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- ❖ **Myanmar and India's North-East**
- ❖ **Politics of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas**
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Impending Financial Crunch!

The ongoing debt crisis in Greece has made the world going bonkers over the development and some developing countries fear an impending financial crunch of greater magnitude than that of 2008. Greece owes 240 billion Euros to the troika of European Commission, European Central Bank (ECB) and IMF. In the wake of rising value of the US dollar, the plunging price of crude is exerting intense pressure on the finances of oil-exporting countries, thereby, giving rise to growing fears of a new debt crisis in the making. One expert says: “We’re going to have another financial crisis. Brazil’s already in great trouble with the strength of the dollar; I dread to think what’s happening in South Africa; then there’s Malaysia. We’re back to where we were, and that for me is really frightening.” Many developing countries are demanding a change in the way sovereign defaults are dealt with. UNCTAD, the UN’s Geneva-based trade and investment arm, has recently recommended a series of principles, including a moratorium on repayments while a solution is negotiated; the imposition of currency controls to prevent capital fleeing the troubled country; and continued lending by the IMF to prevent the kind of existential financial threat that roils world markets and causes severe economic hardship.

Nevertheless, when these proposals were put to the UN General Assembly in September 2014, a number of developed countries, including the UK and the US, voted against it, claiming the UN was the wrong forum to discuss the proposal, which is anathema to powerful financial institutions. Some developing countries are alleged to have been taking advantage of rock-bottom interest rates and the cheap money created by quantitative easing to stack up billions in new debt and in 2013 alone, as World Bank data show, borrowing by developing countries was up 40% to \$17.3bn. Media reports indicate that Brazil’s economy is likely to be seriously tested as the greenback rises; Turkey, Malaysia and Chile have large dollar-denominated debts and sliding currencies; and a string of African countries face sharp rises in debt repayments. Ghana and Zambia have already had to turn to the IMF to ask for help. It’s as if absolutely nothing has changed since the last crisis. Some observers feel that the world economy stands on the brink of a second credit crisis as the vital transmission systems for lending between banks begin to seize up and the debt markets fall over.

Broadly speaking, the collapse of US house prices back in 2007 led to the seizure of the credit markets and banking crisis of 2008. Nevertheless, some experts feel that the collapse of the US housing market was not the cause of the crisis; it was merely a symptom of the more insidious ills of cheap credit, low risk and the promise of another bailout round the corner. The slowing down of the Chinese economic growth rate from 12pc in 2010 to 7.4pc in 2014 has made some experts to observe that it is the once booming property sector that has turned into a bust, and is now dragging down the wider economy as the bubble deflates. The second global credit crisis is now already unfolding in China and the bonds of Chinese real estate companies are now falling like dominoes.

All asset classes are now crumbling. The oil price has collapsed from \$115 per barrel in June 2014 to about \$52 at mid-June this year and iron ore has slumped from \$140 per tonne in January 2014 to \$62 per tonne at mid-June this year. Media reports reveal that the global debt has ballooned by \$57 trillion since 2007 to reach about \$200 trillion. The main culprits of monetary expansion have been China, which launched a 4 trillion Yuan (£386bn) stimulus package, the US Federal Reserve has launched three rounds of QE adding \$3.7 trillion worth of assets to its holdings, the Bank of England has spent about £375bn and Japan has increased its asset buying programme to 80 trillion yen (£454bn) a year, up from the previous rate of 60-70 trillion yen. It is in this backdrop that the RBI governor has warned that the efforts of central banks in the developed world to avoid another Great Depression by keeping interest rates at zero may lead to another crunch.

— BK

Myanmar and India's North-East Region

Aviini Ashikho*

[This paper intends to analyze the need of linking India's North East with Burma and further South East Asian Nations as a problem solving mechanism to achieve a win-win situation. Based on secondary open sources, the paper concludes that, if both the Governments succeed in solving their problems by showing their maturity, the regions of both countries murky social, economic, religious issues will be replaced with not only peace but prosperity.]

The former Prime Minister of India Narasimha Rao, initiated and emphasized the importance of India's 'Look East Policy' during his tenure as the Prime Minister (1991-1996). However, the successive governments have failed to take evidently effective measures due to various reasons in that context. Nevertheless, the forces of globalization and the outward looking attitude of Indian administration for the past one and half decades have been instrumental in generating a lot of interest among the policy makers of India.

