teesta River, the lifeline that flows from the eastern Himalayas through India and Bangladesh to join Bay of Bengal is much more than its hydrological distribution. For millions in both nations, it is a critical means of survival. The Teesta river provides its water as a source for agricultural irrigation, local community sustenance and economic growth. Its floodplains are essential for agriculture, in a place like Bangladesh and its importance is all the more increased up to North Bengal in India, where people depend for irrigation.

But the importance of the river has also sparked difficult and long-standing conflicts. The water-sharing dispute goes back to the turn of the 20th century, with competing commercial interests at play. To deal with these issues a Joint River Commission was created in 1972, and even though numerous agreements have been signed on sharing of water utilization including an arrangement for allocation of the shares made in 1983 yet it is so far not settled till date.

A proposed interim agreement in 2011 to adjust water distributions was also emphasizing that domestic politics can really mishandle cross-border negotiations. Other times it is an environmental issue. Building infrastructure such as hydroelectric dams has resulted in siltation, erosion and disintegration of physical areas. They have prevented natural water from flowing out of the river resulting in reduced access to clean water for users downstream. These issues are compounded by seasonal water flow variability that also impacts agriculture and food security. The erratic monsoon behaviour in the river, and dry season water shortages only stress on the critical need for better management of our waters.

All of which are further complicated by geopolitical complexities. From an Indian perspective, factors like the rise of China and Bangladesh's growing relations with China have brought in more strategic considerations. The possibility of new infrastructure projects with international assistance raises questions about regional stability and security, especially in sensitive areas like India's north-east region.

The solution to these difficult and thorny issues is essentially one that needs a collective response. Effective solutions can include investigating river interlinking projects and constructing reservoirs

for dry spells. Both approaches require significant funding and thorough feasibility assessments. A more equitable and sustainable approach can result from the adoption of a thorough water management plan that takes the entire river basin into account. This strategy would foster greater regional collaboration and stability in addition to addressing the pressing issues around water sharing.

In the end, the Teesta River controversy emphasizes the value of political and environmental considerations, the necessity of collaboration, and the significance of historical problems. India and Bangladesh must cooperate with a collaborative mentality that puts their people's welfare and the health of their shared resources first in order to reach a long-lasting solution. Both countries may turn this divisive issue into a chance for long-lasting peace and progress by taking a comprehensive approach and promoting mutual understanding, opening the door for both to have secure and successful futures.

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Aastha Yadav
Research Scholar
IIS University, Jaipur
aasthayadav1411@gmail.com

Co-Authored by:
Dr. Archana Gupta
Associate Professor, HOD,
Department of Political Science & International Relations,
IIS University, Jaipur

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Implementation of Regional Languages Under National Education Policy 2020 : SWOT Analysis

Aiyaz Ahmad Khan • Abdul Samad

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is significant, aiming for students' holistic development through knowledge and skill integration in the schooling process, despite its 35-year gap announcement. It emphasizes the importance of fostering cultural and language education for individual and national advancement, emphasizing the need for a curriculum rooted in local traditions and customs. The policy aims to revive lost native treasures like languages, arts, and culture, fostering skilled, dynamic, and competent citizens. The Policy states, "Students are the prime stakeholders in the education system. Vibrant campus life is essential for high-quality teaching-learning processes. Towards this end, students will be given plenty of opportunities for participation in sports, culture/arts clubs, eco-clubs, activity clubs, community service projects, etc." (NEP–2020). This study focuses on SWOT analysis in implementing regional languages at different stages of education. The specific focus on different issues provides valuable insights for educators and policymakers in implementing the national languages at various stages of education.

Keywords : *National Education Policy 2020, SWOT Analysis, Opportunity, Challenges, Implementation, Regional Language.*

Introduction

Education is regarded as one of the primary indicators of human growth in any civilization. It helps students gain the

knowledge and skills they need to live better lives and the wisdom to do so. Rabbi (2007) asserts that education for beginners can liberate individuals from darkness and ignorance, thus influencing a country's development status. Therefore, education aims to achieve human potential and promote societal development, economic and national growth, scientific advancement, social justice, equality, national integrity, and cultural preservation as well.

In a democratic system, the progress of the country, to a large extent depends on the harmonious development of the social, economic, and cultural spheres of all its communities. Language remains a powerful tool in the evolution and development of any culture. After independence, different committees and commissions were established in education. In its report, the National Education Commission (1964–1966) suggested modifications to teaching and learning in the foundation topics of three language formulas, excluding the classical languages. The three language schemes and distinctions for Hindi-speaking regions (Hindi, English & Modern Indian Language) and other regions (Modern Indian Language/Regional languages, English & Hindi) were emphasized in the National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986. Furthermore, the significance of the classical languages in the framework was acknowledged by NPE 1986. Similar to this, the Programme of Action (1992) explored and suggested numerous initiatives and efforts to establish a language formula, enhance students' linguistic proficiency across various educational levels, and advance Hindi as a link language, among other things.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, a comprehensive framework for overhauling India's educational system from early childhood care and schooling to higher education, was introduced after a 34-year gap. The major purpose of the NEP 2020 is to provide access, affordability, equity, quality and accountability in the nation's educational system. By encouraging high-quality education, creativity, innovation, multilingualism, cultural diversity, and holistic development, anchored in regional customs, and emphasizing the mother tongue as the medium of teaching, the policy seeks to establish India as a global knowledge superpower. The policy also recommends that all students learn three languages in school, provided that at least two of the languages are native to India. Thus, the study focuses on opportunities and challenges in the

implementation of regional languages in different stages of teaching and learning.

Literature Review

The literature is advancing to address various difficulty and problems related to the preparation of pre-service teachers. Singh and Jaiswal (2024) outlined several vital issues related to the challenges of implementing NEP 2020 in higher education. A few of these problems include structural challenges (integration of vocational education & implementation of the multidisciplinary approach), pedagogical challenges (faculty training & development & adapting to new teaching methodologies), and infrastructural challenges (upgrading existing facilities & incorporating technology in education). However, they pointed out that the major opportunities of the policy are research and innovation (promotion of interdisciplinary research, encouraging collaboration with industries), inclusive education (addressing the needs of diverse students & populations, fostering social equity & inclusion), and globalization and internationalization (attracting international faculty and students, forming global partnerships), etc.

Rani (2022) claims that NEP 2020 is an advanced regime that supports scientific learning and value-based education. It emphasizes the importance of making sure the educational system is flexible, comprehensive, and in line with 21st-century educational expectations. She continued by saying that the language policy in NEP, which is a comprehensive set of principles and guidelines, is ultimately up to the states, organizations, and schools to decide how to implement.

In studies on the opportunities and difficulties in higher education for putting the National Education Policy 2020 into practice, Chowdhury (2023) established that increasing the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) requires significant changes in a system with a shortage of finance and infrastructure. The NEP 2020 establishes a framework for reduced regulation and increased autonomy for institutions. He added that the policy focuses more on life skills and vocational education through a strong self-regulatory framework.

Singh (2023) conducted a study on the challenges and opportunities of NEP 2020. He reported that with the digital divide, opening universities weekly is difficult for doubling the gross

ratio enrolment in higher education by 2035, and quality teachers, and cultural transformation disciplines, are major challenges in implementation. Regarding the prospects for NEP 2020, the conversion of old structure (10+2) into new structure (5+3+3+4), with newly added early childhood education curriculum and instructional framework, and the independence of university are major prospects of NEP 2020.

Kaur (2021) indicated that difficulty to change in the mind set, re-examination and acquiring pedagogical change, re-thinking assessment, educator's training, bottom-up approach, removal of barriers for teachers, funding and pay scale, are the challenges in the implementation of NEP 2020 in schools. In the same manner, he stated that the importance of degrees or certificates, a focus on multidisciplinary learning, financing, and internet connectivity are the main obstacles facing higher education. He added that cooperative federalism and states assuming responsibility for the changes are essential to the NEP's success.

Jadhav (2023) identified a number of prospects associated with implementing NEP 2020, including the growth of the individual on all levels—intellectual, emotional, physical, and spiritual. Further, he added vocational education, technology involvement, flexibility and multidisciplinary, research and innovations, and critical thinking are the opportunities for NEP 2020 implementation. But he also emphasized the obstacles, such as infrastructure development, teacher training, funding, etc. of successful NEP 2020 implementations.

From regional and cultural differences to teacher training and resource distribution, Priyanka's (2024) study came to a nuanced understanding of the myriad issues faced. This study also highlights how these challenges presented abundance of opportunities, such as the potential for innovative teaching strategies, comprehensive development, and global collaboration.

UNESCO has designated 197 Indian languages as endangered, and over 220 have been lost in the past 50 years as a result of poor care and attention (UNESCO, 2010; Moseley, 2010). Indian language instruction and learning must be incorporated into schools and higher education because even non-emerging Indian languages, such as the 22 listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution, confront formidable obstacles. A comprehensive and revolutionary approach to education is the goal of the National Education Policy

2020. Union Cabinet on July 29, 2020, approved the National Education Policy and outlined the future of Indian education. It replaces the 1986 and 1992 National Policy on Education. The policy outlines opportunities and challenges for language implementation, based on literature review and academic discussions.

The incorporation of a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) Analysis provides a regulated framework to critically evaluate the internal and external factors influencing the effective implementation of regional languages under the NEP 2020. This analysis, drawing on extant literature regarding policy opportunities and challenges, delineates the pivotal factors that policymakers and educators must consider.

SWOT Analysis of Regional Language Implementation under NEP 2020

I. Strengths (Internal Factors Favourable to the Policy)

The foundational principles of NEP 2020 exhibit several intrinsic strengths related to linguistic and cultural objectives:

Holistic Development and Cultural Integration: The policy is inherently significant as it aims for holistic student development through the integration of knowledge and skills, emphasizing cultural and language education for both individual and national advancement. It seeks to revive native treasures, including languages, arts, and culture, fostering dynamic and globally competent individuals.

Emphasis on Local Context and Multilingualism: NEP 2020 promotes quality education rooted in local traditions, focusing on the mother tongue as the medium of instruction, and aiming to make India a global knowledge superpower by championing multilingualism and cultural diversity.

Flexibility in Language Choice: The policy proposes a more flexible implementation of the three-language formula, allowing states, regions, and students significant autonomy in choosing their languages, provided at least two are native to India. Students are permitted to change languages in Grade 6 or 7 after demonstrating basic proficiency.

Cognitive Benefits of Early Language Exposure: The policy

leverages research indicating that multilingualism provides significant cognitive benefits, advocating for the exposure of children to different languages starting from the Foundational Stage onwards (ages 2 to 8).

II. Weaknesses (Internal Factors Inhibiting Policy Success)

Intrinsic structural or operational limitations within the policy or education system present hurdles to effective implementation:

Advisory Nature of Language Policy: The language policy detailed within NEP 2020 functions largely as a broad guideline and advisory framework, placing the onus for definitive implementation decisions on individual states, institutions, and schools.

Conflict and Ambiguity in Medium of Instruction: The recommendations regarding the three-language formula often stand in contradiction with the simultaneous push to use mother tongue or language of home as the medium of instruction in early education, initiating debates on the best pedagogical approach. Furthermore, the three-language policy, despite being crucial, contains inherent flaws, particularly concerning the introduction of new language regulations.

Need for Systemic Cultural and Pedagogical Transformation: Successful implementation is challenged by the difficulty in facilitating a change in mind-set, re-examining assessment methods, and acquiring necessary pedagogical adaptations among educators and institutions.

III. Opportunities (External Factors That Can Be Leveraged)

External factors and outcomes resulting from the policy direction offer substantial opportunities for educational growth:

Enhanced Learning and Comprehension: Utilizing the home, mother, local, or regional language as the preferred medium of instruction (ideally until Grade 5, and potentially Grade 8 and beyond) encourages students to learn and comprehend complex concepts more rapidly.

Promotion of Linguistic and Cultural Heritage: The policy presents an opportunity to promote and preserve India's cultural heritage and linguistic diversity, capitalizing on the nation's rich cultural treasure which holds significant global appeal.

Fostering Research and Global Engagement: Implementation facilitates broad opportunities in research and innovation, including the promotion of interdisciplinary research and collaboration with industries. It also supports globalization, aiding in attracting international faculty and students and establishing global partnerships.

Comprehensive Student Development: The policy provides opportunities for the overall development of the individual—intellectually, emotionally, physically, and spiritually—and integrates vocational education, critical thinking, and technology involvement.

IV. Threats (External Factors Posing Implementation Risks)

External constraints and high-stakes requirements represent potential threats to the realization of the policy's language goals:

Resource and Infrastructure Deficits: A significant constraint is the inadequacy of resources required for implementation, including a consistent supply of high-quality learning materials (textbooks, videos, novels). Furthermore, achieving the recommended infrastructure, such as separate language labs with tool kits for each language, often exceeds institutional capacity.

Shortage of Qualified Teachers: A major obstacle is the documented shortage of qualified language teachers required to effectively implement the three-language formula across linguistically diverse regions. A failure to appoint standardized, adequate numbers of teachers could force students to learn only Hindi where a third modern Indian language is intended.

Linguistic Conflict and Policy Dichotomies: The sheer diversity of India’s linguistic landscape often culminates in language policy conflicts, particularly in attempting to balance the promotion of regional languages with the imperative of teaching both Hindi and English.

Risk to Endangered Languages: The continued inadequate attention to Indian languages poses a major threat, evidenced by the loss of around 220 languages in the last 50 years, with UNESCO declaring 197 Indian languages as endangered, necessitating immediate integration into higher education and schooling.

Logistical Challenges for Migrant Populations: The recommendation of using the local language as the medium of

instruction poses difficulties for the children of migrant workers who move frequently and may face instability in their language of instruction.

Conclusion

To encourage multilingualism and national solidarity, instruction will be conducted in the home language, mother tongue, regional language, or local language. India's NEP 2020 seeks to improve the educational system, but a key element—the three-language policy—has shortcomings, especially when it comes to enacting new language-related legislation. There are several challenges in implementing national languages such as language policy conflicts, shortage of trained teachers, resource crisis, additional burden on students, and local language as the medium of instruction. However, there are many new opportunities.

Suggestions

The three-language policy model can be improved by considering the following recommendations:

- There is a conflict of languages in many states of India. So the central and state governments should design a clear-cut language policy for the promotion of the Indian languages and proper implementation of the three-language formula.
- Both central and state governments should appoint an adequate number of teachers in public organizations for different Indian languages and also the recruitment of teachers will be standardized considering the country's cultural and linguistic diversity.
- The government should create language-related resources to support multilingualism and the value of language in education.
- Schools should allow students to choose their preferred Indian language without imposing a specific language choice.

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Aiyaz Ahmad Khan
Assistant Professors,
Department of Education,
Aligarh Muslim University Centre, Murshidabad, West Bengal
aakhan_co@myamu.ac.in

Abdul Samad
Assistant Professors
Department of Education,
Aligarh Muslim University Centre, Murshidabad, West Bengal
asamad1@myamu.ac.in

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Smart Agriculture and Food Security in Future : The Review in Indian Context.

• **Dimpal Agrawal**

Smart Agriculture or smart farming refers to the integration of ICT, sensor networks, and AI driven decision support to optimize inputs, enhance yields, and promote sustainable resource use. Smart Agriculture is an outcome of Agriculture 4.0. Agriculture 4.0 is fourth agricultural revolution which is characterized by integration of advanced information technologies in agricultural practices for increasing yield of crop and productivity of agricultural land. The objective of smart agriculture is to enhance productivity, resource efficiency, and climate resilience by integrating IoT enabled monitoring, data driven decision support, and sustainable farming practices across the production to distribution chain. This review was undertaken to examine the key concept, objectives, and technologies of smart agriculture and how, smart agriculture can tackle the food securities in Indian context. The review was structured through a a systematic literature search following PRISMA guidelines. The results reveal that the major AI tools used to achieve the objectives of smart agriculture include; remote sensing, IoT, cloud computing, big data and analysis, cloud computing, robot, drones and automation, block chain and ICT. Food security has been recognized as a major concern in India and across globe. In 2022, The Global Food Security Index ranked India as 68th across 113 major countries in world in terms of food security. In 2024 Global Hunger Index ranked India on 105th position out of 127 major countries by conquering a score of 27.3. The reports of United Nations declare that in India nearly 195 million people are undernourished. The government of India has initiated different schemes and initiatives which aim to bolster climate resilient, nutrition sensitive agriculture while expanding subsidised grain distribution to vulnerable households. Across different steps to tackle food security concern, the adoption of "smart agriculture" is

turning to be the crucial lever for mitigating hunger by enhancing productivity, resource efficiency, and nutritional outcomes across vulnerable regions in India. The tools of Artificial Intelligence (AI) have increased the efficiency of decision making at every step of crop cultivation process, thus it plays a vital role in enhancing the crop yield and productivity of agriculture land, which ultimately reduce the food security concerns. Future research should prioritize development of low cost, interoperable sensor suites coupled with farmer centric training, establish robust privacy by design data governance frameworks, and explore integration of emerging modalities such as nanotechnology and synthetic biology to enhance climate resilient AI models, thereby ensuring equitable access and public trust in India's smart agri ecosystem

Keywords: Smart Agriculture, Food Security, Digital Technologies.

Introduction

The population of world is increasing at exponential rates, projected to reach approximately 10 billion by 2050 (Mitra et al., 2022). With increase in human population, the livestock population is also recording a significant increase. The increase in human population and the corresponding surge in livestock necessitate a substantial augmentation of global food production, estimated at 25% to 70% by 2050 (Cravero et al., 2022). In 2024, a significant portion of the global population faced acute hunger, with nearly 300 million people across 53 countries and territories experiencing severe food insecurity, according to the Global Report on Food Crises (GRFC), a report by The Global Network Against Food Crisis (GNAFC) rather than the WHO directly. The report estimated that 37.7 million children aged 6-59 months suffered from acute malnutrition, with 10 million requiring urgent treatment. Additionally, 10.9 million pregnant and breastfeeding women were acutely malnourished. Since, agriculture is the primary sector for food production and responsible for the fulfillment of the demands of food by human beings (Quy et al., 2022). The land resources are limited, but the demand of food is continually rising putting a huge pressure on the land resources and agricultural sector across different countries (Virk et al., 2020; Puppala & Sinha, 2025; Mandal et al., 2024). This escalating demand, coupled with dwindling natural resources and unpredictable environmental conditions, has elevated food security to a critical global concern (Quý et al., 2022). In order to fulfill the increasing demand of food the productivity of land need to be increased. The productivity of land can be increased by optimizing resource utilization and

adopting innovative agricultural practices (Bezas & Filippidou, 2023) (Baryshnikova et al., 2022). The integration of modern technologies in the agriculture sector can be leveraged to enable precision farming, real time monitoring, and data driven decision-making that increase the productivity of agriculture land.

Modern technologies like artificial intelligence and its tools has brought revolution in every economic sector including agriculture. The introduction of modern technologies in the agriculture sector was a major objective of "Agriculture-4.0 or Smart Agriculture" Consequently, Agriculture 4.0 emphasizes the deployment of AI driven analytics, IoT sensors, and robotics to optimize inputs, reduce waste, and bolster the resilience of food systems (Batistatos et al., 2025). it's essential to understand the concept of "Smart Agriculture" and how it integrates modern digital technologies in increasing the productivity of agricultural land and reduces waste and environmental impact. The present study was conducted to examine the potential of smart agriculture in fulfilling food security with the increasing human population. This study has examined the goals, and key technologies of smart agriculture.

Motivation of research

This review was motivated through the desire of researcher to examine the potential of smart agriculture in handling the food security problems in future. The smart agriculture holds the potential to fulfill the rising global food demand. The researcher was motivated by the role of digital technologies in different economic sectors including agriculture. The role of digital tools like artificial intelligence has brought smartness in decision making of different economic sectors. The role of digital technologies in different economic sectors has been scarcely investigated. Thus the researcher feel how these digital technologies can transform agricultural practices, and how these technologies can enhance crop production thereby strengthening food security prospects. There is need to understand the level of intersection of smart agriculture in different countries across the globe. in addition to this its essential reveal the role of different digital technologies at different agricultural practices. This study therefor provide a detail framework of smart agriculture and how digital tools are used to achieve the objectives of smart agriculture.

Material and Methodology

In order to achieve the objectives of present study a desk

review qualitative approach was adopted. This methodology involved a systematic literature search following PRISMA guidelines. Under this review approach the secondary data is collected from different secondary sources like; books, newspapers, articles, policy briefs, science direct, Google scholar, JSTOR, Web of Science and Scopus databases. These sources were chosen due to the presence of meta data and ease of extraction of this data from these sources. The researcher search strings incorporated domain specific terms such as "digital transformation," "smart agriculture," and "food security," enabling comprehensive retrieval across mentioned secondary sources. Initially this review focused on the search of abstracts, blogs and articles related to smart agriculture after which full text eligibility was evaluated in strict accordance with PRISMA protocols. Subsequent data extraction involved coding each selected study for variables such as technology type, adoption barriers, and reported impacts on food security outcomes. The extracted variables were then subjected to thematic synthesis to delineate key enablers, adoption challenges, and their respective contributions to enhancing food security. The thematic analysis further revealed that emerging digital technologies function as primary enablers of the agri-food digital transformation, a finding consistent with prior systematic reviews of smart farming literature.

Results and Discussion

This review was conducted to examine the smart agriculture development and how it offers potential for solving food security issues in future. The results obtained from this review are enlisted and discussed under following sections;

3.1. Concept of Smart Agriculture

Agriculture is a primary economic sector of every country. there has been a critical shift from the traditional agriculture practices to technological based agricultural practices. Early agriculture surrounded around human, animal and simple tools. In 1701 the invention of seed drills brought a mechanistic breakthrough in agricultural practices. In 1800 the development of steam traction engines supported grain threshing and early 1900 the steam traction engines transferred into gas traction engines. This lead to the introduction of farm machinery, which reduced physical work in farming. At the same time the data collection and analysis allowed farmers in enhancing their crop yield. This lead to the development of "precision agriculture", which began in 1980's and Dr Pierre Robert was known as "Father of Precision

Agriculture". He identified how specific agriculture lands need specific nutrients for best crop growth. The advancement in agri-business technology in 1990's gave rise to digital crop monitoring through use of Global Positioning System (GPS). The integration of field data and GPS data helped farmers in taking better decisions relation to agriculture. Later the developmental breakthrough in automation, the agriculture practices was further eased and reduced labour, time and saved resources. Further the development in information technology like Artificial Technology, Remote sensing, IoT, Big-data Analysis, cloud computing, Robotics, sensor technology, Block Chain Supply etc revolutionized the agriculture practices and gave rise to digital agriculture revolution (Agriculture-4.0). The Agriculture-4.0 included the concept of "Smart Agriculture".

Smart Agriculture or smart farming refers to the integration of ICT, sensor networks, and AI driven decision support to optimize inputs, enhance yields, and promote sustainable resource use (Bacco et al., 2019). Smart Agriculture is an outcome of Agriculture 4.0. Agriculture 4.0 is fourth agricultural revolution which is characterized by integration of advanced information technologies in agricultural practices for increasing yield of crop and productivity of agricultural land. The smart agriculture paradigm shift enables data driven decision making for higher yields, reduced costs, and minimizing environmental consequences by precisely controlling inputs like water and fertilizer, and by creating an interconnected value chain from farm to consumer. Such end to end connectivity facilitates real time monitoring, predictive analytics, and automated interventions that collectively enhance food security. By leveraging IoT enabled sensors and AI driven analytics, smart farms can continuously monitor climate, soil moisture, and pest pressure, enabling precise input application, reducing waste, and strengthening crop resilience (Yousaf et al., 2023). The overall smart agriculture focus on increasing crop yield and productivity from agriculture lands.

3.2. Objectives of Smart Agriculture

The smart agriculture with integration of advanced information technologies has been a boon in the agriculture sector of every country. A proper digital infrastructure is the backbone of smart agriculture. In developed countries, they have efficient digital infrastructure and thus the goals of smart agriculture are efficiently attained. Conversely, in developing nations the limited digital infrastructure limits the achievement of smart agriculture objectives. Since, in the

above section of this review, it's clear that smart agriculture rely on robust digital connectivity and data driven decision support systems that enable precise resource allocation and real-time crop monitoring (Assimakopoulos et al., 2024; Mohamed, 2022; Yousaf et al., 2023). Thus the objectives of smart agriculture also differ from common agriculture practices. Apart from common agricultural practices, the following remain the major objectives of smart agriculture;

1. Increase productivity and yield through data driven precision techniques such as controlled irrigation and targeted fertilizer application.
2. Enhance resource efficiency and environmental sustainability by optimizing water consumption and minimizing agrochemical inputs through real-time sensor analytics.
3. Facilitate farmer decision-making by delivering actionable insights through AI driven analytics platforms.
4. Promote socioeconomic resilience by delivering scalable, low-cost technologies that reduce labor intensity and bolster smallholder livelihoods.
5. Establish robust, interoperable data standards that facilitate seamless integration of heterogeneous sensor outputs with decision support platforms.
6. Waste reduction through predictive analytics that minimize post harvest losses and enable circular resource use.
7. Sustainable resource management through closed loop systems and reduced waste.
8. Leverage AI enabled pest and disease forecasting to further curtail chemical inputs and safeguard crop health.
9. Strengthen crop resilience and food security by employing AI driven pest and disease forecasting to curtail chemical inputs and protect yields.
10. Deploy AI driven climate adaptation models to optimize sowing dates and cultivar selection under variable weather patterns.

3.3. Key Technologies of Smart Agriculture

The objectives of smart agricultures are achieved through the use of different technologies. These technologies work in a proper sequence from data collection to data processing, analysis, and automated decision-making, which enable precise interventions

throughout the farming cycle (Sharma et al., 2023). The key technologies which are adopted in smart agriculture include;

3.3.1. Internet of Things (IoT)

IoT refers to a network of interconnected sensors, actuators, and communication modules that collect and exchange agricultural data in real time, facilitating precision management of resources and environmental conditions (Avşar & Mowla, 2022) (Irshad et al., 2023). These sensor networks enable real-time monitoring of soil moisture, temperature, and nutrient levels, thereby supporting variable rate inputs and data driven agronomic decisions (Sharma & Shivandu, 2024). the key application of IoT in smart agriculture include; precision irrigation, precision fertilization, pest monitoring, and yield forecasting further extend IoT's role in enabling site-specific, data driven interventions throughout the crop lifecycle (MacPherson et al., 2022) (Karunathilake et al., 2023).

3.3.2. Artificial Intelligence (AI)

AI algorithms process the massive IoT generated datasets to model crop growth, predict stress events, and recommend optimal interventions, thereby enhancing yield and resource efficiency (Fuentes-Peñailillo et al., 2024). Such AI-driven analytics also facilitate early detection of pest infestations and disease risks, enabling timely mitigation measures (Rahaman et al., 2024). Moreover, AI-driven predictive models integrate climate forecasts and sensor derived soil metrics to fine tune planting schedules and fertilizer regimes, thereby advancing sustainable productivity (Alazzai et al., 2024). These AI capabilities are operationalized through cloud based platforms that aggregate sensor streams and deliver actionable recommendations to farm equipment in near real time (Elbaşi et al., 2024) (Weraikat et al., 2024).

3.3.3. Cloud Computing (CC)

CC provides scalable storage and high performance analytics that enable rapid processing of heterogeneous agronomic datasets, thereby supporting real time decision making across the farming ecosystem (Greco et al., 2025) (Araújo et al., 2023). By leveraging elastic cloud infrastructures, farms can dynamically allocate computational resources to run machine learning models on incoming sensor streams, ensuring low latency analytics even under variable workloads (KIRAN et al., 2023) (Yousaf et al., 2023). Furthermore, cloud based services facilitate seamless integration of AI models

with IoT data streams, allowing stakeholders to share insights and coordinate actions across distributed farm operations (Khan et al., 2024) (Thilakarathne et al., 2022).

3.3.4. Big Data and Analysis (BDA)

Big Data analytics integrate heterogeneous sensor streams and historical agronomic records to produce predictive insights that enable site specific management decisions, thereby enhancing resource use efficiency and overall farm sustainability (Alahmad et al., 2023). Variable rate technology, built upon the integrated IoT AI cloud infrastructure, enables site specific delivery of water, nutrients, and pesticides, thereby minimizing input waste and enhancing environmental sustainability (Kumari et al., 2025) (Mansoor et al., 2025). Consequently, the integrated IoT AI cloud framework facilitates continuous, real time adaptive management that further optimizes inputs and supports resilient, data driven farming practices (Issa et al., 2024).

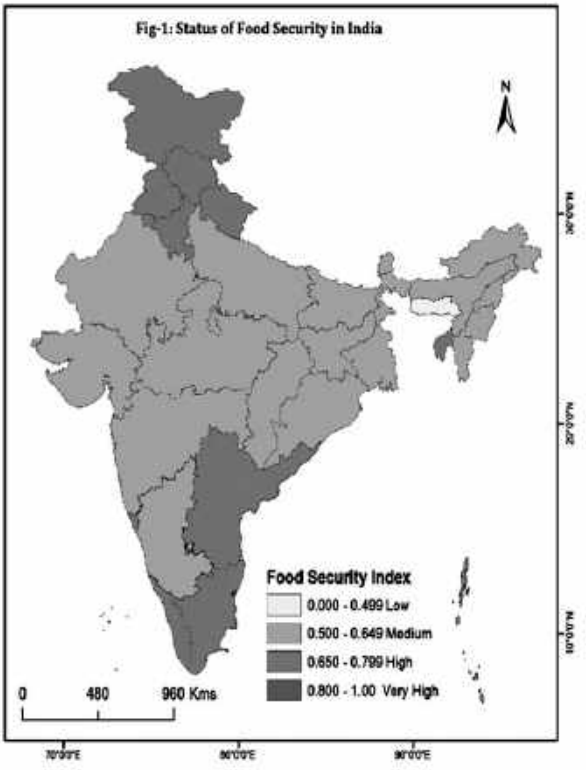
3.3.5. Robotics and automation (RA)

RA integrate autonomous machinery and drones to perform precision tasks such as planting, weeding, and harvesting, thereby reducing labor dependency and enhancing operational efficiency. Furthermore, autonomous drones and ground robots can capture high resolution spatial imagery and sensor data, enriching farm level datasets for real time monitoring and decision support (López-Quílez, 2025). These AI enhanced robotic platforms, equipped with edge computing capabilities, can autonomously execute site-specific interventions such as variable rate seeding and targeted pesticide application, thereby closing the feedback loop between data acquisition and actuation.

3.3.6. Remote Sensing (RS)

RS enables the collection of high-resolution multispectral imagery from satellite platforms and UAVs, which, when fused with ground level sensor data, supports fine-grained spatial analysis for variable rate management and early stress detection (Alahmad et al., 2023; López-Quílez, 2025). The tools of Remote sensing Like GPS, GIS, Arc GIS and ArcGIS-pro are used to generate georeferenced maps that inform variable rate applications and facilitate precise field zoning (Rashid et al., 2025). Integrating these

geospatial insights with cloud based AI models enables dynamic, site specific crop recommendations that further improve yield and sustainability (Singh & Sharma, 2025; Sharma & Shivandu, 2024). The synergistic fusion of satellite derived multispectral data with UAV captured imagery thus provides granular, real time phenotypic insights that empower adaptive management and further bolster sustainable productivity (Getahun et al., 2024). Emerging digital twin platforms synthesize these multi source observations into a dynamic virtual replica of the farm, enabling continuous simulation and optimization of management practices (Awais et al., 2025).



3.4. State of Food Security in India

India is a one of the most populated country across globe. This demographic pressure intensifies the challenge of ensuring adequate, safe, and nutritious food for all citizens, a priority highlighted in recent policy initiatives such. Food security has been recognized as

a major concern in India and across globe. The 2013 Food Security Act, which guarantees every citizen a legal right to subsidised, nutritious grains, exemplifies the governmental response to this challenge (Shukla et al., 2015). Nevertheless, gaps persist in both coverage and adequacy, prompting calls for integrated strategies that link agricultural productivity with nutrition sensitive interventions (Kumar et al., 2014) (Muralikrishnan et al., 2017).In 2022, The Global Food Security Index ranked India as 68th across 113 major countries in world in terms of food security. in 2024 Global Hunger Index ranked India on 105th position out of 127 major countries by conquering a score of 27.3. The reports of United Nations declare that in India nearly 195 million people are undernourished. Also these reports confirm that 73% of the children's in India are chronically undernourished. every state in India has a significant portion of its population experiencing food insecurity, with marked disparities between rural and urban areas (Borsadwala & Khandre, 2023). Addressing these inequities demands the scaling of climate resilient, nutrition sensitive agricultural practices that enhance household access to diverse protein sources, especially in semi arid rural districts where food insecurity and the triple burden of malnutrition are most acute (Kumar et al., 2025) (Muralikrishnan et al., 2017). The government of India has initiated different schemes such initiatives, including the Food Commission, National Food Security Act, Public Distribution System, Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi and the National Food Security Mission, aim to bolster climate resilient, nutrition sensitive agriculture while expanding subsidised grain distribution to vulnerable households. Emerging policies such as the 2023 International Year of Millets aim to diversify diets and improve nutrition by promoting millet cultivation and consumption (Bhattacharya, 2023). Similarly state wise food security innovations in India were taken to to various levels, with State Ranking Index of NFSA being key initiative for performance evaluation. As per this index Orissa ranked highest however, several other states, such as Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, continue to lag behind, underscoring the need for targeted, region specific interventions. The different initiatives taken by central government were implemented by the state governments. Even though having diverse food security initiatives in the country, still a mass population remained undernourished. Necessary steps are needed to be taken to deal with the food scarcity in India. Across

different steps, the adoption of "smart agriculture" is turning to be the crucial lever for mitigating hunger by enhancing productivity, resource efficiency, and nutritional outcomes across vulnerable regions in India.

3.5. Smart Agriculture and Food Security: Discussion from Indian Perspectives

Digital ecosystem especially Artificial Intelligence (AI) has brought a revolution in the economic sectors of India, by its capacity to integrate data driven decision support systems. The tools of Artificial Intelligence (AI) like IoT, Remote Sensing, Big Data and Analysis, Cloud Computing, Sensor and Automation, Block Chain etc have increased the efficiency of decision making in every economic sector. The integration of these AI driven tools into precision farming platforms i.e., "Smart Agriculture" has playing a vital role in enhancing the crop yield and productivity of agriculture land. in the previous sections of this review we have discussed the objectives of Smart Agriculture, and technologies of Smart Agriculture. In this section of this review we will discuss the role of Smart Agriculture in dealing with the food security (in Indian context). The agriculture land resources are limited in every country including India. Majority of population of India lives in rural areas with primary economic sector being agriculture. The lack of information related to the land productivity, pest and disease management, wise fertilization, water monitoring, climate monitoring, proper weed management, proper germplasm selection, and lack of proper harvesting techniques, has reported into low yield and productivity from agriculture lands of India. By leveraging AI enabled precision farming—such as sensor driven irrigation, targeted pesticide application, and data guided crop selection—Smart Agriculture can substantially boost yields while conserving resources, thereby strengthening national food security (Bezas & Filippidou, 2023; Nautiyal et al., 2024). Moreover, AI driven multi temporal remote sensing can accurately differentiate crop phenotypes and monitor soil moisture, thereby further bolstering food security outcomes (Ali et al., 2024).

AI powered predictive analytics can forecast regional harvest volumes, enabling policymakers to proactively allocate reserves and mitigate hunger risks (Alahmad et al., 2023). Furthermore, integrating

IoT enabled sensor networks across smallholder farms can deliver real time soil and climate data, supporting adaptive management and reducing vulnerability to climatic shocks (Manning, 2020). Nevertheless, the rapid expansion of IoT enabled farming equipment introduces significant cybersecurity risks that require comprehensive regulatory safeguards and resilient network designs to protect agricultural data and operations. Establishing comprehensive, nation wide cybersecurity standards for IoT based farming systems will be crucial to safeguard data integrity, ensure farmer confidence, and sustain the long term viability of Smart Agriculture initiatives. The monitoring of weather patterns captured via AI enabled satellite imagery enable timely interventions that further enhance crop resilience and yield stability (Priyadarshini et al., 2018; Chen et al., 2024). The pest and disease management through AI enhanced diagnostic models can rapidly identify pathogen signatures from field imagery, enabling targeted interventions that minimize crop loss and reduce pesticide usage (Mana et al., 2024). Such AI enabled diagnostic platforms empower farmers with rapid, accurate disease identification and tailored treatment recommendations, further enhancing yields while curbing unnecessary pesticide applications (Saruk & Rayalu, 2024; Chakravarty et al., 2022). Collectively, these AI enabled practices advance climate smart agriculture by reducing input related greenhouse gas emissions and supporting biodiversity conservation (Kumari et al., 2025; Balkrishna et al., 2023). Predictive AI models that optimize input use further enhance yields while minimizing environmental footprints, thereby reinforcing national food security objectives (Dhal & Kar, 2024). AI driven forecasting models that integrate climate, market and supply chain data can anticipate regional shortages and guide strategic food reserve allocations, thereby enhancing systemic resilience (Dhal & Kar, 2024).

The global advancement in ICT has lead to the proliferation of mobile based application and services. The mobile applications and services provide the handy information about the meteorological analytics to deliver hyper local forecasts that inform sowing schedules and irrigation planning (Alahmad et al., 2023; Rane et al., 2024). The integration of edge computing enabled smartphones with IoT weather sensors provides smallholder farmers with real time micro climate updates, refining agronomic decisions and optimizing

resource allocation (Siddique et al., 2025; Irshad et al., 2023). In Indian context the almost every region has access to mobile broadband connectivity that supports AI driven weather analytics and real time advisory services, enabling farmers to tailor sowing and irrigation to hyper local climate conditions (Zhu et al., 2022). The mobile advisory help farmers in different ways to enhance crop yield and stimulate land productivity, thus indirectly play a role in food security.

The advent of robots and drones are transforming field operations by enabling autonomous crop monitoring, precision pesticide application, and targeted soil sampling, thereby further enhancing yield efficiency and reducing labor dependencies (Thilakarathne et al., 2022; Kumari et al., 2025). However, the deployment of autonomous platforms also necessitates robust regulatory and ethical frameworks to address safety, data privacy, and equitable access for smallholder farmers. Ensuring that regulatory policies incorporate participatory governance mechanisms will help mitigate potential socio environmental harms while fostering equitable technology diffusion (Muldoon & Wú, 2023). The introduction of robots and drones has reduced the labor demands associated with manual spraying and field monitoring, thereby improving overall operational efficiency (Parra-López et al., 2024). This indirectly enhances the productivity of agriculture lands hence play a pivotal role in food security.

3.6. Successful Smart Agriculture Projects

Prominent examples of successful smart agriculture projects in India include;

1. The Karnataka based e Kheti platform, the Maharashtra Precision Farming Initiative, and the national "Digital India Land Records Modernisation Programme," each demonstrating measurable improvements in yield, resource efficiency, and farmer income.
2. The e Kheti platform utilizes ICT based smart farming tools, such as remote sensing, IoT sensors and AI driven decision support, to enhance crop productivity and resource efficiency (Balkrishna et al., 2023).
3. The Andhra Pradesh programme leverages UAV based

imaging and IoT sensors for real time crop monitoring, aligning with documented IoT and UAV applications in smart agriculture (Yang et al., 2020).

4. The Gujarat initiative employs blockchain for traceability and AI driven disease prediction to enhance crop productivity and supply chain transparency (Yadav et al., 2021).
5. The Tamil Nadu initiative integrates AI powered pest detection with cloud based analytics to optimize pesticide use and improve farmer profitability (Katharria et al., 2024) (Yang et al., 2020).
6. The Punjab initiative employs AI enabled yield forecasting combined with IoT soil sensors to optimize nitrogen application in wheat cultivation, thereby boosting productivity and resource efficiency (Alahmad et al., 2023; Assimakopoulos et al., 2025).
7. The Kerala initiative integrates sensor driven micro irrigation with AI based water use optimization to enhance crop yields while conserving groundwater resources.
8. The Madhya Pradesh project employs blockchain enabled crop insurance smart contracts to secure smallholder yields against climate shocks and streamline claim settlements (Yadav et al., 2021).
9. The Rajasthan initiative deploys satellite based soil moisture monitoring combined with AI analytics to guide irrigation scheduling and mitigate drought risk.
10. The Odisha initiative leverages AI driven soil health assessment together with IoT enabled drip irrigation to boost paddy yields while conserving water resources (Malhotra & Anand, 2020; Kiran et al., 2023).
11. The mobile applications like Kisan GPT, an AI driven chatbot offering multilingual agronomic advice, and Jiva, a platform combining micro financing with AI based decision support, exemplify such mobile solutions (Aashu et al., 2024).
12. The Uttar Pradesh 'AgriSense' mobile platform integrates real time weather forecasts, soil moisture sensor data, and AI driven pest alerts to support smallholder precision irrigation and disease management (Malashin et al., 2024).

3.7. Challenges and Barriers

The adoption of smart agriculture in Indian context is associated with number of challenges and barriers. The major challenges and barriers faced in adoption of smart agriculture in India include;

1. High upfront investment costs and limited rural broadband connectivity hinder widespread deployment of IoT and AI solutions among smallholder farmers (Aijaz et al., 2025).
2. Limited access to affordable financing and fragmented extension services further impede the scalability of precision technologies among marginal cultivators.
3. Insufficient farmer training and digital literacy impede the effective utilization of AI driven decision support tools, limiting technology uptake among marginal cultivators.
4. Inadequate data quality and limited availability of localized agronomic datasets hinder the development of accurate AI models for smallholder farms (Qayoumi et al., 2025).
5. Moreover, the absence of standardized data protocols and limited interoperability among diverse agricultural platforms hampers seamless integration of AI driven tools for smallholder farms.
6. Ambiguous regulatory frameworks governing data ownership and AI deployment create legal uncertainties that deter investment by private actors.
7. Data security concerns remain a critical barrier, requiring robust cybersecurity frameworks and farmer awareness programs . (Manning, 2020)
8. The lack of interest of Indian rural farmers towards adopting advanced digital platforms such as AI driven decision support systems, which further exacerbates the digital divide in smart agriculture.
9. The culture and tradition of old farming practices in India poses a significant obstacle to the rapid uptake of digital innovations, necessitating culturally sensitive extension strategies.
10. The lack of proper policies and schemes for the adoption of smart agriculture is considered to a significnat barrier.

Addressing these gaps requires coordinated policy frameworks that provide subsidized financing, robust digital infrastructure, and targeted capacity building programs to enable smallholder uptake of AI enabled technologies (Makkar et al., 2023;Choruma et al., 2024). Establishing public private partnership models that subsidize hardware, deliver farmer training, and institutionalize data security protocols can therefore accelerate adoption and mitigate the identified financial, knowledge, and safety barriers (Despoudi et al., 2023; Dhillon & Moncur, 2023). Future research should prioritize low cost, interoperable sensor suites and farmer centric training modules to lower entry barriers (Aashu et al., 2024; Prajapati et al., 2025).

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should devise subsidy driven incentive schemes for AI hardware, clarify data ownership regulations, and fund farmer focused digital literacy initiatives to mitigate adoption reluctance and investment concerns. Establishing a national AI agritech hub that harmonizes data standards, facilitates shared analytics, and offers subsidized access to cloud resources can further lower entry barriers while aligning India's regulatory framework with emerging global best practices. Implementing standardized block chain protocols for secure, peer to peer data exchange will safeguard farmer ownership and foster trust in AI driven platforms. Such an ecosystem should also incorporate farmer centred capacity building modules and affordable digital tools to bridge the literacy gap and ensure equitable access to AI agritech. Policymakers must tailor interventions to local socio economic contexts, combining targeted training with financial incentives to overcome awareness, resource, and cultural constraints. A robust monitoring evaluation framework that tracks agronomic outcomes, environmental footprints, and equity impacts of AI driven interventions will enable iterative policy refinement and ensure that technology deployment aligns with sustainable food security goals. Such a coordinated hub would also facilitate the deployment of AI driven forecasting tools that improve productivity and reduce post harvest losses, thereby strengthening the resilience of India's food system. Integrating AI enhanced climate resilient crop modeling into the hub will further bolster adaptive capacity and safeguard yields under extreme weather events.

Conclusion

Smart Agriculture is a transformative paradigm that leverages AI, IoT, and data driven decision support to boost productivity, sustainability, and food security outcomes in India. The increase in the productivity and crop yield will drive substantial improvements in national food security metrics, provided that supportive policies and capacity building initiatives are implemented. This review examined the role of smart agriculture in tackling the food securities beaming the searchlight on India. The review examined that the major objectives of smart agriculture were to enhance productivity, optimize resource utilization, and minimize post harvest losses across the supply chain through adoption of AI tools. The major AI tools used to achieve the objectives of smart agriculture include; remote sensing, IoT, cloud computing, big data and analysis, cloud computing, robot, drones and automation, block chain and ICT. Continued integration of these technologies promises to further elevate agricultural efficiency, sustainability, and resilience across India's diverse farming landscapes. The study reveals that successful smart agriculture projects and government initiatives were launched by Government of India to promote smart agriculture in tackling food securities. The author reveal that future investigations should prioritize low cost, interoperable sensor networks and farmer centric AI models that can function with heterogeneous, limited data to strengthen smallholder resilience and precision agriculture so that the food securities in India as specific and across globe in general can be tackled.

Conflict of Interest

Author don't have any conflict of Interest regarding the publication of this manuscript

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Dimpal Agrawal
Assistant Professor commerce
Naveen Govt College Chaple, District Raigarh
Chhattisgarh-496001, India.
Author Email: dimpalgarg457@gmail.com

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From Reconnaissance to Precision Strikes : The Rising Role of Drones in Warfare

• **Suresh Kumar Dhayal**

The advent of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), commonly known as drones, has revolutionized modern warfare. Initially designed for reconnaissance and surveillance, drones have evolved into sophisticated instruments of precision warfare. This article explores the transformation of drones from passive intelligence-gathering platforms to active combat systems, with an emphasis on their growing importance in recent conflicts across the globe. It examines case studies ranging from U.S. operations in Afghanistan and Iraq to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the Russia–Ukraine war, and Middle Eastern theatres. The paper places particular focus on South Asia, where India and Pakistan have employed drones in surveillance and combat roles, with special reference to Operation Sindoor and cross-border drone activities. By integrating global and regional perspectives, the article highlights strategic, ethical, and legal debates on drone warfare and anticipates future trends including swarm technologies and artificial intelligence. The findings suggest that while drones provide unmatched operational advantages, they also raise critical challenges regarding sovereignty, accountability, and escalation dynamics in modern conflicts.

Keywords : *Drones, UAVs, Reconnaissance, Precision Strikes, India–Pakistan, Operation Sindoor, Modern Warfare, Artificial Intelligence.*

Introduction

The twenty-first century has witnessed a profound transformation in warfare driven by technological advances. Among these, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), or drones,

represent a defining feature of contemporary military strategy. Traditionally, state power and coercion were measured in terms of troop strength, air superiority, and naval presence. However, the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) has underscored how information technologies, cyber capabilities, and autonomous systems are redefining the very nature of war. Drones epitomize this shift by providing unprecedented capabilities in intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance (ISR), and precision strikes. This paper seeks to examine drones as both enablers of operational efficiency and disruptors of traditional doctrines. By situating their role in global conflicts and South Asian security dynamics, it provides a comprehensive account of their strategic implications.

Literature Review

The academic literature on drone warfare is extensive yet unevenly distributed across strategic, ethical, and technological domains. Singer's seminal work, 'Wired for War' (2009), established the framework for understanding unmanned systems as part of the future of conflict. Boyle (2013) expanded the debate by highlighting the legal and ethical ramifications of targeted killings conducted through drones. Chamayou's 'A Theory of the Drone' (2015) provided a philosophical perspective on surveillance and remote killing. Empirical analyses by SIPRI, RAND, and IISS have tracked the global proliferation of drones, while case-specific studies on Nagorno-Karabakh and Ukraine underscore drones' decisive role in altering battle outcomes. In South Asia, research by IDSA and ORF has examined how drones affect India–Pakistan strategic stability. Despite these contributions, there remains a gap in connecting global trends with regional contexts. This article attempts to bridge that gap by juxtaposing global case studies with South Asian experiences, thereby enriching the understanding of drones as instruments of contemporary warfare.

Historical Evolution of Drones

The concept of pilotless aircraft is not new. During World War I, experimental attempts were made to create aerial torpedoes that could strike enemy positions without risking pilots' lives. In World War II, Germany's V-1 flying bomb demonstrated the potential of unmanned systems, though in rudimentary form. The Cold War period saw the U.S. and USSR experimenting with UAVs for reconnaissance, particularly over hostile territory where manned

missions were risky. The Israeli deployment of UAVs during the 1982 Lebanon War was a turning point, as it showcased drones' ability to suppress Syrian air defenses. The 1990s brought the U.S. Predator drone into operational use, initially for surveillance in the Balkans. After 9/11, drones were weaponized, enabling targeted killings in Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen, and Pakistan. This marked a watershed moment in the evolution of drones from passive surveillance platforms to active combat systems capable of reshaping counterterrorism strategies.

Reconnaissance Role of Drones

Reconnaissance has historically been the foundational role of drones. The ability to provide real-time intelligence without risking pilots' lives makes UAVs indispensable for modern militaries. The U.S. deployed Predator and Global Hawk drones extensively in Afghanistan and Iraq to monitor insurgent activity, locate high-value targets, and assess battle damage. India has relied on drones for surveillance along the Line of Control (LoC), with Israeli-origin Searcher and Heron UAVs providing vital intelligence against infiltration attempts. Reconnaissance drones also play a role in humanitarian operations, such as disaster monitoring and search-and-rescue missions. Their endurance, cost-effectiveness, and ability to penetrate difficult terrains underline their growing utility in both military and non-military domains.

Transition to Precision Strikes

The transformation of drones from reconnaissance platforms to offensive strike assets has fundamentally altered warfare. Weaponized drones enable states to conduct surgical strikes with minimal collateral damage, at least in theory. The U.S. pioneered this practice, employing MQ-1 Predators and later MQ-9 Reapers for targeted killings of al-Qaeda operatives in Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia. The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict of 2020 highlighted how Azerbaijan used Turkish-made Bayraktar TB2 drones to devastating effect against Armenian armor and air defenses, tipping the balance of war. The Russia–Ukraine war further illustrated the importance of drones, with Ukraine employing Turkish TB2s and U.S. Switchblade loitering munitions while Russia deployed Iranian Shahed drones for strategic strikes. Drones have thus become symbols of asymmetric power, enabling weaker states and non-state actors to challenge stronger adversaries at relatively low cost.

India–Pakistan Context and Operation Sindoor

In South Asia, drones have emerged as critical tools in the enduring rivalry between India and Pakistan. Operation Sindoor, an Indian initiative, underscored the role of UAVs in enhancing surveillance and precision targeting along the Line of Control and counterinsurgency operations in Jammu and Kashmir. India's reliance on Israeli Heron drones and its indigenous programs such as Rustom-II reflects its attempt to balance reconnaissance with offensive strike capabilities. Pakistan, meanwhile, has developed its Burraq drones, modeled partly on Chinese technology, for use in counterterrorism operations. Beyond formal military use, drone incursions across the Punjab and Jammu sectors since 2020 have been increasingly used for smuggling weapons, explosives, and narcotics into Indian territory. Indian security forces intercepted more than 120 such incidents between 2020 and 2024, highlighting the dual-use challenge of UAV technology. The India–Pakistan case illustrates how drones are not merely strategic tools of deterrence but also instruments of sub-conventional warfare that complicate regional security dynamics.

Strategic Advantages of Drones

Drones offer multiple strategic advantages that make them attractive to both major and middle powers. First, they are cost-effective compared to manned aircraft. For example, a Bayraktar TB2 costs around $5 million, significantly less than advanced fighter jets such as the Rafale, which exceeds $100 million per unit. Second, drones minimize the risk to human life by removing pilots from direct combat. Third, they enhance precision targeting, reducing collateral damage in urban environments. Fourth, drones offer endurance and flexibility, capable of loitering for extended periods before striking. Finally, they provide psychological advantages by instilling fear and disrupting adversary planning. These advantages explain why more than 100 countries now operate drones in some form, with at least 30 having access to armed variants.

Challenges and Ethical Dilemmas

Despite their advantages, drones raise significant ethical, legal, and strategic challenges. The principle of state sovereignty is undermined when drones conduct cross-border strikes without host

nation consent, as seen in U.S. operations in Pakistan and Yemen. Civilian casualties from drone strikes, though lower than conventional bombing, remain controversial and fuel anti-state sentiment. From a legal perspective, questions arise about the applicability of international humanitarian law (IHL) and the accountability of operators who conduct remote killings. Technologically, drones are vulnerable to jamming, hacking, and counter-drone systems, making them less reliable in contested environments. The proliferation of drones to non-state actors, including ISIS, Hezbollah, and Houthi rebels, demonstrates their disruptive potential outside state control. These dilemmas suggest that while drones are indispensable, they cannot be regarded as silver bullets in modern warfare.

Future Trajectory of Drone Warfare

Looking ahead, drones are expected to become even more autonomous and networked. Artificial intelligence will enhance target recognition, decision-making, and coordination among swarms of drones. Swarm technology, which involves dozens or even hundreds of drones operating collectively, has the potential to overwhelm sophisticated air defenses. In India, the government's 'Make in India' initiative is driving indigenous drone development, with DRDO's Rustom-II and private-sector contributions. Counter-drone technologies, including Bharat Forge's anti-drone systems and the Indian Army's SkyDome project, reflect growing recognition of UAV threats. Internationally, debates on regulating autonomous lethal weapons systems are intensifying at the UN. Thus, the trajectory of drone warfare lies at the intersection of technological innovation, strategic adaptation, and ethical governance.

Conclusion

Drones have irreversibly transformed the landscape of modern warfare. From reconnaissance platforms to precision strike systems, they embody the technological shift towards remote, networked, and asymmetric forms of conflict. Case studies from global conflicts and the India–Pakistan rivalry demonstrate both their operational utility and destabilizing potential. While drones provide cost-effective, precise, and risk-minimizing solutions, they simultaneously raise complex legal, ethical, and strategic dilemmas. The future of drone warfare will likely be shaped by artificial intelligence, swarm tactics, and counter-drone technologies, making them central to future

military doctrines. For South Asia, the challenge lies in managing drone proliferation within a fragile security environment, where their misuse can escalate tensions. Ultimately, the role of drones in warfare exemplifies the double-edged nature of technological advancement in international security.

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Suresh Kumar Dhayal

Author/Scholar:

RNB Global University, Ganganagar Road, Bikaner, Rajasthan-334601

Email: sdhayal1988@gmail.com

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Developmental plans implemented for adopting information technology in RTM Nagpur University Nagpur College Library : A analytical study

- **Chakradhar Vithoba Bhurre**
- **Dr. Sudhir G. Astunkar**

Today, along with the industrial revolution of the world, there has been an information revolution. Information Today Information Today Today's era is said to be the information era. In this information era, information has to be made available in modern libraries. This information is being used by teachers, students, researchers, scientists and people in the society and technology is doing the work of delivering this information instantly. Therefore, the technology through which information is delivered to the masses is called information technology. This information technology is being used in every field in modern times.

In this article, the background of the study is explained, the objectives of the research, scope, limitations, literature review, research methods, tools for collecting information, challenges of who will benefit from adopting information technology, implementation strategy, conclusions, and future directions will be drawn. Based on the above research, developmental plans implemented for adopting information technology in Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur University Nagpur College Library : A analytical study While collecting information about this, a questionnaire was adopted. In this questionnaire, a questionnaire was distributed to 60 librarians, out of which 20 librarians returned it. In this questionnaire, college library librarians from Nagpur, Wardha, Gondia and Bhandara districts of Nagpur University in Nagpur division were filled in. It has been seen that

the adoption of information technology has been maximum in libraries.

Key Words : *Library, College Librarian, Information, Information Technology, Library Services, Library Section*

Introduction

The advancement of information technology has created a very important place in the academic library. Information technology is important for how information will be easily available at the lowest cost and how the benefit of this information will be satisfied by the researchers and consumers. Information technology has changed the way of communicating, storing, processing and disseminating information. This research article is very important for what services are provided in the college library, what tools are available to information technicians, and what is the role of the librarian. It has also become necessary to consider what things are important for adopting information technology.

Although college libraries are adopting advanced technology, the financial aspect is very important for them. In addition, the necessary equipment, various software, and trained staff working in academic libraries are also useful. Due to the changes taking place in technology, it is necessary to consider technical and operational efficiency for implementation.

Objectives

The objectives of this research can be stated as follows.

1. To get information about the developmental plans of the college library.
2. To find out how information technology is being used in the library.
3. Understanding the progress of the library and evaluating information sources

Hypothesis

1. Information resources are utilized in the college library.
2. Development plans have been implemented.
3. The college library is used for developmental and training purposes.

4. Modern information technology has been used.

first university to be established in Maharashtra was the University of Mumbai in 1857, followed by Nagpur University in 1923, Pune University in 19048 and Marathwada University in 1956. This state university was truly established in the true sense. In this research paper, at the time of establishment of Nagpur University, which came under the state university, there were 6 colleges in it. There were 917 students studying, but today there is a significant increase in their number. Nagpur University Affiliated 514 The college has three autonomous components.

Scope and limitations

The scope of the research is limited to the National College Library under Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur University, Nagpur. At the same time, only the The grant-aided degree (BA, B.Sc.B.Com) has been studied.

Literature review

Many researchers have observed the transformation from traditional libraries to digital libraries.

Tenopir (1913), electronic resources are digital and automated systems that provide information on how users transfer information.

Kumar and Singh (2017) state that digital libraries provide several basic accessibility and facilities that enable users to access information from online databases, institutional depositories, and open access platforms.

Jagtap and Sharma (2018) in their research

Budget constraints, resistance to frequent changes in skilled staff, and the need to implement IT-based solutions are major obstacles, it said.

Smith and other. (2019) in their research

Data privacy and related security from cyber threats, They have made it clear that security concerns pose significant risks.

Bhattacharya (2020)

It has been explained that the adoption of information technology systems in college libraries is low due to the lack of infrastructure in many institutions.

Natarajan and Kumar (2019) In his research article

help students and faculty innovate to use electronic devices effectively in libraries. Explained

Mishra (2022) In his research article

Today, while using information technology in libraries, cloud computing and artificial intelligence are also increasingly being incorporated into libraries. That said.

Kumbhar (2019) Modern trends such as mobile applications have been explored for continuous access to back-chain and library services.

Kumar and Singh (2018), information technology in libraries enhances information retrieval and sharing services, and digital libraries and computerization enhance efficiency and accessibility, making them user-friendly.

Sawant (2020) He discussed the transition from traditional library systems to digital libraries and the increasing adoption of automation platforms like Koha and Lipsi in college libraries in Maharashtra, which are providing a better experience to the users while managing and using the libraries.

Joshi (2019) and Kade (2021)

According to their study, the limitations of library infrastructure and the lack of skills of library staff have been explained in our research.

Research methods

For the above research work, a questionnaire has been adopted for data collection using descriptive research method. For the present research work, senior colleges coming from Nagpur University, Wardha, Gondia and Bhandara districts have been included.

Information analysis

In the present research, 60 questionnaires were distributed, out of which 21 questionnaires were filled and returned by the respondents

Table of Questionnaire

Sr. No.	District	Questionnaire number	Questionnaire percentage
1	Nagpur	7	33%
2	Bhandara	5	24%
3	Gondia	4	19%
4	Wardha	5	24%
		2 1	100%

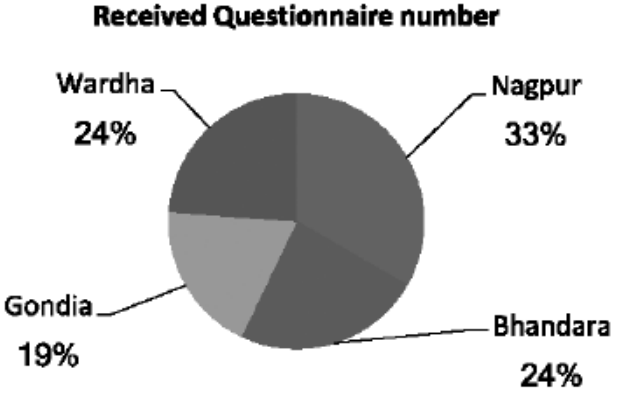


Table : 01 Educational Qualification

Sr. No.	Educational Qualification	Percentage of librarians with educational qualifications
1	M Lib	86.4
2	M. Phil .	50
3	Ph. D.	59.1
4	NET	45.5
5	SET	40.9

College librarians have completed postgraduate education and 50 percent of librarians have completed M.Phil. 59.1 percent of librarians have completed their Ph.D. On average, all librarians have completed their qualifications.

Table No. 02 **College Library Librarian Experience**

Sr. No.	Experience (Years)	Percentage (%)
1	0 to 10	18.2 %
2	11 to 20	50 %
3	21 to 30	22.7 %
4	More than 31	9.1 %
		100%

College librarians can be said to have good experience in the library field, with 18 percent librarians having 10 years of experience. 50 librarians have 10 to 20 years of experience, and 23 percent librarians have more than 20 years of experience. 10 percent librarians have more than 30 years of experience.

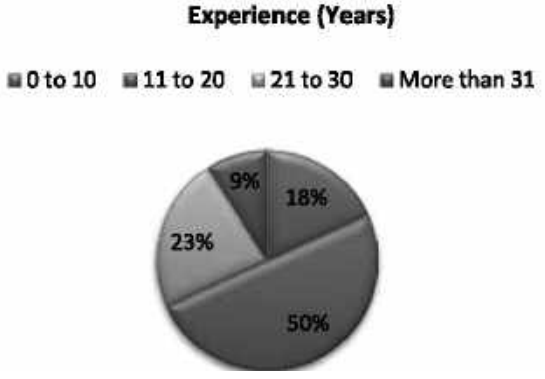


Table No. 03 **Financial assistance to college library**

Sr. No.	Financial assistance to the library	Percentage (%)
1	UGC grant	9.5 %
2	Student library fees	66.7 %
3	Government subsidy	9.5 %
4	Others	14.3%
		100%

Funding for college libraries is provided by UGC to 10 percent of libraries, while 66 percent of libraries are provided by students' library fees, government grants are provided to 10 percent of libraries, and 15 percent of libraries receive other funding.

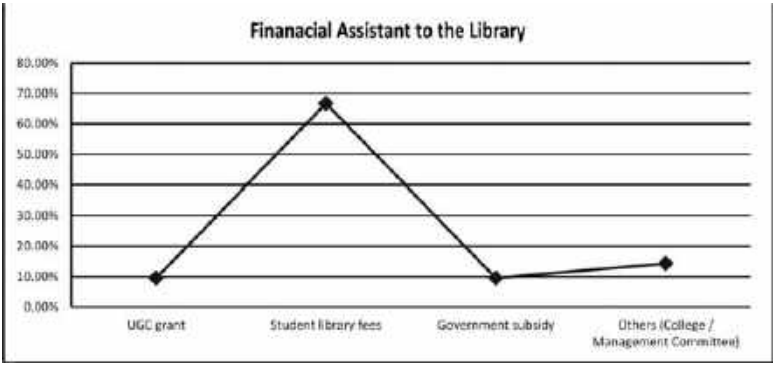


Table No. 04 **Annual Estimates of the Library (in Rupees)**

Sr. No.	Library Annual Estimate Sheet	Percentage (%)
1	10,000 or less	9.1 %
2	10,000 and above	4.5 %
3	50,000 to less than that	31.8 %
4	50,000 and above	22.7 %
5	More than 1,00,000	31.8 %
		100%

Although a few libraries have a small annual budget, most libraries have a budget of more than 50,000.

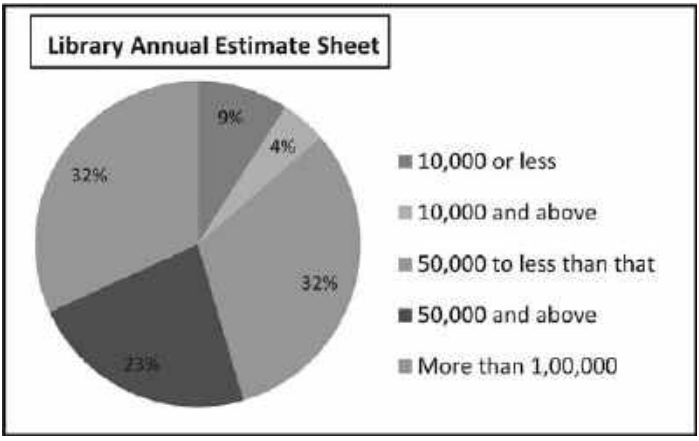
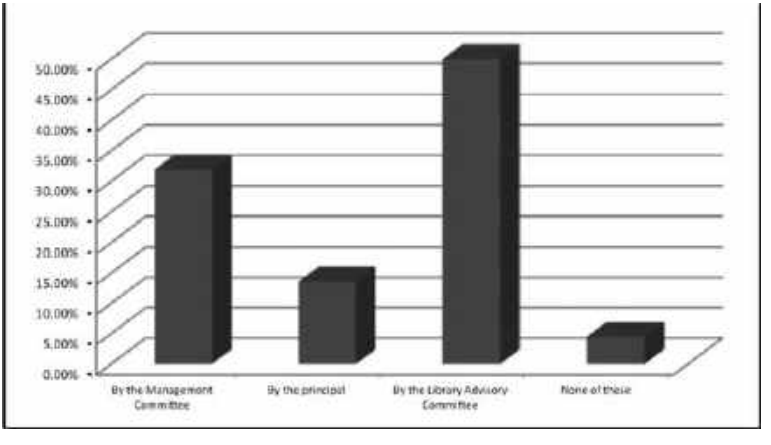


Table No. 05 **Library finances Planning**

Sr. No.	Library financial planning	Percentage (%)
1	Management Committee	31.9 %
2	principal	13.6 %
3	Library Advisory Committee	50 %
4	None of these	4.5 %
		100%

The financial planning of the library is done by the Management Committee, the Principal, and the Library Advisory Committee.



In addition, various factors are included while analyzing.

- Planning review meetings are held twice a year.
- College libraries are an effective tool for Modern services are provided.
- The staff is trained and the services are successful.
- The network connection speed is good.
- Services are provided based on automated information technology.

It appears that there are information technology-based tools available in many colleges.

Conclusion

While conducting an analytical study of the developmental plans implemented for the adoption of information technology in college libraries, information technology is being adopted in college libraries. Library staff are trained. Infrastructure and facilities are provided at the right place at the right time. Although there are challenges to be faced by those coming forward, the library staff is trained. Therefore, the present research is coming to an end.

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Chakradhar Vithoba Bhurre
Research Scholar, S. P. College Chandrapur
chkrdhrbhurre3@gmail.com Contact-8482834438

Dr. Sudhir G. Astunkar
Librarian, Vivekanad College, Bhadrawati
Dist-Chandrapur M. S. Contact-9850946798

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Effect of Copy, Cover And Compare Strategy In Teaching Spelling of Sight Words To Person With Intellectual Disability

● **Dr. Sanjay Kumar**
● **Dr. Mahesh Kumar Choudhary**

Persons with intellectual disability have limited cognitive capacity and face problems in learning any concept. Systematic procedure, methods and strategies are required to teach such persons in any skill. This study sought to ascertain the impact of the copy, cover, and compare (CCC) method on the spelling abilities of adolescents with intellectual disabilities. A child who had mild intellectual disability with cerebral palsy affecting both lower limbs, participated in the study. To assess its efficacy, a multiple baseline design was employed. The subject's performance at baseline was quite poor. However, performance increased once the CCC technique was put into practice.

Keywords : *Intellectual Disability, Copy, Cover, Compare (CCC), and Single-Subject Study Design.*

Introduction:

Students with mild intellectual disabilities frequently struggle with spelling, which further hinders their ability to read and write. Many strategies have been demonstrated to be successful in helping a variety of student demographics improve their spelling (Gettinger 1985, 1994). One evidence-based strategy that has received attention in the literature has been cover copy and compare (CCC). Students just need to do the following steps while using CCC: (a) they look at the stimulus (such as printed words); (b) they cover the stimulus; (c) they write a response; and (d) they uncover the stimulus and compare their answer to the stimulus.

CCC has been successful with children with a variety of disabilities, including specific learning disabilities, but there aren't many research that discuss how beneficial it is with intellectual disabilities (Hoenike et al., 2012; Brinegar et al., 2015).The impact of copy, cover, and compare on spelling in high school pupils with intellectual disabilities was examined by Brinegar et al. in 2015. The participant was a seventeen-year-old girl with an IQ of 44 who had been diagnosed with cognitive delay. A token economy was implemented concurrently with the CCC technique. Its effectiveness was assessed using an ABAB design that combined multiple baseline designs. The findings showed that the subjects' mean spelling word score increased from baseline to intervention.

In a similar vein, Hoenike, R. et al. (2012) did another study to investigate the efficacy of the CCC technique using rereading, sounding out, and student-selected rewards in order to increase accuracy and achieve mastery in certain spelling words. The research included two participants with mild intellectual disabilities. Multiple baseline design was used. The findings demonstrated an improvement in both participants' usage of proper spelling.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to evaluate the effect of CCC in increasing accuracy while decreasing errors in spelling of selected words.

Method

Subjects

Subject selected for the study was a mild intellectually disabled adolescent with cerebral palsy who was attending pre vocational class in special school located at Lucknow. The skill behavior performance of the child was assessed using Behavioural Assessment Scale for Indian Children with Mental retardation developed by Peshawaria, R & Venkatesan , S (1992). BASIC-M R indicated that subject had scored 141 out of 200 (70.5%) in reading-writing domain and overall performance in skill behavior domains was 1042 out of 1400. The subject had goal selected for learning sight words in his IEP by class teacher in addition to others targeted goals.

Settings

The study took place in special school where subject was regular student. The setting selected for intervention was a classroom located at ground floor adjacent to staffroom. It was quiet room with least distractions from people around. The researcher conducted the sessions from 12.05 to 1 PM on each working day, for 4 weeks

Dependent and independent variable :

Effect of CCC procedure was independent variable and number of sight words spells correctly at the end of intervention session was dependent variable.

Materials :

In the study researcher used common teaching materials which included sight word list, worksheet, data collection sheets, 3x5 inch index card and pencil. Sight word list to be taught was provided by the class teacher from his IEP records. The worksheets were developed by the researcher, which was used for CCC intervention.

Research design:

The study employed a multiple baseline approach across word sets (Kazdin 2010). Five words made up each word set, such as A and B. For each of the ten words, baseline data was gathered.

Baseline

All ten words were assessed at baseline sessions to gauge the subject's present proficiency with the chosen spelling terms. The subject would write the term after the researcher said it aloud during baseline sessions. No rewards or prompt were given during baseline sessions.

Intervention (CCC Procedure):

During intervention phase, same words were presented to the subject, which was administered during baseline sessions. After the pretest subject was provided with a CCC worksheet. The first word in the first column is read by the subject, who then copies it into the second column. A blank piece of paper was used to cover the word once the subject had copied it. The subject then wrote this word in the CCC column from memory.

Once subject finished writing the word, the blank sheet of

paper was removed and subject compared the spelling of word they wrote from memory to the word given in the first column. If subject reached the criterion of at least 4 out of 5 correct, social smile with pat on back was provided. If subject misspelled the word, needs to write correct spelling in the final column provided. After this error correction, procedure subject would move to other word.

Once set A reached its criterion and moved into maintenance, set B was introduced to intervention phase.

Inter-observer agreement & fidelity

The class teacher conducted an inter-observer agreement utilizing a photocopy of the student work that was completed with the subject. Prior to being graded by the researcher, the task was regarded by the class teacher. The inter-grade level of agreement was 100%.

For baseline, intervention, and maintenance, the fidelity percentage was 100% .

Results

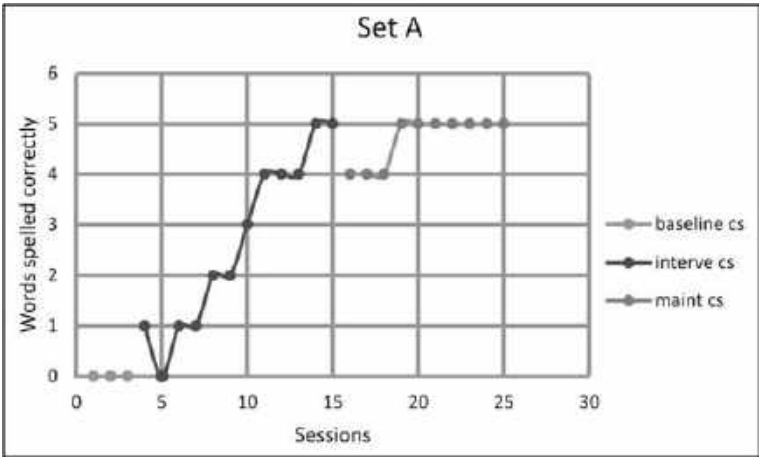
During baseline sessions, mean number of words spelled correctly for set 1 was 0. During intervention words spelled correctly ranged from 0 to 5 with mean of 3.5.

Similarly, baseline score of set 2 ranged between 0 to 1 with mean of 0.8. During intervention words spelled correctly ranged from 2 to 5 with mean of 4.

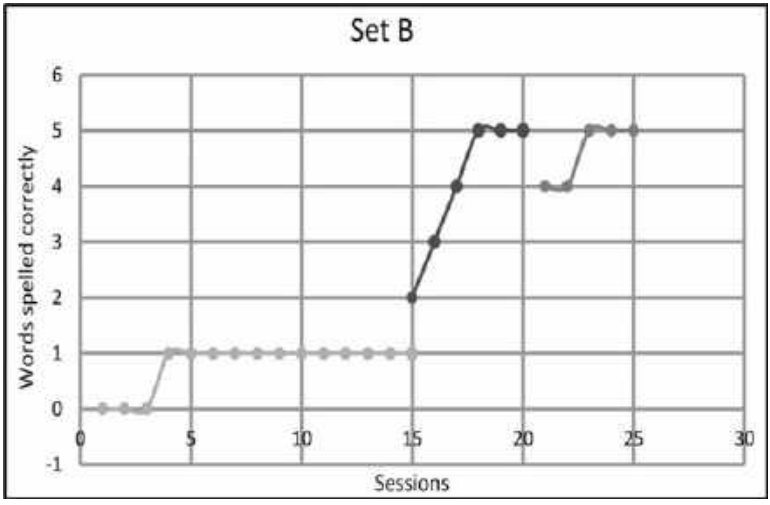
During maintenance phase of set 1, subject words spelled correctly ranged from 4 to 5 with a mean of 4.7 and in set 2 subject spelled correctly ranged from 4 to 5 with mean of 4.6.

Subject results show an increase in level from baseline to intervention for both word sets. It had increasing trends across intervention phases. Maintenance level were similar to intervention. Figure 1 &2 illustratrate the results for words spelled correctly by the subject.

Total Fig:1.



number of words spelled correctly in set A & B.



Note : blue dots indicate baseline, orange dots intervention and black dots indicate maintenance score

Discussion

The study's findings show that the subject responded well to the CCC intervention. Both sets showed an increase throughout the intervention stages. When the mean score from baseline was compared to the intervention score from set A, the subject achieved

100% success; in set B, it improved from baseline by 99.2. The outcome confirms the conclusions of Hoenike et al. (2012), Brinegar et al. (2015), Moser, L. (2009), and Hubbert et al. (2000).

The subject's ability to retain acquired sight words confirmed Nies and Belfiore's (2006) earlier findings. The current study included several limitations, such as the fact that some terms in word sets were quite similar to one another and words that were used frequently. The generalization of the learned sight words was the second drawback. Generalization programming was not used in this study.

The current study has a number of ramifications. First, teachers may use CCC in their classrooms; second, it requires minimal time to learn; and third, students gain from getting feedback on their work right away.

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Dr. Sanjay Kumar
Assistant Professor
DSMNR University, Lucknow
Sanj.70@ gmail.com

Dr. Mahesh Kumar Choudhary
Assistant Professor
DSMNR University, Lucknow
nimhmahesh@gmail.com

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An Analytical Study of Key Challenges and Attitudes Toward Sanskrit Education in the Digital Age Among B.Ed. Students of Uttarakhand.

● **Dr. Chetna Thapa**

Sanskrit, long regarded as the fountainhead of India's intellectual, spiritual, and cultural traditions, now stands at a critical juncture in the digital era. While the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 envisions the revitalization of classical languages through technology-enabled pedagogies, the realization of this vision depends largely on the preparedness and attitudes of future educators. The present study investigates the key challenges and attitudinal orientations of B.Ed. students toward Sanskrit education in Uttarakhand. Employing a descriptive survey design, a sample of 80 B.Ed. students was assessed using two self-made instruments: the Key Challenges for Sanskrit Education Scale (covering digital infrastructure, technological competence, availability of resources, institutional support, and pedagogical adaptability) and the Attitude Toward Sanskrit Education Scale (covering cognitive, affective, behavioral, cultural value, and adaptability dimensions). Statistical analysis involved descriptive measures, independent samples t-tests, and Pearson's correlation.

The findings indicate no significant gender-based differences in either challenges or attitudes, suggesting that gender disparities in Sanskrit education may be diminishing in the region. However, digital competence emerged as a decisive factor: students with higher competence reported markedly fewer challenges and demonstrated more favorable attitudes toward Sanskrit learning. A significant negative correlation between perceived challenges and attitudes was observed, underscoring that greater challenges tend to diminish learners' enthusiasm and receptivity toward Sanskrit education.

The study concludes that while progress toward gender parity is evident, digital competence remains the key determinant of successful engagement with Sanskrit in the digital age. It recommends integrating digital pedagogy modules within B.Ed. curricula, enhancing institutional infrastructure, and developing interactive digital resources to make Sanskrit education both accessible and engaging. These findings contribute to the contemporary discourse on language education, highlighting the imperative of blending cultural preservation with technological innovation to ensure the sustainable future of Sanskrit learning.

Keywords : *Sanskrit education, digital age, B.Ed. students, digital competence, attitudes, challenges, NEP 2020, Uttarakhand*

Introduction

Sanskrit, often hailed as the fountainhead of India's intellectual, spiritual, and cultural legacy, continues to hold a distinctive place in the nation's educational discourse. For centuries, it has been the medium through which philosophical treatises, scientific knowledge, and literary masterpieces were transmitted. However, in contemporary times, Sanskrit has been gradually relegated to the periphery of mainstream education, overshadowed by modern subjects and global languages. The onset of the digital era, while introducing unprecedented opportunities for knowledge dissemination, has also posed formidable challenges to the preservation and promotion of Sanskrit, especially in the realm of teacher education. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 explicitly advocates for the rejuvenation of classical languages, including Sanskrit, by harnessing the potential of technology-enabled learning and innovative pedagogical approaches. Yet, the success of this policy vision depends largely on the preparedness, digital competence, and attitudinal dispositions of teacher trainees.

Recent scholarship underscores the transformative role of digital technologies in sustaining classical language education. **Sharma and Verma (2021)** observed that digital platforms have significantly broadened the accessibility of Sanskrit learning materials; however, they emphasized that a lack of digital training among teacher trainees often hampers meaningful engagement. Similarly, **Kumar and Pandey (2021)** noted that government

initiatives to digitize Sanskrit resources have not fully achieved their potential due to persistent skill gaps among B.Ed. students.

