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VISION

G. L. C. College Bi-annual Periodicals

(Vol.-1, Issue-1, December, 2007)

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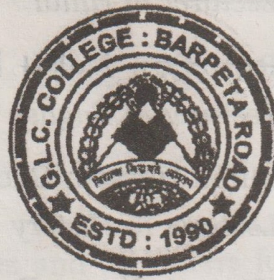


Editor : Jaya Biswas Kunda

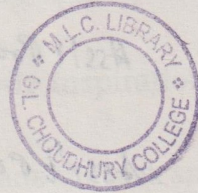
VISION

G. L. C. College Biannual Periodicals

Vol.-1, Issue- 1, December, 2007



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To a Well Wisher

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From

Research Cell
G. L. C. College
Barpeta Road, Assam

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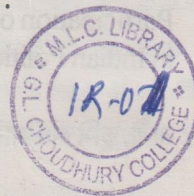
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I have immense pleasure in editing the first issue of biannual periodical of G. L. C. College titled "VISION" in which one's view and expressions would be portrayed. It would be the best means of expressing one's ideas on various issues which would help in focusing the vital problems and prospects of society.

I convey my gratitude to the Principal, my colleagues, non-teaching staff, students and all others for their inspiration and contribution of valuable articles which have made the task smooth for me, i.e. in publishing the first issue of "VISION".



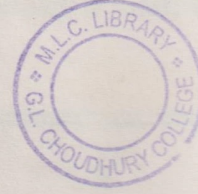
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Lecturer in Economics

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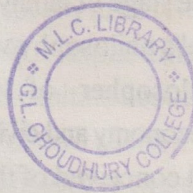
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"Civil Society, Globalization and Political Party : A peep into Nandigram"

Guest Column

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Introduction :

The concept of 'civil society' at this era of 'imperialist globalization' has been popularizing since the 1990's particularly since the break-down of socialist countries of East Europe. At the same time, it is a matter of great concern that there is hidden political agenda, as it is alleged, in the disguise of 'civil society'. In fact, no political hidden agenda can help/ benefit the common people. The civil society, in other words, having welfare for the common people.

Civil Society : Interpreted in several perspectives :

Academically, the concept of 'civil society' is a very significant 'discourse' (Human interaction, especially communication; discourse may disclose or illustrate power relationship - Heywood : 1977) in the area of political science or sociology. Though the 'Civil Society', as a concept, has been reinvented during 1990's, nevertheless, we can safely state that it (civil society) has been debated, of course, in an uninterrupted manner during the last several hundreds of years. Obviously, it has been interpreted in several ways and in several perspectives (Manab Mukharjee : 2002). Innumerable political thinkers and philosophers, namely Aristotle, Adam Ferguson, Adam Smith, David Hume, Edmund Burke, Hegel, Karl Marx, Antonio Gramsci etc. interpreted the concept in various ways and perspective.

It is worthwhile to mention here that Aristotle, for the first time, used this concept in connection with citizens' active advice, involvement and participation relating to the matter of administration - 'Polis'. Obviously, the term, 'civil society' was used for the first time, by Adam Ferguson in 18th century. According to him a citizen should not be confined to himself/ herself just to enhance his/her economic power only but also to participate actively in social and ministerial activities. Ferguson's observation is that besides economic affairs there is also a social identity of human being and that is called 'civil society'. The reflections of this concept of Ferguson's civil society were also found in the writings of Adam Smith

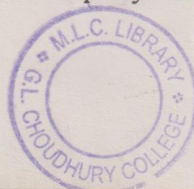
: 1997). The bourgeoisie always use the civil society to perpetuate its hegemony. Obviously, Gramsci advocated to utilize civil society for the cause of working class. Thus, as a part of strategy to capture power by the working class, as Gramsci advocated, the civil society in its favour. In this context, it is to be noted here that Gramsci always tried to expand the 'base' and 'superstructure' of Karl Marx in regard to developed capitalist country and in this specific context he analysed the 'class character' of civil society.

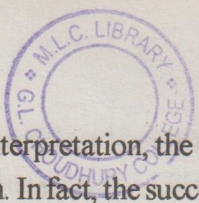
Gramsci's concept of civil society was distorted by the Euro- Communists. Heywood's observation in this respect is noteworthy. Heywood (1997) says that "although the proponents of Euro-Communism have claimed Gramsci as an influence, he remained throughout his life a Leninist and a revolutionary."

It is said that since the 1990's the civil society, as a concept, has been hijacked and expanded by the so called intellectuals under the superindence, guidance and direction of World Bank, UNO, IMF, European Union alongwith propagating the so-called globalization. The role and significance of civil society has been tremendously popularizing since the break-down of socialism in East European countries via non-violent movement. Since then the so called intellectuals began to interpret the civil society in new direction. One of the most popular interpretation has been given by the centre for civil society, London school of Economics. The definition given by them is given below :

"Civil society refers to the arena of uncovered collective action around shared interests, purposes and values. In theory, its institutional forms are distinct from those in practice, the boundaries between state, civil society, family market are often complex, blurred and negotiated. Civil society commonly embraces a diversity of spaces, actors and institutional forms, varying in their degree of formality, autonomy and power. Civil societies are often populated by organization such as registered charities, development non-govt. organizations, community groups, women's organizations trade unions, self-help groups"

This interpretation of civil society is treated as third section. Accordingly, the state and Govt. fall in one section and economy is another section. As per this definition NGO is included in civil society. It is amazing that political parties have no place in all these three sections. It means 'civil society' is apolitical. In other words, civil society is a realm of autonomous groups, associations and NGOs wit specific objectives which separates from party based politics. How can we think workable democracy without political party? We cannot.





But whatever its interpretation, the recognition of civil society is possible only in democratic system. In fact, the success, expansion alongwith its operation of civil society can only be witnessed in democracy. It is interesting to note here that civil society, of late, has been defining to attain specific objective - to popularize the concept of so-called globalisation. In this context it is important to mention here that both the concept of civil society and globalisation have been going together with joining hands with each other. Mention may be made here that the break-down of socialist camps and the revival of civil society is also contemporary and these two crucial points certainly hint us as the matter of grave concern and suspicion.

Manab Mukharjee (2007) has rightly observed : "Any economic system finds/ wants favourable political system for its development. Globalisation is also an economic system which is new in toto; and this completely new economic system requires completely new political institution, World Bank, UN, IMF sponsored 'Globalisation' needs of sponsored political institution - that is called civil society." Of late, a large number of NGOs (at times these NGOs are treated/ considered as civil society) are also operating in such a way, as if they are considered as alternative to political party. It is also amazing that innumerable NGOs are being funded by the protagonists of globalisation - a new economic system just to depopularise political party. Clubs, associations, NGOs, groups of intellectual, media house etc. Of late, are also grouped and united together as civil society to attain a specific objective having no accountability to the people. But it is important to note here that political parties exists in a democratic system having responsibility and accountability. That is why supporters of globalisation favours NGOs (backed by media house) which are safe, secured, apolitical. Thus, they condemn politics alongwith depopular political party.

Role of civil society : Nandigram a part of West Bengal :

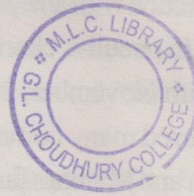
As mentioned earlier, civil society is not answerable to the people; but political parties are answerable, accountable and responsible to the people as the members of political parties are supposed to face election. Election is the basis of democracy. At the same time it is also true to say that some members of civil society may also face election. For instance, some of the members of civil society who took part in procession on 14th November, 2007 at Kolkata as members of civil society in connection with Nandigram's issue might contest election in future. It is also equally true he/ she would like to contest election

being a member of political party not as member of civil society. Apart from this, NGOs (members of civil society) are not supposed to show its accounts alongwith its source of finance/ resources to the to the people whereas political parties are supposed to presenting the accounts and source of finance to the constitutional institution (Election Commission). Manab Mukharjee (2007) has shown beautifully shown the character of civil society alongwith highlighting the responsibility of political parties in connection with analyzing the issue of Nandigram in the following way : According to him peculiar characters of several partners of civil society were discernable of 14th November, 2007. The intellectuals' procession of 14th November, 2007 featured many common faces who were presented in Medha Patkar's sit-in-platform and Mamta's fast programme. Many Naxal groups having no flags, SUCI, Trinamul Congress, a few communal groups together with Anandamargs, few NGOs, few 'intellectuals' and some officials/ employees of a Media House too, were found in the procession. the procession was organised to oust the present Govt. (West Bengal Govt.) relating to achieving the political objective : objective was clear - to oust present Govt. if possible and if it was not - to embarass the Govt. as far as possible. If it was supposed to achieve, what leave and would be engaged to prepare Mining and another portion would be confined to form NGOs, SWCI would be returned to Joyanagar and Kultali, Media House's employees would be engaged to their duties, some of the shooting set, some of them would be engaged to prepare manuscripts. If the process of civil society's agitation were stopped none would be answerable. None would be answerable why the anarchical order did prevail in the state. How could they expect more advantageous position than this. Having no responsibility political objective is to be achieved. For a political party, all these things demand and need an answer.

Conclusion :

It is clear that civil society should not be considered as alternative to political parties as partners of civil society, of late, are being funded and sponsored by supporters of so-called globalisation just to strengthen the corporate house. At times, partners of civil society operate to achieve specific political objective having to accountability to the people. Sometimes, partners of civil society do operate having hidden political agenda. There is no transparency, no distinct political issue barring a few NGOs. All these things cannot strengthen democracy. For true and healthy democracy political parties are to be considered essential. The

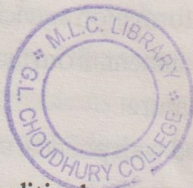
role played by civil society in connection with highlighting Nandigram issue as it is alleged, is not only biased but also derogatory. Thus, it is high time to judge yourself not to be a part of hidden political agenda sponsored by corporate houses just to propagate globalisation as no hidden political agenda can bring welfare and justice. Civil society cannot do this as hidden political agenda is discernable in the disguise of civil society especially in Nandigram issue of West Bengal. □



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Political Communication and its problems



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The study of political communication is at least as ancient as Plato, but modern studies date from the Post-World War - I analyses of war time propaganda. Since then much attention has been devoted to the analysis of the forms and objectives of Political Communications, the media of transmission, the contents of the messages and the impact of messages on receivers. Content analysis has become a highly sophisticated tool for analysis at the sender end of the chain, while survey research and interview techniques provide means for studying message impact. In a broader context, Karl Deutsch has suggested that political communication might become the central focus of political science with political systems treated as vast communication network. Almond and Coleman on their much-cited 1960 study classify political communication as one of the principal functions of political system.