In general, India's North East region has continuously remained neglected, being considered as a sensitive and disturbed region, mainly because of the opinions formed on grounds of ignorance. It is a well known fact that North East India is beset with series of ethnic conflicts as well as insurgency issues because of sub nationalism.

Similarly, the ethnic minority states in Burma are well-known for their prolonged ethnic conflicts and all forms of human rights' violations. Consequently, both the areas are continuously suffering with much conflict resulting in acute poverty and scarcity though both the regions are blessed with rich natural resources.

Indo-Myanmar Relations

India's relations with Myanmar in the modern century can be traced back to the British colonial period where scholars argue that the relations were rather idealistic than realistic, especially during the

Nehru era.¹ In a historic address to Rangoon citizens during the framing of Burma's constitution on 5 January 1948, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the first President of India, assured of India's assistance whenever Burma required its help.²

However, the Military rule in Burma, isolated itself from the rest of the world when, General Ne Win, overtook the government through a military coup d'état in 1962. For decades, citizens in Burma were deprived of any development and growth in terms of political, social and economic under the military rule. Many scholars view that India's relation with Burma came down when the former supported the democratic movement protests in 1988 against the Military Junta.³

India, however, took the step of reviving the old relationship by introducing economic reforms for the development and progress of both the countries in the 1990s. The 'Look East Policy' initiated by the then Prime Minister Narashimha Rao in 1991 changed India's attitude towards Burma and the South East Asian neighboring countries by starting to focus on building economic and commercial links.

Myanmar, which is now in a democratic transitional phase since early 2011, shares maritime and land boundaries with India. Given Myanmar's geographical proximity to the countries of South East Asia (SEA), close and friendly relations between India and Myanmar can pave a way for a broader economic growth for both SEA and South Asia (SA).⁴ ASEAN also recognizes India to be an emerging economic power which could promote stability for regional peace and prosperity.⁵

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As Myanmar is the only corridor by land through India's North East, there are certain hurdles and obstructions that need to be cleared for the smooth functioning of the economic initiation that in turn will benefit SEA, SA and in particular the affected ethnic areas of both countries.

Conflict in Myanmar

For many outsiders, Myanmar seems to be a country which is tirelessly fighting for democracy for almost five decades. However, with its diversified ethnicities, it has more problems than just a fight for democracy. Myanmar is identified as one of the most diverse countries in the world like its neighbour, India. The Burmans constitute the highest population making about 68% and the remaining 32% consist of many smaller ethnic groups such as the Shans, Karens, Karennis, Kachin, Chin, Wa, Mon, Naga, Rakhine, Chinese and Arakans to mention a few.⁶

The ethnic minority groups dwell in the tangential mountainous terrains whereas the majority Burmans inhabit the valley, i.e. the heartland of Burma. The geographical divide and different ethnic identities between the majority Burmans and the ethnic minority groups have created a lot of misunderstanding, distrust, hatred and suspicion which resulted into continuous tensions and frequent conflicts for almost six decades.

The majoritarian big brotherly and autocratic attitude of the Burmans against the other ethnic minorities forced both the parties to use arms which resulted into disaster. Consequently, the insecure ethnic minorities belonging to around 20 ethnic groups are running their own parallel governments in the vast mountainous areas fighting for total autonomy from the military rule.

The continuous conflict forced the military junta to deny political freedom which resulted into conflict-manufactured poverty. Myanmar, earlier known as Burma, which was once upon a time considered as one of the most prosperous countries in South East Asian states, has become a failed state because of the ethnic conflict, denial of political freedom, lack of social and religious harmony, failure of the leadership to solve the problem and lack of good governance.

The animosity between the majority Burmans and the ethnic minorities is part of the colonial legacy. The Burmans felt that the ethnic minorities supported the colonialist and opposed the freedom struggle. At the same time, the ethnic minorities felt that the prosperity and welfare of their region would be better off under colonial rule.