Mishra (2022) highlighted that students with higher digital competence displayed deeper engagement and better comprehension of Sanskrit texts, whereas those lacking technological fluency struggled to utilize online resources effectively. **Joshi and Agarwal (2022)** echoed this view, asserting that digital interventions can democratize Sanskrit education and overcome regional or social barriers—provided institutions ensure adequate infrastructural support and capacity building.

The dimension of gender has also attracted scholarly attention. **Singh and Joshi (2023)** reported that female B.Ed. students often faced greater obstacles in accessing and navigating e-learning platforms, citing limited availability of personal devices, weaker institutional support, and lower confidence levels in digital usage. These findings are corroborated by **Bhatnagar (2023),** who emphasized that gender disparities in digital access and competence risk perpetuating inequities in Sanskrit education.

Equally crucial are attitudinal orientations. **Thapa (2024)** established that a positive outlook toward Sanskrit was strongly correlated with the willingness to adopt digital platforms, while negative perceptions reduced active participation. Similarly, **Kapoor (2024)** observed that the traditional image of Sanskrit as a "difficult and archaic subject" often dampened learner enthusiasm, reinforcing the urgency for digitally enriched, interactive pedagogies. Adding to this discourse, **Deshmukh (2024)** argued that although challenges persist, the digital age presents an unprecedented opportunity to bridge the gap between India's linguistic heritage and modern educational aspirations.

Taken together, these studies indicate that digital competence, gender, and learner attitudes are pivotal variables influencing the success of Sanskrit education in the digital age. However, there remains a paucity of empirical evidence specifically focused on B.Ed. students—future teachers whose perceptions and practices will significantly shape the trajectory of Sanskrit teaching in India.

B.Ed. students, as prospective educators, are the vital link between the aspirations articulated in policy documents and their realization in classrooms. Their capacity to integrate digital tools, address pedagogical challenges, and cultivate positive attitudes

toward Sanskrit will determine whether the language reclaims its rightful place in the educational landscape. In Uttarakhand—a state with deep cultural ties to Sanskrit—understanding the interplay of gender, digital competence, and attitudes is of particular importance.

This study gains further urgency in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, which accelerated the adoption of digital education globally. As highlighted by Thapa (2024), the pandemic-induced digital transformation has widened access but simultaneously exposed stark inequalities in technological preparedness. By investigating the key challenges and attitudinal perspectives of B.Ed. students in Uttarakhand, this study seeks to provide actionable insights for curriculum designers, teacher educators, and policymakers.

Hypotheses:

1. There is no significant difference in the Key challenges for Sanskrit education in the digital age on the basis of gender.
2. There is no significant difference in the Key challenges for Sanskrit education in the digital age on the basis of digital competence
3. There is no significant difference in the attitude toward Sanskrit education in the digital age on the basis of gender.
4. There is no significant difference in the attitude toward Sanskrit education in the digital age on the basis of digital competence.
5. There is no significant relationship between the Key challenges for Sanskrit education and the attitude towards Sanskrit education.

Research Design : This study adopts a **descriptive survey research design** with a quantitative approach to examine the challenges and attitudes toward Sanskrit education in the digital age among B.Ed. students in Uttarakhand.

Sample : 80 B.Ed. students, selected through stratified random sampling.

Variables :

- Independent Variable: Key Challenges for Sanskrit Education in the Digital Age
- Dependent Variable: Attitude Toward Sanskrit Education in the Digital Age
- Background Variables: Gender, Digital Competence

Tools: **Self-made**

1. **Key Challenges for Sanskrit Education Scale**

   Based on the following Dimensions :

   1. Digital Infrastructure
   2. Technological Competence
   3. Availability of Digital Resources
   4. Institutional Support
   5. Pedagogical Adaptability

2. **Attitude Toward Sanskrit Education Scale**

   Based on the following Dimensions:

   1. Cognitive Perceptions (usefulness, relevance)
   2. Affective Orientation (interest, enthusiasm)
   3. Behavioral Intentions (readiness to use digital tools)
   4. Cultural and Traditional Value Orientation
   5. Adaptability to Digital Learning

Data Analysis:

- Descriptive Statistics: Mean, Standard Deviation
- t-test: Differences based on gender and digital competence
- Pearson's Correlation: Relationship between challenges and attitudes

Results and Analysis

Hypotheses: 01 : There is no significant difference in the key challenges for Sanskrit education in the digital age on the basis of gender.

Table 1 : **Key challenges for Sanskrit education in the digital age on the basis of gender.**

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Male	40	74.35	8.42	1.21	0.229
Female	40	72.10	7.98		

Since $p = 0.229 > 0.05$, the null hypothesis is accepted. Thus, male and female B.Ed. students do not significantly differ in their perceived challenges regarding Sanskrit education in the digital age.

These findings are consistent with Sharma and Verma (2021), who observed that infrastructural limitations and lack of training affect learners universally, regardless of gender. While earlier studies (Singh & Joshi, 2023) noted that female students often face more barriers due to limited access to devices, the present findings suggest that in the Uttarakhand context, such disparities may be narrowing due to improved accessibility in teacher education institutions.

Hypotheses 02 : There is no significant difference in the key challenges for Sanskrit education in the digital age on the basis of digital competence.

Table 2 : **Key challenges for Sanskrit education in the digital age on the basis of digital competence.**

Digital Competence	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
High	40	69.85	7.41	3.12	0.003*
Low	40	76.40	8.09		

Since $p = 0.003 < 0.05$, the null hypothesis is rejected. Those with lower digital competence reported facing greater challenges, particularly in navigating online Sanskrit resources and using educational technology effectively. This aligns with Mishra (2022), who emphasized the crucial role of digital literacy in engaging with classical language education. The finding highlights the need for targeted digital skills training in B.Ed. curricula to ensure equitable learning outcomes.

Hypotheses 03 : There is no significant difference in the attitude toward Sanskrit education in the digital age on the basis of gender.

Table 3 : **Attitude towards Sanskrit education in the digital age on the basis of gender.**

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Male	40	82.70	9.05	0.76	0.451
Female	40	81.25	8.61		

Since $p = 0.451 > 0.05$, the null hypothesis is accepted. This

suggests that male and female students have similar attitudes toward Sanskrit education in the digital age. Both male and female B.Ed. students expressed comparable levels of interest, enthusiasm, and willingness to engage with Sanskrit digitally. This result resonates with the conclusions of Bhatnagar (2023), who noted that while digital access may differ, attitudinal orientations toward Sanskrit are increasingly being shaped by institutional support and exposure rather than gender alone.

Hypotheses 04 : There is no significant difference in the attitude toward Sanskrit education in the digital age on the basis of digital competence.

Table 4 : **Attitude towards Sanskrit education in the digital age on the basis of digital competence.**

Digital Competence	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
High	40	85.45	7.92	2.41	0.018*
Low	40	79.30	8.66		

Since $p = 0.018 < 0.05$, the null hypothesis is rejected. This shows that students with higher digital competence display more positive attitudes toward Sanskrit education compared to their low-competence peers. This suggests that technological confidence enhances learners' willingness to adopt and sustain digital learning practices. The result confirms the findings of Kapoor (2024), who reported that digital readiness contributes to more favorable perceptions of Sanskrit as a subject adaptable to modern pedagogies.

Hypotheses 05 : There is no significant relationship between the key challenges for Sanskrit education and the attitude toward Sanskrit education.

Table 5 : **Relationship between the key challenges for Sanskrit education and the attitude toward Sanskrit education.**

Variables	N	r-value	p-value
Key Challenges & Attitude Scores	80	-0.462	0.001*

Since $p = 0.001 < 0.05$ and the correlation coefficient is

negative (r = -0.462), the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates a significant negative relationship: as perceived challenges increase, positive attitudes toward Sanskrit education decrease. These findings align with Thapa (2024), who argued that persistent technological and pedagogical barriers often reduce students' enthusiasm and engagement. The result also supports Deshmukh (2024), who emphasized the need for reducing barriers to promote favorable learner attitudes toward classical languages.

Conclusion

The present study examined the key challenges and attitudinal orientations of B.Ed. students toward Sanskrit education in the digital age, with a specific focus on gender and digital competence. The findings reveal that:

- Gender does not significantly influence either the challenges faced or attitudes held toward Sanskrit education.
- Digital competence, however, plays a decisive role; students with higher competence encounter fewer challenges and demonstrate more positive attitudes.
- A significant negative relationship exists between challenges and attitudes, indicating that higher challenges reduce students' positivity toward Sanskrit learning.

These results underscore that while access gaps between male and female students may be narrowing in Uttarakhand, disparities based on digital competence remain critical. The study affirms that the successful revitalization of Sanskrit education in the digital era, as envisioned by NEP 2020, hinges on strengthening digital readiness among teacher trainees.

Recommendations

1. Integration of Digital Skill Training in B.Ed. Programs
   - Institutions should incorporate structured modules on digital pedagogy, including the use of e-resources and learning management systems, to enhance the digital competence of B.Ed. students.
2. Development of Digital Sanskrit Resources
   - Universities and government agencies should invest in creating user-friendly, interactive digital platforms for

Sanskrit learning, including e-books, audio-visual content, and mobile applications.

3. Institutional Support and Infrastructure
   - Teacher education institutions must ensure reliable internet access, adequate digital devices, and technical assistance to minimize infrastructural barriers.
4. Workshops and Training for Attitude Enhancement
   - Regular orientation and sensitization workshops should be conducted to reshape perceptions of Sanskrit as a living and adaptable subject relevant to modern life.
5. Inclusive Strategies for Students with Low Digital Competence
   - Special mentoring programs and peer-learning initiatives should be introduced for students with low digital competence to ensure equitable participation.
6. Policy-Level Interventions
   - State education departments should collaborate with teacher education institutions in Uttarakhand to design policies that promote the integration of Sanskrit with digital technologies, ensuring that the spirit of NEP 2020 is effectively implemented.

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Dr. Chetna Thapa
Assistant Professor (B.Ed.)
Dayanand Women's Training College, Dehradun
Uttarakhand, India- 248001
chetna.ch@gmail.com

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E-Governance and Consumer Satisfaction: Case Study of E-Mitra from Rajasthan

● **Dr. Vinit Kumar**

The rapid advancement of information and communication technology has significantly transformed public service delivery through e-governance initiatives worldwide. E-Mitra, a pioneering e-governance project implemented in Rajasthan, India, serves as an integrated platform for citizens to access various government services electronically. This study explores the impact of E-Mitra on consumer satisfaction by evaluating service quality, accessibility, efficiency, and transparency. Employing a case study approach, data were collected from E-Mitra users across different regions to assess their experiences and satisfaction levels. The findings indicate that E-Mitra has substantially enhanced convenience and reduced bureaucratic delays, thereby improving overall consumer satisfaction. However, challenges such as digital literacy, technical glitches, and infrastructure gaps remain. This research contributes valuable insights for policymakers, researchers and stakeholders aiming to optimize e-governance frameworks for enhanced citizen engagement and satisfaction.

Keywords : *E-governance, transparency, efficiency, satisfaction*

Introduction

E-governance is a necessity for transparent, efficient, and citizen-centric administration. As more services go digital, governments must focus on inclusivity, reliability, and trust to ensure no one is left behind. With continued innovation and investment, e-governance can truly transform service delivery and bridge the gap between government and the governed. E-Mitra is a flagship e-governance initiative of the Government of Rajasthan, launched in 2002 to deliver citizen services through a single-window,

public–private platform [1]. Today E-Mitra aims to make over 300 services (utility bill payments, certificates, licenses, etc.) available at citizens' door steps[2]. Its mission is to improve convenience, transparency and accountability in public service delivery through digital technology. Researchers are interested in how well E-Mitra achieves these goals: in particular, whether it raises consumer satisfaction, and how factors like rural–urban gaps, digital literacy, and feedback mechanisms influence outcomes. This study reviews government reports (Rajasthan Finance/Economic Reviews, Digital India documents) and academic analyses to assess E-Mitra's impact on service efficiency, accessibility, and citizen satisfaction. It highlights lessons for policy, noting successes in efficiency and transparency as well as remaining challenges.

E-governance can enhance service quality and user satisfaction by reducing costs, wait-times and corruption [3][4]. Studies of citizen-centric models emphasize that digital platforms, when well-designed, improve efficiency and trust [4]. For example, a recent review notes that Rajasthan's e-initiatives have significantly expanded access and efficiency[2][4]. E-Mitra in particular is repeatedly cited as a "game changer" for public service delivery in Rajasthan [2][3]. In practice, users report that E-Mitra's kiosk model simplifies processes low fees and one-stop convenience among key benefits [3]. Independent assessments confirm high user approval for cost savings, reduced bribery, and time savings due to E-Mitra[3][5].

However, respondents also highlight challenges. Digital literacy and infrastructure gaps (especially in rural areas) can limit uptake [6][4]. Language barriers and lack of awareness are noted obstacles for many citizens [7][4]. Rural users appreciated E-Mitra but stressed that connectivity and awareness remain serious issues [8]. E-Mitra's own operations research acknowledges such gaps, indicating that nearly 60% of potential users miss time-sensitive benefits due to network failures or lack of skill[9][10]. E-Mitra as a well-regarded platform that improves transparency and speeds up delivery, but one whose benefits are uneven due to the digital divide.

Scale and Service Delivery Efficiency

Rajasthan's E-Mitra platform has achieved vast scale. As of 2020, official reports cite over 80,000 E-Mitra kiosks (including

CSCs and micro-ATMs) across all districts [11]. More recent analysis (2025) indicates about 70,000 kiosks are operational, offering 300+ services from state and central departments [2]. The platform provides critical G2C and B2C services – utility bill payments, certificates (income, caste, domicile), licenses, land records, schemes enrollment, and grievances – in one place [2]. Users can avail many of these digitally through any kiosk in the state, at prescribed minimal fees.

Efficiency gains are significant. By automating back-end processes and aggregating services, E-Mitra reduces transaction times and paperwork. Users report that kiosks eliminate multiple trips and long queues at various offices. In empirical study 69% of users agreed E-Mitra provides all services "in one place", and 49% noted shorter processing times. The single-window model also appears to curb corruption: only 14% of users responded that bribery still occurred at kiosks, versus higher rates in manual systems Indeed, Rajasthan officials credit E-Mitra with streamlining citizen interactions and improving service transparency at scale[4] [3]. The system's broad adoption (3000+ crore ₹ revenues in 2016) and awards (e.g. Atal e-Gov State Awards) further testify to its delivery efficiency.

Accessibility and Coverage (Rural vs Urban)

E-Mitra's hybrid model explicitly targets both rural and urban users. In rural areas, Common Service Centres (CSCs) function as E-Mitra outlets, whereas urban citizens use dedicated E-Mitra kiosks (often in Municipal or district offices). Data show deliberate emphasis on rural outreach: for example, the E-Mitra Plus upgrade (kiosks with video links to officials) is deployed mainly in villages – as of 2020, 9,891 of the 14,891 E-Mitra Plus units were in rural locations[12]. More generally, roughly half of Rajasthan's kiosks serve rural gram-panchayats, extending digital services to remote communities[2][12].

Despite this coverage, gaps remain. Rural kiosks often grapple with poor internet or power supply, slowing service delivery. Connectivity is a pervasive issue – state officials have acknowledged that "attaining [digital] goals is exhausting" without reliable broadband, especially in arid villages [8]. Some citizens in remote areas must still travel significant distances to reach a

kiosk. By contrast, urban residents can also use online portals and a new E-Mitra mobile app for certain payments [13], giving them an extra access mode. The mobile app, launched by DoIT&C, lets users pay bills (electricity, water, mobile, etc.) and check application status directly from smart phones [13]. This multi-channel approach partially narrows urban–rural divides.

Nevertheless, differences persist. Urban users with internet access often find it easier to complete simple transactions online, while rural users rely heavily on kiosks and their operators. Moreover, the Awareness Gap is steeper in villages: many rural citizens have limited knowledge of E-Mitra's offerings or do not fully trust technology. A kiosk owner noted that many SC/ST and BPL villagers "don't feel technologically handicapped" once assisted, indicating trust in operators [14]. But that also implies that unschooled users seldom initiate kiosk visits on their own without encouragement. Overall, accessibility has improved dramatically from the pre-digital era, but infrastructure and outreach limitations mean E-Mitra's impact is somewhat uneven between urban and rural areas.

Consumer Satisfaction and Perceived Impact

Study suggests high consumer satisfaction with E-Mitra's core services. Across studies, the majority of users report positive experiences. For example, an empirical study conducted in Junjhunu District found users lauded E-Mitra's low fees and one-stop convenience: 68% said charges were "less" than before, and 63% praised having multiple services under one roof. Many also highlighted indirect benefits: 56% agreed E-Mitra provided "equal opportunity" regardless of socio-economic status, and 48% cited "less time" and no long queues. It is crear from the study that eMitra "simplifies the lives of common people" by speeding up daily work and reducing costs. These user-reported gains translate into higher satisfaction levels and trust in the system.

Quantitatively, satisfaction surveys show favorable net ratings, though comprehensive state-wide stats are not public. Nevertheless, overarching indicators (e.g. kiosk usage volume) confirm strong demand. E-Mitra processing millions of transactions annually suggests sustained citizen endorsement. Moreover, qualitative accounts underscore that marginalized users value the platform.

One study notes that women, in particular, tend to be as satisfied or more than men with E-Mitra, as it empower them to handle family paperwork more easily [15]. Villagers who overcame earlier administrative hassles – one widow could finally get her caste certificate without multiple office visits thanks to E-Mitra [16].

However, satisfaction is tempered by frustrations in some cases. Users and non-users respondents point out issues like server downtime, network problems, or complicated forms that can lead to missed deadlines [17]. In study 62% of consumers complained they missed scheme benefits due to technical delays, and many struggled with incomplete or incorrect submissions. Such problems translate into user complaints or reversion to manual methods in difficult cases. Rural citizens, in particular, sometimes expressed reluctance to use kiosks without trust in the operator – until they see consistent, correct service [14]. Thus, while core satisfaction is high for standard transactions, reliability and user-friendliness remain vital areas for improvement.

Governance Impact and Accountability

E-Mitra's transparency features have meaningful governance implications. By digitizing service records and receipts, the system creates audit trails for every transaction. This visibility has helped decrease discretionary delays and leakages in service delivery[3] [4]. In study respondents perceive E-Mitra as more trustworthy than legacy bureaucratic channels. For marginalized groups, the kiosk model reduces the need to navigate opaque office hierarchies; people "trust the [kiosk] operator" after seeing reliable service, which empowers citizens.

From an administrative angle, the PPP model of E-Mitra (with local service providers) not only spurs rural entrepreneurship (including increasing female kiosk ownership[21]) but also keeps the system nimble. Government agencies say that E-Mitra has set new benchmarks for citizen satisfaction surveys: Rajasthan now tracks online grievance volumes (Sampark), kiosk transaction statistics, and complaint-resolution times, using these metrics for course correction[4]. Awards like the Atal e-Governance State Awards (2022–23) have recognized E-Mitra for improving government efficiency. Thus, E-Mitra serves as a case of responsive governance: it embodies Digital India principles by using technology to bring

services to citizens' doorsteps and by engaging users in feedback channels (Jan Soochna, Sampark, IVR helplines)[20][4].

Digital Literacy and Inclusion

Consumer satisfaction with E-Mitra is strongly influenced by users' digital literacy and socio-economic context. Study emphasizes that low digital skills and awareness in rural Rajasthan pose obstacles to full utilization of E-Mitra services. Many villagers lack familiarity with computers or the Internet, and may not know which kiosk services to use for a given scheme. Language and literacy barriers further complicate matters: interfaces and forms in English or Hindi can be daunting for monolingual or illiterate users[7]. Even the notion of paying fees electronically is unfamiliar to older or less-educated citizens.

These deficits affect satisfaction in two ways. First, inexperienced users often need intensive assistance from kiosk operators, reducing their feeling of autonomy. While this human help is a strength of the E-Mitra model, it can also lead to frustration if users feel they cannot access services on their own. Second, groups like women and the poor may initially mistrust digital payments or may be unaware of entitlements. Recognizing this, Rajasthan has implemented digital literacy programs and awareness campaigns alongside E-Mitra rollout. In other words, even as E-Mitra expands, its full impact on satisfaction hinges on the government's ability to educate and empower users (especially in villages) to use e-services confidently.

Recommendations for effective e-governance

1. Strengthen Digital Infrastructure:
2. Expand connectivity: Invest in high-speed internet and reliable power in rural areas (e.g. fiber to villages, solar backup at kiosks). Improving uptime directly tackles a top user complaint[8].
3. Upgrade offline capacity: Provide kiosks with offline data caching and periodic sync options, so that basic services work even if connectivity drops.
4. Enhance Digital Literacy and Outreach:
5. Community training: Partner with Panchayats and NGOs to

conduct regular workshops on using e-services (E-Mitra, Jan Soochna, Sampark). Mobile training vans or "village digital melas" can raise awareness of kiosk services.

6. User-friendly interfaces: Continue adding local languages and visual aids in kiosk software to accommodate semi-literate users[7]. Use voice assistance (e.g. IVR) for guidance.
7. School and youth programs: Integrate digital literacy into school curricula, so the next generation can assist family members.
8. Improve Feedback and Accountability:
9. Regular surveys: Institutionalize periodic citizen satisfaction surveys (via kiosks or digital forms) to measure perceptions and identify issues. Publish summary metrics (e.g. average service time, resolution rate) to ensure transparency.
10. Responsive grievance redressal: Tighten the Sampark portal workflow: set service-level agreements for complaint resolution, and feed resolution data back to kiosks. Ensure kiosk operators are rewarded for successful grievance closure.
11. Monitoring dashboard: Develop an analytics dashboard for administrators to track key indicators (transaction volumes, user feedback, downtimes) in real time, enabling swift corrective action.
12. Optimize Service Delivery:
13. Expand service catalog: Continue adding high-demand services (e.g. health, agriculture schemes) to E-Mitra so users get more value from a single interface.
14. Process simplification: Audit common user transactions for steps and paperwork. Wherever possible, streamline form-filling with pre-populated data (from Aadhaar, Jan Soochna) to reduce errors and user effort.
15. Flexible locations: Pilot 'mobile kiosks' (on wheels or pop-up booths) for underserved hamlets, and encourage village leaders to host kiosks in panchayat offices or libraries on fixed schedules.
16. Capacity Building and Incentives:
17. Kiosk operator training: Provide periodic refresher courses to

kiosk staff (including female entrepreneurs) on new services, software updates, and customer handling, ensuring consistent user experience.

18. Performance incentives: Offer bonuses or recognition (as with Atal eGov awards) for kiosks with high service quality metrics (e.g. minimal transaction time, high user satisfaction ratings). This motivates better citizen service at the grassroots.
19. Policy Integration and Scaling:
20. Leverage data for policy: Use anonymized E-Mitra usage data to identify underserved regions or slow processes, informing broader governance reforms. For instance, low uptake in an area might spur targeted outreach or alternative delivery models.
21. Expand partnerships: Explore collaborations with private tech firms (for UI/UX improvements) or financial institutions (for secure digital payments) to modernize the platform continuously.
22. Replicate best practices: Document and share lessons from E-Mitra's successes (e.g. how E-Mitra Plus kiosks operate) so they can be scaled in other states or central initiatives.

Conclusion

Rajasthan's E-Mitra has demonstrably raised citizen satisfaction by making government services more accessible, quicker, and transparent[3][2]. With tens of thousands of kiosks and a growing mobile presence, millions of residents – especially those in remote areas – now avail needed services without facing bureaucratic hurdles. Studies consistently show that users value the platform's low fees, single-window convenience, and time savings[3][5]. Yet, the success of E-Mitra hinges on policies that sustain this momentum. Continuing expansion of the kiosk network must go hand-in-hand with solving digital literacy and connectivity gaps[6][4]. Feedback mechanisms like the Sampark portal and E-Mitra Plus exemplify citizen-responsive governance, but their effectiveness depends on strong implementation. For policymakers, the E-Mitra case underlines the importance of holistic e-governance strategy: integrating technology deployment with human training, monitoring, and inclusion efforts. In Rajasthan's experience,

e-governance is not just an IT project but a catalyst for inclusive, efficient, and accountable public service. Future gains in consumer satisfaction will come from deepening this integration – ensuring that every resident, rural or urban, has both the access and the capability to benefit from the digital state.

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Dr. Vinit Kumar
Assistant Professor
Department of Public Administration
University of Rajasthan, Jaipur
dudivinit@gmail.com

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Teachers' Perspective on Art Education at Primary Level

Isha Attri1 • Prof. Susmita Lakhyani

Teachers play an important role in the holistic development of the child. Art is one of the vital components in the holistic development. This study aims to understand different perspective that primary teachers have about art. The researcher conducted in-depth interview and classroom observation to understand the role and views of primary teachers about art class. The findings have been thematically divided and discussed further. It can be said that the teachers have multiple views on art. It was also noted that teachers lack support from different stakeholders for art classes in terms of facilities and resources. However, systematic support is required for art to be incorporated effectively in primary classes. The researcher concluded with recommendations like policy improvements and in-service trainings of teachers.

Keywords : *Art, Child Art, Primary Class, Teacher.*

Introduction

Art is a vital component in the overall development of the child. Art enhances creativity and imagination. It provides opportunities to solve problems and think independently. It incorporates free expression, bliss, cultural appreciation and therapeutic healing. Learners develops aesthetic skills along with educative value. Hence, art is essential to gain 21st century skills for a learner. It adds value not only to education but also to the life of an individual. National Education Policy (NEP 2020), mentions about holistic and multidisciplinary approach to education to enable creativity and critical thinking in learners (p. 5). Further the policy highlights art integration as a cross-cultural pedagogical approach that integrated art and culture across other subjects (p.12). This will also strengthen the bond between education and cultural values. In order to nurture

a generation of individuals as creative thinkers, innovators, problem solvers, and well prepared to face the obstacles of changing times, art education must be embraced as the central pillar of academic reforms. (Annet, 2024). Experiences gained through art impacts an individual in their education and life. Hence, art is an integral component in the foundational stages of a young learner. In Delhi Sarvodaya Schools, the class teachers take academic and non-academic subjects (including art) at foundational and preparatory stage. Therefore, one needs to understand teachers' perspective on art as a subject in addition to the challenges faced by them. The present research explores different perspectives that primary teachers have about art as a subject. The study also highlights the challenges faced by primary teachers while teaching art in a classroom.

Objectives

The objectives for the study were–

1. To describe primary class teachers' perspectives on art as a subject.
2. To explore art classes conducted in school by the primary class teachers.
3. To understand the challenges faced by teachers in art education.

Definitions of The Key Terms

Art : This study focuses on visual art.

Child art : Art done by children of age group 06-11 years.

Primary classes : The classes including 1st through 5th is considered the primary class.

Teacher : A teacher who is assigned as a class teacher, and is responsible to teach all the subjects to a designated class throughout the day.

Method

The nature of this study is qualitative to understand the abstract concept of art that cannot be limited to one particular definition. To develop a descriptive understanding of art classes, an interpretative paradigm was used. The study was conducted in one school. All primary art classes of 30 minutes were observed twice per week. An in-depth unstructured interview was conducted with 10 teachers who taught in primary classes.

The themes of the unstructured interviews were as following:

1. Qualification
2. Pedagogy
3. Curriculum
4. Assessment
5. Pre-service and In-service training
6. Resources and facilities
7. Challenges

The study was limited to one school and 10 primary teachers. Hence, the findings cannot be generalized. The process involved observations of primary art classes conducted twice a week of thirty minutes. The researcher prepared themes for unstructured interview schedule, an in-depth interview was conducted both in person and virtually. A theme-wise analysis was performed based on the findings.

Analysis And Discussion

Through teachers' responses to the interviews and art class observation, the following themes were identified and analyzed:

(a) Art teaching methods and art curriculum
(b) Art assessment
(c) Art to break the monotony of other subjects
(d) Art for completion of teacher's additional tasks
(e) Class teacher versus Art Teacher
(f) Art and teacher training
(g) Art and resources
(h) Challenges involved in implementing Art Education

(a) Art teaching methods and art curriculum

During classroom observations, all 10 teachers were observed using demonstration and imitation methods to teach art. The drawing was drawn on a blackboard, and the students were instructed to draw the exact same. Some teachers brought samples of artwork done by children from other classes and asked students to imitate them. One of the teachers during interview said "we draw or show them step by step so that they can follow the process and create good artwork",

while other said that "If sample is shown to students, it becomes less time consuming and students are able to complete their artwork quickly". Prasad (2005) also mentioned that the simple passing down of pre-decided information is not education. Instead of giving scope to the free flow of creativity in artwork, the regularized structures of art classes and teaching methods have made it dull, desolate, and mundane. "I have drawn a fish on the board. All the students will draw the fish in their copies. Color it within the lines beautifully," said one of the primary grade teachers while conducting art class. The teachers give clear instructions to copy the exact same thing drawn on the board and instruct them to color the image neatly. It loses its purpose of enhancing imagination and enriching creative output among young learners. The teachers did not give ample time to the students to think independently about their artwork. The focus of the teachers was to create a "good" artwork. When asked about their understanding of good artwork, their responses were:

- Artwork closest to the demonstrated artwork.
- Colors were within the lines/boundaries.
- Artwork completed on time.
- Artwork that is identifiable to reality.

Based on the above criteria, the teachers decided whether the artwork should be displayed on a bulletin board. Other Art teaching methods include discovery and experiential learning, which enables learners the opportunity and freedom to discover and experience art as it is. Primary classes did not have separate art room in the school. Art classes were conducted in their respective classrooms. They were conducted twice per week for 30 minutes. Since the colonial period, educators, policymakers, and administration have not felt a need to change such structures and timings for art classes. Art classes confined to rigid time structures break the natural flow of creativity among learners. Self-exploration and expression are important for artwork to be unique and creative. However, priority is given to speed rather than imagination. It increases pressure among children to finish their artwork quickly, affirming the preferable outcomes and sidelining their unique perspective. To develop free expression, imagination, and creativity among children, such rigid structures should be flexible. The curriculum should focus on the process of the artwork being created by children. As we shift away from rigidity in art classes, a safe space for free expression can be encouraged in

children's artwork. Art and aesthetics enable individuals to live a happier and more productive life. Art education is not field specific but it's a process to development and lifelong continuity of artistic and aesthetic appreciation (Aslantaş, 2023). Thus, the end goal of art education is not narrowed down to syllabus completion but rather self-exploration and discovery. In order to become a happy society with great individuals, the school education will need to encourage artistic expression among the individuals from the primary stage.

(b) Art Assessment

It was observed that teachers marked grades for the students' artwork. The criteria used to assess the child were Content related to topic, finishing in the artwork, neatness, coloring in between the images' boundary lines, efforts put by the child, and exact choice of color (for example yellow color for sun). Hence, a child's nature, personality, ideas, experience, and true self were excluded in the artwork. Assessment of child art must emphasize process of artwork and give space to art appreciation and art experiences. Students' portfolios can be created and regular feedback can be provided for moderation instead of grading them. Artwork should be celebrated and appreciated based on the creativity and imagination of the child. Both the teachers and students should judge and appreciate each other's artwork.

(c) Art to break the monotony of other subjects

Drawing and coloring activities are often provided to students in the classroom to break the monotony of academic subjects. Art is used as a leisure and recreational activity. One of the teachers said, "The students are already interested in the arts. Thus, if we take a little bit of initiative then the child expresses. We do not need to teach such subjects, as the child is already interested in them. More focus is required on academic subjects". Another teacher said "Art should be taught as our kids are very small. They don't know all the matras, so they can draw. Art and coloring are always of interest for all students." On the other hand, one of them said "Students whose level is less in academic subjects get inclined towards art." Teachers perceive art as a subject that is not worthy of being taught. Art helps individuals in discover, create, experience, explore, make, observe, critically think, do, imagine, and solve problems. Therefore, Art has a critical role in enhancing the overall development of the child which make it worthier to be experienced by children. The general notion that teachers have about art is that it is a leisure activity and

is not an important subject. Furthermore, it does not require any facilitation and is worthy of study in class. One must understand that art is neither a fringe (Francesco, 1958) nor a dasi or servant (Prasad, 1998) of other subjects. Study done by UNESCO claims that "Arts learning fuels transformative education that helps increase students' capacity and motivation to build a more peaceful and sustainable world. However, to fully realize that potential, teachers must mindfully structure and support educational experiences to optimize what students will take away from them" (UNESCO, 2024, p. 3). It is high time that value of art shifts from being a frill attached to education, to an integral component of education that NEP 2020 claims. Art has been ignored and marginalized in schools, with claims that it is a leisure activity. Such notions need to be reconsidered in our education to transform the future of learners.

(d) Art for completion of teacher's additional tasks

"All the students will draw a Holi scene in their notebooks. Nobody will come to me as I am doing work. Complete your drawings silently", said a teacher. Without any brainstorming, prior-discussion, encouragement and motivation the teacher instructed the students to draw a Holi scene. Children need to identify with their personal experiences in order to create an artwork which is personal and unique to the child. Brainstorming and pre-discussion can help a child to recall their personal experiences which will also encourage art appreciation among them. Teachers utilize this time to complete their managerial work, including office work, grading, preparing results, or any other personal work. Teachers in schools get managerial work to do, so they use art to occupy the students to avoid any disturbance. Thus, the question arises that does it justify the work done by the student to be considered as 'art' or not? Teachers have been overburdened by managerial work in schools, as stated by one of them. She said "they don't get time to complete the official work and in order to manage classrooms they use art activities, which helps them to complete their additional tasks". This shows how art is considered subservient to other subjects. A comprehensive art education reform is required to sensitize teachers to the role of art in learners' holistic development. The art experiences provided to the children shape their confidence, innate potential, and life skills. Thus, teachers need to have the correct perception of art and engage in art classes to provide learners with enriched art experiences. Teacher has to be enthusiastic about the learners and

are motivated to teach and learn through the process (Sharma et al., 2024). Therefore, the active involvement of both teachers and pupils is a driving force in the teaching-learning process in an art class.

(e) Class teacher versus Art teacher

The teachers were asked who should be responsible to teach art to the students? All the teachers responded that a professional art teacher will help the child to learn art skills more efficiently. However, in the primary class, there is only one class teacher who teaches all subjects. Further, they claimed that "the class teacher knew the child well. Children are mentally and emotionally connected to the class teacher so if there is no art teacher available in the school then the class teacher must take responsibility for teaching art. So, the teaching responsibility of art should be performed by the class teachers. But if we will have a separate art teacher, then the students can learn new skills and do well in art". Another teacher said that "We primary teachers are all-rounder. For example, a special educator teaches special children of our class but we also identify them and they stay with us for the entire day. Similarly, teaching art is also our responsibility. But both should teach." "If there will be a professional art teacher, they can provide us with training on how to teach art to the students" was told by another teacher. The teacher needs to be driven, eager to learn and excited to teach and enthusiastic about people (Sharma et al., 2024). Such teachers identified with the needs of the children and created such atmosphere for the children to grow. The focus was not on teaching the skills but on providing an appropriate environment, encouragement, facilities, and supplies to the children. To nurture the creative spirit of children, such teachers are needed.

(f) Art and teacher training

Many teachers report difficulties in balancing the demands of academic subjects with those of art education in schools with limited resources. Studies have shown that while teachers value the role of art, they often lack the training and support to integrate it effectively into the curriculum along with suitable facilities and resources. (Robb, 2023). The nature of training that the teachers received in their pre-service was more about the technical aspects of art paintings such as Mural painting, oil painting, Mahbubani painting, finger painting, and Warli art. They used art to make teaching learning aids and to teach other subjects. Hence, even in

the pre-service training, the focus was on the development of a few art skills instead of sensitizing student-teacher about child art. No training, seminars or workshops related to art were provided to the teachers during their in-service training while teaching in schools. It has become more important to educate the teachers and sensitize them towards art education. Pre-service training institutes should not only focus on teaching student teachers about the diafferent forms of painting but also make them aware of child art and the absolute significance of art in an individual's life. Teachers should identify with art mediums and art themes as per the learner's age group. Similarly, schools must conduct workshops and training for primary class teachers so that teachers can understand the relevance of art in the life of a child. Many teachers recognize the value of art in fostering creativity and self-expression, yet they also express concerns about their ability to teach art effectively.

(g) Art and resources

The teachers only used topics mentioned in their textbook, for example, Poster on corona-virus, water conservation, environmental issues, rainwater harvesting, model making, best out of waste, water animals, thumb painting, vegetable printing, pencil shading, spray painting, hand printing, card making, story-making, mask-making. The material used by the students for artwork was based on their choice and the availability of that material at home. One of the teachers shared that "We generally avoid painting colors as our kids are small, and they create a mess in the classroom". Wax crayon colors were provided to the students of Nursery and KG class only. Hence, no age-appropriate art media or materials were provided to the children. School and home environment discourage the learner from engaging engaged in art activities, considering them as a wastage of resources. Such perception of the stakeholders discourages learners from participate actively in art activities and freely express themselves using art resources.

(h) Challenges involved in implementing Art Education

One of the most significant challenges is the lack of adequate training for teachers in art education. Coşkun (2022) stated that knowledge and experiences of a student-teacher during their pre-service education have a huge impact on the in-class art activities that will be executed in the classrooms. Hence, the pre-service

training provided to the teachers should have more compulsory and elective courses related to art to equip them in conducting classes. Many teachers lack confidence and feel unprepared to effectively teach art education. Additionally, many schools lack the resources that are important for supporting art education. This includes paints, brushes, and paper as well as access to art-based events, programs, and artists. National Curriculum Framework (2023) notes that Art education is either not mentioned in the time table or is paused before examinations. Adding to this there is very little preparation, planning, execution and assessment for art teaching in schools, Often, institutes pressurize academic performance that later impacts the teachers. They are compelled to prioritize academic subjects and exclude art education based on standardized assessments. This creates conflicts among teachers who want to give justice to art education but have to bow down to the structure and curriculum demands.

Conclusion

Art promotes critical thinking, imagination, creativity, self-expression, problem-solving and independent thinking which enriches 21st century skills among children. NEP 2020 promotes student-centric individualized assessment through portfolio, peer, and self-assessments. There should be bridge courses for teachers that provide them with the right perception of art and child art. They should further receive professional development to equip themselves to fulfil the objectives of art education in primary classrooms. Teachers need to be acquainted on how to identify with children in terms of art media and themes as per the age group. School must allow flexible time frame to help children discover their creative potential and lifelong appreciation for art. Undoubtedly, instead of being passive knowledge recipients, child can creatively use the acquired knowledge in life. This study invites future instructors to view art as more than merely a syllabus requirement or a recreational pastime. Rather, art should be viewed as a portal to develop a strong self, explore life, and transcend to live each experience aesthetically. It is suggested that teachers be provided with skill sets and confidence to enrich art learning in the classroom. Artists led workshops and community engagements can be essential tools for art education in primary classrooms. Further studies on the views of art from other stakeholders such as parents, students, and administrations can be done.

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Isha Attri
Ph.D. Scholar
Department of Education (CIE)
University of Delhi, India
isha.cie@gmail.com,
8800596353

Prof. Susmita Lakhyani
Professor
Department of Education
University of Delhi, India
susmitalakhyani@gmail.com,
9810808474

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Coping with Crisis: International Students, Institutional Support, and Well-being during COVID-19 Lockdown in Delhi, India

• **Professor (Dr.) Pamela Singla**

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted higher education worldwide, significantly affecting international students, who often face heightened vulnerabilities due to academic, psychological, and cultural displacement, as well as limited social networks. This study examines the experiences of the international women students residing in a premier Delhi University hostel during the nationwide COVID-19 lockdown. Using a qualitative, narrative-informed case study approach, the paper analyses how administrative support, institutional policies, and social work principles mitigated the challenges faced by students in this unprecedented context. Drawing on literature on international student well-being, crisis management, and social support frameworks, this paper argues that institutional empathy, participatory decision-making, and culturally responsive practices can significantly cushion stress and promote resilience among international students. The findings offer implications for policy-making and for managing higher education in times of crisis.

Keywords : COVID-19, international students, well-being, crisis management, institutional support, Delhi, qualitative case study, social work

1. Introduction

The present paper is significant, as we live in unprecedented times where situations like the recent pandemic erupt without prior warning. And the student community is one of the most vulnerable sections of society. The COVID-19 pandemic has had wide-ranging effects on higher education, exposing structural inequalities and vulnerabilities among students (Marinoni et al., 2020). International students, in particular, faced unique challenges due to physical displacement, financial dependency, cultural dislocation, and limited access to local support networks (Zhou et al., 2020). In India, while much attention has been focused on domestic student populations, the experiences of international students remain relatively under-researched.

This study examines the experiences of international women students residing in a dedicated hostel at a leading University in Delhi during the 2020 COVID-19 lockdown. It examines how institutional decisions, administrative interventions, and social work-informed approaches contributed to resilience and coping during a period of uncertainty. According to Prof. Paul (quoted in Rebecca, 2020), COVID-19 created a new and little-understood world of inequalities and social problems.

It is well known that new terms have entered everyday vocabulary, such as social and physical distancing, stigma, vulnerable groups, and colour-coded geographical zones. Governments worldwide struggled to control the spread of the virus, as it affected multiple sectors and social groups. One group that has received relatively little attention is international students. Beyond their academic presence, these students are economically significant, making substantial contributions to their host countries. USA, UK, Australia and Canada are among the destinations that attract large numbers of international students (Maslen, 2018). Adding to this list is India, which has also positioned itself as an emerging destination through national policies like 'Study in India,' making the experiences of international students during COVID-19 an important area of study.

2. Literature Review

This section is divided into three subheadings: international students and vulnerability, crisis management in higher education, and social support and resilience. This section examines these components in the context of international students, with a focus on women students.

2.1 International Students and Vulnerability

International students face multiple stressors, including acculturative stress, financial insecurity, and academic pressures (Smith & Khawaja, 2011). These stressors often exacerbate during crises such as natural disasters or pandemics. For instance, the COVID-19 pandemic augmented these challenges through sudden shifts such as remote learning, visa uncertainties, and isolation from support networks, leading to higher levels of anxiety and mental health concerns among this population (Almutairi et al., 2022). Qualitative analyses of global experiences reveal that international students encountered unprecedented barriers, including stalled mobility and heightened financial strain, underscoring their disproportionate vulnerability during public health emergencies (Bista et al., 2024). According to Andrade (2006), effective institutional support in the form of clear communication, culturally sensitive interventions, and psychological services plays a critical role in promoting student well-being. Recent quantitative analyses further emphasise that coping strategies, such as problem-solving and seeking social connections, are essential for adjustment amid such disruptions, though access to these remains uneven (Chen et al., 2024).

2.2 Crisis Management in Higher Education

Crisis management literature emphasises preparedness, communication, and flexibility in institutional response (Hynes et al., 2018). During the COVID-19 pandemic, universities globally had to balance public health directives with academic continuity and student welfare. For example, qualitative analyses of Australian institutions highlight how rapid operational shifts, including hybrid teaching models, tested leadership's ability to maintain transparency and stakeholder trust amid uncertainty (Smith et al., 2023). Literature suggests that participatory decision-making and transparent communication are key to minimising panic and fostering trust (Schweigert, 2020). Systematic reviews of early pandemic responses further indicate that effective crisis leadership involved leveraging digital tools for continuity while addressing equity gaps, though many institutions struggled with resource allocation and faculty burnout (Motala et al., 2024). Accommodative strategies, such as proactive stakeholder engagement, have been shown to enhance post-crisis relationships, particularly in public health contexts where external factors, like policy changes, dominate (Kim et al., 2023).

2.3 Social Support and Resilience

Social support theory posits that access to emotional, informational, and instrumental support mitigates the negative effects of stress (Cohen & Wills, 1985). In educational contexts, administrative staff, peer networks, and institutional resources collectively constitute a support system that influences students' coping strategies (Feng & Chen, 2019). Empirical studies among international students have consistently affirmed that perceived social support from host communities fosters resilience by buffering acculturative stress. Shared identities—such as identification with fellow internationals—serve as a pathway to reduced psychological distress (Parlak et al., 2024). Moreover, sociocultural adjustment, reinforced by networks like university peers and local friends, emerges as a key predictor of mental health outcomes, including lower anxiety and higher well-being (Li et al., 2023). During crises like COVID-19, contact arrangements such as interactions with host nationals and co-internationals further enhance resilience by providing emotional buffers, as evidenced in studies of students isolated in high-risk areas (English et al., 2021).

2.4 Gaps in the Indian Context

While international students constitute a significant proportion of the higher education population in India (Maslen, 2018), research on their experiences during emergencies is scarce. Few studies have examined the impact of institutional and administrative measures on the resilience of foreign students during systemic crises, such as the COVID-19 lockdown (Khan et al., 2021). Emerging work on student well-being in India during the pandemic points to widespread challenges, such as disrupted online access and heightened mental stress, but largely overlooks the unique vulnerabilities of international cohorts, including visa complications and cultural isolation (Singh et al., 2021). Qualitative insights from migrant student perspectives further reveal that lockdown-induced immobility exacerbated financial and emotional strains, however context-specific analyses of institutional responses for internationals remain limited (Chacko & Kodoth, 2023). Perceptions among international students in Indian universities during the COVID-19 pandemic highlight the need for tailored psychological support; however, comprehensive empirical data on coping mechanisms and policy impacts are still emerging (Pawar-Vispute, 2021). This study seeks to address this gap by providing a context-specific analysis

Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative case study approach. The case focuses on a women's international student hostel in a university in Delhi during the nationwide lockdown (March–May 2020). This approach enables an in-depth understanding of lived experiences and institutional responses. The analysis is informed by the author's firsthand experience and observations in her role as the provost of the hostel during this period.

3.2 Data Sources

The study draws upon the author's experiences and reflective notes in her capacity as provost of the international students' hostel during the lockdown period. Institutional documents, administrative correspondence, and relevant government guidelines were reviewed to contextualise events and decisions. These sources provide insight into the challenges faced by students and the responses of the university administration. Secondary data included University records, government lockdown guidelines, and reports on international student enrollment.

3.3 Ethical Considerations

The study respects the confidentiality and anonymity of all students. No personal names or identifiable details are used in the description of events. The reflections are based on administrative experiences and do not disclose any sensitive personal information. All observations are presented in a manner that ensures dignity and privacy of the individuals involved.

3.4 Analytical Framework

Data were analysed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), focusing on themes of institutional support, coping mechanisms, resilience, and administrative decision-making.

4. Findings

4.1 Institutional Preparedness and Policy Response

The University quickly implemented lockdown protocols in alignment with government directives. Indian students were required to vacate the hostels, while international students were offered

choices based on travel restrictions and personal circumstances. The policy emerged from concerns about potential disruptions to routine operations and the need to prevent crowding in shared spaces, particularly to maintain physical distancing.

Provosts were instructed to communicate the decision to their respective residents. For Indian students, the directive was mandatory, with no option to remain on campus; for international students, it was advisory, recognising their varying mobility, visa status, and safety considerations. Since the instructions were issued immediately after the mid-semester break, many students were already at home within or outside the city, which reduced the number of residents requiring relocation. With international borders sealed and high travel fare, 54 girls from different nationalities stayed back. These included girls largely from Mauritius, South Africa, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka Bangladesh, Mongolia, Vietnam, Iran.

Administrative engagement included:

- Participatory decision-making with hostel authorities
- Phased closure of common facilities, such as the library, gymnasium, TV room and recreation areas, to ensure safety
- Communication of policy updates through meetings, circulars, and online channels to maintain clarity and minimise uncertainty

These early measures reflected a proactive response that balanced public health imperatives with the diverse needs of the student community.

4.2 Administrative and Social Work Interventions

The Provost's role extended beyond administrative oversight to social work-informed facilitation, including:

- Individual and group counselling sessions: The hostel administration ensured that the residents were heard and their feelings respected. They felt blessed with safety, food, shelter, protection, and company, when many were homeless on the streets and walking back to their homes in different parts of the country.
- Coordination with embassy representatives for students requiring assistance: Cases requiring medical attention were addressed by the hostel in collaboration with the University Health Centre, the

concerned embassy, and the Indian Council of Cultural Research (ICCR). Fortunately, there was no serious case.

- Negotiating with service providers to ensure continuity of essentials: Residents also started reporting financial crises due to the disruption in receiving money from home and ICCR, which impacted their buying essential services. This was handled by networking with the local vendor, who agreed to supply on loan. Regular telephonic meetings were held with the mess contractor to ensure that everything was in place. Residents were met at lunch or tea time. Their fears, mainly regarding examinations, the university opening, and fee payment, were addressed, and some false concerns were alleviated, which helped them overcome their anxieties. Late fee was accepted, and all fines were waived for the lockdown period. The staff and residents were instructed to be vigilant of one another, and any indication of ill health was to be reported to the Provost.

These interventions contributed to reducing anxiety and fostering trust in institutional processes.

4.3 Coping and Resilience Among Students

Students demonstrated resilience through peer support, adaptive routines, and engagement with online academic activities. The residents started realising their blessings as they were safe and had each other's company. The realisation of the importance of a harmonious relationship and living life in togetherness was felt. The area within the hostel complex offers good space to move around. The lush green lawn and comfortable seating arrangement give them a breathing space. There is a 24-hour internet service, and any problem with the regular supply of internet, water, and other basic amenities is immediately addressed, all of which helped in better addressing the virus. It was a challenging time, but social media, Netflix, Amazon, and YouTube made life a little easier. Additionally, the classes were being conducted online by their respective departments for the students, which also kept them occupied. Residents wanting to go outside the hostel were reminded about the medical testing process before re-entry, in the interest of others. Key observations include:

- Students adhered to safety protocols while maintaining social connections

- Online classes provided academic continuity and structure
- Collective problem-solving emerged around resource constraints

With very limited office staff and directives from the University and Ministry, the decision to open public spaces, such as the library and reading room, was postponed to the fourth phase of lockdown (beginning May 18, 2020). Keeping in consideration the approaching examination, the two computer rooms were opened, but with rationing of time per student and timings. Residents were expected to sign in the register kept in the room and warned on carrying eatables and beddings.

4.4 Challenges Faced

Despite institutional support, students encountered difficulties such as :

- Limited non-vegetarian food options as mobility was closed and non-vegetarian was not available
- Financial constraints due to disrupted family support
- Anxiety around examinations and visa uncertainties

These challenges highlight the need for more proactive financial, psychological, and logistical support systems for international students in crisis scenarios.

5. Discussion

The findings align with international literature on crisis management and social support:

- Institutional empathy and transparent communication are critical to student well-being (Andrade, 2006; Schweigert, 2020)
- Participatory decision-making strengthens trust between administration and students
- Social work-informed practices provide a structured, compassionate approach to crisis management

In the Indian context, these interventions highlight the importance of localised, context-aware policies, particularly for international students who face numerous vulnerabilities.

The study also highlights the significance of emotional labour involving continuous engagement with students' fears, uncertainties,

and well-being needs, along with practical problem-solving by hostel administrators, reflecting an intersection of professional responsibility and humanitarian care.

6. Implications

The study has significant implications for guiding the actions of academic institutions, particularly those with international students. Some of them are enumerated below:

6.1 Policy Implications

- Universities should institutionalise crisis response protocols tailored to international students
- Mechanisms for financial assistance, mental health support, and resource management must be pre-emptively planned

6.2 Academic and Social Work Practice

- Social work principles, when integrated with administrative duties, enhance the effectiveness of crisis interventions
- Training programs for hostel and administrative staff should emphasise cultural sensitivity, empathy, and conflict resolution

6.3 Research Implications

- Further empirical research is needed to explore the long-term psychological impacts of pandemics on international students in India
- Comparative studies across Indian universities could identify best practices in student welfare and crisis preparedness

7. Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic presented unprecedented challenges for international students in Delhi, highlighting vulnerabilities and underscoring the critical role of institutional support. This study demonstrates that participatory, empathetic, and professionally informed interventions can significantly enhance resilience, mitigate stress, and maintain academic continuity.

The study provides evidence for informed policy-making, effective administrative training, and the integration of social work in higher education crisis management. Institutions that invest in proactive, culturally responsive, and humane approaches can better

safeguard the well-being of international students, not only during pandemics but also in future emergencies.

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Professor (Dr.) Pamela Singla
Department of Social Work
University of Delhi
Delhi-110007
email: pamelasingla@gmail.com

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Fostering Employee Wellbeing and Effectiveness through Yoga in the Workplace

• Mr. Mayank Uniyal
Ms. Madhuri Uniyal • Ms. Swati Uniyal

The advancement and development of technology will be the defining feature of this century. Every day, new technologies and innovations become reality. In the previous 30 years, the world, and India in particular, has gone through a tremendous trip. From carrying necessities over head and in bullock carts to building record numbers of load-bearing vehicles daily. India has undergone significant transformation, going from being known as a nation of snake charmers to a new worldwide leader. This positive change is the result of every single person working extremely hard in their field to create a better nation for future generations; however, since progress is often accompanied by destruction, every single person has experienced ups and downs in their social, mental, and physical well-being. It is exceedingly difficult for someone who works to lead a balanced lifestyle. A sedentary lifestyle, lack of exercise, mental exhaustion, prolonged sitting, social imbalance, and lack of vitality can all readily correlate with employee problems. Yoga is consistently used as a tool to address all of the aforementioned problems. It is a divine skill of living as well as a series of exercises and breathing techniques. These days, due to its many enormous benefits, this practice has grown into therapy. When yoga first emerged, it was thought to be exclusive to saints, sanyasis, and monks. However, today it has become a holistic way of life for all people. Everyone now needs yoga, from young children in school to retired adults sixty years of age for holistic development. The purpose of this research paper is to determine the necessity of yoga practices to be implemented in the workplace in order to improve and raise

employee health and organizational growth. The purpose of this research paper is to answer research questions using a qualitative analysis.

Keywords : *Well-being, workplace, organizational health, effectiveness.*

Introduction :

One of the biggest working populations in the world is found in India. 40% of India's 1.2 billion citizens, or 56% and 23% of the male and female populations, are working in some capacity, according to the National Sample Survey Office. Another survey indicated that in the fiscal year 2022, there were approximately 522 million employed persons in India; by the end of the fiscal year 2030, this number is expected to increase to 569 million. In this case, the majority of workers struggle to strike a balance between their personal and professional lives, and maintaining this balance is undoubtedly important for both personal and professional well-being. Therefore, it is imperative that employees be used to their full potential in a healthy manner for the improvement, development, and growth of the company. To that end, many employers are working to create a healthy work environment by incorporating a variety of physical or healthy activities into their daily schedules, with the goal of improving employee well-being and Yoga is one of those.

One of the best methods for self-improvement is yoga, which facilitates realizing one's greatest potential. Ancient scholars have long suggested that the word "yoga" originated from the Sanskrit root word "Yuj," which means "to join" or "to unite." This basically means that yoga links, integrates, or connects at least two things, or it maintains the balance between two or more things. Yoga is more than just stretching and expanding your muscles or engaging in breath-retention-related asanas. Yoga is a lifestyle. According to Lord Krishna, yoga is "the journey of the self, through the self, to the self". Yoga is essentially a science of awareness. It is a comprehensive system of methods that allows us to fully realize our hidden potential. As we do yoga, our attributes of self-assurance, awareness, intelligence, higher ability of love, and joy all increase. The goal of this research article is to encourage people to take up yoga and lift themselves out of the current state of physical, mental, social, and spiritual deprivation that seems to envelop them like an

unbreakable wall. It wants to let them know that there is a route out. This very information is what makes it so crucial because, when applied, it gives rise to an idea in the mind that, when put into action, acts as a catalyst for the improvement of the individual's circumstances or suffering and enables them to work to the best of their abilities and with the greatest possible energy for the benefit of the entire organization.

Review of Literature:

Angamuthu Kandasamy of Alagappa University in Tamil Nadu conducted research on the influence of selected yogic practices and physical exercises on ninety males including head load workers, school and college teachers, transport employees, and merchants individuals suffering from low back pain aging between 25-50. They were split up into three groups: the control group, the group for physical exercise, and the group for yoga. The yoga group was given access to specific yogic activities for an hour every day for the next twelve weeks. Following a 12-week period, low back pain was found to have significantly decreased in the yoga group compared to the control and physical activity groups (Angamuthu, 1999).

A study by **Gore et al. (1986)** was carried out. The study examined the immediate effect of one-minute Kapalbhati on respiratory functioning. With the help of Collins spirometer, twelve fit participants from the Police Training School were examined for respiratory rate (RR) and oxygen uptake. (OT), one-minute Kapalbhati (KB), and one minute ventilation (MV) prior to, during, and after. Prior to and right after KB, other respiratory measures such maximal breathing capacity, expiratory reserve volume, vital capacity, and inspiratory capacity were also examined. Following the performance of a one-minute KB, respiratory volumes were recorded in RR, MV, and OT. When compared to the readings during KB, the oxygen absorption was observed to have significantly decreased after one minute of KB. Additionally, it was lower than during the first regular breathing (Gore, 1986).

Adhikari (2008), conducted research on the effect of yoga practices on Occupational Stress in Indian Army personnel. The purpose of this study was to investigate how a yoga training program (YTP) affected the occupational stress (OS) of serving Indian army

officers stationed in Uttar Pradesh. The program was divided into two morning and evening sessions, lasting one and a half hours each, and it ran for thirty days. A comprehensive yoga practice with specific asanas, pranayama, prayer (chanting the Omkar and Gayatri mantras), and yoga nidra was part of the program. The findings showed that there was a statistically significant decrease in participant stress at work. The results point to the advantages of both yoga-based interventions and yoga practices (Adhikari, 2008).

Dehkordi (2010) studied The Effect of eight weeks of yoga training on high blood pressure in not - athlete females aged over 40 years in Ahvaz oil industry. As the research population, 317 female members of an oil business club were given the pertinent questionnaires. Two groups of 40 blood pressure-tracking subjects were randomly assigned. groups of yoga practitioners and control subjects participated in an 8-week training regimen that lasted three days a week for 60 minutes each day. The means of the two groups' gain scores were compared, and the results indicated that practicing yoga considerably lowered high blood pressure ((Dehkordi, 2010).

Kaushik Halder et al. (2015) conducted research on the impact of hatha yoga on anthropometric and fitness factors. For the study, seventy-one subjects were chosen from Indian Air Force personal volunteers in order to fulfill the study's objectives by the researcher. Three distinct age groups were used to choose the subjects: (i) group n1 = 27, 20-29 years; (ii) group n2 = 21, 30-39 years; and (iii) group n3 = 23, 40-49 years. The twelve-week hatha yoga experimental program was offered. The factors that have been chosen are muscular strength, flexibility, and anthropometric traits. All of the anthropometric characteristics are improved, according to the data ((Kaushik halder, .2015)

Zala, S., & Maheshwari, V. (2022) studied the effectiveness of Yoga intervention to reduce perceived stress among corporate executives. Yoga and meditation combined can actually improve work performance while reducing stress, which has been connected to approximately 90% of medical visits and diseases, according to studies conducted at the Stress Reduction Clinic at the University of Massachusetts Medical Centre (Tesovic, 2019).

In this study, a 90-day yoga intervention consisting of particular yogic postures, breathing techniques (Pranayama), and

guided meditations was given to 140 corporate executives (91 men and 49 women) from The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India Ahmedabad branch. This study shows that yoga can improve health, harmony, morale, commitment, job motivation, performance, and productivity in both individuals and organizations (Zala, 2022).

Research Objectives :

- This article will evaluate the efficacy of implementing yoga practices in the workplace to improve employees overall wellbeing.
- This article will examine the effects of yoga programs at work on employees' psychological health and ability to reduce stress.
- This article will examine the connection between yoga activities at work and the physical wellbeing of employees.
- This article will analyze how workplace yoga programs affect employee overall growth of employees and organizations.

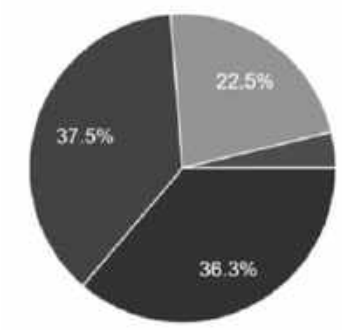
Research Area: This study uses the survey method to achieve its objectives and an experimental design to conduct research. Using judgmental sampling, participants were chosen from a variety of prestigious Uttarakhand based organizations and sectors. As employees working in different workplaces have their own experiences about the implications of working relentlessly for so long and not being active in any other physical fitness regimen, they pretty well know about the value of yoga breaks in workplaces. To collect data from the respondents, a questionnaire has been given to staff members in the departments and organizations stated above.

Research Methodology: Both primary and secondary sources are used in the current study project. The primary source contains a questionnaire that, using judgmental sampling, was given to 80 employees from a variety of Uttrakhand sectors and institutions, including banking, healthcare, and education. The books, articles, websites, periodicals, and other pertinent materials pertaining to the study topic, on the other hand, make up the secondary sources. The primary goal of this research is to introduce and promote yoga in diverse workplaces in order to improve employee wellness and productivity.

Finding : The observations and data that were obtained are described in detail below.

Human body is intended to sit in the seat or chair as long as we can. All you need to know is how.

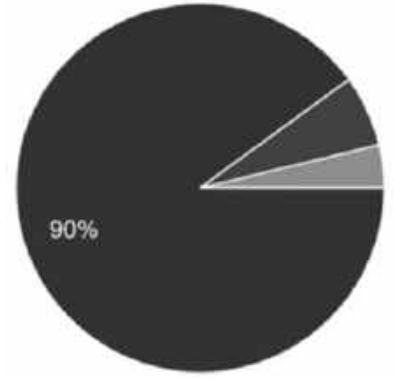
80 responses



Regarding this specific query, participants hold varying opinions. About 37% of respondents say that the human body is not meant for prolonged sitting, while 36.3% disagree. 22.5% of respondents are unsure about the question in the same context.

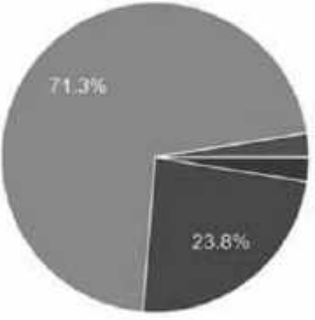
Study proposes one should try to sit forming.....degree angle with our body when sitting in a chair.

80 responses



90% out of the eighty respondents agreed that it is best to try to sit in a chair with our bodies at a 90-degree angle at all times.

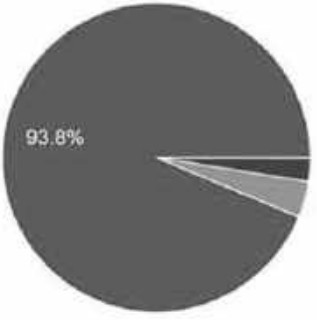
Prolonged sitting at a desk can contribute to
80 responses



- Decreased energy levels.
- Bad body posture.
- Back pain & stiffness.
- Lack of concentration.

Regarding this specific question, over 71% of respondents thought that extended desk time would cause back pain and stiffness in the body, while roughly 24% thought it would result in poor posture.

Improper sitting posture can further lead to serious
80 responses

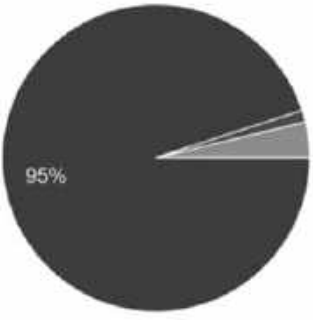


- Headache.
- Weak Eyesight.
- Serious Knee Pain.
- Serious Back Issues.

About 94% of employees thought that bad posture when sitting is very bad and will cause major back problems in the future. However, the remaining 6% respondents thought it could also cause severe headaches and knee pain.

Studies have shown many spinal problems can easily be avoided by maintain proper body posture and correct body alignment and movement.

80 responses

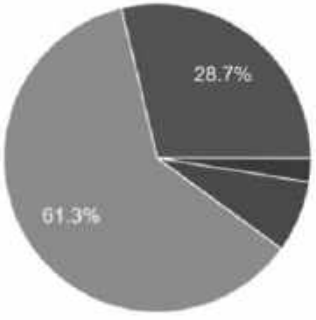


- True.
- False.
- May be.
- None of the above.

95% of all respondents thought that maintaining appropriate body alignment and posture would readily prevent a variety of spine issues.

Office syndrome is basically found in office personals who spend many hours in front of a computer screen. What symptoms could fall under it?

80 responses

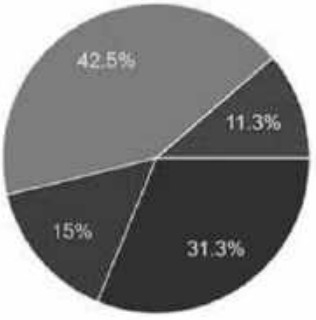


- Numb Fingers and arms.
- Headaches.
- Shoulder & Back pain.
- Dry eyes and weak eyesight.

When asked about office syndromes, the researcher found that 61.3% of respondents thought it was related to back and shoulder discomfort & pain, roughly 29% thought it was related to impaired eyesight and dry eyes, and 7.5% thought it was related to headaches.

According to you, which of the following is a common consequence of inadequate sleep.

80 responses

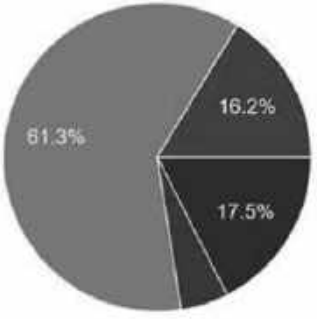


- Less productivity.
- Memory issues.
- Lack of energy.
- Mood swing.

Sleep is one of the most vital processes in the human body. When asked what impacts they would expect from not getting enough sleep, 42.5% of respondents indicated they would have less energy, and 31.3% said they would be less productive overall. Of those asked, 15% agreed that memory issues were caused by sleep deprivation, while 11.3% believed that mood swings were the primary consequence.

Living a sedentary lifestyle can lead to one of the common issues.

80 responses

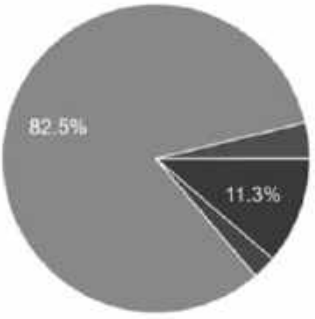


- Heart issues.
- Diabetes.
- Weight Gain.
- Joint and knee pain.

61% of employees thought that leading a sedentary lifestyle causes weight gain; almost 18% thought that this type of lifestyle would be the cause of heart-related problems; 16% thought it might result in joint problems and pain.

According to you, what is the recommended frequency for exercise from preventing muscular and skeletal issues.

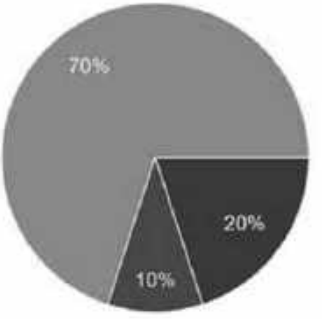
80 responses



When asked how frequently one should workout. 82.5% of respondents said that daily exercise was necessary to prevent muscular and skeletal issues, whereas 11.3% believed that exercise should only be done once a week.

According to you what is the one potential benefit of introducing yoga in the workplace.

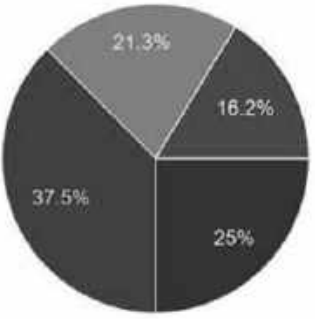
80 responses



When asked about the advantages of implementing yoga in the workplace, 70% of employees believed it would enhance their general well-being, 20% believed it would lessen stress, and 10% were positive it would increase both employees' and the company's overall productivity.

What is the purpose of incorporating yoga breaks during workdays?

80 responses

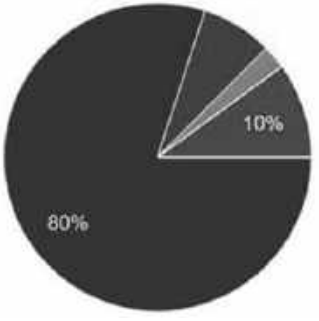


- To decrease stress levels.
- To improve concentration and focus.
- To encourage physical activity.
- To increase overall employee satisfaction.

A little over 38% of employees stated that the main objective of introducing yoga into the workplace is to improve focus and attention, while 25% of respondents stated that the main objective is to reduce employee stress. The main objective of yoga at work, according to 21.3% of the respondents, is to encourage physical activity and relaxation. 16.2% of participants believed that incorporating yoga into the tagline would improve overall employee satisfaction.

Common 'Forward and Backward Neck Bending' exercises designed to help employees with

80 responses

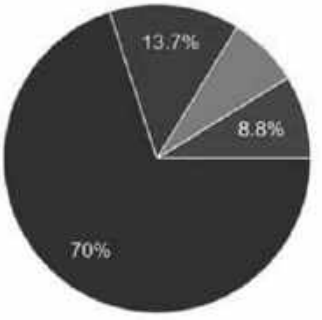


- Sore shoulders and neck.
- Weak back muscles.
- Tight chest muscles.
- None of the above.

Neck-bending exercises are especially advantageous for a variety of reasons. 80% of the employees said that these activities are important for alleviating shoulder and neck pain when asked how important they are.

How can yoga help in reducing workplace stress?

80 responses

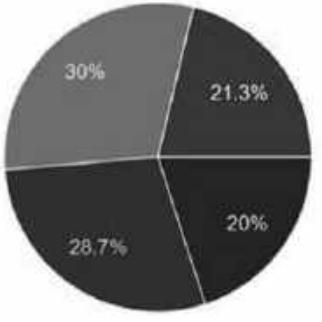


- By filling employee with energy & positivity.
- By providing better body posture.
- Because of breathing techniques.
- By enhancing sleep quality.

When asked if yoga helped employees feel less stressed at work, 70% of respondents claimed it provided more vitality and happiness, 13.7% claimed it helped with posture, and 8.8% claimed it enhanced the quality of one's sleep, all of which contributed to a reduction in stress.

According to you how does yoga contribute to improved posture among employees.

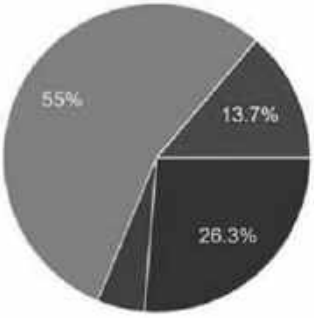
80 responses



- By providing core strength.
- Better muscle flexibility.
- Balance & coordination.
- Spinal alignment.

According to each respondent, yoga aids or enhances posture through a different mechanism. About 30% of employees think yoga helps with balance and coordination, and about 29% think it improves posture by increasing muscle flexibility. About 21% of respondents believe that yoga improves spinal alignment, and 20% believe that yoga strengthens the muscles in the core.

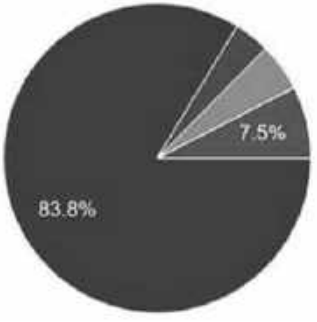
How can yoga contribute to a positive work environment?
80 responses



- Improved productivity.
- Improved teamwork.
- Improved physical wellbeing.
- Improved creativity & morale.

According to respondents, yoga enhances the many elements listed below to foster a positive work atmosphere. 55% of respondents said yoga enhanced physical well-being, 26.3% said it increased productivity, 13.7% said it enhanced creativity and morale, and the remaining respondents said it greatly enhanced teamwork.

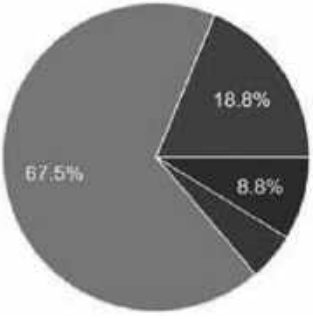
How can workplace yoga contribute to team building?
80 responses



- Promote healthy work atmosphere.
- By building trust.
- Decreased irritability
- Decreased aggression.

When asked how yoga helps with team building, 84% of employees said it fosters a healthy work environment, which helps to establish a healthy work environment in the firm. The remaining employees had different answers to the same question, with 7.5% saying it reduces hostility.

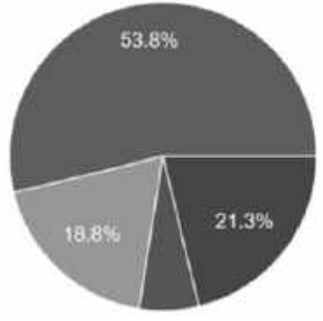
How can yoga contribute to a positive work environment?
80 responses



- By enhancing immunity.
- Reducing absenteeism.
- Reducing stress & anxiety.
- Improving strength & flexibility.

According to 67.5% of the participants, yoga considerably boosts employee productivity by reducing stress and anxiety. Approximately 19% of participants think yoga improves overall strength and flexibility, and 8.8% think it strengthens immunity, which raises productivity at work.

What is the role of breath awareness in addressing the health challenges associated with a sedentary lifestyle through yoga?
80 responses

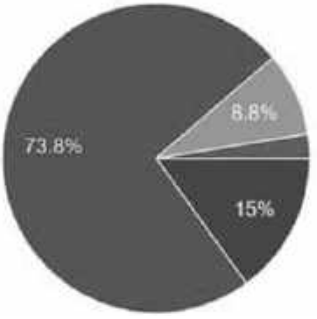


- Positively affects immune system.
- Proper gaseous exchange.
- Improves autonomic nervous system functioning.
- Provide relief in anxiety, depression & stress.

Regarding the function of breath awareness, 53.8% of respondents stated that yoga relieves stress, anxiety, and depression, while 21.3% of subjects think yoga strengthens the immune system. 18.8% of respondents think yoga enhances autonomic nervous system performance, and the remaining 6% believe it facilitates appropriate gas exchange.

How does yoga contribute to improved mental health in the workplace?

80 responses

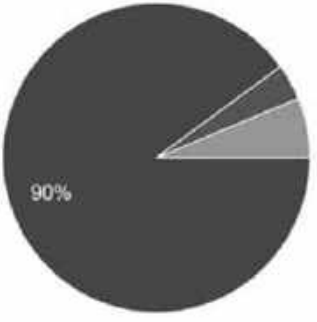


- By sharpens concentration.
- Relaxes the mind.
- Lowering sadness & anxiety.
- Relief from sleeplessness.

According to 73.8% of respondents, yoga improved employees' mental health at work by lowering stress levels. While 9% of respondents believe yoga improves employees' mental health by reducing anxiety and sadness, 15% of respondents believe it boosts focus.

Do you think yoga should be adopted as an essential in work place?

80 responses



- Yes.
- No.
- May be.
- None of the above.

Of the 80 participants, 90% expressed a strong belief that yoga is beneficial to them and should be incorporated into their work routine, while the remaining 6.3% were unsure about the matter.

Conclusion : Based on a thorough qualitative data analysis of information gathered from multiple employees across various

organizations, it is possible to draw the conclusion that implementing yoga practices and activities at work will benefit and enhance employees physical, mental, and general health and well-being, which will subsequently contribute to the organization's overall development and expansion. Yoga needs to be implemented in every workplace. By doing this, the organization not only improves the mental and physical well-being of its workers, but also fosters an atmosphere that encourages workers to stay longer. Organizations should engage a professional yoga trainer for this purpose in order to foster a positive and healthful environment for the practice, which will ultimately aid in the growth of both the company and its personnel.