According to the eminent sociologists, R. M. MacIver and C. H. Page, 'without communication there can be no community.' Prof. Quincy wright says, "Societies exit by virtue of communication from such interaction develop communities, societies, institutions, cultures and civilizations.

A political system consists of a network of structures and institutions, namely groups, parties govt. and bureaucracies. Interpenetration and reciprocal influences exist between structures and behaviour. Through these structures people are linked to the rulers and the rulers to the people. In democracies, the Legislative assemblies embody the sovereignty of the people, but in the general political sense the views and proposals of the population are communicated to the govt. and vice-versa with the help of intermediate bodies.

Political communication is the transmission of meaning having relevance for the functioning of a political system. Political communication like other communications, requires a sender, a message, some channel or means of transmission and a receiver, political communication ordinarily involves the written or the spoken word, but it may occur by means of any sign, symbol or sigment through which meaning is transmitted. The communication would include symbolic acts as diverse as burning draft card, voting, political assassination or sending a

fleet around the world. Much political communication is the province of specialized institutions such as the mass-media, govt. information agencies or political parties. It nevertheless is found in every social environment, from face-to-face two person settings to the chambers of a national legislature.

Thus, political communication is linked with political systems and the former gives dynamics to the later. Each political systems has certain reception systems which provide information form internal and external sources. Each political system has certain goals to achieve and it depends on the capacity of the system how far and to which extent it can use the information it receives form the system. It is communication which nourishes the body of political system. It also stands for link among the citizens themselves.

Problems of Political Communication :

Generally lack of political communication means the gap between the society or people and the political system. It is also regarded as problem of political communication. There are a number of problems of political communication. Among them the following may be regarded to be the main :

1. Lack of time and largeness of area :

It is well known that face-to-face contents in a political system can play a major role in providing the people the necessary information about public affairs. But this process is not frequently used in most the time of countries including India. Of course, during the time of clutions the political clites, irrespective of their party colour prefer to use the channel of communication and go door to door of the people. But the channel is difficult to use because of the largeness of constituencies in terms of territory and population and also of shortness of times.

2. Censorship on Mass Media :

Mass media like News Papers, Magazine, Radio and Televisions etc. can pioneer role in establishing contract between people themselves and between people and the political system. But most of the countries especially the developing and totalitarian ones have imposed censorship on mass media. The govt. tries to use them for the fulfillment of some vested interest.

3. Scarcity and lack of popularity of Mass media :

Some mass-media like news papers and journals etc. are not popular among the uneducated people. Again all the educated people of a country hardly read news papers and journals. Only 4% read news papers in India and they are generally residents of urban areas. According to the UNESCO, for every thousand persons

in developing country there are fifty radio receivers, twenty cinema seats hundred news papers. In India for every thousand persons there are 13 news papers, 17 radio and 7 cinema seats. Thus scarcity and lack of popularity of mass media are responsible for some problems regarding political communication at least in the underdeveloped and developing countries.

4. Corruption :

The nations like criminalisation of politics, sycophancy, feudalism in different forms, personalized politics, commercial approach to image building and the like have fundamentally affected the nature of politics and the orientation of people towards politics. On it necessary to maintain any contract with the political system.

5. Inactive role of political parties :

Problems arise in establishing political communication due to inactive role played by the political parties, especially of the developing countries, in the political system. The political parties of the countries like India, Pakistan and Bangladesh become active during clutions and go to slumber during normal times. These parties do not try to establish mass communication.

6. Lack of issue-based discussion :

The debates and discussion in the legislatures often provide important information to people about various public issues or grievances. But these are not effective in all countries including India. For example, in India issue-based debates and discussions in the parliament and state legislatures do not take place so often. As a result interest articulation function of the Indian Political system suffer.

7. Lack of co-operation of bureaucrats :

It is expected that the bureaucrats should supply necessary information and data to the people regarding govt. policies and programmes. But practically the bureaucrats do not actively play their role. By and large, it may be said that the role of the bureaucrats is not up to satisfaction.

8. Lack of effort for the establishment of interaction :

It is very difficult to acquire information and data necessary for decision making, if the govt. or decision making authority does not try to establish periodical interactions with institutions and persons such as political parties, pressure groups, voluntary organizations and clites etc. The govt. is unable to have people's demands and interest. The duisim makes do not have pertinent information. Of course, some efforts are being made for interactions; but these are just formal than real. For example, mention may be made of India.

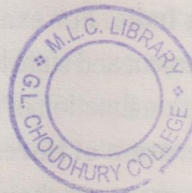
Absolute or lack of a forum appears to be the cause for the informal clites nor expressing their opinion on public policy makers even if they wish to do so. The informal clites' view is that they do not get opportunities to interact with the cluted representatives. Even with this handicap the clites can provide information to the policy makers through mass media, by publishing articles in various periodicals etc. However, the impact of such information on public policy is expected to be very limited.

9. Ignorance and indolence :

Generally the illiterate people are ignorant and indolent. They have little contact with the outer world. They do not know and do not try to know the functioning of the govt. whether local or national or international. They feel satisfied by entrusting the responsibility of ruling country in the hands of others.

Conclusion :

It is needless to say that the functioning and success of the popular govt. largely depends on proper communication with the people and other organizations. That is why the govt. should try its level best to establish necessary interactions with the people and organizations. In this connection emphasis should be laid on education of the people, providing ample freedom to mass media and periodical whole hearted interaction with the people, clites, businessman and the like. □



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Role of Women in Boro Society

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Women are like homestead of a family. To become or to settle a home, a good homestead is very important. Like this to become a good or develop family, role of women within the family is very important in so far as they are free to take dominant parts in all the household affairs.

In ancient time, only home was the place of Boro women. They always spent their daily life busy. They did not have any leisure since leaving the bed early in the morning and till going to bed at night. Parents and guardians of girls did not send their daughters to school. They thought that male teacher were not good for their daughters. Their daughters could not express their own thought and ideas freely to male teachers. Because at that time there was no female teachers. So, at that time, the literacy among the women were particularly very low. But now-a-days, women are also equally encouraged along with the men. They have understood the meaning of "plants are developed by cultivation and men by education." (J. J. Rousseau)

In Boro society, women are the prime member of the family in matters relating to preparing food, wash clothes, receiving guests and everything household affairs. The position of women in the family as well as in the society is almost equal to that of men. Women are also developed in education and they also know how to bring peace and how to work for the development of society. So they can take part in social works also. Besides these, Boro women are regarded as indispensable in the other fields of works also, such as agriculture, trade etc.

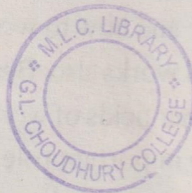
Boro women have important role in the development of economy of a family or a society. Animal husbandry, spinning and weaving etc. ensure the economic condition of the Boro family. The poultry, piggery and goat rearing are mainly confined to womenfolk in traditional way and most of these products are sold at home by themselves. Sometimes these products are also sold in the market.

In ancient time, a Boro woman was not honoured and put value in the society, if she did not know the art of spinning and weaving. Again she was not accepted as a good character in society. So at that time the art of spinning and weaving was always been held to be one of the highest attainments among every women of every caste whether they were the women of good or bad character.

According to Chronicles, Momai Tamuli Barbarua, the Prime Minister of king Pratap Singha (1603 - 1641) also made it an indispensable duty for every women in their kingdom. From ancient time, through spinning and weaving, Boro women have been giving help in their family. They rear Endi worm and spin yarn out of cocoons and weave different kind of clothes. They can make designs of beautiful flowers, trees and plants, birds and animals and other fascinating objects. They weave them in handlooms with their own hands and sell these clothes in markets and earn many rupees which help their family's people. It is very interesting or it is the matter to note that an illiterate women also can weave foot print like 'Alaiyan or Alayaran' (Dawn), 'Bwisagu' (bihu) 'Bordaibai' (Welcome), 'Gwjwnthwng' (Be happy) etc. in their clothes through their spinning and weaving. In ancient time in Boro society, when men were ready to go to battle field, then women wove a 'phali' (a kind of towel) within one night and gave it in their neck. This towel is known as 'Aronai' in Boro which is now-a-days found available among Boros. But it is true that this 'Aronai' which is found now-a-days is meaningless. Because this is wove at day time also and this is used in everywhere. At that time when men were ready to go to the battle field, then women were also ready by taking 'Aronai' in their hands to give them farewell. Then they sang a farewell song like this -

Boro :

Ayo! Jwhwlauphwr
 Aronai gangpha gangpha langpha
 Janji khapranw
 Suthurjwng dauha nangnw
 Suthurkhwu phejennw



English :

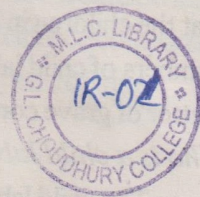
Take a Aronai,
 Oh! Our heroes
 To bind your waist
 To fight with foe
 And to defeat the foe.