The ethnic divide⁷ was obvious since that time, for instance, during the Second World War, the Burmans under the leadership of Aung San fought against the allied forces which Great Britain was part of, while, the ethnic minorities fought along with the British forces. This led to a severe bloodshed between the majority and the minorities where it bore irreparable damages causing bloody castigatory killings which greatly left many of the ethnic minorities affected. This was one reason shared by many ethnic communities for taking up arms to resist future defeat.⁸

The main ethnic minorities, consisting of the Shans, Karens, Kachins, Chins, Rakhine, Kayan, Naga, Wa and Mon, to name some, reside in the frontier areas of the country and demand for separate independent states. However, the central Government refused to give even autonomy to any of these states. Consequently, the Karens took arms and formed the first revolutionary group to fight against the military Government in the name of Karen National Union from 1947. Subsequently, other ethnic groups organized themselves, fighting for their own independence.⁹

However, Aung San took an initiative through the famous 'Frontier Areas Conference' in February 1947, involving some ethnic groups succeeding in reaching a hasty accord which was fluid in nature. One of the features of accord was to create a federal state incorporating the ethnic representatives equally. Though the agreement was not satisfying, many of the ethnic groups, the untimely death of Aung San and the majoritarian attitude of the post independent Governments further created mistrust among the minorities.

During the conference, the ethnic groups had agreed to retain their autonomy, accepting the central Government's defence and policy in their areas.

However, the advent of U Nu and Ne Win Governments complicated all the peace efforts. For instance, the first President U Nu was known for his inactions and indifference and disinterest in solving any of the ethnic disputes which created frustration among the ethnic minorities.

Subsequently, Ne Win, the second Prime Minister, who captured power by a military coup, was known for his aggressive, anti-minority policy. He established a one-party dictatorship and suppressed the minorities resulting into severe human rights violations such as forced labour and relocation of village communities.¹⁰

The continuous civil war affected the socio-economic lives of all the civilians in general and the ethnic minorities in particular. Consequently, Burma was listed as one of the least developed countries in the world according to a 1987 survey by United Nations Economic and Social Council (UN-ECOSOC).¹¹

Another dimension of the conflict was religious division. Understanding the pluralistic nature of Burma, Aung San drafted the first Post-Independent Constitution separating religion from politics. However, in 1961, U Nu unilaterally amended the constitution declaring Buddhism as the official religion of the country which created further mistrust in security and alienation among the other minority groups.

For the ethnic groups such as the Kachin, Karen, Naga and Chins are predominantly Christians. As per the latest statistics available, Karens inhabit southern and southeast Burma with 15% Christians.¹² Similarly, Kachins who dwell in the northern most part of Burma have a population of 64.8% of Christians. According to the Joshua Project, the Chins who inhabit the Western part of the country have 90% Christians.¹³

Likewise, among the Nagas, who reside the north western part of Burma, 80% are Christians¹⁴. Above all, among the Rohingyas who live in Rakhine state of Burma, which is situated in the western coast, 90% follow Islam¹⁵. In this situation, the Prime Minister U Nu tried to introduce majoritarian agenda

of popularising Buddhism through educational institutions in order to please the powerful Buddhist monk. However, the opposition from the other minority communities led him to introduce other religious texts in this course which created rebellions among the Buddhist monks.

Realising, the threat from outside in the form of Communism and from inside in the form of majoritarian Buddhism, Nu was forced to prefer the support of the Buddhist monks who are popular among the majority Burmans. The options before U Nu were to get the support of the Buddhist majority to prevent the spread of Communism in Burma.

Consequently, he was forced to declare, Burma as a Buddhist theocratic state in 1961¹⁶. He realised that Buddhism was a powerful weapon to fight a decisive war against the spread of Communism and also a source of integration of the major community-Burmans.

Moreover, after the military takeover in 1962, the government machinery with the strong support of Buddhist monks systematically and vigorously executed their sectarian agenda, propagated and practiced Buddhism through marriages, building of Pagodas, harassing and arresting minority religious leaders, destroying their worshipping places and implementing forced conversion.¹⁷ Consequently, Burma was emotionally and permanently divided on religious grounds which resulted into the prolonged ethnic conflict that created so many miseries.

Conflict in North East India

The North Eastern region of India is not new to conflict and underdevelopment. In the words of Subir Bhaumik, “for an entire generation of post-colonial Indians, the little wars of the North East remained a thunder, a collection of conflicts not worth to bother; until someone’s brother was kidnapped by the rebels, while working in a tea estate or in an oil platform or until someone’s relative got shot in an encounter with them, while leading a military patrol through the leech-infested jungles of the region.”¹⁸

Given the geographical isolation with the often termed 'mainland' India, North-East region is far behind the rest of other states of the country in terms of infrastructural development, good transportation and is often caught up with political unrest and ethnic conflicts. Seven States comprise the North East region namely, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and recently Sikkim has been included as the eighth.