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Mr. Mayank Uniyal
Research Scholar
Sparsh Himalaya University Dehradun, Uttarakhand
Email-id – makbuddy1110@gmail.com
Contact No: 7417023990

Ms. Madhuri Uniyal
Research Scholar
Hemvati Nandan Bahuguna Garhwal University
Srinagar Garhwal, Uttarakhand
Email-id – miniuniyal56962@gmail.com
Contact No: 9456131313

Ms. Swati Uniyal
Assistant Professor
School of Management & Commerce
Dev Bhoomi Uttarakhand University, Dehradun
Email-id – swatiuniyal18@gmail.com
Contact No: 7895912646

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शुक्राचार्य की प्रशासनिक अवधारणा एवं प्रासंगिकता

• डॉ. नरेश कुमार

ऋषि शुक्राचार्य की शुक्रनीति एक प्रसिद्ध नीतिग्रंथ है, इसकी रचना करने वाले शुक्र ने शुक्रनीति में राजनीतिक, आर्थिक, सामाजिक, न्यायिक, प्रशासनिक तथा सैद्धांतिक एवं व्यावहारिक सन्दर्भ में अमूल्य विचार प्रस्तुत किए हैं। इनकी अवधारणा का उल्लेख महाभारत में भी मिलता है। शुक्रनीति में पाँच अध्याय और 2000 श्लोक हैं। पौराणिक शास्त्रों में ऐसा कहा जाता है, कि तीनों लोकों में शुक्रनीति के समान दूसरी अन्य कोई नीति नहीं है और राज्य-राजपद और प्रजा के लिये शुक्र की ही नीति सर्वश्रेष्ठ है, शेष सब 'कुनीति' है।

प्रशासन

शुक्र का प्रशासन प्रजाहितकारी अर्थात् लोक कल्याणकारी राज्य की स्थापना उनकी शुक्रनीति में वर्णित है। काल सापेक्ष, आदर्श कोष की धारणा का उल्लेख भी शुक्र ने किया है। शुक्र का मत है, कि यह कोष इतना सम्पन्न होना चाहिए, कि कर जमा न होने पर भी 20 वर्ष तक प्रजा व सेना की ज़रूरतों को पूरा करने में समर्थ हो। शुक्र एकमात्र ऐसे राजशास्त्री हैं, जिन्होंने राज्य की आय-व्यय की वार्षिक योजना का उल्लेख किया है। मनु, कौटिल्य आदि आचार्यों की तुलना में शुक्र का व्यय विवरण अधिक स्पष्ट, निश्चित एवं नियमबद्ध है। शुक्र ने अपने व्यय के विवरण में जन कल्याण एवं समाज कल्याण पर भी बल दिया है।

शुक्र ने दो प्रकार के प्रशासन का उल्लेख किया है : (1) **केन्द्रीय प्रशासन** (2) **स्थानीय प्रशासन।**

(1) **केन्द्रीय प्रशासन :** केन्द्रीय प्रशासन में राजभृत्यों के महत्व को बताते हुए शुक्र ने राजा को परामर्श दिया है, कि वह राज्य की उन्नति के लिए अनेक ज्ञानवान एवं गुणी सहायकों की नियुक्ति करें। शुक्र ने सात प्रकार के सेवकों का उल्लेख किया है और सभी विभाग के अधिकारियों, सहायकों एवं सेवकों की नियुक्ति सम्बन्धी योग्यता का विस्तार से उल्लेख किया है।

(2) **स्थानीय प्रशासन :** शुक्र ने स्थानीय प्रशासन के संगठन का उल्लेख किया है, जिसमें अग्रलिखित छह अधिकारियों का उल्लेख है। ''साहसाधिपति'', ''ग्रामनेता'', ''भागहार'', ''लेखक'', ''शुल्कग्राहक'' तथा ''प्रतिहार'' इत्यादि। शुक्र का कहना है, कि गांव में छह प्रकार के अधिकारी और उनकी निम्नोक्त जातियां थीं। साहसाधिपति (साहस करने या बल प्रयोग करने वाले के द्वारा हुए अपराधों पर दण्ड देने वाला) क्षत्रीय था, ग्रामनेता ब्राह्मण था, भागहार (राजकीय कर उगाहने वाला) क्षत्रीय था, लेखक (लिपिक) कायस्थ था, शुल्कग्राहक (चुंगी एकत्र करने वाला) वैश्य था तथा प्रतिहार (ग्राम-सीमा पर रक्षा करने वाला) शूद्र था।

शुक्र ने इन छह अधिकारियों के कार्यों का भी वर्णन किया है, ''साहसाधिपति'' अपराधों पर दण्ड देने वाला होता था। ''ग्रामनेता'' (यथा अर्थात् मुखिया) ग्रामनेता को डाकुओं, चोरों एवं भ्रष्ट राज्य-कर्मचारियों से ग्रामवासियों के पिता पुत्र के समान रक्षा करनी पड़ती थी। ''भागहार'' को वृक्षों की रक्षा करनी पड़ती थी। ''लेखक'' के लिए अंकन एवं गणना करने में दक्ष होना एवं कई भाषाओं का ज्ञान रखना आवश्यक था। ''शुल्कग्राहक'' को ऐसी व्यवस्था रखनी या करनी पड़ती थी, कि चुंगी के कारण उन्हें अपने माल के विक्रय में घाटा न लगे। और ''प्रतिहार'' को शरीर से स्वस्थ एवं तगड़ा, अस्त्र-शस्त्र एवम् विद्या में निपुणता, विनीत तथा ग्राम के लोगों को यथोचित आदर देने वाला होना पड़ता था। अतः इन सभी के कार्यों का शुक्रनीति में विस्तारपूर्वक वर्णन करते हुए शुक्र ने कहा है, कि ''साहसाधिपति'' न बहुत क्रूर न बहुत मृदु होना चाहिए और उसे दंड का विधान इस प्रकार करना चाहिए, कि प्रजा को अधिक कष्ट और कदापि असमानता न लगे। ग्राम के ''अधिपति'' को माता-पिता की तरह, लुटेरे, चोरों और गणों से प्रजा की

रक्षा करने में दक्ष होना चाहिए। ''भागहार'' इस प्रकार से काम करने वाला हो जो माली के समान वृक्षों को पुष्ट कर उनसे फल और फूल बीने अर्थात् वह इस बात की भी व्यवस्था करें कि लोगों की खेती आदि उत्तम हो तथा वह उतना ही भाग उसमें से ले जिसमें लोग नष्ट न हो जाय। ''लेखक'' ग्राम की पुस्तकों आदि की देख-भाल करने वाला (पटवारी अथवा लेखपाल) ऐसा व्यक्ति हो जो अपना लेख असंदिग्ध और बिना गूढ़ार्थ के लिखे, गणित में कुशल तथा देश की भाषा को अच्छी प्रकार से जानने वाला होना चाहिए। ''प्रतिहार'' (चौकीदार) अस्त्र-शस्त्र में कुशल, दृढ़ शरीर वाला, निरालसी, विनम्र और ठीक प्रकार से पुकार करने वाला (पुकार लगाने वाला तथा बुलाने वाला) होना चाहिए। ''शुल्कग्राहक'' अथवा दौल्किक ऐसा होना चाहिए, जो इस प्रकार से शुल्क ले, जिससे कि व्यापारियों का मूल धन नष्ट न हो।

प्रशासनिक संगठन

शुक्रनीति में प्रशासन के 20 विभागों का उल्लेख किया गया है। जिनमें मुख्य गज, अश्व, स्वर्ण, रजत विभाग आदि सम्मिलित है। इन विभागों के मुखिया को सामान्य रूप से कर्म सचिव कहा है, किन्तु इसके साथ ही अध्यक्ष को पति या अधिपति की संज्ञा से संबोधित किया है। शुक्रनीति में प्रतिपादित प्रशासनिक संगठन बहुस्तरीय है। प्रशासन के केन्द्रीय स्तर पर संगठित विभागों के अतिरिक्त, शुक्र ने स्थानीय, ग्रामीण और नगरीय प्रशासन की संगठनात्मक संरचना पर प्रकाश डाला है। शुक्र का मत है, कि प्रत्येक ग्राम और प्रत्येक नगर में साहसाध्यक्ष (पुलिस अधीक्षक के समकक्ष पद) ग्राम का अध्यक्ष भागहार (प्रजा से कर वसूलने हेतु उत्तरदायी) की नियुक्ति की जानी चाहिए। प्रशासन के समस्त स्तरों पर नियुक्त कार्मिकों की व्यावसायिक व तकनीकी योग्यताओं का शुक्र नीति में विस्तार से उल्लेख किया गया है।

प्रशासन की कार्यालय पद्धति

शुक्र ने प्रशासन की कार्यालय पद्धति में लिखित आदेश को अत्यधिक महत्व दिया है। उनके अनुसार, अधिकारी या सहायकों को बिना लिखित राजाज्ञा के कोई कार्य नहीं करना चाहिए, क्योंकि राजा की राजमुद्रा व हस्ताक्षर युक्त लिखित आदेश ही वास्तविक राजा का होता है, व्यक्ति राजा

नहीं होता है। शुक्र ने राजा के लिखित आदेश को स्मृति पत्र (फाइल) के रूप में सुरक्षित रखने की प्रणाली को स्वीकार किया है। इसके साथ ही उन्होंने प्रशासन में दैनिक, मासिक, वार्षिक तथा बहुवर्षीय रिपोर्ट तैयार करने पर भी बल दिया गया है। प्रशासन के कुशल संचालन के लिये शुक्र ने सूचनाओं की प्रतिदिन प्राप्ति पर जोर दिया है। उनका मत, है कि राजा को प्रतिदिन 100 मील दूर तक के प्रदेशों की सूचनाएँ प्राप्त होनी चाहिए। शुक्र ने राजकीय कार्यालयों की सुरक्षा के लिए पहरेदारों व रक्षकों की व्यवस्था को स्वीकार किया है।

राज्य के प्रशासनिक दायित्व

1. **राज्य का सामाजिक दायित्व** : सामाजिक व्यवस्था का नियमन और सामाजिक जीवन में धर्म और नैतिक मूल्यों की प्रतिष्ठा का पालन करना। शुक्र के अनुसार, राजा को शक्ति पूर्वक प्रजा से वर्ण-धर्म का पालन कराना चाहिए किंतु इसके साथ ही शुक्र ने बताया, कि इस संसार में जन्म से ही कोई भी ब्राह्मण, क्षत्रिय, वैश्य, शूद्र, म्लेच्छ नहीं होता है, वरन् अपने गुणों के आधार पर ही मनुष्यों में यह भेद किया जाता है। मनुष्यों द्वारा विभिन्न कलाओं व विद्याओं को अपनाने से ही अनेक जातियों का विकास हुआ है। श्रेष्ठता कुल या जाति से नहीं प्राप्त होती वरन् गुणों से ही प्राप्त होती है। जब राजा व प्रजा अपने-अपने धर्म व नीति का पालन करते हैं तब राज्य चिरस्थायी होता है। शुक्र का राज्य सामाजिक नैतिकता का संरक्षक है, राजा के गुणों का ही प्रजा अनुकरण करती है।

2. **राज्य का शैक्षणिक दायित्व** : राज्य ही शिक्षा के प्रचार प्रसार के लिए उत्तरदायी है, योग्य विद्यार्थियों को छात्रवृत्ति देना राज्य का ही दायित्व है। विद्या और कला की उन्नति राज्य की ही जिम्मेदारी है। योग्य, बुद्धिमान व्यक्तियों के सम्मान व भरण-पोषण की व्यवस्था भी राज्य का दायित्व है।

3. **विधि एवं न्याय व्यवस्था** : शुक्र ने कौटिल्य के समान ही अन्य विधिस्रोतों के अतिरिक्त राजा की आज्ञा को भी विधि का स्रोत माना है। शुक्र ने 'पंडित' नामक मंत्री का उल्लेख किया है, जो विधि विशेषज्ञ है। यह राजा का प्रमुख कर्त्तव्य है, कि वह मुकदमों का उचित प्रकार से निर्णय करें और अपने आदेशों का विधिवत पालन कराए। राजा को न्यायकार्य द्वारा दुष्टों का

दमन करना चाहिए। लेकिन यदि राजा अपने न्याय कार्य की उपेक्षा करता है तो शुक्रनीति के अनुसार उसे घोर कष्ट सहन करने पड़ते है।

4. **प्रशासनिक व्यवस्था का कुशल संचालन :** शुक्रनीति में न केवल प्रशासन के सन्दर्भ में विभागीय एवं कार्यालय पद्धति का उल्लेख किया गया है वरन् प्रशासन को लिखित आदेशों पर भी आधारित किया है। राज्य के दायित्वों को पूरा करने हेतु, एक सुदृढ़ प्रशासनिक व्यवस्था की आवश्यकता होती है। शासन को निरंतर सजग रहते हुए यह देखना चाहिए, कि प्रशासनिक अधिकारी व कर्मचारी अपने दायित्वों का भली प्रकार पालन करते रहें एवं प्रजा को पीड़ित न करें। इसके साथ ही कर्मचारियों के हितों का ध्यान रखना भी राज्य का ही दायित्व है। शुक्र ऐसे प्रथम भारतीय विचारक हैं, जिन्होंने प्रशासन के आंतरिक पक्षों का भी विस्तृत विवरण दिया है।

प्रशासन में कार्मिक व्यवस्था

कार्मिक व्यवस्था के विवेचन की दृष्टि से शुक्रनीति को विलक्षण ग्रन्थ माना जा सकता है, क्योंकि कार्मिक व्यवस्था के विभिन्न पक्षों का उन्होंने व्यवस्थित व पूर्ण चित्रण के रूप में इस प्रकार उल्लेख किया है।

1. **राज्य कर्मचारियों के लिए आचार संहिता :** समस्त राजकर्मचारियों से आचरण के सामान्य नियमों के पालन की अपेक्षा की गई है। इन नियमों या आचार संहिता का पालन करने वाले कर्मचारियों को ग्रन्थ में श्रेष्ठ कार्मिक बताया गया है। शुक्र के अनुसार, भृत्य को स्वामी के प्रति तथा अपने सेवा कार्य के प्रति पूरी तरह से समर्पित होकर कार्य करना चाहिए। उसे शिष्टतापूर्वक राजा को सद्कार्य की प्रेरणा देनी चाहिए तथा कभी भी चाटुकारिता नहीं करनी चाहिए। कर्मचारियों को कभी भी प्रजा से झूठे वादे नहीं करने चाहिए। अनुचित कार्यों जैसे कि रिश्वत, जुआ, क्रोध, दुश्चरित्रता आदि को त्याग देना चाहिए। उपर्युक्त गुणों के विपरीत कार्य करने वालों को शुक्र ने निकृष्ट माना है।

2. **वेतन, वेतनमान व वेतनवृद्धि :** शुक्रनीति के अनुसार वेतन भुगतान के सिद्धान्त में कार्य व काल दोनों को ही आधार बनाया गया है अर्थात् एक निश्चित काल में किए गये कार्य की मात्रा देखकर ही भृत्ति दी जाती है। शुक्र ने राजा को यह परामर्श दिया है, कि वह वेतन में कटौती नहीं

करें और सदैव नियत समय पर ही वेतन दे। शुक्रनीति में स्पष्ट प्रतिपादित किया गया है, कि कार्मिक का न्यूनतम वेतन इतना होना चाहिए कि उस पर आश्रित व्यक्तियों का सरलता से भरण-पोषण हो सके। वेतनमानों को श्रेष्ठ, मध्यम, सम व हीन में विभाजित किया गया है। शुक्र ने राजा को चेतावनी दी है, कि अत्यन्त कम वेतन प्राप्त करने वाले कर्मचारी शासन से असंतुष्ट हो जाते हैं और राजकीय कार्यो की अपेक्षा अन्य कार्यों में रुचि लेने लगते हैं। अतः जैसे-जैसे भृत्य की योग्यता में वृद्धि हो, वैसे-वैसे उसके वेतन में भी वृद्धि होनी चाहिए, क्योंकि इससे अन्त में स्वयं राजा का हित होता है।

3. **सेवा अवधि, पदोन्नति एवं पद अवनति :** सामान्य स्थिति में एक कर्मचारी की सेवा अवधि 40 वर्ष स्वीकार की है, किन्तु इसके साथ ही क्रमिकों (भृत्यों) की सदैव परीक्षा होती रहनी चाहिए और अवगुण उत्पन्न हो जाने पर भृत्य को पद मुक्त कर देना चाहिए। शुक्रनीति में कर्मचारियों की समयबद्ध पदोन्नति के बारे में स्पष्ट प्रावधान किया गया है, जब कोई कार्मिक अपने अनुभव के आधार पर अपने पद से श्रेष्ठ होता जाए तो उसे उत्तरोतर श्रेष्ठ पद पर नियुक्त किया जाना चाहिए। इसके विपरीत यदि कोई प्रधान सेवक आलस्य आदि के कारण अपने दायित्वों की उपेक्षा करता है तो उसे अप्रधान सेवक बना देना चाहिए। शुक्र ने भृत्यों के प्रशिक्षण की व्यवस्था भी की है।

4. **पेंशन, क्षतिपूर्ति, भविष्य निधि व बोनस की व्यवस्था :** राजसेवा में 40 वर्ष पूरे करने के उपरांत, सेवानिवृत्ति के बाद पेंशन के रूप में पैसा आजीवन दिया जाना चाहिए। केवल पेंशन ही नहीं पारिवारिक पेंशन की भी व्यवस्था होनी चाहिए। कार्मिकों (भृत्यों) के लिए भविष्यनिधि की योजना को भी स्वीकार किया हैं। राजा को कार्मिक के वेतन की कुल राशि का 1/6 या 1/4 भाग काटकर अपने यहां जमा कर लेना चाहिए और दो या तीन वर्ष बाद, उस जमा राशि के आधे या पूरे भाग का भुगतान कार्मिक को कर देना चाहिए।

5. **विश्राम एवं अवकाश के नियम** : नियमित कार्मिकों के प्रतिदिन 12 घण्टे राजकार्य की व्यवस्था है। कर्मचारियों को उपयुक्त अन्तराल पर तथा विशिष्ट परिस्थितियों में कार्य से अवकाश प्रदान किये जाने की आवश्यकता व्यक्त की गई है जिसमें विस्तृत नियमों का प्रतिपादन किया गया है। उत्सव आदि के दिन कोई कार्य कर्मचारियों से नहीं कराया जायेगा। यदि कोई अधिक

आवश्यक कार्य हो तो उत्सव वाले दिन भी कार्य कराने की व्यवस्था की गई है, परन्तु श्राद्ध के दिन किसी भी प्रकार के कार्य का स्पष्ट निषेध किया गया है। कार्मिकों को प्रतिदिन निश्चित अन्तराल पर अवकाश देने की व्यवस्था भी की गई है। कर्मचारियों के अस्वस्थ हो जाने पर उन्हें 'सवेतन' व अर्द्धवेतन अवकाश की व्यवस्था की गई है। प्रतिवर्ष 15 दिन के सवेतन अवकाश के साथ स्वास्थ्य अवकाश की भी व्यवस्था की है। किन्तु जब कोई योग्य भृत्य बीमार हो जाए, उसकी बीमारी की अवधि की उपेक्षा करके उसे सदैव आधा वेतन अवश्य ही दिया जाना चाहिए। इस प्रकार शुक्रनीति प्राचीन भारतीय राजनीतिक चिन्तन का ऐसा ग्रन्थ है, जिसमें कार्मिक व्यवस्था का इतना विस्तृत व व्यापक विवरण दिया गया है, तथा जो कर्मचारियों के हितों पर आधारित है।

शासकीय अधिकारियों पर नियन्त्रण

कुशल प्रशासन हेतु अनिवार्य है, कि राजा अधिकारियों के कार्यों पर कड़ी नज़र रखे। शुक्रनीति में कहा गया है, कि यदि प्रजाजन किसी अधिकारी के विरूद्ध आवेदन पत्र दे दें, तो उस अधिकारी को पदच्युत कर देना चाहिए। शुक्र ने परामर्श दिया है, कि राजा अन्याय करने वाले अधिकारियों से उनकी शक्तियाँ छीन ले। नियन्त्रण के लिए यह भी अनिवार्य है, कि एक पद पर एक व्यक्ति अधिक समय तक न रहे। किसी व्यक्ति के पद पर नियुक्ति केवल योग्यता के आधार पर करनी चाहिए

न्यायिक व्यवस्था

शुक्र ने न्याय कार्य के महत्व को स्वीकार करते हुए राजा के 8 प्रधान कर्त्तव्यों में दुष्ट-निग्रह को शामिल किया है। यह न्यायिक प्रक्रिया प्रजा को धर्म पालन में मदद करती है। राजा का कर्त्तव्य है, कि वह मुकदमों का उचित प्रकार से निर्णय करे और इस बारे में सत्तापूर्वक प्रजाजन से अपने निर्णय का पालन करवाए। शुक्र ने न्याय के अवधारणात्क पक्ष की उतनी विस्तृत व्याख्या नहीं की है, जैसी कि कौटिल्य के अर्थशास्त्र और मनुस्मृति में उपलब्ध है। न्याय के संस्थागत और प्रक्रियात्मक पक्ष का शुक्र ने विस्तृत विवरण दिया है। शुक्राचार्य ने न्यायपालिका के संगठन, न्यायिक प्रक्रिया तथा मुकदमों से सम्बन्धित पक्षों के अधिकारों एवं दायित्वों का विस्तार से विवेचन किया है।

न्यायालयों का संगठन एवं क्षेत्राधिकार

शुक्र द्वारा न्यायिक प्रक्रिया के अन्तर्गत राजा एवं सभा का उल्लेख किया गया है तथा विशेष प्रसंगों में सहायता करने के लिए 'जूरी' का भी उल्लेख किया गया है। शुक्रनीति में राजा को सम्पूर्ण न्याय व्यवस्था का (स्थानीय एवं साधारण मुकदमों के अतिरिक्त) प्रमुख निर्णायक अथवा सर्वोच्च अधिकारी माना गया है, किन्तु यह स्पष्ट कर दिया गया है, कि राजा न्यायपालिका का केवल औपचारिक अध्यक्ष है। शुक्र ने राजा से शास्त्रों के अनुरूप न्यायिक कार्यों को भली भांति देखने की अपेक्षा की गई है। राजा द्वारा अकेले ही सभासदों की सहमति लिए बिना, निर्णय लेने के गम्भीर दुष्परिणामों का भी उल्लेख किया है।

न्यायसभा

शुक्र ने राज्य के केन्द्रीय न्यायालय को सभा या न्यायसभा कहा है। न्यायसभा एक ऐसी संस्था है, जहाँ व्यक्ति के लौकिक आचरण एवं हितों की जांच स्मृति के कानून के अनुसार की जाती है। शुक्र ने ऐसे दस साधनों का उल्लेख किया है, जिनकी मदद से सभा न्यायिक कार्य को भली-भांति करने में समर्थ होती है। ये दस साधन हैं : राजा, सभ्य, स्मृति, लेखपाल, लेखक, स्वर्ण, अग्नि, जल, अधिकारी तथा राजपुरुष। शुक्र के अनुसार, सभा में प्रथम स्थान राजा का होता है, जो सभा का सभापतित्व करता है। राजा सभा में अपना प्रतिनिधि नियुक्त कर सकता है, जिसे शुक्र ने प्राड्विवाक कहा है, जो सभा के अलावा मन्त्रिपरिषद का भी सदस्य होता है। शुक्र ने ब्राह्मण को प्राथमिकता देने के साथ ही सभी जातियों से सभा के सदस्य बनाना स्वीकार किया है।

मुख्य न्यायाधीश

राजा के बाद एक मुख्य न्यायाधीश होता है, जिसे सर्वोच्च न्यायिक पदाधिकारी माना गया है। इस पद पर शुक्र के अनुसार ऐसा व्यक्ति नियुक्त किया जाना चाहिए। जिसका विधि-शास्त्र का ज्ञान अत्यन्त व्यापक व विशेष हो तथा जिसकी निष्पक्षता व निष्ठा संदेह से परे हो।

न्यायालय में कार्मिक वर्ग एवं साधन

न्यायालय को समुचित संख्या में कर्मचारी व साधन उपलब्ध होने

चाहिए अन्यथा न्यायालय अपना कार्य सुचारू रूप से नहीं कर सकते। अतः शुक्र का मत है कि वही न्यायसभा पवित्र होती है, जिसमें मुकदमे के निर्णय के लिए आवश्यक समस्त साधन उपलब्ध हो।

न्यायाधीशों के लिए आचार-संहिता

शुक्रनीति में न्यायाधीशों के मनमाने व्यवहार का निषेध किया गया है। उनके लिए कुछ नियमों की व्यवस्था की गई है। राजा को न्याय करने के अपने कर्त्तव्य का समुचित पालन करना चाहिए तथा न्याय करते हुए विभिन्न जातियों, श्रेणियों और कुलों की परम्पराओं को मानते हुए निर्णय करना चाहिए एवं धर्म का पालन करना चाहिए। सभासदों को सभा में सत्य अवश्य कहना चाहिए। न्यायिक प्रक्रिया के समय राजा या न्यायाधीश को वादी के प्रति सम्मानपूर्वक आचरण करना चाहिए।

न्यायिक प्रक्रिया

1. व्यवहार : सरल शब्दों में व्यवहार का अर्थ है, न्यायालय में चलने वाले मुकदमे की न्यायिक प्रक्रिया'। इस न्यायिक प्रक्रिया द्वारा ही यह मालूम होता है कि कौन व्यक्ति अपराधी है और कौन निरपराधी।
2. व्यवहार के चरण : शुक्र ने मुकदमे की न्यायिक प्रक्रिया के चार चरण स्वीकार किए है। (1) पूर्व पक्ष (2) प्रतिपक्ष (3) क्रिया (4) निर्णय।

किसी भी मुकदमे की शुरूआत पूर्वपक्ष के लिखित या मौखिक बयान से होती है, कि मुकदमा बनता है या नहीं। इसके बाद दूसरा चरण प्रतिपक्ष प्रारंभ होता है। अब न्यायालयवादी एवं प्रतिवादी दोनों से ही प्रश्न एवं प्रतिप्रश्न करता है। यदि न्यायालय यह अनुभव करता है, कि वास्तव में कानून की दृष्टि से कोई मुकदमा बनता है, तो मुकदमा अपने तृतीय चरण अर्थात् क्रियापद में प्रवेश करता है। अन्यथा उसे द्वितीय पाद में समाप्त हो जाता है। क्रिया पाद के अन्तर्गत मुकदमे में प्रस्तुत विभिन्न प्रमाणों की कड़ी जांच की जाती है और मुकदमे में निहित सत्य व असत्य की जानकारी प्राप्त की जाती है।

साक्ष्य और न्यायिक निर्णय

शुक्र ने सभी साक्ष्य अर्थात् प्रमाणों के दो मूल प्रकार बताए है; (1) मनुष्य प्रमाण (2) दैवी प्रमाण।

शुक्र ने दैवी प्रमाण को मानुष प्रमाण से कम महत्वपूर्ण माना है और इसलिए किसी भी प्रकार के मानुष प्रमाण के अभाव में देवी प्रमाण को उचित बताया है।

शुक्र ने 6 प्रकार के निर्णय बताए है : (1) प्रमाण (2) तर्कसिद्ध (3) अनुमान (4) सदाचार (5) शपथ (6) राजाज्ञा (7) वादी की सहमति। शुक्र के अनुसार, निर्णय की घोषणा के साथ ही विजेता पक्ष को जयपत्र दिया जाना चाहिए। इसे एक कानूनी दस्तावेज के रूप में भी मान्यता प्रदान की है। न्यायालय में वादी एवं प्रतिवादी दोनों को ही उपस्थित होना चाहिए। शुक्र ने अपने पूर्ववर्तियों के विपरीत नई व्यवस्थाओं जैसे-पुनर्विचार (रिव्यू) सम्मान, जमानत और नियोगी अर्थात् वकील का भी उल्लेख किया है। शुक्र के अनुसार नियोगी को कानून का ज्ञान होना चाहिए एवं उसे नियमानुसार ही शुल्क लेना चाहिए।

अपराधों का वर्गीकरण

शुक्र ने सभी प्रकार के अपराधों को चार मूल वर्गों में बांटा है : (1) कायिक (2) वाचिक (3) मानसिक (4) सांसारिक।

कायिक अपराध शरीर से, वाचिक अपराध वाणी से, मानसिक अपराध मन से एवं सांसारिक अपराध किसी के साथ मिलकर या सहयोग से किया जाता है। शुक्र का मत है, कि प्रत्येक अपराध की गुरूता एवं लघुता को जानकर ही अपराधी को दण्डित किया जाना चाहिए। शुक्रनीति में अपराधों की श्रेणियों का विस्तृत वर्गीकरण किया गया है, जो अपराधों के विषय में शुक्रनीति के व्यवस्थित, व्यावहारिक व वैज्ञानिक दृष्टिकोण को व्यक्त करता है। शुक्रनीति में सामाजिक, आर्थिक, नैतिक, राजनैतिक, व प्रशासनिक समस्त प्रकार के अपराधों को महत्व प्रदान करते हुए उनके प्रतिकार की अपेक्षा की गई है। शुक्रनीति में सामान्यतः प्राणदंड न देने का प्रावधान किया गया है तथा केवल राजद्रोह जैसे गम्भीर अपराध के लिए वध का दण्ड प्रदान किए जाने के औचित्य का प्रतिपादन किया गया है।

दण्ड व्यवस्था एवं अपराध

प्राचीन भारतीय परम्परा में 'दण्ड' शब्द के अनेक अर्थ हैं। यद्यपि

शुक्र ने दण्ड का अर्थ सेना, युद्ध और न्याय व्यवस्था को भी स्वीकार किया है, वास्तव में दण्ड जनता को बुरे आचरण से मुक्ति दिलाता है। राजा की दण्डयुक्त नीति सभी कार्यो की सिद्धि कराती है और दण्ड धर्मों का परम रक्षक है। शुक्र ने अपराध के दस प्रकारों का उल्लेख किया है, इनमें मुख्य राजाज्ञा का उल्लंघन, स्त्री की हत्या, चोरी करना आदि सम्मिलित है। वस्तुतः ये 10 अपराध राज्य, समाज, नैतिकता एवं धर्म के विरूद्ध अपराध है। शुक्र ने दण्डनीय अपराधों में 50 प्रकार के छलों का उल्लेख किया है। शुक्र ने इन्हें राजा के प्रति किए गये अपराध माना है।

दण्ड के प्रकार

शुक्र ने मनु व यागवलक्य के समान ही न्यायिक प्रशासन या अपराध उन्मूलन के सन्दर्भ में दण्ड के अग्रलिखित चार प्रकार स्वीकार किए है :

(1) वाक्दण्ड (2) धिक् दण्ड

(3) अर्थ दण्ड (4) कार्य दण्ड

शुक्र के अनुसार, केवल उत्तम पुरुष एवं मध्यम पुरुष को वाक्दण्ड या धिक्दण्ड दिया जाना उचित है। अधम पुरुषों पर इनका सुधारात्मक प्रभाव नहीं पड़ता है, अतः ये दण्ड इनके लिए नहीं है। शुक्र ने अपराध व दण्ड के पारस्परिक सम्बन्ध को स्वीकार किया है। जो राजा अपराध व दण्ड के इस सम्बन्ध का ध्यान रखते हुए कार्य करता है, उससे प्रजा सन्तुष्ट रहती है। केवल अपराधी ही दण्डनीय है, निरपराधी सदैव अदण्डनीय है। दण्ड की मात्रा, अपराध के अनुसार ही होनी चाहिए। उसे मनमाने ढंग से दण्डित नहीं किया जा सकता। राजा को दण्ड देने में अत्यधिक कठोर नहीं होना चाहिए। शुक्र ने एक ही प्रकार के अपराध के लिए उत्तम, मध्यम, व अधम पुरुषों के लिए अलग-अलग दण्डों की व्यवस्था की है, जिससे शुक्र की दण्ड नीति का विषमतावादी पक्ष स्पष्ट होता है। परन्तु शुक्र ने ऐसे अपराधों का भी उल्लेख किया है, जिनमें दण्ड सबको समान दिया जाता है, जैसे—राजद्रोह। यह उल्लेखनीय है, कि शुक्र ने मनु की तुलना में दण्ड के क्षेत्र में अधिक समतावादी व्यवस्था को अपनाया है। आधुनिक दण्ड सिद्धान्त की दृष्टि से यह कहा जा सकता है, कि शुक्र ने प्रतीकात्मक दण्ड सिद्धान्त को स्वीकार

नहीं किया है परन्तु शुक्रनीति में अवरोधक, निरोधक और सुधारात्मक दण्ड सिद्धान्तों को अवश्य ही स्वीकार किया गया है।

पर-राष्ट्र (विदेश) नीति

शुक्र ने प्राचीन भारतीय आचार्यों की परम्परा के अन्तर्गत ही 'पर-राष्ट्र सम्बन्धों' अर्थात् अपने राज्य एवं अन्य राज्यों के आपसी सम्बन्धों का विस्तृत विवेचन प्रस्तुत किया है। परराष्ट्र सम्बन्धों का सैद्धान्तिक पक्ष शुक्र ने कौटिल्य के समान मण्डल सिद्धान्त का उल्लेख नहीं किया, परन्तु चार प्रकार के राज्यों के अस्तित्व को स्वीकार किया है जो इस प्रकार है;

(1) स्वयं विजिगीषु राजा (विजय की इच्छा रखने वाला का राज्य),

(2) मित्र राज्य,

(3) शत्रु राज्य,

(4) उदासीन राज्य।

शुक्र ने राज्यों के वर्गीकरण का आधार उनकी भौगोलिक स्थिति को नहीं माना है अपितु विजिगीषु राजा एवं अन्य राज्यों के बीच उनके राजहित की स्थिति को माना है।

प्रासंगिकता

शुक्राचार्य के राजनीतिक सन्दर्भ में उनके विचार आज भी उतने ही प्रासंगिक हैं, जितने उस काल में थे। मनु मूलतः धर्मशास्त्रीय विचारक है, कौटिल्य अर्थशास्त्रीय विचारक है, जबकि शुक्र राजनीतिक है। इसीलिए प्राचीन भारतीय राजनीतिक चिन्तन में उनका विशिष्ट स्थान व महत्व है। शुक्रनीति की विषयवस्तु की शैली के आधार पर ऐसा लगता है, कि शुक्र चिन्तन की एक विशेष परम्परा को व्यक्त करता है, एक व्यक्ति को नहीं। भारतीय राजनीतिक चिन्तन के स्रोत के रूप में इसे एक प्रमाणिक ग्रन्थ माना जाता है। अल्तेकर का मत है, कि शुक्रनीति में प्रशासनिक महत्व की ऐसी अनेक व्यवस्थाएँ मिलती है, जो अर्थशास्त्र सहित अन्य किसी ग्रन्थ में उपलब्ध नहीं है। यह सत्य है, कि शुक्र ने राज्य के सैद्धान्तिक पक्ष का भले ही विस्तार से विवेचना नहीं की हो, परन्तु प्राचीन भारत में व्यावहारिक पक्ष

पर प्रकाश डालने की परम्परा शुरू की। शुक्र ने दण्डनीति को सर्वप्रमुख विद्या के रूप में मान्यता देकर, दण्डनीति शास्त्रीय औशनस सम्प्रदाय का अनुकरण करते हुए सैद्धान्तिक एवं धर्मशास्त्रीय ज्ञान पर व्यावहारिक व लौकिक ज्ञान की श्रेष्ठता को प्रतिपादित किया है। शुक्राचार्य का मानना है, कि दण्डनीति के प्रयोग से राजा को सभी फलों की सिद्धि होती है, यहां तक कि वह सतयुग की स्थापना भी कर सकता है।

शुक्र की प्रशासनिक व्यवस्था मनुस्मृति की तुलना में अधिक विस्तृत, प्रगतिशील, रचनात्मक एवं विकसित है। इसमें लिखित कार्यालय पद्धति, कार्मिकों (राजसेवकों) की आचार संहिता, कार्य, नियुक्ति प्रक्रिया, योग्यता प्रशिक्षण, न्यूनतम एवं अधिकतम वेतन के सिद्धान्त आदि का भी उल्लेख किया गया है। शुक्र ने कार्मिकों की सेवा अवधि, पदोन्नति, पद-अवनति, गणवेश आदि के नियमों का भी उल्लेख किया है। शुक्र ने प्रशासन की इस कार्मिक व्यवस्था के अन्तर्गत कुछ ऐसी व्यवस्थाओं का भी उल्लेख किया है, जो आधुनिक प्रशासनिक व्यवस्थाओं के अधिक निकट प्रतीत होती हैं। अतः इसकी आवश्यकता आज भी प्रासंगिक है। उन्होंने सामान्य विश्राम, अवकाश, स्वास्थ्य अवकाश, पेंशन सहित सेवानिवृति, पारिवारिक पेंशन, भविष्य निधि, बोनस आदि का भी उल्लेख किया है।

शुक्र ने न्याय प्रशासन का श्रेष्ठ विवरण प्रस्तुत किया है। उन्होंने न्याय प्रशासन में धर्मशास्त्रीय परम्परा का अनुकरण किया है, किन्तु इसके साथ ही उन्होंने न्याय प्रशासन में कुछ नए तत्वों का भी उल्लेख किया है। न्याय सभा के लिए सदस्यता में केवल ब्राह्मण वर्ण की अनिवार्यता नहीं, बल्कि जूरी प्रणाली, सम्मन, जमानत, अपील एवं पुनः विचार, नियोगी (वकील) आदि इसमें सम्मिलित है।

निष्कर्ष

शुक्राचार्य की प्रशासनिक अवधारणा प्राचीन भारतीय राजनीतिक चिन्तन में शुक्रनीति का जितना महत्वपूर्ण स्थान है, शायद ही उतना किसी चिंतन का हो। इसमें कोई दो राय नहीं है, कि शुक्रनीति के रचयिता शुक्राचार्य का नाम भारतीय प्राचीन चिन्तन में विशेष रूप से ''देव'' के रूप में लिया जाता है। शुक्रनीति में राजनीतिक चिंतन के महत्वपूर्ण पक्षों अर्थात् दार्शनिक,

अवधारणात्मक, संरचनात्मक और प्रक्रियात्मक आदि दृष्टिकोण के रूप में चित्रित किया गया है। राज्य की प्रशासनिक व्यवस्था के साथ-साथ राज्य के प्रयोजन, राजसत्ता पर नियंत्रण आदि सैद्धान्तिक पक्षों के साथ-साथ दण्ड व न्यायिक प्रक्रिया, राज्य की सुरक्षा व युद्ध, अंतर्राष्ट्रीय सम्बन्ध आदि ऐसे विषयों का, जो राज्य के व्यावहारिक पक्षों से संबंधित हैं, विशद् रूप में विवेचन किया गया है।

दण्डी के दशकुमार्चरिताम में सभी राजनीतिक शास्त्रों में सर्वप्रथम स्थान शुक्राचार्य को ही प्रदान किया गया है। शुक्रनीति अत्यधिक प्राचीन ग्रंथ होते हुए भी इसमें अनेक ऐसी धारणाएँ अर्थात् विषय वर्णित हैं, जिनकी प्रासंगिकता वर्तमान युग में भी उपयोगी है। शुक्रनीति में चिन्तन की गौरवशाली एवं समृद्ध परम्परा का ज्ञान होता है। कौटिल्य के ''अर्थशास्त्र'' और मैकियावली के ''द प्रिंस'' के समान शुक्रनीति में भी राजा को शासन करना व उसके कर्त्तव्यों का बोध करवाया गया है। अतः इस प्रकार शुक्रनीति में राजनीति का सैद्धान्तिक नहीं वरन् व्यावहारिक पक्ष अधिक महत्वपूर्ण एवं प्रासंगिक है। शुक्र के अनुसार, ''सभी आशंकाओं को त्यागकर राजा को ऐसी नीति का पालन करना चाहिए, जिससे शत्रु का अंत किया जा सके अर्थात् उस पर विजय प्राप्त हो''। शुक्राचार्य के अनुसार, उन्होंने अपने शिष्यों के सामने ब्रह्मा के नीतिशास्त्र का सार प्रस्तुत किया है।

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डॉ. नरेश कुमार

एसोसिएट प्रोफेसर, राजनीतिक विभाग,

शहीद भगत सिंह सांध्य कॉलेज

(दिल्ली विश्वविद्यालय)

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प्राचीन भारतीय इतिहास में कृषक वर्ग की दशा एवं चुनौतियाँ : एक ऐतिहासिक विश्लेषण

● डॉ. आशीष फोगाट

कृषक जीवन का प्राचीनतम साक्ष्य (गेहूँ-जौ की खेती पर आधारित) मेहरगढ़ (ब्लूचिस्तान) से प्राप्त होता है। यह प्रारम्भिक कृषक समुदाय के उद्भव का प्रतिनिधित्व करता है। इसका समय लगभग 6000BCE माना जाता है। हड़प्पा सभ्यता के कृषि समुदाय के संबंध में हमारी जानकारी अधूरी है। उत्खनन में मृदभांडों का जो वितरण मिलता है वह एक सुदृढ़ कृषि आधार की ओर संकेत करता है। सम्भवतः कृषक वर्ग का निवास शहरों के चारों तरफ स्थित गाँवों में था। कृषकों द्वारा उत्पादित किया जाने वाला खाद्यान्न उनके उपयोग से अधिक होता था जिसका हस्तांतरण वे शहरों में निवास करने वाले लोगों को कर देते थे।

पशुपालन के साथ-साथ आर्य कृषि की ओर उन्मुख हुए। '**कृषिमित्कृषस्व वित्ते रमस्व बहु मन्यमानः**'[1] इस मंत्र से यह स्पष्ट होता है कि वैदिक काल से ही कृषि कर्मजीवी श्रमिकों का सम्मान था और सामाजिक श्रम बहुमान्य था। ऋग्वेद में उल्लेख मिलता है कि यदि जुआरी जुआ छोड़कर स्वयं को कृषि कार्य में संलग्न करे तो उसे पत्नी, सम्पत्ति और पशुधन की प्राप्ति हो सकती है।[2] धीरे-धीरे बड़े भूमिखण्डों वाले कृषक अस्तित्व में आए। ये कृषि कार्य सम्पादित करने हेतु मजदूर रखने लगे। साथ ही ऐसे लोगों की संख्या में भी वृद्धि हुई जो भूमिहीन थे और दूसरों के खेतों में काम करके जीवन-निर्वाह करते थे। ऋग्वैदिक युग में अधिसंख्य कृषक पारिवारिक सदस्यों के सहयोग से स्वयं की भूमि पर कार्य करते थे।

उत्तरवैदिक काल तक कृषि लोगों की आजीविका का प्रमुख स्रोत बन

चुकी थी। शतपथ ब्राह्मण[3] में खेत जोतने के विधि संस्कारों का उल्लेख मिलता है। ब्राह्मण-पुरोहित और क्षत्रियों का कृषि सम्बन्धी गतिविधियों में कोई योगदान नहीं था। वैश्य वर्ण के लोग ही कृषि के विकास हेतु निरन्तर प्रयत्नरत रहते थे।[4]

बौद्ध युग में ऐसे धनी ब्राह्मण भी थे जो कृषक थे। इनके पास कृषि कार्य हेतु सैकड़ों हल और बैल होते थे। ये बहुत से दूसरे लोगों को श्रम हेतु नियोजित करते थे।[5] इसके विपरीत बहुत से गरीब ब्राह्मण कृषक भी थे, जो गरीबी के चलते केवल एक बैल से अपनी भूमि जोतने के लिए विवश होते थे।[6] कुछ कृषक जीतोड़ परिश्रम के बावजूद बड़ी मुश्किल से अपना परिवार चला पाते थे। पुन्ना नामक किसान अपने परिवार के पालन-पोषण हेतु खजांची समुन्ना के यहाँ कार्य करता था। जब खजांची समुन्ना ने पुन्ना को छुट्टी करने या काम करने के दो विकल्पों में से किसी एक विकल्प को चुनने के लिए कहा तो पुन्ना ने काम करने के विकल्प को चुना क्योंकि उसके अनुसार छुट्टी तो अमीरों के लिए होती है जबकि उसके घर में कल के लिए चावल भी नहीं हैं। इससे स्पष्ट होता है कि भूमिहीन कृषकों को बहुत अल्प वेतन मिलता था।[7]

छठी शताब्दी ईस्वी पूर्व के पहले तक कृषि अधिशेष की मात्रा सीमित थी क्योंकि कृषि कार्य में प्रयुक्त किए जाने वाले हल का फाल लकड़ी का बना होता था जिससे गहरी जुताई सम्भव नहीं थी फलस्वरूप उत्पादन सीमित था। बलि के नाम पर बड़ी संख्या में पशु मारे जा रहे थे।

डी.डी. कौशाम्बी के अनुसार इससे नियमित कृषि पर असहनीय दबाव पैदा हो गया। छठी शताब्दी के धार्मिक सुधार (बौद्ध-जैन धर्म) ने पशुबलि के प्रचलन को समाप्त कर दिया। लौह अयस्क की खोज के फलस्वरूप कृषि के स्वरूप में क्रांतिकारी परिवर्तन हुआ और अब जीवन निर्वाह वाली कृषि का स्थान अधिशेष उत्पादन वाली कृषि ने ले लिया। कृषि के संबंध में जानकारी बढ़ने और बेहतर उपकरणों के निर्माण से अब कृषक अधिक मात्रा में अतिरिक्त उत्पादन करने लगे। इस सबसे कृषकों की आय में वृद्धि हुई। इस अतिरिक्त उत्पादन का उपयोग व्यापारिक उद्देश्यों के साथ-साथ उस काल खण्ड में उल्लिखित लगभग साठ शहरों के निवासियों के भरण-पोषण हेतु किया जा सकता था।

महाकाव्यों में तत्कालीन कृषि-व्यवस्था का व्यवस्थित चित्रण मिलता है। विदुर के अनुसार वह व्यक्ति समिति की सदस्यता हेतु अनुपयुक्त था जो कृषि-कार्य के ज्ञान से रहित था।[8] महाभारत के अनुसार किसानों को राज्य की ओर से बीज और कर्ज मिलते थे तथा उनकी देखरेख हेतु ईमानदार अधिकारी नियुक्त होते थे। राष्ट्र की समृद्धि का यही आधार थे।[9] पूर्व मौर्यकाल में गृहपतियों (किसान भू-स्वामियों) और कुटुंबिकों (सम्पन्न किसानों) के अधिकार में भूमि का एक बड़ा भाग था। ब्राह्मणों को भू-राजस्व वसूली की प्रक्रिया में सम्मिलित करने के बावजूद राजा और कृषकों के प्रत्यक्ष सम्बन्ध बने रहे। कभी-कभी उनसे बेगार भी ली जाती थी। कोई भी कृषक बिक्री, बंधक या उपहार के रूप में अपनी जमीन को अन्य व्यक्ति को हस्तांतरित नहीं कर सकता था। इस समय गाँव अपने अधिशेष खाद्यान्न की आपूर्ति शहरों को करते थे जिसके चलते इन शहरों में रहने वाली बड़ी जनसंख्या का भरण-पोषण होता था।[10]

मौर्यकाल

मौर्यकाल में दास और कर्मकर बेगार (विष्टी) करते थे। गाँवों के स्वतंत्र किसान बेगार करते थे या नहीं इसके बारे में निश्चयपूर्वक नहीं कह सकते। कौटिल्य ने बेगार के अन्तर्गत करवाए जाने वाले विभिन्न कामों का उल्लेख किया है लेकिन इनमें से कोई भी विशुद्ध रूप से खेती-बाड़ी से सम्बन्धित नहीं है।[11]

मौर्यकाल में राज्य के द्वारा कृषि के विकास में महत्त्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभायी गयी। इसके अन्तर्गत कृषि फॉर्मों की स्थापना, नई कृषि बस्तियों का विकास तथा जनसंख्या का कृषि कार्य हेतु हस्तांतरण उल्लेखनीय हैं। दासों, श्रमिकों एवं बंदियों को सीताध्यक्ष (कृषि-अधीक्षक) द्वारा राजकीय भूमि पर कृषि कार्य हेतु नियोजित किया जाता था। परती भूमि को खेती के अन्तर्गत लाने के लिए किसानों को पशु, बीज, मुद्रा की आपूर्ति की गयी और करों में रियायत दी गयी। दासों को राजकीय कृषि फॉर्मों में कृषि कार्य में नियोजित करना मौर्यकाल में एक महत्त्वपूर्ण प्रवृत्ति के रूप में परिलक्षित हुआ। राज्य द्वारा उपलब्ध करवायी गयी सिंचाई सुविधाओं से भी कृषि के विकास में मदद मिली। किसानों द्वारा भूमि का हस्तांतरण ऐसे किसान को नहीं किया जा सकता था जो कर नहीं देता हो। यदि

किसान स्वयं को आवंटित भूमि पर खेती करने में असफल रहता था तो उसे दूसरे व्यक्ति को हस्तांतरित कर दिया जाता था।

मौर्योत्तर काल में राज्य कृषि फॉर्मों की अनुपस्थिति से कृषि क्षेत्र पर राज्य के नियंत्रण का पतन हो गया जिससे कृषि के विकास में कृषकों की व्यक्तिगत भूमिका का महत्त्व बढ़ गया। जमीन मुख्य रूप से कृषकों के निजी अधिकार में थी। भूमि अनुदान की प्रथा का चलन आरम्भ हो गया था। सामान्यतः भूमि अनुदान धार्मिक दायित्व को पूरा करने के उद्देश्य से दिए जाते थे। लेकिन कुछ अनुदान परती भूमि को खेती के अन्तर्गत लाने के उद्देश्य से भी दिए जाते थे। मौर्योत्तर काल में कृषि के संरक्षण हेतु राज्य ने सम्भवतः कुछ कानून बनाए। मनु कृषि उपकरणों को चुराने वालों के लिए दण्ड की बात करते हैं। मनु दूषित बीज का विक्रय करने वालों, बोए हुए बीजों को निकाल लेने वालों और सीमा चिह्नों को क्षति पहुँचाने वालों के लिए अंग-भंग की बात करते हैं।[12] कृषि कार्य को मनु ने ब्राह्मण और क्षत्रिय वर्ण के लिए वर्जित किया है। उनके अनुसार हल से जीव हिंसा होती है और यह पराधीन कर्म है।[13]

गुप्तकाल

गुप्तकालीन भू-व्यवस्था में सामंतीकरण की प्रक्रिया आरम्भ हुई। मंदिरों और ब्राह्मणों को कृषि योग्य भूमि अनुदान में मिलने लगी। भूमि अनुदान की प्रथा का परिणाम भूमि के विखण्डन के रूप में सामने आया। भूमि अनुदान व्यवस्था से कृषि क्षेत्रों में नये तत्त्वों का उद्‌भव हुआ। भू-अनुदानों के फलस्वरूप एक ऐसा जमींदार वर्ग अस्तित्व में आया जो भू-सम्पत्ति में मालिकाना हक रखता था। ऐसा वर्ग पूर्ववर्ती चरणों में नहीं दिखाई देता। भूमि अनुदानों के कारण कृषक संरचना और कृषक सम्बन्धों में परिवर्तन आया। कृषकों की स्वतंत्र स्थिति प्रतिकूल रूप से प्रभावित हुई। परिणामस्वरूप उनकी नयी स्थिति किरायेदार जैसी हो गयी। कुछ क्षेत्रों में कृषकों को अनुदान प्राप्तकर्ताओं के पास हस्तांतरित किया जाने लगा। विष्टी (बेगार) को विभिन्न क्षेत्रों से जोड़ दिया गया तथा इसका प्रयोग सभी प्रकार के कार्यों में होने लगा था। परिणामस्वरूप एक प्रकार का दास कृषक वर्ग हमें दिखाई देता है जो मध्यवर्ती भू-स्वामियों के तरह-तरह के करों के नीचे दबा हुआ था। बौद्ध और मौर्यकाल से तुलना करें तो इस समय कृषकों की स्थिति में गिरावट के संकेत मिलते हैं।

चौथी से छठी शताब्दी तक के महाराष्ट्र और गुजरात क्षेत्र के भूमि अनुदानों से स्पष्ट होता है कि अनुदान प्राप्तकर्ता को भूमि के उपयोग का पूरा अधिकार था। वह स्वयं कृषि करने के साथ ही अन्य लोगों को भी कृषि कार्य में लगा सकता था।[14]

गुप्तकाल में बेगार के स्वरूप में काफी परिवर्तन आया। चौथी से सातवीं शताब्दी के मध्य इस प्रथा में बड़े पैमाने पर परिवर्तन हुए। वाकाटकों, राष्ट्रकूटों और चालुक्यों के अभिलेखों से स्पष्ट होता है कि यह प्रथा मध्य भारत के पश्चिमी क्षेत्र, महाराष्ट्र और कर्नाटक के कुछ क्षेत्रों में प्रचलित हो गयी। मध्य भारत में इसका व्यापक पैमाने पर प्रचलन हुआ और इसके लिये 'सर्वविष्टी' शब्द प्रचलित हो गया। अब और अधिक कामों के लिए बेगार ली जाने लगी। कौटिल्य ने बेगार के तहत करवाए जाने वाले कामों में विशुद्ध रूप से खेती-बाड़ी से सम्बन्धित किसी काम का उल्लेख नहीं किया है। कृषि के लिए बेगार का स्पष्ट उल्लेख वात्सायन के कामसूत्र में मिलता है।[15]

पूर्व मध्यकाल

पूर्व मध्यकाल में कृषि संगठन और अर्थव्यवस्था भूमि अनुदानों (ब्रह्मदेय, गैर-ब्रह्मदेय, देवदान) पर आधारित थी। इन भूमि अनुदानों के कारण कृषि क्षेत्र में भूमिपति और बिचौलिए सामंतों का वर्चस्व था। इन वर्गों ने बेगार (विष्टी) और कृषि-दास प्रथा को बढ़ावा दिया। भूमि पर बढ़ते अधिकारों के कारण कृषकों की स्थिति विपन्न हुई। लगभग 500 ईस्वी तक भूमि अनुदानों का स्वरूप धार्मिक रहा जो ब्रह्मदेय, अग्रहार के रूप में ब्राह्मणों को दिए जाते थे। लगभग 700 ईस्वी से सैन्य, प्रशासनिक, कला-साहित्य संरक्षण के लिए धर्मनिरपेक्ष रूप में भूमि अनुदानों की शुरुआत हुई। भूमि अनुदानों के अन्तर्गत सामूहिक तथा निजी भू-स्वामित्व अधिकारों के साथ वंशानुगत अधिकार भी दिए गए। कालांतर में मानवीय संसाधनों को पूर्णतः भूमि के साथ दान दिया जाने लगा। भूमि अनुदानों के फलस्वरूप कृषि संगठन, संरचना, संस्थागत आधारों एवं भूमि सम्बन्धों पर अनेक सकारात्मक और नकारात्मक प्रभाव पड़े। भूमि अनुदानों के कारण गैर कृषि क्षेत्र में उपनिवेशीकरण की प्रक्रिया आरम्भ हुई। धीरे-धीरे उपसामंतीकरण की प्रक्रिया में परीधीय क्षेत्रों में भूमि अनुदानों से कृषि कार्य सम्भव हुआ और कृषि का प्रसार हुआ। भूमि सम्बन्धों तथा भूमि स्वामित्व के दृष्टिकोण से

सर्वोच्चाधिकार प्राप्त शासक तथा वास्तविक कृषक के मध्य नया बिचौलिया वर्ग अस्तित्व में आया। इस प्रक्रिया ने कृषकों की दशा को प्रतिकूल रूप से प्रभावित किया एवं उन पर कर भार बढ़ गया। यद्यपि कृषि उत्पादन में वृद्धि हुई। राजनीतिक स्तर पर भूमि अनुदानों के दो प्रभाव परीलक्षित हुए प्रथम– परीधिय क्षेत्रों में राजनीतिक नियंत्रण स्थापित किया गया, द्वितीय–राजकीय संसाधनों का प्रसार हुआ। सामाजिक दृष्टिकोण से कृषि विस्तार से शूद्रों का कृषकों के रूप में रूपांतरण हुआ साथ ही कृषि में बढ़ती श्रम की आवश्यकता ने कृषि दासता को बढ़ावा दिया। भूमि अनुदान प्रक्रिया ने धार्मिक और बौद्धिक क्षेत्र को भी गुणात्मक रूप से प्रभावित किया। मंदिरों में अकूत धन सम्पदा एकत्र हो गयी, जिसने बाद में अरबी-तुर्की आक्रमणकारियों को आकर्षित किया। भूमि अनुदान प्रक्रिया ने नवीन ग्रामीण बस्तियों के प्रसार को भी बढ़ावा दिया।

निष्कर्ष

निष्कर्षतः वैदिक काल में विश् या वैश्य वर्ग कृषि से जुड़ा हुआ था। इस काल में कृषक समुदाय की सामाजिक स्थिति अच्छी थी। बौद्ध काल में कृषि कार्य में संलग्न ब्राह्मणों के भी साक्ष्य मिलते हैं। जो समकालीन समाज में कृषक वर्ग के महत्त्व को इंगित करते हैं। इस काल में गरीब कृषकों और भूमिहीन कृषि श्रमिकों की सामाजिक स्थिति ज्यादा अच्छी नहीं थी। महाकाव्यों में जो साक्ष्य मिलते हैं वे सामाजिक दृष्टि से कृषक वर्ग की महत्त्वपूर्ण स्थिति को पुष्ट करते हैं। मौर्यकाल में कृषि क्षेत्र में राज्य का सीधा हस्तक्षेप इस बात का प्रमाण है कि कृषि क्षेत्र बहुत महत्त्वपूर्ण था। कौटिल्य द्वारा विष्टी (बेगार) की स्वीकार्यता कृषक समुदाय की सामाजिक स्थिति में गिरावट का संकेत देता है। गुप्तकाल में कृषकों की स्थिति को प्रभावित करने वाले प्रमुख कारक थे–बढ़ती सामंतीकरण की प्रक्रिया, मन्दिरों और ब्राह्मणों को दिए जाने वाले भू-अनुदानों के फलस्वरूप उत्पादन की स्थानीय इकाईयों का उभरना, तेजी से बढ़ता भू-विखण्डन और विष्टी (बेगार)। भूमि अनुदानों के फलस्वरूप कृषक वर्ग के अधिकारों में कमी आई और कृषक वर्ग की स्थिति दासों जैसी हो गई। पूर्व मध्यकाल में कृषि विस्तार से शूद्रों का कृषकों के रूप में रूपांतरण हुआ। साथ ही कृषि में बढ़ती श्रम की आवश्यकता ने कृषि दासता को बढ़ावा दिया। इस काल में सामंतवादी मनोवृत्ति, असमान

भूमि वितरण और निम्न वर्गों के शोषण ने सामाजिक तनाव और संघर्ष को बढ़ाया। शोषण के विरुद्ध कृषकों ने विद्रोह भी किए।

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डॉ. आशीष फोगाट
सहायक आचार्य
राजकीय कन्या महाविद्यालय, होद (खण्डेला)
पिनकोड – 332709

बिलाड़ा संग्रह के आधार पर मेवाड़ के महाराणाओं की धार्मिक गतिविधियों का अध्ययन : आई माता धाम के संदर्भ में

• प्रो. (डॉ.) सुशीला शक्तावत

राजस्थान के इतिहास में मेवाड़ राज्य छठी शताब्दी से 20वीं शताब्दी के दीर्घ समय तक एक ही राजवंश के इतिहास के रूप में प्रसिद्ध रहा है। इतनी लम्बी अवधि तक एक ही राजवंश का इतिहास अपवाद स्वरूप ही मिलता है। मेवाड़ के महाराणा धार्मिक आस्था प्रिय थे। मेवाड़ के महाराणाओं को आई माता व उनके पंथ पर अगाध श्रद्धा थी, यह समय-समय पर बिलाड़ा धाम के दीवान को पुष्कल अनुदान प्रदान करने के आदेश से प्रकट होता है।

मेवाड़ के बिलाड़ा संग्रह में मेवाड़ महाराणाओं के द्वारा बिलाड़ा दीवान को लिखे गये पत्र काफी संख्या में प्राप्त होते है, जिनमें न केवल मेवाड़ के महाराणाओं की धार्मिक आस्था अपितु तत्कालीन सामयिक जानकारी मिलती है जिससे हम तत्कालीन मेवाड़ की राजनीति व सामाजिक संरचना को समझ सकते हैं इससे राजनीतिक व आर्थिक जानकारी प्राप्त होती है। यहाँ के शासक वर्ग के अलावा जनता पर भी आई पंथ का व्यापक प्रभाव था, ऐसा बिलाड़ा संग्रह से ज्ञात होता है।

बिलाड़ा के दीवान माधवसिंह के यहाँ ऐतिहासिक बहियों और अभिलेखों का महत्त्वपूर्ण संग्रह है बिलाड़ा दीवान के संग्रह 16वीं सदी से 19वीं सदी तक के है 891 हिन्दी और 73 मराठी कुल 964 कागज पत्र हैं इनमें से कुछ प्राप्त नहीं होते हैं।

राजस्थान, मालवा, मेवाड़, गुजरात और महाराष्ट्र, कर्नाटक तक यह सारा आई माता का कार्यक्षेत्र रहा। मध्यकाल में जब रामानन्दाचार्य जी अपने

द्वादश शिष्यों और द्वादश तिलकों के साथ, देश, समाज और हिन्दुओं को बचाने का वैष्णव प्रयत्न करते रहे थे ऐसे परिवेश में आई माता ने पूरे देश में अपने व्रतों और संकल्पों वाला 11 सूत्रीय आईपंथ स्थापित किया। संवत् 1472 से 1561 में माता ने अपना उपदेश देकर जनजागृति का शंखवाद किया। वे जहाँ-जहाँ गई वहाँ-वहाँ ज्योतिपीठ और मंदिर स्थापित किये। इन मंदिरों की संख्या 1200 हैं।[2] मुख्य ज्योति धाम राजस्थान के जागीर नगर ठिकाना बिलाड़ा जिला जोधपुर है जहाँ आज भी दीवान माधोसिंह जी आईमाता की पूज्य धरोहर और संकल्प संस्कार को धारण करके अपना जीवन पूरी सात्विकता के साथ जी रहे हैं। बिलाड़ा धाम में आईमाता जी का मुख्य थानक मंदिर है, जहाँ माता की सेवा व्यवस्था गादीधारी दीवान स्वयं देखते है।

आईमाता के मंदिरों की विशेषता यह है कि पिछले 550 वर्षो से इन मंदिरों में अखंड दीप ज्योति जलती रहती है ज्योति से काजल नहीं अपितु स्वर्णिम केसर प्राप्त होती है।

आई माता के रूप मे स्वयं दुर्गा ने ही अवतार लिया वे ही आई माता के रूप में माता अम्बावती की गोद में पधारी यह निर्धाण स्वयं माता दुर्गा ने धर्म और नियम संयम की रक्षा करने के लिए निर्धारित किया। स्पष्ट रूप से कहे तो उनका प्राकट्य हुआ।[3]

ऐसे और भी उदाहरण प्रसंग उपलब्ध हैं जब माता दुर्गा ने अवतार रूप से जन्म लिया। राजस्थान में चारण सात देवियों का प्रसंग ऐसा ही है। इन्हें मावलिया कहा जाता है। इन सातों लोक देवियों को पौराणिक देवियों के रूप में पूजा जाता है।

यदि हम आई का शाब्दिक भाष्य करे आई अर्थात् जो प्रकट हुई। जो अवतार लेकर आई। इसलिए उन्हें 'आई' कहा गया। जीजी उनका आदर सूचक अलंकरण माना गया। आई का भी तो अर्थ माता ही होता है। यथा माता-माई-आई। महाराष्ट्र में माँ का आई संबोधन से ही पुकारा जाता है।

आई माता तो एक अवतार देवी थी। उन्होंने जो उपदेश समय-समय पर अपने श्रीमुख से प्रदान किये उन्हें गाथाकार मणिलाल बिलावत ने अपनी शब्द शैली एवं काव्य शैली में इस गाथा के रूप में प्रकट किया।[4] इस प्रकार

यह गाथा माता की वाणी के रूप में प्रसिद्ध है। इसमें निहित उपदेश इसी प्रकार वंदनीय एवं अनुकरणीय हैं, जिस प्रकार भगवान कृष्ण के गीता उपदेश।

आई दाती ने धर्म संस्थानापनार्थ आई पंथ की स्थापना की। माता का यही आदेश है कि नियम-संयम का पालन करें। यही धर्म का पालन माना जायेगा। जहाँ-जहाँ भी माता ने जोते स्थापित की हैं वहाँ-वहाँ वे अंश रूप में विराजित रहती हैं। उन्होंने सार रूप में कहा है।

क्षमा दया छोड़ो मती, करूणा रखजो हीव।
मनसे-वाचे-करमणे, मती सताजो जीव॥

यही गाथा तार नितार प्रसंग दोहा ऋ. 592

माता अपने द्वारा स्थापित गादी दीवान में सदा विद्यमान रहती है दीवानजी के द्वारा जोतित ज्योत ही मान्य होती है। उसी से केसर का धूम निकलता है। अन्यथा काजल निकलना शुद्ध हो जाता है।

जहाँ-जहाँ माता की जोत जागृत है, उस गांव में तथा सीमा क्षेत्र में कभी भी न अकाल पड़ता है, न महामारी आ पाती है। आई माता के डोरा बंद अनुयायी बिलाड़ा धाम की यात्रा कर स्वयं को धन्य मानते हैं। जो भी उनकी शरण में जाकर अपने अपराधों की क्षमा याचना करता है तथा भविष्य में अपने दोष त्याग कर नियम संयम का पालन करता है। माता उन्हें नवजीवन प्रदान करती है। सुख समृद्धि की मेहर करती हे। गादीधारी दीवान भी माता के प्रतिनिधि के रूप में ही पूज्य होते हैं।

आईमाता को जब हम दुर्गा का अवतार मानते हैं तब हम उनकी लीलाओं में नवदुर्गाओं का रूप भी देखते हैं। उन्होंने समाज में जहाँ धार्मिक एवं साम्प्रदायिक समरसता कायम करने का प्रयत्न किया, वहीं वर्ग भेद और वर्णभेद के साथ स्त्री-पुरुष समान सहयोग का भी मार्ग प्रशस्त किया। समाज में व्याप्त रूढ़ियों को समाप्त कर उन्होंने सहज एवं सात्विक समाज की स्थापना का मार्ग प्रशस्त किया।

आईमाता ने उपदेशों से समाज एवं धर्म में व्याप्त रूढ़ियों अंधविश्वासों, धार्मिक आडम्बरों, जात-पात, छुआ-छूत, दहेज प्रथा, कन्या वध, बाल विवाह, मांस मंदिरा सेवन, श्रम शोषण आदि के विरूद्ध अपनी आवाज

बुलंद कर समाज में पुनर्जागरण और पुनर्चेतना का शंखवाद कर समाज की पुनर्नवीनता का मार्ग प्रशस्त किया। उन्होंने जो पुनर्जागरण का शंखनाद किया था, उसकी ध्वनि आज भी समाज को जागरूक बनाए रख रही है। आज भी आई माता का रथ गांव-गांव घुमकर आई पंथ का प्रचार करता है तथा आज भी दीवान को डोराबन्द अपने धर्मगुरु और आई माता के रूप में पूजा करते हैं।

महाराणा रायमल और आईमाता–महाराणा कुंभा के पुत्र उदयसिंह ने अपने पिता को मारने का प्रयास किया था जो असफल रहा। दूसरा पुत्र रायमल इस घटना से अनभिज्ञ था लेकिन कुम्भा को इस पर विश्वास नहीं हुआ और उसे राज्य से बाहर जाने का आदेश दिया। रायमल अपने पिता की आज्ञानुसार मेवाड़ से चले गये, इधर-उधर भटकते हुए वह एक दिन सोजत शहर में आये, सोजत में रायमल ने बीलपुर में आई माता के चमत्कारों के बारे में सुना। तो तुरन्त वहाँ से आई माता के पास जाकर चरणों में शीश नवाया और दिन रात आई माता की सेवा करने लगे। रायमल ने आई माता को अपना दुख सुनाया। आई माता ने रायमल की सेवा भक्ति से खुश होकर एक दिन वरदान दिया कि ''रायमल जा तुझे मेवाड़ का राज दिया'' लेकिन पहले एक माह मेड़ता शहर में जाकर रहना होगा। इतना वरदान सुन रायमल मेड़ता के लिए रवाना हुआ और मेड़ता जाकर निवास किया।[5]

उन्हीं दिनों में मेवाड़ के राणा कुंभा का देहान्त हो गया। अब मेवाड़ की गद्दी पर बैठाने के लिए मंत्री ने रायमल को मेड़ता संदेश भेजा। संदेश मिलते ही रायमल मेड़ते से रवाना होकर पहले बीलपुर जाकर आई माता के चरणों में शीश नवाया। आई माता ने आशीर्वाद दिया कि जावों और मेवाड़ का राज करो। रायमल ने आई माता को निवेदन किया कि है मातेश्वरी आप मेरे साथ मेवाड़ में चलकर वास करो और मैं आपको 10 गांव भेंट करता हूँ। इस पर आई माता ने कहाँ मुझे गांव लेकर क्या करना है, तो भी रायमल ने अपने राज्य मेवाड़ के गांव डायलाण में 50 बीघा जमीन धूप-दीप के खर्च हेतू भेंट का संकल्प लिया साथ ही यह प्रतिज्ञा कि मेरे वंश में जो मेवाड़ की गद्दी पर बैठेगा वो 50 बीघा जमीन आपको भेंट चढ़ायेगा।[6]

इसके बाद रायमल मेवाड़ पहुँचे और मेवाड़ की गद्दी पर बैठते ही

पहले 50 बीघा जमीन ग्राम डायलाणा में आई माता को भेंट की। उस समय से जो भी राणा मेवाड़ की गद्दी पर बैठे सभी ने 50 बीघा जमीन भेंट की।

मेवाड़ के महाराणाओं ने रायमल के वचन को सदैव निभाया और आई माता और बिलाड़ा दीवान को मान्यता प्रदान की थी और समय-समय पर उनकी और से पुष्कल अनुदान प्रदान करने के आदेश प्रदान किये गये जो उनकी आई पंथ की आस्था को दर्शाते हैं। जब मेवाड़ की गद्दी पर सम्वत 1651 में महाराणा प्रताप गद्दी पर बैठे तो अपने पूर्वज रायमल की प्रतिज्ञा के अनुसार गांव डायलाणा में आई माता को 50 बीघा जमीन भेंट की थी।

इसी प्रकार अपने पूर्वजों की प्रतिज्ञा को महाराणा अमरसिंह ने भी संवत 1660 में चौधरी रोहितास को डायलाणा में अरहट कीलकण प्रदान कर पूरा किया जिसका परवाना प्राप्त होता है।[8]

वि.सं. 1716 में पंचोली फतेहचंद उदयपुर की ओर से लिखे परवाने में दीवान राजसिंह के नाम महाराणा राजसिंह जी की तरफ से ग्राम डायलाणा में 50 बीघा जमीन भेंट की गयी। इसका आदेश शाह डूंगर को दिया गया।[9] वि.सं. 1716 में महाराणा राजसिंह की ओर से दीवान राजसिंह को खीमेल गांव बसाने और खेती कराने का तथा सिरोपाव आदि दिये गये।[10] वि.सं. 1731 में महाराणा राजसिंह की ओर से दीवान राजसिंह को न्यौता के साथ-साथ एक घोड़ा भी भेजा गया।[11]

महाराणा जयसिंह भी शान्तिप्रिय, दानी, धर्मनिष्ठ व उदार था। उनके पत्रों से ज्ञात होता है कि वह बिलाड़ा दीवान के गांव बसाने, किसानों से संबंधित समस्याएँ व सुधार आदि विषयों पर निरन्तर पत्र व्यवहार करते रहते थे, जिनमें तत्कालीन राजनीतिक, प्रशासनिक व सामाजिक नीतिगत बाते मिलती है।

महाराणा जयसिंह के समय पंचोली दामोदर की ओर से लिखित परवाने में दीवान राजसिंह को गांव डायलाणा में संवत् 1739 में 50 बीघा जमीन महाराणा जयसिंह की तरफ से दी गयी इसका शाह रिखवदास पंचोली मधुसुदन को आदेश दिया गया है।[12]

राजसिंह की मृत्यु के बाद उनके पुत्र भगवानदास दीवान बने, वे कुछ समय उदयपुर महाराणा जयसिंह के पास रहे थे उनसे उनके मधुर संबंध थे। संवत् 1743 में महाराणा जयसिंह द्वारा दीवान को हिरण की जोड़ी भेजी गयी उसकी जानकारी मिलती है।[13] जब कुंवर अमरसिंह ने गद्दी पर बैठने के लिये उपद्रव खड़ा कर दिया तब महाराणा जयसिंह गांव घाणेराव आ गये। घाणेराव आकर राणा ने भगवानदास जी को पत्र लिखकर अपने पास बुलाया, जब दीवान भगवानदास जी घाणेराव पहुँचे तो उन्होंने महाराणा जयसिंह को हिम्मत बंधाई और कहाँ कि आप चिंता न करे मैं अब सब संभाल लूंगा।[14] दीवान भगवानदास जी ने अपने वीर सैनिकों को इकट्ठा किया तथा राठौड़ दुर्गादास जी को घाणेराव बुलवाया।

जब मेवाड़ के कुंवर अमर सिंह को यह ज्ञात हुआ कि मारवाड़ की फौज आ रही है, तो थोड़ा भयभीत हुआ और दीवान भगवानदास जी को बुलाकर आपस में सुलह कर ज्यों-त्यों गद्दी छोड़ने का फैसला किया। पुनः महाराणा जयसिंह सिंहासनासीन हुए। महाराणा जयसिंह जी ने दीवान भगवानदास जी का उपकार मानकर कहा कि मेवाड़ का राज मुझे पुनः आप ही ने दिया है। इस खुशी में महाराणा ने भगवानदास जी को घोड़ा सिरपाव तथा राय की पदवी दी।[15] यह पदवी पाकर दीवान भगवानदास जी अपने पट्टे के गांव माडपुरा रवाना हुये। मांडपुरा की आय कम थी और डायलाणा से थोड़ी दूर भी पड़ता था। इसलिए विदा होते समय राणा से गांव माडपुरा की जगह दूसरा गांव देने की मांग रखी। तत्काल राणा ने माडपुरा के बदले बाराहो गांव दे दिया। गांव बाराहों आजकल माताजी की बारहों के नाम से जाना जाता है। महाराणा ने इस गांव का ताम्रपत्र दिया था।

यह ताम्रपत्र संवत् 1750 का है।[16] इसके क्रियान्वयन हेतू अमल की चिट्ठी भी प्राप्त होती है, जिसमें महाराणा जयसिंह जी द्वारा जोशी ताराचंद को आदेश दिया गया है 1750 मिगसर बदी 2 को कि भगवानदास को बाराहो गांव दिया गया है इसे अमल किया जाये, कोई ढील न हो।[17]

महाराणा अमरसिंह द्वितीय भी जब गद्दी पर विराजमान हुये तो सबसे पहले दीवान भगवानदास जी को संवत 1757 में 50 बीघा जमीन भेंट की थी।[18]

दीवान भगवानदास के दुर्गादास के साथ प्रगाढ़ मित्रता थी। दीवान भगवानदास ने दुर्गादास जी की पुत्री का संबंध उदयपुर के महाराज कुमार तेजकरण के साथ कर दिया। बारात आने के पहले उदयपुर महाराणा अमरसिंह द्वितीय ने भगवानदास को बारात की अच्छी खातिरदारी करने के लिये पत्र लिखा था।[19] विवाह बिलाड़ा बड़ेर से ही दुर्गादास जी की पुत्री का विवाह बड़ी धूमधाम से किया था। कन्यादान दीवान भगवानदास जी ने किया था। इस विवाह के खर्चे का विवरण ठिकाना बडेर की बहियों में मौजूद है।[20]

विवाह भली प्रकार निपट जाने के बाद महाराणा अमरसिंह जी ने भगवानदास जी को पत्र लिखा कि आपने दुर्गादास जी की गैर मौजूदगी में जो खातिरी की उससे मुझे बहुत खुशी हुई।[21]

विवाह के बाद उदयपुर से बाईजी को पुनः बिलाड़ा ही लाया गया था और फिर मुकलावे की रस्म के साथ वापिस बाईजी को उनके ससुराल विदा किया। इस पर महाराणा अमरसिंह जी बहुत खुश हुये और दीवान भगवानदास जी को संवत 1765 में एक हवेली हेतु जमीन बख्शीस की थी।[22]

इसी प्रकार जब महाराणा संग्राम सिंह द्वितीय गद्दी पर विराजमान हुये तो सर्वप्रथम अपने पूर्वज रायमल जी की प्रतिज्ञा को पूरा किया संवत 1768 के परवाने में 50 बीघा जमीन डायलाणा में दी गई थी। दीवान भगवानदास जी को उदयपुर महाराणा ने बहुत सम्मान दिया था।[23]

महाराणा संग्राम सिंह जी भी अपने पिता की भांति वीर, प्रबन्ध कुशल, धर्मनिष्ठ, मातृभक्त, बुद्धिमान और योग्य शासक था। उन पर भी इस सम्प्रदाय का व्यापक प्रभाव था। दीवान भगवानदास को संवत 1770 में जेठ वद 12 शुक्रवार को एक पत्र लिखकर कहा गया कि वह मारवाड़ छोड़ मेवाड़ में आकर बस जायें। इस पत्र के द्वारा महाराणा संग्राम सिंह की एकलिंग जी के साथ-साथ आईमाता के प्रति श्रद्धा एवं आस्था संबंधी उदार भावना की जानकारी मिलती है और जब भगवानदास का स्वर्गवास हुआ तब उत्तराधिकारी के रूप में कल्याणदास को पत्र लिखकर संवेदना व्यक्त की थी, जिसमें लिखा था कि चिंता मत करो दरबार के हो।[24]

उदयपुर के महाराणा संग्राम सिंह ने दीवान कल्याणदास को उदयपुर

आने के लिये पत्र लिखा था। पत्र पाकर वे उदयपुर के लिये रवाना हो गये। 5 रुपये नजर किये साथ ही एक बद्देरा अवलख भेंट किया। उदयपुर में खास उमरावों में बैठक थी। उस समय कुंवर पदमसिंह जी भी साथ थे।[25]

दीवान कल्याणदास जी की पुत्री कुशलकंवर के विवाह में न्योते के 500 रूपया महाराणा संग्राम सिंह जी ने उनके प्रतिष्ठित मित्रों के साथ भेजे श्री महकरण जी ने 1 घोड़ा भेजा।[26]

महाराणा संग्राम सिंह दीवान कल्याणदास जी पर बहुत प्रसन्न थे। महाराणा ने पाँच गांव काटकर कल्याणपुर गांव बसाने की आज्ञा देकर बख्सीस किये थे। उसका परवाना इस प्रकार है।[27]

महाराजाधिराज महाराणा श्री संग्रामसिंह जी आदेसातु चौधरी कल्याणदास भगवानदास कस्य। ग्राम मया किधी विगत। गांव आडावडया री खेड़ो उजड़ है। से इ चार गामा री कांकण माहे वसावोगा-प्रगने गोढ़वाड़।

नवो हुकम विगत गामा रा कांकड़ जण विवे। 1 गांव रवीमेल 1 गांव देवतरा 1 गांव साडेर 1 गांव ब्राह्मी 1 गांव अकवाड़ो।

इण खेड़ा रो नाम कल्याणपुरो हुकम परवानगी पंचोली बिहारीदास एवं संवत 1771 वर्ष आसाढ़ सुद 11 शुभ्रे।

यह गांव कल्याणपुरा कल्याणदासजी को कुंवर पदवी में ही मिला था। जिससे इस गांव को बसा नहीं सके थे। जब कल्याणदासजी दीवान की गद्दी पर विराजे तब दूसरा परवाना दिया था।

दीवान कल्याणदास जी तीरअन्दाजी में भी बहुत अच्छे थे तथा आपके कंवर पदमसिंह जी भी अच्छे बाणवली थे। उदयपुर के महाराणा तीरअंदाजी सीखने के लिये कंवर पदमसिंह जी को अपने पास रखकर उनसे तीर चलाना सीखते थे। अतः कंवर पदमसिंह जी तीरन्दाजी में महाराणा के गुरु माने जाते थे।[28]

विजयादशमी को हर वर्ष तीरन्दाजी की हाजरी देने कुंवर पदमसिंह जी अपने पिता कल्याणदास जी के साथ उदयपुर जाया करते थे। यदि किसी कारणवश विजयादशमी के पर्व पर नहीं पहुँच पाते तो महाराणा तत्काल पत्र

लिखते थे। ऐसा ही संवत 1776 का पत्र प्राप्त होता है।[29] इससे ज्ञात होता है कि महाराणा संग्राम सिंह ने दीवान कलयाणदास को पुत्र सहित हिरण लेकर उदयपुर आने के लिए लिखा था। पत्रों के आधार पर यह भी ज्ञात होता है कि महाराणा संग्रामसिंह का पशु-पक्षियों से अधिक लगाव था क्योंकि वे अपने पत्रों में इसकी मांग करते है। संवत 1786 में 4 हिरण प्राप्त होने पर उसकी सूचना कल्याणदास को दी गई थी।[30]

विशेषतः त्यौहारो के अवसर पर बिलाड़ा दीवान का मेवाड़ महाराणा के यहाँ आना जाना रहता था। यह महाराणा संग्राम सिंह के पत्रों के माध्यम से जानकारी मिलती है। मेवाड़ महाराणा और जोधपुर महाराजा के रियासती कामकाज दीवान कल्याणदास जी की सलाह से हुआ करते थे। दोनों रियासतों को आप पर विश्वास था संवत 1785 का धाय भाई नगराज के पत्र से यह ज्ञात होता है।[31] पत्रों से यह भली भांति ज्ञात होता है कि दीवान कल्याणदास के प्रति महाराणा की भावना अधिक थी, इस भावना की अतिशय झलक पत्रों में दिखाई देती है।

उदयपुर के महाराणा जगतसिंह जी मेवाड़ की गद्दी पर विराजे तो सर्वप्रथम अपने पूर्वजों की प्रतिज्ञानुसार आई माता को 50 बीघा जमीन भेंट की थी, जिसका परवाना पंचोली बिहारीदास उदयपुर की ओर से दीवान कल्याणदास को महाराणा की ओर से भेजा गया था।[32]

कल्याणदास का जब गोलोकवास हुआ तो दीवान पदमसिंह को महाराणा जगतसिंह ने उन्हें उदयपुर बुलाया। महाराणा तो दीवान पदमसिंह जी पर कुंवर पदे से ही खुश थे। उन दिनों मेवाड़ के रजवाड़ों पर 'टंका' की लाग लगाती थी। इस टंके की लाग को दीवान पदमसिंह जी ने उदयपुर महाराणा से माफ करवाई थी। वि.सं. 1793 में महाराणा जगतसिंह की ओर से चौधरी पदमसिंह के नाम राज्य के 6001 रूपया छूट करने से संबंधित पत्र है।[33]

मेवाड़ में उन दिनों ऐसा कुरब था कि उदयपुर महाराणा की विनते में घोड़ा नजर करना पड़ता था। दीवान पदमसिंह ने भी विनते का घोड़ा नजर किया था। इस पर महाराणा ने दीवान को घोड़े का पहुँच का पत्र दिया संवत 1796 का है।[34]