With their prominent role the Boro women have made great contribution to the enrichment of culture and gradual evolution of the society. But it is the matter to note that some superstitions fears on women are being seen in Boro

society. For these they are deprived from some works in society. So it is the time for all women to get freedom in all works within and outside the house. Otherwise, women will be used as the toy of play. □

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Child Labour in India : Problems and Remedies

Jaya Biswas Kunda

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A child is a human being who is not an adult. They belong in the age group of 5 - 14 years of age. While I thought of writing this paper an old proverb came to my mind "A child is the father of the nation". This is said because children of today are the citizens of tomorrow. They are going to bear the burden of governing the nation on their shoulders. They will have to build nations socio-economic, political and cultural positions stronger. So, the right time has come to bring up these "would be citizens" of India properly. Their quality of life, education, health, culture etc. all which are needed for the all round development should be the unavoidable responsibility of the Govt. of a welfare state. But it astonished me that the children in India are deprived of even the basic human rights. The large numbers of child labour in India is an example of this deprivation and which is a matter of grave concern.

Who is a child labour ?

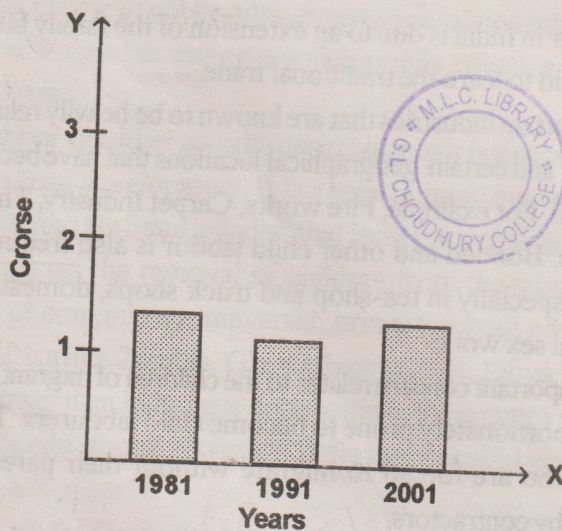
The child labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986 has defined a boy or a girl who has not attained the age of 14 years is a child. Through this Act, ban is imposed on the engagement of children in certain specific fields like mines, collieries, automobile workshop where bidi-making, match-making, agarbati, explosive and fire-works etc. are carried on.

It is generally accepted that India has the largest numbers of child labourers in the world. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) estimates that there are more than 35 million such children, accounting for 14 % of the children in the 5 - 14 age group.

Poverty and child labour :

It is observed that there is a relationship between child labours → out of school children → poverty. The estimates which are made about the numbers of child labour are largely based on the data of children who are out of school. And one of the major causes of dropouts is poverty.

But this explanation is a far too simple interpretation obviously it is mainly the poor families who are bound to send their children for work but it does not follow that there is a necessary causal relationship between the two.



As the Fig. No. 1 depicts that the census data for 2001 suggest a much lower incidence, with 1.26 crore child labourers identified, which would be less than 5% of the relevant age group. This represents a declining incidence compared with the 1991 figure of 6.4% of the children between 5 - 14 years of age.

Important Acts to prevent Child Labour in India :

1. Children (pledging of labour) Act. 1933 prohibits parents and guardians from pledging the services of a child in return for advances.
2. The Employment of Child Act. 1938. Ambiguous in its scope and content, it classifies into two age groups for prohibition and regulation of their employment.
3. The child labour (prohibition and regulation) Act. 1986. Prohibits employment of children below 14 in 7 occupations and 18 processes. Also regulates the working conditions of children in other employment. This is the principal enactment on the employment of children.
4. Notification issued on June 26, 1993. Regulates working conditions of children in all employments which are not prohibited under the CLA 1986.
5. Juvenile Justice (care and protection of children) Act. 2000. Provides for the resettlement of rescued children with their parents. It has no further provisions for these children after they return home.

Reasons for growing child labour in India :

1. Poverty is the root cause of child labour. The poor parents are forced to make their children go for work.

2. Child labour in India is due to an extension of the family business, which allows a child to learn the traditional trade.
3. There are certain industries that are known to be heavily reliant on bonded child labour and certain geographical locations that have become infamous for it as well. For example, Fire works, Carpet Industry, The glass bangle makers etc. Bonded and other child labour is also frequently found in services, especially in tea-shop and truck shops, domestic service and commercial sex work.
4. Another important concern relates to the children of migrant workers. Who are disproportionately prone to become child labourers. These are child workers who are forced to migrate without their parents, in groups organized by contractors.
5. The decline in public educational spending and the increase in school tuition fees have been important proximate causes of the increase in child labour. It has also been noted that the system of examinations and progression through school also creates disincentives against continuation for children from poor families who detain in one year.
6. Another important causes of child labour is that children being cheaply available. A large numbers of children are employed by the owner in different activities which do not require any educational qualifications.

Measures to eradicate the problem of child labour :

Some of the important measures which can help to eradicate the problem of child labour are the following :

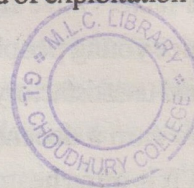
1. A survey should be made on child labour and which should be completed within a fixed period of time.
2. Besides, the fruitful implementation of the universal education, there should be a special progarmme which provides "education grant" based on household monthly wages, which will enable the poor parents to send their children to school.
3. On discontinuation of the employment of the child, his education should be assured in suitable institution with a view to make it a better citizens.
4. Honourable courts should also observe whether the directions given by number of Acts passed in the parliament to eliminate child labour is properly followed or not. If not, punishment should be assured to the persons who are guilty.

5. A greater degree of public outrage and social action is required to counter this social evil and to make the policies really effective.

Concluding Note :

Child labour is neither socially desirable, nor it is a necessary outcome of a particular stage of development. It has been pointed out by M. Weiner in his book "The Child and the State in India" that India is a significant exception to the global trend toward the removal of children from the labour force and the establishment of compulsory, universal, primary school education, as many countries of Africa like Zambia, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Libya, Zimbabwe, with income levels lower than India have done better in these matters. This shows that the problem of child labour persists in India is not really because of dearth of resources, but lack of zeal.

So, let us all, the Govt., the people, the parents and all the members of civil society put their sincere efforts together to combat the problem of child labor and make India free from any kind of exploitation of children without any further delay. □



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Generation Gap : An Insoluble Puzzle

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The differences in ideas, feelings and interest between older and younger people is called generation gap. In other words, it is actually the difference between the ebullience of youth on the one hand and the caution and prudence of old age on the other. The old consider the younger lot to be arrogant fools; the young declare the older people to be senile and insipid. The gulf between the two generations seems unlikely to be bridged.

Generation gap, as a phenomenon, is not new to our times alone. In all ages and at all places, it has always been prevalent; but in modern times, life styles are changing so fast that the gap between the two generations becomes easily perceptible. Many other factors have also contributed to bring about this situation. Everywhere we notice young people are feeling disgruntled because their upbringing is inadequate and unsatisfactory while their education is irrelevant. Rather than equipped them to earn a decent living, education appears to be rendered them unemployable. It is often heard the old are complaining that the young are ignorant of what they want.

The most commonly faced problem is that the youth are protesting the difference between the myth and reality of the society in which they are growing. In fact, they are passing through a period of transition. Long accepted social norms and codes of conduct have almost collapsed. An attitude of dissent and irreverence has come to replace spontaneous faith and quiet acceptance of the wisdom of the old. The socio-economic changes all over the world have deeply affected the life pattern of the people. Rapid population growth has resulted in the disintegration of family life. The bitter struggle for existence has left the parents with little time to devote to their children and to properly direct and supervise their activities. Consequently, the lack of understanding between the old and the young is widened.

So it is overt that under these circumstances the talk of dedication to ideals, moral vigour, basic human virtues etc. leaves the young cold and unconvinced. They are no longer prepared to blindly follow whatever their elders tell them. Instead, they critically review all the social and political values they are asked to

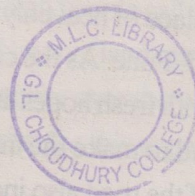
accept. When the young see high -sounding principals being ignored for expediency, political leaders deliberately befooling the masses, vested interest being allowed to frustrate the state at every step, corruption common in all places and a gaping difference between promise and performance, they naturally revolt against social and economic justice and clamour for alteration.

To be precise, in Indian society where tradition and modernity are often in conflict, there is always an undercurrent of tension. It is also the dismal fact that in traditional societies, age dominates youth completely. This dominance kills the spirit of initiative in the young. They gradually becomes mere executors of other people's will - soulless people who, when they are idle or only partially employed, resort to violence and take to the street on the slightest pretext. They want to attract attention to themselves through unconventional behaviour and clothes. They fall victims to self-pity, develop an aversion to honest hard work and remain on the look-out to have something for nothing.

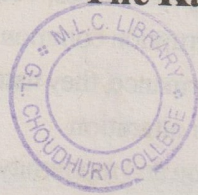
No doubt, generation gap implies dissent, which is necessary and obligatory even when things go wrong. It becomes dangerous when it takes the shape of violence. The elders have grave, dissatisfaction with the modern youth but it also betrays a lack of sympathetic understanding and realistic appreciation of the dilemma in which the younger generation finds itself. The youth must also learn to earn the right to dominate the scene through responsible conduct and show that they are not always wild, irresponsible, noisy and needlessly demonstrative. They should work for the promotion of basic human rights and mankind's liberation from shackles of poverty, inequality and injustice. A fine blend of age and youth is needed for human welfare. As a whole, the youth should be made responsible, equipped and trained to inherit a world that would conform to their vision, albeit the generation gap is an insoluble puzzle. □

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My Dateless Diary of Mahabaleshwar : The Kashmir of Maharashtra



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Nature is the anchor of man's purest thoughts. Its healing power helps a man to get rid of his awkward loneliness. To Wordsworth, "Nature is the nurse, the guide and the guardian of man's heart and soul" and "It never betrays the heart that loved her." This is inevitable because the sylvan surroundings of nature can cure the modern mind full of anxiety, restlessness and boredom.