The region is entirely different from the 'mainland' India, culturally, religiously, physically and apparently has an even higher level of ethnicity and language differences.¹⁹ The region constitutes 4 percent of India's population and is home to about 39 million of 475 ethnic groups and sub-groups speaking around 400 languages and dialects.²⁰

The region is often in the news for all wrong reasons, with home to many insurgency groups fighting against the Central Government for autonomy and liberation. In recent studies, it is argued that, the main reasons for the abruption of frequent rebellion retaliation is due to the poor performance of political institutions in India and the overriding of power to cut up sub-national territories.²¹ The conflicts are mainly due to the issues of weak state –society linkages and a fragmented divided society that hinders resolutions of conflict in the area difficult.²²

The North East Region has long been an area of neglect and isolation. Battalions of armies were poured out in every area in the region possibly to counter the revolutionary groups. The controversial Armed Forces Special Power Act (AFSPA) introduced to the region on 18 August, 1958, as a counter-insurgency move has also caused serious emotional and sentimental injury to the people of the region.

Many observers see this Act as the Government's disinterest to solve the conflict in the region with adequate political measures, instead, an attempt to suppress any group challenging the political and territorial integrity of India.²³ Scores of Human Rights violations were and are committed by the men in uniform and economic development is left unmonitored.

The Naga insurgent group formed in the 1950s is known to be the oldest unresolved armed conflict in the world today. The Indian government's past and ongoing processes of national integration, state-building and democratic consolidation have further aggravated the conflict scenario in the region.²⁴ The careless governance and isolationist's policies of the Government have further aggravated the situation in the region.

North East Region-Gateway to South East Asia

Of late, the Government of India have started to invest in the North East Region. In 2008, the then Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh released the Northeast Vision 2020, drafted by the Northeast Council (NEC) focusing on developing communication linkages prioritizing infrastructure development.²⁵ In 2011, the Government allocated a special assistance package of INR 8,000 crore for the development of the region.²⁶ 98 per cent of the North East Region of India is bordered internationally by China, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Bhutan.²⁷

Many now view North East as 'gateway to opportunities of international trade and commerce rather than as a remote and dangerous frontier region' as had been perceived then.²⁸ Indo-Myanmar trading plans not only benefit the two countries but bring the larger regions of East and South East Asia economic ties closer.²⁹

India's 'look east' policy seems to have brought a silver lining to the once forgotten region. The policy could help the states in building better transportation linkages and greater market opportunities with the rest of the country and the neighboring countries.³⁰ However, to achieve this; there is a greater need for the area to develop in terms of infrastructure to attract domestic and foreign big investors.³¹

Possible areas of Co-operation

Despite success stories of India's initiation in improving the economic ties, several studies have rightly pointed out certain drawbacks that have hindered the progress in the development and growth of the initiatives taken up so far. Some of which are, lack of markets in North East India that

can attract traders from East and South East Asian Nations, slow progress in completing the road and railway projects linking to SEA countries through NE India.³²

Other issues that are slowing the progress are the border disputes especially in Moreh, Manipur and Zawkhatar in Mizoram³³, lack of free flow of trade due to limited items identified by border officials leading to illegal trading³⁴ etc.

The 'look east policy' can benefit the people if the inclusions of the usually excluded group of people are equally represented in the planning and development. The agreement (i.e. people to people ties) made by the then Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Myanmar President Thein Sein during their meeting in 2011, should feature in a practical way. The two leaders rightly stated that India and Myanmar need to promote people to people ties. The often excluded lots are the ethnic minorities.

Most of the projects to be undertaken are in the ethnic minorities' areas, who since time immemorial are the victims of various suppressions. The areas of the ethnic minorities in both the countries are rich in natural resources, have power generation potentialities, rich in traditional art crafts and have agricultural and food processing prospects.

Therefore, the governments of the two countries should take careful measures to attain the goals so that even the existing hindrances can be resolved in order that the planned development projects can move in Godspeed. There are few things that both the Governments should work on to achieve greater heights for the smooth functioning of their economic linkage with each other and other countries in East, South and South East Asia.