मेवाड़ के महाराणाओं में जगतसिंह के भी काफी पत्र मिलते है जिनसे जानकारी मिलती है कि महाराणा के समय शासन प्रबन्ध शिथिल हो जाने के कारण सरदार लोग अपने ठिकानों में मनमानी करने लगे। चोर, डकेतों और पासीगरों को अपने पास रखकर उसने लूट आदि के माल में से वे चोथा हिस्सा लेने लगे। इससे वे खालसे तथा बाहरी इलाकों के निवासियों को लूटने लगे। इसलिए महाराणा ने वि.सं. 1799 में डायलाणा के जागीरदारों तथा पटेलों के नाम दीवान पदमसिंह के बड़ेर की मान मर्यादा का ध्यान रखने का और चौरो को ठिकाने में रखे तो अपराधी समझे जाने की हिदायत दी गयी है।[35]

वि.सं. 1802 में महाराणा जगतसिंह की ओर से पंचोली छाजूराम का पत्र मिलता है[36] उदयपुर महाराणा जगतसिंह से गोडवाड़ के सीरवी नाराज होकर करीब दो हजार सीरवी जालोर चले गये। जिससे मेवाड़ के महाराणा को चिन्ता होने लगी। उन्होंने दीवान पदमसिंह जी को पत्र लिखा कि आप किसी तरह सीरवियों को मनाकर जालोर से वापस लाकर पुनः गोडवाड़ में बसाइये। सीरवी केवल आप ही की बात मानते है। महाराणा का पत्र मिलते ही दीवान पदम सिंह जी तुरन्त जालोर गये और सीरवियों को समझाकर पुनः गोडवाड़ में लाकर बसाया। इससे संबंधित पत्र उपलबध है।[37]

महाराणा अरिसिंह जब मेवाड़ की गद्दी पर विराजमान हुए तब महाराणा ने अपने पूर्वजों की प्रतिज्ञानुसार आई माता को 50 बीघा जमीन भेंट संवत 1817 में चढ़ाई।[38] संवत 1821 में महाराणा ने अपने जन्मदिन के उपलक्ष में दीवान साहब को उदयपुर बुलाया इस अवसर पर अपने कुंवर हरिदास जी को साथ लेकर पालखी में विराज कर उदयपुर पधारे। उस समय दीवान पदमसिंह को उदयपुर महाराणा की ओर से माता के प्रति सप्ताह 188 रू. मिलते थे।[39] इतनी बड़ी राशि बड़े-बड़े रईसो को भी नहीं मिलती थी।

महाराणा अरिसिंह के पत्रों से ज्ञात होता है कि वह प्रजा का हित साधन करने वाला तथा अनुराग रखने वाला था। वि.सं. 1818 में दीवान पदमसिंह की महाराणा अरिसिंह द्वारा गोडवाड़ के समस्त किसानों को पुनः गोडवाड़ में बसाने हेतु पत्र लिखा था।[40]

वि.सं. 1820 में मालवा से लाये 2000 सीरवियों को गोड़वाड़ में दीवान पदमसिंह ने पुनः बसाया था, इस पर महाराणा अरिसिंह की ओर से

धन्यवाद दिया गया था।[41] वि.सं. 1823 में गोडवाड़ में किसानों को विश्वास दिलाकर कृषि कराने के लिए महाराणा अरिसिंह उदयपुर की ओर से दीवान पदमसिंह को पत्र लिखा गया था।[42]

वि.सं. 1824 में महाराणा अरिसिंह की ओर से दीवान हरीदास को गोडवाड़ छोड़कर सीरवी लोग मारवाड़ जाने वाले थे रोकने हेतू निवेदन किया गया था।[43]

वि.सं. 1823 में गोडवाड़ से सीरवी लोग मालवा चले गये थे, उनको दीवान पदमसिंह पुनः मेवाड़ में लाये।[44] महाराणा अरिसिंह द्वारा बिलाड़ा दीवान को लिखे गये पत्रों से जानकारी मिलती है कि किसानों की स्थिति अच्छी नहीं थी, उस समय मराठों को मेवाड़ व राजस्थान में ही नहीं अपितु मालवे में भी नर्मदा नदी के दक्षिण में खदेड़ने के प्रयास मिलकर प्रारम्भ किये तो दूसरी और अपने उद्देश्यों की प्राप्ति के लिए स्वार्थो की पूर्ति हेतू मराठो के सहयोग की कामना भी की। इसी स्वार्थ व अपनी कामना सिद्धि के लिए वि.सं. 1820 में महाराणा अरिसिंह की ओर से दीवान पदमसिंह को मल्हारराव होल्कर के पास जाने का आदेश था। दीवान पदमसिंह के मल्हारराव होल्कर के साथ अच्छे संबंध थे। मल्हारराव होल्कर के पास जाने की भी जानकारी मिलती है। पहले भी कुंवर हरिदास के साथ कई बार पदमसिंह जी इन्दौर गये थे।[45]

मल्हारराव ने हरिदास जी की अपनी फौज में रख लिया था। तीन चार साल तक हरिदास जी इन्दोर की फोज में रहे। तीन चार साल बाद वापस बिलाड़ा पधारे।

यहां के शासक वर्ग के अलावा जनता पर भी इस सम्प्रदाय का व्यापक प्रभाव पड़ा, जिसका प्रमाण आई माता व दीवान को दिये गये अनुदान एवं भेट से मिलता है। संवत 1811 में ठाकुर सुल्तानसिंह उदावत द्वारा माताजी के नाम भूमि भेंट करना[46], संवत 1801 में बेदला रामचन्द्र का दीवान पदमसिंह के नाम हिरण की जोड़ी भेजना आदि।[47]

मेवाड़ से संबंधित पत्रों को देखकर एक और जानकारी मिलती है कि राज्य की उच्च स्तरीय सेवाओं में कायस्थों का योगदान महत्त्वपूर्ण रहा था। पंचोली एवं सहीवाला परिवार के लोग उच्च पदासीन थे। सही वाला परिवार के महाराणा द्वारा स्वीकृत पट्टो व परवानों पर 'सही' का विशिष्ट चिन्ह अंकित करते थे, जिससे इस कार्य को करने वाले सही वाला के नाम से प्रसिद्ध हो गये।[48]

महाराणा रायमल जिन्हें आई माता के आशीर्वाद से मेवाड़ का राजपाट प्राप्त हुआ तभी से उनका यह संकल्प कि मेवाड़ में मेरे वंश का जो भी शासक बनेगा वह सर्वप्रथम आईमाता के नाम पर 50 बीघा जमीन देगा। यह आस्था व विश्वास की नींव इतनी गहरी थी कि सभी महाराणाओं ने इसका पालन किया। आईपंथ के अनुयायीयों में सीरवी सर्वाधिक है, मेवाड़ के महाराणाओं के सामने जब भी किसानों के पलायन की समस्या आयी उन्होंने बिलाड़ा दीवान व आईमाता के आशीर्वाद से उनके हस्तक्षेप से समस्या का समाधान किया। अपनी व्यक्तिगत समस्याओं के निवारण में भी बिलाड़ा दीवान का अपेक्षित सहयोग प्राप्त किया। बिलाड़ा दीवान को मेवाड़ में ही रही घटनाओं से महाराणाओं द्वारा अवगत कराया जाता था, वे उन्हें इस बात की हिदायत भी देते थे कि बिलाड़ा बड़ेर की मान-मर्यादा परम्परा अनुसार बनी रहे, उनके भावनात्मक संबंध को दर्शाते है। मेवाड़ के बिलाड़ा संग्रह में मेवाड़ महाराणाओं के द्वारा बिलाड़ा दीवान को लिखे गये पत्र काफी संख्या में प्राप्त होते है, जिनसे न केवल मेवाड़ के महाराणाओं की धार्मिक आस्था अपितु तत्कालीन सामाजिक एवं सांस्कृतिक परिस्थितियों की जानकारी प्राप्त होती है जिससे हम तत्कालीन मेवाड़ की राजनीति व समाज की संरचना को समझ सकते हैं।

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प्रो. (डॉ.) सुशीला शक्तावत
विभागाध्यक्ष
इतिहास विभाग
जयनारायण व्यास विश्वविद्यालय, जोधपुर (राज.)
मो. नं. 8279255153
sushilashaktawatabc@gmail.com

❑❑❑

हरदौल का लोकदेवत्व

● डॉ. सफ़िया ख़ान

बुन्देलखण्ड के महाराजा बीरसिंह जूदेव का नाम इतिहास में एक भवन-निर्माता के रूप में प्रसिद्ध है। उन्होंने अपने शासनकाल में (1605-27 ई.) बुन्देलखण्ड को मुग़ल राजनीति के केन्द्र में लाकर खड़ा कर दिया था। मुग़ल बादशाह जहाँगीर ने न केवल उनको पांच हजारी मन्सब एवं महाराजा की पदवी से सम्मानित किया बल्कि उनको अपने राज्य विस्तार की मौन स्वीकृति भी दे दी। महाराजा ने मुग़ल बादशाह की कृपाओं का लाभ उठा कर ओरछा के समीप स्थित क्षेत्रों को अपने राज्य का न केवल हिस्सा बना लिया बल्कि लूट से प्राप्त सम्पत्ति से अपनी राजधानी ओरछा को मुग़ल राजधानी आगरा की लघु आकृति का स्वरूप प्रदान करने का प्रयास किया। कई भवनों के अतिरिक्त जलबान्धों का निर्माण करके कृषि को उन्नत करने के प्रयास किए। अपने राज्य के बाहर कृष्ण जन्मभूमि मथुरा में विशाल केशोराय मन्दिर का निर्माण करके आमेर एवं जोधपुर राजपूत रियासतों के शासकों के समकक्ष स्वयं को खड़ा कर लिया। लेकिन उसकी कीर्ति आज अकादमिक जगत तक सीमित है। मुग़ल भारत में निश्चित ही बुन्देलखण्ड को पहिचान दिलाने में उनका नाम सदैव अग्रणी रहेगा। लेकिन वे लोकनायक का पद प्राप्त नहीं कर पाए थे जो उनके पुत्र हरदौल ने प्राप्त कर लिया था और आज भी लोक की आस्था के केन्द्र में विराजित हैं।

महाराजा बीरसिंह जूदेव ने तीन विवाह किए थे जिनसे उनके बारह पुत्र थे। उनकी द्वितीय रानी गुमान कुंवर थी जिनसे चार पुत्र एवं एक पुत्री उत्पन्न हुए। इनमें एक हरदौल थे जो महाराजा के द्वितीय पुत्र थे। इनके अलावा तीन भाई भगवंतराय, चन्द्रभान एवं विसुनसिंह थे। इन चार भाईयों के एक बहिन कुंज कुंवरी थी।[1] 1627 ई. में बीरसिंह जूदेव के स्वर्गवास के पश्चात उनके बड़े पुत्र जुझार सिंह ने ओरछा की कमान सम्भाली, उस समय मुग़ल राजगद्दी

पर शाहजहां थे। लेकिन मुग़ल बादशाह इनसे आशंकित रहते थे। जिसका कारण 1625 ई. खुर्रम के विद्रोह के समय उन्होंने जहाँगीर का साथ दिया था इसलिए बादशाह बनने पर उसके मन में ओरछा शासक के प्रति सदैव आशंका रहती थी। शाहजहाँ के बादशाह बनने पर वे आगरा दरबार में हाजिर हुवे लेकिन बादशाह की बिना इजाजत वे ओरछा लौट आए। बादशाह ने उनको गिरफ्तार करने हेतु सेना भेजी लेकिन माफी मांग कर वे वापिस मुग़ल सेवा में लौट आए। जुझार सिंह की अनुपस्थिति में ओरछा का राजकार्य हरदौल के अधिकार में रहता था। उसके कार्यों से जनसामान्य अत्यंत खुश थे एवं वे अत्यंत लोकप्रिय थे लेकिन राजदरबारी उनसे ईर्ष्या रखते थे। कहा जाता है कि दरबारी राजा के कान होते हैं जिसके परिणाम सामान्यतः अप्रिय एवं दुखदायी होते हैं। इन दरबारियों ने हरदौल एवं राजा की पत्नी के मध्य अनैतिक सम्बन्धों की झूठी बात राजा तक पहुँचाई जिसका परिणाम ओरछा रियासत एवं उसकी प्रजा के लिए प्रलयकारी रहा। जुझार सिंह की शुंकालु प्रवृति का परिणाम हरदौल की मृत्यु के रूप में हमारे सम्मुख आया।

हरदौल की यह मृत्यु साधारण घटना नहीं थी बल्कि उनके स्वयं द्वारा आत्मोसर्ग था। इस बात का नर्मदा प्रसाद गुप्त ने अच्छे ढंग से समझाने का प्रयास किया है। इसके लिए उन्होंने सर्वप्रथम हरदौल की जन्मतिथि एवं महाप्रयाण की तिथि पर विचार किया है। उन्होंने केशव द्वारा निर्धारित जन्मतिथि वि.सं. 1664 अर्थात 1607 ई. माना है एवं मृत्यु वि.सं. 1685 / 1628 ई. एवं वि.सं. 1688 /1631 ई. के मध्य माना है। इन तिथियों पर चर्चा की पृष्ठभूमि में उनका मन्तव्य यह जतलाना रहा था कि वे मृत्यु के समय अबोध बालक नहीं थे। विषयुक्त खाने के परिणाम से वे पूर्णतः वाकिफ थे एवं बुद्धिमान थे। अपनी इस धारणा की पुष्टि के लिए गुप्त महाकवि केशव रचित 'वीरसिंहदेव चरित' के पंक्तियां उद्धृत करते हैं :

तिनतें लहुरे उर आनियै। राजा बीरसिंह जानियै।
सुत तिनके एकादस सुनौ। एकादस सुद्रहि जनु गिनौ।
जेठ जुझाररई रनधीर। पुनि हरदौल बुद्धि गंभीर।

नर्मदा प्रसाद गुप्त ने जन्म एवं मृत्यु तिथि के आधार पर यह बताने का प्रयास किया है कि विषयुक्त भोजन सेवन के समय हरदौल की उम्र लगभग

29 एवं 32 वर्ष के मध्य थी। वे लिखते हैं कि इस आयु में एक आदमी का बलिदान कोरी भावुकता का परिणाम नहीं माना जाना चाहिए, वह तो एक प्रौढ़ मस्तिष्क की उपज था।' प्रकारान्तर से गुप्त यह कहना चाहते हैं कि हरदोल भौजी (भाभी) के अविरल बहते आंसुओं से ही सारी स्थिति भांप गए थे। फिर भी उन्होंने माता स्वरूपा भाभी से आंसुओं का कारण जानना चाहा तब भाभी द्वारा सच्ची बात बताने के पश्चात देवर ने प्रसन्नता से विषयुक्त भोजन किया एवं अपने प्राणोत्सर्ग करके एक आदर्श प्रस्तुत किया। गुप्त हरदौल को केशव के शब्दों में 'बुद्धि गंभीर' अर्थात् विचारवान मानते हें अर्थात् वे भारतीय परम्पराओं एवं सांस्कृतिक संस्कारों से पूर्णतः परिचित थे। इस आधार पर मैं निश्चित तौर पर कह सकती हूँ कि वे सीता और लक्ष्मण के आदर्श सम्बन्धों से पूर्णतः परिचित थे। रावण द्वारा सीता हरण के समय मार्ग में उसने जो अपने जेवरात फैंके थे उनको लक्ष्मण नहीं पहिचानते थे क्योंकि उन्होंने अपनी माता-स्वरूपा भाभी के चरणों के अतिरिक्त कुछ देखा भी नहीं था। नैतिक संस्कारों का यह पाठ भारतीय सांस्कृतिक इतिहास का एक अनूठा उदाहरण है।

राजवंश में परिवार के सभी सदस्यों की शिक्षा में संस्कारों के निर्माण एवं नैतिक मूल्यों पर अत्यधिक बल दिया जाता था। इसके लिए बाल्मिकी रचित रामायण एवं तुलसीकृत रामचरित मानस इस पाठ्यक्रम के अहम हिस्सा होते थे। पतिव्रत एवं पत्नीव्रत, धर्म, स्त्रियों के प्रति सम्मान, भाई-बन्धुओं के मध्य पारस्परिक प्रेम-भाव एवं माता-पिता की आज्ञा पालन एवं भौजी-देवर के मध्य मातृ-पुत्र तुल्य स्नेह ही इन ग्रन्थों की शिक्षा के केन्द्र में होते थे। इन महाकाव्यों में वर्णित चरित्रों ने मानव के जीवन में नैतिक मूल्यों एवं प्रेम एवं सौहार्द की भावनाओं की प्रतिस्थापना की।

नर्मदाप्रसाद गुप्त हरदौल के इस बलिदान को व्याख्यायित करते हुए लिखते हैं कि 'वास्तव में यह बलिदान एकतरफा त्याग नहीं है, वरन् उसमें दोनों ओर के कई आदर्शों का संगम है। रानी का पातिव्रत्य और देवर के प्रति वत्सल भाव तथा हरदौल का भौजी से प्रेम, उसके धर्म की रक्षा का संकल्प और प्रेम की पवित्रता में खरे उतरने का उत्साह। तात्पर्य यह है कि हरदौल का प्राण त्याग वैयक्तिक प्रेम का प्रतीक मात्र नहीं है, वरन् उसमें भारतीय संस्कृति के आदर्श का पूरा उत्कर्ष है।[2]

हरदौल के आत्मोसर्ग के पश्चात की एक अन्य घटना उनको देवत्व की श्रेणी में प्रतिस्थापित करती है। जैसा कि पूर्व में वर्णन किया गया है कि उनके कुंजा नामक एक बहिन थी जो अपनी पुत्री के विवाह का निमंत्रण देने एवं भात के लिए ओरछा आई थी। उसने यह निमंत्रण जुझार सिंह को न देकर वह विवाह-पत्री उस स्थान पर छोड़ आई जहाँ उसके भाई का दाह संस्कार किया गया था। विवाह के भात भराई के समय सोने, चांदी एवं जेवरात से लदी गाड़ियों के साथ हरदौल की सवारी दतिया पहुँची। वहाँ उपस्थित सभी महिलाओं के आंचल मोहरों से भर गए। उस मांगलिक अवसर पर बहिन एवं भाई की भेंट एवं वर के आग्रह पर हरदौल का दर्शन देना उनको लोक देवता के रूप में जनजन के मन में प्रतिस्थापित कर देता है। इसके अतिरिक्त, बहिन कुंजा ने विदाई के समय इसी प्रकार की सहायता का वचन सभी विवाहों के लिए भाई से ले लिया। नर्मदाप्रसाद गुप्त का यह कहना सही है कि 'इस दृष्टि से हरदौल सामाजिक हित से बंध जाते हैं और उनके देवत्व का प्रमुख आधार यही लोकमंगल की भावना है।'

भौजी-देवर के मध्य सम्बन्धों की पवित्रता को स्थापित करने हेतु उनके प्राणोत्सर्ग ने उनको लोक मानस का सही अर्थों नायक बना दिया। इसके अतिरिक्त भाँजी के विवाह में भात भरना एवं बहिन को अन्य विवाहों में इस प्रकार के मंगलकारी सहयोग देने के वचन ने उन्हें लोक हित से जोड़ दिया। इसके पश्चात् प्रत्येक परिवार द्वारा प्रथम निमंत्रण हरदौल को भेंट करने की परम्परा पड़ गई।

उपरोक्त घटनाओं ने हरदौल को लोकदेवता के रूप में लोकमन में स्थापित कर दिया। लोक ने उनकी प्रसिद्धि को सम्पूर्ण बुन्देलखण्ड के गाँव-गाँव तक पहुँचा जिसका प्रमाण अधिकांश गाँवों में उनके चबूतरे होना हैं।

लोकदेवताओं के लिए सीमाओं का कोई बन्धन नहीं होता। यह लोक का ही आलोक है वे जहां चाहें उन्हें प्रतिष्ठित कर दें। आज उनकी सम्पूर्ण उत्तर एवं मध्य भारत में विवाह के देवता के रूप में मान्यता है यही वजह है कि उनके चबूतरे बुन्देलखण्ड के बाहर बड़ी तादाद में देखे जा सकते हैं। ललित शर्मा ने छत्तीसगढ़ अंचल के सर्वक्षण के आधार पर लिखा है कि इस अंचल में अनेक लोक देवताओं के साथ हरदेव लाल भी हैं जिन्हें हरदे लाला या हरदे बाबा के नाम से जाना जाता है। इनक चोतरे रायपुर, बिलासपुर, डेंगरापार,

बालोद, नया पारा राजिम, आरंग एवं अन्य स्थानों पर देखने में आते हैं। इन्हें मांगलिक कार्यों का निमंत्रण सर्वप्रथम दिया जाता है। ऐसी लोक मान्यता है कि वे सभी कार्यों को स्वयं संभाल लेते हैं।'

हरदौल का आत्मोसर्ग बुन्देलखण्ड ही नहीं उत्तर एवं मध्य भारत के लगभग सभी अंचलों के निवासियों के लिए पूजनीय एवं उनकी आस्था के केन्द्र हैं। इस प्रकार उन्होंने लोकदेव का पद प्राप्त कर लिया। यही वजह है कि गाँव-गाँव में इस लोकदेवता के चबूतरे हैं। घर-घर में लोकगीतों की स्वर लहरियां सुनाई पड़ती हैं। नर्मदाप्रसाद गुप्त के शब्दों में 'लोकगीतों के राजा तो हरदौल ही हैं।' उन गीतों की मांगलिक अनुगूंज का उदाहरण :

गाँउन गाँउन चोंतरा उर देसन देसन नाँउ।
लाला तोरौ भलो है लछारौ नाँउ।

ओरछा स्थित फूलबाग में हरदौल का चौतरा।

हरदौल बैठक के कुछ चित्र

हरदौल की मूर्ति

सन्दर्भ :

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डॉ. सफ़िया ख़ान
टैगोर फेलो
राष्ट्रीय अभिलेखागार
नई दिल्ली

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19वीं शताब्दी में जयपुर रियासत में आधुनिक शिक्षा : एक विश्लेषणात्मक अध्ययन

(महाराजा रामसिंह द्वितीय के विशेष संदर्भ में)

डॉ. नीकी चतुर्वेदी • डॉ. रामदेव जाट

अंग्रेजी शासन ने भारतीय समाज के राजनीतिक, सामाजिक एवं आर्थिक सभी क्षेत्रों को प्रभावित किया जिससे शिक्षा का क्षेत्र भी अछूता न रहा। राजपूताना की रियासतों में स्वदेशी शिक्षण प्रणाली का प्रचलन था। राजपूताना में सन् 1818 ई. से पूर्व शिक्षा का संचालन एवं विनियमन निजी व्यक्तियों एवं सामुदायिक संस्थाओं के सहयोग पर निर्भर करता था। उस युग में शिक्षा प्रसार उसकी उपयोगिता पर निर्भर करता था। जिसका उद्देश्य सांसारिक एवं आध्यात्मिक ज्ञान, व्यक्तिगत कल्याण और आजीविका के साधन उपलब्ध करवाना था। शिक्षा का स्वरूप अनौपचारिक हुआ करता था जिसके अन्तर्गत शिक्षकों को अपने ढंग से शिक्षा देने की स्वतंत्रता थी। परम्परागत शिक्षा प्रणाली आधुनिक शिक्षा पद्धति से सर्वथा भिन्न थी। संस्कृत वैदिक ज्ञान एवं साहित्य की भाषा थी जिसमें अध्ययन-अध्यापन का कार्य सम्पादित हुआ करता था जबकि पारसी राजकीय भाषा थी। व्यापार-वाणिज्य एवं वैज्ञानिक अध्ययन पद्धति में गणित की उपयोगिता थी। राजपूत शासकों की रुचि अंग्रेजी शिक्षा के प्रति नहीं थी क्योंकि उनका मानना था कि अंग्रेजी जीविकोपार्जन का एक साधन है। अतः वे अपनी संतानों को अंग्रेजी स्कूलों में निम्न वर्ग के लड़कों के साथ भेजने के विरूद्ध थे। ऐसी स्थिति में अंग्रेज अधिकारियों ने सामन्त पुत्रों के लिए अलग से विशिष्ट स्कूल स्थापित करने का निश्चय किया। सर्वप्रथम जयपुर राज्य में सन् 1866 ई. में सरदारों तथा राजपूतों के लड़कों के लिए जयपुर 'नोबिल्स स्कूल' की स्थापना की गई।[1] शोधार्थी द्वारा प्रस्तुत शोध पत्र में जयपुर महाराजा रामसिंह द्वितीय के द्वारा आधुनिक पाश्चात्य शिक्षा

प्रणाली के संवर्द्धन के लिए किये गये कार्यकलापों एवं उपलब्धियों को विश्लेषणात्मक ढंग से प्रस्तुत करने का प्रयास किया गया है।

शब्द संकेतक : परम्परागत, आधुनिक, स्त्री-शिक्षा, चिकित्सा, मिशन, कॉलेज

अंग्रेजी शिक्षा की प्रगति

राजस्थान में आधुनिक शिक्षा प्रणाली आरम्भ होने से पूर्व परम्परागत शिक्षा का काफी प्रसार था। जयपुर नगर में 110 शालाएँ थी जिनमें 2598 विद्यार्थी अध्ययनरत थे।[2] राजस्थान में ए.जी.जी. ने अपनी रिपोर्ट में लिखा था कि ''सभी राज्यों में असंख्य निजी शालाएँ है जिनमें साधारण पारिश्रमिक के बदले में हिन्दी, फारसी और गणित की शिक्षा प्राप्त की जा सकती है।''[3]

राजस्थान में अंग्रेजी शिक्षा की प्रगति में जयपुर राज्य अग्रणी रहा। यहाँ के शासक रामसिंह द्वितीय ने सन् 1844 ई. में जयपुर में 'महाराजा स्कूल' की स्थापना की यहीं स्कूल आगे 'महाराजा कॉलेज' के नाम से प्रसिद्ध हुआ। 1866 में इसमें 800 विद्यार्थी पढ़ते थे। सन् 1900 में इसे पोस्ट डिग्री कॉलेज बना दिया गया। यह एक मात्र पोस्ट डिग्री कॉलेज था। प्रारम्भ में कॉलेज में निर्धन विद्यार्थियों के लिए छात्रवृत्तियों की व्यवस्था की गई थी।[4] जब राजस्थान पर ब्रिटिश संरक्षण स्थापित हो गया, तब से ही अंग्रेजों ने राजपूत शासकों एवं उनके पुत्रों के लिए शिक्षा की आवश्यकता एवं महत्व का अनुभव कर लिया था। इस संबंध में उन्होंने कोई निश्चित नीति नहीं अपनाई, अपितु अवसर के अनुकूल कार्य करना उपयुक्त समझा।

सन् 1836 ई. में जयपुर नरेश रामसिंह की शिक्षा के लिए कम्पनी के निर्देशकों ने गर्वनर जनरल को विस्तृत निर्देश भेजे थे।[5] 1857 के विद्रोह के समय राजपूत शासकों की स्वामीभक्ति पूर्ण रूप से स्पष्ट हो गई थी। ब्रिटिश सरकार ने राजपूत शासकों की स्वामीभक्ति और आज्ञाकारिता की भावना को ओर दृढ़ करने के लिए अंग्रेजी शिक्षा पर विशेष बल देने का निश्चय किया। मेयो कॉलेज अजमेर इसी भावना का परिणाम था। मेयो कॉलेज को इंग्लैंड की 'ईटन कॉलेज' के अनुरूप स्थापित किया गया था।[6]

स्त्री शिक्षा

सन् 1866 ई. में स्त्री शिक्षा हेतु सर्वप्रथम भरतपुर, जयपुर, उदयपुर में

सरकारी स्कूल की स्थापना की गयी।[7] स्त्री शिक्षा के संबंध में 19वीं शताब्दी के अंत तक जयपुर राज्य में 6 महिला स्कूल स्थापित हो चुके थे जिनमें 695 छात्राएँ अध्ययनरत थी।[8]

सारणी I : जयपुर राज्य में महाराजा रामसिंह द्वितीय के शासनकाल में संचालित शिक्षण संस्थान (1840-1880)[9]

क्र.सं.	विद्यालय का नाम	स्थापना वर्ष
1.	महाराजा कॉलेज	1844
2.	संस्कृत कॉलेज	1845
3.	चांदपोल शाखा विद्यालय (बॉयज)	1849
4.	मेडिकल विद्यालय	1862 (1868 में समाप्त)
5.	नोबल स्कूल	1862
6.	ऑरियन्टल कॉलेज	1844 और 1850 के मध्य
7.	गंगापोल शाखा विद्यालय (बॉयज)	1862
8.	आर्ट्स एण्ड क्राफ्ट स्कूल	1866
9.	औद्योगिक कला महिला विद्यालय	1867
10.	हथरोई बालिका विद्यालय	1874
11.	गंगापोल बालिका विद्यालय	1874
12.	घाटगेट बालिका विद्यालय	1874
13.	सैन्ट्रल बालिका विद्यालय	1875
14.	महिला सामान्य प्रशिक्षण विद्यालय	1875
15.	गंगापोल बालिका विद्यालय	1875
16.	जौहरी बाजार बालिका विद्यालय	1877
17.	माजी का बाग बालिका विद्यालय	1879

जयपुर राज्य में 1860 ई. से पूर्व छात्राओं की प्राथमिक शिक्षा के लिए कोई देशी शिक्षण पद्धति तक नहीं थी।[10] यहाँ सर्वप्रथम 1866 ई. में महाराजा सवाई रामसिंह द्वितीय ने लड़कियों के लिए एक स्कूल खोला। महाराजा द्वारा खोली गयी इस पाठशाला में 25 छात्राओं ने प्रवेश लिया।[11] सन् 1867 ई. में कलकत्ता से श्रीमति ओगलटीन को बुलवाकर हैडमिस्ट्रेस (प्रधानाध्यापिका) नियुक्त किया गया।[12] उसने इस विद्यालय को तीन दर्जों में विभाजित कर दिया। इसके पहले दर्जे में केवल प्रारम्भिक ज्ञान की जानकारी तथा दूसरे व तीसरे दर्जे में भूगोल, साधारण गणित तथा सिलाई की जानकारी देने की व्यवस्था की गई।[13] इस प्रकार की कक्षाएँ जनता में बहुत पसन्द की गई। अतः 1875 ई. में इसकी कुछ अन्य शाखायें खोली गयी। इनमें अध्ययन कर चुकी लड़कियों को अध्यापक के रूप में रखा गया।[14] इसी बीच स्त्री शिक्षकों के लिए नॉर्मल स्कूल खोला गया।[15] सन् 1875 ई. तक इन स्कूलों में अध्ययनरत छात्राओं की संख्या 564 तक पहुँच गयी। इस प्रगति को देखते हुए इन स्कूलों की शाखाएँ हथरोई, चांदपोल और घाटगेट में खोली गई। 1899 ई. तक चांदपोल शाखा बंद की गई और आमेर में एक नई शाखा खोली गई।[16] स्त्री-शिक्षा हेतु स्थापित स्कूलों में से किसी में भी उच्च शिक्षा की व्यवस्था नहीं थी। स्त्री-शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में पर्याप्त प्रगति नहीं होने के अनेक कारणों में समाज में प्रचलित बाल-विवाह, योग्य शिक्षिकाओं का अभाव और स्त्री-शिक्षा के प्रति सार्वजनिक रूचि का अभाव मुख्य थे। पर्दे की प्रथा भी एक अन्य मुख्य कारण था।[17]

मिशन स्कूल – राजस्थान में ईसाई धर्म के प्रचार में यूनाइटेड प्रेस्बिटेरियन मिशन की भूमिका अधिक महत्वपूर्ण रही है। मिशन स्कूलों में हिन्दी, उर्दू के साथ-साथ अंग्रेजी भाषा की शिक्षा भी दी जाने लगी। मिशन ने स्त्रियों की शिक्षा के लिए भी अपने स्कूल स्थापित किए। मिशन ने सन् 1872 ई. में जयपुर में मिशन स्कूल शुरू किया। इसके बाद मिशन स्कूलों की संख्या में वृद्धि होने लगी। सन् 1876 ई. में सांभर व फुलेरा तथा सन् 1883 ई. में बांदीकुई में मिशन स्कूल स्थापित किये गये।[18]

अभिजात्य वर्ग की शिक्षा

मेयो कॉलेज मुख्यतः अभिजात्य वर्ग एवं सामंतों की शिक्षा के लिए ही बना, किन्तु वह इतना महंगा और उच्चवर्गीय था कि उसमें छोटे सामन्त

अपने राजकुमारो को नहीं भेज सकते थे। कामदार, मुसाहिब और ठिकानेदारों के बालकों की शिक्षा की आवश्यकता को महसूस करके सर्वप्रथम जयपुर महाराजा रामसिंह द्वितीय ने अपने यहाँ सन् 1861 में नोबल्स स्कूल खोला और अपने ताजमी सरदारों के सात से 15 वर्ष की आयु के सभी राजकुमारों की सूची तैयार करवायी।[19]

कारखाना पुण्य

सन् 1844 ई. में इस स्थिति में परिवर्तन आया। जब राज्य में शिक्षा ने लोगों का ध्यान अपनी ओर आकर्षित किया। क्योंकि सन् 1844 ई. में महाराजा रामसिंह द्वितीय के द्वारा 'महाराजा स्कूल' की स्थापना की गई। इसका उद्देश्य जयपुर के लोगों को अंग्रेजी शिक्षा की मुख्य-मुख्य बातें सिखाना था और साथ ही हिन्दी का ज्ञान भी देना था।[20] शिक्षा को अभी भी एक दान माना जाता था और इसे 'कारखाना पुण्य' की देख-रेख के रूप में जाना जाता था। विद्यार्थियों से कोई फीस नहीं ली जाती थी और गरीब व योग्य छात्रों को छात्रवृत्ति दी जाती थी। 'कारखाना पुण्य' की परम्परा के अनुसार अध्यापकों को महाराजा को नजर पेश करने से छूट दी गयी थी।[21]

महाराजा कॉलेज

समस्त राजपुताना में यह एकमात्र कॉलेज था जो आधुनिक पद्धतियों से अंग्रेजी शिक्षा प्रदान करने के लिए शुरू किया गया था। सन् 1844 ई. में महाराजा रामसिंह द्वितीय ने जयपुर राज्य के पॉलिटिकल एजेण्ट लुड़लो के सहयोग से 'महाराजा स्कूल' की स्थापना की थी।[22] यही स्कूल आगे चलकर महाराजा कॉलेज के नाम से प्रसिद्ध हुआ। सन् 1847 ई. में इस स्कूल में पहली बार आधुनिक परीक्षा प्रणाली जारी की गई। सन् 1866-67 ई. के सत्र में इस स्कूल में कुल 26 शिक्षक थे जिनमें 11 अंग्रेजी भाषा के, 11 फारसी और उर्दू भाषा के तथा 4 संस्कृत के शिक्षक थे। छात्रों की संख्या लगभग 800 थी।[23] इस कॉलेज में प्रारम्भ में क्रमशः पण्डित शिवदीन, मुंशी कृष्ण स्वरूप और पण्डित बंशीधर तीन अध्यापक थे।[24] पण्डित शिवदीन इस संस्था के प्रथम प्रधानाचार्य थे तथा अंग्रेजी पढ़ाते थे। उनकी शिक्षा गवर्नमेंट कॉलेज आगरा में हुई थी और सन् 1845 में वे महाराजा रामसिंह द्वितीय के शिक्षक बने थे। अपने उत्साह, इमानदारी और योग्यता के कारण उन्होंने महाराजा

रामसिंह का विश्वास प्राप्त किया व उनके प्राईवेट सेकेट्री बने। सन् मई 1862 ई. में ठाकुर लक्ष्मणसिंह की मृत्यु के पश्चात् उन्हें जयपुर राज्य का प्रधानमंत्री बनाया गया, जिस पद पर वह जून, 1864 ई. में अपनी मृत्यु पर्यन्त बने रहे। इस छोटे से काल में जब तक वह उच्च पद पर रहे तब तक प्रशासन उत्साह और बुद्धिमानी से चलता था। प्रारम्भ से ही पण्डित शिवदीन प्रशासन के कार्यों में सम्मिलित हो गये थे और कॉलेज की ओर उनका ध्यान कम रहा। सन् 1856 ई. तक वे इस कॉलेज के हैडमास्टर रहे।[25] छात्रों से उनकी पारिवारिक हैसियत के अनुसार एक आने से चार आने मासिक शुल्क लिया जाता था, परन्तु इस प्रकार से प्राप्त समूचे शुल्क का उपयोग पुस्तकालय के लिए ही किया जाता था।[26] विद्यार्थियों को सस्ते मूल्य पर पुस्तकें उपलब्ध हो सकें इस दृष्टि से एक लिथो प्रेस भी स्थापित किया गया।[27]

सन् 1856 ई. में मुंशी कृष्ण स्वरूप को हैडमास्टर बनाया गया। वीर विनोद के अनुसार यह कॉलेज उस समय तक कोई विशेष प्रगति नहीं कर सका जब तक सन् 1867 ई. में महाराजा ने तीन बंगालियों को कलकत्ता से बुलवाकर इस कॉलेज में नियुक्त नहीं किया। उनके कठिन परिश्रम और प्रशासन से कॉलेज में उन्नति हुई और छात्रों की संख्या में भी वृद्धि हुई। अब यह राजस्थान की प्रधान शिक्षण संस्था बन गयी थी। सन् 1865 ई. में राय बहादुर कांतिचन्द्र मुखर्जी ने कॉलेज का पुनर्गठन किया जो कॉलेज के हैडमास्टर नियुक्त हुए थे। उच्च शिक्षण संस्था के इस कॉलेज की सफलता इसी काल से शुरू हुई। शिक्षा का स्तर बढ़ा और कलकत्ता विश्वविद्यालय की प्रवेश परीक्षा के लिए सन् 1867 ई. में पहला बैच भेजा गया।[28] सन् 1873 ई. में कॉलेज को विश्वविद्यालय के इंटरमीडिएट (एफ.ए.) स्तर तक क्रमोन्नत किया गया और इस प्रकार यह द्वितीय श्रेणी का कॉलेज बन गया। सन् 1888 ई. में इसे डिग्री कॉलेज और सन् 1900 ई. में पोस्ट डिग्री कॉलेज बना दिया गया। यहाँ सन् 1890 ई. में बी.ए. की परीक्षा की कक्षाएँ आरम्भ हुई। सन् 1891 ई. में बी.ए. की परीक्षा हेतु प्रथम बैच इलाहाबाद विश्वविद्यालय में भेजा गया। जिसमें तीन विद्यार्थी सफल हुए हरिनारायण इन तीनों विद्यार्थियों में प्रथम आये।[29]

महाराजा कॉलेज के इतिहास से यह स्पष्ट हो जाता है कि सन् 1865 ई. से इस कॉलेज का यही प्रयत्न रहा कि शिक्षण की ऐसी पद्धति अपनाई

जाये जो ब्रिटिश शासित भारत में विकसित हो रही थी। इसमें कोई नवीनता का परीक्षण नहीं किया गया और यह प्रयत्न किया गया कि जितना संभव हो, ब्रिटिश इण्डियन सिस्टम का अनुकरण किया जावे। संभवतया उच्च शिक्षा के प्रति राज्य का कोई सजग विचार नहीं था। उन्होंने एक कॉलेज खोल दिया और इसके पश्चात् अध्यापकों को इसे संभालना था। इसके अलावा शिक्षण के माध्यम के बारे में भी कठिनाई थी। राज्य की सरकारी भाषा उर्दू थी व लोगों की मातृ भाषा हिन्दी थी, जबकि वरिष्ठ अध्यापक अधिकतर बंगाली थे।[30] जिन्हें अंग्रेजी में बोलना सरल लगता था। इन अध्यापकों के हित में उस पद्धति को चालू रखा गया। इस प्रकार उच्च शिक्षा जयपुर में अपनी जड़े नहीं जमा सकी।

संस्कृत कॉलेज

संस्कृत कॉलेज में छात्रों का नामांकन अधिक होने के कारण इसकी संस्कृत अध्ययन के केन्द्र के रूप में प्रसिद्धी थी और इसलिए भारत के सभी भागों से विद्यार्थी यहाँ आते थे। उल्लेखनीय है कि सन् 1845 ई. में जयपुर राज्य में यह कॉलेज अपने आरम्भिक रूप में 'संस्कृत विद्यालय' के रूप में खुला था।[31] इस कॉलेज में संस्कृत शिक्षा की विभिन्न शाखाओं जैसे– व्याकरण, दर्शन, साहित्य, वेदान्त, न्याय, ज्योतिष, वेद, वैदिक साहित्य और आयुर्वेद आदि में शिक्षा दी जाती थी। सन् 1852 ई. में औषधियों के लिए अलग आयुर्वेद कॉलेज खोला गया। पहले यह महाराजा कॉलेज के संस्कृत विभाग के अन्तर्गत था जिसमें 6 पण्डित थे और इसमें व्याकरण, साहित्य, न्याय, आयुर्वेद और वेदों की कक्षाएँ चलती थी। सन् 1866 ई. में संस्कृत विभाग महाराजा कॉलेज से अलग कर दिया गया और एक नये भवन में स्थानान्तरित किया गया। उसी समय से यह संस्कृत कॉलेज के नाम से जाना गया।[32]

सन् 1870 ई. में इसमें ज्योतिष की कक्षा शुरू की गई और नया प्रोफेसर इस विषय को पढ़ाने के लिए नियुक्त किया गया।[33] अभी भी पढ़ाई का तरीका पुरातन ढंग लिए हुआ था जिसमें स्मृति का महत्वपूर्ण स्थान था। वर्तमान अर्थ में कोई अनुशासन नहीं था, अध्यापन में कोई नियमितता नहीं थी, न ही उपस्थिति में नियमितता थी और पण्डित अपनी इच्छानुसार पाठ

पढ़ाते थे। संस्कृत कॉलेज में शिक्षण को नियमित करने में कई वर्ष लगे। इसका कारण पुराने स्कूल के पण्डितों का विरोध था।[34]

सन् 1886-87 में बाबू हरिदास के नेतृत्व में संस्कृत कॉलेज का वास्तविक गठन हुआ जो स्वयं एक पण्डित थे। वे राज्य में पब्लिक इन्सट्रक्शन के डायरेक्टर भी थे। उन्होंने पाठ्यक्रम का संशोधन किया और पण्डितों की राय लेकर पाठ्यपुस्तकें तय की एवं संस्कृत उपाधि परीक्षा लागू की जिससे जयपुर में संस्कृत शिक्षा को बड़ा प्रोत्साहन मिला।[35] सन् 1893 ई. में पण्डित लक्ष्मीनाथ शास्त्री को महाराजा कॉलेज से स्थानान्तरित कर संस्कृत कॉलेज का अधीक्षक बनाया। वे आठ वर्षों से अधिक समय तक संस्कृत के प्रोफेसर रहे थे। शिक्षा की पद्धति और डिप्लोमा पाठ्यक्रम को आधुनिक बनाने के कारणवश यह कॉलेज प्रसिद्ध हुआ।[36]

चिकित्सा शिक्षा

सन् 1846 ई. में जयपुर के तत्कालीन पॉलिटिकल एजेंट लूडलो ने जयपुर में एक मेडिकल कॉलेज खोलने का प्रस्ताव रखा जो फलीभूत नहीं हो पाया।[37] पन्द्रह वर्ष बाद सन् 1861 ई. में महाराजा रामसिंह द्वितीय ने जयपुर में एक मेडिकल कॉलेज स्थापित किया।[38] 6 वर्ष की अवधि में यह कॉलेज केवल 12 छात्रों को सफलता दिलवा पाया जबकि इसमें पढ़ने वाले प्रति छात्र पर 500 रुपये औसत वार्षिक खर्चा होता था। अतः 1867 में इसे बंद कर दिया गया। कॉलेज बंद किये जाने के विविध कारणों में आशाजनक परिणामों का अभाव, लाशों की चीर-फाड़ के प्रति छात्रों की अरुचि, यूरोपीय चिकित्सा पद्धति के प्रति जनता की आशंकाएँ, उत्तीर्ण छात्रों के लिए नौकरियों का अभाव और भारी व्यय आदि मुख्य थे।[39]

जयपुर राज्य में संस्कृत कॉलेज में आयुर्वेद सन् 1852 ई. से पढ़ाया जा रहा था परन्तु सन् 1886-87 ई. में इसका पाठ्यक्रम ठीक प्रकार से व्यवस्थित किया गया। राजवैद्य कृष्ण रामजी भट्ट सन् 1890 ई. में आयुर्वेद विभाग के अध्यक्ष बने। अन्य विषयों की तरह आयुर्वेद में भी तीन उपाधि परीक्षाएँ थी। इसका सन् 1904 ई. में इसका पाठ्यक्रम तीन भागों में विभाजित कर दिया गया जो क्रमशः उपाध्यक्ष परीक्षा, शास्त्री परीक्षा तथा आचार्य परीक्षा था। इस विवरण से स्पष्ट होता है कि उस समय पाठ्यक्रम पूरी तरह से शास्त्रीय ग्रंथों पर आधारित था।[40]

शिक्षा व्यय

राज्य सरकार ने सन् 1862-63 ई. में शिक्षा पर 17,088 रुपये खर्चे किये।[41] जिसमें कुल व्यय का 59 प्रतिशत महाराजा कॉलेज, 13 प्रतिशत नोबल्स स्कूल, 8 प्रतिशत जिला प्राथमिक पाठशालायें एवं 2 प्रतिशत सिटी मिडिल स्कूलों पर खर्च किया गया।[42]

सन्	रुपये	संस्थाएँ	व्यय (प्रतिशत)
1862-63	17088	महाराजा कॉलेज	59 प्रतिशत
		नोबल्स स्कूल	13 प्रतिशत
		जिला प्राथमिक पाठशालायें	8 प्रतिशत
		सिटी मिडिल स्कूल	2 प्रतिशत

सारणी II : वार्षिक व्यय (महाराजा कॉलेज, जयपुर)

वर्ष	वार्षिक व्यय (रू.)	छात्र संख्या	औसत लागत प्रत्येक छात्र पर (रू.)
1862[43]	10092	150	67
1872[44]	17726	602	29
1880[45]	21220	802	26

सन् 1880 ई. में कुल राज्य व्यय 40,066 रुपये हो गया जो राज्य की कुल वार्षिक आय का 0.61 प्रतिशत था।[46] महाराजा कॉलेज, संस्कृत कॉलेज, नोबल्स स्कूल, सिटी मिडिल स्कूल एवं गर्ल्स स्कूल (जयपुर, आमेर व सांगानेर) को क्रमशः कुल बजट का 53.05 प्रतिशत, 18.79 प्रतिशत, 11.89 प्रतिशत, 7.25 प्रतिशत और 15.7 प्रतिशत आवंटित किया गया था।

सारणी III : महाराजा कॉलेज का व्यय

वर्ष	मद	व्यय (प्रतिशत में)
1862[47]	स्टाफ	66.6 प्रतिशत
	स्टेशनरी एवं पुस्तकें	15.6 प्रतिशत
	छात्रवृत्ति	8.4 प्रतिशत
	कार्यालय व्यय	7 प्रतिशत
	पेंशन	2.4 प्रतिशत

जयपुर राज्य में सक्षम एवं दूरदर्शी पॉलिटिकल एजेन्ट जैसे जॉन लूडलो, मिस्टर थोरोबसे के सहयोग से जयपुर राज्य के महाराजा रामसिंह द्वितीय ने जयपुर राज्य में अनेक शिक्षण संस्थाओं की स्थापना की जिसमें प्राथमिक पाठशालायें, मदरसे, डिग्री कॉलेज तथा मेडिकल कॉलेज आदि शामिल है। शासक ने विद्वत जनों को राज्य में आमंत्रित किया जिससे श्रेष्ठ व गंभीर शैक्षणिक माहौल का निर्माण किया जा सके। शासक की समावेशी व सहिष्णु सोच तथा दृष्टिकोण के कारण जयपुर राज्य राजपूताना में शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में अग्रणी रहा। शासक ने परम्परागत शिक्षा पद्धति के साथ-साथ आधुनिक-पाश्चात्य शिक्षा प्रणालियों को राज्य में शुरू करने में कोई संकोच नहीं किया। महाराजा रामसिंह द्वितीय दूरदर्शी सोच के धनी थे, उनका मानना था कि ब्रिटिश भारत में अंग्रेजों के द्वारा स्थापित की जा रही अत्याधुनिक शिक्षण पद्धतियों एवं संस्थानों को जयपुर राज्य में भी शुरू की जावें। जयपुर राज्य हमेशा से ही कवियों, दार्शनिकों, विद्वानों, संस्कृत आचार्यों, शिक्षा शास्त्रियों तथा वैज्ञानिकों को आश्रय प्रदान किया है जिसके कारण जयपुर को द्वितीय काशी के नाम से जाना जाता है।

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डॉ. नीकी चतुर्वेदी
एसोसिएट प्रोफेसर
इतिहास एवं भारतीय संस्कृति विभाग,
राजस्थान विश्वविद्यालय, जयपुर
neekeechaturvedi@gmail.com
Mob.: 9414796730

डॉ. रामदेव जाट
असिस्टेंट प्रोफेसर
इतिहास एवं भारतीय संस्कृति विभाग
राजस्थान विश्वविद्यालय, जयपुर
ramdevjat1122@gmail.com
Mob.: 9414540584

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सरदार पटेल–एकीकरण के शिल्पकार और आधुनिक भारत के राष्ट्र निर्माता

अखिल वर्मा • डॉ अमीर अली खान

स्वतंत्र भारत के गठन और एकीकरण में सरदार वल्लभभाई पटेल (1875-1950) का बहुआयामी योगदान है। भारत के औपनिवेशिक शासन से स्वतंत्रता की ओर संक्रमण के दौरान सरदार वल्लभभाई पटेल के नेतृत्व को अक्सर अंतरराष्ट्रीय जगत में, विशेष रूप से महात्मा गांधी और जवाहरलाल नेहरू जैसे समकालीनों की तुलना में, नजरअंदाज कर दिया गया है। हालाँकि, इस महत्वपूर्ण अवधि में उनकी निर्णायक भूमिका अंतरराष्ट्रीय विद्वानों का ध्यान आकर्षित करती है, क्योंकि उनके योगदान ने नए स्वतंत्र राष्ट्र को आकार देने में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई थी। यह लेख तीन महत्वपूर्ण क्षेत्रों में पटेल की महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका का विश्लेषण करता है–रियासतों को एकीकृत करना, प्रशासनिक सुधार और बहुलवादी समाज में राष्ट्र निर्माण। प्राथमिक स्रोतों और हाल के ऐतिहासिक घटनाक्रमों की आलोचनात्मक जांच के माध्यम से, यह अध्ययन दर्शाता है कि कैसे शासन के प्रति पटेल के व्यावहारिक दृष्टिकोण, प्रशासनिक कौशल और राष्ट्रीय एकता के प्रति अटूट प्रतिबद्धता ने उन मूलभूत संरचनाओं का निर्माण किया जिन्होंने एक एकीकृत लोकतांत्रिक राज्य के रूप में भारत के अस्तित्व और उसके बाद के विकास को सक्षम बनाया। विश्लेषण से पता चलता है कि पटेल का योगदान एक आधुनिक राष्ट्र-राज्य के रूप में भारत के उदय के लिए आवश्यक संस्थागत आधार स्थापित करने के लिए केवल राजनीतिक एकीकरण से परे था।

मुख्य शब्द : *सरदार पटेल, भारतीय स्वतंत्रता, रियासतें, प्रशासनिक सुधार, राष्ट्र-निर्माण, भारतीय एकीकरण*

1. प्रस्तावना

1947 में ब्रिटिश औपनिवेशिक शासन के अंत के बाद नवजात राष्ट्र के सामने आने वाली असाधारण चुनौतियों को देखते हुए 1950 में भारतीय गणराज्य का जन्म उत्तर औपनिवेशिक राज्य के गठन में एक महत्वपूर्ण उपलब्धि का प्रतिनिधित्व करता है। उपमहाद्वीप के विभाजन, अभूतपूर्व पैमाने पर सांप्रदायिक हिंसा, 560 से अधिक रियासतों के सवाल और गंभीर आर्थिक संकट ने संकटों का एक समूह बनाया जिसने नए राष्ट्र की व्यवहारिकता को खतरे में डाल दिया। इससे भारत न केवल बच गया, बल्कि अंततः दुनिया के सबसे बड़े लोकतंत्र के रूप में पनपा, यह काफी हद तक कई प्रमुख हस्तियों की दूरदर्शी राजनीति का परिणाम है, जिनमें से सरदार वल्लभभाई पटेल (1875-1950) शायद सबसे परिणामी के रूप में अंतरराष्ट्रीय स्तर पर कम मान्यता प्राप्त हैं।

उनके समकालीन महात्मा गांधी और जवाहरलाल नेहरू के विपरीत, जिनकी अंतर्राष्ट्रीय मान्यता लगातार उच्च बनी हुई है, पटेल के योगदान को अंतर्राष्ट्रीय अकादमिक विमर्श में विद्वानों का ध्यान नहीं मिला है। रियासतों को एकी*कृत* करने में उनकी अद्वितीय उपलब्धि जिसने उपमहाद्वीप के बाल्कनीकरण को रोका-और भारत के प्रशासनिक ढांचे की स्थापना में उनकी महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका के बावजूद यह असंतुलन बना हुआ है। भारत के पहले उप प्रधानमंत्री और गृह मंत्री के रूप में, पटेल ने नवजात राष्ट्र के सामने सबसे अधिक दबाव वाली आंतरिक चुनौतियों का सामना किया।

2. अध्ययन का उद्देश्य

इस अध्ययन का उद्देश्य तीन परस्पर जुड़े आयामों के माध्यम से आधुनिक भारत के निर्माण में सरदार वल्लभभाई पटेल के योगदान की व्यवस्थित रूप से जांच करके एक महत्वपूर्ण ऐतिहासिक अंतर को भरना है। सबसे पहले, कूटनीति का प्रयोग करते हुए भारतीय संघ में रियासतों का रणनीतिक एकीकरण, दूसरा, उनके दूरदर्शी प्रशासनिक सुधार, जिन्होंने संस्थागत स्थिरता और शासन की निरंतरता की नींव रखीय और तीसरा, राष्ट्र-निर्माण के लिए उनका दृष्टिकोण, जो एक सामंजस्यपूर्ण राजनीतिक ढांचे के भीतर भारत के गहरे विविध और विषम समाज को एकजुट करने

का प्रयास करता था। पटेल की व्यावहारिक दृष्टि, प्रशासनिक कौशल और राष्ट्रीय एकता के प्रति दृढ़ प्रतिबद्धता ने नवजात भारतीय राज्य को स्थिर करने में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई, जिससे एक लचीली लोकतांत्रिक राजनीति में इसके विकास की नींव रखी गई।

3. ऐतिहासिक संदर्भः स्वतंत्रता के समय भारत

अगस्त 1947 में औपनिवेशिक शासन से उभरा भारत असाधारण उथल-पुथल से पैदा हुआ राष्ट्र था। विभाजन के परिणामस्वरूप अभूतपूर्व जनसंख्या विस्थापन हुआ था, जिसमें लगभग 14 से 16 मिलियन लोग भारत और पाकिस्तान के बीच नई स्थापित सीमाओं को पार कर गए थे। साम्प्रदायिक हिंसा ने लाखों लोगों की जान ले ली। आर्थिक स्थिति विकट थी, अकाल ने कई क्षेत्रों को खतरे में डाल दिया, उद्योगों को बाधित कर दिया और राजकीय कोष समाप्त हो गया। ब्रिटिश अधिकारियों के जाने और औपनिवेशिक संस्थानों के विभाजन के बाद प्रशासनिक ढांचे अव्यवस्थित हो गए थे।

शायद भारत की क्षेत्रीय अखंडता के लिए सबसे अधिक खतरा रियासतों का सवाल था। स्वतंत्रता के समय, भारत में न केवल ब्रिटिश-प्रशासित क्षेत्र शामिल थे, बल्कि 562 रियासतें भी शामिल थीं, जो तकनीकी रूप से ब्रिटिश सर्वोच्चता समाप्त होने पर स्वतंत्र हो गईं। ये राज्य, हैदराबाद और कश्मीर जैसी बड़ी संस्थाओं से लेकर कुछ गांवों के छोटे जागीरों तक के आकार में नाटकीय रूप से भिन्न थे, जो उपमहाद्वीप के लगभग 40 क्षेत्र को सम्मिलित करते थे और इसकी आबादी का लगभग 25 हिस्सा रखते थे। उनका एकीकरण न तो स्वचालित था और न ही अपरिहार्य वास्तव में, कई शासकों ने स्वतंत्रता की आकांक्षाओं को पोषित किया, विशेष रूप से वे जो महत्वपूर्ण संसाधनों के साथ बड़े राज्यों पर शासन करते थे।

अंग्रेजों के जाने से एक भू-राजनीतिक शून्य पैदा हो गया जिसका कई आंतरिक और बाहरी ताकतों ने फायदा उठाना चाहा। तुर्को के पतन के बाद बाल्कन से लेकर फ्रांसीसी इंडोचीन के टूटने तक अन्य उपनिवेश विघटित क्षेत्रों में स्वतंत्रता के बाद के विघटन के अनुभव ने एक गंभीर मिसाल प्रदान की जिसका कई पर्यवेक्षकों ने अनुमान लगाया कि भारत अनुसरण करेगा।

ऐसा न करने का श्रेय इस संकट के समय में पटेल के निर्णायक नेतृत्व को जाता है।

4. रियासतों का एकीकरण: कूटनीति, दबाव और बल

भारतीय संघ में रियासतों का विलय 20वीं शताब्दी की सबसे उल्लेखनीय राजनीतिक उपलब्धियों में से एक है। जब अंतिम वायसराय लॉर्ड माउंटबेटन ने जुलाई 1947 में चैंबर ऑफ प्रिंसेस को संबोधित किया, तो उन्होंने उन्हें भौगोलिक निकटता और जनसांख्यिकीय संरचना के आधार पर भारत या पाकिस्तान में से किसी एक में शामिल होने की सलाह दी। इस विशाल राजनयिक चुनौती को लागू करने का कार्य मुख्य रूप से सरदार पटेल के पास था, जिन्होंने मेनन के साथ सचिव के रूप में एक नए विदेश विभाग की स्थापना की।

पटेल के दृष्टिकोण ने दबाव के साथ अनुनय, राजनयिक कौशल के साथ अचूक दृढ़ता को जोड़ा। उनकी प्रारंभिक रणनीति में राजकुमारों को यह विश्वास दिलाना शामिल था कि एक तेजी से जटिल भू-राजनीतिक परिदृश्य में अलग-थलग स्वतंत्रता बनाए रखने का प्रयास करने के बजाय भारत में शामिल होने से उनके व्यक्तिगत और उनकी प्रजा दोनों के हितों की बेहतर सेवा होगी। पटेल ने रियासतों को प्रिवी पर्स, विशिष्ट विशेषाधिकारों के लिए संवैधानिक सुरक्षा और जहां उपयुक्त हो वहां प्रशासनिक निरंतरता का आश्वासन दिया। यह रणनीतिक दृष्टिकोण भारतीय संघ में अधिकांश छोटे और मध्यम आकार के राज्यों के प्रवेश को सुरक्षित करने में प्रभावी साबित हुआ।

अधिक अवज्ञाकारी राज्यों के लिए, पटेल ने दबाव रणनीति के एक ढाल का इस्तेमाल किया। उन्होंने गैर-स्वीकृत राज्यों के लिए सीमा शुल्क बाधाओं और परिवहन प्रतिबंधों को खतरे में डालते हुए आर्थिक लाभ का भी उपयोग किया। जरूरत पड़ने पर, उन्होंने सैन्य बल को तैनात करने की इच्छा का प्रदर्शन किया, जैसा कि सितंबर 1948 में हैदराबाद के खिलाफ पुलिस कार्रवाई में देखा गया था।

4.1 जूनागढ़

जूनागढ़ रियासतों में सबसे छोटा था, जिसे अक्सर अनदेखा और

महत्वहीन माना जाता था। जूनागढ़ भौगोलिक रूप से पाकिस्तान से अलग था, क्योंकि यह उन रियासतों से घिरा हुआ था जो पहले से ही भारत में शामिल हो चुकी थीं और जिनका पाकिस्तान से सीधा भूमि संबंध नहीं था। निकटतम पाकिस्तानी शहर कराची समुद्र मार्ग से लगभग 300 मील दूर था। इस तथ्य के बावजूद कि जूनागढ़ के नवाब और अधिकांश शासक वर्ग मुस्लिम थे जबकि राज्य की अधिकांश आबादी-लगभग 80 प्रतिशत-हिंदू थी। जूनागढ़ जैसे छोटे तटीय राज्य ने तब एक प्रारंभिक चुनौती पेश की जब इसके मुस्लिम शासक नवाब महाबत खान ने मुख्य रूप से हिंदू आबादी होने और पाकिस्तान के साथ कोई सन्निहित सीमा नहीं होने के बावजूद पाकिस्तान में शामिल होने की घोषणा की। इसने देश की क्षेत्रीय अखंडता और स्थिरता के लिए संभावित खतरा पैदा कर दिया था।[1]

24 अगस्त 1947 को नवाब ने जिन्ना को पाकिस्तान में जूनागढ़ के विलय के विषय को लेकर एक पत्र लिखा जिसमें उन्होंने कहा -प्रेस की रिपोर्टों ने आपको आभास कराया होगा कि जूनागढ़ पर हर तरफ आलोचना की बौछार हो रही है। ईश्वर को धन्यवाद, कि हम अपने फैसले पर दृढ़ हैं। हम जूनागढ़ के विलय के संबंध में पाकिस्तान सरकार की शीघ्र घोषणा की उम्मीद करते हैं। मैं अपनी राज्य परिषद के राजस्व सदस्य श्री ए. के. वाई. अब्रहानी को स्टैंड स्टिल समझौते की शर्तों को तय करने के लिए भेज रहा हूं। मैं उन्हें अपनी राज्य सरकार की ओर से समझौते पर हस्ताक्षर करने के लिए अधिकृत करता हूं। इस प्रकार पाकिस्तान में जूनागढ़ के विलय ने रणनीतिक और राजनीतिक दोनों रूप से भारत के लिए एक महत्वपूर्ण चुनौती पेश की।[2]

जूनागढ़ के विलय की घोषणा के कुछ दिनों के भीतर, आसपास के कई राज्यों के शासकों ने अपना विरोध व्यक्त किया और भारत सरकार से निर्णायक कार्रवाई करने का आग्रह किया। इन घटनाक्रमों के पश्चात, सरदार पटेल ने जूनागढ़ की सेना को उनके द्वारा कैंजा किए गए क्षेत्रों से वापस लेने की मांग की। जब नवाब ने इसका पालन करने से इनकार कर दिया, तो पटेल ने भारतीय सैनिकों और नागरिक अधिकारियों को हस्तक्षेप करने और उन्हें हटाने का आदेश दिया। जवाब में, नवाब अपनी व्यक्तिगत संपत्ति के एक महत्वपूर्ण हिस्से के साथ राज्य के खजाने को अपने साथ लेकर राजधानी से

भाग गया। उनके जाने से पूरे जूनागढ़ में व्यापक अशांति और अराजकता फैल गई। नतीजतन, जूनागढ़ के दीवान (प्रधानमंत्री) ने औपचारिक रूप से भारत सरकार के हस्तक्षेप का अनुरोध किया। भारतीय सैनिकों और प्रशासकों को तेजी से तैनात किया गया, एक जनमत संग्रह किया गया, और लोगों ने भारत में विलय के पक्ष में भारी मतदान किया।[3] जिससे नए स्वतंत्र राष्ट्र में लोकप्रिय संप्रभुता के सिद्धांत के लिए एक महत्वपूर्ण मिसाल स्थापित हुई।

4.2 हैदराबाद

हैदराबाद भारत की सबसे बड़ी रियासत थी और उन्हें उनमें से सर्वोच्च दर्जा प्राप्त था। 82,000 वर्ग मील से अधिक के क्षेत्र को कवर करते हुए, इसकी आबादी लगभग 1 करोड़ 60 लाख थी। राज्य ने अपनी प्रशासनिक और आर्थिक स्वायत्तता को दर्शाते हुए अपने स्वयं के सिक्कों और कागजी मुद्रा को बनाए रखा। इसके शासक को ब्रिटिश राज के साथ हैदराबाद के ऐतिहासिक संबंधों की मान्यता में भारतीय रजाकारों के बीच विशिष्ट रूप से सम्मानित किया गया था और उन्हें ''महामहिम'' और ''वफादार सहयोगी'' की उपाधि दी गई थी। इस तथ्य के बावजूद कि 85 प्रतिशत से अधिक आबादी हिंदू थी, सेना सहित शासन और सार्वजनिक सेवाएं सत्तारूढ़ मुस्लिम अभिजात वर्ग के नियंत्रण में रहीं।[4]

3 जून 1947 के कुछ ही समय बाद, निजाम ने भारत या पाकिस्तान में शामिल होने के बजाय स्वतंत्र रहने के अपने फैसले की घोषणा करते हुए एक फरमान जारी किया। उन्होंने जोर देकर कहा कि 15 अगस्त को सत्ता के हस्तांतरण पर, हैदराबाद पूरी तरह से संप्रभु राज्य के रूप में अपनी स्थिति को फिर से हासिल करेगा। व्यापक विचार-विमर्श के बाद, पटेल ने निष्कर्ष निकाला कि, इस प्रकृति के छोटे राज्यों के लिए, एकीकरण और लोकतंत्रीकरण ही कार्रवाई का एकमात्र हल था। उन्होंने रजाकारों को आश्वासन दिया कि उनकी संपत्ति, गरिमा और आजीविका की रक्षा की जाएगी और उन्हें सरकार के भीतर सेवा करने के अवसर दिए जाएंगे। हालांकि उन्होंने स्पष्ट किया कि उनके खिलाफ जबरदस्ती नहीं की जाएगी, उन्होंने रेखांकित किया कि उभरती राजनीतिक परिस्थितियों और उनके राज्यों के सामने आने वाली अनूठी चुनौतियों के कारण उनके सहयोग की आवश्यकता है। अपनी अंतिम टिप्पणी में, पटेल ने जोर देकर कहा कि

रजाकारों द्वारा कुछ शक्तियों का स्वैच्छिक त्याग उनकी प्रतिष्ठा को कम नहीं करेगा। इसके बजाय, उन्होंने तर्क दिया कि इस तरह के निर्णय से उनकी स्थिति में वृद्धि होगी, जिससे उनकी प्रजा के बीच सम्मान और प्रशंसा की स्थायी भावना को बढ़ावा मिलेगा, जिससे उनकी स्थायी विरासत में योगदान मिलेगा।[5]

निजाम द्वारा अर्धसैनिक रजाकारों का समर्थन, जो हिंदू नागरिकों के खिलाफ जबरदस्ती और हिंसा के कृत्यों में शामिल थे, ने आंतरिक सुरक्षा चुनौतियों को और बढ़ा दिया, जिससे अस्थिरता और अशांति का माहौल पैदा हो गया।

मई 1948 में, हैदराबाद और भारत सरकार के बीच बातचीत एक बार फिर असफल साबित हुई। इसके साथ ही राज्य के भीतर सांप्रदायिक गतिविधि तीव्र होने लगी। निजाम द्वारा स्टैंड स्टिल समझौते के कथित उल्लंघन के आधार पर भारत सरकार ने हैदराबाद के खिलाफ एक आर्थिक नाकाबंदी लागू की। राज्य के भीतर स्थिति तेजी से बिगड़ती गई, जो बढ़ती हिंसा और लगभग अराजकता की स्थिति हो गयी थी। सितंबर 1948 तक, भारत सरकार ने स्थिरता बहाल करने के लिए सैन्य हस्तक्षेप को अधिकृत कर दिया। आठ दिनों के भीतर, प्रतिरोध को प्रभावी रूप से दबा दिया गया, जिससे निजाम के मंत्रिमंडल का इस्तीफा हो गया और एक सैन्य प्रशासन की स्थापना हुई, जिससे हैदराबाद भारतीय नियंत्रण में आ गया।[6]

इस प्रकार जब राजनयिक प्रयास अप्रभावी साबित हुए, विशेष रूप से उन परिदृश्यों में जहां नागरिक आबादी को महत्वपूर्ण सुरक्षा खतरों का सामना करना पड़ा तब हैदराबाद के एकीकरण ने पटेल की निर्णायक सैन्य कार्रवाई ऑपरेशन पोलो करने की तैयारी का उदाहरण प्रस्तुत किया।

4.3 कश्मीर

पटेल अन्य एकीकरण मामलों की तुलना में कश्मीर के प्रश्न में कम प्रत्यक्ष रूप से शामिल थे (नेहरू ने अपनी कश्मीरी विरासत और व्यक्तिगत हित के कारण अधिक प्रमुख भूमिका निभाई थी) उनका योगदान महत्वपूर्ण बना रहा। पटेल ने आदिवासी आक्रमण से पहले की अनिश्चित अवधि के दौरान महाराजा हरि सिंह को महत्वपूर्ण मार्गदर्शन प्रदान किया। मेनन के

अनुसार, जो उनकी सितंबर 1947 की बैठक में मौजूद थे, पटेल ने जोर देकर कहा कि ''स्वतंत्रता एक व्यावहारिक विकल्प नहीं था'' और महाराजा को ''अपने लोगों के हितों के आधार पर अपनी पसंद बनाने'' की सलाह दी।[7]

यह व्यावहारिक सलाह राज्य एकीकरण के लिए पटेल के व्यापक दृष्टिकोण के अनुरूप थी और अंतिम विलय के लिए आधार तैयार करने में मदद की।

जनजातीय आक्रमण के बाद, पटेल ने 26 अक्टूबर, 1947 को महत्वपूर्ण कैबिनेट रक्षा समिति की बैठक के दौरान तत्काल सैन्य हस्तक्षेप की पुरजोर वकालत करते हुए कहा, ''हम कश्मीर के लोगों को आक्रमणकारियों के लिए नहीं छोड़ सकते। एक बार विलय के दस्तावेज पर हस्ताक्षर हो जाने के बाद, हम नैतिक और कानूनी रूप से राज्य की रक्षा करने के लिए बाध्य होंगे।''[8]

रक्षा मंत्री बलदेव सिंह के निजी दस्तावेजों से पता चलता है कि पटेल ने साजो-सामान की चुनौतियों के बावजूद सैन्य संसाधन जुटाने में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई थी, यह तर्क देते हुए कि ''हर घंटे की देरी हमें क्षेत्र और जीवन की कीमत चुकाएगी''।

सरदार पटेल के नेतृत्व में राज्य विभाग ने कश्मीर के विलय को सुविधाजनक बनाने के लिए आवश्यक संस्थागत ढांचे की स्थापना की। इस प्रशासनिक संरचना ने क्षेत्र की अनूठी राजनीतिक और रणनीतिक जटिलताओं को समायोजित करते हुए प्रक्रियात्मक स्थिरता सुनिश्चित की।[9]

जब पाकिस्तानी आदिवासी बलों ने अक्टूबर 1947 में कश्मीर पर आक्रमण किया, जिससे महाराजा हरि सिंह के लिए संकट पैदा हो गया, तो पटेल ने भारत में कश्मीर के विलय पर त्वरित सैन्य हस्तक्षेप की वकालत की। उनकी निर्णायकता ने महाराजा द्वारा हस्ताक्षरित विलय के माध्यम से भारतीय सैन्य भागीदारी के लिए आवश्यक कानूनी ढांचे को सुरक्षित करने में मदद की। जनवरी 1949 तक, पटेल ने भारतीय संघ में लगभग सभी रियासतों के एकीकरण की देखरेख की थी—एक ऐसी उपलब्धि जिसे पूर्व ब्रिटिश प्रधान मंत्री क्लेमेंट एटली ने ''राजनीतिक कौशल का एक कार्य... जिसके लिए इतिहास में कोई समानता नहीं है'' के रूप में वर्णित किया था।

इस एकीकरण ने उपमहाद्वीप के संभावित रूप से सैकड़ों संप्रभु संस्थाओं में विखंडन को रोक दिया, जिसने शासन, आर्थिक विकास और सुरक्षा के लिए दुर्गम चुनौतियां पैदा कर दी।

5 प्रशासनिक आधार : भारत का स्टील फ्रेम

क्षेत्रीय एकीकरण से परे, पटेल ने भारत के प्रशासनिक बुनियादी ढांचे की स्थापना में महत्वपूर्ण योगदान दिया, विशेष रूप से तीन प्रमुख क्षेत्रों में अपने नेतृत्व के माध्यम से जिसमें सिविल सेवा का संरक्षण और सुधार, सशस्त्र बलों को एकीकृत करना और शासन के लिए संवैधानिक प्रावधान तैयार करना।

5.1 भारतीय प्रशासनिक सेवा

पटेल के सबसे महत्वपूर्ण नीतिगत निर्णयों में से एक ब्रिटिश भारत के प्रशासनिक तंत्र भारतीय सिविल सेवा (आई. सी. एस.) को संरक्षित करना और इसे भारतीय प्रशासनिक सेवा (आई. ए. एस.) में बदलना शामिल था। इस निर्णय को कई राष्ट्रवादियों के काफी विरोध का सामना करना पड़ा, जो आईसीएस को एक औपनिवेशिक साधन के रूप में देखते थे। नेहरू ने खुद ब्रिटिश शासन के ''स्टील फ्रेम'' को बनाए रखने के बारे में आपत्ति जताई थी।

1949 में, पटेल संविधान सभा में सिविल सेवा के समर्थन करते हुए कहते हैं— मैं आपको आश्वस्त करना चाहता हूं कि मैंने इस कठिन समय के दौरान उनके साथ काम किया है। मैं पूर्ण जिम्मेदारी की भावना के साथ स्वीकार करता हूँ कि देशभक्ति, निष्ठा, ईमानदारी और क्षमता की दृष्टि से, आपके पास कोई विकल्प नहीं हो सकता है। वे हमारे जैसे ही अच्छे हैं। मैं इस सदन में यह बताना चाहता हूं कि अगर पिछले दो या तीन वर्षो के दौरान सिविल सेवाओं के अधिकांश सदस्यों ने विशेष रूप से और निष्ठा के साथ व्यवहार नहीं किया होता, तो संघ ध्वस्त हो जाता।[10]

हालाँकि, पटेल ने परिवर्तन की अवधि के दौरान प्रशासनिक निरंतरता बनाए रखने की व्यावहारिक आवश्यकता को स्वीकार किया। उन्होंने तर्क दिया कि सिविल सेवा को समाप्त करने से एक प्रशासनिक शून्य पैदा होगा

जो राज्य के बुनियादी कामकाज को खतरे में डाल सकता है। इसके बजाय, उन्होंने ऐसे सुधारों का समर्थन किया जो सेवा को अपने पेशेवर लोकाचार और संस्थागत ज्ञान को संरक्षित करते हुए लोकतांत्रिक शासन के एक साधन में बदल देंगे।

अप्रैल 1948 में सिविल सेवा परिवीक्षाधीनों को दिए एक भाषण में, पटेल ने इस दृष्टिकोण को व्यक्त कियाः ''आप भारतीय सेवा में अग्रणी हैं, और इस सेवा का भविष्य बहुत कुछ आपके द्वारा निर्धारित की जाने वाली नींव और परंपराओं, आपके चरित्र और क्षमताओं और आपकी सेवा की भावना पर निर्भर करेगा।''

सरदार वल्लभभाई पटेल ने सिविल सेवा को स्वतंत्र भारत में शासन के एक अनिवार्य स्तंभ के रूप में मान्यता दी। उन्होंने सिविल सेवकों को पेशेवरता और सत्यनिष्ठा के साथ अपने कर्तव्यों का पालन करने की पुरजोर वकालत की और मंत्रियों के साथ बातचीत में स्वतंत्रता बनाए रखने के महत्व पर जोर दिया। साथ ही, उन्होंने राजनीतिक नेताओं को आत्मसंतुष्ट सिविल सेवकों को नियुक्त करने के खिलाफ आगाह किया, जो उद्देश्यपूर्ण और अच्छी तरह से तर्कपूर्ण सलाह देने के बजाय केवल मंत्री प्राथमिकताओं के अनुरूप थे। पटेल का मानना था एक लोकतांत्रिक ढांचे में, एक सिविल सेवक को निष्पक्ष रहना चाहिए, राजनीतिक जुड़ाव से बचना चाहिए और सांप्रदायिक विवादों में शामिल होने से बचना चाहिए। इन सिद्धांतों से कोई भी विचलन लोक सेवा की अखंडता से समझौता करता है और इसकी गरिमा को कम करता है।[11]

अखिल भारतीय सेवाएँ भारत में सिविल सेवाओं की एक श्रेणी को संदर्भित करती हैं जिनके अधिकारियों की भर्ती और शुरुआत में भारत सरकार द्वारा प्रशिक्षित किया जाता है लेकिन वे केंद्र और राज्य दोनों सरकारों की सेवा करते हैं। इन सेवाओं के सदस्यों को एक विशिष्ट राज्य (संवर्ग) के लिए आवंटित किया जाता है, लेकिन वे अपने पूरे कार्यकाल के दौरान राज्य और केंद्रीय स्तर पर कार्यों के बीच घूमते रहते हैं।[12]

सरदार पटेल का मानना था कि शासन में स्थिरता बनाए रखने के लिए एक अच्छी तरह से काम करने वाली सिविल सेवा आवश्यक है। यह

जरूरी है कि उच्च पदों पर तैनात अधिकारी जनता का विश्वास और सम्मान हासिल करें। जबकि राजनीतिक नेतृत्व में समय-समय पर परिवर्तन होते रहते हैं, एक स्थायी प्रशासनिक संस्थान के रूप में सिविल सेवा को दृढ़, कुशल और सैद्धांतिक बने रहना चाहिए। इसकी अखंडता और क्षमता निरंतरता और प्रभावी शासन की आधारशिला के रूप में कार्य करती है।[13]

5.2 सैन्य एकीकरण

ब्रिटिश भारत के विभाजन के कारण इसके सशस्त्र बलों के विभाजन की आवश्यकता पड़ी, जो सांप्रदायिक तनावों से भरी एक जटिल प्रक्रिया थी। पटेल ने यह सुनिश्चित करने में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई कि भारत ने कठिन संक्रमण का प्रबंधन करते हुए पर्याप्त सैन्य क्षमताओं को बनाए रखा। उन्होंने प्रमुख सैन्य नेताओं और तकनीकी कर्मियों की सेवाएं हासिल कीं और सैन्य संपत्तियों को विभाजित करने के जटिल प्रक्रिया का निरीक्षण किया।

इससे भी महत्वपूर्ण बात यह है कि पटेल ने सैन्य मामलों में सशस्त्र बलों की पेशेवर स्वायत्तता के प्रति सम्मान बनाए रखते हुए सेना पर नागरिक नियंत्रण के स्पष्ट सिद्धांतों की स्थापना की। इस संतुलित दृष्टिकोण ने सैन्य हस्तक्षेप के बिना भारत की लोकतांत्रिक स्थिरता में उल्लेखनीय योगदान दिया है जबकि इसके विपरीत पड़ोसी पाकिस्तान जहां सैन्य तख्तापलट ने बार-बार लोकतांत्रिक शासन को बाधित किया है।

5.3 संवैधानिक योगदान

संविधान सभा और इसकी विभिन्न समितियों के सदस्य के रूप में, पटेल ने भारत के संवैधानिक ढांचे के कई प्रमुख पहलुओं को आकार दिया। प्रशासनिक सेवाओं की संरचना को आकार देने, आपातकालीन प्रावधानों को तैयार करने और पूर्व रियासतों के एकीकरण के लिए शासन ढांचे की स्थापना में उनका सबसे महत्वपूर्ण योगदान था।