Some places deserve remarkable mention for their natural and scenic beauty. Mahabaleshwar, one of the most beautiful green spots of Maharashtra, is one of them. Those who with their illimited curiosity and gusto, want to relish the splendors of mountains and other wonderings of nature can visit this hermitage of beauty. Mahabaleshwar seems to be an exquisite picture painted by the invisible golden and skilled hands of nature. Amidst numerous hills and mountains stands this paradise of natural beauty where man's romantic heart finds the ultimate taste of invariable time, it provides a pertinent atmosphere where one can enjoy to his heart's content. Between two lofty cliffs of the mountain are located deep valleys whose picturesque beauty injects madness, romance and passion into the hearts of the viewers. One can observe boundless greenery all around. Thus, being pregnant with the blessings of nature, Mahabaleshwar can be literally regarded 'The Abode of Natural Beauty.'

It was the early winter in the year 2002 when we undertook an educational tour to this place of heavenly beauty by covering the distance of about 100 kms form Saswad, Pune. As the car started running along the zigzag road, our minds were filled with fresh hopes and limitless curiosity to see the unseen, to know the unknown and to make the impossible possible. The density of the forest on the both sides of the road also increased. The serpentine road, cut through the sides of the mountain slopes, took us slowly and steadily to our destination. On reaching Mahabaleshwar, the first thing we did was to visit the famous temple of Lord Shiva. I prayed to the Almighty : 'Whatever I desire and obtain is only for your favour. My Lord, let my wishes be fulfilled today.'

Then started the sight-seeing. We claimed the peak-points from where

one can enjoy the magnificent views of Mahabaleshwar and its neighbouring areas. While standing on the 'echo-point' one can simply witness the mystical natural atmosphere all around.

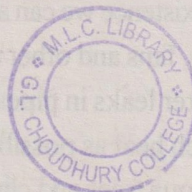
In Mahabaleshwar, nature possesses an embellishment in form of a beautiful green lake on the bank of which we had our delicious lunch. The landscape around lake provides a solid impetus for the beauty and tranquility of nature. In the clean and green lake water there is provision made for water sports with small paddle boats. We had a fair sport under the board and mighty blue sky made to smile by the sparkling sunshine. With rows and rows of green trees on both sides of the lake and melodious caroling of birds - the scenic beauty is beyond description.

The jubilant and zealous morning sun suddenly became aged, timid and whimsical to take shelter in its west abode beyond the horizon. The crazy and romantic heart in me pleaded repeatedly for a delay. But, I consoled it with the lines composed by Robert Frost :

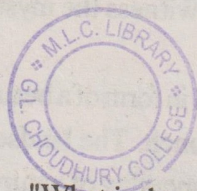
"But miles to go before I sleep
And miles to go before I sleep."

I questioned myself : 'In only five hours of sunshine and laughter, how much could I know you, Mahabaleshwar ?' 'You are very attractive. I will live with the hope of returning to you again to quench my thirst by dozing in your green and loving lap. I cannot forget your serene, silent and soft smiling face with unparalleled beauty :

The Mahabaleshwar trip was all over. But the cluster of its sweet memories are still roaming in my mind. It seems that nature has left no stone unturned to embellish Mahabaleshwar as the 'Belle of Mountains.' The natural beauty of Mahabaleshwar is undoubtedly mesmerizing for which people call it 'The Kashmir of Maharashtra.' By whatever name this beautiful tract of land may be known as, it is older than anyone of us today. Its age and maturity over the vagaries of time have lent it a mystic charm. Choice is yours to strive for this experience. □



How Green Is My Valley



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"What is the use of a beautiful house if you don't have a decent planet to put it on?" Henry D. Thoreau rightly said this 'MELTING ICE' is a hot topic throughout the globe in recent years. Statesmen, scientist, economists, social workers are engrossed in this topic irrespective of different views and ideologies so that the ice does not melt. What is the philosophy behind this type of Global concern? The answer is very simple. Atmosphere has no political boundaries. Global warming, depletion of Ozone layers, loss of global biodiversity etc. are going to affect the mankind as a whole and for that we have to think globally.

Actually, the United Nations Conference of Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and popularly known as 'Earth Summit' is turning point. It attracted the attention of the general public towards the deteriorating environment.

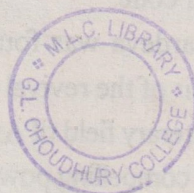
Being a micro unit of the globe what can we do. Will we remain silent spectator like Niro of Troy? Will we continue Talibani activities on our holy Basundhara? Obviously not. We have to think globally and act locally. We must remember that "Nature has enough to satisfy our needs, but not to satisfy our greeds." Environmental problem is a complex problem. It is not only a problem of science or otherelse. It is a complex outcome arising out of economic, social, political, ethical reasons. Long ago, our Vedas and Upanishads said about the importance of Green valley, importance of protecting environment. India's rich culture, traditions and values contains within it the 'panacea' of the present environmental problems. Our 'Bisnoy' community and some such other communities are glaring examples of this.

For our very existence we can at least follow the following code of conduct

- (i) Turn off lights, fans and other appliances when not in use.
- (ii) Check for water leaks in pipes and toilets and repair them promptly.
- (iii) Obtain as much heat as possible from natural source.
- (iv) Grow, deciduous trees and climbers at proper places outside your house.
- (v) Recycle and reuse glass, metals and papers.

- (vi) Try riding bicycle or just walk down small distances instead of using your car or scooter.
- (vii) While constructing your houses, don't uproot the trees as far as possible.
- (viii) Grow different types of ornamental plants, herbs and trees in your garden.
- (ix) Don't waste food.
- (x) Reduce the use of pesticides.
- (xi) Reduce, reuse, recycle, refuse the use of plastics as far as possible.
- (xii) Fertilise your crop primarily with organic fertilizers.
- (xiii) Eat and consume local seasonal vegetables. This saves lot of energy on transport, storage and preservations.
- (xiv) Don't keep water taps running while brushing, shaving, washing or bathing.
- (xv) Water the plants and flower in the evening. Never water the plants in mid-day.
- (xvi) Install a small system to capture rain water.
- (xvii) Use solar cooker for cooking your food on sunny day. It will cut down your LPG expenses.
- (xviii) Use mixed cropping.
- (xix) Control pest by biological control methods.
- (xx) Grow grass in the open areas which will bind the soil and prevent its erosion.
- (xxi) Don't make unnecessary chaos.
- (xxii) Control the volume of your Television, Radio and other entertainment appliances.
- (xxiii) Organise seminar, meetings etc. for awakening people about environmental degradation.
- (xxiv) Protect wildlife, animals, birds.
- (xxv) Make compost from your kitchen waste and use it for your kitchen garden or flower pots.

How long will you survive depends on how green is your valley. We like or not, this is the ultimate fact.

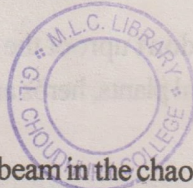


Sankardeva, a beam in the darkness

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Exactly, it was a beam in the chaos, gloomy atmosphere in old Kamrup or Asom during the medieval era i.e. the 15th century when he was born. As he emerged, "it was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of credulity, it was a season of light, it was a season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct to the other way" - Charles Dickens, here is not concerned with the advent of mystic Sankardeva but his origin in the air of Asom was very much significant and similar as the remarks of Dickens.

Here before Sankardeva, perhaps there was no such aureole personality who had shaped concretely the Assamese nations, its language, social life style and significantly the Assamese literature. So far as his outlook is concerned, especially in the philosophy of life and in various genres of Assamese literature, he may rightly be called, "the first modernist of Asom." He had a unique and peerless innovative power of mind which was proved from his very first poem that was written just after learning the alphabets i.e.

"Kara tala Kamala
Kamala dala Nayana
....."

Possibly, in his innovative mind, there is found an indirect global influence when it was the stage of maturity of the western literature, especially English. It was the revival of learning and knowledge of antiquity. It was the Renaissance which was an intellectual rebirth which showed itself in the effort of the individual to free himself from the rigid institutions of the middle ages, feudalism and church and to assert his right to live, to think and to express himself in accordance with a more flexible secular code.

Perhaps, Sankardeva was found injected by the reformatory zeal of renaissance and the air of the revival of learning also blew over Asom. In the social, religious and literary field of Asom, he brought about a renaissance. His reformatory mind and compelling power reformed the dogmatism of the people

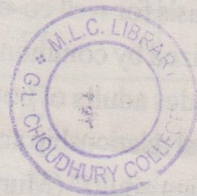
and directed them to the right path. He made free the men from the religious superstition, he taught people, how to live, how to think and to express. But it was not possible to make them understand the utterly ignorant people. Hence, he tried to set them in the right direction through the ideals of 'Ek Sarana Nam Dharma' and finally he got enormous success in uniting the Assamese nation into one.

The people on the other hand notwithstanding persecution from the old orthodoxy, flocked to Sankardeva's side to listen to the message of love and met there as equal sons of God. Thus he effected a great change and cleansing of hearts. He also taught people personal cleanliness and correct social behaviour. Ever since the day of receiving ordination of life of a 'Bhakta' becomes a life of dedication. Alongwith the initiation, he taught the ways of clean life, inward and outward in minute details to which he adhere in greatest possible care.

Thus, Sankardeva became a legend, a mystic in the mind of the so called Assamese Nation. He was not simply a social reformer but also a modifier of the thoughts of the Assamese people. When the whole Assamese nation was shrouded in the darkness before his emergence, when they were quite ignorant about the right ways of life, "He" was like a 'beam' of wisdom, knowledge, reformation and pathfinder. He remains a 'concept' in the intellectual minds which is not much at least established not only the concrete foundation but also a complete house of identity of the Assamese on the doorsteps of the world. □

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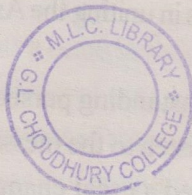


A Study on Family Among the Tiwas of Markangkuchi (Jagiroad area) Morigaon, Assam

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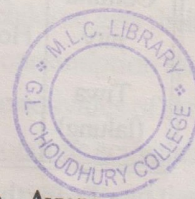
Jagiroad town lies in the district of Morigaon. It is mainly an administrative town and also the main business centre of the N. E. India. It is approximately 60kms from Guwahati. The whole Jagiroad area is covered by paddy fields and villages. There are around twenty villages covering Jagiroad. The population of Jagiroad is composed of heterogeneous communities. Both tribal and non-tribal communities live in the area.