Suggestions

1. Clearing off the existing border dispute in order to win the trust of the ethnic minorities living in the vicinity. Intrusion from the Myanmar side and the Government of India's inability to provide a permanent solution has caused resentment among the population living in the border

vicinities.³⁵ The Government of India should look into the border dispute that erupts every now and then. The Governments of both the countries should look into the problems created by the artificial fences that could further aggravate the sentiments of the already fuming villagers residing at the border areas especially on the Indian side.³⁶

2. The trilateral highway connecting Moreh (the Indo-Burma border town) in Manipur is about 1000 Kms from Siliguri that connects North East India to the rest of India; whereas the distance from Moreh to Mae Sot (the Thai-Burma border town) in Thailand is about 1360 Kilometers.³⁷ In this regard, the need for the Governments to bring stability among the ethnic groups should be the sole purpose as the trilateral highway would pass through ethnic conflict zones in both the countries.³⁸
3. Illegal trade movement should be checked. The Indo-Myanmar border trade was opened in 1995 to bridge the economic linkages between India and other South East Asian countries.³⁹ Studies have found that illegal trading of commodities was estimated at Rs. 8,365 crore between India and Myanmar in 2000-01 through the Moreh- Tamu border towns. Most of the illegal commodities that are imported from Myanmar are precious stones, cigarettes, beer cans, medicines, platinum ores, narcotic drugs such as heroin, opium, ganja and so on smuggled into India.⁴⁰

The reason for illegal trading is due to the limited legal trading items. Law and order is chaotic and cases of harassments of traders by officials are often reported and also requiring traders to go through a lot of paper work which makes it hard for the traders.⁴¹ For Indian traders, the nearest licensing office is in Guwahati (Assam) which is about 582 kms from Moreh, the border town of Indo-Burma. To curb illegal trading movement, the governments of both countries should systematically develop and increase import and export items, set up licensing offices accessible for traders and monitor the movement

of illegal goods such as arms and drug smuggling on both sides.

4. Curbing insurgency issues that have hampered the development of the region not through arms retaliation but through the means of peace and negotiations should be the option. Myanmar has been battling with civil war for several decades, the longest civil war in the world. India's North East insurgency issues have not been resolved till date with the number of insurgent groups multiplying every few years. Manipur, a small state with a population of 2.7 million (2011 statistics) has more than 20 insurgent groups according to a 2012 report, which poses a major threat to the development projects in the region.⁴²

Therefore, the governments of both the countries should solve this issue patiently and meticulously through peaceful means and not through uses of force as has been done in the past which otherwise would dampen the development and growth of the entire projects.

5. One important agreement made during a meeting between then Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Myanmar President Thein Sein in 2012, was setting up cooperation between institutions from both countries which was seen as an important agreement because no such institution-based links has been witnessed earlier in both the countries. However, this kind of educational link should expand to accommodate the ethnic minorities of both countries as the literacy rate is comparatively low when compared with the majority ethnic groups.

Cross-border education, like the initiations taken by SAARC countries, should be implemented. The Government can adopt the reservation methods, wherein it can have tie ups with institutions from both countries. Providing special reservations and scholarships for merit students from both countries, especially from the ethnic minorities, would help in increasing ideas, knowledge and help in developing the countries.

6. Given the underdevelopment of the areas through which India tries to link economically with the

rest of East and SEA nations, the Centre has to understand the sentiments of the ethnic population living in the areas where the trilateral highway will pass through. The Government should keep in mind to set up the project with the consent and cooperation of the natives as the project will bring about a totally new and an irreversible change in the region.

Likewise, the Government of Myanmar should also look into the issues of the ethnic communities with the approval of the local minorities, especially those cases of forceful land grabbing activities and construction of harmful dams in the name of development are destroying the ancient lush forests and devastating the environment.

7. Cross-cultural assimilation is very important for any society to exist peacefully and progressively. During Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Myanmar with the approval of the minorities, the leaders of the two countries discussed certain important matters one of which was the importance of cultural contacts.⁴³ Cultural exchanges took place between the two countries in the past few years where Burma, in 2012 sent a 13 member student group to attend a SAARC cultural festival in India.