आपातकालीन प्रावधानों से संबंधित संविधान के भाग पर उनका प्रभाव विशेष रूप से महत्वपूर्ण था। जबकि नेहरू जैसे उदार संविधानवादियों ने आपातकालीन शक्तियों के संभावित दुरुपयोग के बारे में चिंता व्यक्त की, पटेल ने मजबूत तंत्र के लिए तर्क दिया जो राज्य को अस्तित्व के खतरों

का प्रभावी ढंग से जवाब देने में सक्षम बनाएगा। उदार मूल्यों और सुरक्षा अनिवार्यताओं के बीच यह तनाव भारतीय संविधानवाद में एक स्थायी विषय बना हुआ है, जिसमें पटेल के आंतरिक और बाहरी खतरों के प्रति भारत की भेद्यता के व्यावहारिक मूल्यांकन ने असाधारण शक्तियों के लिए तर्क प्रदान किया है जिन्होंने राज्य को कई संकटों का सामना करने में सक्षम बनाया है।

6. बहुलवादी समाज में राष्ट्र-निर्माण

शायद पटेल की सबसे जटिल चुनौती भाषा, धर्म, जाति और क्षेत्रीय पहचान में असाधारण विविधता वाले समाज में राष्ट्रीय एकता को बढ़ावा देना था। इस चुनौती के प्रति उनके दृष्टिकोण ने उनकी दृष्टि की ताकत और सीमाएँ दोनों को प्रकट किया।

6.1 सामाजिक सद्भाव और एकता

विभाजन की हिंसा ने हिंदू-मुस्लिम संबंधों में गहरे घाव पैदा कर दिए थे। इस संवेदनशील मुद्दे पर पटेल के दृष्टिकोण ने अल्पसंख्यकों के सैद्धांतिक संरक्षण को असंवेदनशील व्यावहारिकता के साथ जोड़ा। उन्होंने भारत में रहने वाले मुसलमानों के खिलाफ प्रतिशोधात्मक हिंसा का दृढ़ता से विरोध किया, दिल्ली और अन्य शहरों में हमलों को रोकने के लिए व्यक्तिगत रूप से हस्तक्षेप किया। हालाँकि, उन्होंने धार्मिक समुदायों के लिए विशेष आवास के बजाय अधिक स्पष्ट रूप से धर्मनिरपेक्ष राज्य संरचना की भी वकालत की। पटेल ने सांप्रदायिक संबंधों के संबंध में अपने मौलिक दर्शन को व्यक्त करते हुए कहा है—

अल्पसंख्यक समुदायों की सुरक्षा और संरक्षण न केवल बहुसंख्यक आबादी का एक मौलिक कर्तव्य है, बल्कि उनके व्यापक प्रबुद्ध स्वार्थ के साथ भी मेल खाता है।[14]

इस कथन ने पटेल के इस विश्वास को समाहित किया कि अल्पसंख्यकों के अधिकारों की रक्षा करना केवल एक नैतिक अनिवार्यता नहीं है, बल्कि राष्ट्रीय स्थिरता के लिए आवश्यक है।

6.2 भाषाई पुनर्गठन

भाषा ने राष्ट्रीय एकता के लिए एक और महत्वपूर्ण चुनौती पेश की।

भारत ने सैकड़ों बोलियों के साथ चौदह प्रमुख भाषाओं (अब बाईस) को मान्यता दी। भारतीय राष्ट्रीय कांग्रेस ने लंबे समय से प्रांतों के भाषाई पुनर्गठन का वादा किया था, लेकिन जब स्वतंत्रता के बाद ऐसी मांगें तेज हो गईं, तो पटेल ने शुरू में तत्काल कार्यान्वयन का विरोध किया, इस डर से कि यह भाषाई आधार पर और विखंडन को बढ़ावा देगा।

पटेल का सतर्क दृष्टिकोण उनकी इस चिंता से उत्पन्न हुआ कि भाषाई क्षेत्रवाद नाजुक राष्ट्रीय एकता को कमजोर कर सकता है। हालाँकि, वह धीरे-धीरे उचित सुरक्षा उपायों के साथ भाषाई पुनर्गठन को स्वीकार करने की ओर बढ़े। इस मुद्दे पर उनकी विकसित स्थिति उनकी व्यावहारिक मान्यता को दर्शाती है कि लोकतांत्रिक शासन के लिए ऐसी प्रशासनिक इकाइयों की आवश्यकता होती है जो सांस्कृतिक और भाषाई वास्तविकताओं से मेल खाती हों, फिर भी राष्ट्रीय सामंजस्य के लिए तंत्र के साथ संतुलित होने की आवश्यकता होती है।

6.3 आर्थिक दृष्टि

सरदार पटेल न केवल एक प्रमुख राजनीतिक और प्रशासनिक विचारक थे, बल्कि उनके पास महत्वपूर्ण आर्थिक दूरदर्शिता भी थी। उन्हें राष्ट्रीय विकास के लिए दूरदर्शी दृष्टिकोण रखने वाले अर्थशास्त्री के रूप में माना जा सकता है। पटेल ने देश की प्रगति के लिए एक मौलिक आवश्यकता के रूप में आर्थिक विकास पर जोर दिया और घरेलू मांगों को पूरा करने के लिए वस्तुओं के उत्पादन में वृद्धि की वकालत की। उन्होंने इस प्रक्रिया में निजी निवेशकों की महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका को पहचाना। नतीजतन, उन्होंने उन नीतियों का समर्थन किया जो निजी निवेश को प्रोत्साहित करती थीं। इसके अतिरिक्त, पटेल आर्थिक विस्तार को बढ़ावा देने के लिए उत्पादन, व्यापार और वाणिज्य पर प्रतिबंधों को कम करने के प्रस्तावक थे। उन्होंने राष्ट्रीय आत्मनिर्भरता प्राप्त करने के साधन के रूप में आयात प्रतिस्थापन के महत्व को भी रेखांकित किया।[15]

सरदार पटेल के सभी आर्थिक विचार ध्यान देने योग्य हैं क्योंकि भारत का लक्ष्य दुनिया की शीर्ष अर्थव्यवस्थाओं में से एक बनना है जो पहले ही सबसे तेजी से विकासशील अर्थव्यवस्था का दर्जा हासिल कर चुका है।

7. मूल्यांकन

आधुनिक भारत में सरदार वल्लभभाई पटेल के योगदान को संरचनात्मक नींव प्रदान करने के रूप में संक्षेप में प्रस्तुत किया जा सकता है, जिस पर भारतीय लोकतंत्र के आदर्शों का निर्माण किया जा सकता है। अगर गांधी ने भारत की नैतिक अंतरात्मा और नेहरू ने इसकी दूरदर्शी आवाज के रूप में कार्य किया, पटेल राष्ट्र के राजनीतिक और प्रशासनिक समेकन के प्रमुख वास्तुकार के रूप में उभरे। रियासतों के उनके सफल एकीकरण ने क्षेत्रीय विखंडन को रोक दिया, जिससे आधुनिक भारत की भौगोलिक एकता की नींव पड़ी। उनके प्रशासनिक सुधारों ने शासन संरचना को संस्थागत बना दिया, जिसने कई चुनौतियों के बावजूद भारतीय लोकतंत्र के लचीलेपन को सुनिश्चित किया है। इसके अलावा, कुछ सीमाओं के बावजूद, उनके राष्ट्र-निर्माण के प्रयासों ने एक साझा नागरिक पहचान के विकास में योगदान दिया जो सांप्रदायिक विभाजन से परे फैली हुई थी।

सरदार पटेल के निधन के बाद, द मैनचेस्टर गार्जियन ने आधुनिक भारत को आकार देने में उनकी महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका पर टिप्पणी की: ''पटेल के बिना, गांधी की दृष्टि में व्यावहारिक प्रभाव की कमी होती, और नेहरू के आदर्शवाद की पहुंच अधिक सीमित होती।'' पटेल ने न केवल स्वतंत्रता संग्राम के संघर्ष में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई, बल्कि नए स्वतंत्र राज्य के निर्माण में भी महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई। एक ही व्यक्ति के लिए एक क्रांतिकारी और एक राजनेता दोनों के रूप में उत्कृष्टता प्राप्त करना दुर्लभ है हालाँकि, सरदार पटेल इस मानदंड के लिए एक उल्लेखनीय अपवाद थे।[16]

चेकोस्लोवाकिया के पूर्व राष्ट्रपति एडवर्ड बेनेस ने एक लेख में एक आदर्श राजनेता की अपनी अवधारणा दी, उन्होंने कहा, ''एक आदर्श राजनेता में वास्तविक लोकतांत्रिक नेता के सभी गुणों के साथ-साथ अधिनायकवादी नेता के कुछ गुण भी होने चाहिए।'' अपनी बात को स्पष्ट करते हुए डॉ. बेनेस ने कहा, ''वह विश्लेषण, तर्क और विज्ञान के व्यक्ति से कुछ अधिक होना चाहिए, वह न केवल एक बौद्धिक व्यक्ति होना चाहिए बल्कि निर्णय और साहस का भी व्यक्ति होना चाहिए।''[17] इस प्रकार आप मूल्याङ्कन कर सकते है कि भारत में सरदार वल्लभभाई उन नेताओं में से एक हैं जो उपरोक्त सभी आवश्यकताओं को पूरा करते हैं।

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अखिल वर्मा
असिस्टेंट प्रोफेसर
इतिहास विभाग
समस्तीपुर कॉलेज, समस्तीपुर
ललित नारायण
मिथिला विश्वविद्यालय, दरभंगा

डॉ. अमीर अली खान
एसोसिएट प्रोफेसर
इतिहास विभाग
ललित नारायण
मिथिला विश्वविद्यालय
दरभंगा

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राष्ट्रीय आन्दोलन में बीकानेर का योगदान

● डॉ. मुकेश हर्ष

बीकानेर में भी अन्य राजपूताना रियासतों की भाँति 1857 में हुई घटनाओं के बाद एकबारगी चुप्पी छा गई। लेकिन यह खामोशी केवल आभासी थी, जिस प्रकार अंगारों के ऊपर गहरी राख आ जाती है। इस राख को हटाने का कार्य देश में चल रहे आन्दोलनों जैसे—1905 में बंगभंग, आर्य समाज की गतिविधियाँ, गरम दल के नेताओं के ओजस्वी भाषणों तत्पश्चात्, लॉर्ड मिण्टो और देशी रियासतों के शासकों द्वारा अपनाई गई दमनकारी कार्य शैली ने किया। इस स्वतंत्रता की आग को प्रजामण्डल व प्रजा परिषद जैसी संस्थाओं ने भड़काया। कांगड़ काण्ड, दूधवाखारा किसान आन्दोलन और राजगढ़ आन्दोलन इस तथ्य के साक्षी हैं। बीकानेर में 1857 से 1949 तक जितने भी आन्दोलन एवं जन जागृति फैलाने के प्रयास हुए, उसमें अनगिनत लोगों ने अपना प्रत्यक्ष-परोक्ष योगदान दिया। इन आन्दोलनकारियों में से कई ऐसे व्यक्ति भी थे, जिन्होंने स्वतंत्रता आन्दोलन के दौरान अपना सब कुछ न्यौछावर कर दिया। जेलों में दिल दहला देने वाली कठोर यातनाएँ भुगतने के साथ राज्य से निर्वासित होकर एकांकी जीवन व्यतीत किया व अपार कष्ट झेले। ये ऐसे व्यक्ति थे जिनकी बात में बल था तथा जिनके एक ही इशारे पर जनता बड़ी से बड़ी कुर्बानी देने को तैयार हो जाती थी। ऐसे व्यक्तियों को अगर लोक नेताओं की श्रेणी में रखा जाए तो अतिशयोक्ति नहीं होगी। ऐसे बीकानेर रियासत के स्वतंत्रता संग्राम में माननीय रघुवरदयाल गोयल, दाऊदयाल आचार्य, पं. वैद्य गंगादत रंगा, सत्यनारायण पारीक, वैद्य मघाराम, रामनारायण शर्मा आदि स्वतंत्रता सेनानी थे। ऐसे अनेकों स्वतंत्रता सेनानियों के विचारों व कार्यों ने इस आजादी के आंदोलन को गति प्रदान की।

यद्यपि सरकार ने केवल जेल यात्रा करने व मार खाने वालों को ही स्वतंत्रता सेनानी माना है। इसके अलावा कई नेताओं से अधमरी हालत में हस्ताक्षर

करवाकर कमजोर भी साबित करवाने का प्रयास किया, परन्तु वे सभी व्यक्ति इस महान स्वतंत्रता आन्दोलन रूपी यज्ञ में भस्मसात होने वाली विभूतियां व निधि हैं। इसके अलावा वे व्यक्ति भी स्वतंत्रता सेनानी कहलाने के योग्य हैं, जिन्होंने किसी भी उपाय से चाहे खादी पहनकर, देश भक्ति के गीत गाकर या स्वतंत्रता सेनानियों को किसी भी प्रकार का सहयोग देकर इस आन्दोलन को मजबूत बनाया हो चाहे वे जेल गए हों या नहीं वे सभी स्वतंत्रता सेनानी की श्रेणी में आते हैं इस क्रम में प्रमुख स्वतंत्रता सेनानियों के बारे में जानकारी का संकलन किया गया है।

बीकानेर के प्रमुख स्वतन्त्रता सेनानियों का परिचय एवं योगदान

पं. चन्दनमल बहड़

बीकानेर में स्वतन्त्रता आन्दोलन की चेतना को न केवल जागृत करने वरन् उसे गतिशील बनाकर एक मुकाम पर पहुंचाने वाले कोई थे तो वे थे पं. चन्दनमल बहड़। बीकानेर रियासत के चूरू निवासी पं. चन्दनमल बहड़ का जन्म अपने ननिहाल रामगढ़ शेखावटी में हुआ था। आपकी शिक्षा दीक्षा चूरू के तत्कालीन सुप्रसिद्ध विद्वान महर्षि कल्प पं. कन्हैयालाल ढ़ण्ढ़ के सानिध्य में हुई।[1] आपको अंग्रेजी, बंग्ला, गुजराती व मराठी भाषाओं का अच्छा ज्ञान था। आपने पं. कन्हैयालाल ढ़ण्ढ़ द्वारा ही संस्थापित समाज सेवा और जन जागृति की प्रमुख संस्था सर्वहितकारिणी सभा, चूरू के माध्यम से सार्वजनिक जीवन में प्रवेश किया।[2] पं. बहड़ इस संस्था के माध्यम से महिलाओं में शिक्षा प्रसार, वंचित वर्ग के जीवन स्तर को ऊंचा उठाना, प्राकृतिक और देवी प्रकोपों से पीड़ितों की सेवा आदि रचनात्मक कार्यों में स्वामी गोपालदास के साथ समर्पित भाव से जुट गए। इसी दौरान श्री बहड़ को सर्वश्री अर्जुनलाल सेठी, विजय सिंह पथिक, हरिभाऊ उपाध्याय, जयनारायण व्यास, रामनारायण चौधरी और जमनालाल बजाज के साथ रहकर कार्य करने का सौभाग्य प्राप्त हुआ।[3] सन् 1921 में महात्मा गांधी ने जब रोलट एक्ट के विरोध में देश भर में उपवास रखने की अपील की तो बहड़ जी ने भी गांधी जी के निर्देशानुसार उपवास रखकर सक्रिय राजनीति में पदार्पण किया।[4] इस समय रियासतों में भाषण, लेखन एवं राजनीतिक संगठन बनाने की किसी प्रकार की

स्वतन्त्रता नहीं थी। ऐसी गतिविधियों में संलग्न व्यक्ति को राजद्रोह का अपराधी माना जाता था। पं. बहड़ को इस बात का पूरा ज्ञान था। पं. बहड़ लोकतन्त्र के प्रबल समर्थक थे। उनका मत था कि नगरपालिकाएं ही स्वराज्य की नींव हैं। उन्होंने हितकारी दल बनाकर 1929 में चूरू नगरपालिका के चुनावों में भाग लिया जिसमें वे अपने साथियों सहित नगरपालिका के सदस्य चुने गए।[5] इन्हीं के आन्दोलन के परिणाम स्वरूप बीकानेर रियासत में अनिवार्य शिक्षा अधिनियम बना। पं. बहड़ और उनके साथियों ने 26 जनवरी, 1930 ई. को चूरू के सर्वोच्च स्थल धर्मस्तूप पर तिरंगा झण्डा फहराया जो चूरू के तिरंगा झण्डा कांड के नाम से प्रसिद्ध हुआ तथा बीकानेर रियासत में तहलका मच गया।[6] इसी कांड के कारण पं. बहड़ नगरपालिका की सदस्यता से पृथक कर दिए गए और उन पर फिर कभी सदस्य न हो सकने की पाबन्दी लगा दी गई।[7]

पं. बहड़ ने अपने साथी भालचन्द के साथ बिड़ला हाऊस में पं. मदन मोहन मालवीय को यह घटना बताई तो मालवीय जी ने कहा–''आप लोगों ने सर गंगासिंह के राज्य में झण्डा फहराकर ग़जब का काम किया है। यह तो सोये हुए शेर की पूंछ पर पांव रखने जैसा कार्य है।''[8] रियासत में हुई प्रतिक्रिया एवं मालवीय जी के पत्राचार द्वारा पं. बहड़ जी एवं उनके साथियों की सदस्यता पुनः बहाल कर दी गई। इस घटना ने पूरी रियासत के नवयुवकों में नई ऊर्जा व उत्तेजना का संचार किया।[9]

पं. बहड़ ने आगरा की कष्ट निवारण समिति के सचिव श्री रामस्वरूप शर्मा, जिनका सम्बन्ध श्री हरिभाऊ उपाध्याय, श्री विजय सिंह पथिक तथा श्री रामनारायण चौधरी से था, के माध्यम से एक खुली चिट्ठी महाराजा बीकानेर के विरुद्ध प्रकाशित करवाई।[10]

पं. बहड़ ने सत्यनारायण सर्राफ के साथ मिलकर एक घोषणा पत्र ''राजस्थानियों का उद्धार कैसे हो?'' शीर्षक से तैयार किया जिसे विजय सिंह पथिक, बाबा नृसिंह दास, श्री अभिन्न हरि, श्री देवराज और श्री लक्ष्मीचन्द सुराणा के नाम से प्रकाशित कराया गया। यह घोषणा पत्र जून, 1931 में देशी राज्य लोक परिषद के अधिवेशन में बांटा गया।[11] देशी रियासतों की स्थिति को लेकर पं. बहड़ ने एक पत्र पं. जवाहर लाल नेहरू के पास भिजवाया। इस पत्र का उत्तर देते हुए पं. नेहरू ने लिखा कि–''कांग्रेस की नीति देशी राज्यों में हस्तक्षेप की नहीं है लेकिन यह कहना भी सही नहीं है कि हम इस नीति को

जारी रखना चाहते हैं, किन्तु इसके लिए रियासती जनता को खुद उठ खड़ा होना होगा और अत्याचारों के मुकाबले के लिए आन्दोलन करना होगा। हम उन लोगों की कोई मदद नहीं कर सकते जो खुद कुछ न करते हों।''[12]

पं. बहड़ के अथक प्रयत्नों से 1931 ई. आयोजित द्वितीय गोलमेज सम्मेलन में अखिल भारतीय देशी राज्य लोक परिषद् के प्रतिनिधि मण्डल को बीकानेर रियासत के जुल्मों का कच्चा चिट्ठा तैयार करके 18 पृष्ठों की ''बीकानेर एक दिग्दर्शन'' शीर्षक की पुस्तिका तैयार करके दी गई।[13] इस पुस्तिका के सम्मेलन के अध्यक्ष लॉर्ड सैंकी के हाथ में पहुंचने[14], उसके द्वारा पुस्तिका पर टिप्पणी लिखकर[15] महाराजा गंगासिंह को देने के कारण बीकानेर राजद्रोह एवं षड्यंत्र केस की कार्यवाही हुई। इस बीकानेर राजद्रोह एवं षड्यंत्र केस में पं. बहड़ भी एक अभियुक्त बनाए गए। फलस्वरूप पं. बहड़ को 15 जनवरी, 1932 ई. को चूरू में गिरफ्तार कर लिया गया।[16]

गिरफ्तारी के तीन माह तक हवालात में पुलिस इनका लगातार रिमाण्ड लेती रही जबकि रियासत की ओर से ऐसी हिदायत थी कि कोई भी फौजदारी मुकदमा 6 सप्ताह से ज्यादा बकाया में न निकले।[17] अंत में 13 अप्रेल, 1932 ई. को जिला जज बाबू बृजकिशोर चतुर्वेदी की अदालत में केस दायर किया गया।[18] इन पर हस्ब जाब्ता कार्यवाही जेर दफा 377 (ग), 124 (क) तथा 120 (ख) मजमुआ ताजीरात बीकानेर अमल में लाई गई।[19] गिरफ्तारी के तीन माह में पं. बहड़ को जेल में तरह-तरह से प्रताड़ित किया गया एवं अमानुषिक यातनाएं दी गई।[20] 15 जनवरी, 1934 को सुनाए गए फैसले के अनुसार पं. चन्दनमल बहड़ को ढ़ाई वर्ष की कैद की सजा सुनाई गई।[21] आपको स्वतन्त्रता के पच्चीसवें वर्ष पर स्वतन्त्रता संग्राम में स्मरणीय योगदान हेतु राष्ट्र की ओर से तत्कालीन प्रधानमंत्री श्रीमती इन्दिरा गांधी ने 15 अगस्त, 1972 ई. को दिल्ली के प्रसिद्ध लाल किले के दीवाने खास के गरिमामय समारोह में ''ताम्र पत्र'' भेंटकर आपकी सेवाओं के प्रति सम्मान प्रकट किया तथा चूरू में आपका उल्लेख युक्त शिलालेख लगाया गया जो वर्तमान में भी अवस्थित है।

बाबू मुक्ता प्रसाद वकील

बाबू मुक्ता प्रसाद वकील को बीकानेर की जन जागृति का पितामह

कहना चाहिए। वे अत्यन्त साहसी, निर्भीक और स्पष्टवादी राजनेता थे। सदा राज्य की आंखों में खटकते रहते थे।[22] बाबू मुक्ता प्रसाद वकील बीकानेर के अत्यन्त लोकप्रिय लोक नेता थे। धनी-मानी, अमीर-गरीब सभी आपका एक सा सम्मान करते थे। दिन रात आप जनसेवा में रत रहते थे। महाराजा गंगासिंह के काल में किसी प्रत्यक्ष राजनीतिक संस्था की स्थापना सम्भव न हो सकने के कारण आपने सेवा की भावना से प्रेरित होकर सन् 1920 में ''सद् विद्याप्रचारिणी सभा'' की स्थापना की और जनता में राजनीतिक जागृति पैदा करने का श्री गणेश किया।[23] इसके लिए आपने सभा की ओर से देश सुधार के नाटक खेलने का आयोजन किया। ये नाटक थे ''धर्म विजय'' तथा ''सत्य विजय''। इनमें विदेशी वस्त्रों की होली जलाने के साथ ''महात्मा गांधी की जय'' के नारे भी लगा दिए जाते थे।[24] इसलिए मुक्ता प्रसाद जी को बुलाकर ऐसे नाटकों का आयोजन करने से रोका गया। नाटकों की रिहर्सल उच्च पुलिस अधिकारियों को दिखलाने के बाद ही उनका मंचन किया जाए, ऐसी हिदायत दी गई।[25] आपने एक और संगठन ''मित्र मण्डल'' की भी स्थापना की। जनता की सेवा मण्डल का मुख्य काम था। कार्तिक मास में कोलायतजी मेले पर भी मण्डल का कैम्प लगाकर सेवा करते, शुद्ध खाद्य पदार्थों की दुकान लगाते थे। हरिजनों में विशेष रूप से काम किया जाता था। लावारिश लाशों के दाह संस्कार करने का काम भी यह मण्डल करता था।[26] इस मित्र मण्डल में मुक्ता प्रसाद जी के साथ उनके प्रबुद्ध नागरिक, प्रमुख कार्यकर्ता के रूप में आ जुड़े थे जिनमें प्रमुख थे पं. सूर्यकरण आचार्य एम.ए., वकील बनारसी दास, गिरधर प्रसाद, रावतमल जी वकील, भीकाराम जी वकील, चम्पालाल जी बक्शी, बाबू भोलाराम जी आदि।[27]

1921 में ब्रिटिश भारत में असहयोग आन्दोलन का सूत्रपात होने पर बीकानेर में भी वकील साहब की प्रेरणा पर उनके ही अहाते में आपके साथियों ने विदेशी कपड़े की होली जलाई और शुद्ध खादी पहनने का व्रत लिया गया।[28]

बीकानेर में खादी का काम भी आपकी ओर से शुरू किया गया और खादी भण्डार भी खोला गया। लोगों ने उत्साहित होकर कारखाने खोले। इसी सन्दर्भ में 1921 में बाबू मुक्ताप्रसाद ने तत्कालीन महाराज कुमार सादुल सिंह को एक दरख्वास्त देकर प्रार्थना की थी कि राज्य में गांव गांव में कपड़ा

बनाने की सुविधा और साधन की व्यवस्था राज्य की ओर से हो जाए तो गरीबों को मजदूरी मिलेगी और अकाल के समय तो गरीबों को बहुत बड़ी राहत मिलेगी। इस निर्दोष प्रार्थना में भी महाराज कुमार साहब को राजनीति और राजद्रोह की गंध आई जो उनके निर्णय से साफ नजर आती है। उनका निर्णय था–''यह प्रार्थना पत्र उतना निर्दोष नहीं है जितना दिखाई देता है। प्रार्थी गांधीवाद का प्रवचन कर रहा है और चाहता है कि हम रियासत में चरखे का प्रवेश करके गांधीवाद के सिद्धान्तों का प्रचार करें। मुझे प्रतीत होता है कि यह एक राजनैतिक चाल है जिसमें फंस जाना उचित नहीं होगा।''[29]

1932 के बीकानेर राजद्रोह एवं षड्यंत्र केस के प्रसिद्ध मुकदमे में पैरवी करने का रियासत भर में आप ही में नैतिक साहस था। आपके साथी थे रघुवर दयाल गोयल।[30] मुकदमे की पैरवी करने से पूर्व मुक्ताप्रसाद जी अपने मित्रों के साथ आर्थिक सहायता हेतु बम्बई के धनाढ्य लोगों से भी मिले। इसके साथ ही अखिल भारतीय देशी राज्य लोक परिषद् के नेता अमृत लाल सेठ, मणीशंकर त्रिवेदी तथा पी.एल. चूड़गर से भी इस मुकदमे के सम्बन्ध में सलाह ली।[31] इसी समय से आप बीकानेर शासन की आंख की किरकिरी बन गए।

1936 में आपकी प्रेरणा पर ही प्रजा मण्डल की स्थापना की गई। आप हरिजन सेवा में संलग्न होने से प्रजा मण्डल के सदस्य नहीं बने थे लेकिन उसको आपकी पूरी सहायता एवं समर्थन प्राप्त था।[32] आपका विचार था कि इस संस्था के द्वारा जनता की शिकायतों और उचित मांगों के सम्बन्ध में आवाज उठाई जाए तथा महाराज और राज्य के अन्य अधिकारियों के सामने जनता के कष्टों को रखा जाए, जिससे राज्य के निवासियों का कुछ भला हो। भाई साहब (बाबू मुक्ता प्रसाद वकील) के सुझाव पर यह निश्चय हुआ कि श्री मघाराम को नवीन संस्था का प्रधान और लक्ष्मण दास को मंत्री बना दिया जाए। संस्था के सदस्य बनाने का काम जारी हो गया और 15-16 सदस्य बनते ही चुनाव करने का आयोजन कर लिया।[33]

प्रजा मण्डल के निर्माण होने के बाद उत्पीड़न की शिकायतों का अम्बार लग गया। महाराजा एवं आग बबूले प्रशासन ने इनसे निपटने का कार्य एक अंग्रेज अधिकारी हैमिल्टन हार्डिंग को दिया। हैमिल्टन हार्डिंग ने पूरी जांच करके रिपोर्ट की कि सारी गड़बड़ियां प्रजा मण्डल के अध्यक्ष मघाराम वैद्य

द्वारा करवाई जाती है। मघाराम जी के घर की तलाशी के दौरान् 1932 के षड्यंत्र केस के अभियुक्त रहे वकील सत्यनारायण सर्राफ के कुछ पत्र मिले जिनमें प्रजा मण्डल का भी उल्लेख था। परिणाम स्वरूप रियासती प्रशासन ने यह निर्णय निकाला कि प्रजा मण्डल बनाना और चलाना मघाराम जैसे बौद्धिक स्तर के व्यक्ति के बूते का काम न होकर इसके पीछे दो बुद्धि जीवियों यानि बाबू मुक्ताप्रसाद व षड्यंत्र केस के नायक लाला सत्यनारायण सर्राफ का दिमाग काम कर रहा था।[34] इसी मध्य बाबू मुक्ताप्रसाद ने बीकानेर रियासत की राजनीतिक स्थिति का खुलासा करने के लिए सत्यनारायण सर्राफ को दिल्ली में एक प्रेस लगाने की योजना बनाकर दी। हालांकि सर्राफ दिल्ली पहुंच भी गए लेकिन बाबू मुक्ता प्रसाद उन्हें धन मुहैया नहीं करवा पाए। अतः यह योजना असफल हो गई।[35] जब बाबू मुक्ता प्रसाद एवं उनके साथियों की इस योजना का रियासती सरकार को ज्ञान हुआ तो कौंसिल ने बीकानेर पब्लिक सेटी एक्ट नं. 3, सन् 1932 के तहत मघाराम, लक्ष्मीदास, सत्यनारायण सर्राफ सहित बाबू मुक्ता प्रसाद को 17 मार्च, 1937 की अर्धरात्रि तक बीकानेर के देश निकाले का आदेश दे दिया।[36]

बाबू मुक्ता प्रसाद के घर पर जनता काफी संख्या में एकत्र हो गई। उनका विदाई का दृश्य अपूर्व था। सरकारी नौकर तक उनसे मिलने आए। उस दिन स्टेशन पर बीकानेर की जनता उमड़ पड़ी। अनेक व्यक्ति चीलो स्टेशन तक पहुंचाने गए। श्री बुलाकीदास व्यास तो दिल्ली तक साथ ही रहे। दिल्ली पहुंच कर सब लोग आनन्द राज सुराणा के यहां ठहरे। संयोग से उस समय दिल्ली में अखिल भारतीय कांग्रेस कमेटी की बैठक हो रही थी। अतः इन लोगों ने बीकानेर की स्थिति के सम्बन्ध में राष्ट्रीय नेताओं पं. नेहरू एवं सरदार पटेल और विशेषकर देशी राज्य लोक परिषद के प्रधान डॉ. पट्टाभिसीतारमैया को भी पूरी जानकारी दी।[37] दिल्ली में राजस्थानी निवासियों की सभा हुई। उक्त सभा में बीकानेर में चलने वाले दमन की घोर निन्दा की गई। सभा में गणमान्य व्यक्ति उपस्थित थे। बीकानेर में चलने वाले दमन के सम्बन्ध में अर्जुन, हिन्दुस्तान, लोकमान्य नवज्योति और राजस्थान आदि पत्रों में समाचार, लेख, सम्पादकीय टिप्पणियां प्रकाशित हुई।[38]

22 मार्च 1937 को बाबू मुक्ता प्रसाद अपने मूल निवास अलीगढ़ चले गए। फिर पीठ फेरकर बीकानेर की ओर कभी नहीं देखा क्योंकि उनकी

यह मान्यता रही कि मैं तो बीकानेर वासियों की सेवा ही करता था, फिर भी यदि राजा नहीं चाहता तो सेवा करने के लिए लड़ाई क्यों मोल लूं।[39] तत्पश्चात् उनका राजनीति की ओर कोई रूझान नहीं रहा। फिर भी जब कभी बीकानेर के नेता अलीगढ़ से गुजरते तो बाबू मुक्ता प्रसाद से सलाह मशविरा करते। 11 अगस्त, 1942 को बम्बई की कांग्रेस महासमिति की बैठक में भाग लेकर लौटते समय खूबराम सर्राफ व बाबू रघुवर दयाल गोयल उनसे अलीगढ़ में मिले थे।[40]

बाबू मुक्ता प्रसाद ने बीकानेर से अपने निर्वासन के बारे में कभी भी रियासती सरकार से कोई शिकायत नहीं की। उनके देश निकाले के बाद भी उनका पुत्र जो बीकानेर में ही कॉलेज में पढ़ता था, उसे बेवजह तंग न करने का आग्रह किया था।[41]

महाराजा गंगासिंह के 2 फरवरी, 1943 को निधन के पश्चात् 13 फरवरी, 1943 को नए महाराजा सादुलसिंह ने गद्दी पर बैठने के पश्चात् सद्भावनावश बन्दियों की मुक्ति के साथ बाबू मुक्ता प्रसाद का देश निकाला भी रद्द कर दिया। अलीगढ़ में जब उनके निर्वासन रद्द की सूचना पहुंची तब उनकी शवयात्रा की तैयारियां हो रही थी।[42]

श्री रघुवर दयाल गोयल

न केवल परिवार एवं परिजन-स्वजन बल्कि सार्वजनिक कार्यकर्ताओं और आम जनता में भी ''बाबू जी'' के नाम से प्रसिद्ध श्री रघुवर दयाल गोयल एक ऐसे व्यक्ति थे जिन पर देश, राजस्थान और विशेषतः बीकानेर को सदा गर्व रहेगा। आपका जन्म शहर के प्रसिद्ध एवं प्रथम श्रेणी वकील और तत्कालीन बीकानेर राज्य एसेम्बली के सदस्य श्री झमनलाल जी गोयल के घर हुआ। आपकी प्रारम्भिक शिक्षा बीकानेर में ही मोहता मूलचन्द विद्यालय एवं उच्च शिक्षा डूंगर महाविद्यालय में हुई। वहीं डॉ. सम्पूर्णानन्द जैसे महान् राष्ट्रवादी गुरूओं से आपने प्रारम्भ से ही राष्ट्रीयता के पाठ पढ़े।[43] कॉलेज जीवन में ही आपने खादी और टोपी का परिधान धारण कर लिया था जिसके कारण प्रिंस ऑफ वेल्स के बीकानेर आगमन पर स्वागतार्थ छात्रों की पंक्ति में आपको खड़ा नहीं किया गया क्योंकि ये अपनी खादी की टोपी छोड़ने को तैयार नहीं थे।[44] सन् 1928 में आपने वकालत शुरू

की। आपने 1929 के कांग्रेस के लाहौर अधिवेशन में भाग लिया था।[45] जिसमें पं. जवाहरलाल नेहरू ने प्रथम बार भारत के लिए पूर्ण स्वतन्त्रता की मांग की घोषणा की और प्रतिवर्ष 26 जनवरी को स्वतन्त्रता दिवस मनाने का आह्वान किया। वकालत के दौरान ही गोयल जी का सम्पर्क बीकानेर में ही वकालत कर रहे एक अन्य वकील बाबू मुक्ता प्रसाद से हुआ। ये दोनों ही भादरा के सत्यनारायण सर्राफ जो राज्य की नीतियों के आलोचक थे, के सम्पर्क में आए।[46] वकालत प्रारम्भ करने के चार वर्ष बाद ही गोयल जी के समक्ष एक निर्णायक चुनौती आई जिसे आपने साहसपूर्ण स्वीकार किया। लाहौर अधिवेशन से ही उनको मातृभूमि की स्वतन्त्रता के लिए कुछ कर गुजरने का संकल्प मिला। सन् 1932 में चूरू के स्वामी गोपालदास, पं. चन्दनमल बहड़, सत्यनारायण सर्राफ आदि के खिलाफ रियासत के डी.आई.जी. कुंवर सबल सिंह ने 13 जनवरी, 1932 को एक मुकदमा दायर किया जो ''बीकानेर राजद्रोह एवं षड्यंत्र केस'' के नाम से प्रसिद्ध होकर जाना जाता है। वह समय देशी राज्यों में राजाओं के जुल्म एवं आतंक का जमाना था। इसलिए इस मुकदमे की पैरवी के लिए बीकानेर रियासत के वकीलों में नैतिक साहस नहीं आया। इस चुनौती का सामना गोयल जी एवं उनके मित्र बाबू मुक्ता प्रसाद जी ने मिलकर किया और उन्होंने अभियुक्तों की ओर से साहसपूर्वक पैरवी की। परिणाम स्वरूप गोयल जी महाराजा गंगासिंह की आंख की किरकिरी बन गए और रियासत की नौकरशाही भी उनकी शत्रु बन गई।[47]

बाबू मुक्ताप्रसाद के कारण गोयल जी का सम्पर्क वैद्य मघाराम एवं लक्ष्मीदास स्वामी से भी हो गया। सन् 1936 में जब इन लोगों ने पहली बार बीकानेर में प्रजा मण्डल की स्थापना की तो उनको इसमें गोयल जी का भी सहयोग मिला।[48] राज्य सरकार द्वारा उठाए जा रहे निरंकुश कदमों का सामना करने में सक्षम कार्यकर्ताओं को तैयार करने के उद्देश्य से आपने अपने साथियों के साथ मिलकर सन् 1939 में एक व्यायामशाला की स्थापना की।[49] इसी समय आपने अपने अन्य मित्र रावतमल पारीक, ईश्वरदयाल गोयल, देवीदत्त पंत आदि के साथ मिलकर झांसी स्थित ''हिन्द केसरी'' नामक अखबार के सम्पादक मोहम्मद शेर खान को बीकानेर में पूर्व में स्थापित निष्क्रिय हो गए प्रजा मण्डल के स्थान पर नया प्रजा मण्डल स्थापित करने में सहयोग देने हेतु बीकानेर आने का निमन्त्रण दिया। मोहम्मद शेर खान 23 जुलाई, 1939 को

बीकानेर आए किन्तु उस समय उनकी प्रजा मण्डल स्थापित करने की योजना सफल नहीं हो सकी।[50]

अक्टूबर, 1939 में आपने गंगादास सेवग, देवीदत्त पंत और रावतमल पारीक के साथ मिलकर बीकानेर स्टेशन के सामने ''श्री गंगा हरिजन होटल'' खोला। इस का उद्देश्य हरिजनों के उद्धार सम्बन्धी कार्यक्रमों को बढ़ाने के साथ राजनीतिक मंत्रणा का स्थान भी बनाना था किन्तु सरकार की दमनात्मक कार्यवाही के कारण यह होटल शीघ्र ही बन्द हो गया।[51]

सन् 1940 में गोयल जी ने अपने मित्रों के सहयोग से आगरा स्थित शहर कांग्रेस के भूतपूर्व अध्यक्ष डॉ. आनन्द स्वरूप सिंघल को बीकानेर की राजनीतिक स्थिति का अध्ययन करने हेतु बीकानेर आने का निमन्त्रण दिया। इस पर सिंघल ने बीकानेर यात्रा करके 1 सितम्बर, 1940 के दैनिक हिन्दुस्तान के अंक में ''मेरी बीकानेर यात्रा'' नाम से एक लेख छपवाया जिसमें बीकानेर रियासत के प्रशासन की कड़ी आलोचना की गई थी।[52] सन् 1940 में ही जब बीकानेर में नगरपालिका चुनाव हुए तो आपने बीकानेर से ''प्रोगेसिव पार्टी'' के नाम से कुछ उम्मीदवार खड़े करने का निश्चय किया। आप स्वयं भी चुनाव में खड़े हुए किन्तु किसी तकनीकी कमी के कारण आपका नामांकन पत्र रद्द कर दिया गया। इसी मध्य आप बीकानेर राज्य के सरकारी विभागों में व्याप्त भ्रष्टाचार के लेख लिखते रहे। 14 अगस्त, 1939 को साप्ताहिक ''राजस्थान'' में आपने ''बीकानेर राज्य में यातायात पुलिस में भ्रष्टाचार'' नाम से लेख लिखा। इसी प्रकार उसी अखबार के एक अन्य अंक में ''विभागों द्वारा दिए गए आश्वासन बेकार'' नाम से एक लेख जिसमें राज्य के जनरल रिकार्ड ऑफिसर द्वारा जनता को नकलें जारी करने में होने वाले भ्रष्टाचार की आलोचना की गई।[53]

1942 के प्रारम्भ में गोयल जी ने सत्यनारायण सर्राफ व देवीदत्त पंत के सहयोग से उत्तरदायी शासन की मांग पर जोर देने के लिए बीकानेर रियासत में राजनीतिक गतिविधियों को बढ़ाने और पुनः राजनीतिक संगठन स्थापित करने का निश्चय किया। इसके लिए आपने खादी भण्डार जो बीकानेर में गोविन्दगढ़ चरखा संघ की एक शाखा के रूप में काम करता था, के माध्यम से प्रचार कार्य को हाथ में लिया। अप्रेल, 1942 में आपने ''अखिल भारतीय कांग्रेस कमेटी'' के आदेश पर बीकानेर नगर में ''राष्ट्रीय सप्ताह'' का आयोजन

किया। इसके अन्तर्गत 10 अप्रेल, 1942 को नगर में खादी बाड़े में संगीत सम्मेलन और 12 अप्रेल को चरखा चलाने की प्रतिस्पर्द्धा का आयोजन किया गया। सप्ताह के अन्तिम दिन 13 अप्रेल को कांग्रेस के कार्यकर्ताओं ने एक आम सभा करने का प्रयत्न किया किन्तु सरकार द्वारा इस पर प्रतिबन्ध लगा दिए जाने के कारण यह सभा नहीं हो सकी।[54] 27 अप्रेल को गोयल जी जयपुर जाकर हीरालाल शास्त्री से मिले और राजपुताना कार्यकर्ताओं की मीटिंग में भाग लिया। इस मीटिंग में आपने बीकानेर में आम सभा न करने देने के लिए राज्य सरकार की आलोचना के साथ भारत विभाजन की क्रिप्स योजना की भी आलोचना की।

28 जून, 1942 को गोयल जी ने जोधपुर में द्वारका दास वकील के घर हुई एक गुप्त मीटिंग में भाग लिया जिसमें बाल मुकुन्द बिस्सा की मृत्यु पर शोक प्रस्ताव पास किया गया। श्री बिस्सा की मृत्यु का बीकानेर में भी काफी प्रचार किया गया और जोधपुर में आवश्यकता के समय बीकानेर से कुछ स्वयं सेवकों को सत्याग्रह के लिए भी भेजा गया।[55]

22 जुलाई, 1942 को वह दिन भी आ पहुंचा जब बीकानेर के उत्साही देशभक्तों ने बाबू जी (गोयल जी) की प्रेरणा से आपकी ही अध्यक्षता में ''बीकानेर राज्य प्रजा परिषद'' की स्थापना हुई।[56] इससे तत्कालीन महाराजा गंगासिंह बौखला उठे। 29 जुलाई, 1942 को गोयल जी को बीकानेर पब्लिक सेटी एक्ट, 1932 के तहत गिरफ्तार कर बीकानेर रियासत से निर्वासित करने का आदेश दे दिया गया। श्रीराम आचार्य ने तिलक लगाकर उन्हें पुराने घर से वन्दे मातरम् के नारे लगाते हुए विदाई दी। आई.जी. स्वयं अपनी गाड़ी में बिठाकर उन्हें पलाना स्टेशन ले गए और वहां से गाड़ी में बिठाकर देश निकाला (निर्वासन) दे दिया।[57] 30 जुलाई, 1942 को गोयल जी जयपुर चले गए।

जयपुर में गोयल जी ने प्रजा मण्डल के कार्यकर्ताओं यथा चिरंजीलाल मिश्रा, हरिशचन्द्र वकील आदि को बीकानेर की राजनीतिक स्थिति से अवगत ज्ञान कराया। बाद में गोविन्दगढ़ स्थित भारतीय चरखा संघ के कार्यालय में उनकी वरिष्ठ कार्यकर्ता देशपाण्डे से भेंट हुई। देशपाण्डे ने ही गोयल जी को अजमेर ले जाकर श्री विजयसिंह पथिक से मिलवाया। 3 अगस्त को गोयल जी पुनः जयपुर आ गए और वहां जयपुर राज्य प्रजा मण्डल की मीटिंग में भाग

लिया। जयपुर से ही गोयल जी बम्बई में होने वाल अखिल भारतीय कांग्रेस अधिवेशन में भाग लेने के लिए चले गए। बीकानेर षड्यंत्र केस के अभियुक्त रहे खूबराम सर्राफ भी उस समय बम्बई में ही थे। गोयल जी ने बम्बई में उस ऐतिहासिक कांग्रेस अधिवेशन में भाग लिया जिसमें ''भारत छोड़ो'' प्रस्ताव पारित किया गया था। 11 अगस्त, 1942 को गोयल जी तथा खूबराम सर्राफ रास्ते में बाबू मुक्ता प्रसाद वकील से मिलते हए जयपुर चले गए जहां से गोविन्दगढ़ जाकर देशपाण्डे से बीकानेर की स्थिति पर बातचीत की।[58] अब आपने बीकानेर पुनः जाने की ठानी।

गोयल जी ने बीकानेर रियासत के प्रधानमंत्री को सूचना दी कि मैं निर्वासन आदेश को भंग करके बीकानेर की सीमा में प्रवेश करूंगा।[59] 29 सितम्बर, 1942 को गोयल जी जयपुर से बीकानेर के लिए रवाना हुए लेकिन उन्हें रास्ते में ही बीकानेर पुलिस आई. जी. ने चीलो और देशनोक के बीच गाड़ी रूकवाकर उतार लिया और रात को ही सीधे जेल भेज दिया। जेल में उन पर मुकदमा चलाकर 13 अक्टूबर, 1942 को गोयल जी को एक वर्ष का कठोर कारावास तथा 1,000/-रू. का दण्ड दिया गया।[60] महाराजा गंगासिंह के देहान्त के पश्चात् बने नए शासक महाराजा सादुल सिंह ने गोयल जी को 16 फरवरी, 1943 को जेल से रिहा कर दिया।[61] रिहा होकर गोयल जी बीकानेर रियासत की दमनकारी नीतियों के खिलाफ समाचार पत्रों में लेख देते रहे। इसी क्रम में गंगादास का लेख 24 फरवरी, 1943 के ''दैनिक विश्वमित्र'' में छपा, इससे रियासत का प्रशासन पुनः सक्रिय हो गया।[62]

25 मई, 1943 को गोयल जी ने अपने साथियों के सहयोग से खजांची बिल्डिंग में खादी मन्दिर की स्थापना की। यह उस समय की राजनीतिक गतिविधियों का केन्द्र बन गया।[63] ईदगाह बारी के बाहर मरूनायक जी की बगीची में एक व्यायाम शाला की स्थापना भी गोयल जी के प्रयासों से ही हुई। यहां भी राजनीतिक गतिविधियों की चेतना जागृत की जाती थी।[64] 7 अक्टूबर, 1943 को गोयल जी ने अपने साथियों गंगादास, दाऊदयाल, श्याम जी आदि सहित खादी मन्दिर में गांधी जयन्ती का आयोजन किया।[65]

20 व 21 नवम्बर, 1943 को जयपुर राज्य के लक्ष्मणगढ़ कस्बे में सीकर राजनीतिक सम्मेलन हुआ जिसकी अध्यक्षता गोयल जी ने की। अपने अध्यक्षीय भाषण में गोयल जी ने बीकानेर रियासत में होने वाले राजनीतिक

दमन चक्र पर विशेष प्रकाश डाला।[66] 30 नवम्बर के जयपुर से प्रकाशित हिन्दी दैनिक ''लोक वाणी'' पत्र में एक तथ्यात्मक लेख छापा।[67]

1 अप्रेल, 1944 को उदयपुर में जब राजपूताना मध्य भारत राज्यों के कार्यकर्ताओं की कॉफ्रेंस हुई तो उसमें गोयल जी ने भी भाग लिया तथा राज्यों में जन जागृति फैलाने के लिए संगठन के विधान निर्माण हेतु एक 11 सदस्यीय कमेटी बनाई गई जिसमें गोयल जी को भी एक सदस्य बनाया गया।[68]

गोयल जी जयपुर प्रजा मण्डल के वार्षिक अधिवेशन जो 10 मई, 1945 को जयपुर में आयोजित हुआ जिसकी अध्यक्षता बाबू सम्पूर्णानन्द ने की उसमें सम्मिलित हुए। तत्पश्चात् सिरोही के नेता गोकुल भाई भट्ट को लेकर 15 मई को बीकानेर पहुंचे। कस्तूरबा नेशनल मेमोरियल फण्ड में धन इकट्ठा करने हेतु 25 मई को रतन बिहारी पार्क में बाबू ईश्वरदयाल की अध्यक्षता में मीटिंग रखी।[69] आपके द्वारा उक्त फण्ड के लिए राजगढ़, भादरा एवं नोहर के भ्रमण के दौरान बीकानेर म्युनिसिपैलिटी के चेयरमेन सेठ बद्रीदास डागा द्वारा चेयरमेनशिप से इस्तीफा देते समय सरकार विरोधी भाषण की छपी कॉपियां बांटी। साथ ही बीकानेर के राजनीतिक दमन के विरोध में देश के समाचार पत्रों में लेख लिखना जारी रहा। कोटा का सप्ताहिक पत्र ''दीन बन्धु'' सबसे आगे था।[70]

26 अगस्त, 1944 को बीकानेर के तत्कालीन नरेश सादुल सिंह ने गोयल जी को उच्च स्तरीय वार्ता हेतु लालगढ़ महल में बुलाया। वार्ता विफल रही। घर पहुंचने से पहले ही डी.आई.जी. पुलिस ने आपको साथियों (गंगादास कौशिक तथा दाऊदयाल आचार्य) सहित गिरफ्तार कर बंद मोटर में चुपचाप कानासर पहुंचा दिया जहां से रात को 12 बजे रेल में बैठाकर लूणकरणसर गांव में उतार दिया। गोयल जी को तो यहीं नजरबन्दी के आदेश दिए व शेष दोनों को अनूपगढ़ किले में कैद में डाल दिया।[71] बाबू जी (गोयल जी) ने अपनी नजरबन्दी के विरूद्ध बीकानेर उच्च न्यायालय में बंदी प्रत्यक्षीकरण याचिका पेश की जिससे घबराकर महाराजा ने उन्हें रिहा कर दिया और उसी दिन अर्थात् 21 मई, 1945 को बीकानेर रियासत की सीमा से देश निकाले का आदेश दे दिया।[72]

यह निर्वासन लगभग एक वर्ष चला। इस अवधि में बाबू जी (गोयल

जी) दिल्ली, झूंझूंनु, चौमूं, दौसा, जयपुर आदि स्थानों पर रहे। इसी बीच उदयपुर में अखिल भारतीय देशी राज्य प्रजा परिषद का अधिवेशन पं. जवाहरलाल नेहरू की अध्यक्षता में हुआ, उसमें आप भी सम्मिलित हुए और पंडित जी को बीकानेर की राजनीतिक दमन की स्थिति से अवगत कराया।[73] उदयपुर से बाबू जी (गोयल जी) जब जयपुर लौटे तो 7 जनवरी, 1946 को जयपुर सरकार ने बीकानेर सरकार के दबाव पर सवेरे 6 बजे ही जयपुर राज्य से निर्वासन का आदेश दिया और 2 घण्टे के भीतर जयपुर छोड़ने को कहा गया। बाबू जी (गोयलजी) तुरन्त रेल से अलवर गए और वहां प्रजा परिषद का कार्यालय स्थापित करके संगठन में जुट गए। भीषण आर्थिक संकट से विवश होकर वे अर्थ-संग्रह के लिए कलकत्ता गए। वहां से ''आज का बीकानेर'' नामक साप्ताहिक पत्र निकाला। कलकत्ता से बाबू जी अलवर लौटे।[74]

गोयल जी ने 24 मई, 1946 को बीकानेर सरकार को सूचना दी कि मैं एक माह पश्चात् निषेधाज्ञा तोड़कर बीकानेर राज्य में प्रवेश करूंगा। 25 जून को वे ऐलनाबाद से बीकानेर आने वाली रेलगाड़ी में चढ़े जहां हजारों किसानों ने उन्हें विदाई दी। ज्योंहि गाड़ी बीकानेर राज्य की सीमा में घुसी, पुलिस ने बाबू जी को गिरफ्तार कर लिया और बस द्वारा पांच दिन बाद 30 जून को रात को 12 बजे बीकानेर जेल पहुंचाया। यह देश की राजनीति का सबसे अधिक घटनापूर्ण काल था। उसका प्रभाव बीकानेर पर भी पड़ा और बाबूजी को 28 जुलाई, 1946 को रात के बारह बजे अचानक रिहा कर दिया गया।[75]

बीकानेर महाराजा ने सन् 1946 में एक अन्तरिम मंत्रीमण्डल की स्थापना की जिसमें प्रजा परिषद में गुटबाजी के कारण गोयल जी उससे अलग रहे। 15 अगस्त, 1947 को जब भारत स्वतन्त्र हुआ तो गोयल जी ने महाराजा की इच्छा के विपरीत ईदगाह बारी के बाहर केवल राष्ट्रीय झण्डा ही फहराया चूंकि महाराजा ने कहा कि ऊंचे खंभे पर बीकानेर राज्य का झण्डा और नीचे एक स्तम्भ गाड़कर उस पर राष्ट्रीय झण्डा फहराया जाए। अन्ततः उन्होंने विशाल जन समुदाय की उपस्थिति में राष्ट्रीय झण्डा फहराकर महाराजा की सत्ता को अस्वीकार कर दिया।[76]

राष्ट्र निर्माता सरदार पटेल 1949 में राजपूताना के सभी देशी राज्यों को

मिलाकर विशाल राजस्थान का निर्माण करने में सफल हुए। 7 अप्रेल को श्री हीरालाल शास्त्री के मुख्यमंत्रित्व में प्रथम मंत्रीमण्डल में गोयल जी ने शपथ ग्रहण की। आप कृषि, आपूर्ति एवं वन विभागों के मंत्री के रूप में सम्मिलित हुए। इस पद पर आप 5 जनवरी 1951 तक रहे तथा शास्त्री मंत्रीमण्डल टूटने पर उससे पृथक हुए। तत्पश्चात् आपने 1951 में पुनः वकालत का पेशा एवं रचनात्मक कार्य प्रारम्भ कर दिए। 16 दिसम्बर 1974 को आपका निधन हो गया।[77]

श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार शर्मा

श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार शर्मा बीकानेर महाराजा सर गंगासिंह द्वारा बीकानेर में राजनीतिक चेतना जागृत करने वाले संगठन 'प्रजामंडल' और उसके नेताओं को देश निकाला देकर राजनीतिक आन्दोलन का मूलोच्छेदन किये जाने और 1937 से 1942 तक के श्मशानी काल में उस राख के नीचे बीकानेर में राजनीतिक गतिविधियों को जारी रखले वाला अंगारा थे। श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार शर्मा का पितृ पक्ष जोधपुर रियासत के वर्तमान पाली जिले में जैतारण कस्बे का निवासी तथा मातृपक्ष बीकानेर का निवासी था। बीकानेर में श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार शर्मा अपने मामा लालचन्द श्रीमाली के पास रहते थे जो कोटगेट के बाहर गणेश मंदिर की पूजा-अर्चना करते थे। श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार का राजनीतिक कार्य क्षेत्र बीकानेर एवं बीकानेर से बाहर भी रहा।[78]

सर्वप्रथम राजनीतिक आन्दोलन में आपने बम्बई में भाग लेना शुरू किया। आप बम्बई में मारवाड़ विद्यालय के छात्र थे। उसी समय देश में महात्मा गांधी द्वारा नमक सत्याग्रह अर्थात् सविनय आन्दोलन चलाया जा रहा था। इसी विद्यालय के अध्यापकों श्री केयानी आदि के प्रेरणास्पद विचारों यथा रशिया ने कैसे राजनीतिक आजादी हासिल की? अमेरिका ने किस प्रकार स्वतंत्रता प्राप्त की?, से छात्रों में 'भारत को स्वतंत्र कराना है' का विचार प्रेरित किया जाता था। श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार भी इसी लक्ष्य को लेकर राजनीति में प्रविष्ट हुए। नमक सत्याग्रह के दौरान महात्मा गांधी को गिरफ्तार कर लिया गया तब उक्त विद्यालय के छात्र श्री रामनारायण लोहिया के नेतृत्व में जाकर सारी स्कूलें व कॉलेज बन्द करवाते थे। वहां एक छात्रों का संगठन बना जिसका नाम था 'वानर सेना'। जिसके नेतृत्वकर्त्ता थे अशोक मेहता और श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार इस वानर सेना के सदस्य बने।[79]

गांधीजी जब गोलमेज कांफ्रेस में भाग लेकर आये फिर सत्याग्रह चला उसमे श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार ने भी भाग लिया।[80] 1932-33 में आपने विदेशी वस्तुओं के बहिष्कार एवं स्वदेशी अपनाने के आन्दोलन में भाग लिया।[81] विदेशी वस्तुओं की दुकानों के आगे पिकेटिंग (धरना) करते और जनता को देशी माल के उपयोग हेतु प्रेरित करते।

1935 में श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार जब 'अखण्ड भारत' नामक पत्र में समाचार देने गये तो वहां आपकी मुलाकात लोकनायक श्री जयनारायण जी व्यास से हुई। उन्हीं की प्रेरणा से श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार को बाबु मुक्ता प्रसाद एवं प्रजामंडल के बारे में ज्ञान हुआ।[82]

श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार 1936 में बीकानेर आये उसी समय प्रजामण्डल की स्थापना हुई। आपको श्री लक्ष्मीदास स्वामी 'अथक' ने डॉ.जयशंकर एवं तीन अन्य लोगों के साथ प्रजामण्डल का सदस्य बनाया। आप यहां बीकानेर में प्रजामण्डल का कार्य करने लगे तथा बम्बई भी आते-जाते रहते।[83] जब प्रजामंडल के नेताओं बाबू मुक्ताप्रसाद वकील, वैद्य मघाराम (अध्यक्ष), लक्ष्मीदास स्वामी (मंत्री), सत्यनारायण सर्राफ को 17 मार्च 1937 की अर्द्धरात्रि तक बीकानेर छोड़ने का आदेश दिया जाकर उन्हे निर्वासित कर दिया। ऐसे समाचार की जब श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार को जानकारी हुई तो उन्होंने इस आन्दोलन को जारी रखने की योजना बनाई।

इस योजनानुसार श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार ने अप्रेल 1937 में ही अपने साथियों लिच्छूराम जी जत्ती, देवी दत्त पंत, रामलाल आचार्य, कन्हैयालाल, गंगादास गज्जाणी, रामगोपाल दुबे, विष्णु व्यास आदि 25-30 साथियों सहित प्रजामंडल के स्थान पर 'हितवर्धक सेवा सदन' नामक संस्था आचार्यों के चौक में स्थित लिच्छूरामजी जत्ती के उपासरे में स्थापित की। प्रत्यक्ष में यह एक सामाजिक संस्था थी लेकिन परोक्ष रूप से इसका उद्देश्य राजनीतिक जागृति पैदा करना था।[84] यह संस्था अपना कार्य करती रही। इसे शहर के कुछ संभ्रात लोगों द्वारा अप्रत्यक्ष रूप से भी आर्थिक सहायता मिलती रही। इनमें से कुछ थे-आचार्यों के चौक के श्री सूरजकरण जी आचार्य (एम.ए.साहब) वकील तथा कलकत्तिया बाबू आदि। राज्य की दमन नीति को देश के कुछ प्रमुख अखबारों में प्रकाशित करने श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार और रामलाल अजमेर और ब्यावर गये।[85]

हितवर्द्धक सेवा सदन की सारी गतिविधियां पुलिस को मालूम हो गई। चूंकि प्रजामंडल के विरूद्ध रियासती सरकार की कार्यवाही के दौरान पुलिस के हाथ लगी सदस्य सूची से पता चला कि उक्त श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार भी प्रजामंडल के सक्रिय कार्यकर्त्ताओं में से एक है। श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार के भी हृदय में चारों नेताओं के निर्वासन के प्रति टीस थी, वह भी कुछ करना चाहते थे। उसी वर्ष बीकानेर महाराजा गंगासिंह का स्वर्ण जुबली बनाई जानी थी, जिसमें तत्कालीन वायसराय लॉर्ड लिनलिथगो आने वाले थे।[86] श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार की योजना थी कि वायसराय के आगमन पर काले झण्डों द्वारा प्रदर्शन किया जाये, 'वायसराय गो बैक', 'वापिस जाओ वायसराय को वापिस करो, देश को आजाद करो', नारे लगाने की थी।[87] श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार ने दीवारों पर छापने के लिए स्टेन्सिल काट कर तैयार किया जिसमें लिखा था 'या तो निर्वासितों को आने दो, वरना रियासत खतरे में है।[88]

उपर्युक्त योजना का पुलिस को श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार के ही एक साथी रामलाल आचार्य द्वारा पता चल गया। वह पुलिस का मुखबिर बन गया। पुलिस ने अपनी कार्यवाही शुरू कर दी।

लार्ड लिनलिथगो के आगमन के करीब 25 दिन पूर्व श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार के साथ श्री कन्हैयालाल तथा फकीर मोहम्मद को पुलिस ने कोटगेट के बाहर सुखलेचा कटले के बाहर मना महाराज पान मर्चेण्ट की दुकान से गिरफ्तार कर किया और पुलिस लाइन में हवालात में भेज दिया। जहां इन पर अमानुषिक अत्याचार किये, यथा–मारपीट, यातनाएं, बर्फ की सिल्ली पर 3 दिन बांधे रखा, पांच दिन तक पैरों को जमीन में गाड़े रखा, मुर्गा बनाया आदि। उक्त कार्यवाहियां हॉडिंग, I.G.P. के निर्देश पर हुई ताकि ये राजनीति छोड़ दे। इस वास्ते इन्हें प्रलोभन भी दिया गया।[89]

श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार पर पुलिस ने वायसराय की यात्रा के दौरान बम फैंकना, बिजली फैल करना, लाइन उड़ाने के आरोप लगाये। इसी आधार पर श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार को 16 नवम्बर 1937 को बीकानेर छोड़ने के आदेश मिल गये।[90] यद्यपि पुलिस ने श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार पर उक्त आरोप तो लगाये तथापि पुलिस उन्हें सिद्ध नहीं कर पाई। जिरह के दौरान सुल्तानी गवाह बना मुखबिर रामलाल आचार्य, जिसने पुलिस को उक्त सब कहा, अपनी बातों में उलझ गया।[91]

बीकानेर निर्वासन के पश्चात् श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार बम्बई चले गये।[92] वहां जाकर भी आप बीकानेर के राजनीतिक आन्दोलन से जुड़े रहे। इसके पीछे आपकी बीमार मां को बहुत तंग किया। फलस्वरूप 31.07.1938 को आप बीकानेर आये और 23.08.38 को अपनी माताजी को लेकर जैतारण चले गये।[93]

इसके पश्चात श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार भूमिगत रह बीकानेर आन्दोलन से जुड़े रहे। दूधवा खारा आन्दोलन में श्री कर्मानन्द एवं श्री हनुमान चौधरी को भूमिगत सहयोग किया। अन्य आन्दोलनकारियों को जेल के दौरान उनके घरों में रखने का सामान पहुंचाने आदि कार्य किये। आप बीकानेर छिपकर तथा छद्मनाम यथा सोहनलाल, मूलचन्द आदि से आते थे। इस काल में आप जयपुर, सोजत, अजमेर, ब्यावर भी गये। सोजत में श्री मिठालाल त्रिवेदी, अजमेर में श्री ऋषिकेशदत्त को आचार्य से बात करने से मना कर रखा था। बताया हुआ था कि वह पुलिस का मुखबिर है। अपने काम निकलवाने के लिए ही आचार्य को साथ रखते थे।[94]

सन्दर्भ :

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3. वही : पृ. 3
4. राजस्थान स्वर्ण जयन्ती समारोह समिति जयपुर, ग्रंथमाला 3 राज. में स्वतंत्रता संग्राम के अमर पुरोधा पं.चन्दनमल बहड़ पृ. 2
5. वही : पृ. 6
6. स्वामी गोपालदास के बयान (शहादत गवाहान तहरीरी पेश करदा मुलजिमान दि. 24.11.1933 पृ. 1944, 1-4 मिसल कागजात वजह सबूत गोपालदास न. क. 11) (राजस्थान राज्य अभिलेखागार, बीकानेर)
7. दाऊदयाल आचार्य : भारत के स्वतंत्रता संग्राम में बीकानेर का योगदान पृ. 26
8. राजस्थान स्वर्ण जयन्ती समारोह समिति जयपुर, ग्रंथमाला 3 राज. में स्वतंत्रता संग्राम के अमर पुरोधा पं.चन्दनमल बहड़ पृ. 9

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11. वही : पृ. 11; होम डिपार्टमेंट, बीकानेर फा. सं. C-XXIV सन् 1930-31 पृ. 5 (रा.रा.अ.बी.)
12. वही : पृ. 11
13. होम डिपार्टमेंट, बीकानेर 1931 फा. नं. C 19 पृ. 1-5;
होम डिपार्टमेंट, बीकानेर सन् 1932 नं. C-XIII पृ. 2-5 (गोपनीय) (रा.रा.अ.बी.)
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17. चेतना मुद्गल : बीकानेर में जन आन्दोलन पृ. 39
18. जयनारायण व्यास बीकानेर राजद्रोह और षड्यंत्र का मुकदमा कुछ ज्ञातव्य बातें पृ. 8
19. वही : पृ. 7
20. वही : पृ. 21 से 33; सत्यदेव विद्यालंकार, बीकानेर का राजनीतिक विकास और श्री मघाराम वैध पृ. 198 से 210
21. फैसले की मूल प्रति जो वर्तमान में श्री महावीर प्रसाद बहड़ स्वतंत्रता सेनानी पुत्र पं. चन्दनमल बहड़, मंत्री मार्ग, चूरू के पास उपलब्ध है।
22. सत्यदेव विद्यालंकार, धुन के धनी पृ. 33
23. महकमा खास, बीकानेर C-11 1926-32 पृ. 3 (रा.रा.अ.बी.)
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27. श्री दाऊलाल आचार्य के टेप संस्मरण (रा.रा.अ.बी.)
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28. श्री दाऊलाल आचार्य के टेप संस्मरण (रा.रा.अ.बी.)
सत्यदेव विद्यालंकार, : बीकानेर का राजनीतिक विकास और मघाराम वैद्य पृ. 27
29. श्री दाऊलाल आचार्य (स्वतंत्रता सेनानी) : भारत के स्वतंत्रता आन्दोलन में बीकानेर का योगदान पृ. 40
30. राजस्थान स्वर्ण जयन्ती समारोह समिति, जयपुर ग्रंथमाल-3 राजस्थान में स्वतंत्रता संग्राम के अमर पुरोधा पं. चन्दनमल बहड़ पृ. 24
31. होम डिपार्टमेंट, बीकानेर गोपनीय फाइल सं. 101, 1945 पृ. 3
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33. सत्यदेव विद्यालंकार, : बीकानेर का राजनीतिक विकास और मघाराम वैद्य, पृ. 117
34. होम डिपार्टमेंट, बीकानेर फा. नं. c-v सन् 1937 पृ. 2
35. होम डिपार्टमेंट, बीकानेर (गोपनीय) फाइल नं. 10, 1945 हिस्ट्रीशीट ऑफ सत्यनारायण सर्राफ पृ. 6
36. होम डिपार्टमेंट, बीकानेर (गोपनीय) फाइल नं. c-v,1937 पृ. 2
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39. श्री दाऊलाल आचार्य (स्वतंत्रता सेनानी) : भारत के स्वतंत्रता आन्दोलन में बीकानेर का योगदान पृ. 47

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45. वही : पृ. 57
46. चेतना मुद्गल, बीकानेर में जन आन्दोलन पृ. 143
47. खादी मन्दिर बीकानेर, बीकानेर राज्य में स्वतन्त्रता संग्राम के सूत्रधार और जननेता श्री रघुवर दयाल गोयल, पृ. 2,; दाऊदयाल आचार्य, (स्वतंत्रता सेनानी) भारत के स्वतंत्रता आन्दोलन में बीकानेर का योगदान पृ. 57
48. होम डिपार्टमेंट बीकानेर, फाइल नं. C-101 सन् 1945, हिस्ट्री शीट ऑफ रघुवर दयाल गोयल पृ. 1-2 (रा.रा.अ.बी.)
49. होम डिपार्टमेंट बीकानेर, फाइल नं. C-XXI सन् 1939 पृ. 1-2 (रा.रा.अ.बी.)
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51. होम डिपार्टमेंट, बीकानेर फाइल सं. C-IXVVI, 1939 पृ. 1-13 (रा.रा.अ.बी.)
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55. वही : पृ. 7 (रा.रा.अ.बी.)
56. होम डिपार्टमेंट बीकानेर फाइल सं. C-IXVVI सन् 1939 पृ. 320-21

57. होम डिपार्टमेंट बीकानेर, पत्रावली सं. C-101 सन् 1945, हिस्ट्री शीट ऑफ रघुवर दयाल गोयल पृ. 8 (रा.रा.अ.बी.)
58. होम डिपार्टमेंट बीकानेर, पत्रावली सं. C-101 सन् 1945, हिस्ट्री शीट ऑफ रघुवर दयाल गोयल पृ. 9 (रा.रा.अ.बी.)
59. खादी मन्दिर, बीकानेर, बीकानेर राज्य में स्वतंत्रता संग्राम के सूत्रधार और जन नेता रघुवर दयाल गोयल पृ. 2
60. होम डिपार्टमेंट बीकानेर, फाइल सं. C-XXXIX 1939 पृ. 345, (रा.रा.अ.बी.), श्री सत्यदेव विद्यालंकार, बीकानेर का राजनीतिक विकास और मघाराम वैध पृ. 134
61. खादी मन्दिर, बीकानेर, बीकानेर राज्य में स्वतंत्रता संग्राम के सूत्रधार और जन नेता रघुवर दयाल गोयल पृ. 3; दाऊदयाल आचार्य, (स्वतन्त्रता सेनानी) भारत के स्वतंत्रता आन्दोलन में बीकानेर का योगदान पृ. 126
62. प्रेस कटिंग दैनिक विश्वामित्र 24 फरवरी 1943, प्रेस कटिंग फाइल 1943 (रा.रा.अ.बी.)
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64. (दाऊदयाल आचार्य) : पृ. 158-164
65. दाऊदयाल आचार्य, (स्वतंत्रता सेनानी) भारत के स्वतंत्रता आन्दोलन में बीकानेर का योगदान पृ. 133-34
66. दाऊदयाल आचार्य स्वतंत्रता सेनानी के टेप संस्मरण (रा.रा.अ.बी.)
67. होम डिपार्टमेंट (गोपनीय), बीकानेर फाइल नं. XCVIII 1945 पृ. 1-5
68. दाऊदयाल आचार्य, (स्वतंत्रता सेनानी) भारत के स्वतंत्रता आन्दोलन में बीकानेर का योगदान पृ. 136-38
69. होम डिपार्टमेंट (गोपनीय), बीकानेर फाइल सं. 101 सन् 1945, हिस्ट्री शीट ऑफ रघुवर दयाल गोयल पृ. 9
70. आज का बीकानेर, जनवरी 1945 (राजपूताना रियासती कार्यकर्ता द्वारा प्रकाशित) (रा.रा.अ.बी.)
71. होम डिपार्टमेंट (गोपनीय), बीकानेर फाइल सं. 101 सन् 1945, हिस्ट्री शीट ऑफ रघुवर दयाल गोयल पृ. 9

72. खादी मन्दिर, बीकानेर, बीकानेर राज्य में स्वतंत्रता संग्राम के सूत्रधार और जन नेता रघुवर दयाल गोयल पृ. 3; दाऊदयाल आचार्य, (स्वतंत्रता सेनानी) भारत के स्वतंत्रता आन्दोलन में बीकानेर का योगदान पृ. 158-164

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74. होम डिपार्टमेंट (गोपनीय) बीकानेर, प्रकरण नं. 101 सन् 1945 (रा.रा.अ.बी.) हिस्ट्री शीट ऑफ रघुवर दयाल गोयल पृ. 10,

75. खादी मन्दिर, बीकानेर, बीकानेर राज्य में स्वतंत्रता संग्राम के सूत्रधार और जन नेता रघुवर दयाल गोयल पृ. 4-5

76. खादी मन्दिर, बीकानेर, बीकानेर राज्य में स्वतंत्रता संग्राम के सूत्रधार और जन नेता रघुवर दयाल गोयल पृ. 5

77. वही : पृ. 5-6

78. श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार के टेप संस्करण (रा.रा.अ.बीकानेर); हो.डि.बीकानेर गोपनीय फाइल सं. XI सन् 1937 (रा.रा.अ.बीकानेर)

79. होम डिपार्टमेंट बीकानेर गोपनीय फाइल सं. 20 सन् 1937 पृ. 3; श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार के टेप संस्करण (रा.रा.अ.बीकानेर)

80. वही; राजस्थान पत्रिका दिनांक 15 अगस्त 1989 स्वतंत्रता दिवस विशेषांक।

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82. वही : पृ. 5 (रा.रा.अ.बी.)

83. श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार के टेप संस्मरण (रा.रा.अ.बी.); सुमनेश जोशी, राजस्थान में स्वतंत्रता संग्राम के सेनानी, पृ. 790,

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89. श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार के टेप संस्मरण (रा.रा.अ.बीकानेर); दाऊदयाल आचार्य (स्वतंत्रता सेनानी) : भारत के स्वतन्त्रता आन्दोलन में बीकानेर का योगदान, पृ. 48-49
90. हो.डि. बीकानेर गोपनीय फाइल सं. XX सन् 1937 पृ. 7-8 (रा.रा.अ.बी.)
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92. हो.डि.बीकानेर गोपनीय फाइल सं. XX सन् 1937 पृ. 8 (रा.रा.अ.बी.)
93. दाऊदयाल आचार्य (स्वतंत्रता सेनानी) : भारत के स्वतंत्रता आन्दोलन में बीकानेर का योगदान, पृष्ठ 49
94. श्री सुरेन्द्र शर्मा के टेप संस्मरण (रा.रा.अ.बी.)