Among the villages of Jagiroad area one village is Markangkuchi gaon. It is one of the hamlet of the village Nakhowla. The village is situated in the western part of the main town Jagiroad. The village Markangkuchi is inhabited by the Tiwa, Assamese, Bengali, Bodo, Nepali communities.

The lalungs prefer to call themselves as Tiwa. According to the lalungs 'Ti' means water and 'Wa' means superior. Among the lalungs the family is closely knit unit which is the basis for well co-ordinated social system. "The family is a social group characterized by common residence, economic co-operation and re-production. It includes adults of both sexes at least two of whom maintain socially approved sexual relationship and one or more children own or adopted, of the socially co-habiting adults" (Murdock, 1965).

They have both nuclear and joint family system. Usually, a family consists of a man his wife and unmarried children. Father is the head of the family and all the members obey him. Due to their long association with the Jayantias, the lalungs adopted some of the socio-cultural traits of the jayantias. The Kinship terminology prevalent among them may be termed as descriptive. But the use of certain classificatory Kinship terminology cannot be overlooked. Thus, "Magara Ayung" is used to address the father's elder sisters as well as mother's elder sisters's husband. Some of the Kinship terminologies prevalent among the lalungs are show to next page :

English	Lalung
1. Father -----	Pang
2. Mother -----	Ayung
3. Father's mother-----	Buri
4. Father's Father-----	Aja
5. Son -----	Cha
6. Daughter-----	Choja
7. Father's elder sister-----	Magara - Ayung



It was reported by the elderly lalungs that the lalungs society had followed a matrilineal system of inheritance in the past decades which however is not practiced now-a-days. Instead they practice a loosely knit matrilineal system of inheritance. The lalungs of the hilly region still follow the matrilineal system of inheritance. Among the union between a man and a woman. Clan exogamy is the general rule and monogamy is the socially and legally recognised type of marriage. Polysamy is avoided. Cousin marriage are not in vogue in lalung society. Widow remarriage is in vogue and cases of divorce is very rare.

Table : 1 : Village Communities of Markangkuchi

Community	No. of Households	% (Percentage)
Assamese	49	29.9
Bengali	17	10.2
Bodo	10	6.1
Nepali	4	2.5
Tiwa	84	57.2
Total	164	99.9

From the above table it is seen that the village Markangkuchi consists of five communities out of which 84 households belong to the Tiwa community and the percentage is 57.2%. There are 49 Assamese households and 17 Bengali households and the percentage is 29.9% and 10.2% respectively. There are 10 Bodo households (6.1%) and 4 Nepali households (2.5%)

Table : 2 : Population pattern among the Tiwa of Markangkuchi village.

Communi- nity	No. of Household	No. of Persons				Total
		Male	%	Female	%	
Tiwa (lalung)	84	217	49.5	221	50.5	438

From the above table it is seen that there are 84 Tiwa households in the village Markangkuchi. Total number of male is 217 (49.5%) and female is 221 (50.5%). The number of female is slightly higher than male.

Table 3 : Distribution of Household among the Tiwas of Markangkuchi village by composition.

Composition	Number of Households	% (Percentage)
Nuclear Family	52	61.9
Joint Family	31	36.9
Extended Family	1	1.2
Total	84	100

From the above table it is seen that the total number of nuclear family is 52 (61.9%) and 31 (36.9%) families are joint families and only 1 (1.2%) extended family is found in the village.

Among the Tiwas of the village Markangkuchi the nuclear type of family is found in large number. The sons after marriage like to live separately. This is mainly due to lack of accomodation in their parental household. Because of scarcity of land the sons after marriage get difficult to stay together with their parents. But though they live separately from their parents they co-operate with their parents. Besides nuclear family there are also joint family in the village. The Tiwas of the village do Bodo, Sali, and Ahu cultivations and therefore they like to live in a large family. So, that each family member can help one another. Another reason of forming joint family is production and consumption. All the brothers work together in the field and they can produce more food.

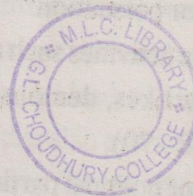
The family is headed by the oldest male member of the family. He is the

supreme authority. He possesses absolute power over his family. He has the great role and responsibility upon the family. He takes all the decisions to maintain the family. Everyone of the family respects and obey him.

Among them the family acts as an educational unit. The children gets their formal education in the family. Regarding the production and consumption the family is the smallest units in the village. In respect of economic activities of the family the position of the head man of the family is unique. All economic activities of the family are directed by the head of the family and he supposed to lead the family to economic prosperity.

In the village there have some of the economic functions of the family which is prevailing within the different households. The village is mostly dominated by nuclear families. All the members of family are very much co-operative for the upliftment of the entire family. The male person is particularly the head of the family and do all outdoor movement. The women folk on the other hand take care of the domestic work.

Of all human group, the family is the most primary group. Family organization of any society is a vast subject for comprehensive study. It covers all the aspects of a family or a social group of people, such as characteristics, types, size, composition, functions and division of labour among the economic, cultural, religious, social and emotional aspects of life. □

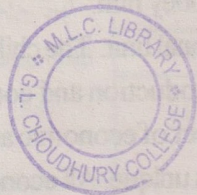


Participation of Indian Women in Indian Politics

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The success of a political system, especially democratic country largely depends upon the effective political participation of its citizens in the political system as well as decision making process direct and indirect participation of the citizens is not only important but also essential for the success of a participatory democracy. In this connection, Indian democratic system furnish a dismal picture of political participation of Indian men in general and women in particular. The involvement of women in Indian political system is not as intense and wild that of the men.

Conventionally, participation means voting, supporting pressure groups, active membership of a political party, holding party offices, contesting election, raising party funds and so on. Thus in a limited sense, political participation includes those activities designed to influence decision making of any political system. But there is also a broad meaning of political participation. According to Kalpana Roy, political participation include -

- A) The activities designed to influence the decisions of government through pressure or persuasion.
- B) Electorate activities such as voting, campaigning, lobbying.
- C) Protest, strikes, demonstration, resort to violence . (Women in Indian Politics, P - 70)

The aim of political participation is not to create more and more women members in parliament or states legislature, but to touch the structure. Its goal is to create massive mobilization and involvement of women within political structure. Indian women got franchise in 1936. But it was only in 1950, with the inauguration of Indian constitution Indian women got equal rights with men in the form of "Fundamental Rights" and "Directive Principles". In spite of this constitutional provisions, though government has been passing various bills for the protection of women rights, but Indian women have not been able to get adequate and proportionate political participation. This will be evident from the following -

WOMEN MEMBER IN LOKSABHA

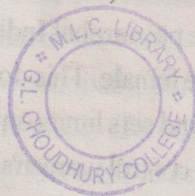
	Total Members of seats	Number of women membership	Percentage %
First Loksabha	499	22	44%
Second Loksabha	500	27	5.4%
Thrid Loksabha	503	34	67%
Fourth Loksabha	521	31	5.9%
Fifth Loksabha	523	22	4.2%

The reasons of this lack of effective political participation may be sought in the social environment which restrict women to come out of their private sphere and participate in public life. The inegalitarian and the patriarchal Indian social structure provided scope for male domination over the female. This domination or subordination destroy self respect, self confidence and sets limits on women's aspiration. The basic unit of Indian society i.e. the family, control women's sexuality, labour, production-reproduction and even their political and social mobilization. During Indian freedom struggle a good number of women participated in freedom movement, therefore paved the way of women's participation in public sectors. They played a legendary role in freedom movement. But, according to some critics, inspite of their legendary participation during freedom struggle, Indian women themselves failed realized revolutionaries representatives of Indian womanhood. Their directions came form the congress leaders. Geraldine Forbes opines in this connection very rightly - "Male guardianship prevailed, even though Indian freedom movement was not characterized by 'Patriarchial Nationalism'." (Women in Modern India - p . 155)

There has been an ongoing serious debate regarding the 33% reservation of seats for women. To broaden the base of political participation and to strengthen the faith in political process, reservation is necessary. But at the same time, practically it is not the enough measure for effective women's participation. Because reservation can't solve the gender inequality and without elimination of gender inequality political participation is not again possible. It is due to gender inequality, the men-folk and the political parties are very reluctant to give up

authority, power and status for women. However, the de-centralisation of power by panchayat Raj (73rd constitutional amendment) created a milestone for women's political participation. The 73rd amendment has "Provide scope for coming of women to the leadership and decision making position and it has made such a role mandatory and universal in the whole India" (Panchayati Raj in Active by Susheela Kaushik)

Awareness raising programmes, income generative schemes, education, meaningful use of power etc. means are important for women participation. These measures should create enough space for women about their equal rights with men in all field - social, political, economic as well as domestic sphere - "Let women share the rights and will emulate the virus of men". □