Likewise, the Indian Embassy in Yangon also organized annual Indian Film Festival in the following months.⁴⁴ The Handshake Concert held in July, 2014 in Yangon, initiated by the Embassy of India in Yangon and Rattle and Hum Music Society of Nagaland, India in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture of the Government of Myanmar with the approval of the minorities was a big event of cultural integration where the participants were well received and appreciated.⁴⁵

Given the cultural diversity of both the countries, both countries' governments should promote and encourage such cultural events even more as cultural integration is an important aspect of bringing people from different ethnicities together helping them to appreciate the varieties and in turn bring about peace, development, growth

and would also strengthen the relations of countries.

Conclusion

India-Myanmar cooperation is noticed as an important step in strengthening the long lost cordial relationship shared until the 1980s. India's initiative in the 1990s to regain its lost connection through the 'look east policy' was welcomed by not only Myanmar but by all its East and South East Asian neighbours. In order to be successful in all the programs initiated, both the countries cannot single-handedly manage the show. They have to forge a brotherly relation as has been rightly put so by President Thein Sein during Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit in Nay Pyi Taw in November 2014, so that they can move ahead together to achieve all that has been discussed and agreed upon.

Nonetheless, both the countries have to carry forward their visions and goals looking into the sensitive ground realities such as the ethnic minority issues, which often affect both sides. Small though they may be, the Government should give careful attention to clear the issues and apprehensions of the minority groups, which are excluded in most part, so that it can strengthen and enhance their mutual cooperation.

As discussed earlier, there are many bottlenecks for both countries to achieve their goals nevertheless, if both the governments imbibe inclusive participation to win the trust and self-confidence of their minorities, it can facilitate them to efficiently and effectively execute the planned projects of cooperation, which will benefit not only the two countries but the whole regions of South and South East Asia.

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India-South Korea Economic Relations

Dr. Dipen Saikia*

During the two-day visit of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to South Korea on 18-19 May 2015, a fresh impetus to bilateral economic relations was provided with South Korea pledging \$10 billion for infrastructure projects in India and the two countries signed seven agreements.

The deals came a day ahead of Prime Minister Modi's scheduled meetings with business tycoons from South Korea's largest conglomerates, called chaebols, which include Hyundai, Samsung and LG. All three manufacturing giants operate plants in India where they enjoy sizeable shares of the vast consumer market for cars, smart phones and home appliances.

Media reports indicate that South Korea's ministry of finance and the Export-Import Bank of Korea will create a \$1 billion economic development cooperation fund and provide \$9 billion in export credits to India.

According to one opinion, South Korean pledge of \$10-billion is in line with Modi's efforts to secure promises of bigger South Korean investments as part of his Make in India initiative. The funds will support infrastructure projects such as development of smart cities, railways and power generation.

Some experts feel that undoubtedly economic relations between India and Korea have been strengthening over the years; nonetheless, the current size of trade and investment between the two countries is relatively low compared to the size and structural complementarities of the two economies.

Broadly speaking, India and Korea have shared a close relationship since the establishment of formal diplomatic ties in 1973. The last three and a half decades have seen high-level exchanges and the signing of several crucial agreements like Agreement on Trade Promotion and Economic and Technological Co-operation in 1974; Agreement on Cooperation in Science & Technology in 1976; Convention on Double Taxation Avoidance in 1985; Bilateral Investment Promotion/ Protection Agreement in 1996 etc., leading to a continuous strengthening of bilateral economic relations. However, this strengthening of economic relations between the two countries gained fillip after the beginning of the liberalisation of the Indian economy in 1991.

The greater openness of the Indian economy has not only enhanced market access for Korean goods but has also provided investment opportunities for internationally competitive Korean companies. This is evident from the fact that bilateral merchandise trade increased from \$0.55 billion in 1991 to \$8.86 billion in 2007.

Korea has also emerged as an important source of FDI for India. However, because of several tariff and non-tariff barriers in both economies, the current size of trade and investment is very low compared to the size and structural complementarities of the two economies. There is immense potential to enhance economic co-operation between the two sides.

India and South Korea did not take much notice of each other till the end of the 1970s. A nonaligned India pursued a policy of equal treatment of the two

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Koreas, which it finally abandoned in the 1980s. The emergence of South Korea as an Asian Tiger compelled India to look at it as a source of investment and technology.

The dawn of real democracy in South Korea in the late 1980s brought it ideologically closer to India. The end of the Cold War and India's 'Look East Policy' opened the doors for a rapid economic engagement with South Korea.