डॉ. मुकेश हर्ष
महाराजा गंगासिंह विश्वविद्यालय, बीकानेर
मो. 9928326515

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वर्तमान परिदृश्य में गांधीवादी और अंबेडकरवादी पारिस्थितिकी की प्रासंगिकता

डॉ. तालीम अख्तर • डॉ. मुख्त्यार अली

भारत अपनी सांस्कृतिक और वैचारिक विविधता के साथ, विकास के पथ पर एक अनूठी यात्रा पर है। आज जब पूरी दुनिया पर्यावरणीय संकटों और आर्थिक असमानताओं से जूझ रही है, भारत को एक ऐसी विकास संकल्पना की आवश्यकता है जो न केवल आर्थिक प्रगति को गति दे, बल्कि प्रकृति और समाज के साथ सामंजस्य भी स्थापित करे। इस संदर्भ में, महात्मा गांधी और डॉ. भीमराव अंबेडकर के पारिस्थितिकीय दृष्टिकोण न केवल प्रासंगिक हैं, बल्कि एक समग्र और समावेशी विकास मॉडल की नींव भी रखते हैं। गांधी का सादगी और आत्मनिर्भरता पर आधारित स्वराज का दर्शन, और अंबेडकर का सामाजिक न्याय व वैज्ञानिक तर्क पर टिका पर्यावरणवाद, परंपरा और आधुनिकता के बीच एक संतुलित मार्ग प्रस्तुत करते हैं। यह आलेख इन दोनों महान विचारकों के पारिस्थितिकीय दृष्टिकोणों का समन्वय प्रस्तुत करता है, ताकि भारत में विकास की अवधारणा को पुनर्परिभाषित किया जा सके-एक ऐसा विकास जो मात्रात्मक वृद्धि से परे, गुणवत्ता, समानता और प्रकृति के प्रति सम्मान को प्राथमिकता दे।

गांधी का पर्यावरणीय दृष्टिकोण और सतत विकास

महात्मा गांधी को आधुनिक अर्थों में पर्यावरणवादी कहना शायद पूरी तरह ठीक न हो, लेकिन उनकी सादगी भरी जीवनशैली, न्यूनतम आवश्यकताओं पर आधारित दर्शन, नैतिकता-केंद्रित अर्थव्यवस्था, और सबसे महत्वपूर्ण, आधुनिक सभ्यता की उनकी गहन आलोचना आज के सतत विकास के सिद्धांतों से गहराई से जुड़ी है। गांधी ने सादगी, आत्मनिर्भरता और स्वदेशी के सिद्धांतों को अपनाकर एक ऐसी जीवनशैली की वकालत की, जो प्रकृति

के साथ सामंजस्य बनाए रखती थी। उनका प्रसिद्ध कथन, प्रकृति में सभी की आवश्यकताओं को पूरा करने के लिए पर्याप्त संसाधन हैं, लेकिन किसी के लालच को नहीं,यह दर्शाता है कि संसाधनों का उपयोग विवेकपूर्ण और सीमित होना चाहिए। यह विचार आधुनिक पर्यावरणवाद का मूल सिद्धांत है, जो संसाधनों के संरक्षण और पारिस्थितिक संतुलन पर जोर देता है। गांधी की आर्थिक स्वराज की संकल्पना, जो स्वदेशी और आत्मनिर्भरता पर आधारित थी, स्थानीय उत्पादन और उपभोग को बढ़ावा देती थी। खादी इसका प्रतीक थी, जो न केवल आर्थिक स्वतंत्रता का साधन थी, बल्कि पर्यावरणीय स्थिरता का भी। खादी के माध्यम से गांधी ने विकेंद्रित उत्पादन को प्रोत्साहित किया, जो अनियंत्रित औद्योगिक विकास और संसाधनों के शोषण को कम करता था। यह दृष्टिकोण आज के सतत विकास के लक्ष्यों, जैसे कार्बन उत्सर्जन में कमी और जीवन की गुणवत्ता को बनाए रखने, से मेल खाता है।

गांधी की कालजयी रचना हिंद स्वराज (2009) में वे आधुनिक सभ्यता को अनैतिक मानते हैं, क्योंकि यह हिंसा, लालच और भौतिकवाद को पोषित करती है। उनके लिए, आधुनिकता के प्रतीक-विलासपूर्ण आवास, रंग-बिरंगे वस्त्र, अथाह धन और प्रौद्योगिकी की अनवरत दौड़-सच्ची प्रगति नहीं, बल्कि नैतिक और आध्यात्मिक पतन के द्योतक थे। गांधी का मानना था कि प्रगति का अर्थ केवल भौतिक समृद्धि नहीं, बल्कि नैतिक अखंडता और आध्यात्मिक पूर्णता है। उनकी यह आलोचना पर्यावरणीय दृष्टिकोण से भी महत्वपूर्ण है, क्योंकि आधुनिक सभ्यता का भौतिकवादी मॉडल प्राकृतिक संसाधनों के अंधाधुंध दोहन और पर्यावरणीय विनाश का कारण बनता है। गांधी का यह विचार आज की जलवायु परिवर्तन और पर्यावरणीय संकट की चुनौतियों के संदर्भ में और भी प्रासंगिक हो जाता है।

गांधी का सर्वोदय का दर्शन, जो सभी के कल्याण की बात करता है, गहन पारिस्थितिकी के सिद्धांतों से मेल खाता है। उन्होंने कहा, मुझे विश्वास है कि ईश्वर के सभी प्राणियों को उतना ही जीने का अधिकार है, जितना हमें (गांधी, 1955)। यह कथन मानव-केंद्रित दृष्टिकोण को अस्वीकार करता है और प्रकृति के सभी जीवों के साथ सामंजस्य की वकालत करता है। गहन पारिस्थितिकी का यह विचार आज के नव-पर्यावरणवाद का आधार है, जो यह मानता है कि मानव केवल प्रकृति का हिस्सा है, न कि उसका स्वामी।

गांधी का यह दर्शन हमें एक ऐसी दुनिया की कल्पना करने के लिए प्रेरित करता है, जहां पर्यावरणीय नैतिकता और सामाजिक न्याय एक-दूसरे के पूरक हों।

गांधी औद्योगिक विकास की भयावह कामकाजी परिस्थितियों, जैसे प्रदूषित और विषाक्त हवा, से भी व्यथित थे। उन्होंने 1907 में कहा, आजकल, प्रबुद्ध लोगों में खुली हवा की आवश्यकता की सराहना बढ़ रही है (गांधी, 1907)। इतिहासकार रामचंद्र गुहा (1998) का तर्क है कि गांधी का पश्चिमी औद्योगिक विकास के प्रति संदेह एक पारिस्थितिकीय स्वर प्रदान करता है। यह संदेह आज के संदर्भ में भी प्रासंगिक है, क्योंकि औद्योगिक विकास ने न केवल पर्यावरण को नुकसान पहुँचाया है, बल्कि सामाजिक असमानता को भी बढ़ाया है। गांधी का विकेंद्रित उत्पादन मॉडल, जो स्थानीय संसाधनों और श्रम पर आधारित था, इस समस्या का एक व्यावहारिक समाधान प्रस्तुत करता है।

गांधी के विचारों को समकालीन संदर्भ में देखें, तो वे सतत विकास लक्ष्यों के साथ गहराई से जुड़े हैं, जो संयुक्त राष्ट्र द्वारा 2030 तक प्राप्त करने के लिए निर्धारित किए गए हैं। विशेष रूप से, सतत विकास लक्ष्य (SDG)12 (उत्तरदायी उपभोग और उत्पादन) और सतत विकास लक्ष्य (SDG)13 (जलवायु कार्रवाई) गांधी के स्वदेशी और न्यूनतम उपभोग के सिद्धांतों से प्रेरित हैं। इसके अलावा, गांधी का दर्शन आज के "सर्कुलर इकोनॉमी" (चक्रीय अर्थव्यवस्था) के विचार से भी मेल खाता है, जो संसाधनों के पुनर्चक्रण और पुनः उपयोग पर जोर देता है। उदाहरण के लिए, खादी और स्थानीय हस्तशिल्प को बढ़ावा देना न केवल पर्यावरणीय स्थिरता को प्रोत्साहित करता है, बल्कि स्थानीय समुदायों को आर्थिक रूप से सशक्त भी करता है।

इसके अलावा, गांधी का पर्यावरणीय दृष्टिकोण सामाजिक न्याय के साथ भी जुड़ा है। आधुनिक पर्यावरणीय आंदोलनों, जैसे "पर्यावरणीय न्याय"यह तर्क देते हैं कि पर्यावरणीय क्षति का सबसे अधिक प्रभाव गरीब और हाशिए पर रहने वाले समुदायों पर पड़ता है। गांधी का सर्वोदय का दर्शन इस विचार को और मजबूत करता है, क्योंकि यह सभी के कल्याण और समानता की वकालत करता है।

गांधी का दर्शन, जो सादगी, स्वराज, स्वदेशी और नैतिकता पर आधारित था, आज के सतत विकास और पर्यावरणीय नैतिकता के लिए एक प्रेरणा स्रोत है। उनकी आधुनिक सभ्यता की आलोचना और सर्वोदय की संकल्पना हमें यह सिखाती है कि सच्ची प्रगति भौतिक समृद्धि में नहीं, बल्कि नैतिक और आध्यात्मिक मूल्यों में निहित है। समकालीन चुनौतियों, जैसे जलवायु परिवर्तन और संसाधनों का अति-दोहन, के संदर्भ में गांधी के विचार न केवल प्रासंगिक हैं, बल्कि एक वैकल्पिक विकास मॉडल की ओर मार्गदर्शन भी करते हैं। यह मॉडल पर्यावरण, समाज और अर्थव्यवस्था के बीच संतुलन स्थापित करता है, जो एक टिकाऊ और समावेशी भविष्य की नींव रख सकता है।

अंबेडकर का पर्यावरणीय दृष्टिकोण: सामाजिक न्याय और पारिस्थितिकी का संगम

डॉ. भीमराव अंबेडकर को उनके आर्थिक, सामाजिक न्याय और लोकतंत्र के विचारों के लिए व्यापक रूप से सराहा गया है, लेकिन उनके पर्यावरण और पारिस्थितिकी से संबंधित विचारों पर अपेक्षाकृत कम ध्यान दिया गया है। अंबेडकर का पर्यावरणीय दर्शन उनके सामाजिक न्याय के सिद्धांतों से गहराई से जुड़ा था, जो प्रकृति तक समान पहुंच और संसाधनों के विवेकपूर्ण उपयोग पर जोर देता था।

अंबेडकर का प्रकृति के प्रति प्रेम उनके बचपन में ही स्पष्ट था। जैसा कि धनंजय कीर (2016) ने उल्लेख किया है, अंबेडकर हर पैसे को नए पौधे खरीदने में खर्च करते थे, जो उनके हाथ लगता था। यह बागवानी के प्रति उनका लगाव न केवल व्यक्तिगत रुचि थी, बल्कि प्रकृति के साथ उनके गहरे जुड़ाव को भी दर्शाता था। यह प्रेम बाद में उनके पर्यावरणीय विचारों में परिलक्षित हुआ, विशेष रूप से जल संरक्षण, वनीकरण और कृषि-पारिस्थितिक समस्याओं के प्रति उनकी चिंता में।

गांधी के विपरीत, जो आधुनिक सभ्यता की आलोचना करते थे, अंबेडकर ने आधुनिकता को समानता, तर्कसंगति, न्याय और लोकतंत्र के प्रति प्रतिबद्ध माना (शर्मा, 2017)। उनकी आधुनिकता सामाजिक और राष्ट्रीय प्रगति के संदर्भ में थी, जो तकनीकी और प्रशासनिक प्रगति से जुड़ी

थी। इस दृष्टिकोण ने उन्हें नदी घाटी प्राधिकरण जैसे विचारों को बढ़ावा देने के लिए प्रेरित किया, जो सिंचाई, जलविद्युत और बाढ़ नियंत्रण जैसी परियोजनाओं को सुगम बनाता था। अंबेडकर का जल संरक्षण पर जोर उनकी दूरदर्शिता को दर्शाता है। उन्होंने कहा, पानी कभी इतना अधिक नहीं हो सकता कि वह हानिकारक बन जाए। मनुष्य को पानी की कमी से अधिक कष्ट होता है, न कि उसके अधिक होने से (अंबेडकर, 2019)। उनका तर्क था कि पानी एक संपदा है, और इसका अनिश्चित वितरण (सूखा और तूफान) प्रकृति की चुनौती है, जिसका समाधान संरक्षण और प्रबंधन में निहित है।

अंबेडकर का आधुनिकता में विश्वास उन्हें बड़े बांधों के निर्माण के लिए उत्साहित करता था, जो उस समय बाढ़ नियंत्रण, सिंचाई, जल आपूर्ति और नौवहन के लिए आवश्यक थे। हालांकि, आधुनिक पर्यावरणवादी इन बांधों की आलोचना करते हैं, क्योंकि इनके कारण समुदायों का विस्थापन, पारिस्थितिकीय असंतुलन और बांध टूटने से होने वाली विनाशकारी बाढ़ जैसी समस्याएँ सामने आईं। फिर भी, अंबेडकर के समय के सामाजिक-आर्थिक संदर्भ में, ये परियोजनाएँ विकास और आधुनिकीकरण का प्रतीक थीं। उनकी दृष्टि में, ये परियोजनाएँ न केवल तकनीकी प्रगति थीं, बल्कि सामाजिक कल्याण और आर्थिक समृद्धि का साधन भी थीं।

अंबेडकर का पर्यावरणीय दृष्टिकोण उनकी सामाजिक न्याय की अवधारणा से गहराई से जुड़ा था। उन्होंने पर्यावरणीय संकट को सामाजिक संकट से जोड़ा, विशेष रूप से प्रकृति तक असमान पहुंच के मुद्दे को। उनके अनुभवों ने उन्हें यह समझने के लिए प्रेरित किया कि सामाजिक पदानुक्रम और पर्यावरणीय संसाधनों तक पहुंच में असमानता एक-दूसरे से जुड़े हैं (शर्मा, 2017)। उदाहरण के लिए, उनकी कृषि-पारिस्थितिक समस्याओं, विशेष रूप से भूमि वितरण, पर जोर देना इस बात को दर्शाता है कि पर्यावरणीय समस्याएँ सामाजिक असमानता से अलग नहीं हैं। बाद में, वनीकरण पर उनका ध्यान उनकी पर्यावरणीय चेतना को और रेखांकित करता है (घई, 2024)। यह दृष्टिकोण आज के पर्यावरणीय न्याय आंदोलन से मेल खाता है, जो यह तर्क देता है कि पर्यावरणीय क्षति का सबसे अधिक प्रभाव हाशिए पर रहने वाले समुदायों पर पड़ता है।

अंबेडकर का पर्यावरणीय दर्शन समकालीन संदर्भ में भी अत्यंत प्रासंगिक है। उनका जल संरक्षण और भूमि वितरण पर जोर संयुक्त राष्ट्र के सतत विकास लक्ष्यों (SDGs) से जुड़ा है, विशेष रूप से SDG 6 (स्वच्छ जल और स्वच्छता) और SDG 15 (स्थलीय पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र का संरक्षण)। उनकी यह मान्यता कि पानी एक सामूहिक संपदा है, आज के जलवायु परिवर्तन और जल संकट के दौर में और भी महत्वपूर्ण हो जाती है। इसके अलावा, अंबेडकर का सामाजिक न्याय और पर्यावरणीय समस्याओं का एकीकृत दृष्टिकोण आधुनिक जलवायु न्याय के सिद्धांतों से मेल खाता है, जो यह मानता है कि जलवायु परिवर्तन का प्रभाव सामाजिक और आर्थिक असमानताओं को और गहरा करता है।

अंबेडकर के बांधों के प्रति उत्साह को आधुनिक संदर्भ में पुनर्मूल्यांकन की आवश्यकता है। आज, बड़े बांधों के नकारात्मक प्रभावों को देखते हुए, वैकल्पिक समाधान जैसे सूक्ष्म-जलविद्युत परियोजनाएँ और वर्षा जल संचयन अधिक टिकाऊ माने जाते हैं। फिर भी, अंबेडकर का यह विश्वास कि तकनीकी प्रगति सामाजिक कल्याण के लिए होनी चाहिए, आज भी प्रासंगिक है। उदाहरण के लिए, नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा (जैसे सौर और पवन ऊर्जा) और टिकाऊ कृषि प्रथाएँ उनके विचारों का आधुनिक रूप हो सकती हैं।

अंबेडकर का पर्यावरणीय दृष्टिकोण उनके सामाजिक न्याय और आधुनिकता के विचारों से अटूट रूप से जुड़ा था। उनका जल संरक्षण, वनीकरण और भूमि वितरण पर जोर, साथ ही प्रकृति तक समान पहुंच की वकालत, एक समावेशी और टिकाऊ विकास मॉडल की नींव रखता है। हालांकि उनके बड़े बांधों के प्रति उत्साह को आधुनिक पर्यावरणीय दृष्टिकोण से आलोचना का सामना करना पड़ता है, फिर भी उनके समय के संदर्भ में यह सामाजिक और आर्थिक प्रगति का साधन था। अंबेडकर का दर्शन हमें यह सिखाता है कि पर्यावरणीय और सामाजिक न्याय एक-दूसरे के पूरक हैं। आज के जलवायु संकट और सामाजिक असमानता के दौर में, उनके विचार एक ऐसी दुनिया की कल्पना करने के लिए प्रेरित करते हैं, जहां प्रकृति और समाज दोनों के लिए न्याय सुनिश्चित हो।

गांधी और अंबेडकर के पर्यावरणीय दृष्टिकोण में समन्वय और समकालीन प्रासंगिकता

गांधी और अंबेडकर के पारिस्थितिकीय विचारों में समानता वहां दिखती है, जहां दोनों प्रकृति और मानव समाज के बीच सामंजस्य की वकालत करते हैं। अंबेडकर का यह कथन कि वनीकरण के बिना एक जीवंत ग्रामीण अर्थव्यवस्था संभव नहीं है (अंबेडकर, 2019), गांधी के स्वदेशी और ग्राम-केंद्रित अर्थव्यवस्था के विचार से मेल खाता है। दोनों ने साझा संसाधनों के संरक्षण पर जोर दिया। हालांकि, उनके दृष्टिकोण में अंतर स्पष्ट है: गांधी का दृष्टिकोण आधुनिक सभ्यता के प्रति आलोचनात्मक और परंपरावादी था, जबकि अंबेडकर का दृष्टिकोण तर्कसंगत और वैज्ञानिक था, जो पश्चिमी विकास मॉडल से प्रभावित था। उदाहरण के लिए, अंबेडकर ने दलितों के लिए अलग गांवों की वकालत की, ताकि सामाजिक असमानता को कम किया जा सके, जबकि गांधी ने सर्वोदय के माध्यम से समग्र सामाजिक एकता पर बल दिया।

आज के दौर में, गांधी और अंबेडकर के विचारों का समन्वय एक बहुलवादी विकास मॉडल के रूप में उभरता है, जो मात्रा (आर्थिक विकास) और गुणवत्ता (पर्यावरणीय और सामाजिक संतुलन) के बीच संतुलन साधता है। भारत का प्रारंभिक विकास मॉडल तर्कसंगत और पश्चिमी ढांचे पर आधारित था, जो बड़े बांधों और औद्योगिक प्रगति पर केंद्रित था। लेकिन जलवायु परिवर्तन, पर्यावरणीय क्षति और सामाजिक असमानता की बढ़ती चुनौतियों ने एक समग्र और टिकाऊ दृष्टिकोण की आवश्यकता को रेखांकित किया है। मिश्रा (2001) के अनुसार, समकालीन विकास की अवधारणा अब बांधों के निर्माण के बजाय बाढ़ के साथ जीने और पारिस्थितिकीय संतुलन पर जोर देती है। यह गांधी के सादगी और स्वदेशी के विचारों के साथ-साथ अंबेडकर के सामाजिक न्याय और संसाधनों तक समान पहुंच के दृष्टिकोण से प्रेरित है।

निष्कर्ष

गांधी और अंबेडकर के पारिस्थितिकीय दृष्टिकोण भारत के लिए एक ऐसी विकास संकल्पना प्रस्तुत करते हैं, जो न केवल आर्थिक प्रगति को बल

देती है, बल्कि सामाजिक न्याय, पर्यावरणीय संरक्षण और नैतिकता को भी प्राथमिकता देती है। गांधी का स्वराज और सर्वोदय प्रकृति के साथ सामंजस्य और आत्मनिर्भरता का मार्ग दिखाता है, जबकि अंबेडकर का तर्कसंगत और समावेशी दृष्टिकोण सामाजिक समानता के साथ पर्यावरणीय संकटों को जोड़ता है। इन दोनों विचारों का समन्वय भारत को एक ऐसी विकास यात्रा की ओर ले जाता है, जो परंपरा और आधुनिकता के बीच संतुलन स्थापित करती है।इस संतुलन से हम एक ऐसी दुनिया का निर्माण कर सकें जो समृद्ध, समावेशी और प्रकृति के प्रति संवेदनशील हो।

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डॉ. तालीम अख्तर
सह आचार्य
हिन्दू महाविद्यालय, दिल्ली विश्वविद्यालय

डॉ. मुख्त्यार अली
उप निदेशक
इग्नू क्षेत्रीय केंद्र, जोधपुर

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स्वतन्त्रता संघर्ष के काल विशेष पर पं. झाबरमल्ल शर्मा की सम्पादकीय टिप्पणियां महत्त्वपूर्ण ऐतिहासिक स्त्रोत

• बी. एल. भादानी

उपनिवेशवादी अंग्रेजी सत्ता के विरुद्ध आजादी के संघर्ष में भारत के विभिन्न वर्गों की ऐतिहासिक भूमिका के बारे में विस्तार से वर्णन इतिहासकारों के ग्रन्थों में उल्लेखित है, इन समूहों में शिक्षित, सरकारी, गैर-सरकारी सेवक, व्यापारी, कारीगर (दस्तकार), छात्र, किसान मज़दूर सम्मिलित थे। इनके अतिरिक्त, पत्रकारों, संपादकों एवं लेखकों-विद्वानों ने अंग्रेजी हुकूमत के खिलाफ जनसमुदाय में राजनीतिक चेतना जागृत करने हेतु न केवल अख़बार प्रकाशित किए बल्कि संपादकों एवं पत्रकारों-लेखकों ने अख़बारों में आलेख लिखे जिनके माध्यम से अंग्रेज हुकमरानों की जनविरोधी एवं दमनकारी नीतियों को पुरजोर शब्दों में उजागर किया गया। इन आलेखों के माध्यम से लोगों में राजनीतिक चेतना विकसित करके भावी राजनीतिक आन्दोलनों के लिए ज़मीन तैयार में अहम् भूमिका निभाई। इन अख़बार नवीसों, संपादकों, प्रकाशकों एवं पत्रकार-लेखकों में मुख्य थे–श्रीयुत दुर्गाप्रसाद मिश्र, गणेश शंकर विद्यार्थी बाबूराम मिश्र एवं अन्य पत्रकार आदि। इनमें पं. झाबरमल्ल शर्मा का स्थान भी अग्रणी पंक्ति में था। पंडित शर्मा का ऐसे क्षेत्र से सम्बन्ध था जो राजशाही एवं सामन्ती सत्ता के आधिपत्य में था जो ब्रिटिश शासन के सहयोगी-भागीदार थे। इन क्षेत्रों की राजनीतिक चेतना स्वामी-भक्ति एवं गुलामी की मानसिकता में जकड़ी थी। वे मूलतः खेतड़ी के जसरासर गांव के निवासी थे जो वर्तमान में झुंझुनूं (राजस्थान) जिले में स्थित है। सामान्यतः यह मान्यता स्थापित हो गई है कि राष्ट्रीयता की भावना का संचार जिन प्रदेशों में सर्वप्रथम हुआ उनमें बंगाल एवं महाराष्ट्र प्रथम पंक्ति में थे। राजस्थान जैसे

सामंती शासित क्षेत्र का उल्लेख तक नहीं किया जाता। पत्रकारिता के क्षेत्र में इन अंचलों से निकले पत्रकारों-बुद्धिजीवियों की भूमिका को रेखांकित करना अत्यावश्यक है ताकि स्वाधीनता आन्दोलनों में उनकी लेखनी को स्थापित करके उनके योगदान को रेखांकित किया जा सकें।

श्री झाबरमल्ल शर्मा का जन्म 1888 ई. में हुआ था। इनका जन्म झुंझुनूं जिले के जसरासर गाँव में हुआ अवश्य था लेकिन उनको पहिचान तत्कालीन ब्रिटिश राजधानी कलकत्ता (वर्तमान कोलकाता) में प्राप्त हुई। सतरह-अठारह वर्ष की आयु में 1905-06 ई. में उनकी मुलाकात पं. दुर्गाप्रसाद मिश्रा जैसे प्रसिद्ध पत्रकार से हुई जिसने उनके जीवन की धारा निर्धारित कर दी। पण्डित मिश्र उस समय 'भारत मित्र' एवं 'उचित वक्ता' के सम्पादक थे। इन्हीं से पं. झाबरमल्लजी को पत्रकारिता के संस्कार मिले। वे पण्डित मिश्राजी को अपना 'गुरु एवं मार्गदर्शक' मानते थे।[1] ऐसे यशस्वी गुरु के मार्गदर्शन में उन्होंने उनके ही मार्ग पर चलने का निर्णय लिया एवं पत्रकारिता के क्षेत्र में नए कीर्तिमान स्थापित करके शेखावाटी के इस सुपुत्र ने अंग्रेजी शासन के दौरान राष्ट्रीय अर्थात् अखिल भारतीय पहिचान बनाई। पंडित मिश्राजी से जब नवयुवा पं. झाबरमल्ल का साक्षात्कार हुआ तब बंगाल में बंगभंग के विरुद्ध बंगाल के जनमानस में लार्ड कर्जन के इस कदम के विरुद्ध राजनीतिक उबाल था। अंग्रेजों की इस 'बाटो और शासन करो' की राजनीति के विरुद्ध हिन्दू-मुसलमान सड़कों पर उतर आये थे एवं एक विशाल जनआन्दोलन की पृष्ठभूमि तैयार की जा रही थी। उस समय शेखावाटी अंचल की सामंती पृष्ठभूमि का एक नवयुवा अंग्रेजी साम्राज्य की राजधानी कलकत्ता में पत्रकारिता के क्षेत्र में अपना प्रथम कदम रख रहा था एवं सौभाग्य से उसे पंडित दुर्गाप्रसाद मिश्र जैसे यशस्वी संपादक पथप्रदर्शक शिक्षक के रूप में मिले।

नवयुवा पं. झाबरमल्ल को सर्वप्रथम 1907 ई, में कलकत्ता से प्रकाशित होने वाली 'ज्ञानोदय' पत्रिका को सम्पादित करने का दायित्व मिला। जिस समय उनको सम्पादन जैसे गुरुत्तर कार्य को सौंपा गया उस समय उनकी उम्र मात्र उन्नीस वर्ष की थी जिससे अकादमिक योग्यता के साथ उनकी कलम की शक्ति का अनुमान भी लगाया जा सकता है। इसके दो साल पशचात् 1909 ई. में बम्बई से प्रकाशित होने वाले साप्ताहिक पत्र 'भारत' के सम्पादन का कार्य करने हेतु आमन्त्रित किया गया जहां वे उसके प्रकाशन के बन्द होने

तक उससे सम्बद्ध रहे। इसके पश्चात् उन्हें अखिल भारतीय माहेश्वरी सभा के मुख पत्र 'मारवाड़ी' के सम्पादन हेतु नागपुर जाना पड़ा जहां स्वास्थ्य ने उनका साथ नहीं दिया जिस कारण से वे 1910 ई. में कलकत्ता लौट आए। 1911 ई. का साल उनके लिए एक मोड़ साबित हुआ। विजयदत्त श्रीधर के शब्दों में 'पं. झाबरमल्ल शर्मा के सम्पर्क फलक का विस्तार 1911 ई. में हुआ, जब प्रयाग में अखिल भारतीय हिन्दी साहित्य सम्मेलन और अखिल भारतीय वैद्य सम्मेलन में उन्होंने भाग लिया।[2] जहां उनकी मुलाकात महावीर प्रसाद द्विवेदी, बालकृष्ण भट्ट, पुरुषोत्तमदास टण्डन, चन्द्रधर शर्मा, गुलेरी, राधाकृष्णदास एवं बाबू श्यामसुन्दर दास जैसे विद्वानों से हुई जिसने उनके जीवन को गहराई से प्रभावित किया। त्रिवेणी के संगम स्थल प्रयाग से मुद्रणालय की स्थापना का संकल्प लेकर कलकत्ता लौट आए। वही प्रयाग जिसका मुग़ल सम्राट अकबर ने इलाहाबाद नाम रख कर उसे सूबा (प्रान्त) का स्तर प्रदान करके उसके सम्मान में वृद्धि की तथा वहां आयोजित होने वाले कुम्भ आयोजन की व्यवस्था सुचारू रूप से करने का आदेश दिया। इस मुग़ल सूबा मुख्यालय एवं त्रिवेणी संगम जैसे पवित्र स्थल पर लिया गया संकल्प शीघ्र ही फलीभूत हुआ। उन्होंने राधाकृष्ण मिश्र, भूरालाल मिश्र एवं शंभूराम पुजारी जैसे सहयोगियों के साथ साझेदारी में एक प्रेस खरीदी। इसी प्रेस से श्रीकृष्ण जन्माष्टमी तद्नुसार 14 अगस्त, 1914 ई. के दिन दैनिक 'कलकत्ता समाचार' के प्रकाशन का श्रीगणेश किया।[3] श्रीकृष्ण के जन्म दिवस पर अखबार के प्रकाशन की पृष्ठभूमि में दो, महत्त्वपूर्ण उद्देश्य उभर कर हमारे सम्मुख आते हैं प्रथम, कृष्ण का जन्म मथुरा के आततायी शासक कंस, जो रिश्ते में उसका मामा था, के दुराचारी शासन के अन्त के निमित्त हुआ था एवं द्वितीय ठीक उसी प्रकार 'कलकत्ता समाचार' का जन्म ब्रिटिश शासन के विरुद्ध जनचेतना को जागृत करने एवं उपनिवेशवादी शासकीय नीतियों के शोषणकारी चरित्र को उजागर करना था। इस अख़बार के प्रकाशन के साथ पण्डितजी निरन्तर सम्पादकीय आलेख लिखते रहे। प्रथम विश्वयुद्ध के समय युद्ध के बारे में ताजा समाचार अख़बार में पढ़ने को मिलते थे। यह समाचार पत्र मात्र समाचारों का सूचना पट्ट ही नहीं था बल्कि इसमें कई आन्दोलनों को मंच भी प्रदान किया। उदाहरणार्थ घी में मिलावट के विरुद्ध घृत आन्दोलन का नेतृत्व किया। नव जागरण आन्दोलन से जन्मे अख़बार ने विभिन्न समाजों में

व्याप्त सामाजिक कुरीतियों के विरुद्ध भी आन्दोलन चलाए एवं ऐसी बुराइयों के विरुद्ध निरन्तर आवाज बुलन्द की।

ब्रिटिश सरकार ने भारत में निरन्तर उभर रहे जन-आन्दोलनों राजनीतिक पटल पर महात्मा गांधी के उभरने एवं व्यापक होते जन-आन्दोलनों को कुचलने हेतु रोलेट एक्ट पास किया। इस नवीन कानून के अन्तर्गत बिना किसी ट्रायल के लोगों को गिरफ्तार करने का प्रावधान था। अदालत में बिना प्रस्तुत किए किसी को भी गिरफ्तार किया जा सकता था। ब्रिटिश सरकार की नीतियों के कारण उपजे असन्तोष, उभरते एवं विस्तारित होते जन आन्दोलनों को कुचलने का हथियार था। पंडितजी ने इस जनविरोधी कानून के ख़िलाफ आलेख लिखे। उनके आलेखों ने इस एक्ट के विरुद्ध बंगाल के जनमानस को उद्वेलित करने में अहम् भूमिका निभाई। परिणामतः इस कानून के विरोध में सभाओं के आयोजन किए गए एवं व्यापक स्तर पर जनसमुदाय सड़कों पर उत्तर आया एवं जुलूस निकाले गए। जनविरोध का सिलसिला लंबा होता चला गया। इस जनआन्दोलन का समर्थन पंडित झाबरमल्ल के नेतृत्व में 'कलकत्ता समाचार' ने कन्धे से कन्धा मिला दिया। विशाल जनसमुदाय एवं इस अख़बार की जुगलबन्दी ने सम्पूर्ण बंगाल में ब्रिटिश सरकार के विरुद्ध भावी राजनीतिक आन्दोलनों की नींव डालने का उल्लेखनीय कार्य किया। रोलेट एक्ट विरोधी उभरते जन आन्दोलनों ने ब्रिटिश प्रशासन में खलबली मचा दी। परिणामतः तत्कालीन बंगाल गवर्नर लार्ड रोनाल्ड शे का आग बबूला होना स्वाभाविक था। कम्पनी के आला अफसरों ने इस जनआन्दोलन का दमन करने के निर्देश दिए। गवर्नर ने सर्वप्रथम राजस्थान के प्रवासी मारवाड़ियों को आतंकित किया। ऐसा सम्भवतः गवर्नर ने इसलिए किया क्योंकि कलकत्ता में मारवाड़ी प्रवासी थे एवं बंगाल में उनकी जड़ें अभी मजबूत नहीं हो पाई थी। इसके अतिरिक्त, उनकी निर्भरता अंग्रेजों पर अधिक थी। इनके विरुद्ध कार्यवाही के जरिए गवर्नर सम्भवतः बंगाली जनसमुदाय को अप्रत्यक्ष रूप से सन्देश देना चाह रहा था। उसके इस व्यवहार का ग़ैर-मारवाड़ी आन्दोलनकारियों पर पड़े प्रभाव की जानकारी के लिए तत्कालीन समाचारों के अध्ययन के पश्चात् ही निश्चित तौर पर कुछ कहा जा सकता है।

इस अनुमान की पुष्टि पं. झाबरमल्ल शर्मा की सम्पादकीय टिप्पणी से

होती है जो उन्होंने *'गवर्नर का गुस्सा मारवाड़ियों पर दोषारोपण'* के शीर्षक से लिखी जो निम्न थी–

'बंगाल के गवर्नर लार्ड रोनाल्ड शे की उस वक्तृता को पाठक पढ़ चुके हैं, जो उन्होंने गत रविवार की शाम के मारवाड़ी और भाटिया जाति के कुछ प्रतिनिधियों को अपने घर बुला कर सुनायी थी। वक्तृता को हमने ध्यानपूर्वक पढ़ा है और उस दिन के अभिनय की बातें भी पूरे तौर से सुनी हैं। बड़े विचार के बाद हमें इस सिद्धान्त पर ठहरना पड़ता है कि गवर्नर साहब का क्रोध अकारण ही इतना चढ़ गया है और उन्होंने गुस्से में आकर इतने भले आदमियों को भला बुरा कह डाला। यह सच है कि कर्मवीर गांधी के सत्याग्रह के मूल सिद्धान्त के साथ एक मारवाड़ियों की क्या, सभी देशवासियों की सहानुभूति है, फिर मारवाड़ियों को ही इसके लिए लाल आंखें क्यों दिखलायी जाती है?'[4]

पं. शर्मा की अन्तिम पंक्तियों से ही इस बात की पुष्टि हो जाती है कि इस रोलेट एक्ट विरोधी आन्दोलन के प्रति सहानुभूति सिर्फ मारवाड़ियों में ही नहीं थी बल्कि सम्पूर्ण देशवासियों की भी थी। इसीलिए बंगाली एवं ग़ैर-बंगाली जातियों के लोग आन्दोलन में अपनी भागीदारी निभा रहे थे।

कलकत्तावासियों ने महात्मा गांधी की गिरफ्तारी के विरोध में हड़ताल की थी न कि उपद्रव किया था। पण्डितजी के अनुसार 'हड़ताल करना और उपद्रव करना एक नहीं है।' इसके अतिरिक्त उन्होंने मारवाड़ियों की भी इस बात के लिए कटु आलोचना की कि उन्होंने गवर्नर की बातों का प्रतिरोध क्यों नहीं किया। पंडितजी ने उनकी अशिक्षा की ओर संकेत करते हुए लिखा कि इसी कारण से ये लोग सरकार को माकूल जवाब नहीं दे पाए। इसके अतिरिक्त एक अत्यंत उल्लेखनीय बात की ओर संकेत करते हुए उन्होंने मारवाड़ियों को उलाहना दिया। उन्होंने लिखा कि 'तुम्हारा कोई जोरदार अंग्रेजी पत्र नहीं जिसके द्वारा तुम दूसरों के द्वारा किए हुए आक्रमणों का जवाब दे सको। जवाब देना तो दूर रहा, जिन पत्रों (अख़बारों) से तुम्हारा संपर्क है, उनके राजनैतिक आन्दोलनों के लिए ही *'तौबा'* करने को तैयार रहते हो। किसी में तुम्हारा विश्वास नहीं।'

आगे उन्होंने मारवाड़ियों को शिक्षा देते हुए लिखा कि 'शास्त्र का सिद्धांत है' कि 'संशयात्मा निनवश्यति' इसलिए संभल जाओ और अपनी

जाति में विद्या का प्रचार कर उसे उठाओ। जो कुछ काम करो और विश्वास के साथ करो। किसी के दबाव को अकारण मत सहो। उसी दशा में वर्तमान संघर्ष के समय में तुम ठहर सकोगे।' पंडित झाबरमल्ल शर्मा की इन सम्पादकीय टिप्पणियों से महात्मा गांधी के अहिंसात्मक आन्दोलन के प्रति उनकी प्रतिबद्धता, दमन के विरुद्ध बिना किसी भय के विरुद्ध आवाज उठाने का साहस एवं सरकार एवं हुकमरानों की आँख में आँख डाल कर बात करने की प्रवृत्ति उजागर होती है।

पं. झाबरमल्ल शर्मा की रोलेट-एक्ट के विरोध में उपजे आन्दोलन के समर्थन एवं सरकार की दमनकारी नीतियों के विरुद्ध सम्पादकीय टिप्पणियां एवं आलेख इतने प्रभावी थे कि जिसके कारण अंग्रेजी हुकूमत ने 'कलकत्ता समाचार' पर दो हजार रुपये की जमानत अच्छे आचरण की गारंटी के रूप में मांगी। अख़बार के स्वाभिमानी संचालकों को जमानत देकर समाचार पत्र निकालना उचित नहीं लगा। इसलिए उन्होंने 18 जून, 1919 से पत्र प्रकाशन स्थगित कर दिया।[5] अख़बार संचालकों के इस कदम से स्वाभिमान के साथ-साथ राष्ट्रभक्ति एवं आन्दोलनों के प्रति उनकी प्रतिबद्धता झलकती है। इस कदम से सम्पादक द्वारा लिखित आलेखों के प्रति संचालकों की आस्था एवं समर्थन की भावना भी झलकती है।

'कलकत्ता समाचार' लगभग पांच वर्ष तक प्रतिदिन निरंतर प्रकाशित होता रहा। इन वर्षों के दौरान सम्पादक की टिप्पणियां सम्भवतः निरन्तर प्रकाशित होती रही होंगी। जो बंगाल एवं भारतीय राजनीतिक परिस्थितियों को समझने की दृष्टि से अत्यंत महत्त्वपूर्ण हैं। 'समय से साक्षात्कार' में सम्पादक द्वारा लिखित सम्पादकीय आलेख 19 जनवरी 1923 से 30 दिसम्बर 1923 के मध्य में लिखित संकलित हैं। ये टिप्पणियां उस काल की हैं जब अख़बार का 15 फरवरी 1921 से पुनः प्रकाशन प्रारंभ किया गया एवं जिसका प्रकाशन 6 जनवरी 1925 तक जारी रहा। इसके पश्चात इस नाम से फिर यह कभी प्रकाशित नहीं हुआ।

'कलकत्ता समाचार' के अगस्त 1914 के थोड़े समय पश्चात ही महात्मा गांधी का भारत की राजनीति में प्रवेश हुआ था एवं जब जून 1919 में प्रकाशन स्थगित किया गया था तब तक गांधी की अंग्रेजों के विरुद्ध संघर्ष की बागडोर उनके हाथों में पूर्णतः आ चुकी थी। इसलिए इस दौर की पंडितजी

की सम्पादकीय टिप्पणियां इस काल खण्ड के आन्दोलन के अध्ययन के लिए अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण हैं।

'समय से साक्षात्कार' में संकलित टिप्पणियां असहयोग ख़िलाफत आन्दोलन के काल की हैं जो उस दौर के इतिहास के स्रोत हैं। उनके द्वारा लिखित ये आलेख विभिन्न विषयों से सम्बन्धित हैं जो उनकी राजनीतिक, सामाजिक एवं सांस्कृतिक दृष्टि की व्यापकता को दर्शाती हैं। राजनीति की दृष्टि से कांग्रेस कार्यकारिणी कमेटियों[6] की टिप्पणियां तत्कालीन कांग्रेस की राजनीति के उतार-चढ़ावों एवं आन्तरिक अन्तर्विरोधों को समझने एवं उसे व्याख्यायित करने में सहायता प्रदान करती हैं। उनकी इन टिप्पणियों की तुलना अन्य समकालीन स्रोतों से करके उनके महत्त्व को उजागर किया जा सकता है। इस आलेख के अन्त में कांग्रेस कार्यकारिणी की 11 जुलाई, 1923 की नागपुर बैठक पर सम्पादक की टिप्पणी *परिशिष्ट* में हुबहू प्रस्तुत की गई है जिससे उनकी राजनीतिक परिस्थितियों की समझ उजागर होती है।

एक वर्ष की सम्पादकीय टिप्पणियां प्रवासी भारतीयों की समस्या, हिन्दू मुस्लिम एकता एवं अनेक महत्त्वपूर्ण ग़ैर-राजनीतिक विषयों पर केन्द्रित हैं जिन पर बिन्दुवार विश्लेषण की आवश्यकता है। पंडित झाबरमल्ल शर्मा की ये टिप्पणियां इतिहास लेखन के पुनर्निर्माण की मूल सामग्री है। आलेख की अगली कड़ी में इन टिप्पणियों की व्यापक परिप्रेक्ष्य में अध्ययन करके इनके महत्त्व को उजागर करने का प्रयास किया जाएगा।

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कांग्रेस की बैठक

11 जुलाई 1923

आलइण्डिया कांग्रेस कमिटी की जिस बैठक के लिये देशवासियों का ध्यान खिंचा हुआ था, वह गत 8 और 9 जुलाई को नागपुर में सम्पन्न हो गयी। विभिन्न प्रांतों से कांग्रेस कमिटी के सदस्य नागपुर पहुंचे थे। दोनों दलों के अधिनायक देशबन्धुदास और चक्रवर्ती राजगोपालाचार्य भी सम्मिलित हुए थे। डॉ. अन्सारी ने सभापति का आसन ग्रहण किया था। पण्डित मदन मोहन मालवीयजी ने अमृतसर के हिन्दू-मुसलमानों के वैमनस्य को हटाने में लगे रहने के कारण तार भेजकर अपनी अनुपस्थिति के लिये खेद प्रकट करते हुए बम्बई के समझौते को न बदलने की प्रार्थना की थी।

यह कहना केवल पुनरुक्ति मात्र होगा कि बम्बई के समझौते पर पुनः विचार करने तथा नागपुर में आरम्भ हुए राष्ट्रीय झण्डे के सत्याग्रह के सम्बन्ध में विचार करने को ही कमिटी का आह्वान किया गया था। प्रथम दिन की बैठक के आरम्भ में सभापति अन्सारी ने प्रयोजन समझाते हुए इसी अभिप्राय को व्यक्त किया था तदनन्तर बंगाल के बा. हरदयालनाग के इस प्रस्ताव पर विचार होता रहा कि ''गया कांग्रेस के कौंसिल बहिष्कार सम्बन्धी प्रस्ताव के अनुसार कार्यबन्द करने का जो प्रस्ताव बम्बई वाले अधिवेशन में गत 26 मई को स्वीकृत हुआ था वह आल इण्डिया कांग्रेस कमिटीके अधिकारसे बाहर था इसलिये उस पर फिर विचार हो और वह प्रस्ताव रद्द कर दिया जाय।' अपने प्रस्ताव को उपस्थित करते हुए नाग महाशय ने अपने पक्ष समर्थन में एक ऐसी बात भी कह डाली जो उनके समान वृद्ध पुरुष को नहीं कहनी चाहिये थी और जिसके लिये देशबन्धुदास के आपत्ति करने पर स्वयं सभापति महाशय को उनके उस कथन को अप्रासङ्गिक और नियम विरुद्ध बताना पड़ा। नाग महाशय ने कहा बम्बई की बैठक में श्री दास ने अध्यक्ष का आसन बिना समर्थन के ही ग्रहण कर लिया था।'' निस्सन्देह ऐसी क्षुद्र बात को मुंह पर लाने से यह समझा जा सकता है कि सबल हेतु न मिलने के कारण ही ऐसी पोच दलील पेश की जाती है। जो हो, उस दिन की बैठक का कार्य यहीं समाप्त हो गया और

सदस्यों को राष्ट्रीय झण्डे का सत्याग्रह देखने का अवकाश दे दिया गया, यद्यपि उनके मौके पर पहुंचने से पहले ही उस दिन का कार्य समाप्त हो चुका था।

दूसरे दिन सबसे पहले श्रीमती सरोजिनी नायडू ने अपना प्रस्ताव उपस्थित किया जिसमें श्रीमान् लाला लाजपतरायजी की अस्वस्थता के लिये दुःख प्रदर्शन और पञ्जाबियों के साथ लाजपतराय दिवस मानने की बात कहते हुए यह आन्तरिक विश्वास प्रकट किया गया था कि श्रीमान् लालाजी शीघ्र ही निरोग हो जायेंगे। इस प्रस्ताव के सर्व सम्मति से स्वीकृति होने में क्या सन्देह था। समस्त भारतवर्ष श्रीमान् लालाजी की देश सेवा से उपकृत है और कृतज्ञ हृदय से उनकी मङ्गलकामना करता है। ईश्वर उन्हें शीघ्र नीरोग करें। देश की जैसी कठिन परिस्थिति है, नौकरशाही का जैसा रुख है—इस दशा में श्रीमान् लालाजी जैसे सुरक्ष राजनीतिज्ञ का नीरोग और बन्धनमुक्त होना परम वांछनीय है।

दूसरा प्रस्ताव श्रीमती नायडू ने यह उपस्थित किया कि राष्ट्रीय झण्डे की रक्षा के लिये नागपुर में वीर सत्याग्रहियों के दृढ़ और निरन्तर के प्रतिरोध की यह कमिटी प्रशंसा करती है। यह कमिटी मध्यप्रान्त तथा अन्यान्य प्रान्तों को इस आन्दोलन में भाग लेने के कारण बधाई देती है और कांग्रेस कार्यकारिणी समिति से अनुरोध करती है कि वह इस आन्दोलन की सफलता के लिये आवश्यकीय उपायों के निर्माण में नागपुर की कमिटी की सहायता करें। यह प्रस्ताव मौलवी महम्मद शफी द्वारा अनुमोदित हुआ। इस प्रस्ताव पर कितने ही संशोधन उपस्थित हुए। श्री वसन्तकुमार मजूमदार ने कहा कि जिन नेताओं का इस सत्याग्रह आन्दोलन में भाग लेने में पूरा विश्वास हो, वे अग्रग्रामी बनकर झण्डा धारण करें और निषिद्ध किये हुए स्थान में जाय। मौ. शमसुद्दीनने अपनी यह राय पेश की कि आज ही सायंकाल आलइण्डिया कांग्रेस कमिटी के सदस्य जुलूस के आगे आगे जायं। श्री. सन्तानम्ने कहा कि आ.इ.कां. कमिटी के सदस्य बारी बारी से प्रत्येक दिन इस आन्दोलन में सम्मिलित हों और जुलूस लेकर चलें। इन संशोधक कथनों से नागपुर के सत्याग्रह ने नेताओं के हृदय में कितना स्थान कर लिया है, इसका स्पष्ट पता चल जाता है। सबके विभिन्न कथनों को सुनकर सभापति ने कहा कि आन्दोलन के हित की दृष्टि से यह अच्छा होगा कि कांग्रेस वर्किङ्ग कमिटी को यह आन्दोलन सौंप दिया जाय और संशोधक लोग अपने संशोधन प्रस्ताव वापस ले लें। श्री पं.

जवाहरलाल नेहरू ने कहा कि मैं एक साथ मिलकर आज शाम को वर्जित स्थान में जुलूस लेकर जाने के विचार का स्वागत करता हूं परन्तु इससे हमारे काम में सहायता नहीं होगी और यह उचित होगा कि आन्दोलन को जारी रखा जाये। आपने यह भी कहा कि प्रबंध के विचार के लिये एक उपसमिति नियुक्त हो चुकी है। देशबन्धुदास ने कहा कि मैं इस वीरता की बहुत प्रशंसा करता हूं परन्तु मुझे इसमें भाग लेने के लिये तब तक उत्साह नहीं मिलता जब तक कि कांग्रेस के अन्तर्गत भेद दूर न हो जाय। श्री दास महोदय के इस विचार का मौ. महम्मदशफी ने अनुमोदन किया। इसके बाद सभी संशोधन वापस ले लिये गये और मूल प्रस्ताव सम्मति ग्रहण के अनन्तर स्वीकृत हो गया। स्वराज्य दल के सदस्यों ने तटस्थ रहने की नीति का अवलम्बन कर किसी ओर सम्मति नहीं दी। केवल एक सदस्य प्रस्ताव के विरोधी थे। बीच में एक मजेदार बहस भी हो गयी थी, जिसका विवरण पाठक स्थानान्तर में प्रकाशित नागपुर के संवाद में पढ़ेंगे। मध्याह्नोत्तर चार घण्टे की बहस के बाद 13 सम्मतियों की अधिकता से अगस्त में विशेष अधिवेशन होने का प्रस्ताव भी स्वीकार हो गया। विशेष अधिवेशन होकर भी यदि विरोध शान्त हो जाय तो बड़ी बात हो।

हमने बम्बई के जिस अधिवेशन में समझौते का प्रस्ताव स्वीकृत हुआ था उससे बहुत पहले विशेष अधिवेशन करने की सम्मति दी थी। हम यह भी कई बार लिख चुके हैं कि कौंसिलों में जाने के पक्षपाती हम नहीं हैं। हम कौंसिलों की मेम्बरी को स्वराज्य प्राप्ति का साधन भी नहीं समझते किन्तु हम इस बात में कोई लाभ नहीं समझते कि आज जो निश्चय किया गया है वह दो दिन के बाद बदल दिया जाय। इस प्रकार करने से जनता का विश्वास भी जम नहीं सकता। कौंसिलों में जाने और न जाने की बात को लेकर जो अप्रिय चर्चा कुछ समय से चल रही है, हमारी राय में उससे हमारी राष्ट्रीय प्रगति को बड़ा धक्का पहुँचा है। अस्तु, नागपुर के निश्चयानुसार अब कांग्रेस का विशेष अधिवेशन अवश्य होगा परन्तु क्या वे नेता जो देश के दुर्भाग्य से कौंसिलों के प्रश्न को लेकर समस्त रचनात्मक कार्यक्रम को पूरा करने की ओर से प्रायः दृष्टि हटा चुके हैं, अपना हठ छोड़ कर उसके निर्णय को स्वीकार करने को तैयार होंगे? ❑

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राजनीति में आध्यात्मिकता एवं अहिंसा के संदर्भ में गांधी द्वारा अपनायी गई व्यूह रचना का अध्ययन एवं वर्तमान समय में प्रासंगिकता

डॉ. अफरोज अहमद • सुनिता मौर्य

'गांधी और राजनीति का आध्यात्मिकीकरण' महात्मा गांधी के आध्यात्मिक विश्वासों के कारण राजनीतिक कार्रवाई में शामिल होने के तरीकों की जांच करना है। यह देखते हुए कि गांधी का मानना था कि आध्यात्मिकता और राजनीति का अटूट संबंध है, उनका मानना था कि राजनीतिक कार्य आध्यात्मिक अवधारणाओं द्वारा निर्देशित होने चाहिए। उनका मानना था कि सत्य (सत्य) और अहिंसा (अहिंसा) ऐसे आदर्श हैं जिन्हें किसी एक धर्म या समुदाय तक सीमित नहीं किया जाना चाहिए। उनका मानना था कि ये सिद्धांत सार्वभौमिक रूप से लागू होने चाहिए। इन विचारों का उन पर महत्वपूर्ण प्रभाव पड़ा और वे बौद्धिक रूप से दुनिया के बारे में उनकी धारणा को आकार देने के लिए जिम्मेदार थे। गांधी द्वारा इस्तेमाल की गई रणनीति में अनुशासन, ईमानदारी और हिंसा का सहारा लिए बिना न्याय की खोज जैसे बुनियादी घटकों की उपस्थिति थी। राजनीति के इस आध्यात्मिकीकरण का लक्ष्य राजनीतिक परिदृश्य और उसमें रहने वाले लोगों को बदलने के प्रयास में नैतिक और नैतिक आदर्शों पर आधारित सार्वजनिक जुड़ाव को प्रेरित करना था।

खोज शब्द : *गांधी, राजनीति का आध्यात्मिकीकरणए अहिंसा, सत्य, नैतिक नेतृत्व, सत्याग्रह*

प्रस्तावना

वर्तमान विश्व राजनीति के बदलते परिप्रेक्ष्य में मानव जाति आशा एवं

आकांक्षा के संयुक्त भाव से भविष्य की ओर देख रही है। एक और वैज्ञानिक और तकनीकी क्रांति का अपार वैभव एवं तिलिस्म है, वहीं दूसरी ओर व्यक्तिगत एवं सामाजिक स्तर पर बढ़ती हिंसा एवं प्रतिस्पर्धा ने नैतिक एवं मानवीय मूल्यों को विस्मृत कर जीवन को अस्थिर एवं असुरक्षित बना दिया है। आज उत्तरजीविता का भयावह संकट विश्वव्यापी चिंता का विषय बन गया है। आज विश्व के समक्ष कई समस्याएँ सिर उठाये खड़ी है जिनमें आतंकवाद एवं हिंसात्मक गतिविधियों विश्व शांति के मार्ग में सबसे बड़ी बाधा है। विश्व में राजनीतिक गतिविधियों को आतंकवाद अपने क्रियाकलापों द्वारा निरंतर प्रभावित कर रहा है। जिसके कारण उचित एवं न्यायपूर्ण कार्यप्रणाली का अस्तित्व ही खतरे में है।

विश्व पटल पर महात्मा गाँधी का अभ्युदय एक महान घटना है। गाँधीजी को दो रूपों में जाना जाता है–राजनेता एवं अध्यात्मवेत्ता किसी व्यक्ति के व्यक्तित्व निर्माण में प्रमुखतः दो बातों की भूमिका होती है–अन्तः चेतना एवं प्रवर्तित परिस्थितियाँ अन्तःचेतना स्वतः स्फूर्त होती है इस आधार पर होने वाले व्यक्तित्व निर्माण के लिये पृथक् प्रयासों की आवश्यकता नहीं होती। इसका निर्माण पेड़ों पर पत्तियों आने के सदृश स्वाभाविक होता है। इस कारण इसमें कृत्रिमता नहीं होती यह शाश्वत होता है। दूसरी ओर देश काल की विद्यमान परिस्थितियाँ व्यक्ति को कुछ विशिष्ट आचरण हेतु प्रेरित/विवश करती हैं।

इसके लिये व्यक्ति कुछ खास प्रयास करता है संभव है इस निमित्त किया गया आचरण व्यक्ति के मौलिक स्वभाव से कुछ विचलित हो सकता है वैशिष्ट्य एवं संस्कारित होने के कारण इसमें कृत्रिमता रहती है और इस कारण यह चिरन्तन हो, ऐसा आवश्यक नहीं किन्तु महापुरुषों में यह सामान्य लक्षण होता है कि वे परिस्थितिवश उठाये गये कदमों में भी भरपूर संयम का बर्ताव करते हैं, इस कारण ऐसे आचरण में भी वे किसी सीमा तक अपने स्वाभाविक गुणों की छाप छोड़ने में सफल रहते हैं। गाँधीजी के संदर्भ में इसे देखा जाये तो सत्य, अहिंसा संबंधी मौलिक सद्गुण उनमें स्वाभाविक रूप से विद्यमान थे। इन मौलिक सद्गुणों का प्रयोग उन्होंने कृत्रिम रूप से स्वदेशी, असहयोग, सविनय अवज्ञा, नमक कानून को भंग करना, भारत छोड़ो आंदोलन करो या मरो का नारा एवं स्वतंत्रता के समय गाँधीजी का

आचरण के रूप में किया। गांधीजी ने अपने लंबे राजनीतिक जीवनकाल में अपने चरित्र के मौलिक गुणों पर सामान्यतः प्रवर्तित परिस्थितियों को हावी नहीं होने दिया और राजनीतिक स्वतंत्रता आंदोलन को अपने अन्तर्मन की आवाज के अनुरूप चलाने का सफल प्रयोग किया। यह गुण उनकी महात्मा की उपाधि को चरितार्थ कर देता है।

उद्देश्य

1. महात्मा गांधी द्वारा अभिव्यक्त विचारों की वर्तमान संदर्भ में प्रासंगिकता का अध्ययन करना।
2. राजनीति में आध्यात्मिकता एवं अहिंसा के संदर्भ में गांधी द्वारा अपनायी गई व्यूह रचना का आलोचनात्मक मूल्यांकन करना।

महात्मा गांधी जीवन दर्शन एक परिचय

मोहनदास करमचंद गांधीजी का जन्म 2 अक्टूबर, 1869 को हुआ। वे करमचंद गांधी के सबसे छोटे पुत्र थे। जो काठियावाड़ के कम-से-कम तीन रजवाड़ों-पोरबंदर, राजकोट और वाँकानेर में अलग-अलग समय पर प्रमुख मंत्री रहे थे। करमचंद गांधी के पिता और उनके भाई भी इसी पद पर रहे। ये पद कोई इतने ऊँचे नहीं थे, जितने कि नाम से लगते थे, क्योंकि ये छोटे-छोटे रजवाड़े थे और परिवार में से किसी ने कोई लंबी-चौड़ी दौलत भी इकट्ठी नहीं की थी। लेकिन पुत्र की स्मृति में काबा गांधी का तस्वीर एक अत्यंत ही व्यवहार कुशल योग्य व्यक्ति की थी, जो अपनी रैय्यत के जटिल प्रश्नों व विवादों को निपटाया करते थे। भगवान के दर्शनों के लिए मंदिर जाना उनकी आदत थी तथा ढलती उम्र में उन्होंने भगवद्गीता पढ़नी शुरू कर दी थी। परिवार जब पूजा करता तो वे गीता के श्लोक उच्चारित करते थे। निस्संदेह इस सबने बालक गांधी के चिंतन को दिशा दी।

लेकिन कुल मिलाकर, लड़का किसी भी लिहाज से असाधारण नहीं था। वे यह खुद भी स्वीकार करते हैं कि उनमें पढ़ाई के लिए कोई विशेष रूझान भी नहीं था। प्रारंभिक वर्षों में काफी शर्मीला लड़का था और उन्हें साथियों से घबराहट होती थी। गांधीजी ने स्वयं कहा है कि वे स्कूल जाते, फिर वहाँ से भाग आते, ताकि उन्हें किसी से बातचीत न करनी पड़े। उनके बचपन की

एक घटना ने, लगता है, गहरा असर छोड़ा था। एक बार एक घुमंतु नाटक मंडली आई थी, जिसका नाटक, 'हरिश्चंद्र' उन्होंने देखा। महाभारत ग्रंथ की एक महान कथा पर आधारित इस नाटक में सत्यवादी राजा हरिश्चंद्र की कथा का वर्णन था, जिसने सत्य के लिए हर चीज का बलिदान कर दिया तथा प्राण त्यागने से पूर्व जिसे दारूण दुखों का निरंतर सामना करना पड़ा था। मरने से कुछ ही दिन पहले एक बार उनके अंतरमन में ऐसी बात बैठ जाती तो उसको निकाला नहीं जा सकता था। जैसा कि उन्होंने बताया कि जब वे बच्चे थे तो उन्होंने अनगिनत बार, स्वयं को हरिश्चंद्र मानकर, उसका अभिनय किया था। इस प्रकार प्रारंभ में ही सबसे बड़ी अच्छाई के लिए मैं सत्य उनके मन में घर कर गया था, और ऐसा लगता है कि जैसे कोई पेड़ या फूल बढ़ता है, वैसे ही सत्य का पौधा भी उनके मन में स्वाभाविक रूप से बड़ा होता चला गया। आने वाले समय में इसे एक ऐसा प्रमुख व एकमात्र विचार बनना था, जो उनके चिंतन के हर पहलू पर छा जाये। तेरह वर्ष की आयु में, गांधीजी के घरवालों ने उनका विवाह कस्तूरबा बाई से कर दिया। अपनी दुल्हन, कस्तूरबा बाई के वे अत्यंत ही दीवाने थे और बाद के वर्षों में अपनी इस अपरिपक्व विषयसिक्त पर उन्हें बड़ा ही दुःख व शर्म महसूस होती रही होगी। शायद इसी भावना ने बाल-विवाह पर उनके मन में बड़े कठोर विचारों को जन्म दिया, क्योंकि बाद में वे बाल-विवाह को भारत की एक भीषण बुराई मानते थे। तब बाल विवाह न केवल कानूनी दृष्टि से वैध था, बल्कि हिंदुओं में इसे दुनियावी आकर्षणों से बचाव का एकमात्र हितकर मार्ग जाना जाता था।

एक-दूसरे से अनजान बच्चों का विवाह करना, आम रिवाज था और अकसर कहा जाता था कि ऐसे विवाह प्रायः सुखी होते थे। कुछ भी हो, गांधीजी के बारे में ऐसा ही था। हालाँकी बाद के वर्षों में उनकी अंतरात्मा उन्हें काफी मंडली आई थी, जिसका नाटक, 'हरिश्चंद्र' उन्होंने देखा। महाभारत ग्रंथ की एक महान कथा पर आधारित इस नाटक में सत्यवादी राजा हरिश्चंद्र की कथा का वर्णन था, जिसने सत्य के लिए हर चीज का बलिदान कर दिया तथा प्राण त्यागने से पूर्व जिसे दारूण दुखों का निरंतर सामना करना पड़ा था। मरने से कुछ ही दिन पहले एक बार उनके अंतरमन में ऐसी बात बैठ जाती तो उसको निकाला नहीं जा सकता था। जैसा कि उन्होंने बताया कि जब वे बच्चे थे तो उन्होंने अनगिनत बार, स्वयं को हरिश्चंद्र मानकर, उसका

अभिनय किया था। इस प्रकार प्रारंभ में ही सबसे बड़ी अच्छाई के लिए मैं सत्य उनके मन में घर कर गया था, और ऐसा लगता है कि जैसे कोई पेड़ या फूल बढ़ता है, वैसे ही सत्य का पौधा भी उनके मन में स्वाभाविक रूप से बड़ा होता चला गया। आने वाले समय में इसे एक ऐसा प्रमुख व एकमात्र विचार बनना था, जो उनके चिंतन के हर पहलू पर छा जाये।

तेरह वर्ष की आयु में, गांधीजी के घरवालों ने उनका विवाह कस्तूरबा बाई से कर दिया। अपनी दुल्हन, कस्तूरबा बाई के वे अत्यंत ही दीवाने थे और बाद के वर्षों में अपनी इस अपरिपक्व विषयसिक्त पर उन्हें बड़ा ही दुःख व शर्म महसूस होती रही होगी। शायद इसी भावना ने बाल-विवाह पर उनके मन में बड़े कठोर विचारों को जन्म दिया, क्योंकि बाद में वे बाल-विवाह को भारत की एक भीषण बुराई मानते थे। तब बाल विवाह न केवल कानूनी दृष्टि से वैध था, बल्कि हिंदुओं में इसे दुनियावी आकर्षणों से बचाव का एकमात्र हितकर मार्ग जाना जाता था। एक-दूसरे से अनजान बच्चों का विवाह करना, आम रिवाज था और अकसर कहा जाता था कि ऐसे विवाह प्रायः सुखी होते थे। कुछ भी हो, गांधीजी के बारे में ऐसा ही था। हालाँकी बाद के वर्षों में उनकी अंतरात्मा उन्हें काफी कचोटती रहती थी, लेकिन उन्होंने जीवन पर्यंत कस्तूरबा बाई में अपने जीवन की सुख-शांति पाई। गांधीजी का बचपन विषयासक्त, अहंकारी और बेमतलब ईष्यालु था। गांधी परिवार में कस्तूरबा बाई छह महीने रहीं और इस दौरान, गांधी उनसे केवल रात में ही मिल सकते थे शेष छः महीने कस्तूरबा मायके में अपने माँ-बाप के पास रहीं। कस्तूरबा बाई अनपढ़ थीं और गांधीजी उन्हें वह सब कुछ सिखाना चाहते थे, जो वे जानते थे परंतु विषयासिक्त प्रेम ने, जैसा कि गांधीजी स्वयं कहते थे, उन्हें ऐसा करने का समय ही नहीं दिया और कस्तूरबा बाई अनपढ़ ही बनी रहीं। बस, स्थानीय भाषा गुजराती के गिने-चुने शब्द ही उन्हें आते थे। उनकी अपनी आत्मकथा में उनके पश्चाताप और आत्मनिंदा का स्पष्ट वर्णन है।

विवाह के बाद भी गांधीजी की हाई स्कूल की पढ़ाई जारी रही। उन्होंने कहा, 'हमारे वर्तमान हिंदू समाज में ही, पढ़ाई और वैवाहिक जीवन साथ-साथ चल सकते हैं। पढ़ाई में, उन्हें दिक्कतें महसूस हुई, परंतु लगता है कि चौदह वर्ष की आयु के बाद उनकी पढ़ाई पटरी पर आ गई थी और उनकी प्रगति अच्छी रही। इतना ही नहीं, एक-आध पुरस्कार भी उन्होंने जीत लिए

थे। 4 सितम्बर, 1888 को वे मुंबई से पानी के जहाज में विदेश रवाना हुए, तब वे एकदम सीधे-सादे अट्ठारह वर्षीय शर्मीले व जिज्ञासु हिंदू युवा थे। उन्होंने नए यूरोपीय वस्त्र पहन रखे थे, उनके भाईबंदों ने जो खरीद कर उन्हें दिए थे। टाई उनके लिए गले का फंदा बन रही थी, हाँ, यह बात और है कि बाद में लंदन में यही टाई उनके विनोद का कारण बनी। दरअसल अपनी छोटी जॉकेट और पतलून पर उनका ध्यान बार-बार जाता और जूते तो उन्हें काट रहे थे, फिर भी वे अपनी यात्रा के लिए तैयार थे और उनके मन में सीखने की, ज्ञान प्राप्त करने की उत्सुकता बड़ी प्रबल थी।

उस समय भी भारत में पहली चार प्राथमिक कक्षाओं से ऊपर की पढ़ाई अंग्रेजी में आज की तरह होती थी। अतः इंग्लैंड गए बिना ही, गांधीजी अंग्रेजी भाषा से परिचित हो चुके थे। परंतु यह स्कूली भाषा थी, मातृभाषा या आम बोलचाल की भाषा नहीं थी कि उन्हें सहज रूप से इसका ज्ञान हो जाता। जहाज पर उन्हें किसी की बात समझने, यहाँ तक की सेवकों की बात समझने में भी कठिनाई हो रही थी। यह भी डर उन्हें लगा रहता था कि कहीं माँस, मदिरा व स्त्रियों के बारे में माता को दिए वचन, भंग न हो जाएँ, इसलिए वे भोजन अपने केबिन में ही करते और उनका मुख्य आहार अपने साथ लाया भोजन ही होता। बेचारे गांधीजी को छुरी-काँटों का कुछ भी पता न था, और शर्मीले वे इतने थे कि किसी भी सहयात्री से बात करने से कतराते। और फिर उन्होंने सफेद फलालेन के अपने सबसे बढ़िया वस्त्र साउथैम्पटन में उतरते समय पहनने के लिए संजोकर रखे थे। इंग्लैंड की यात्रा में उन्होंने सारे रास्ते काले कपड़े पहने थे और परिणाम यह हुआ कि जब वे जहाज से उतरे तो उन्होंने जो कपड़े पहन रखे थे, वे इंग्लैंड के पतझड़ के उस मौसम से बिलकुल भी मेल नहीं खा रहे थे। दो दिन तक उनकी सबसे बड़ी परेशानी, ये वस्त्र ही रहे, क्योंकि दो दिन बाद ही उन्हें जो थोड़ा-बहुत उनका समान था, मिल पाया। रात भर एक अजनबी जगह में, नितांत अकेले होने का अहसास लिए वे रोते रहे। कदम-कदम पर उन्हें अनिश्चितता ही देख रही थी। उन्हें डर लग रहा था कि कहीं अनजाने में उनके वचन भंग न हो जाएँ या अंग्रेजों के देश में भारतीयता के प्रति कोई अन्य अपराध उनसे न हो जाए। समस्या, निसंदेह भोजन की थी।

आजकल के भारतीय विद्यार्थियों को इतना फर्क नहीं पड़ता। उस समय

भी, उनमें से कईयों के लिए भी यह समस्या नहीं थी। उन्हें वहाँ जो कुछ मिलता, खा लेते और उन्हें इसकी आदत भी पड़ जाती थी। लेकिन गांधीजी ने तो शाकाहार का व्रत लिया था, जिसका पालन करने के लिए उन्होंने दृढ़ संकल्प ले रखा था। सब्जियों के नाम पर वे अंग्रेजों के अधपके व बेस्वाद भोजन को गले से नीचे नहीं उतार पाते थे। वे लगभग कई दिनों तक भूखे ही रहते। सुबह जई के दलिए से मदद मिलती थी, परंतु दिन और रात के भोजन में समझ में नहीं आता, कि क्या किया जाए। भारतीय विद्यार्थी मित्र, जिनके बीच वे पहुँच गए थे और जिन्होंने उनके लिए ठहरने की व्यवस्था कर दी थी, उनकी इस बात को लेकर वे बड़े उत्तेजित थे। माँस खाने में उन लोगों को कोई दिक्कत नहीं होती थी, और वे शाकाहार का अडिग व्रत लेने के लिए गांधीजी को मूर्ख और जिद्दी समझते थे। एक यात्री-निवास से दूसरे यात्री निवास, उनकी यात्रा चलती रही, परंतु उन्हें मनपसंद भोजन नहीं मिल पाया। लेकिन एक दिन उन्हें फैरिगंटन स्ट्रीट में एक शाकाहारी रेस्तरां मिल ही गया। परमात्मा परमेश्वर का शुक्र है, उन्होंने कहा। बड़े दिनों के बाद उन्होंने वहाँ भरपेट भोजन किया। वहाँ उन्हें एक पुस्तक दिखाई दी। शाकाहार के पक्ष में (एप्ली फोर वेजीटेरियन्ज्म) जिसे उन्होंने एक शिलिंग में खरीद लिया। उन्होंने उसे आद्योपांत पढ़ा, बार-बार पढ़ा और उस पुस्तक ने उन्हें एक ऐसे शाकाहारी से, जिसने अपनी माँ को दिए वचन के आधार पर और धर्म व परंपराओं का पालन करते हुए शाकाहार का व्रत लिया था, एक ऐसे शाकाहारी में बदल दिया जो शाकाहार के अपने व्रत के औचित्य के बारे में पूर्णतः आश्वस्त था। इसी तरह से अपने लंबे जीवनकाल में उन्हें ऐसा कुछ न कुछ मिलता रहा जिसने, जो वे थे तथा जो उनके विश्वास थे, उनकी पुष्टि ही की। उन्हें एक 'आधार' मिल गया था। अब वे सैद्धांतिक आधार पर शाकाहारी बने रह सकते थे।

नैतिक निरपेक्षतावाद

गांधीजी के नैतिक निरपेक्षतावाद का बीज वेद की उस धारणा में विद्यमान है जिसे 'ऋत' कहते हैं। ऋत का सिद्धान्त बतलाता है कि कुछ ऐसे ब्रह्माण्डीय तथा नैतिक अध्यादेश हैं जो मनुष्यों तथा देवताओं दोनों पर शासन करते हैं। बुद्ध को भी नैतिक व्यवस्था के अस्तित्व में विश्वास था। हिन्दू दार्शनिक दोनों पर शासन करते हैं। बुद्ध को भी नैतिक व्यवस्था के अस्तित्व

में विश्वास था। हिंदू दार्शनिक पतंजलि ने भी स्वीकार किया है कि नैतिकता की प्रमुख धारणाएँ (पाँच यम और पाँच नियम) देश-काल की सापेक्षता से परे हैं। गांधीजी इन अनुभूतियों को स्वीकार करते हैं। उनके स्वयं के जीवन के अनुभव ने भी नैतिक मूल्यों की श्रेष्ठता में उनका विश्वास पक्का कर दिया था। गांधीजी का कहना था कि इतिहास अहिंसा की श्रेष्ठता की उत्तरोत्तर पुष्टि कर रहा है। उन्होंने लिखा है 'मेरा दृढ़ विश्वास है कि मनुष्य स्वभावतः ऊँचा उठ रहा है। अहिंसा पाप के सामने समर्पण करने का नाम नहीं है, और न अपनी दुर्बलता को छिपाने का ढोंग अहिंसा है। वह उस वीर आत्मा की दृढ़ शक्ति की परिचायक है जो किसी जीवित प्राणी को इसलिए कष्ट नहीं पहुंचाता कि हर प्राणी तत्वतः आत्मा है और स्वयं उसके साथ एक रूप है।

वह सर्वोच्च नैतिक तथा आध्यात्मिक शक्ति का प्रतीक है। अहिंसा के लिए अनिवार्य है कि इसमें जो सबसे दुर्बल और अकिंचन हैं उसके भी अधिकारों की बड़ी सावधानी के साथ रक्षा की जाय। सत्य का साक्षात्कार करने की आकांक्षा रखने वाला उसके हेतु हर प्रकार के कष्ट सह लेता है। अहिंसा का अर्थ है अनन्त प्रेम और अनन्त प्रेम का अभिप्राय है कष्ट सहन की अनन्त क्षमता। गांधीजी कहा करते थे कि सत्य और अंहिसा को निरपेक्ष रूप से अंगीकार करना आवश्यक है।

निष्कर्ष

गांधीजी ने राजनीति को आध्यात्मिकता के चश्मे से समझा। इसमें कोई संदेह नहीं है कि यह उनका एकमात्र योगदान है। वे उस दौर से आते हैं जब लोग मानते थे कि राजनीति और धर्म एक दूसरे से बहुत अलग हैं। एक विचारधारा का मानना था कि धर्म का राजनीतिक मामलों पर बहुत कम असर होता है। गांधीजी के अनुसार, राजनीति के बारे में इस तरह से सोचना संभव नहीं है कि वह धर्म से अलग हो। कट्टरता के विपरीत आस्था और नैतिक व्यवस्था को हमारे सभी कार्यों के लिए मार्गदर्शक सिद्धांत होना चाहिए। यह धर्म कई अन्य धर्मों की तुलना में दूसरों से श्रेष्ठ है। इस तरह से वास्तविक आस्था निहित है। उनका दृष्टिकोण यह है कि धर्म ही एकमात्र आधार है जिस पर राजनीति खड़ी होती है, और उन्होंने इस दृष्टिकोण को व्यक्त किया। गांधीजी ने जोर देकर कहा कि ऐसा कोई धर्म नहीं है जो अंधविश्वासों से रहित

हुए बल्कि, उनके अनुसार, एक ऐसा धर्म है जो सार्वभौमिक और सहिष्णु दोनों है। एक ऐसा स्थान जहाँ कोई विरोध और कोई शारीरिक हिंसा नहीं है। उन्होंने अनैतिक राजनीति को खत्म करने का तर्क दिया। गांधीजी के अनुसार, हर धर्म के सदस्यों के साथ एक जैसा व्यवहार किया जाना चाहिए। कांग्रेस के सदस्यों में पंडित जवाहरलाल नेहरू धार्मिक सहिष्णुता की अवधारणा के सबसे आदर्श प्रतिनिधि थे। आम तौर पर यह माना जाता है कि आधुनिक वैज्ञानिक प्रक्रिया उनके मानदंडों पर खरी उतरती है। फिर भी, ऐसा करके कांग्रेस ने महात्मा गांधी के दृष्टिकोण का सम्मान किया। गांधीजी अपने इस विश्वास पर अड़े थे कि धर्म को मानव अस्तित्व के हर पहलू में शामिल किया जाना चाहिए। उनके अनुसार, धार्मिक विश्वास रखने का मतलब हमेशा यह नहीं होता कि कोई व्यक्ति एकांतप्रिय है। इसका मतलब एक ऐसे ब्रह्मांड से है जिसमें संगठित नैतिकता की व्यवस्था शासन करने वाला सिद्धांत है।

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डॉ. अफरोज अहमद
(सहायक प्रोफेसर)
afrozcug@gmail.com

सुनिता मौर्य
(शोद्यार्थी)
sunitajatolia1982@gmail.com

राज. विज्ञान विभाग
आरएनबी ग्लोबल विश्वविद्यालय, बीकानेर (राज.)