নাৰী, তুমি অৰ্থ আকাশ

ৰূপামণি কাকতি

প্ৰবন্ধ, অসমীয়া বিভাগ

জি. এল. চি. মহাবিদ্যালয়

দুটা পৰিয়ালৰ মাজত এখন মৰমৰ সাকোঁ নিৰ্মাণ কৰা নাৰীক ভাৰতবৰ্ষৰ আদ্যাশক্তি হিচাবে অভিহিত কৰা হয়। নাৰীক শক্তিৰ প্ৰতীক বুলি ধৰা হয়। দেৱীৰ আসন দিয়া হয়— মহিমাময়ীৰ ৰূপত। সুন্দৰৰ পূজাৰী হৈ মিলনৰ সংসাৰ বচোতা নাৰীৰ সন্মান আৰু মৰ্যাদা আমাৰ সমাজত সুৰক্ষিত নোহোৱাটো অতি লাজ আৰু পৰিতাপৰ কথা। সমাজৰ সৰ্বস্তৰতে নাৰী আজিও উপেক্ষিত হৈ আছে। ধৰ্মৰ আৰু নিৰ্যাতনৰ বলি হোৱা নাৰীৰ ভয়ংকৰ তথ্যই আমাৰ পুৰুষশাসিত বস্তুবাদী সমাজখনৰ প্ৰকৃত ৰূপ উদঙাই দিছে। যুগে যুগে পণ্য সামগ্ৰীৰ দৰে ব্যৱহাৰ হৈ অহা নাৰীৰ প্ৰকৃত স্বাধীনতাইহে আমাৰ সমাজক এটা প্ৰগতিশীল ৰূপ প্ৰদান কৰিব বুলি দৃঢ়তাৰে ক'ব পাৰি।

সাম্প্ৰতিক যুগত কিছু সংখ্যক নাৰীয়ে শিক্ষা আৰু সচেতনতাৰ দ্বাৰা নিজকে গঢ় দি লক্ষ্যত উপনীত হৈছে যদিও নাৰী-প্ৰগতিৰ সামগ্ৰিক ছবিখন সন্তোষজনক নহয়। প্ৰায়ভাগ নাৰীয়ে শিক্ষাৰ পোহৰ নোপোৱা বাবে সামাজিক দিশবোৰৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত অজ্ঞ আৰু সেইবাবে সহজে শোষিত হৈ আহিছে। কন্যাসন্তান জন্ম হ'লে এতিয়াও বহুতে গলগ্ৰহ বুলি ভাবে। তেনে সন্তানৰ শিক্ষা-দীক্ষাৰ প্ৰতিও অভিভাৱক সকলে মুঠেই গুৰুত্ব নিদিয়। ফলত শিক্ষা, চাকৰি, ৰাজনীতি, সমাজনীতি আদি ক্ষেত্ৰত নাৰীৰ অগ্ৰগতি সামান্য। বিশ্বৰ মুঠ সম্পত্তিৰ ভিতৰত মহিলাৰ নিজৰ অংশ এক শতাংশৰো কম। সেইদৰে বিশ্বৰ মুঠ অশিক্ষিতৰ ভিতৰত দুই তৃতীয়াংশই মহিলা। এই বিস্ময়কৰক তথ্যই নাৰী প্ৰগতিৰ পয়ালগা ছবিখন স্পষ্টকৈ দাঙি ধৰে। প্ৰতিভা পাটিলে ৰাষ্ট্ৰপতি হোৱাটো বা ছানিয়া মিৰ্জাই খিতাপ জয় কৰাটোৱে নাৰীৰ প্ৰকৃত বিকাশ প্ৰমাণ নকৰে। এইখন ভাৰতত প্ৰতিদিনে ধৰ্মগণ, নিৰ্যাতন, শোষণৰ বলি হোৱা নাৰীৰ জীৱনৰ হিচাপ-নিকাচেৰেহে নাৰী প্ৰগতিৰ নিৰপেক্ষ ধাৰণা কৰিব পৰা যায়। আইন থকা সত্ত্বেও এইখন ভাৰতত প্ৰতিদিনে কিমান যে কন্যাৰ্জন হত্যা কৰা হয় তাৰ লেখ জোখ নাই। আনকি কন্যা সন্তান জন্ম দিয়া মাতৃগৰাকীও লাঞ্ছনাৰ বলি হ'ব লগা হয়। যোৱা বছৰৰ বিধান সভাত প্ৰকাশিত সমীক্ষা মতে ৮৬৭ গৰাকী নাৱালিকাকে ধৰি ৪৪৭৩ গৰাকী নাৰী নিৰ্যাতিতা হৈছে। বিহাৰ, উত্তৰ প্ৰদেশ আদি ৰাজ্যৰ বহুতো দৰিদ্ৰ পিতৃ-মাতৃয়ে যৌতুকৰ ভয়ত জন্মৰ লগে লগে নিমখ খুৱাই কন্যাসন্তান হত্যা কৰি আহিছে। বিশ্ব সংস্থাই নাৰী-নিৰ্যাতনৰ সমীক্ষা চলাই মত পোষন কৰিছে যে, নাৰীৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত মানৱ অধিকাৰ যথাযথভাবে কাৰ্যকৰী হোৱা নাই।

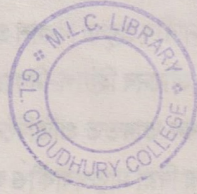
অথচ সৃষ্টিৰ দুটা পিঠি— এটা পুৰুষ আৰু আনটো মহিলা। এখন সুস্থ সমাজ গঢ়িবলৈ হ'লে পুৰুষৰ লগতে নাৰীকো সমানে আগবাঢ়ি যাবলৈ সুবিধা দিব লাগিব। নাৰীকো অমৃতৰ সন্তান বুলি আগবাঢ়ি যাবলৈ সুবিধা দিয়া উচিত। অকল পুৰুষৰ প্ৰগতি আৰু জয়গানেৰে আমাৰ সমাজৰ প্ৰগতিৰ স্বৰূপ নিৰ্ণয় নকৰে।

অসমৰ আৰ্থ-সামাজিক দিশত নাৰীসকলে পুৰুষৰ সমানে অংশগ্ৰহণ কৰিও বঞ্চিত হ'ব লগা হোৱাটো সঁচাকৈয়ে চিন্তনীয় দিশ। সৰু ছোৱালীৰ পৰা আৰম্ভ কৰি গৃহিণী, বৃদ্ধালৈকে সকলোৰে ঘৰে-

বাহিৰে ব্যস্ত থাকি পুৰুষক সহায় কৰে। গাঁৱৰ সৰহভাগ মহিলাই খেতিপথাৰত কাম কৰাৰ উপৰিও ৰন্ধা-বঢ়া, ধোৱা-পখলা, সৰা-মোচা আদি কাম কৰে। কোলাৰ কেচুৱাটোকো মাতৃগৰাকীয়ে ইয়াৰ মাজতে যত্ন ল'বই লাগিব। তৎসত্ত্বেও নাৰী উপেক্ষিত বা বঞ্চিত হৈ থকাটো সঁচাকৈয়ে ভাবিবলগীয়া কথা। নাৰী সৰলীকৰণৰ ওপৰত গুৰুত্ব আৰোপ কৰিলেহে নাৰীমুক্তি সম্ভৱ হৈ উঠিব। নাৰী সৰলীকৰণৰ বাবে নাৰীক আৰ্থিকভাবে স্বাৱলম্বী কৰি তুলিব লাগিব। অৰ্থনৈতিক স্বাধীনতা অবিহনে অকল শিক্ষা-দীক্ষাৰে নাৰীমুক্তিৰ ফটাটোল বজাই থাকিলে আমাৰ সমাজৰ প্ৰকৃত উন্নতি হ'ব নোৱাৰে। আৰ্থিক নিৰাপত্তা নাৰীৰ বাবে অতি প্ৰয়োজন। কৃষি আৰু চাকৰিকে অৰ্থনীতিৰ একমাত্ৰ পথ বুলি বিবেচনা নকৰি অৰ্থনীতিৰ আন আন ক্ষেত্ৰ সমূহৰ লগতো জড়িত কৰি, উপযুক্ত প্ৰশিক্ষণ লৈ সংস্থাপনৰ পথ মুকলি কৰিব লাগিব। চৰকাৰী পৃষ্ঠপোষকতাত নাৰী আত্মসহায়ক গোটৰ বৃদ্ধি আৰু বিকাশ হ'লেহে অসমৰ থলুৱা আৰু পৰম্পৰাগত সামগ্ৰী উৎপাদন কৰি এক সতেজ অৰ্থনীতি গঢ়ি তুলিব পৰা যাব। ইয়াৰ বাবে প্ৰয়োজন শিক্ষা, মনৰ উদ্যম আৰু শ্ৰম।

সেইবাবে নাৰী শিক্ষাৰ ওপৰত অধিক গুৰুত্ব প্ৰদান কৰা উচিত। যেতিয়ালৈকে নাৰী সামাজিকভাবে সচেতন আৰু অৰ্থনৈতিকভাবে স্বাৱলম্বী নহয় তেতিয়ালৈকে নাৰীৰ ওপৰত বিভিন্ন ধৰণৰ অত্যাচাৰ-উৎপীড়ন চলি থাকিব। চৰকাৰে বিভিন্ন ধৰণৰ আইন প্ৰণয়ন কৰিও নাৰী-নিৰ্যাতন ৰোধ কৰিব নোৱাৰে। উদাহৰণ স্বৰূপে 'গাৰ্হস্থ্য আইন' বলবৎ হোৱা সত্ত্বেও নাৰী নিৰ্যাতনৰ সোঁত বন্ধ হোৱা নাই।

আমাৰ সমাজত নাৰী সুৰক্ষিত হ'লেহে সমাজৰ প্ৰকৃত প্ৰগতিৰ অভিযান আৰম্ভ হ'ব। নাৰী পুৰুষৰ অৰ্দ্ধাঙ্গিনী। নাৰীয়েই আদ্যাশক্তি। সেইবাবে প্ৰসিদ্ধ মনীষা মাও-চে-টুঙে কৈছিল— 'নাৰী, তুমি অৰ্ধ আকাশ'। নাৰীৰ কৰ্ম আৰু ব্যক্তিত্বৰ পোহৰতহে এইখন সমাজৰ সঁচা প্ৰগতি নিৰ্ণিত হ'ব। □