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पूर्वी राजस्थान की सांस्कृतिक विरासत : लोकनाट्य एक अध्ययन

अभिलाषा मीना • डॉ. शिल्पी गुप्ता

राजस्थान के पूर्वी अंचल में सदियों से लोक नाट्यों की लम्बी परम्परा रही हैं। जो पीढ़ी दर पीढ़ी आगे बढ़ी है। इनमें पद, कन्हैया, रसिया, हैला, ख्याल, कीर्तन, सुड्डा प्रमुख हैं। जिनमें विभिन्न पौराणिक व ऐतिहासिक गाथाओं व कथाओं के माध्यम से विभिन्न प्रसंगों को अपनी शैली में मंचन किया जाता है। इनका मुखिया अपनी सर्जनात्मक शक्ति से प्रसंगों को स्वतः स्फूर्त गति प्रदान करता है तथा अन्य संगी गायक दल समूह को अपने साथ एकाकार किये रहता है। लोकवाद्यों की जोरदार घमक-घमासान के रहते संगीत का उत्ताल बढ़ता रहता है तब शब्द गौण होते ही है, स्वर भी संगीत में विलीन होता जाता हैं। मुख्य गायक सभी तरह की प्रतिभा लिये होता हैं, गायन, वादन, नर्तन नाट्य में उसकी समानता बेजोड़ होती है। उसमें आशु संगीत प्रदर्शन, अभिनय दर्शन तथा काव्य का अर्पूव कौशल सबको बाँधे रहता है। आकर्षण इतना जर्बदस्त होता है, कि उसके साथ गायक ही नहीं दर्शक समुदाय भी उसी भावभंगिमा में मस्त व लीन दिखाई देता हैं।

लोकनाट्य की कथाएँ, संवाद व गीत लोकमानस में प्रचलित व उनकी रुचि के अनुरूप होती है तथा ये जनमानस के मनोरंजन के लिए उन्हीं के द्वारा मंचित किये जाते हैं। पौराणिक, धार्मिक, सामाजिक-सांस्कृतिक लोक कथाओं के साथ-साथ राजनीति, शासन-व्यवस्था व समसामयिक घटनाक्रम भी इनके द्वारा व्यक्त किये जाते हैं। लोकजीवन में लोकनाट्य का अर्थ उस विद्या से लिया जाता है। जो आनन्द एवं उल्लास, के अवसरों पर सामूहिक अभिव्यक्ति का सहज अनुकरण होती है। ये नाट्य सामूहिक आवश्यकतों और प्रेरणाओं से निर्मित होते हैं। लोक प्रचलित परम्परागत रूढ़ियों, धार्मिक

अनुष्ठानों, कथा-आख्यानों तथा वार्ता-विश्वासों की सफलता इन नाट्यों की मूल पीठिका होती हैं।[1]

लोकनाट्य' शब्द की परिभाषा

डॉ. श्याम परमार के अनुसार 'लोकनाट्य से तात्पर्य नाटक के उस रूप से है। जिसका संबंध विशिष्ठ समाज से भिन्न सर्वसाधारण के जीवन से हो और परम्परा से अपने-अपने क्षेत्र के जनसमुदाय के मनोरंजन का साधन रहा हो।[2]

नाट्यों की विषय-वस्तु धार्मिक, ऐतिहासिक और लौकिक होती है। रामचरित्र मानस, श्रीमद्भागवत् और महाभारत कथाओं ने धार्मिक नाट्यों का ताना-बाना बुना हैं। ऐतिहासिक कथाऐं प्रायः मध्यकाल की है, और ये कथाएँ पूर्णतः लोक प्रचलित परम्परागत कथानकों पर आधारित हैं। अनेक लोकनाट्य ऐसे है, जिससे सभी भिज्ञ होते है, इतना होते हुए भी उनके प्रति लोकरुचि तनिक भी शिथिल नही होती।

डॉ. महेन्द्र भानावत के अनुसार 'लोकधर्मी रूढ़ियों की अनुकरणात्मक अभिव्यक्तियों का वह नाट्य रूप जो अपने-अपने क्षेत्र के लोकमानस को आह्लादित, उल्लासित एवं अनुप्रमाणित करता है, लोकनाट्य कहलाता है।[3]

राजस्थान के पूर्वांचल में लोक जीवन के विभिन्न रूपों की अभिव्यक्ति के लिए लोकनाट्य रचे गये हैं। और उनका अपने तरीके से मंचन किया जाता है। ये लोकनाट्य जन जीवन को आह्लादित करते हैं। इन में दर्शकों और अभिनेता के मध्य दूरियाँ प्रायः नहीं होती है तथा गीत एवं नृत्य की प्रधानता के लिए लोकनाट्यों में प्रतीकात्मक साज-सज्जा से पात्रों की पहचान हो जाती है। अचंल विशेष की संस्कृति से जुड़े लोकनाट्यों में पुरुष अथवा महिला या दोनों भाग लेते है। कई बार पुरुष ही स्त्री की वेशभूषा धारण कर अभिनय करते हैं।

लोकनाट्य परम्परा के द्वारा न केवल मनोरंजन होता है, अपितु ऐतिहासिक, धार्मिक, सामाजिक, पौराणिक घटनाओं का ज्ञान भी प्राप्त होता हैं। लोकजीवन की सहज-सरल अभिव्यक्ति लोकनाट्यों विवेचित होती हैं। आपसी हेलमेल, धार्मिक अनुष्ठान, वार-त्यौहार, फसल कटने की खुशी आदि

लोकरंजन के ऐसे मूलभूत घटक हैं। जिन में लोकनाट्यों की अतःसलिला स्फुटित होती है। गाना, बजाना व नाचना सामूहिक जीवन की सरलतम् प्रवृति रही है, इसलिए जहाँ कही भी अनेक जातियाँ, वर्ग, धर्म व समुदाय इकट्ठा होता है, वहाँ कई संस्कृतियों की अनंत परम्पराएँ अपने चैतन्य को आत्मसात करती हुई अपनी आत्मा का विस्तार पाती हैं। आत्मा का यही विस्तार धीरे-धीरे सामूहिक अभिव्यक्ति का ऐसा आडम्बरहीन प्रस्तुत कर पाता है, जहाँ लोक संस्कृति और लोकमंगल के समस्त क्रिया-कलाप, मान्यताएँ, विश्वास, धर्म-कर्म, जनश्रुतियाँ अपने आँचलिक आनन्द एवं उल्लास को खुलकर प्रदर्शित करती हैं।

कन्हैया

''कन्हैया'' का साधारण शब्दों में अर्थ 'कहन' अर्थात् कहने से लिया जाता हैं। क्योंकि जब किसी कथा को विशेष शैली में लोकगायक द्वारा कहा जाता है, तो स्थानीय लोगों ने इसे 'कन्हैया' के नाम से सम्बोधित करना आरंभ कर दिया। जबकि कुछ लोगों ने इसका सम्बन्ध भगवान श्रीकृष्ण से जोड़ा, क्योंकि इसकी अधिकतर विषय-वस्तु भगवान कृष्ण से ही सम्बन्धित होती है।[4]

पूर्वी राजस्थान की सांस्कृतिक धरोहर 'कन्हैया' एक अनूठी लोक परम्परा है। कन्हैया लोकनाट्यों में यहाँ के स्थानीय लोगों के रहन-सहन, खान-पान, रीति-रिवाज, वेशभूषा, मूल्य-विश्वास आदि व्यक्त होकर यहाँ की संस्कृति को दर्शाते हैं। कन्हैया नाट्यों के दंगलों के आयोजन आए दिन पूर्वांचल के गाँवों-कस्बों में होते रहते हैं। इसमें एक गाँव के 70 से 100 सदस्य सामूहिक रूप से गोल घेरा बनाकर सुर, लय, ताल के साथ देवी-देवताओं की पौराणिक-धार्मिक, ऐतिहासिक, सामाजिक कथाओं पर आधारित लोकनाट्यों का मंचन करते हैं। इस पूरी मंडली को स्थानीय भाषा में जोठ कहा जाता हैं। इस जोठ में सभी जातियों व मुस्लिम समुदाय के लोग बिना किसी धार्मिक द्वेष व कट्टरता के गाते हैं।[5] यहाँ के मुस्लिम समुदाय के लोग पीढ़ियों से कन्हैया गाते आ रहे हैं। कन्हैया प्रस्तुतीकरण के समय दल में कम से कम 70-80 व्यक्ति होते हैं। ये सभी एक खुले मैदान में गोल घेरे के रूप में हाथों में हाथ डाले रहते हैं। घेरे के बीचों बीच या सिरे पर नौबत,

चंग व घेरा आदि वाद्य यंत्र होते हैं। घेरे के अन्दर दो मेड़िया (प्रधान गायक) होते हैं जो घेरे के अन्दर दोनों ओर (आमने-सामने) खड़े होते हैं। सर्वप्रथम प्रमुख मेड़िया 'उठाण' बोलता है और उसके उपरांत उस मेडिया की ओर का आद्या हला उसका अनुकरण करता है। अंतिम बोल टूटने के साथ ही सामने वाला मेड़िया और शेष आधा दल उस बोल को पकड़ कर गाने लगता हैं यही क्रम निरन्तर चलता है।

''कन्हैया'' का कथ्य या विषय लोक प्रचलित धार्मिक एवं पौराणिक आख्यानों पर आधारित रहता हैं। जिसमें महाभारत, रामायण आदि के मार्मिक एवं लोकप्रिय स्थल प्रमुख है। कन्हैया एक ताल प्रधान नाट्य है। जिसमें चौपाई, सवैया आदि छंदों में कथा को लयबद्ध करके गाया जाता है। गाने वाला दल संगीत के अभिन्न अंग वाद्य यंत्रों का प्रयोग इस मंचन के साथ करता है जिनमें घेरा, नौबत, ढफ, झांझ, मंजीरा आदि प्रमुख हैं।

कन्हैया लोकनाट्य की प्रस्तुती देते कलाकार

पद

राजस्थान के पूर्वी अंचल में सदियों से लोक नाट्यों की परम्परा रही हैं। जो पीढ़ी दर पीढ़ी आगे बढ़ी है। जिनको विभिन्न पौराणिक व ऐतिहासिक गाथाओं व कथाओं के माध्यम से विभिन्न प्रसंगों को अपनी शैली में मंचन किया जाता है। पद लोक नाट्य पूर्वी राजस्थान में प्रचलित विशेष विद्या हैं। जिसमें कलाकार ढ़प, बम, ढ़ोलक व मंजीरों की सहायता से अपनी रचना को संगीतमय बनाते हैं। ये इस इलाके में इतने लोकप्रिय है कि जगह-जगह पदों

के दंगल भरते रहते हैं। इसमें एक मुख्य गायक होता है, जो मेडिया कहलाता है व अन्य साथी मेडिया के द्वारा उठाये गए बोलों को लय प्रदान करते हैं। पद बड़ा ही आनन्द और ज्ञान प्रदान करने वाला लोकनाट्य है। मुख्य गायक कलाकार के माध्यम से कथा का प्रारंभ पद व दोहों में किया जाता हैं। मात भवानी और शारदा को मनाने से प्रारंभ कर पद को मेडिया गाता है तथा सहायक मण्डली जिसमें 7 से 9 लोग होते हैं इसे दोहराते हुए गाती हैं और मेडिया इसे कथा के माध्यम से समझाता हुआ आगे बढ़ता है।[6]

पदों का मुख्य विषय सामाजिक व्यवस्थाओं से सम्बधित होते हैं। जिनके माध्यम से रीति-रिवाजों, कुप्रथाओं, अंधविश्वासों पर भी कटाक्ष किया जाता हैं। ये किसी भी पौराणिक-ऐतिहासिक ग्रंन्थों में किसी भी प्रसंग को लेकर पद के रूप में मेडिया द्वारा गाये जाते हैं। जैसे-राणा हम्मीर, राजा मोरध्वज, भर्तृहरि, मत्स्य अवतार, गोपीचन्द्र, भक्त पूरणमल, भक्त हरदौल, नरसी रो मायरो, राम-बनवास, कृष्ण लीला, शिव-पार्वती विवाह, शिक्षा, वर्तमान राजनीति आदि जैसे प्रसंगों को लेकर पद लोकगीत गाये जाते हैं।

लोकनाट्य की प्रस्तुती देते कलाकार

सुड्डा

पूर्वी राजस्थान के लोक नाट्यों में सुड्डा भी एक महत्वपूर्ण लोक नाट्य है। जिसे लोग बड़े चाव से सुनते हैं। इस गीत को दोहें व पद शैली

में गाया जाता हैं तथा किसी भी ऐतिहासिक, पौराणिक, सामाजिक-सांस्कृतिक प्रसंग को लेकर प्रशनोत्तर शैली, कथा शैली और संवाद शैली में गाया जाता हैं। गाने वाले को मेडिया कहा जाता है तथा सहयोग के लिए दस से बाहर लोग मंडली में होते हैं। पुरुषों के साथ-साथ महिलाएं भी सुड्ड़ा गीत गाती हैं। इस गायन में ढ़प, मंजीरा, ढ़ोलक आदि वाद्ययंत्रों का प्रयोग किया जाता हैं।[7] प्रारंभ में इनका प्रचलन कम था। जो मनोरंजन के रूप में गाँव की चौपाल, अथाई या मंदिर के चबूतरे पर खुशी के अवसर पर गाया जाता था। लेकिन वर्तमान समय में इसने विस्तृत रूप ले लिया है राजस्थान के बाहर भी सुड्ड़ा मंडलियों को मंचन के लिए बुलाया जाता है।[8] इन सुड्ड़ा लोक नाट्यों में इतिहास के अछुते पहलुओं पर भी प्रकाश डाला जाता हैं। डांग के इस इलाके में किसी जमाने में मीणा समुदाय के दो सुरमा हुआ करते थे, जिनके नाम किसन्ना व मन्नू थे।[9] आजादी के पहले की बात है। जब देश में भीषण अकाल पड़ा हुआ था, लोग मर रहे थे, खाने-पीने को कुछ नहीं था। ऐसे में हुकूमत ने लगान उगाई जारी रखी। तो किसन्ना और मन्नू ने लगान देने से इंनकार कर दिया और लोगों को भी लगान देने मना करने को बोल दिया। और सीधे विद्रोह कर दिया इस पर पुलिस ले दोनों को कारागार में बंद कर दिया। जेल से रिहा होकर दोनों ने अपना दल बनाकर हुकूमत के अन्न धन लूट कर गरीबों की मदद करने लग गये। पुलिस के खिलाफ राजद्रोहों सहित डाकाजनी व लूट बगैरहा के दर्जनों मुकदमें दर्ज कर उन्हें बाकायदा दस्यु करार दे दिया और उनकी गिरफतारी पर ईनाम घोषित कर दिया। किंतु लोक में उन्हें आज भी बहादुर नायकों के रूप में याद किया जाता है तथा उनके नाम के गीत गाये जाते हैं।[10] एक लोकगीत में.....

ऐ-ऐ.....

किसना मन्नू जन्में या जगरोटी में।

जिनने नाम कमायों या डांगन में रे॥

सुड्डा गायिका

नौटंकी

नौटंकी का शाब्दिक अर्थ है नाटक का अभिनय करना। नौटंकी धौलपुर, करौली, गंगापुर, भरतपुर तथा सवाई माधोपुर में नौटंकी के खेल प्रचलित हैं। यहाँ की नौटंकी उत्तरप्रदेश की हाथरसी नौटंकी से प्रभावित है। नौटंकी के नाटकों में नल-दमयंती, लैला-मजनूं, रूप-बसंत, सत्यवादी हरिशचन्द्र, राजा भरथरी आदि प्रमुख हैं। प्रायः विवाह, सामाजिक समारोह, मेलों तथा लोकोत्सवों में इनका आयोजन करवाया जाता हैं।[11] वर्तमान में कुछ महिलाओं की नौटंकी पार्टियाँ प्रसिद्व है। आशा की नौटंकी पार्टी सम्पूर्ण पूर्वी राजस्थान में प्रसिद्व रही है। इसके अलावा गुलालबाई, कृष्णा कुमारी, कमलेश लता की पार्टियाँ प्रसिद्व है।

ख्याल

राजस्थान के पूर्वी अंचल में ख्याल गायिकी के लिए धौलपुर, सवाई माधोपुर, दौसा, लालसोट, हिन्ड़ौन, करौली एवं मासलपुर प्रसिद्व हैं। यहाँ जगह-जगह ख्याल प्रेमियों द्वारा दगंल आयोजित किए जाते हैं, जो दो-तीन दिवस तक लगातार चलते हैं। इसमें सभी समुदायों के लोग भाग लेते हैं।

'ख्याल' फारसी भाषा का शब्द है जिसका अर्थ कल्पना या विचार होता है। साधारण तौर पर रागों के नियमों का पालन करते हुए गाने वाला जब अपनी कल्पना तथा अभ्यास को आलाप, तालों व ताल से सजा कर जो गीत गाता है, उसे ख्याल कहते है।[12] अतः हम कह सकते है कि ख्याल गायन की वह शैली है। जिसमें गायक एक गीत को विभिन्न आलाप, ताल व अंलकारों से एक नया मनोहर रूप प्रदान करता है।

'ख्याल' लोकनाट्य की वह विद्या है। जिसमें किसी ऐतिहासिक, धार्मिक, सामाजिक व पौराणिक कथानक को पद्यबद्व रचनाओं के रूप में विभिन्न पात्रों द्वारा गाकर लोक मनोरंजन हेतु प्रस्तुत किया जाता है। इस विद्या की खास बात ये है जहाँ नाटकों में देखना व सुनना दोनों प्रधान होते हैं, वहाँ ख्याल में केवल सुनना प्रमुख होता है। ख्याल एक संगीत प्रधान लोक नाट्य है। ख्याल लोक नाट्य में नगाड़ा, हरमोनियम, सारंगी, मंजीरा व ढ़ोलक आदि प्रमुख वाद्य यंत्रों का प्रयोग किया जाता हैं।

हेला ख्याल

पूर्वी राजस्थान का प्रमुख लोकनाट्य हेला ख्याल है। जो मुख्य रूप से दौसा और सवाई माधोपुर जिलो से संबंधित है।[13] यह संगीत, नृत्य व कहानी कहने का एक मिश्रित कला रूप है। जिसमें पौराणिक, ऐतिहासिक और सामाजिक विषयों पर आधारित प्रर्दशन होते हैं। इस लोकनाट्य की प्रमुख विशेषता लम्बी 'टेर' या 'हेला' देना है। नौबत, ढ़ोलक, झाँझ, मंजीरा, खजरी आदि वाद्यों के साथ गाये जाते हैं।[14] ये लोकगीत किसी भी पौराणिक-ऐतिहासिक ग्रंन्थों में किसी भी प्रसंग को लेकर मेडिया द्वारा गाये जाते हैं। जैसे-राणा हम्मीर, राजा मोरध्वज, भर्तृहरि, मत्स्य अवतार, गोपीचन्द्र, भक्त पूरणमल, भक्त हरदौल, नरसी रो मायरो, राम-बनवास, कृष्ण लीला, शिव-पार्वती विवाह, शिक्षा, वर्तमान राजनीति आदि है।

हेला ख्याल की प्रस्तुती देते कलाकार

रसिया

पूर्वांचल का रसिया भी एक महत्वपूर्ण लोकनाट्य हैं। ब्रज प्रदेश के निकट होने के कारण यहाँ पर ब्रज लोक संस्कृति का प्रभाव दिखाई देता हैं। रसिया की व्युत्पत्ति 'रसिक' से हुई है। रस से युक्त बातें ही रसिया में कही जाती हैं।[15] भगवान श्री कृष्ण रसिक है। अतः उनकी रसपूर्ण लीलाओं का वर्णन रसिया में हुआ है। रसिया मुख्यतः श्रृंगार परक है, परन्तु कहीं-कहीं भक्ति परक भी हैं, जिनके श्रीकृष्ण की बाल-लीलाओं का वर्णन किया जाता हैं।

रसिया लोक नाट्य की पूर्वी राजस्थान में लम्बी परम्परा रही है, रसियों का प्रचलन बहुत पुराना हैं।[16] प्रमुख त्यौंहार होली करौली में बिना रसिया गीतों के अधूरा-सा लगता है जो कि ब्रज भाषा में गाया जाता है। इसमें राधा-कृष्ण को चित्रित करते हुए मानवीय सम्बधों, मानवीय प्रेम और ईश्वरीय प्रेम-भक्ति का गायन हैं। गाँवों की हथाई व चौपालों व मंदिरों में ग्रामीण अपने लोकवाद्यों बम, ढ़प, ढ़ोलक और मंजीरा बजाते हुए रसियों का मंचन किया जाता हैं।[17]

रासलीला और रामलीला

अवतारों के चरित्र का अभिनय दिखाने, उन्हें रिझाने एवं उनका गुणगान करने करने के लिए जो स्वरूप, नृत्य व गायकी प्रदर्शित की जाती है उसे 'लीला' कहा जाता है। ब्रजमंडल की रासलीला एवं रामलीलाओं का आयोजन राजस्थान के प्रायः प्रत्येक गाँव शहर में होता हैं।[18] आश्विन के महिने की नवरात्रा में आयोजित रासलीला और रामलीला में कलाकारों द्वारा इनका का मनमोहक मंचन किया जाता है। रासलीला में भगवान श्री कृष्ण गोपियों के साथ नृत्य करते है, तथा भागवद् की कथाओं का प्रदर्शन किया जाता है। तथा रामलीला में भगवान श्री राम के जीवन को लीला के माध्यम से प्रदर्शित किया जाता हैं।

रासलीला ब्रज के साथ-साथ राजस्थान का प्रमुख लोक नाट्य है। इसमें राधा-कृष्ण की प्रेम लीलाओं का प्रदर्शन होता है, जिसमें आध्यात्मिकता की प्रधानता रहती है। इनका मूल आधार सूरदास व अष्टछाप कवियों के पद एवं भजन होते हैं, इनमें संगीत व काव्य रस का आनन्द दोनों ही रहता है। रासलीला का रंगमंच साधारण होता है। जो प्रायः गाँव की चौपाल, मंदिर का चबूतरा या विधालय का प्रागंण होता हैं। रासलीला का शुभारंभ राधा-कृष्ण की आरती से होता हैं, इसके बाद महारास होता है। तथा भगवान श्री कृष्ण की कोई लीला होती है, व बीच में भगवान की झाँकी होती है। रासलीला के पात्रों में राधा-कृष्ण व गोपियाँ होती हैं। बीच-बीच में हास्य का प्रसंग भी होता है जिसमें विदूषक के रूप में मनसुखा रहता है, जो विभिन्न गोपिकाओं के साथ प्रेम एवं हँसी-मजाक की बातें कर कृष्ण के प्रति उनके अनुराग को व्यक्त करता है। मंजीरा, खड़ताल, ढ़ोलक, सितार, घुँघरू, हरमोनियम, जंतर, वीणा आदि वाद्ययंत्रों का प्रयोग किया जाता है।[19]

राजस्थान का पूर्वी क्षेत्र उत्तरप्रदेश के ब्रज क्षेत्र से सटा हुआ है। शायद इस निकटता के कारण यहाँ रामलीला, रासलीला की बड़ी समृद्व परम्परा हैं।[20] यहाँ रासलीला और रामलीलाओं का प्रायः आयोजन होता ही रहता है। जो लगातार सात दिनों तक चलती हैं। दिन में दुपहर तक रामलीला व दुपहर से सांय तक श्रीमद् भागवत कथा व रात को रासलीला होती है। इनका आयोजन सम्पूर्ण बस्ती द्वारा किया जाता हैं। दूर-दराज से आने वाले लोगों

के भोजन के लिए भंडारा चलता रहता है, जिसमें कोई भी भोजन कर सकता है। इन के आयोजन से सम्पूर्ण स्थान ब्रजमय हो जाता है। आस-पास व दूर-दराज के गाँवों के लोग बड़ी संख्या में रासलीला और रामलीला देखने आते हैं, और अपने को धन्य मानते हैं।

रासलीला की प्रस्तुतीकरण देते कलाकार

टूंटिया-टंटूकी या खोड्या

दुल्हे की बारात जब लड़की वालों के यहाँ चली जाती है। तब पीछे से वर पक्ष की महिलाओं द्वारा वर-वधू की नकल के रूप में जो स्वांग प्रदर्शित किया जाता है, उसे खोड्या निकालना या टूंटिया-टंटूकी कहते है। इसमें एक औरत वर तथा दूसरी औरत वधु बनती हैं। दुल्हे बनने वाली औरत दुल्हे की बहिन होती है तथा दुल्हन बनने औरत दूल्हे की रिश्ते में भाभी होती हैं। इनको वर-वधू की पौशाक पहनाई जाती है। वर-वधू के इस नाट्य में इनकी नकली शादी करवाई जाती है। खोड्या का मुख्य उद्देश्य असली वर-वधू को आधि-व्याधि से मुक्त रखने का रहता है। खोड्या का जुलूस पूरे परिवार-कुटुंब में निकलता है। इसमें पूरे परिवार-कुटुंब की महिलाओं को चूंड़ा पहनाते हुए थाली, चिमटा, पीपा, फुंकनी बजाते हुए गीत गाते हुए नृत्य करती हैं।[21]

कठपुतली

भारत वर्ष में कठपुतली कला का इतिहास बहुत पुराना है। प्रचीनकाल से ही पुतली चालक अपने दल सहित पुतलियों का पिटारा लिए गाँव-

खोड़िया निकालती महिलाएँ

गाँव घूमते और जनता को कठपतुलियों के नाना खेल दिखाकर अपनी आजीविका चलाते हैं। खेल द्वारा मनोरंजन के साथ-साथ लोक शिक्षण, सामाजिक सरोकार, ऐतिहासिक प्रसंग तथा सांस्कृतिक भाईचारे का संदेश भी आम लोगों को सहज मिल जाता हैं।[22] कठपुतली 'काठ' (लकड़ी) पुतली (गुडियाँ) कठपुतली लकड़ी या कपड़े से बनी निर्जीव आकृतियों को धागे, डोरी, छड़ या हाथ से नियंत्रित किया जाता है, ताकि वे कहानी सुना सके या संवाद कर सके। यह एक प्राचीन लोकनाट्य है। जिसमें लकड़ी या धागें से बनी गुड़िया का उपयोग करके सामाजिक व धार्मिक कहानियाँ सुनाई जाती हैं

तथा लोक प्रचलित प्रसंगों का मंचन किया जाता है। इसे चलाने वाला व्यक्ति धागों या अन्य तरीकों से इन निर्जीव वस्तुओं को नियंत्रित करता है, जिससे वे जीवंत लगती हैं और संबंधित पात्रों की भूमिका निभाती हैं। कठपुतली नचाने वाला सूत्रधार अपने मुँह में सीटी ध्वनी के लिए रखता है, जो कठपुतलियों की आवाज का आभास कराती है, इससे ढ़ोलक बजाने वाली महिला अपनी बोली में उथलाकर दर्शकों को कठपुतलियों के संवाद से रूबरू कराती हैं।

इस प्रकार लोक नाट्य हमारी सभ्यता व संस्कृति के अवशेष हैं, इनमें युग-युगीन परिस्थियाँ प्रतिबिम्बत रहती है। समाज के प्रत्येक पक्ष का इनमें सजीव चित्रण रहता है। ये हमारे इतिहास, सभ्यता व संस्कृति की पहचान हैं। इनमें सर्वधर्म सम्भाव, भाईचारा, सामूहिकता सामाजिक समरस की भावना होती हैं।

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अभिलाषा मीना
(शोधार्थी)
वनस्थली विद्यापीठ, निवाई (राज.)

डॉ. शिल्पी गुप्ता
(निर्देशिका)
एसोसिएट प्रोफेसर
वनस्थली विद्यापीठ, निवाई (राज.)

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भारत में शिक्षा के अधिकार में न्यायपालिका की भूमिका का विश्लेषणात्मक अध्ययन

विजय लक्ष्मी जोशी • डॉ. रश्मि शर्मा

शिक्षा का अधिकार एक मानवाधिकार होने के साथ-साथ एक मूल अधिकार भी है। भारत में इसकी उत्पति स्वतंत्रता से पूर्व 1892 में बड़ौदा नरेश महाराज सयाजीराव गायकवाड़ एवं 1910 में गोपाल कृष्ण गोखलेजी के प्रयासों से हुई। स्वतंत्रता के पश्चात् अधिकारिक तौर पर संविधान के अनुच्छेद 21क में शिक्षा के अधिकार को उपबंधित किया गया इसके पूर्व यह नीति निदेशक तत्त्व था यद्यपि मोहिनी जैन एवं उन्नीकृष्णन के वाद में न्यायपालिका ने अनुच्छेद 21 में उपबंधित प्राण एवं दैहिक स्वतंत्रता के अधिकार में शिक्षा के अधिकार को अंतनिर्हित माना, न्यायपालिका समय-समय पर शिक्षा के अधिकार के क्रियान्वयन के लिए अपने निर्णयों के माध्यम से सरकार को उचित दिशा-निर्देश देती रही हैं जैसे कि अविनाश महरोत्रा के वाद में स्कूल में आग लग जाने के कारण छात्रों की मृत्यु होने पर सरकार को सभी विद्यालयों में बच्चों की सुरक्षा हेतु उचित कार्यवाही करने के निर्देश दिए थे तथा इन्वायरोमेन्टल एण्ड कन्ज्यूम प्रोटेक्शन के वाद में छात्र-छात्राओं हेतु स्वच्छ पीने का पानी, पृथक शौचालय एवं स्कूलों की अवसंरचना में सुधार हेतु सरकार को शपथ-पत्र फाइल करने का निर्देश दिया किन्तु उसके बाद भी हमारे देश के अधिकांश शिक्षा के मंदिर जर्जर एवं क्षीण अवस्था में हैं जो कि कभी भी बच्चों के लिए मृत्युशाला बन सकते हैं जैसे अभी राजस्थान के झालावाड़ में हुआ जहाँ एक सरकारी स्कूल भवन के गिर जाने से 21 बच्चें घायल हो गये तथा 10 से ज्यादा बच्चों की मृत्यु हो गई। भारत में ऐसा हादसा कही पर भी हो सकता हैं राजस्थान में 2000 से ज्यादा सरकारी स्कूलों के भवन जर्जर हालत में है तो मध्य प्रदेश एवं अन्य राज्यों के भी यही हाल हैं इसका कारण कार्यपालिका की घोर लापरवाही

हैं जिस पर अंकुश लगाना अत्यंत आवश्यक है। वर्तमान शोधपत्र में शिक्षा के अधिकार के क्रियान्वयन में न्यायपालिका की भूमिका का विश्लेषणात्मक अध्ययन किया गया है।

शब्द कुंजी : *शिक्षा का अधिकार, न्यायपालिका की भूमिका, शिक्षा के अधिकार का क्रियान्वयन*

शिक्षा के अधिकार की परिभाषा : 6 से 14 साल की आयु के प्रत्येक बालक को सरकार द्वारा स्थापित एवं अनुदान प्राप्त शिक्षण संस्थानों में निःशुल्क एवं अनिवार्य प्रारंभिक शिक्षा पाने के अधिकार को ही शिक्षा का अधिकार कहते हैं। संविधान के 86वें संशोधन द्वारा शिक्षा के अधिकार को संविधान के अनुच्छेद 21क में उपबंधित किया गया हैं। इससे पूर्व यह अनुच्छेद 45 के अधीन नीति निदेशक तत्त्व था।

प्रारंभिक शिक्षा का अर्थ : प्रारंभिक शिक्षा का अभिप्राय कक्षा 1 से लेकर 8वीं तक की शिक्षा से है।

संविधान का अनुच्छेद 21क : 21क–शिक्षा का अधिकार–राज्य, 6 से 14 वर्ष की आयु के सभी बच्चों को निःशुल्क और अनिवार्य शिक्षा इस प्रकार प्रदान करेगा जिस प्रकार से राज्य विधि के अधीन निर्धारित करें।

शिक्षा के अधिकार के क्रियान्वयन में न्यायपालिका की भूमिका : शिक्षा का अधिकार संविधान निर्माण के समय मूल अधिकार न होकर नीति निदेशक तत्त्व था इसे न्यायपालिका ने सर्वप्रथम मोहिनी जैन के वाद में मूल अधिकार घोषित किया। इसके पश्चात् न्यायपालिका समय-समय पर इसके क्रियान्वयन हेतु कार्यपालिका को वाद निर्णयों के माध्यम से दिशा-निर्देश देती रही निम्नलिखित वाद इसके जीवन्त दृष्टांत हैं–

वाद क्र. 1 - **मोहिनी जैन**

बनाम

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के वाद में उच्चतम न्यायालय ने निर्णित किया कि शिक्षा का अधिकार अनुच्छेद 21 में प्रयुक्त प्राण एवं दैहिक स्वतंत्रता के अधीन एक मूल अधिकार

है। इस वाद में कहा गया कि कॉलेजों द्वारा केपिटेशन फीस लेना नागरिकों को इस अधिकार से वंचित करना है अतः वह अवैध है। कैपिटेशन फीस के कारण निर्धन छात्र शिक्षा पाने से वंचित रह जाता है और धनी छात्र उसे प्राप्त कर लेता है। प्रत्येक छात्र को शिक्षा उपलब्ध कराना राज्य का संवैधानिक दायित्व है।[1]

वाद क्र. 2 - **उन्नीकृष्णन**

बनाम

आंध्रप्रदेश राज्य (1993) 4 एस.सी.सी. 645

के वाद में मोहिनी जैन के मामले में दिए गए निर्णय पर पुनर्विचार का आवेदन देने पर पाँच न्यायाधीशों की पूर्ण पीठ ने 3-2 के बहुमत से मोहिनी जैन में दिए गए इस मत की पुष्टि की कि शिक्षा पाने का अधिकार अनुच्छेद 21 के अधीन एक मूल अधिकार है और सभी को शिक्षा उपलब्ध कराना राज्य का उत्तरदायित्व हैं किन्तु उस पर एक परीसीमा लगा दी कि यह अधिकार 14 साल तक की आयु के बच्चों के लिए ही सीमित है उच्च शिक्षा के मामलें में यह अधिकार राज्य की आर्थिक क्षमता पर निर्भर करेगा।[2]

वाद क्र. 3 - **एम. सी मेहता**

बनाम

तमिलाण्डु राज्य

के वाद में उच्चतम न्यायालय ने निर्णय दिया कि 14 साल की आयु के बालक को कारखाने या खान और संकटपूर्ण कार्य में नहीं लगाया जाएगा और उन्हें अनुच्छेद 45 के आदेशों के अनुसार शिक्षा पाने का पूर्ण अवसर प्रदान किया जाएगा।

वाद क्र. 4 - **अशोक कुमार ठाकुर**

बनाम

भारत संघ (2008) 6 एस.सी.सी. 1

के वाद में 5 न्यायाधीशों के.जी. बालाकृष्णन अध्यक्ष, अरीजित पसायत, सी. के. ठक्कर, आर.वी. रवीन्द्रन, दलवीर भण्डारी की संवैधानिक

पीठ ने संविधान के अनुच्छेद 15(5) (शैक्षणिक संस्थानों में प्रवेश में आरक्षण) की संवैधानिकता पर निर्णय दिया कि—

1. संविधान का 93 वॉ संशोधन अधिनियम 2005 जहॉ तक इसके राज्य द्वारा स्थापित एवं सहायता प्राप्त संस्थाओं से संबंधित है यह संविधान के आधारभूत ढॉचे को प्रभावित नहीं करता है।
2. अनुच्छेद 15(5) संवैधानिक रूप से वैध है और अनुच्छेद 15(4) एवं 15(5) परस्पर विरोधी नहीं है।
3. संविधान के अनुच्छेद 15(5) के तहत अल्पसंख्यक संस्थाओं को अपवर्जित करना संविधान के अनुच्छेद 14 का उल्लंघन नहीं है क्योंकि अल्पसंख्यक संस्थाएँ स्वयं संविधान के अन्य प्रावधानों के तहत एक अलग वर्ग है। आरक्षण देते समय सामाजिक और शैक्षिक वर्ग के क्रिमीलेयर वर्ग को निकालकर आरक्षण देना होगा किन्तु यह नियम अनुसूचित जाति एवं अनुसूचित जनजाति पर लागू नहीं होगा।[3]

वाद क्र. 5 - **अविनाश महरोत्रा**

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इस वाद में एक झोंपड़ी में 900 छात्रों का स्कूल एक संकिर्ण सीढ़ियों वाले और एकल प्रवेश वाले स्कूल में झोपड़ीनुमा घास-फूस वाली छत के भवन में चलता था जिसमें आग लग जाने के कारण कई छात्रों की मृत्यु हो गई। स्कूल में सुरक्षा मापदण्डों को सुनिश्चित करने एवं स्कूल का दायित्व निर्धारित करने के लिए लोकहित याचिका दायर की गई और बच्चों को स्कूल में आग व अन्य दुर्घटनाओं से प्रतिरक्षित करने के लिए विधि बनाने के लिए सरकार को निर्देश जारी करने की उच्चतम न्यायालय से प्रार्थना करने पर न्यायालय ने निर्णित किया कि राज्य का यह सर्वोच्च कर्तव्य है कि वह शिक्षा को व्यापक व पूर्ण रूप से प्रदान करे। बच्चें को शिक्षित करने के लिए एक अध्यापक व ब्लैकबोर्ड, क्लॉस एवं पुस्तक से कहीं व्यापक आवश्यकता गुणवत्ता की होती है शिक्षा के अधिकार की अपेक्षा यह होती है कि बच्चा

किसी गुणवत्ता वाले स्कूल में पढ़े और गुणवत्ता युक्त विद्यालय उसकी सुरक्षा के लिए खतरा नहीं होना चाहिए।[4]

वाद क्र. 6 - **सोसाइटी फॉर अनएडेड प्राइवेट स्कूल ऑफ राजस्थान**

बनाम

भारत संघ और अन्य 2012 ए. आई. आर.(एस.सी.) 3445, 2012(6) एस.सी.सी.(जे.)

के वाद में शिक्षा के अधिकार अधिनियम की संवैधानिकता एव इसकी धारा 12(1)(ग) की संवैधानिकता पर निर्णय देते हुए उच्चतम न्यायालय ने निर्णय दिया कि शिक्षा का अधिकार अधिनियम 2009 संवैधानिक है। इसकी धारा 12(1)(ग) में कमजोर वर्ग के बच्चों हेतु प्रवेश में 25ः आरक्षण निजी गैर सहायता प्राप्त शैक्षणिक संस्थाओं के संविधान के अनुच्छेद 19(1)छ के अधीन व्यवसाय करने के अधिकार का उल्लंघन नहीं करता है। टी.एम.पाई. फाउण्डेशन बनाम कर्नाटक राज्य के वाद में उच्चतम न्यायालय ने निर्णित किया कि निजी व्यावसायिक शैक्षणिक संस्थाओं पर अनुच्छेद 19(1)(छ) के अधीन यथोचित प्रतिबंध राज्य द्वारा लगाया जा सकता है, अतः कक्षा 1 में प्रवेश हेतु पिछड़े वर्गों के लिए 25% का आरक्षण शिक्षा के व्यवसाय के अधिकार पर एक यथोचित प्रतिबंध है इसके अतिरिक्त न्यायालय ने यह अभिनिर्धारित किया कि यह अधिनियम निम्नलिखित शैक्षिक संस्थानों पर लागू होगा–

1. यथोचित सरकार अथवा स्थानीय प्राधिकारी द्वारा स्थापित, स्वामीत्व युक्त अथवा नियंत्रित स्कूल
2. सहायता प्राप्त अल्पसंख्यक स्कूल एवं सभी पूर्णतः अथवा आंशिकतः सहायता प्राप्त स्कूल
3. गैरसरकारी सहायता प्राप्त गैर अल्पसंख्यक स्कूल

किन्तु मदरसें, वैदिक परिषद इत्यादि जो मुख्य रूप से धार्मिक निर्देश उपलब्ध कराते हैं और धर्म निरपेक्ष शिक्षा नहीं देते है तथा गैरसरकारी सहायता प्राप्त अल्पसंख्यक शैक्षणिक संस्थानों पर भी उक्त अधिनियम लागू नहीं होगा।[5]

वाद क्र. 7 – **इन्वायरोमेन्टल एण्ड कन्ज्यूमर प्रोटेक्शन फाउण्डेशन**
बनाम
दिल्ली प्रशासन

के मामले में निर्णित किया गया कि शिक्षा के अधिकार के अधीन विद्यालय में स्वच्छ पीने के पानी एवं छात्र और छात्राओं के लिए पृथक् शौचालय की सुविधा का अधिकार भी शामिल है। इसमें न्यायालय ने सभी राज्य सरकारों को स्कूलों की अवसंरचना में सुधार करने के लिए शपथपत्र फाईल करने का निर्देश दिया एवं विद्यालयों में स्वच्छ पीने का पानी एवं लड़के एवं लड़कियों हेतु पृथक् शौचालय की सुविधा प्रदान करने का निर्देश दिया।

वाद क्र. 8 - **प्रमति एजुकेशनल एण्ड कल्चरल ट्रस्ट एवं अन्य**
बनाम
भारत संघ और अन्य 2014(8) एस.सी.सी. 1

के वाद में संविधान के अनुच्छेद 21क, 15(5) एवं शिक्षा के अधिकार अधिनियम की संवैधानिकता को चुनौती इस आधार पर दी गई थी कि यह समानता के सिद्धांत का उल्लंघन करता है जो कि संविधान का आधारभूत ढाँचा है। इस प्रकार शिक्षा का अधिकार अधिनियम संविधान के मूलभूत ढाँचे को नष्ट करता है। अनुच्छेद 15(5) 93वें संविधान संशोधन अधिनियम 2005 द्वारा संविधान में जोड़ा गया था जो गैर अल्पसंख्यक नीजि शिक्षण संस्थानों में सामाजिक और आर्थिक रूप से पिछड़े वर्ग के छात्रों के प्रवेश हेतु आरक्षण का उपबंध करता है। इस मामले में 5 जजों की संवैधानिक पीठ ने अपना निर्णय निम्न आधारों पर व्यक्त किया-

अनुच्छेद 15(5) संविधान के अनुच्छेद 19 (1)(छ) के अधीन निजी शिक्षण संस्थानों के व्यवसाय के अधिकार को नष्ट नहीं करता है द्वितीय अनुच्छेद 15(5) में अल्पसंख्यक एवं गैर अल्पसंख्यक शिक्षण संस्थानों में किया गया विभेद संविधान के समानता के सिद्धांत के नष्ट नहीं करता है क्योंकि संविधान में मान्यता प्राप्त अल्पसंख्यक शिक्षण संस्थान पहले से ही पृथक वर्ग है। तृतीयतः अनुच्छेद 21क की संवैधानिकता को इस आधार पर चुनौती दी गई थी कि इसके द्वारा निजी शिक्षण संस्थानों पर थौपा गया दायित्व

(धारा 12(1)(ग)के अधीन कमजोर वर्ग एवं वंचित समुदाय के लिए सीटों का आरक्षण) उनके अनुच्छेद 19 (1)(छ) में दिए गए व्यापार व्यवसाय की स्वतंत्रता के अधिकार का उल्लंघन करता है। न्यायालय ने यह निर्णित किया कि अनुच्छेद 21क के अधीन निजी शिक्षण संस्थानों को सौपा गया दायित्व अनुच्छेद 19 (1)(छ) के अधीन उनके व्यापार व्यवसाय की स्वतंत्रता के अधिकार का अतिक्रमण नहीं करता है इसे अनुच्छेद 21क एवं 19 (1)(छ) के बीच सामंजस्यपूर्ण संरचना कहा जा सकता हैं।

न्यायालय ने इस वाद में यह निर्णित किया कि अनुच्छेद 21क एवं शिक्षा का अधिकार अधिनियम सहायता प्राप्त एवं गैर सहायता प्राप्त अल्पसंख्यक शिक्षण संस्थानों पर लागू नहीं होगा क्योंकि इससे उनका अल्पसंख्यक चरित्र नष्ट होता है।

निष्कर्ष : उपर्युक्त न्याय निर्णयों का अध्ययन करने के बाद यह निष्कर्ष निकाला जा सकता है कि न्यायपालिका ने शिक्षा के अधिकार के क्रियान्वयन में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई हैं एवं समय-समय पर कार्यपालिका को उचित दिशा-निर्देश भी दिए किन्तु वह, कार्यपालिका उन दिशा-निर्देशों का पालन कर रही हैं या नहीं इसकी मॉनीटरींग करने में विफल रही अन्यथा अविनाश महरोत्रा एवं इन्वायरोमेंटल एण्ड कंज्यूम प्रोटेक्शन फाउण्डेशन के वाद में बच्चों की सुरक्षा एवं अवसंरचना में सुधार संबंधी दिशा निर्देश देने के बाद भी झालावाड़ जैसी त्रासदी घटित नहीं होती इसके लिए न्यायपालिका को कार्यपालिका पर न्यायालय की अवमानना हेतु कठोर कार्यवाही करनी चाहिए जिससे कि शिक्षा का अधिकार गरीब एवं कमजोर वर्ग के बालकों के लिए अभिशाप न होकर वरदान साबित हो।

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विजय लक्ष्मी जोशी
शोधार्थी
विक्रम विश्वविद्यालय उज्जैन

डॉ. रश्मि शर्मा
शोध निदेशिका
सहायक प्राध्यापक शासकीय विधि महाविद्यालय उज्जैन

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भारत के तराई क्षेत्र में थारू जनजाति की सामाजिक, राजनीतिक एवं शैक्षिक स्थिति : एक मानवशास्त्रीय अध्ययन

डॉ. प्रतिमा गोंड • विनय कुमार विश्वकर्मा

थारू जनजाति भारत के उत्तर प्रदेश और उत्तराखंड के तराई क्षेत्रों में निवास करने वाला एक प्रमुख आदिवासी समुदाय है, जो अपनी अनूठी संस्कृति और पारंपरिक वनाश्रित जीवनशैली के लिए जाना जाता है। यद्यपि संविधान ने अनुसूचित जनजातियों के लिए विशेष संरक्षण और अधिकार सुनिश्चित किए हैं, फिर भी थारू समुदाय आज भी सामाजिक, राजनीतिक और शैक्षिक दृष्टि से अपेक्षाकृत पिछड़ा हुआ है। प्रस्तुत शोध पत्र लखीमपुर खीरी और बहराइच जिलों में फील्डवर्क आधारित साक्षात्कार और अवलोकन पर केंद्रित है। अध्ययन से पता चलता है कि पारंपरिक सामाजिक ढाँचे में कुछ बदलाव अवश्य आए हैं, किंतु महिलाओं की निर्णय क्षमता सीमित है और राजनीतिक भागीदारी ग्राम पंचायत स्तर तक ही सिमटी हुई है। शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में प्राथमिक स्तर तक पहुँच तो बढ़ी है, परंतु माध्यमिक और उच्च शिक्षा में प्रवेश की दर अत्यंत कम है। गरीबी, जागरूकता की कमी और संस्थागत सुविधाओं का अभाव इनके विकास में मुख्य बाधाएँ हैं। निष्कर्षतः थारू समाज के सतत् विकास के लिए बहु-आयामी रणनीतियों की आवश्यकता है, जिनमें शिक्षा का प्रसार, महिलाओं का सशक्तिकरण, भूमि अधिकारों की सुरक्षा और सांस्कृतिक संरक्षण के उपाय शामिल हों। यह शोध नीति निर्माताओं को थारू जनजाति के सामाजिक-सांस्कृतिक संदर्भ को समझने और कारगर नीतियाँ बनाने में सहायक होगा।

मुख्य शब्द : थारू जनजाति, सामाजिक संरचना, राजनीतिक भागीदारी, शिक्षा, जनजातीय सशक्तिकरण, तराई क्षेत्र।

भूमिका :

भारत की जनजातियाँ न केवल देश की जैव-सांस्कृतिक विविधता का अद्भुत उदाहरण हैं, बल्कि यह समुदाय हजारों वर्षों से अपने पारंपरिक ज्ञान, जीवन पद्धति और पर्यावरण के प्रति सामंजस्यपूर्ण दृष्टिकोण के लिए भी जाने जाते हैं। इन्हीं में से एक प्रमुख समुदाय है थारू जनजाति, जो मुख्यतः उत्तर प्रदेश और उत्तराखंड के तराई क्षेत्रों में नेपाल की सीमा से लगे जिलों में निवास करती है। थारू समाज का पारंपरिक जीवन वन आधारित आजीविका, सामुदायिक सहयोग और प्राकृतिक संसाधनों के सतत उपयोग पर आधारित रहा है। इनकी विशिष्ट भाषा, लोक कला, पारंपरिक परिधान और उत्सव इनके सांस्कृतिक वैभव को दर्शाते हैं।

स्वतंत्रता के बाद भारत में भूमि सुधार, वन संरक्षण कानूनों और शरणार्थी पुनर्वास जैसी नीतियों ने थारू समुदाय के सामाजिक-आर्थिक परिदृश्य को गहरे स्तर पर प्रभावित किया। कई परिवारों को पारंपरिक जमीनों से विस्थापित होना पड़ा, जिससे उनकी आजीविका और सांस्कृतिक पहचान को चुनौती मिली। सरकारी स्तर पर थारू समाज के उत्थान हेतु अनुसूचित जनजाति के रूप में उन्हें संवैधानिक संरक्षण दिया गया तथा शिक्षा, रोजगार और राजनीतिक आरक्षण की व्यवस्था की गई।

इसके बावजूद आज भी थारू समुदाय शिक्षा, स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं, राजनीतिक प्रतिनिधित्व और आर्थिक अवसरों की दृष्टि से अपेक्षाकृत पिछड़ा हुआ है। समाज में गरीबी, भूमि अधिकारों को लेकर असुरक्षा और महिलाओं की निर्णय प्रक्रिया में सीमित भागीदारी जैसे मुद्दे मौजूद हैं।

प्रस्तुत मानवशास्त्रीय अध्ययन का उद्देश्य थारू जनजाति की सामाजिक संरचना, उनकी बदलती जीवनशैली, राजनीतिक चेतना और शैक्षिक स्थिति का समग्र विश्लेषण करना है, ताकि इस समुदाय की वास्तविक समस्याओं, उनकी आवश्यकताओं और उनके सशक्तिकरण के लिए प्रभावी नीतिगत दिशा सुझाई जा सके। यह अध्ययन केवल अकादमिक महत्व तक सीमित नहीं,

बल्कि जनजातीय समुदायों के न्यायसंगत और सतत विकास की दिशा में भी एक महत्वपूर्ण प्रयास है।

साहित्य समीक्षा

थारू जनजाति पर हुए विभिन्न मानवशास्त्रीय और समाजशास्त्रीय शोध इस समुदाय की सांस्कृतिक विशिष्टता और पारंपरिक जीवनशैली को समझने में सहायक रहे हैं। श्रीवास्तव (1998) ने थारू समाज की पारंपरिक संरचनाओं और उनके अनूठे पर्यावरणीय अनुकूलन को विस्तार से वर्णित किया है, जबकि सिंह (1993) ने People of India परियोजना के अंतर्गत उत्तर प्रदेश में थारू समुदाय की सामाजिक संगठनात्मक विशेषताओं का विवेचन किया। वर्मा (1990) ने भारतीय जनजातियों के ऐतिहासिक विकास में थारू समाज के योगदान को भी रेखांकित किया है।

नेगी (2010) ने थारू जनजाति के वनाधिकार और उनके सामाजिक जीवन पर पड़ने वाले प्रभावों का अध्ययन प्रस्तुत किया है। वहीं, कुमार (2018) ने थारू महिलाओं की शिक्षा और सशक्तिकरण के विषय में अपने शोध में प्रमुख समस्याओं और संभावनाओं को उजागर किया है।

हालाँकि, वर्तमान समय में बदलते सामाजिक-राजनीतिक संदर्भ, सरकार की नीतियाँ, वनाधिकार अधिनियम के क्रियान्वयन और शिक्षा योजनाओं के जमीनी प्रभाव पर थारू समुदाय के बीच फील्ड आधारित समकालीन अध्ययन अपेक्षाकृत कम हैं। अतः इस शोध का उद्देश्य पूर्ववर्ती अध्ययनों की कड़ी को आगे बढ़ाते हुए वर्तमान में थारू जनजाति की सामाजिक, राजनीतिक और शैक्षिक स्थिति का एक वस्तुनिष्ठ और मानवशास्त्रीय आकलन प्रस्तुत करना है।

अध्ययन के उद्देश्य

1. थारू जनजाति की सामाजिक संरचना और सांस्कृतिक पहचान का अध्ययन करना।
2. समुदाय में राजनीतिक भागीदारी और संवैधानिक अधिकारों के प्रति जागरूकता का विश्लेषण करना।
3. शैक्षिक स्थिति, साक्षरता स्तर और अवरोधों की पहचान करना।

4. चुनौतियों को रेखांकित कर नीतिगत सुझाव प्रस्तुत करना।

अनुसंधान प्रश्न

1. किस प्रकार सामाजिक-आर्थिक बदलावों ने थारू समाज की पारंपरिक संरचनाओं को प्रभावित किया है?
2. थारू समुदाय की राजनीतिक जागरूकता और भागीदारी का स्तर कैसा है?
3. शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में प्रमुख बाधाएँ क्या हैं, विशेषकर महिलाओं के लिए?
4. सरकारी योजनाएँ कितनी प्रभावी हैं और उनका क्रियान्वयन कैसे हो रहा है?

शोध पद्धति

इस अध्ययन की रूपरेखा को इस प्रकार विकसित किया गया है कि यह थारू जनजाति की सामाजिक, राजनीतिक एवं शैक्षिक स्थिति को एक समग्र मानवशास्त्रीय दृष्टिकोण से समझने में सहायक हो। इस हेतु वर्णनात्मक और विश्लेषणात्मक दृष्टिकोण को समन्वित रूप से अपनाया गया है। अध्ययन में मात्रात्मक आँकड़ों के साथ-साथ गुणात्मक आँकड़ों को भी समान रूप से महत्त्व दिया गया है ताकि शोध निष्कर्ष अधिक विश्वसनीय और वस्तुनिष्ठ बन सकें।

1. अनुसंधान रूपरेखा

शोध में सामाजिक संरचना, राजनीतिक भागीदारी और शैक्षिक स्थिति जैसे विषयों को विस्तार से जानने के लिए क्षेत्रीय फील्डवर्क, साक्षात्कार और प्रत्यक्ष अवलोकन की पद्धतियों को जोड़ा गया है। इसमें आदिवासी समुदाय के लोगों की अनुभवात्मक समझ, उनकी बोली, परंपराएँ और रोजमर्रा की चुनौतियाँ भी समाहित हैं।

2. अध्ययन क्षेत्र

उत्तर प्रदेश के लखीमपुर खीरी और बहराइच जिले के थारू बहुल गाँवों

को शोध क्षेत्र के रूप में चुना गया है। ये क्षेत्र नेपाल की तराई सीमा से सटे हुए हैं तथा यहाँ थारू जनजाति का घनत्व अधिक है। प्राकृतिक संसाधनों, जंगलों और खेती पर निर्भरता ने इनके सामाजिक जीवन को विशिष्ट रूप प्रदान किया है। चयनित गाँवों में सांस्कृतिक विविधता, आर्थिक स्तर और राजनीतिक भागीदारी के भिन्न स्तर शोध को अधिक प्रामाणिक बनाते हैं।

3. डेटा संग्रहण

डेटा संग्रहण के लिए प्राथमिक और द्वितीयक स्रोतों का उपयोग किया गया है।

- **प्राथमिक डेटा** के लिए 50 अर्ध-संरचित साक्षात्कार लिए गए, जिनमें पुरुष, महिलाएँ, बुजुर्ग और युवा सभी शामिल थे। इसके अतिरिक्त 5 समूह चर्चाएँ (Focus Group Discussions) आयोजित की गईं, जिनमें गाँव के सक्रिय सदस्यों ने भाग लिया। साथ ही ग्राम सभाओं, पंचायत बैठकों और सामुदायिक आयोजनों में सहभागिता कर प्रत्यक्ष अवलोकन किया गया, जिससे संदर्भ आधारित जानकारी प्राप्त हो सकी।
- **द्वितीयक डेटा** में भारत सरकार की जनगणना रिपोर्ट (2011), जनजातीय मामलों के मंत्रालय की वार्षिक रिपोर्टें, अनुसंधान संस्थानों द्वारा प्रकाशित संबंधित शोध-पत्र और पुस्तकों का सहारा लिया गया।

4. नमूना आकार

अध्ययन के लिए 100 परिवारों का चयन स्तरीकृत यादृच्छिक नमूना पद्धति द्वारा किया गया। इस पद्धति से विभिन्न उप-समुदायों, आय वर्गों और लिंग संतुलन का उचित प्रतिनिधित्व सुनिश्चित किया गया।

5. डेटा विश्लेषण

संग्रहित आँकड़ों का विश्लेषण विषयवस्तु विश्लेषण और वर्णनात्मक सांख्यिकीय विधियों द्वारा किया गया। प्राप्त उत्तरों से प्रमुख थीमों की पहचान कर उन्हें सामाजिक संकेतकों से जोड़ा गया। शैक्षिक स्तर, राजनीतिक सहभागिता और सामाजिक संरचना से जुड़े संकेतकों का तुलनात्मक अध्ययन

कर निष्कर्ष तैयार किए गए, ताकि नीति-निर्माताओं के लिए व्यावहारिक सुझाव सामने लाए जा सकें।

परिणाम एवं चर्चा

इस अध्ययन का उद्देश्य तराई क्षेत्र में बसे थारू समुदाय की सामाजिक संरचना, राजनीतिक सहभागिता और शैक्षिक स्थिति का वस्तुनिष्ठ आकलन करना था। प्राप्त फील्डवर्क डेटा और साक्षात्कारों से जो प्रमुख निष्कर्ष निकले, वे उनके समकालीन जीवन के विभिन्न पक्षों को उजागर करते हैं।

1. सामाजिक संरचना

थारू समाज की पारंपरिक संरचना आज भी पितृसत्तात्मक व्यवस्था पर आधारित है, परंतु सामूहिकता और सहयोग की भावना इसकी विशेष पहचान है। ''बरगदिया'' प्रणाली ग्राम स्तर पर एक तरह की पारंपरिक पंचायत है, जो सामाजिक विवादों के निपटारे और सामूहिक निर्णयों में महत्त्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाती है। धार्मिक दृष्टिकोण से थारू लोग प्रकृति पूजक होते हैं। उनके देवी-देवता भी स्थानीय पर्वों और पर्यावरण से जुड़े होते हैं।

हालांकि, अध्ययन में यह भी सामने आया कि तेजी से बदलते सामाजिक परिवेश और बाहरी प्रभावों के कारण युवा पीढ़ी में परंपरागत रीति-रिवाजों और सांस्कृतिक मान्यताओं के प्रति रुचि कम होती जा रही है। समुदाय के 68% प्रतिभागियों ने स्वीकार किया कि बाहरी प्रभावों ने उनकी संस्कृति में मिश्रण पैदा कर दिया है, जिससे सांस्कृतिक अस्मिता के क्षरण का खतरा बढ़ गया है।

2. महिलाओं की भूमिका

थारू महिलाओं की भूमिका सदैव महत्वपूर्ण रही है–वे कृषि, वनोपज संग्रहण और घरेलू कार्यों में सक्रिय सहयोग देती हैं। फील्डवर्क के दौरान यह देखा गया कि महिलाएँ जंगलों से महुआ, शहद, कंद-मूल इकट्ठा कर परिवार की आजीविका में योगदान देती हैं। इसके बावजूद, निर्णय-निर्माण प्रक्रियाओं में उनकी भागीदारी सीमित रहती है।

जल्दी विवाह, पितृसत्तात्मक सामाजिक धारणाएँ और शिक्षा का अभाव महिलाओं के सशक्तिकरण में बाधक बनते हैं। साक्षात्कारों में कई महिलाओं ने

कहा कि वे परिवार के फैसलों में अपनी राय तो देती हैं, लेकिन अंतिम निर्णय पुरुषों द्वारा ही लिए जाते हैं। युवा लड़कियों के लिए स्कूल छोड़ने की दर अभी भी अधिक है, जिसका प्रत्यक्ष प्रभाव उनके आर्थिक स्वावलंबन पर पड़ता है।

3. राजनीतिक स्थिति

वनाधिकार अधिनियम, 2006 के लागू होने के बाद थारू समुदाय में राजनीतिक चेतना में धीरे-धीरे वृद्धि देखी गई है। कई गाँवों में थारू समुदाय के लोग ग्राम प्रधान, वार्ड सदस्य या पंचायत समिति के सदस्य निर्वाचित हुए हैं। यह परिवर्तन उनके अधिकारों के प्रति जागरूकता को दर्शाता है।

हालाँकि, पंचायत स्तर से ऊपर यानी ब्लॉक या जिला स्तर की राजनीति में इनका प्रतिनिधित्व नगण्य है। राजनीतिक नेतृत्व कौशल, संसाधनों की कमी और उच्च जातीय वर्गों के प्रभुत्व के कारण थारू प्रतिनिधि कई बार अपने समुदाय के मुद्दे प्रभावी ढंग से उठा नहीं पाते। फील्ड डेटा से यह भी स्पष्ट हुआ कि केवल 22% लोगों ने कहा कि वे नियमित रूप से ग्राम सभा बैठकों में भाग लेते हैं। इससे यह स्पष्ट होता है कि जन प्रतिनिधित्व होने के बावजूद लोकतांत्रिक भागीदारी और नीति-निर्माण प्रक्रिया में समुदाय की सक्रिय भूमिका अभी सीमित है।

4. शैक्षिक स्थिति

शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में थारू समुदाय ने पिछले कुछ दशकों में प्राथमिक स्तर पर थोड़ी प्रगति अवश्य की है। सरकारी योजनाओं जैसे 'सर्व शिक्षा अभियान', छात्रावास सुविधा और छात्रवृत्ति से बच्चों के नामांकन में वृद्धि हुई है। फील्ड डेटा के अनुसार औसत साक्षरता दर 52% है, जबकि महिला साक्षरता दर 39% पाई गई।

अध्ययन में यह भी सामने आया कि कक्षा पाँच के बाद ड्रॉपआउट दर लगभग 45% है। इसका मुख्य कारण आर्थिक संकट, विद्यालयों की दूरी, शिक्षकों की नियमित अनुपस्थिति और पठन सामग्री की स्थानीय भाषा में अनुपलब्धता है। विशेषकर किशोरियों में पढ़ाई छोड़ने की दर जल्दी विवाह और सामाजिक दबावों के कारण अधिक है।

फील्ड चर्चा के दौरान कुछ युवाओं ने बताया कि माध्यमिक और उच्च

शिक्षा के लिए निकटतम विद्यालय 8-10 किलोमीटर दूर है, और परिवहन सुविधा न होने से नियमित उपस्थिति मुश्किल हो जाती है।

5. प्रमुख चुनौतियाँ और दिशा

थारू जनजाति की सामाजिक संरचना मजबूत और सामूहिकता पर आधारित है, लेकिन आधुनिक दबावों ने परंपरा को चुनौती दी है। राजनीतिक चेतना बढ़ने के बावजूद इसे सशक्त राजनीतिक नेतृत्व में बदलना अभी बाकी है। शिक्षा की नींव मजबूत करने के लिए स्थानीय स्तर पर आवासीय विद्यालय, मातृभाषा में पठन सामग्री, और महिला सशक्तिकरण कार्यक्रम जरूरी हैं।

सारांशतः यह कहा जा सकता है कि थारू समुदाय आज भी विकास की मुख्यधारा से जुड़ने के लिए संघर्षरत है, और इसके लिए बहुस्तरीय नीतिगत हस्तक्षेप व सामुदायिक भागीदारी दोनों अनिवार्य हैं।

परिणाम

थारू जनजाति का मानवशास्त्रीय अध्ययन दर्शाता है कि यह समुदाय आज भी सामाजिक, राजनीतिक और शैक्षिक दृष्टि से कई चुनौतियों से जूझ रहा है। फील्डवर्क से प्राप्त आँकड़ों के अनुसार लगभग 65% परिवार गरीबी रेखा के नीचे जीवन यापन कर रहे हैं। महिलाएँ कृषि और वनोपज संग्रह में सक्रिय होने के बावजूद निर्णय लेने में केवल घरेलू क्षेत्र तक सीमित हैं। राजनीतिक भागीदारी पंचायत स्तर तक सीमित रह गई है, जबकि जिला और राज्य स्तर पर प्रतिनिधित्व नगण्य है। सांस्कृतिक पहचान पर बाहरी प्रभाव स्पष्ट रूप से देखा जा रहा है, जिससे पारंपरिक रीति-रिवाजों के विलुप्त होने का खतरा बढ़ गया है।

तालिका : 01. प्रमुख संकेतक

संकेतक	स्थिति
गरीबी रेखा के नीचे परिवार	65%
महिलाओं की निर्णय क्षमता	सीमित, केवल घरेलू क्षेत्र तक
राजनीतिक भागीदारी	केवल पंचायत स्तर तक सीमित
सांस्कृतिक पहचान	बाहरी प्रभाव से कमजोर हो रही

प्रमुख समस्याएँ और चुनौतियाँ

- आर्थिक असुरक्षा और सीमित भूमि स्वामित्व।
- महिलाओं और युवाओं में राजनीतिक जागरूकता की कमी।
- शैक्षिक सुविधाओं की कमी और माध्यमिक स्तर पर ड्रॉपआउट दर अधिक।
- प्राथमिक स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं तक सीमित पहुँच।
- पारंपरिक संस्कृति के संरक्षण में ठोस प्रयासों का अभाव।

थारू समुदाय के सतत विकास के लिए बहुआयामी योजनाओं और समुदाय केंद्रित दृष्टिकोण की नितांत आवश्यकता है।

सुझाव

थारू जनजाति के समग्र विकास के लिए बहुस्तरीय और स्थानीय आवश्यकता आधारित नीतियाँ लागू करना अत्यंत आवश्यक है। सबसे पहले, थारू भाषा में प्रारंभिक शिक्षा की व्यवस्था की जानी चाहिए ताकि बच्चे अपनी मातृभाषा में आसानी से सीख सकें, साथ ही आवासीय विद्यालयों की स्थापना से ड्रॉपआउट दर को कम किया जा सकता है। वनाधिकार अधिनियम और पंचायत (PESA) अधिनियम के प्रावधानों का प्रभावी क्रियान्वयन कर समुदाय को भूमि और वन संसाधनों पर अधिकार मिल सकेगा। महिलाओं के लिए स्वयं सहायता समूह और नेतृत्व विकास कार्यक्रम शुरू किए जाएँ ताकि वे आर्थिक रूप से स्वावलंबी बन सकें और निर्णय प्रक्रिया में भागीदारी बढ़ा सकें। स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं के लिए स्थानीय प्राथमिक स्वास्थ्य केन्द्रों और मानसिक स्वास्थ्य परामर्श केन्द्रों का विस्तार होना चाहिए। अंततः थारू संस्कृति, लोककला, नृत्य और पारंपरिक ज्ञान को संरक्षित करने हेतु दस्तावेजीकरण और प्रचार-प्रसार के प्रयास सुनिश्चित किए जाने चाहिए।

निष्कर्ष

थारू जनजाति उत्तर भारत के तराई क्षेत्रों में निवास करने वाला एक महत्वपूर्ण आदिवासी समुदाय है, जो आज भी कई सामाजिक, शैक्षिक और राजनीतिक चुनौतियों का सामना कर रहा है। भले ही वनाधिकार अधिनियम, पंचायत राज व्यवस्था और विभिन्न सरकारी योजनाओं के माध्यम से

इनके जीवन में सुधार लाने के प्रयास हुए हैं, फिर भी गरीबी, शिक्षा की कमी, स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं की अनुपलब्धता और राजनीतिक जागरूकता का अभाव इनकी प्रगति में बड़ी बाधाएँ हैं। महिलाओं की स्थिति विशेष रूप से संवेदनशील है, जहाँ उनका योगदान तो महत्त्वपूर्ण है लेकिन निर्णय क्षमता सीमित है। इस समुदाय का वास्तविक सशक्तिकरण तब ही संभव है जब शिक्षा, अधिकार जागरूकता और आर्थिक अवसरों का समेकित विकास हो। इसके लिए नीति-निर्माताओं, सरकारी तंत्र, गैर-सरकारी संगठनों और स्वयं थारू समुदाय के लोगों को मिलकर काम करना होगा। साथ ही यह भी सुनिश्चित करना होगा कि थारू समाज की पारंपरिक संस्कृति, भाषा और लोककला बाहरी प्रभावों में विलुप्त न हो जाए, बल्कि संरक्षित रहकर आने वाली पीढ़ियों को अपनी जड़ों से जोड़े रखे। समन्वित प्रयासों से ही थारू जनजाति को विकास की मुख्यधारा में शामिल किया जा सकता है और उन्हें सम्मानजनक जीवन स्तर प्रदान किया जा सकता है।

कृतज्ञता

लेखकों द्वारा थारू समुदाय के प्रतिभागियों, स्थानीय पंचायती नेताओं और क्षेत्रीय NGO का सहयोग प्राप्त करने हेतु आभार के साथ ही इंस्टिट्यूट ऑफ एमिनेन्स, काशी हिन्दू विश्वविद्यालय, वाराणसी को भी सहयोग हेतु आभार व्यक्त किया जाता है।

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डॉ. प्रतिमा गोंड
सह आचार्या
समाजशास्त्र विभाग, महिला महाविद्यालय
काशी हिन्दू विश्वविद्यालय, वाराणसी

विनय कुमार विश्वकर्मा
शोध छात्र
समाजशास्त्र विभाग
काशी हिन्दू विश्वविद्यालय, वाराणसी

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भारतीय कला को समर्पित विदूषी : स्टैला कार्मरिच

● डॉ. रीतिका गर्ग

भारतीय कला इतिहास और संस्कृति की परम्परा को प्रवाहमान बनाए रखने में असंख्य विद्वानों ने अपना सर्वस्य अर्पण कर स्वयं को गुमनामी के अंधेरों में भी ढकेला है। पुनरूत्थान काल (बंगाल स्कूल) से हमें भारतीय कला के लिये समर्पित विद्वानों, कलाकारों, विचारकों आदि की एक लम्बी श्रृंखला देखने को मिलती है जिन्होंने विदेशी दासता से भारतीय कला को मुक्त कराने का अथक प्रयास किया है। ऐसी ही एक विदूषी महिला स्टैला कार्मरिच का नाम भी बहुत ही आदर के साथ भारतीय कला के सौन्दर्यात्मक पक्ष पर प्रकाश डालने के लिये लिया जाता है।

आस्ट्रिया, चेक गणराज्य में जन्मी स्टैला की प्रारम्भ से ही भारतीय इतिहास, कला, संस्कृति व दर्शन में रुचि थी। अतः उन्होंने अपना अध्ययन भी इसी पर केन्द्रित रखा। सन् 1924 ई. में वे भारत आई और कलकत्ता विश्वविद्यालय में अध्यापन कार्य आरम्भ किया। उन्होंने भारत में रहते हुए भारतीय कला का गहन अध्ययन, विश्लेषण और अनुशीलन किया तथा अनेक लेख लिखे। उनके प्रयासों द्वारा भारतीय कला को न केवल विश्व पटल पर पहचान ही मिली अपितु उसने अपनी खोई हुई गरिमा को भी पुनः प्राप्त किया।

मुख्य शब्द : *संस्कृति, पुनरूत्थान काल, अथक, विदूषी, अनुशीलन।*

अपने कला अध्ययन के मध्य मैंने जाना कि न जाने कितने व्यक्ति ऐसे रहे हैं जिन्होंने भारतीय कला की साधना में अपना जीवन समर्पित कर दिया। भारतीय कला इतिहास और संस्कृति की परम्परा को प्रवाहमान बनाए रखने में असंख्य विद्वानों ने अपना सर्वस्व अर्पण कर स्वयं को गुमनामी के अंधेरों में भी ढकेला है। आज वर्तमान समय में भी अनेक ऐसे व्यक्ति हैं जिनके बारे में जानकारी का अभाव होने के कारण हम उनके कला, इतिहास व संस्कृति के

योगदान पर विस्तार से चर्चा नहीं कर पाते हैं। यद्यपि अनेक शोधार्थी व जिज्ञासु समय-समय पर इनके बारे में कुछ तथ्य एकत्रित करते रहे हैं। पुनरूत्थान काल (बंगाल स्कूल) से हमें भारतीय कला के लिये समर्पित विद्वानों, कलाकारों, विचारकों आदि की एक लम्बी शृंखला देखने को मिलती है जिन्होंने विदेशी दासता से भारतीय कला को मुक्त कराने का अथक प्रयास किया है। ऐसी ही एक विदूषी महिला स्टैला कार्मरिच का नाम भी बहुत आदर के साथ भारतीय कला के सौन्दर्यात्मक पक्ष पर प्रकाश डालने के लिये लिया जाता है, जिन्होंने भारतीय न होते हुए भी भारतीय कला की विशेषताओं और महत्व को समझा तथा इसे विश्व पटल पर उद्घाटित करने का कार्य भी किया। स्टैला कार्मरिच अमेरिका की एक अग्रणी कला इतिहासकार, क्यूरेटर तथा बींसवी शती की सबसे प्रमुख भारतीय कला विशेषज्ञ के तौर पर जानी जाती हैं।

जीवन परिचय तथा कार्य

स्टैला कार्मरिच का जन्म 29 मई 1896 ई. को निकोलसबर्ग, आस्ट्रिया (Nikolsburg, Austria) वर्तमान में मिकुलोव, चेक गणराज्य– (Now Mikulov, Czech Republic) में हुआ था।[1] अपने बचपन में इन्होंने बैले नृत्य का प्रशिक्षण प्राप्त किया। जब ये दस वर्ष की थीं तब इनके माता-पिता वियना (Vienna) चले गये। एक दिन स्टैला को श्रीमद् भगवतगीता का अंग्रेजी अनुवाद प्राप्त हुआ जिसे पढ़ने के उपरान्त वे अत्यन्त प्रभावित हुई और उन्होंने अपने जीवन का लक्ष्य निर्धारित कर लिया। उन्होंने वियना विश्वविद्यालय में कला इतिहास विभाग में अध्ययन के लिये प्रवेश लिया जहाँ वे प्रोफेसर मैक्स ड्वोरक (Max Dvorak) तथा जोसेफ स्ट्रजी गोव्स्की (Josef Strgygowski) के सम्पर्क में आई। उन्होंने अपना अध्ययन भारतीय कला और संस्कृति पर केन्द्रित करते हुए संस्कृत, दर्शनशास्त्र, साहित्य तथा मनोविज्ञान पढ़ा। उन्होंने 'भारत में प्रारम्भिक-बौद्ध मूर्तिकला' (Classical Indian Buddhist Sculpture) विषय पर शोध प्रबन्ध लिखकर 1919 ई. में डॉक्टरेट की डिग्री प्राप्त की।

सन् 1919 में ही उन्हें विश्वविद्यालय प्रतिनिधिमण्डल के एक सदस्य के रूप में ऑक्सफोर्ड विश्वविद्यालय, लन्दन में तीन व्याख्यान देने के लिये भेजा गया जहाँ रवीन्द्रनाथ टैगोर ने उनकी बातें सुनकर उनसे प्रभावित होते

हुए उन्हें भारत आकर विश्व-भारती विश्वविद्यालय में शान्ति निकेतन में पढ़ाने के लिये आमंत्रित किया। स्टैला ने इस प्रस्ताव को स्वीकार कर लिया तथा वे सन् 1924 में भारत आई और कलकत्ता विश्वविद्यालय में प्रोफेसर के पद पर नियुक्त हो गई। यहाँ उन्होंने 1950 तक अध्यापन कार्य किया। सन् 1924 ई. में ही स्टैला कार्मरिच ने बादामी गुफा मन्दिरों की खोज भी की।[2] इस दौरान स्टैला अपने व्याख्यान देने के लिए वियना आती-जाती रहीं। 1924 में उनका प्रथम मोनोग्राफ 'प्रिंसिपल्स ऑफ इंडियन आर्ट' जर्मन में प्रकाशित हुआ जिसकी सम्पूर्ण यूरोप की पत्र-पत्रिकाओं में समीक्षा की गई। उन्होंने 1933 ई. में अवनीन्द्रनाथ टैगोर के साथ मिलकर *'जर्नल ऑफ द इंडियन सोसाइटी ऑफ ओरिएंटल आर्ट'* का सम्पादन किया। इस जर्नल में उनके वियना के सहयोगियों के लेखों का अंग्रेजी अनुवाद भी प्रकाशित हुआ। उनका मौलिक प्रकाशन *'इंडियन स्कल्पचर'* (1933) था जिसमें उन्होंने भारतीय मूर्तिकला का गहन विश्लेषण किया था। इसके साथ ही उन्होंने विष्णुधमोत्तर पुराण के चित्रसूत्र का अंग्रेजी में अनुवाद भी किया था। डॉ. जी.के. अग्रवाल के अनुसार भी ''इस ग्रन्थ के अंग्रेजी में अनुवाद डॉ. स्टेला क्रामरिश, डॉ. आनन्द कुमारस्वामी, डॉ. शिवराम मूर्ति एवं डॉ. प्रियबाला शाह ने किये हैं।''[3]

1947 ई. में भारत-पाकिस्तान विभाजन के पश्चात् स्टैला कार्मरिच के पति लास्ज़लो नेमेनयी (Laszlo Nemnyi) ने पाकिस्तान जाकर काम करने का विकल्प चुना और वे कराची चले गये। सन् 1950 में एक समुद्र तट पर उनकी गोली मारकर हत्या कर दी गई। इसके उपरान्त स्टैला उसी वर्ष अमेरिका चली गईं। जहाँ उन्हें संस्कृतविद् डब्ल्यू नार्मन ब्राउन (Sanskritist W. Norman Brown) द्वारा पेंसिल्वेनिया विश्वविद्यालय (Pennsylvania University) के नवगठित दक्षिण एशिया क्षेत्रीय अध्ययन विभाग में पढ़ाने के लिए आमंत्रित किया गया। स्टैला ने यह निमंत्रण स्वीकार कर लिया और 1969 तक यहाँ प्रोफसर रहीं। 1964-1982 तक वे न्यूयार्क में ललित कला संस्थान में भारतीय कला की सहायक प्रोफेसर भी रहीं। उन्होंने 1954 से 1979 तक फिलाडेल्फिया संग्रहालय (Philadelphia Museum) में भारतीय कला के क्यूरेटर के रूप में भी कार्य किया। फिलाडेल्फिया संग्रहालय में काम करने के दौरान उन्होंने भारतीय कला और हिमालयी कला पर गहन

अध्ययन कर अपनी पकड़ और मजबूत की और अनेक महत्त्वपूर्ण प्रदर्शियों की शृंखला आयोजित की। उन्होंने इससे सम्बन्धित कैटलॉग लिखे और इससे सम्बन्धित अपने अध्ययन को भी प्रकाश में लाने का कार्य किया जिसके कारण इस संग्रहालय और भारतीय कला दोनों को पहचान मिली।

भारतीय कला और संस्कृति पर ऐसी ही एक प्रदर्शनी 1968 में आयोजित की गई जिसका शीर्षक था *'अननोन इंडिया : रिचुअल आर्ट इन ट्राइब एण्ड विलेज'* (Unknown India : Ritual Art in Tribe and Village) (अज्ञात भारत : जनजाति और गाँव में अनुष्ठान कला)। इसके बाद 12 वर्षों की कड़ी मेहनत के उपरान्त उन्होंने एक और प्रदर्शनी 'मैनीफैस्टेशन्स ऑफ शिवा' (शिव की अभिव्यक्तियाँ – Manifestations of Shiva) शीर्षक से 1981 में आयोजित की। इसमें भगवान शिव से सम्बन्धित 197 वस्तुओं को रखा गया था। इसका आयोजन शिव का अध्ययन और उनसे सम्बन्धित रहस्यों और व्याख्यों का पता लगाने के लिए किया गया था। यह इस देश की इस प्रकार की पहली प्रदर्शनी थी। सन् 1985 ई. में उन्हें ओरिएंटल सभ्यता की समझ में उनके योगदान के लिए 'चार्ल्स लैंग फ्रीर मेडल' (Charles Lang Freer Medal) प्रदान किया गया। सन् 1982 में भारत सरकार द्वारा उन्हें विश्व में भारतीय कला को पुनः प्रतिष्ठित करने में अपना अमूल्य सहयोग देने हेतु पद्म-भूषण प्रदान किया गया। 31 अगस्त 1993 ई. को फिलाडेल्फिया, पेंसिल्वेनिया (Philadelphia, Pennysylvania) में उनकी मृत्यु हो गई। अपनी मृत्यु से पहले उन्होंने अपना समस्त लेखन कार्य, शोध सामग्री आदि वसीयत लिखकर फिलाडेल्फिया कला संग्रहालय को दे दी थी।

भारतीय कला पर स्टैला के विचार

स्टैला कार्मरिच ने अपने लेख 'द् आर्ट ऑफ इण्डिया' में लिखा है कि–''यद्यपि भारतीय काव्यों और दर्शन की खोज यूरोपिय लोगों ने सौ साल पहले की थी किन्तु उन्होंने इसके सबसे महत्वपूर्ण तत्व इसकी कलाओं की कोई सराहना नहीं की। जबकि 'शकुन्तला' और 'बुद्ध के उपदेशों' को प्लेटो या सोफोकल्स (Saphocles) के लेखन के समान महत्व दिया गया और प्रत्येक यूरोपीय साहित्यिक परम्पराओं में भी इन्हें शामिल किया गया परन्तु भारतीय कलाओं के साथ ऐसा व्यवहार किया गया जैसे कि वे एक दूरस्थ

विदेशी दुनिया के धार्मिक इतिहास, या कामुक रहस्यमय, मानव-विज्ञान के सचित्र पूरक थे। यह खोज करना अभी भी बाकी है कि विश्व पटल पर कला के सार्वभौमिक इतिहास में भारत की कलाओं का उचित स्थान है। कोई भी अतिश्योक्ति के भय के बिना यह दावा कर सकता है कि मेरी यह पुस्तक (भारतीय कला पर उनका लेखन कार्य) इस क्षेत्र में प्रथम हैं। ऐसा इसलिए होना चाहिए क्योंकि विद्वानों ने कालक्रम, क्षेत्रीय-भेद और धार्मिक सामग्री की समस्याओं पर अपना इतना अधिक ध्यान दिया है कि वे कभी भी यह प्रदर्शित नहीं कर पाए कि भारतीय मूर्तिकला और वास्तुकला का मूल्य, विशुद्ध रूप से कलात्मक मानकों के आधार पर, ग्रीक मूर्तिकला और मध्यकालीन कैथेड्रल के समान था।''[4]

इसी प्रकार अपने एक अन्य लेखन कार्य 'अननोन इण्डिया' (Unknown India) में भारतीय कला परम्पराओं का पालन करते हुए कलाकारों व कला-परम्परा के बारे में भी स्टैला ने अपने विचार प्रगट किये हैं। उन्होंने लिखा कि ''महान परम्परा के भारतीय छवि निर्माताओं ने अपनी कलात्मक क्षमताओं के अनुसार विस्तृत प्रतिमा विज्ञान और प्रतिमामिति (Iconography and Iconometry) का अनुपालन किया। नियमों ने उसे अपनी मजबूत नींव से ऊपर उठने दिया या उन्होंने उसे बांध दिया।'' उन्होंने कहा है कि–''भारतीय कला जीवन के लक्ष्यों को पूरा करने में मदद करती है, जिसका अन्तिम उद्देश्य मुक्ति है। भारत में, जीवन का अन्तिम लक्ष्य मुक्ति है और कला इस लक्ष्य को प्राप्त करने का एक साधन है। कला और योग एकान्त शिखर की ओर ले जाने वाले कई मार्गों की एक अधिरचना का निर्माण करते हैं, जहाँ पूर्ण की प्राप्ति आसन्न है।'' भारतीय कलाकृति का दर्शन करते समय, परम्परा से अनभिज्ञ दर्शक केवल उसका रूप देखता है, इसकी गुणवत्ता उसमें उस सम्पूर्ण जागरूकता के प्रति एक अस्पष्ट प्रतिक्रिया जगाती है, जो इसके निर्माण में लगी है।

अपने फिलाडेल्फिया संग्रहालय के लिये किये गये कार्य के दौरान उन्होंने भगवान शिव से सम्बन्धित कलात्मक वस्तुओं, कलाकृतियों और साहित्य का गम्भीर अध्ययन किया। इसके उपरान्त उन्होंने वेदों और पुराणों में दिये गये शिवत्व के तत्त्वमीमांसा, सत्तामीमांसा और मिथकों (Metaphysics, Ontology and Myths) पर अपने विचार दिये। इसी प्रकार उन्होंने बुद्ध-

प्रतिमा विज्ञान व प्राकृतिक चित्रण, प्रतीकों, गाँवों व जनजातियों की कलाओं आदि पर भी गम्भीर तथा महत्वपूर्ण लेख लिखते हुए प्रकाश डाला। उन्होंने तत्कालीन समय में भारतीय कला के लिये जो कार्य किये वह एक साधारण व्यक्ति के लिये सम्भव नहीं था। अपनी असाधारण प्रतिभा का परिचय देते हुए न केवल स्टैला कार्मरिच ने भारतीय कला की खोई हुई प्रतिष्ठा को पुनःस्थापित करने में अपना अमूल्य योगदान ही दिया अपितु उन्होंने भारतीय कला की सेवा में अपना सम्पूर्ण जीवन ही समर्पित कर दिया।ल

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डॉ. रीतिका गर्ग

सहायक आचार्य

चित्रकला विभाग

राजस्थान विश्वविद्यालय, जयपुर

reetikagarg101@gmail.com

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ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति की भूमिका एवं प्रभाव का अध्ययन

प्रियंका लोहिया • श्रीमती ललिता साहू

इस शोध पत्र के द्वारा शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति की भूमिका और प्रभाव का पता लगाने का प्रयास करेंगे। वर्तमान शैक्षणिक वातावरण में ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति के प्रचलन और अनुप्रयोग का व्यापक विश्लेषण करके, हम शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में इस तकनीक की उपयोगिता, छात्रों और शैक्षणिक संस्थानों पर इसके संभावित प्रभाव को समझने का प्रयास करेंगे। इस शोध पत्र के माध्यम से ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति के लाभों, चुनौतियों और भविष्य में संभावनाओं पर भी प्रकाश डालने का प्रयास करेंगे।

कुंजी शब्द : *ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति, ऑनलाइन लर्निंग प्लेटफॉर्म, उच्च शिक्षा, दूरस्थ शिक्षा, प्रौद्योगिकी अनुप्रयोग, छात्र सीखने का अनुभव, सर्वांगीण विकास, समावेशी शिक्षा*

परिचय

समाज के निर्माण एवं प्रत्येक वर्ग के सर्वांगीण विकास हेतु शिक्षा आवश्यक ही नहीं वरन् आज के वैश्विक अर्थव्यवस्था में उच्च प्रतियोगी वातावरण में आगे बढ़ने के लिए देश व समाज की सबसे महत्त्वपूर्ण आवश्यकता है। शिक्षा के जरिए व्यक्तित्व का विकास होता है। शिक्षा विद्यार्थी को जीवन में आने वाली हर कठिनाइयों का सामना करने हेतु समझ, ज्ञान एवं बुद्धि, कठिन तथ्यों को समझने, प्रश्न करने और प्रत्युत्तर देने का साहस देती है। वर्तमान समय में प्रौद्योगिकी क्रांति और तकनीकी विकास के कारण होने वाले लाभों से समाज के प्रत्येक वर्ग को जोड़ने के लिए एक

सुनियोजित, सुव्यवस्थित एवं समन्वित प्रयास की आवश्यकता है। किसी भी समाज का सामाजिक, आर्थिक एवं राजनीतिक उत्थान एवं कल्याण उस समाज के लोगों की सोच पर निर्भर करता है। अच्छे विचार, सोच एवं भाव केवल शिक्षा के माध्यम से ही प्राप्त होते हैं। शिक्षा ही व्यक्ति और समाज का सर्वांगीण विकास कर सकती है। दूरस्थ शिक्षा कोई नवीन तथ्य नहीं है, अपितु ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति ने इस शक्तिशाली शैक्षिक मॉडल में नई जान फूंक दी है। कोविड-19 महामारी के दौरान ऑनलाइन शिक्षा को अपनाने में तेज़ी ला दी है, जिससे कई संस्थानों को वर्चुअल कक्षाओं की ओर रुख़ करना पड़ा है।

उद्देश्य

1. इस शोध पत्र के द्वारा भारत में ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति के उद्भव, विकास व इसके विभिन्न स्वरूप को जानने का प्रयास करेंगे।
2. ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति के सकारात्मक व नकारात्मक पक्षों का अध्ययन करेंगे।
3. ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति के समक्ष चुनौतियों एवं इन चुनौतियों व समस्याओं के निपटान हेतु सुझाव पर प्रकाश डालेंगे।
4. भविष्य में ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति की संभावनाओं का अध्ययन करेंगे।

शोध प्रविधि

प्रस्तुत अध्ययन नई शिक्षा नीति 2020, विभिन्न जर्नल्स, पुस्तकों एवं वेबसाइट के द्वितीय स्रोतों पर आधारित है।

ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति की अवधारणा एवं विकास

ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति शिक्षा प्राप्त करने का एक ऐसा माध्यम है जिसमें शिक्षा प्राप्त करने वाला कहीं भी, किसी भी समय इंटरनेट द्वारा अध्ययन का कार्य कर सकता है। परंपरागत शिक्षा पद्धति में शिक्षक कक्षा रूम में भौतिक रूप से उपस्थित होकर ब्लैक बोर्ड का उपयोग कर विद्यार्थियों को शिक्षा प्रदान करता है और प्रत्यक्ष रूप से आचार-विचारों का संवाद होता

है। परंतु ऑनलाइन पद्धति में शिक्षा ग्रहण करने के लिए मोबाइल, लेपटॉप में गूगल मीट या माइक्रोसॉफ्ट टीम या अन्य एप का उपयोग कर घर बैठे विभिन्न व्याख्यानों को सुनकर शिक्षा अर्जित की जा सकती है।

1970 के दशक में कंप्यूटर की शुरुआत शैक्षिक प्रौद्योगिकी में महत्वपूर्ण मील का पत्थर साबित हुई। शुरुआती कंप्यूटर सिस्टम बड़े महंगे और बड़े थे, लेकिन धीरे-धीरे इसमें क्रांतिकारी परिवर्तन लाए गए। 1990 के दशक में इंटरनेट के आगमन से शिक्षा क्षेत्र में क्रांति ला दी गई। इससे ऑनलाइन शिक्षण प्लेटफार्म, वर्चुअल क्लासरूम और सहयोगी टूल बनाने में सक्षम बनाया। दूरस्थ शिक्षा अधिक सुलभ हो गया। छात्र दुनिया पर जानकारी संसाधनों का खजाना प्राप्त कर सकते थे। शिक्षण कार्य में संलग्न सभी शिक्षकों को इस तरह की शिक्षा देने के लिए एक कंप्यूटर या स्मार्टफोन की आवश्यकता होती है। ठीक इसी प्रकार विद्यार्थियों के पास भी इंटरनेट कनेक्शन के साथ-साथ कंप्यूटर या स्मार्ट फोन की आवश्यकता होती है। इस प्रकार की शिक्षण प्रणाली में घर बैठे अध्ययन-अध्यापन का कार्य सम्पन्न किया जाता है।

इस पद्धति में प्रत्येक शिक्षक जो अध्यापन का कार्य कर रहा होता है उसे अपने कंटेट या शिक्षण सामग्री को स्क्रीन शेयर के माध्यम से प्रदान करता है। इस शिक्षण पद्धति में प्रत्येक छात्र या छात्रा संवाद के माध्यम से अपने सवाल का जवाब पूछ सकते हैं तथा पूछे गए प्रश्नों का जवाब दिया जा सकता है। साथ-ही-साथ वे घर बैठकर पहले से संकलित विभिन्न शिक्षकों के वीडियो व्याख्यान, लिखित पाठ्य सामग्री या अन्य कंटेंट को संग्रहित करने के साथ-साथ अपने अन्य सहपाठी को प्रेषित करने का कार्य भी आसानी से कर सकता है। इस शिक्षण पद्धति में विद्यार्थी दुनिया के किसी भी कोने में बैठकर शिक्षा अर्जित कर सकता है जबकि, ऑफलाइन शिक्षा पद्धति में समस्त अधिगम को प्रत्यक्ष रूप एवं भौतिक रूप से उपस्थित होना आवश्यक है। ऑनलाइन शिक्षा पद्धति में भौतिक रूप से उपस्थित होने की अनिवार्यता नहीं होती है। राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति 2020 में शिक्षा व सिखाने में प्रौद्योगिकी के व्यापकता, वर्चुअल लैब ,डिजिटल रिपोजिटरी, ऑनलाइन मूल्यांकन ,डिजिटल शिक्षा को सम्मिलित किया गया है। यह ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति की महत्ता को इंगित करता है।

कुछ प्रचलित ऑनलाइन शिक्षण प्लेटफॉर्म है–

पीएम ई विद्या 17 मई 2020 को आत्मनिर्भर भारत अभियान के अंतर्गत पीएम ई विद्या नाम एप प्रारंभ किया गया ,जो शिक्षा में मल्टी मोड पहुंच को सक्षम बनाने से डिजिटल /ऑनलाइन शिक्षा संबंधित सभी प्रयासों के एकीकृत करती है। **मुक्त शैक्षिक संसाधनों का राष्ट्रीय भंडार** (NROER) यह भारत सरकार के शिक्षा मंत्रालय की एक पहल है जिसका उद्देश्य मुक्त शैक्षिक संस्थानों का एक केंद्रित भंडार बनाना है,यह शिक्षकों को पाठ्य पुस्तकों, वीडियो, ऑडियो संसाधनों और इंटरएक्टिव मॉड्यूल सहित डिजिटल शिक्षण सामग्री की एक विस्तृत श्रृंखला को साझा करने, सहयोग करने और उन तक पहुंचाने के लिए एक मंच प्रदान करता है। **भारतीय राष्ट्रीय डिजिटल लाइब्रेरी** NDLI एक डिजिटल लाइब्रेरी है, जो पाठ्य पुस्तकों ,विद्वानों के लेखों, शोध प्रबंधों और अन्य शैक्षिक सामग्रियों सहित शैक्षिक संस्थानों के विशाल संग्रह तक निशुल्क पहुंच प्रदान करती है। **स्वयं (SWAYAM) स्टडी वेब्स ऑफ़ एक्टिव लर्निंग फॉर यंग एस्पायरिंग माइंड्स** प्लेटफार्म में बड़े पैमाने पर ओपन ऑनलाइन कोर्स और अन्य डिजिटल लर्निंग रिसोर्स पोस्ट करता है। यह शिक्षार्थी को भारत भर के विभिन्न संस्थाओं और संगठनों से उच्च गुणवत्ता वाली शैक्षिक सामग्री तक पहुंचाने की अनुमति देता है और शिक्षक प्रबंधन प्राणियों के साथ संगतता सुनिश्चित करने के लिए खुले मानकों का पालन करता है। **दीक्षा DIKSHA (डिजिटल इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर फॉर नॉलेज शेयरिंग)** भारत में राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद (एनसीइआरटी) द्वारा विकसित प्लेटफॉर्म है जो शिक्षको, छात्रों और अभिभावकों को डिजिटल शिक्षण सामग्री की एक विस्तृत श्रृंखला तक पहुंच प्रदान करता है। दीक्षा 30 भाषाओं के साथ विश्व का सबसे बड़ा ई-लर्निंग प्लेटफॉर्म है। **स्वयं प्रभा** टीवी चैनल इसके माध्यम से कक्षा 1 से 12 तक के प्रति कक्षा के लिए ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति आरंभ की गई है। DAISY दृष्टि बाधित और श्रवण बाधितों के लिए डिजिटल रूप से सुलभ सूचना प्रणाली पर और एनआईओएस वेबसाइट यूट्यूब पर सांकेतिक भाषा में विशेष ही सामग्री विकसित की गई है। अन्य कुछ प्रचलित ऑनलाइन शिक्षण प्लेटफ़ॉर्म है Udemy, Coursera, BYJU'S,Simplilearn ब्रिलियंट, ऑर्ग, मास्टरक्ल, खान अकादमी, लिंक्डइन लर्निंग, स्किलशेयर, एडएक्स आदि।

ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति के सकारात्मक पक्ष

उपरोक्त विवेचन से यह स्पष्ट है आज शिक्षा का भविष्य तेजी से पारंपरिक कक्षाओं से डिजिटल स्क्रीन की ओर स्थानांतरित हो रहा है। प्रौद्योगिकी में प्रगति और सीखने की जरूरत से प्रेरित ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति ने शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में क्रांतिकारी परिवर्तन लाए हैं इसके सकारात्मक प्रभाव को जानने का प्रयास करते हैं—

1. लचीलापन और सुविधा : छात्र अपनी गति और सुविधा के अनुसार अपनी पढ़ाई का समय और स्थान चुन सकते हैं। ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति की सबसे उल्लेखनीय लाभ छात्र उसकी भौतिक सीमा व स्थान को पार करने की क्षमता है। भारत जैसे देश में जहां ग्रामीण क्षेत्र में अक्सर पर्याप्त शैक्षणिक बुनियादी कमी है, डिजिटल प्लेटफॉर्म जीवन रेखा प्रदान करते हैं छात्र अपने स्थान की परवाह किए बिना पाठ्यक्रम सामग्री और विशेषज्ञ निर्देश प्राप्त कर सकते हैं।

2. इंटरैक्टिव शिक्षण प्रणाली : वीडियो, एनिमेशन और क्विज़ जैसी इंटरैक्टिव सामग्री से सीखना अधिक आकर्षक और प्रभावी हो जाता है।

3. ज्ञान का विस्तृत संसाधन : छात्रों के पास पाठ्यक्रमों से संबंधित विभिन्न प्रकार के संसाधनों तक पहुंच होती है, जो उनके ज्ञान के आधार को बढ़ाता है।

4. आजीवन सीखना और माइक्रो लर्निंग डिजिटल युग में स्क्रीन अंतहीन सीखने के अवसरों के लिए पोर्टल के रूप में काम करती है। ऑनलाइन पाठ्यक्रमों, ट्यूटोरियल और शैक्षिक संसाधनों के भंडार को अनलॉक करते हैं निरंतर व्यक्तिगत विकास को बढ़ावा देते हैं। यहां तक की सबसे व्यस्त कार्यक्रम में भी शिक्षा को फिट किया जा सकता है। माइक्रो लर्निंग का उदय इस परिदृश्य में क्रांति लाता है संक्षिप्त केंद्रित मॉड्यूल में ज्ञान प्रदान करता है, जटिल तथ्यों को समझने योग्य विभाजित करके माइक्रो लर्निंग व्यक्तियों को अपनी गति से विशिष्ट उद्देश्यों को आगे बढ़ाने के लिए सशक्त बनाते हैं, जिससे आजीवन सीखना पहले से कहीं अधिक सुलभ और आकर्षक हो जाता है। पारंपरिक कक्षा के अलावा, छात्र ऑनलाइन पाठ्यक्रम और वेबिनार के माध्यम से अपने कौशल को लगातार अपडेट कर सकते हैं।

5. शैक्षणिक निरंतरता वैश्विक महामारी कोरोना के कारण सभी शैक्षणिक संस्थानों को बंद कर दिया गया ऐसी स्थिति में विद्यार्थियों को शिक्षा उपलब्ध ना कराने के स्थान पर ऑनलाइन शिक्षण प्लेटफॉर्म द्वारा उनके शैक्षणिक निरंतरता को बनाए रखा गया।

6. न्यूनतम आर्थिक लागत व संसाधनों की आवश्यकता एवं समय की बचत न्यूनतम संसाधनों में किस प्रकार शिक्षा को जारी रखा जा सकता है यह ऑनलाइन शिक्षण प्लेटफॉर्म ने सिद्ध किया अर्थात आर्थिक रूप से कमजोर व निम्न वर्गों के लिए ऑनलाइन शिक्षण प्लेटफॉर्म एक वरदान के रूप में दिखाई देती है। मात्र एक स्मार्ट फोन के द्वारा हम शिक्षा का लाभ उठा सकते हैं।

7. सुदूर दूरस्थ क्षेत्रों हेतु एक सार्थक प्लेटफार्म समान अवसरः दूरदराज के क्षेत्रों में रहने वाले छात्र भी शिक्षा प्राप्त कर सकते हैं, जिससे समावेशिता और समान अवसर को बढ़ावा मिलता है। भारत जैसे विविधता भरे देश में दूरस्थ वनांचल सुदूर क्षेत्रों में भी छात्र डिजिटल प्लेटफॉर्म के माध्यम से शैक्षणिक गतिविधियों से जुड जुडकर शिक्षा का लाभ उठा रहे है।

8. सूचना व संचार तकनीक से जुड़ने का सुअवसरः आज पूरा विश्व एक वैश्विक ग्राम' की अवधारणा को समाहित किए हुए है। निसदेह इस ऑनलाइन शिक्षण प्लेटफॉर्म ने ना केवल विद्यार्थियों अपितु उनके पूरे परिवार को भी सूचना तकनीकी के विभिन्न ससाधनों से जुड़ने का एक अवसर प्रदान किया। सूचना व संचार क्राति का उपयोग आज समय की माग है निसदेह ऑनलाइन शिक्षण प्लेटफॉर्म ने व्यक्तियों को सूचना एवं संचार संसाधनों से जुड़ने का एक बेहतरीन अवसर प्रदान किया

9. ICT प्रयोग से प्रशिक्षण स्तर में सकारात्मक वृद्धि अर्थात डिजिटल कौशल विकासः छात्र ऑनलाइन प्लेटफ़ॉर्म का उपयोग करना,और डिजिटल रूप से सहयोग करना सीखते हैं, जो उनके डिजिटल साक्षरता कौशल को बढ़ाते हैं। विभिन्न शैक्षणिक संस्थानों में शिक्षकों ने भी आईसीटी के प्रयोग को न केवल सीखा, बल्कि उनके अधिकतम प्रयोग भी किया। वर्तमान युग सूचना एवं संचार क्रांति का युग है और इस क्रांति से

शिक्षा का क्षेत्र भी अछूता नहीं है. इस प्रकार ऑनलाइन शिक्षण प्लेटफॉर्म ने आईसीटी के प्रयोग हेतु शिक्षण संस्थानों को भी एक सकारात्मक माहौल प्रदान किया।

10. पारिवारिक समन्वय सामंजस्य में वृद्धिः आईसीटी के प्रयोग के दौरान विद्यार्थियों को उनके माता-पिता से सहयोग प्राप्त हुआ अर्थात परिवार में माता-पिता व बच्चों के मध्य एक पारिवारिक सामंजस्य, प्रेम व समन्वय का वातावरण को संवर्धन मिला, जिससे पारिवारिक एवं सामाजिक व्यवस्था दोनों ही मजबूत हुई।

11. शिक्षकों व विद्यार्थियों के मध्य समन्वय व सामंजस्य पूर्ण वातावरण का निर्माणः ऑनलाइन शिक्षण प्लेटफॉर्म अंतर्गत शिक्षक विद्यार्थियों से प्रत्यक्ष संपर्क मे नहीं रह सकते। अतः इसी सपर्क को प्रभावी बनाने हेतु शिक्षकों और विद्यार्थियों ने एक दूसरे से निरंतर समन्वय एवं सामंजस्य पूर्ण वातावरण का निर्माण किया जिससे एक बेहतर शिक्षा का माहौल तैयार हुआ।

12. शिक्षा में नए अभिनव प्रयोग : नए प्रयोग व अनुसंधान प्रशासनिक स्तर पर शैक्षणिक संस्थानों व प्रशासनिक संस्थानों ने शिक्षा को और बेहतर बनाने हेतु शिक्षा में नए अभिनव प्रयोग किए तथा ऑनलाइन शिक्षण प्लेटफॉर्म के तकनीकों को अपनाने का प्रयास किया. निश्चित तौर पर एक नए प्रयोग व अनुसंधान से शैक्षणिक क्षेत्र में आशातीत सफलता प्राप्त हुई है और आगे भी ऐसी संभावना व्यक्त की जा सकती है।

13. शिक्षकों की भूमिका : अब शिक्षक सुविधाकर्ता, सलाहकार और मार्गदर्शक के रूप में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभा रहे हैं। छात्र डिजिटल संसाधनों को प्रभावित ढंग से नेविगेट करें। महत्वपूर्ण डिजिटल साक्षरता कौशल विकसित करें और डिजिटल क्षेत्र में नैतिक विचारों को समझें। शिक्षकों की भूमिका सामग्री वितरण से आगे बढ़कर डिजिटल शिक्षण वातावरण में सहयोग, आलोचनात्मक सोच और सामाजिक भावनात्मक कौशल को बढ़ावा देने तक फैली हुई है।

14. व्यक्तिगत शिक्षक अनुभव डिजिटल प्लेटफॉर्म छात्र की व्यक्तिगत जरूरत और प्राथमिकताओं के अनुरूप व्यक्तिगत शिक्षक के

अवसर प्रदान करते हैं। अनुकूली शिक्षण तकनीकी द्वारा छात्र के प्रदर्शन डाटा का विश्लेषण कर सकते है और लक्ष्य सिफारिश से अनुकूली आकलन और अनुकूलित शिक्षक मार्ग प्रदान कर सकती है। यह व्यक्तिगत दृष्टिकोण सीखने के परिणाम को अनुकूलित करने में मदद करता है और यह सुनिश्चित करता है कि छात्रों को वह सहायता मिले जिसकी उन्हें आवश्यकता है।

15. सहयोग और वैश्विक संबंध : डिजिटल स्क्रीन छात्रों को दुनिया भर के साथियों और विशेषज्ञों से जुड़ने और सहयोग करने में सक्षम बनाते हैं। वीडियो कॉन्फ्रेंसिंग, चर्चा मंचों और ऑनलाइन सहयोग उपकरणों के माध्यम से छात्र क्रॉस सांस्कृतिक आदान-प्रदान, परियोजना आधारित शिक्षा और सहयोगी समस्या समाधान में संलग्न हो सकते हैं।यह एक वैश्विक दृष्टिकोण को बढ़ावा देता है, संचार कौशल को बढ़ाता है और छात्रों को परस्पर जुड़ी दुनिया के लिए तैयार करता है।

16. डाटा संचालित अंतर्दृष्टि : डिजिटल प्लेटफॉर्म छात्र प्रदर्शन और सीखने के पैटर्न पर मूल्यवान डाटा कैप्चर करते हैं। शिक्षक आंकड़ों का लाभ उठाकर व्यक्तिगत और कक्षा की प्रगति के बारे में जानकारी प्राप्त कर सकते हैं। सुधार के क्षेत्र की पहचान कर सकते हैं और सूचित निर्देशात्मक निर्णय ले सकते हैं।

ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति के नकारात्मक पक्ष/चुनौतियां

ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति के संचालन में जहां आशातीत सफलता मिली है वही विभिन्न चुनौतियों व समस्याओं का सामना करना पड़ा, इन्हीं पर संक्षेप में उल्लेख इस प्रकार है—

1. बंद समूह का आभासः ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति से बंद समूह का वातावरण निर्मित हो गया, या यूं कहें बच्चे एक कैदखाने में कैद जैसे हो गए। यदि संयुक्त परिवारों को छोड दिया जाए, तो एकल परिवारों व नगरीय संस्कृति में तो बच्चों की स्थिति बिल्कुल कैद खाने जैसी हो गई, जिससे उनमें अवसाद व तनाव की स्थिति तथा शिक्षा के प्रति अरुचि स्पष्ट परिलक्षित होती है।

2. विद्यार्थियों का डिजिटली विभाजन : इस अकस्मात, अप्रत्याशित तकनीकी बदलाव के कारण बच्चे दो वर्गों में बंट गए। एक वर्ग जो डिजिटली संपन्न व दक्ष रहे एवं दूसरा वर्ग जो इनसे अछूते रहें। जिससे सम्पूर्ण समाज डिजिटल रूप से विभाजित हो रहा है, जिसे अन्य शब्दों मे तकनीकी असमानता के रूप में चिनहाँकित कर सकते है।

3. बुनियादी ढांचे व प्रौद्योगिकी की उपलब्धता की कमी भारत जैसे विकासशील देशों में तथा सामाजिक-आर्थिक आधार पर पिछड़े हुए, ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति दूभर प्रतीत होता है। यहां स्थिति 'डिजिटल हैव नॉट्स की तरह है अर्थात् वह क्षेत्र जो नेटवर्क व अन्य साइबर सुविधाओं से पिछड़े हैं। UDISE+2021-22 के डेटाबेस के अनुसार कुल 14.89 लाख स्कूलों में से लगभग 7.07 लाख अर्थात 47.5% स्कूल में कंप्यूटर की सुविधा है 5.05 लाख अर्थात 33.9% स्कूलों में इंटरनेट की सुविधा है और लगभग 2.22 लाख अर्थात पर 14.9% स्कूलों में स्मार्ट क्लास की सुविधा है। स्पष्टतः रिमोट एरिया व दूरस्थ अंचल क्षेत्रों में ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति एक कड़ी चुनौती है।

4. शारीरिक व मानसिक स्वास्थ्य के स्तर को बनाए रखना : स्क्रीन टाइम बढ़ने से स्वास्थ्य पर भी दुष्प्रभाव पड़ा है व मानसिक स्वास्थ्य संबंधी समस्याएं भी उत्पन्न हो रही। ई लर्निंग कार्यक्रम के द्वारा शिक्षण व्यवस्था से निःसदेह बच्चे स्वध्याय व एकल अध्ययन पर अधिक समय व्यतीत कर रहे है जिससे उनमें तनाव, अवसाद व मानसिक उग्रता जैसे प्रभाव स्पष्ट परिलक्षित हुए। अतः शारीरिक व मानसिक स्वास्थ्य के स्तर को बनाए रखना तथा बच्चों के मानसिक विकास को सुदृढ़ करना भी एक प्रमुख समस्या व चुनौती के रूप में उभरा।

5. शिक्षण प्रशिक्षण की कमी भारतीय शैक्षणिक संस्थानों की यदि बात की जाए, तो आज भी शिक्षा का एक बड़ा वर्ग आधुनिक तकनीकी सूचना व संचार से अनभिज्ञ है। ऐसे में इन्हें इस स्तर तक प्रशिक्षित करना, जिससे वे ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति का उपयोग कर सकें। निःसंदेह एक बहुत ही चुनौती भरा पूर्ण कार्य रहा। इसके अतिरिक्त कई ऐसे परिवार है जिनमें विद्यार्थी व उनके माता-पिता भी सूचना क्रांति की तकनीकी से अनभिज्ञ

अथवा कम सरोकार रखते हैं। ऐसे में ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति शिक्षा के समक्ष एक बहुत बडी खाई दिखाई देती है।

6. मध्याह्न भोजन कार्यक्रम के लाभ से वंचित भारत एक ग्रामीण अर्थव्यवस्था एवं ग्रामीण आबादी वाला देश है। शिक्षा के सुचारू संचालन तथा निम्न वर्गों तक भी शिक्षा की उपलब्धता तथा कुपोषण जैसी समस्या को दूर करने हेतु 'मध्याह्न भोजन कार्यक्रम' आरंभ किया गया। ऐसे में ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति द्वारा इस योजना का संचालन बाधित हुआ ,जिससे बहुत सारे विद्यार्थियों में शिक्षा के प्रति अरुचि उत्पन्न हुई तथा शारीरिक स्वास्थ्य पर भी प्रतिकूल प्रभाव पड़ा।

7. शैक्षणिक संस्थान व प्रशासनिक व्यवस्था में सामंजस्य की कमी शैक्षणिक संस्थानों और प्रशासनिक व्यवस्था में आपसी समन्वय व सामजस्य की कमी रही, जिसका खामियाजा विद्यार्थियों को भुगतना पड़ा था परिणाम स्वरूप ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति विभिन्न चुनौतियों का सामना करना पड़ा।

8. वित्तीय संसाधनों की कमी–''भारतीय बजट'' में बजट का एक बहुत कम हिस्सा शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में आवंटित किया जाता है. दूसरी ओर भारत जैसे विकासशील देश में सूचना और क्रांति तकनीकी पहुंच आज भी दूरस्थ या आम व्यक्ति की पहुंच से बाहर है. स्पष्टता इस ऑनलाइन शिक्षा पद्धति के अंतर्गत शिक्षा प्रदान करने हेतु जिस तकनीक एवं उपकरण आवश्यक थे, उस हेतु वित्तीय संसाधनों को पूरा करना भी एक चुनौतीपूर्ण है कार्य है।

9. ऑनलाइन शिक्षण सामग्री की विश्वसनीयता और गुणवत्ता सुनिश्चित करने के लिए अभी भी प्रयास किए जाने हैं। इंटरनेट पर उपलब्ध जानकारी की बाढ़ के कारण भरोसेमंद स्रोतों का चयन और सत्यापन करना महत्वपूर्ण है। शैक्षिक मानकों को बनाए रखने के लिए शिक्षकों और कानून निर्माता को गुणवत्ता नियंत्रण और सामग्री निगरानी के लिए मजबूत प्रक्रिया लागू करने की आवश्यकता है।

प्रयास/सुझाव

ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति एक व्यवहारिक व सहायक विकल्प हो

सकता है परंतु इसके लिए आवश्यक है कि कुछ उपाय एवं शर्तों का पालन करे सक्षिप्त में सुझाव इस प्रकार है–

1. शैक्षणिक संस्थानों में पर्याप्त व्यवस्था व आवश्यक नीतियों का निर्माण कर उनका पालन किया जाए।

2. ऑनलाइन शिक्षण प्लेटफॉर्म की व्यवस्था मुहैया कराने के लिए पर्याप्त सार्वजनिक वित्तीय संसाधनों का आवंटन हो, विशेष तौर पर आर्थिक रूप से कमजोर छात्रों के लिए।

3. पूरे देश में मजबूत ब्रॉडबैंड व्यवस्था स्थापित किए जाए इसके साथ पाठ्यक्रम बच्चों तक पहुंचाने के लिए ब्रॉडकास्ट तकनीकों जैसे रेडियो ,टीवी का सुचारू संचालन हो।

4. महानगरों के साथ ही छोटे ग्रामीण अंचल क्षेत्रों के शैक्षणिक सस्थानों को आधुनिक आईसीटी सुविधाओं से लैस किया जाए।

5. दिव्यांग विद्यार्थियों के लिए आवश्यक नीतियां एवं व्यवस्थाए सुनिश्चित की जाए।

6. ऑनलाइन शिक्षण प्लेटफॉर्म / डिजिटल प्लेटफॉर्म के उपयोग हेतु शिक्षकों को समय-समय पर पर्याप्त प्रशिक्षण दिया जाए।

7. ऑनलाइन शिक्षण प्लेटफॉर्म/ डिजिटल प्लेटफॉर्म पर अंग्रेजी, हिंदी के साथ ही क्षेत्रीय भाषा में पढ़ाई की व्यवस्था को प्रोत्साहित किया जाए।

8. छात्रों के समान सीखने के अधिकार का सम्मान करते हुए उन्हें पर्याप्त एवं समुचित संसाधन उपलब्ध कराएं जाना सुनिश्चित किया जाए।

9. केंद्रीय ऑनलाइन शिक्षण हेतु आवश्यक व्यवस्था किया जाए।

10. सम्पूर्ण देश में एक जैसा पाठ्यक्रम लागू करने हेतु नीति निर्माण किया जाए।जिससे आनलाइन पाठ्य सामग्री प्राप्त करने मे विद्यार्थियों को सुविधा हो।

11. सार्वजनिक निजी भागीदारी मॉडल के सहयोग से ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति को बेहतर बनाने में मदद मिल सकती है वे ग्रामीण स्कूलों की मदद के लिए फंड,तकनीक और मानव संसाधन दे सकते हैं।

12. सामुदायिक शिक्षण केंद्र के द्वारा जहां छात्र स्कूल के बाहर जाकर सीख सके, यह मददगार हो सकते हैं। इन स्थानों पर कंप्यूटर, इंटरनेट सुविधा हो, जिससे छात्र ऑनलाइन सीख सके।

13. भारत विविधताओं से परिपूर्ण देश है अतः आवश्यक है कि अध्ययन सामग्री व माध्यम उनकी संस्कृति व भाषा के अनुकूल हो तथा उनकी स्थानीय भाषा में पाठ्यक्रम उपलब्ध हो जिससे वह ज्यादा सरलता से सिख सकें।

निष्कर्ष

विविधता से परिपूर्ण भारत में ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति समावेशी व लोकतान्त्रिक शिक्षा की दिशा में एक बहुत ही सकारात्मक प्रयास है। इसके द्वारा दूरस्थ व समाज के निचले वर्ग भी बहुत ही न्यूनतम संसाधनों से तकनीकी शिक्षा व उच्च शिक्षा से जुड़ सकते हैं। ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति के कारण पूरे देश के छात्रों के लिए उच्च गुणवत्ता वाले शैक्षणिक संस्थानों तक पहुंच एवं व्याख्यान–अध्ययन सामग्री और इंटरएक्टिव की उपलब्धता स्मार्टफोन और उचित मूल्य वाले इंटरनेट के व्यापक उपयोग से संभव हुई, जिससे शिक्षा के संदर्भ में सीखने के समान अवसर उपलब्ध हो पाया है। डिजिटल शिक्षा से विद्यार्थियों की अविष्कार और मौलिकता को बढ़ावा मिला है। इंटरएक्टिव सिमुलेशन मल्टीमीडिया, सूचना और वर्चुअल प्रयोगशाला द्वारा विवेचनात्मक सोच और समस्या समाधान संबंधी क्षमताओं को बढ़ावा देने वाले इमर्शन लर्निंग अवसर प्रदान किए जाते हैं। यद्यपि इस क्षेत्र में कुछ तकनीकी चुनौतियां व समस्याएं हैं, परंतु इस दिशा में आज बहुत तेजी से सकारात्मक प्रयास किया जा रहे हैं। आज भारत में हर युवा वर्ग जो शिक्षा से जुड़े हैं वह प्रत्यक्ष या अप्रत्यक्ष रूप से ऑनलाइन शिक्षण पद्धति का उपयोग कर रहे हैं।

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प्रियंका लोहिया
अतिथि व्याख्याता (समाजशास्त्र)
शासकीय दिग्विजय स्वशासी
स्नातकोत्तर महाविद्यालय,
राजनांदगांव (छ.ग.)
मो. न. 6261861395

श्रीमती ललिता साहू
सहायक प्राध्यापक (समाजशास्त्र)
शासकीय दिग्विजय स्वशासी
स्नातकोत्तर महाविद्यालय,
राजनांदगांव (छ.ग.)
मो न 9131589509
lalita.24sahuls@gmail.com

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सतत विकास लक्ष्यों (SDG) की प्राप्ति की दिशा में वैश्विक पर्यावरणीय मुद्दों के समाजशास्त्रीय आयामों पर बॉलीवुड फिल्मों का एक अध्ययन

● प्रो. (डॉ.) रमेश कुमार शर्मा

सतत विकास लक्ष्य (SDGs) एक वैश्विक एजेंडा है जिसे 2015 में संयुक्त राष्ट्र द्वारा इस संकल्प के साथ अपनाया गया की आगामी पंद्रह वर्षों यानी 2030 तक वैश्विक स्तर पर शिक्षा, स्वास्थ्य, रोजगार, गरीबी, असमानता और जलवायु परिवर्तन जैसी समस्याओं को समाप्त करना है। इस संकल्प की सिद्धि के लिए संयुक्त राष्ट्र और स्थानीय सरकारों के प्रयासों को जन जन तक पहुंचने और प्रेरित करने में सुचना और संचार के जन माध्यमों की भूमिका अत्यंत महत्त्व पूर्ण है1 भारत में सिनेमा अथवा फिल्म का सूचना और जन माध्यमों का सबसे प्रचलित और आकर्षक माध्यम होने कारण इसकी भूमिका को केंद्र में रखकर अध्ययन किया गया है। बॉलीवुड भारत का सबसे बड़ा हिंदी फिल्म उद्योग है, जिसे हिंदी सिनेमा के रूप में भी जाना जाता है। यह शोध पत्र बॉलीवुड फिल्मों के माध्यम से वैश्विक पर्यावरणीय मुद्दों के समाजशास्त्रीय आयामों की समीक्षा करता है और भारत में सतत विकास लक्ष्यों (SDGs) को प्राप्त करने में इन फिल्मों की भूमिका को उजागर करता है। कुछ चुनिंदा फिल्मों के माध्यम से पर्यावरणीय समस्याओं, सामाजिक दृष्टिकोण और जनता के व्यवहार में बदलाव की दिशा में योगदान का अध्ययन किया गया है। इस शोध का मुख्य उद्देश्य है कि यह पता लगाया जाए कि किस प्रकार बॉलीवुड फिल्मों ने पर्यावरणीय मुद्दों को समाजशास्त्रीय परिप्रेक्ष्य में प्रस्तुत किया और समाज में जागरूकता बढ़ाई।

विशिष्ट शब्द : सतत विकास लक्ष्य (SDGs), संयुक्त राष्ट्र, बॉलीवुड, पर्यावरण, सूचना, सिनेमा

प्रस्तावना

सतत विकास लक्ष्य (SDGs) कुल 17 लक्ष्यों और 169 उपलक्ष्यों के माध्यम से आर्थिक विकास, सामाजिक न्याय, और पर्यावरण संरक्षण और उसमें संतुलन स्थापित करने का एक संकल्प है जिसे संयुक्त राष्ट्र द्वारा 2015 अनुमोदित किए गया और 2030 तक हासिल करने की योजना बनाई गई है। इस संकल्प में जिन 17 लक्ष्यों को चिन्हित किया गया उनका विवरण निम्नवत हैः

1. गरीबी का उन्मूलनः सभी जगहों पर गरीबी को समाप्त करना।
2. भूख का उन्मूलनः खाद्य सुरक्षा और पोषण को सुनिश्चित करना, और स्थायी कृषि का विकास करना।
3. स्वास्थ्य और कल्याणः सभी के लिए स्वस्थ जीवन और कल्याण को बढ़ावा देना।
4. गुणवत्ता शिक्षाः सभी के लिए समावेशी और गुणवत्ता वाली शिक्षा प्राप्त करना और जीवनभर के लिए सीखने के अवसर प्रदान करना।
5. लैंगिक समानताः महिलाओं और लड़कियों के अधिकारों को सशक्त बनाना और लैंगिक समानता को प्राप्त करना।
6. स्वच्छ पानी और स्वच्छताः सभी के लिए जल और स्वच्छता की उपलब्धता सुनिश्चित करना।
7. सस्ती और स्वच्छ ऊर्जाः सभी के लिए सस्ती, विश्वसनीय, टिकाऊ और आधुनिक ऊर्जा की पहुँच सुनिश्चित करना।
8. सामाजिक और आर्थिक विकासः समावेशी, टिकाऊ और सतत आर्थिक विकास को बढ़ावा देना और पूर्ण और उत्पादक रोजगार और सभी के लिए काम करना।
9. औद्योगीकरण, नवाचार और अवसंरचनाः टिकाऊ औद्योगीकरण और नवाचार को बढ़ावा देना।

10. असमानता में कमीः देशों के भीतर और देशों के बीच असमानता को कम करना।

11. सतत शहर और समुदायः सतत शहरों और मानव बस्तियों का निर्माण करना।

12. उपयोग और उत्पादन के पैटर्न का स्थायित्वः टिकाऊ उपभोग और उत्पादन के पैटर्न को सुनिश्चित करना।

13. जलवायु परिवर्तन के विरुद्ध कार्रवाईः जलवायु परिवर्तन और उसके प्रभावों के खिलाफ तात्कालिक कार्रवाई करना।

14. जल के पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र का संरक्षणः महासागरों, समुद्रों और समुद्री संसाधनों का सतत उपयोग करना।

15. स्थलीय पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र का संरक्षणः भूमि और पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र का संरक्षण करना, वनों की रक्षा करना और भूमि में अवनति को रोकना।

16. शांतिपूर्ण और समावेशी समाजः शांतिपूर्ण और समावेशी समाज का निर्माण करना, न्याय की उपलब्धता सुनिश्चित करना और संस्थाओं का निर्माण करना।

17. सहयोग के लिए साझेदारीः वैश्विक स्तर पर सतत विकास को प्राप्त करने के लिए सहयोग बढ़ाना।

Image source: https://sdgs.un.org/goals

SDGs का मुख्य उद्देश्य यह सुनिश्चित करना है कि सभी लोग, चाहे वे किसी भी पृष्ठभूमि से हों, एक बेहतर जीवन जी सकें तथा प्राकृतिक संसाधनों और पर्यावरण का समुचित उपयोग के साथ साथ उसमें संतुलन बना रहे। इन लक्ष्यों (SDGs) का समग्र दृष्टिकोण विकास के लिए समावेशी और टिकाऊ तरीकों को अपनाने पर जोर देता है, जिससे भविष्य की पीढ़ियों के लिए एक बेहतर और अधिक सुरक्षित दुनिया का निर्माण किया जा सके।

पर्यावरणीय मुद्दे तथा समाजशास्त्रीय दृष्टिकोण : साहित्य समीक्षा

भारत एक बहुसांस्कृतिक और बहुधार्मिक देश है, परन्तु यहाँ लगभग सभी धर्मों की मान्यताओं में प्रकृति और पर्यावरण के प्रति गहरी आस्था पाई जाती है। हिन्दू धर्म में, नदियों, पेड़ों और पर्वतों की पूजा की जाती है, जबकि बौद्ध धर्म और जैन धर्म में अहिंसा और पर्यावरण की रक्षा पर बल दिया जाता है। इस धार्मिक दृष्टिकोण के कारण लोगों में पर्यावरण के संरक्षण की भावना स्वाभाविक रूप से विद्यमान रहती है। समाजशास्त्रीय दृष्टिकोण से भी अगर हम अवलोकन करें तो हमें ज्ञात होता है की हमारे पूर्वज और मनीषी सदैव सामुदायिक विकास और स्थानीय संसाधनों के उचित उपयोग और आर्थिक विकास के साथ-साथ समाज में समानता और समरसता पर भी जोर देने की बात करते थे जो कि पर्यावरणीय संतुलन और सतत विकास के लिए महत्वपूर्ण है।

वैश्विक पर्यावरणीय मुद्दों के समाजशास्त्रीय आयामों पर चर्चा करते हुए, यह समझना आवश्यक है कि पर्यावरण और समाज के बीच घनिष्ठ संबंध है। भारत में सतत विकास लक्ष्यों (SDGs) की प्राप्ति के लिए यह ज़रूरी है कि हम सामाजिक संरचनाओं, आर्थिक असमानताओं और सांस्कृतिक कारकों को ध्यान में रखें। पर्यावरण के मुद्दों पर समाजशास्त्रीय दृष्टिकोण से संबंधित कुछ प्रकाशनों जैसे पुस्तकों और शोध पत्रों की संछिप्त समीक्षा इस प्रकार है :

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माधव गाडगिल और रामचंद्र गूह की पुस्तक 'इकोलॉजी एंड इक्विटी' में

समकालीन भारत में प्रकृति के उपयोग और दुरुपयोग पर ध्यान केंद्रित किया गया है। लेखक यह तर्क करते हैं कि पर्यावरणीय असमानताओं के बढ़ते स्तर के साथ-साथ आर्थिक विकास की प्रक्रिया में सामाजित और पारिस्थितिकीय न्याय की कमी स्पष्ट होती जा रही है। यह पुस्तक भारत में पारिस्थितिकी और सामाजिक न्याय के बीच के संबंधों की जटिलताओं को उजागर करती है, विशेष रूप से आदिवासी और गरीब समुदायों पर इसके प्रभाव को। गाडगिल और गूह का यह अध्ययन न केवल पर्यावरणीय स्थिरता के लिए महत्वपूर्ण है, बल्कि यह सामाजिक और आर्थिक न्याय के दृष्टिकोण से भी आवश्यक है।

2. Agarwal, Anil & Narain, Sunita (1997). Dying Wisdom: Rise, Fall and Potential of India's Traditional Water Harvesting Systems.

Agarwal & Narain (1997) द्वारा प्रकाशित पुस्तक 'Dying Wisdom : Rise, Fall and Potential of India's Traditional Water Harvesting Systems.' भारत के पारंपरिक जल संचयन प्रणालियों के उत्थान, पतन और संभावनाओं का गहन विश्लेषण प्रस्तुत करती है। यह पुस्तक दर्शाती है कि किस प्रकार जल संकट के संदर्भ में पारंपरिक ज्ञान और प्रथाओं को भुलाया जा रहा है। लेखक बताते हैं कि इन पारंपरिक प्रणालियों का संरक्षण और पुनर्स्थापन न केवल जल संसाधनों के प्रबंधन के लिए आवश्यक है, बल्कि यह स्थानीय समुदायों के लिए भी जीवनदायिनी साबित हो सकता है। इस अध्ययन में जल प्रबंधन की पारंपरिक विधियों की पुनर्वापसी की आवश्यकता पर जोर दिया गया है।

3. Guha, Ramachandra & Martinez—Alier, Joan (1998). Varieties of Environmentalism: Essays North and South.

गुहा और मार्टिनेज-एलियेर (1998) की पुस्तक ''Varieties of Environmentalism'' में उत्तरी और दक्षिणी देशों के पर्यावरणीय विचारों की तुलना की गई है। यह पुस्तक विभिन्न सांस्कृतिक और सामाजिक संदर्भों में पर्यावरणीय चिंताओं की विविधता को उजागर करती है, जिसमें विकास और पर्यावरण संरक्षण के बीच के जटिल संबंधों का विश्लेषण किया गया है। लेखक यह तर्क करते हैं कि पर्यावरणीय मुद्दे केवल वैश्विक नहीं हैं,

बल्कि उनके स्थानीय और ऐतिहासिक संदर्भ भी महत्वपूर्ण हैं। यह अध्ययन पर्यावरणीय सक्रियता के विभिन्न रूपों को समझने में सहायक है, जो विभिन्न देशों की विशेष परिस्थितियों पर निर्भर करते हैं।

4. Berkes, Fikret (2008). Sacred Ecology.

फिकरेट बर्केस (2008) की ''Sacred Ecology'' में पारिस्थितिकी और स्थानीय ज्ञान के बीच के संबंधों का अध्ययन किया गया है। लेखक यह स्पष्ट करते हैं कि पारंपरिक समुदायों का प्रकृति के प्रति संबंध एक आध्यात्मिक दृष्टिकोण से जुड़ा हुआ है, जो पारिस्थितिकीय संतुलन बनाए रखने में मदद करता है। बर्केस का यह काम दिखाता है कि कैसे स्थानीय ज्ञान और अभ्यास, विशेष रूप से पवित्र स्थलों और सांस्कृतिक मान्यताओं के संदर्भ में, पारिस्थितिकी और संरक्षण के लिए महत्वपूर्ण हो सकते हैं। यह अध्ययन पारिस्थितिकी और संस्कृति के संयोग को समझने में एक महत्वपूर्ण योगदान है।

5. IPCC (2014). Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability.

आईपीसीसी (2014) की ''जलवायु परिवर्तन 2014 : प्रभाव, अनुकूलन, और संवेदनशीलता'' रिपोर्ट जलवायु परिवर्तन के व्यापक प्रभावों और मानव समाज पर इसके दीर्घकालिक परिणामों का विश्लेषण करती है। यह रिपोर्ट बताती है कि जलवायु परिवर्तन न केवल पर्यावरणीय बल्कि आर्थिक और सामाजिक रूप से भी विनाशकारी हो सकता है, खासकर उन क्षेत्रों में जहां लोगों की संवेदनशीलता अधिक है। इसमें अनुकूलन की रणनीतियों पर जोर दिया गया है, जो स्थानीय समुदायों को जलवायु परिवर्तन के प्रभावों से बचने और अपने जीवन को सुरक्षित रखने में मदद कर सकती हैं। रिपोर्ट यह दर्शाती है कि वैश्विक और स्थानीय स्तर पर सहयोग के बिना जलवायु परिवर्तन से निपटना असंभव है।

6. Shiva, Vandana (2016). Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Development

वंदना शिवा की पुस्तक ''स्टेइंग अलाइव : वुमेन, इकोलॉजी एंड डेवलपमेंट'' में महिलाओं की भूमिका और पारिस्थितिकी के बीच के गहरे

संबंधों की चर्चा की गई है। शिवा का तर्क है कि महिलाओं ने पारिस्थितिकीय स्थिरता को बनाए रखने में महत्वपूर्ण योगदान दिया है, विशेष रूप से ग्रामीण और कृषि आधारित समुदायों में। वह इस बात पर जोर देती हैं कि विकास के मौजूदा मॉडल अक्सर महिलाओं की आवाज़ और उनके ज्ञान को नजरअंदाज करते हैं, जो कि पारिस्थितिकी और समाज के लिए हानिकारक होता है। इस प्रकार, पुस्तक यह दिखाती है कि यदि हम सच में स्थायी विकास की दिशा में आगे बढ़ना चाहते हैं, तो हमें महिलाओं के पारंपरिक ज्ञान और अनुभव को सम्मानित करना और उन्हें निर्णय लेने की प्रक्रिया में शामिल करना आवश्यक है।

7. Singh, R. (2020). "Sustainable Development Goals and Sociological Perspectives." Journal of Environmental Sociology

Journal of Environmental Sociology में प्रकाशित R. Singh का लेख ''Sustainable Development Goals and Sociological Perspectives'' पर्यावरणीय समाजशास्त्र की दृष्टि से स्थायी विकास लक्ष्यों का विश्लेषण करता है। इस लेख में बताया गया है कि कैसे समाजशास्त्र का दृष्टिकोण सामाजिक, आर्थिक और पर्यावरणीय कारकों के बीच जटिल अंतर्संबंधों को समझने में मदद कर सकता है। सिंह इस बात पर जोर देते हैं कि स्थायी विकास लक्ष्यों को प्राप्त करने के लिए हमें न केवल तकनीकी समाधान की आवश्यकता है, बल्कि सामाजिक संरचनाओं और प्रक्रियाओं के संदर्भ में भी एक व्यापक दृष्टिकोण अपनाने की आवश्यकता है। इस प्रकार, यह लेख सामाजिक न्याय, सामुदायिक भागीदारी और पर्यावरणीय स्थिरता के महत्व को रेखांकित करता है।

उपर्युक्त पुस्तकों और शोध पत्रों की समीक्षा के आधार पर हम यह कह सकते हैं की, वैश्विक पर्यावरणीय मुद्दों का समाजशास्त्रीय दृष्टिकोण भारत के सतत विकास लक्ष्यों को प्राप्त करने में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभा सकता है। इसके लिए जरूरी है कि हम पर्यावरणीय समस्याओं के सामाजिक, आर्थिक, और सांस्कृतिक प्रभावों को समझें और समावेशी नीतियों के माध्यम से सभी वर्गों के लिए समान अवसर और न्याय सुनिश्चित करें। इस प्रकार, सतत विकास लक्ष्यों की प्राप्ति के लिए समाजशास्त्रीय दृष्टिकोण से पर्यावरणीय

मुद्दों को समझना और उनके समाधान के लिए सामुदायिक और सामाजिक ढांचे में बदलाव आवश्यक है।

अध्ययन का उद्देश्य

बॉलीवुड, भारत की सबसे प्रचलित हिंदी फिल्म इंडस्ट्री होने के साथ-साथ सामाजिक संदेशों को प्रभावी ढंग से प्रस्तुत करने का एक सशक्त साधन भी है। जिसने समय-समय पर सामाजिक मुद्दों को उठाने में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई है। प्रस्तुत अध्ययन का उद्देश्य पर्यावरणीय मुद्दों पर केंद्रित बॉलीवुड हिंदी फिल्मों का समाजशास्त्रीय दृष्टिकोण से विश्लेषण करना है, जिनका उद्देश्य पर्यावरण के प्रति समाज में जागरूकता बढ़ाने और उनके व्यवहार में परिवर्तन लाने का प्रयास किया गया है।

बॉलीवुड फिल्मों में पर्यावरणीय मुद्दे तथा समाजशास्त्रीय दृष्टिकोण

सूचना एवं जन संचार तथा मनोरंजन के क्षेत्र में बॉलीवुड (हिंदी फिल्म इंडस्ट्री) का प्रमुख स्थान है, यह भारत की सबसे प्रचलित एवं प्रमुख फिल्म इंडस्ट्री होने के साथ-साथ दुनिया की सबसे बड़ी फिल्म इंडस्ट्री में से एक है।बॉलीवुड की शुरुआत 1913 में दादा साहेब फाल्के के द्वारा निर्मित पहली मूक फिल्म राजा हरिश्चंद्र से हुई थी। आज लगभग सौ वर्षों से अधिक का सफर तय कर चुकी बॉलीवुड इंडस्ट्री में हर साल हज़ारों फिल्में बनती हैं, जो न केवल भारत में, बल्कि विदेशों में भी रिलीज़ होती हैं। बॉलीवुड फिल्मों का निर्यात कई देशों में होता है, विशेषकर मध्य-पूर्व, अमेरिका, ब्रिटेन और दक्षिण-पूर्व एशिया में। बॉलीवुड भारतीय अर्थव्यवस्था का एक महत्वपूर्ण हिस्सा होने के साथ पर्यटन को भी बढ़ावा देती है जिससे विदेशी दर्शक भी भारतीय संस्कृति और परंपराओं के प्रति आकर्षित होते हैं। बॉलीवुड का भारतीय समाज और जीवनशैली पर गहरा प्रभाव है। इसने मनोरंजन के अलावा सामाजिक, धार्मिक, सांस्कृतिक, आर्थिक और पर्यावरण से संबंधित मुद्दों पर जागरूकता बढ़ाने के लिए अत्यंत महत्त्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई है।

सतत विकास लक्ष्यों (SDGs) की प्राप्ति के लिए बॉलीवुड फिल्मों के समाजशास्त्रीय दृटिकोण की बात करें तो हम फिल्मो के माध्यम से सामाजिक जागरूकता का निर्माण, संवेदनशीलता और नैतिकता का विकास, सामुदायिक भागीदारी और समाधान, पर्यावरणीय न्याय, व्यक्तिगत जिम्मेदारी का बोध

और नीति निर्माताओं पर प्रभाव का आकलन करते हैं l पर्यावरणीय मुद्दों पर जागरूकता फैलाने के लिए बॉलीवुड हिंदी फिल्मों ने महत्वपूर्ण योगदान दिया है। प्रदूषण, जल संरक्षण, वन्यजीव संरक्षण, जलवायु परिवर्तन और पर्यावरण संतुलन जैसे विषयों को कहानी के केंद्र में रखकर कई फिल्मों का निर्माण किया है। अतः पर्यावरणीय समस्याओं का समाजशास्त्रीय अध्ययन समझने के लिए कुछ हिंदी फिल्मों का विश्लेषण प्रस्तुत हैः

1. SDG 13 और 15 को केंद्र में रखकर बॉलीवूड निर्देशक अभिषेक कपूर ने अभिनेता सुशांत सिंह राजपूत और अभिनेत्री सारा अली खान को लेकर 2013 में केदारनाथ में आयी भयंकर बाढ़ और भूस्खलन की विभीषिका को एक प्रेम कहानी के माध्यम से दर्शाया गया है, फिल्म 'केदारनाथ' के केंद्र में एक बड़ा पर्यावरणीय मुद्दा है। तीर्थयात्रा के दौरान पर्यटन के बढ़ते दबाव, अव्यवस्थित विकास, और पर्यावरण के प्रति लापरवाह दृष्टिकोण को दर्शाया गया है, जिससे प्राकृतिक आपदाओं का खतरा और भी बढ़ जाता है। बी बी सी के हवाले से प्रकाशित एक रिपोर्ट के अनुसार इस भयावह त्रासदी में हजारों लोगों की मृत्यु हो गयी और कुछ का तो अता पता ही नहीं लग पाया, वैसे तो यह प्राकृतिक आपदा थी परन्तु भारी धन-जन की हानि के पीछे अव्यस्थित जनसंख्या वृद्धि और पहाड़ों को तोड़कर किया गया अव्यवस्थित निर्माण हैं। फिल्म में जलवायु परिवर्तन और मानव गतिविधियों के कारण उत्पन्न पर्यावरणीय असंतुलन को अप्रत्यक्ष रूप से दिखाया गया है।

फिल्म में दिखाया गया है कि किस तरह मानवीय गतिविधियों, जैसे अधिक निर्माण कार्य और जंगलों की कटाई ने क्षेत्र की पारिस्थितिकी को प्रभावित किया है। इन गतिविधियों ने नदियों की धाराओं में अवरोध पैदा किया, जिसके परिणामस्वरूप 2013 की आपदा और भी विनाशकारी साबित हुई। 'केदारनाथ' इस बात को भी उजागर करती है कि किस प्रकार पर्वतीय क्षेत्रों में अतिवृष्टि और भूस्खलन जैसी घटनाएं जलवायु परिवर्तन से जुड़ी हुई हैं। यह प्राकृतिक आपदा हमारे लिए एक चेतावनी के रूप में देखी जा सकती है कि अगर हम जलवायु परिवर्तन और पर्यावरण संरक्षण की ओर ध्यान नहीं देंगे, तो इस तरह की आपदाएं बार-बार होंगी। फिल्म 'केदारनाथ'

पर्यावरणीय असंतुलन के बीच मानवीय रिश्तों और संघर्षों को दिखाने का प्रयास करती है, जो यह संदेश देती है कि प्रकृति के साथ तालमेल बनाए रखना अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण है।

2. SDG 13: जलवायु परिवर्तन के प्रभावों को उजागर करने और इससे निपटने के लिए 2017 में कड़वी हवा' एक संवेदनशील और गंभीर फिल्म है जो जलवायु परिवर्तन और इसके परिणामस्वरूप उत्पन्न होने वाले संकटों को उजागर करती है। फिल्म की कहानी बुंदेलखंड और ओडिशा के सूखाग्रस्त और बाढ़ प्रभावित इलाकों के इर्द-गिर्द घूमती है, जहाँ किसानों का जीवन जलवायु असंतुलन से बुरी तरह प्रभावित हो रहा है। नील माधब पांडा द्वारा निर्देशित यह फिल्म पर्यावरण के दो बड़े मुद्दों जलवायु में आ रहे बदलाव और जल स्तर में असंतुलन और सूखा या बाढ़ जैसी गंभीर समस्याओं को दर्शाती है, फिल्म की पृष्ठभूमि उत्तर प्रदेश के बुंदेलखंड और उड़ीसा के तटीय इलाकों पर केंद्रीय है दोनों क्षेत्रों में पर्यावरणीय असंतुलन होने के कारण जहाँ बुंदेलखंड के लोग कम बरसात होने और जल स्तर घटने की समस्या से जूझ रहे हैं वही उड़ीसा के तटीय इलाके के लोग अत्यधिक वर्षा, बाढ़ और जल स्तर बढ़ने से परेशान दिखाए गए हैं। यह फिल्म पूरे देश में जारी मौसमी बदलाव और उसके दुष्प्रभाव को दर्शाने के साथ साथ किसानों की आत्महत्या जैसे ज्वलंत मुद्दों को सामने लाती है। यह फिल्म न सिर्फ एक गंभीर सामाजिक और पर्यावरणीय मुद्दे को दर्शाती है बल्कि यह सन्देश भी देती है की समय रहते अगर इस गंभीर समस्या से हम सचेत नहीं होंगें तो पूरे विश्व को जलवायु परिवर्तन के गंभीर परिणामों को झेलना होगा।

3 कांतारा ऋषभ शेट्टी द्वारा निर्देशित एक कन्नड़ फिल्म है जिसको हिंदी भाषा में डब करके प्रदर्शित किया गया है, कांतारा कन्नड़ भाषा का शब्द है जिसका एक अर्थ जंगल होता है। कर्नाटक में जंगल के देवता को कांतारे कहा जाता है। यह फिल्म SDG 15 स्थलीय पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र का संरक्षण करना, वनों की रक्षा करना और भूमि में अवनति को रोकना तथा SDG 16 शांतिपूर्ण और समावेशी समाज पर आधारित है, 'कांतारा' फिल्म की कहानी का मूल विषय

वन और प्राकृतिक संसाधनों का संरक्षण है, जलवायु परिवर्तन और पर्यावरणीय दृष्टिकोण से, फिल्म वन संसाधनों के दोहन, अवैध खनन, और जंगलों की कटाई के नकारात्मक प्रभावों को सामने लाती है, जो सीधे तौर पर स्थानीय समुदायों की आजीविका और पारिस्थितिकी पर प्रभाव डालते हैं। निर्देशक ने फिल्म के माध्यम से जंगल में बसने वाले वनवासियों और आदिवासियों का जंगल एवं वन सम्पदा पर उनके अधिकारों को प्रस्तुत करने के साथ-साथ यह संदेश भी प्रसारित करता है कि जंगल और प्राकृतिक सम्पदा के बिना वहाँ के लोगों की सांस्कृतिक और सामाजिक पहचान समाप्त हो जाती है। आदिवासी समुदाय अपने अस्तित्व के लिए प्राकृतिक संसाधनों पर निर्भर होते हैं, और इन संसाधनों की हानि न केवल पर्यावरणीय असंतुलन पैदा करती है, बल्कि स्थानीय समुदायों को भी हाशिये पर धकेलती है। कहानी के माध्यम से जलवायु परिवर्तन के कारण बढ़ती वन्यजीवों और मानवों के बीच संघर्ष, पारंपरिक संसाधनों की कमी और प्रकृति के प्रति मानवीय लालच की भी आलोचना की गई है। फिल्म में दिखाया गया है कि प्रकृति के साथ संतुलन बनाए रखना न केवल सामुदायिक जीवन के लिए महत्वपूर्ण है, बल्कि यह पर्यावरणीय स्थिरता के लिए भी आवश्यक है।

समाज शास्त्रीय दृष्टिकोण का सामान्य अर्थ सामाजिक जागरूपता, संवेदनशीलता, सामुदायिक भागीदारी और व्यक्तिगत जिम्मेदारी का बोध होता है। सतत विकास लक्ष्यों (SDGs) में निहित वैश्विक पर्यावरणीय और जलवायु परिवर्तन समेत अन्य मुद्दों जैसे शिक्षा, स्वास्थ्य, समानता, गरीबी उन्मूलन, लिंग भेदभाव और स्वछता सदैव बॉलीवुड फिल्मों का प्रमुख विषय रहा है l SDG 3: स्वास्थ्य और कल्याण को ध्यान में रखकर 'पैडमैन', SDG 6: स्वच्छ जल और स्वच्छता पर आधारित–'टॉयलेट : एक प्रेम कथा', SDG 13: जलवायु परिवर्तन पर आधारित 'कड़वी हवा', SDG 15: स्थलीय पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र का संरक्षण–पर केंद्रित 'शेरनी' और अभी हाल में प्रदर्शित फिल्म रोबोट जिसमें मोबाइल टावर द्वारा निकलने वाले चुंबकीय तरंगों से गोरैया व अन्य छोटी पक्षियों की प्रजातियां पर हो रहे नुकसान को दिखाया गया है l यह सब सतत विकास लक्ष्यों (SDGs) पर

आधारित कुछ बॉलीवुड फिल्मों के उदहारण है। ऐसी अनगिनत हिंदी फ़िल्में है जिनका समाज, पारिस्थितिकी और पर्यावरण को लेकर जन चेतना के निर्माण और सामाजिक सुधारों में महत्त्वपूर्ण भूमिका रही है।

निष्कर्ष :

समाज शास्त्रीय दृष्टिकोण का सामान्य अर्थ सामाजिक जागरूपता, संवेदनशीलता, सामुदायिक भागीदारी और व्यक्तिगत जिम्मेदारी का बोध होता है। सतत विकास लक्ष्यों (SDGs) में निहित वैश्विक पर्यावरणीय और जलवायु परिवर्तन समेत अन्य मुद्दों जैसे शिक्षा, स्वास्थ्य, समानता, गरीबी उन्नमूलन, लिंग भेदभाव और स्वछता सदैव बॉलीवुड फिल्मों का प्रमुख विषय रहा है l SDG 3: स्वास्थ्य और कल्याण को ध्यान में रखकर 'पैडमैन', SDG 6: स्वच्छ जल और स्वच्छता पर आधारित—'स्वदेश' 'लगान' एवं 'टॉयलेट : एक प्रेम कथा', SDG 13: जलवायु परिवर्तन पर आधारित 'कड़वी हवा', SDG 15: स्थलीय पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र का संरक्षण–पर केंद्रित 'शेरनी' और अभी हाल में प्रदर्शित फिल्म रोबोट जिसमें मोबाइल टावर द्वारा निकलने वाले चुंबकीय तरंगों से गोरैया व अन्य छोटी पक्षियों की प्रजातियां पर हो रहे नुकसान को दिखाया गया है। यह सब सतत विकास लक्ष्यों (SDGs) पर आधारित कुछ बॉलीवुड फिल्मों के उदहारण है ऐसी अनगिनत हिंदी फ़िल्में है जिनका समाज, पारिस्थितिकी और पर्यावरण को लेकर जन चेतना के निर्माण और सामाजिक सुधारों में महत्त्वपूर्ण भूमिका रही है।

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प्रो. (डॉ.) रमेश कुमार शर्मा

विवेकानंद इंस्टिट्यूट ऑफ़ प्रोफेशनल स्टडीज, दिल्ली

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कार्यस्थल पर लैंगिक उत्पीड़न : कानूनी और नीतिगत उपाय

• डॉ. पूजा छींपा

मुख्य शब्द :

1. लैंगिक उत्पीड़न
2. कार्यस्थल
3. विधिक प्रावधान
4. आंतरिक परिवाद समिति
5. शिकायत तंत्र
6. सुलह
7. कर्मचारी
8. गोपनीयता

भारत जैसे विकासशील देश में गृहस्थी चलाने के लिए स्त्री और पुरुष दोनों को आजीविका के साधन अपने स्तर पर ढूंढने होते हैं। ऐसे में कार्यस्थल पर महिलाएं अपने परिवार के लिए आर्थिक सहयोग करने के लिए कार्य करने पहुंच तो जाती है लेकिन उनके साथ भेदभाव भरा व्यवहार होता है कभी वेतन को लेकर, कभी कार्य अधिकता तो कभी लैंगिक उत्पीड़न के रूप में। वर्तमान प्रतिस्पर्धी परिस्थितियों में महिलाओं के कार्य प्रदर्शन पर भी बाधा डालता है। साथ ही उनकी सामाजिक और आर्थिक विकास पर भी प्रतिकूल प्रभाव डालता है इससे महिलाओं को शारीरिक और भावनात्मक पीड़ा से गुजरना पड़ता है। सुप्रीम कोर्ट का अति महत्वपूर्ण ऐतिहासिक निर्णय विशाखा बनाम राजस्थान में दिए मार्गदर्शिका के अनुसार कार्यस्थल पर महिलाओं का लैंगिक उत्पीड़न निवारण अधिनियम 2013 पारित किया गया। इस अधिनियम का उद्देश्य कार्य स्थल पर महिलाओं के साथ होने वाले लैंगिक उत्पीड़न को रोकना और उन्हें समय पर न्याय दिलाना और उनके साथ समानता का व्यवहार कराना है।

भूमिका

'कार्यस्थल पर महिलाओं का लैंगिक उत्पीड़न (निवारण, प्रतिषेध और

प्रतितोष) अधिनियम, 2013' (POSH ACT) महिलाओं को अनुकूल, स्वास्थ्य कर और सुरक्षित वातावरण प्रदान करने के लिए बनाया गया है। यह भारत सरकार के महिला एवं बाल विकास मंत्रालय द्वारा अधिनियमित किया गया है जो 9 दिसंबर 2013 को लागू हुआ तत्पश्चात कार्य स्थल पर महिलाओं का लैंगिक उत्पीड़न (निवारण, निषेध और प्रतितोष) नियम 2013 (पोश नियम) के अंतर्गत नियमों को भी अधिसूचित किया गया। भारतीय संविधान का अनुच्छेद 15 जो धर्म, नस्ल, जाति, लिंग और जन्म स्थान के आधार पर भेदभाव को निषेध करता है। साथ ही महिलाओं के खिलाफ सभी प्रकार के भेदभाव के उन्मूलन पर कन्वेंशन जिसे भारत ने 1993 में अनुमोदित किया। इन सभी प्रावधानों के पालन के लिए यह अधिनियम पारित किया जाना अति आवश्यक था।

लैंगिक उत्पीड़न की परिभाषा–

1. शारीरिक स्पर्श या संपर्क
2. यौन संबंधों के लिए मांग या अनुरोध
3. यौन सुझाव वाले शब्दों या कार्यों का उपयोग
4. अश्लील सामग्री दिखाना या साझा करना
5. अन्य यौन सुझाव वाले व्यवहार जो एक महिला को असहज महसूस कराते हैं।

इसके अलावा, अधिनियम में लैंगिक उत्पीड़न में निम्नलिखित भी शामिल हो सकते हैं :

– अवांछित शारीरिक निकटता या संपर्क
– यौन संबंधों के लिए धमकी या वादा
– यौन सुझाव वाले टिप्पणियाँ या व्यवहार
– अश्लील सामग्री का प्रदर्शन या प्रसार

पीड़ित महिला : किसी भी आयु की महिला इसमें शामिल है चाहे वह कार्यस्थल में कार्यरत है अथवा नहीं, क्योंकि कोई महिला ग्राहक के साथ लैंगिक उत्पीड़न होना भी इस अधिनियम के तहत पीड़ित महिला में शामिल है।

परिवाद समिति

परिवाद समिति की स्थापना करना पोश अधिनियम का एक महत्वपूर्ण प्रावधान रहा है। इस शिकायत समिति को पूर्व में आंतरिक परिवाद समिति का नाम दिया गया था। बाद में सन 2016 में संशोधन करके इसे आंतरिक समिति (आईसी)का नाम दिया गया।

आंतरिक समिति (आईसी)–प्रत्येक कार्यालय /कार्यस्थल जहां कर्मचारियों की संख्या 10 या उससे अधिक हो, वहां आंतरिक समिति स्थापित करना आवश्यक है। आंतरिक समिति का यदि गठन नहीं किया जाता है तो पोश अधिनियम के तहत <50000 जुर्माने का प्रावधान है।

आंतरिक समिति का गठन

- पीठासीन अधिकारी :– कार्यस्थल के कर्मचारियों में वरिष्ठतम नियोजित महिला
- सदस्यः– कर्मचारियों में से न्यूनतम दो सदस्य जो महिलाओं के हित के संबंध में कार्यरत हो या सामाजिक कार्य का अनुभव हो या विधि का ज्ञान रखते हो
- बाह्य सदस्यः– गैर सरकारी संगठन या सोसाइटी जो महिलाओं के हितों के लिए प्रतिबद्ध हो अथवा लैंगिक उत्पीड़न से संबंधित मुद्दों से परिचित हो

यह ध्यान रखना आवश्यक है कि इस आंतरिक समिति में कुल सदस्यों में से कम से कम आधे सदस्य महिलाएं होंगी।

स्थानीय समिति

जिला स्तर पर स्थानीय समिति का गठन किया जाता है जिन संस्थाओं में 10 से कम कर्मचारी होने के कारण आंतरिक समिति का गठन नहीं किया जाता वहां स्थानीय समिति का गठन किया जाता है।

स्थानीय समिति का गठन

- अध्यक्षः- एक प्रतिष्ठित महिला जो सामाजिक कार्यकर्ता हो या महिलाओं के हितों हेतु प्रतिबद्ध हो।

– एक महिला सदस्यः– जो स्थानीय ब्लॉक, तहसील, वार्ड या जिले में नगर पालिका में कार्य करती हो।

– दो गैर सरकारी संगठन के सदस्यः– जिनमें से न्यूनतम एक महिला होगी जो महिलाओं के हितों हेतु प्रतिबद्ध हो या लैंगिक उत्पीड़न से संबंधित मुद्दों से परिचित हो।

समितियां की शक्तियां

आंतरिक समिति और स्थानीय समिति को वही शक्तियां प्राप्त है जो सिविल प्रक्रिया संहिता 1908 के अधीन किसी सिविल न्यायालय में निहित होती है–

1. किसी व्यक्ति को समन करना, उपसंजात करना तथा शपथ पर परीक्षा लेना।
2. दस्तावेज को पेश करना।
3. ऐसा कोई अन्य विषय जो विहित किया गया हो।

शिकायत तंत्र

पीड़ित महिला घटना के तीन माह के भीतर अपनी लिखित शिकायत आंतरिक समिति या स्थानीय समिति को प्रस्तुत कर सकती है। पोश अधिनियम में संशोधन 2024 के तहत 3 माह की अवधि को बढ़कर एक वर्ष करने का प्रस्ताव है। लिखित शिकायत के साथ सुसंगत दस्तावेज तथा साक्षियों के नाम और पते भी प्रस्तुत करना चाहिए। किंतु यदि पीड़ित महिला द्वारा लिखित शिकायत दर्ज करवाने में विलंब हो जाता है तो आंतरिक समिति अथवा स्थानीय समिति विलंब के कारणों को अभिलिखित करके शिकायत दर्ज करने की परिसीमा बढ़ा सकता है।यदि पीड़ित महिला शिकायत दर्ज करने में असमर्थ है तो उसकी ओर से परिवार, रिश्तेदार, मित्र आदि शिकायत दर्ज कर सकते हैं।

पीड़ित महिला के अनुरोध पर सुलह की कार्यवाही की जा सकती है तथा सौहार्दपूर्ण समझौते द्वारा मामले को निपटने का प्रयास किया जा सकता है। किंतु संशोधन 2024 में सुलह के प्रावधान को हटाने का प्रस्ताव किया गया है।

शिकायत की एक प्रति शिकायत प्राप्त होने के 7 दिनों के भीतर प्रतिवादी को प्रेषित की जाती है। प्रतिवादी ऐसी शिकायत की प्रति प्राप्त होने के 10 दिनों के भीतर इसका जवाब देगा। इस जवाब के साथ सुसंगत दस्तावेज एवं साक्षियों के नाम और पते हो सकते हैं। शिकायत प्राप्त होने के 90 दिनों के भीतर जांच पूर्ण होनी आवश्यक है।

समितियां की सिफारिश पर 7 दिनों के भीतर नियोक्ता द्वारा कार्रवाई करनी होगी। समिति के निर्णय के विरुद्ध अपील 90 दिनों के भीतर की जा सकेगी।

सुलह की कार्यवाही

पीड़ित महिला के अनुरोध पर सुलह की कार्यवाही की जा सकती है तथा सौहार्दपूर्ण समझौते द्वारा मामले को निपटाने का प्रयास किया जा सकता है किंतु संशोधन 2024 में सुलह के प्रावधान को हटाने का प्रस्ताव है।

अंतरिम उपाय

पीड़ित महिला के अनुरोध पर समिति नियोक्ता को अंतरिम उपाय हेतु सिफारिश कर सकते हैं जो निम्न हो सकता है–

1. पीड़ित महिला या प्रतिवादी को अन्य कार्य स्थल पर स्थानांतरण करना।
2. पीड़ित महिला को उसके नियमित अवकाश अधिकार के अतिरिक्त तीन माह की अवधि तक अवकाश प्रदान करना।
3. पीड़ित महिला की कार्य निष्पादन रिपोर्ट प्रतिवादी द्वारा करने पर रोक लगाना।

निष्कर्ष

आंतरिक परिवाद समिति के गठन हेतु व्यवहारिक कदम उठाए जाने चाहिए। समिति में जहां तक संभव हो महिलाओं को सदस्य के तौर पर शामिल करना चाहिए, जो संवेदनशील और समझदार हो इन महिला सदस्यों को पोश अधिनियम के प्रावधान एवं नियमों की जानकारी करवानी चाहिए। साथ ही उनको प्रशिक्षित की करना चाहिए। बहुमत के आधार पर निर्णय होने के लिए यह बेहतर होगा कि सदस्यों की संख्या विषम हो। समिति को

पारदर्शिता से एवं पक्षपात रहित निर्णय करना चाहिए। समिति की बैठकर एवं सदस्यों का प्रशिक्षण नियमित आयोजित होना चाहिए। पोश अधिनियम की अनुपालना न केवल कानूनी तौर पर करने की औपचारिकता करनी चाहिए अपितु महिला कर्मचारियों को सुरक्षित और सम्मानजनक कार्य स्थल उपलब्ध कराने की प्रतिबद्धता के साथ करना चाहिए।

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डॉ. पूजा छींपा

सहायक आचार्य

राजकीय विधि स्नातकोत्तर

महाविद्यालय, बीकानेर

drpoojachhimpa@gmail.com

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मिश्र की फराओनों की कब्रों में पुराने भारतीय भित्ति लेख (ग्रेफिटी)

टाईम्स ऑफ इण्डिया में प्रकाशित एक ख़बर के अनुसार मिश्र की कब्रों पर तमिल नाम उकेरे जाने के साक्ष्य उपलब्ध होते हैं। इन तमिल नामों के साक्ष्य इस बात के साक्षी हैं कि प्राचीन भारतीय व्यापारी कितनी दूर तक गए थे और पुरानी दुनिया कितनी गहराई से जुड़ी हुई थी।

ये व्यापारी 2000 वर्ष पहले मिश्र की वैली ऑफ किंग्स में गए थे और अपने हस्ताक्षर पीछे छोड़ गए। एक ही आगंतुक द्वारा लिखित आठ लेख–जो फराओनों की चट्टानों से काट कर बनाई कब्रों पर उकेरे गए हैं। उनके नाम फिर से सामने आए हैं और इस बहस को पुनः शुरू कर दिया है कि रोमन काल में भारतीय व्यापारी कितनी दूर यात्रा करते थे। संस्कृत, प्राकृत और अन्य भारतीय भाषाओं में भी शिलालेख पाए गए हैं।

तमिल-ब्राह्मी में लिखा नाम 'सिकोई कोर्रन' पढ़ा जाता है। 'सिकाई' का अर्थ जूड़ा या मुकुट होता है, जबकि 'कोर्रन' (कोत्रम) का अर्थ नायक या नेता होता है। यह वैली ऑफ किंग्स का छह में पांच शाही कब्रों में दिखाई देते हैं। ये स्मारक 1600 ई. पूर्व के आसपास बनाए गए थे, लेकिन बाद में प्राचीन दुनिया के विभिन्न क्षेत्रों से आए लोगों ने यहां आकर भ्रमण किया था।

पाकिस्तान के उत्तर-पश्चिम प्रान्त ख़ैबर पख्तूनस्वा में स्वात से तक्षसिला तक फैले क्षेत्र में इटलवी पुरातत्त्वविदों द्वारा उत्खनन

इस उत्खनन से स्वात के बारीकोट में लगभग 1200 वर्ष पुराने एक छोटे मंदिर के अवशेष मिले हैं जो इस क्षेत्र की निरंतर सांस्कृतिक एवं सभ्यता की विरासत के दुर्लभ प्रमाण हैं। इतालवी पुरातात्त्विक मिशन के निदेशक डॉ. लूका ने बताया कि छोटे मंदिर के अवशेष बारीकोट (प्राचीन बाज़ीरा) में उत्खनन के दौरान मिले। उन्होंने यह भी कहा कि मंदिर और आसपास की पुरातात्त्विक परतों की सुरक्षा के लिए उत्खनन क्षेत्र को अब स्वात नदी की ओर बढ़ा कर एक सुरक्षात्मक बफर ज़ोन स्थापित किया गया है।

तीन वर्षीय इस पहल, जिसे 'ख़ैबर पाथ प्रोजेक्ट' कहा जाता है, के अन्तर्गत 400 से अधिक स्थानीय श्रमिकों को रोजगार के अवसर दिए जाएंगे, इसके साथ ही उत्खनन संरक्षण और विरासत प्रबंधन में व्यावहारिक प्रशिक्षण भी प्रदान किया जाएगा।

यह परियोजना, जो 1 जून से शुरू हुई, का उद्देश्य प्रान्त में क्षेत्रीय निवास, पेशेवर क्षमता निर्माण और पर्यटन को बढ़ावा देना है, कई स्थानों पर उत्खनन कार्य पहले ही शुरू हो चुका है।

प्रारंभिक अध्ययनों से संकेत मिलता है कि ये स्थल प्रागैतिहासिक काल से लेकर इस्लामी काल तक लगातार आबाद रहे। प्रमुख खोजों में एक किला है, जिसके बारे में माना जाता है कि वह गज़नवी काल का है।

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हीरक जयन्ती

राष्ट्रभाषा हिन्दी प्रचार समिति

संस्कृति भवन, श्रीडूँगरगढ (बीकानेर) राज.

कार्यकारिणी समिति-वर्ष 2025-2030

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भगवती पारीक
सदस्य

सम्पर्क : 9414416274, 9414416252, 9414416269, 01565-294670 (कार्यालय)

www.rbhpsdungargarh.com hindipracharsamiti@gmail.com

मरुभूमि शोध संस्थान

संस्कृति भवन, श्रीडूँगरगढ़ (बीकानेर) राज.

कार्यकारिणी समिति-वर्ष 2025-2030

प्रो. बी. एल. भादाणी
अध्यक्ष एवं पदेन निदेशक

डॉ. चेतन स्वामी
उपाध्यक्ष

डॉ. गजादान चारण
उपाध्यक्ष

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ओमप्रकाश गुरावा
सदस्य

सम्पर्क : 9414416274, 9414416252, 9414416269, 01565-294670 (कार्यालय)

www.rbhpsdungargarh.com hindipracharsamiti@gmail.com

महावीर प्रसाद माली मरुभूमि शोध संस्थान,
श्रीडूँगरगढ़ के लिए मुद्रित एवं प्रकाशित।

मुद्रक : महर्षि प्रिंटर्स, श्रीडूँगरगढ़ (बीकानेर) राज.

जूनी ख्यात बैंक विवरण :
Account Name : Marubhumi Shodh Sansthan
Bank : Punjab National Bank, Sridungargarh
Account No. : 3604000100174114
IFSC : PUNB0360400

Website : http://rbhpsdungargarh.com