বিধবা বিবাহ এবং বিদ্যাসাগর

আনন্দ ঘোষ

প্রবন্ধা, বাংলা বিভাগ

জি. এল. চি. মহাবিদ্যালয়

উনবিংশ শতাব্দীর উবালগ্নে অপারিসীম শিল্পীবুদ্ধি, ভাষাজ্ঞান এবং সমাজ সংস্কারের দায়িত্ব নিয়ে আত্ম প্রকাশ করেছিলেন ঈশ্বর চন্দ্র বিদ্যাসাগর (১৮২০-১৮৯১)। তিনি যে সামর্থ্য ও আত্মনির্ভর শক্তি নিয়ে জন্মগ্রহণ করেছিলেন, সাধারণ বাঙালীর চরিত্রে তার তুলনা মিলে না। তাঁর মূর্তি ধবল পর্বতের ন্যায় শীর্ষ তুলে দণ্ডায়মান থাকে; কারো সাধ্য নাই যে সেই উচ্চ চূড়া অতিক্রম করে বা স্পর্শ করে।

বিদ্যাসাগরের জীবনচরিত গ্রন্থের প্রায় প্রতি পাতাতেই দেখা যায়, তিনি কাঁদছেন। বিদ্যাসাগরের এই রোদন প্রবণতা তাঁর চরিত্রের একটা বিশেষ লক্ষণ। কোন দীন-দুঃখী এসে দুঃখের কথা আরম্ভ করতই তিনি কেঁদে আকুল; কোন বালিকা বিধবার মলিন মুখ দেখা মাত্রই তাঁর বক্ষস্থলে গঙ্গা প্রবাহমান। বাল্য বিধবাদের বৈধব্যদশা বিদ্যাসাগরকে দারুণভাবে ব্যথিত করত। তাই এই বাল বিধবার দুঃখ-দর্শনে তার হৃদয় বিগলিত হ'ল এবং সেই বিগলিত হৃদয়ের প্রস্রবণ থেকে করুণ মন্দাকিনীর ধারা প্রবাহিত হ'ল। 'সুরধনী যখন ভূমিপৃষ্ঠে অবতরণ করে, তখন কারসাধ্য যে, সে প্রবাহ রোধ করে। বিদ্যাসাগরের করুণার প্রবাহমান ছুটেছিল, তখন কারো সাধ্য হয়নি যে সেই গতির পথে দাড়াতে পারে। দেশাচারের দারুণ বাঁধ তা বোধ করতে পারে নি। সমাজের ঝুঁকুটা ভঙ্গিতে তার শ্রোত বিপরীত মুখে ফিরে নাই। সরল, উন্নত জীবন্ত মনুষ্যত্ব নিয়ে তিনি শেষদিন পর্যন্ত স্থিরভাবে দণ্ডায়মান ছিলেন; কারো সাধ্য হয় নাই যে, সেই মেরুদণ্ড নমিত করে।

বাল্য বিধবাদের বৈধব্যদশা দেখে বিদ্যাসাগর কাতর হয়েছিলেন। যে সকল বালিকা 'বিধবা' শব্দের সঙ্গে পরিচিতই নয়, তারা কি করে এই বৈধব্য দশা পালন করবে বিদ্যাসাগর তা ভেবে পান নি। তাই তিনি নানা যুক্তি দিয়ে বিধবাদের পুনরায় বিবাহের কথা বলছেন। তিনি বলেছেন— "বিধবা বিবাহের প্রথা প্রচলিত না থাকতে যে নানা অনিষ্ট ঘটিতেছে, ইহা অনেকেরই হৃদয়ঙ্গম হইয়াছে। অনেকেই স্ব স্ব বিধবা কন্যা ভগিনী প্রভৃতির পুনর্বীর বিবাহ দিতে উদ্যত আছেন। অনেকে ততদূর পর্যন্ত যাইতে সাহস করিতে পারেন না; কিন্তু এই ব্যবহার প্রচলিত হওয়ার নিতান্ত আবশ্যিক হইয়া উঠিয়াছে, ইহা স্বীকার করিয়া থাকেন।" বিদ্যাসাগরকে সে সময় অনেক সমালোচনার সম্মুখিন হতে হয়েছে। বিভিন্ন জন বিভিন্নভাবে তাকে বিধবা বিবাহ নিয়ে প্রশ্ন করেছেন। কিন্তু তিনি বিভিন্ন যুক্তি দিয়ে সমালোচকদের প্রশ্ন খণ্ডন করেছেন এবং বিধবাদের পুনরায় বিবাহের কথা বলেছেন। তিনি 'বিধবাবিবাহ প্রচলিত হওয়া উচিত কি না এতদ্বিষয়ক প্রস্তাব' গ্রন্থে স্পষ্টভাবে বলেছেন— "দুর্ভাগ্যক্রমে যাহারা অল্প বয়সে বিধবা হয়, তাহারা যাবজ্জীবন যে অসহ্য যন্ত্রণা ভোগ করে এবং বিধবা বিবাহের প্রথা প্রচলিত না থাকতে ব্যভিচার দোষের ও ঝগ্ন হত্যা পাপের শ্রোত যে উত্তরোত্তর প্রবল হইয়া উঠিয়াছে, ইহাবোধ করি চক্ষু-কর্ণ বিশিষ্ট ব্যক্তি মাত্রই স্বীকার করিবেন। অতএব হে পাঠকবর্গ মহাশয়! আপনারা অন্ততঃ কিয়ৎক্ষণের নিমিত্ত স্থিরচিত্তে বিবেচনা করিয়া বলুন, এখন স্থলে দেশাচারের দাস হইয়া, শাস্ত্রের বিধিতে উপেক্ষা প্রদর্শন পূর্বক, বিধবা-বিবাহের প্রথা প্রচলিত না করিয়া, হতভাগ্য বিধবাদিকে যাবজ্জীবন অসহ্য যন্ত্রণা নলে দক্ষকরা এবং ব্যভিচারি দোষের ও ঝগ্নহত্যা পাপের শ্রোত উত্তরোত্তর প্রবল হইতে দেওয়া উচিত; অথবা দেশাচারের অন্নগত না হইয়া, শাস্ত্রের বিধি অবলম্বন পূর্বক, বিধবা বিবাহের প্রথা প্রচলিত করিয়া, হতভাগ্য বিধবাদের অসহ্য বৈধব্য

যন্ত্রণা নিরাকরণ এবং ব্যভিচারি দোষের ও ভ্রংশহত্যা পাপের স্রোত নিবারণ কর উচিত।”

বিদ্যাসাগর বিভিন্ন পুরাণের উদ্ধৃতি দিয়ে বিধবাদের পুনরায় বিবাহের কথা বলেছেন। পূর্ব প্রচলিত বিভিন্ন আচারের পরিবর্তন করে নূতন-নূতন আচার প্রচলিত হয়েছে, তবে হতভাগ্য বিধবাদের প্রতি এত অবিচার কেন? তাদের শাস্ত্রও পরিবর্তন করা দরকার। এই বাল্য বিধবাদেরও মন আছে, তাদেরও হৃদয় আছে। তিনি বিভিন্ন যুক্তি দিয়ে দেখিয়েছেন যে বিধবা বিবাহ শাস্ত্র সন্মত, শাস্ত্র বিরুদ্ধ নয়। বিদ্যাসাগর পরাশর সংহিতার কথা উল্লেখ করেছেন। এই গ্রন্থের চতুর্থ অধ্যায়ে আছে—

“নষ্টে মৃতে প্রব্রজিতে ক্লীবে চ পতিতে পতৌ।

পথগাম্বালৎসু নারীনাং পতিরন্যো বিধীয়তে।।

অর্থাৎ স্বামী অনুদ্দেশ হলে, মারা গেলে, সংসার ধর্ম পরিত্যাগ করলে, ক্লীব স্থির হলে ও পতিত হলে, স্ত্রীদিগের পুনর্বীর বিবাহ করা শাস্ত্র বিহিত। মাধবাচার্যও স্বয়ং লিখেছেন— কলিযুগে মনুষ্যের কষ্টসাধ্য ধর্মে প্রবৃত্তি হওয়া অসম্ভব, তাই অনায়াস সাধ্য ধর্ম নিরূপনই উচিত। বিবাহ অনায়াসসাধ্য বলে সর্বসাধারণ বিধবার লক্ষে সর্ব প্রথম বিবাহের অনুষ্ঠা দিয়েছেন। এমন কি বিদ্যাসাগর নারদসংহিতার কথাও উল্লেখ করে— বিধবাদের বিবাহের কথা বলেছেন। নারদসংহিতাতে আছে সন্তান জন্মগ্রহণ করলেও স্ত্রীলোকের বিবাহ দেওয়া যায়। বিদ্যাসাগর আর একটি যুক্তি দিয়ে বলেছেন, যদি কলিযুগে বিধবা বিবাহের সম্ভাবনাই থাকত না। যখন বৃহৎপরাশর সংহিতাতে পুনর্বীর বিবাহিত বিধবার অন্নভক্ষণের নিষেধ দেখা যাচ্ছে, তখন বিধবা বিবাহ কলিযুগের ধর্ম বলে সুস্পষ্ট প্রতীয়মান হচ্ছে। যদি কলিযুগে বিধবা বিবাহের প্রসঙ্গও না থাকত, তা হলে পুনর্বীর বিবাহিতা বিধবার অন্নভক্ষণের নিষেধও থাকত না। সম্ভাবনা না থাকলে, নিষেধের আবশ্যিকতা থাকেনা। অতএব, বৃহৎপরাশর সংহিতার বিবাহিতা বিধবার অন্নভক্ষণ নিষেধ দ্বারা, বিধবাবিবাহ নিষিদ্ধ বলে বোধ না জন্মে, বরং বিহিত বলেই বিলক্ষণ প্রতীতি জন্মে।

বিদ্যাসাগরের সময়ে অনেক পণ্ডিত ব্যক্তি তাঁর বিধবাবিবাহকে সমর্থন করেন নি। এমন কি তারা বলেছেন যে, কোন পিতাই একবার কন্যাকে দান করার পর পুনরায় আবার অন্যপাত্রের দান করতে পারেন না। বিদ্যাসাগর মহাশয় এর প্রত্যুত্তরে বলেছেন যে যদি একবার কন্যাদান করলে, আর কোনও অবস্থায় সেই কন্যাকে পুনরায় পাত্রান্তরে দান করতে পিতার অধিকার না থাকত, তা হলে মহর্ষি কাত্যায়ন বিবাহিতা কন্যার পুনরায় অন্যপাত্রের দান করার সুস্পষ্ট বিধি দিতেন না। এ বিষয়ে কেবল বিধি মাত্র পাওয়া যাচ্ছে, এমন নয়; পিতা বিধবা কন্যাকে পাত্রান্তরে দান করেছেন, তারও স্পষ্ট দৃষ্টান্ত পাওয়া যায়। মহাভারতের ৯১ নং অধ্যায়ে আছে, অর্জুন নাগরাজ ঐরাবতের বিধবা কন্যার পানি গ্রহণ করেছিলেন। এমন কি নাগরাজের কন্যাতে অর্জুনের ইরাবান নামে এক পুত্র জন্মে। তাই বিদ্যাসাগর মহাশয় বলেছেন যে যখন শাস্ত্রে বিবাহিতা কন্যার পুনরায় যথাবিধানে পাত্রান্তরে সম্প্রদান করার স্পষ্ট বিধি আছে, তখন কন্যা দান করলে পিতার স্বত্ব ধ্বংস হয়ে যায় এমন হতে পারে না। অতএব বিধবা বিবাহ শাস্ত্রসন্মত।

বিদ্যাসাগরের একটি উক্তি দিয়েই প্রবন্ধটি শেষ করা যেতে পারে— “যে দেশে পুরুষজাতির দয়া নাই, ধর্ম নাই, ন্যায়-অন্যায় বিচার নাই, হিতাহিত বোধ নাই, সদসম্বিবেচনা নাই, কেবল লৌকিক রক্ষাই প্রধান কর্ম ও পরম ধর্ম, আর যেন সে দেশে হতভাগা অবলাজাতি জন্মগ্রহণ না করে।

হা অবলাগণ! তোমরা কি পাপে, ভারতবর্ষে আসিয়া জন্মগ্রহণ কর, বলিতে পরি না।” □

Employment Opportunities in an Economy

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There are so many problems in an economy. In present day the major problems of an economy is growing unemployment. It is not that the problem of unemployment exist only in underdeveloped economy but in developed economy the problem of unemployment also exist. But the nature of unemployment is different in different economy.

Meaning of unemployment :

"Unemployment is defined as a state of affairs when in a country there are a number of able bodied person of working age who are willing to work but cannot find work at current wage level." The unemployment in a society may be voluntary or may be involuntary. There are scope in the society who are not able to work or not willing to work are voluntarily unemployed. But there are some other people in the society who are able and willing to work but the economy does not provide them jobs are involuntary unemployed. The involuntary unemployed people are only taken as unemployed people in the society. The voluntary unemployed people are not taken into the account of unemployment.

Unemployment in developed and underdeveloped countries :

The problem of unemployment in developed countries is different from the problem of unemployment in underdeveloped countries. There is always minimum amount of unemployment that prevails in the economy among the workers who are working for a particular jobs and searching for new better jobs or looking for employment for first time. They are not able to get jobs because of frictions such as lack of market information about availability of jobs and lack of perfect mobility on the part of workers. They remain unemployed for relative short period of time before they are able to get new jobs, When presently frictionally unemployed persons get jobs the new frictionally unemployed persons come into existence and thus there is always some frictional unemployment prevailing in the economy.

Unemployment also exist in a growing economy because of structural change. In a growing economy if the demand for one kind of labour is expanding then the demand for another kind of labour declining. For example, with the

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computerization of banks, offices occurred in India recently some workers were rendered unemployed. But computerization creates new job opportunities. One being given training in computer operation some of them again got jobs. But for sometime they remain unemployed. Again due to decline in demand for some industrial goods in the market the unemployment arises in that industries. On the other hand with the rise in demand for some products in the market the new jobs are created and the unemployed people are able to get jobs but before getting jobs they remain unemployed.

The problem of unemployment also arises in developed and underdeveloped nations. In an industrialized economy the problem of cyclical unemployment arises. In advanced nations the consumptions of the people does not arise in the same proportion in which their income increases. So, they save a vast amount of their income. The low consumption reduces the demand for consumer goods and it reduces the income of the people engaged in the consumer goods industries. With the fall in demand and income, the inducement to invest falls and it reduces production than before. The lower the production the lower will be the employment opportunity in the economy. Moreover in developed countries the labour are paid lower wages than their productivity. It reduces the labours purchasing power. Because the labours in one hand, are factors of production and an the other hand they are the consumer. So, finally it reduces the demand for the products. Because of the fall in demand in the market production falls and it leads to the unemployment in the society.

The problem of unemployment in developed countries can be solved by taking appropriate monetary and fiscal policies. The government can raise tax rate, it until increase the revenue of the government and that can be invested in the economy to raise employment. Moreover, the rate of interest can also be lowered by raising money supply in the economy. More investment means more production and more employment. At a lower rate of interest people can take loan easily and can invest for productive purpose. But if the money taken from the banks are used for unproductive purpose like buying gold and other materials it will raise the price level in the economy.

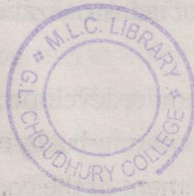
The problem of unemployment in underdeveloped countries is just different form the developed countries. In underdeveloped countries the productivity of the factors like capital and labour is very low. They cannot produce superior product and hence their income level is also low. At a lower level of income their

living standard is also low. They spend major part of their income on consumption and it reduces their saving and also reduces their power to formulate capital in the economy. Moreover, most of the underdeveloped countries are based on agriculture which is again uncertain because of the lower increase in the agricultural sector the demand for industrial product does not increase. Again due to the lower level of increase in industrial sector the demand for food crops and commercial crops is also low in the economy. The low level of productivity in agricultural as well as industrial sector is the prime cause of small size of the market. Thus if some investors want to invest they do not invest because the extent of the market is very small. The low level of productivity and lack of demand could be the main cause of the lack of industrialization in underdeveloped countries.

The problem of unemployment in underdeveloped countries cannot be solved only by raising money supply in the economy but by raising the productivity of the people of the country. The government of the country have to play an important role to solve the problem of unemployment. The government must take step for development of agricultural sector and industrial sector. The modern scientific method should be used in agricultural as well as industrial sector. The adequate financial facility have to be provided to the farmers as well as the people who want to establish small scale and cottage industries.

The people of the country should reduce their expenditure on luxurious goods that do not provide any kind of income and employment. People should save money and take loan form the banks to invest them either in agriculture or in industrial sector. In agricultural sector people can invest their money in horticulture, floriculture (flower production), fishing, mining, poultry etc. which will provide income and self employment opportunity. Moreover people also can invest in the establishment of small scale and cottage industries like basket making, bag making, soap making, doll making, cloth making, food processing and the agro based industries like sugar, tea, gur, biscuit industries. The employment opportunities in these sector has also been increasing day by day. The investment in any discipline requires effective administration for success. Therefore the people should have proper knowledge and management capacity and then only they can earn income and self employment in the economy. For raising productivity the government should expand vocational education in the country. Education makes people skilled and able to work effectively. Expenditure on education is also a kind of investment.

Because it will increase income of the people and of the country. The government alone cannot solve the huge unemployment problem in the country. The people in the country can create employment opportunity through SHGs. The loans and facilities offered should be used for productive purposes. Those policies should be undertaken by the public sectors which will create greater employment opportunities or job oriented projects should be undertaken. And the only way to guarantee employment is the all round development of a Nation. Balanced growth is the need of the hour. □



Village Economies Affected by Flood in the District of Barpeta

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Every year flood occupies the front page of almost all the newspapers of Assam. With the advent of the monsoon, it rains cats and dogs in this region of the country. As a result, the mighty Brahmaputra and its tributaries seem to be the mine of danger thereby creating a havoc in the countryside.

Barpeta is always a flood-prone district in Assam. In the month of July, 2004 heavy showers of rain fell for days together. As a result, water came downward at a killing speed and overflowed the rivers like Beki and Polla. For this, a terrible flood swept over the low-lying areas of the district of Barpeta. Water stood high like a colossal figure in the district for many days. The breaking of the dyke at Mathanguri acted a fuel in doing great ravages to the village economy. Similar kind of damage was witnessed in the flood of 2007.

The ravages caused by the flood can hardly be described. Thousand of houses, pet animals and other properties were carried away by the terrible rushing water, villages like Kalpani, Nimua, Ananda Bazar, Barbala, Balabhita, Hassanpur, Baghbar etc. were badly affected. In some places output of the whole village was entirely swept away. People became homeless and took shelter on platforms and highways. Crisis of drinking water and food items because the burning question. Water-borne diseases like dysentery, cholera, malaria etc. broke out among the victims in the flood-affected areas. Many people died of incurable diseases. Some people lost their sense for losing their essential things. Animals were also affected. As the paddy fields and the field of grass were undermined by water, a large number of animals died without food.

Assam is mainly an agricultural state. The district of Barpeta is not an exception to this where more than eighty percent of the total population depend upon agriculture, paddy is the main crop of the district. But it is unfortunate for the poor farmers that all the paddy fields are generally captured with water thereby preventing them from harvesting. Since paddy constitutes the bread and butter of the village economy, its destruction in the flood provides a lifeless atmosphere.

In the time of flood everyone was moved by the pathetic condition of the

flood victims in the relief camps. Many doctors and students visited the flood affected areas and rendered great service to the distressed people. Both government and non-government organizations took steps to help the sufferers. Many boats were released for the people to travel here and there to collect useful things. Loans were granted to the ruined peasant for buying cattle and seed. Arrangements were made for the free distribution of several relief materials such as rice, clothes, medicine etc.

Though the government has taken steps to help the flood victims, it is not enough. A great deal of work has to be done to control the flood. A permanent solution is the need of the hour before it becomes a threat to people and their way of living.