As a part of its "Look East Policy", India has been making efforts to intensify its economic relations with East Asian economies. Consequently, East Asia has become one of India's largest trading partners in recent years. Korea too is looking beyond its traditional trading partners like US and China to sustain its trade and economic progress.

Realising the need for greater economic co-operation, both countries agreed in 2005 to establish a Joint Study Group (JSG) to comprehensively evaluate their economic relations and the feasibility of an India-Korea Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA). After several rounds of negotiations, the CEPA was finally signed on August 7, 2009.

Major Korean conglomerates (Chaebols) such as Samsung, Hyundai Motors and LG have made significant investments into India, estimated at \$2.6 billion, till September 2012. Indian investments in ROK have already exceeded \$ 1 billion. Novelis, a Hindalco subsidiary, acquired a Korean aluminium company by investing about \$ 600 million. Mahindra & Mahindra acquired a majority stake in Ssang Yong Motors, the country's 4th largest auto manufacturer, in March 2011, with an investment of about \$470 million.

Tata Motors acquired Daewoo Commercial Vehicle Company for \$ 102 million in March 2004. Other Indian companies present in India include IT majors, Indian Overseas Bank etc.

India-RoK Joint Commission for bilateral cooperation was established in February 1996, which is chaired by the External Affairs Minister (EAM) and the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade from the Korean side. So far, six meetings of the Joint Commission have been held, the last one in June 2010 in Seoul. The two countries have also established a Foreign Policy and Security Dialogue (FPSD) at Secretary (Vice-Ministerial) level, which last met at New Delhi on 28 June 2012.

Both countries concluded a bilateral Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), which was signed on August 7, 2009 and it came into force on 1st January, 2010. Rapidly expanding trade and investment flows lie at the core of the bilateral cooperation. Bilateral trade in 2011 crossed \$ 20.5 billion registering a 70% growth over a two year period. A revised trade target of \$ 40 billion by 2015 was established by both sides on 25 March 2012.

The first decade of the new millennium saw a rapid expansion of both economic and political relations. In 2010, India and South Korea became 'Strategic Partners' and implemented the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA). Bilateral trade surged to \$20 billion in 2011, surpassing India's trade with Japan. However, economic activities have been somewhat stagnant since then and require renewed energy and new ideas. For instance, the much-heralded \$12 billion investment by the Korean steelmaker POSCO in Odisha has been stuck since 2005 in the quagmire of procedures for mining licences, land acquisition and environmental clearances.

Both countries focus on the economic prosperity of their citizens. On strategic regional issues, they strive for a stable and peaceful external environment. In the aftermath of Prime Minister Modi's recent visit to South Korea, economic and trade relations

between the two countries are likely to reach a new trajectory of growth for mutual advantage.

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Politics of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas

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[This article critically examines the slogan of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas articulated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, especially in the context of Hannah Arendt’s notion of politics as theatre of appearance. It is an academic analysis of a popular slogan which also entails its shortcomings along with remedial suggestions. Ed]

The constitution of political space, according to Hannah Arendt, should be designed in a manner, wherein it gives space for politically organized groups or bodies to appear in the public and assert their rights and articulate their demands vis-a vis other politically organized bodies. Politics for Arendt is this theatre of appearance, and freedom for Arendt, far from being an individual or personal ideal, is a deeply political ideal, which is possible only in pursuance of politics.

Arendt considering politics as theatre of appearance and freedom as a political ideal is influenced by the classical examples set in the then Greek and Roman age. As Arendt argues, “The Greek Polis once was precisely that ‘form of government’, which promised men with a space of appearances where they could act, with a kind of theatre where freedom could appear” (Arendt 1998: 152). And further, “The

reason for this striking fact is that, in Greek as well as in Roman antiquity, freedom was an exclusively political concept, indeed the quintessence of the city-state and of citizenship” (ibid 156).

For Arendt, a political constitution, which has in-built provisions for giving its citizenry space for politically appearing in public and pursuing their partisan agenda, could be considered a constitution, which has constituted liberty in the polity. As a political constitution does not ensure freedom for its citizens by putting checks on the rulers or by ensuring that the rulers do not interfere in the private life of the citizens, freedom is ensured if a constitution is designed in a manner in which the participation of organized citizenry in the affairs of the polity is fundamental to the very functioning of the polity itself.

This could only happen if power instead of being centralized is diffused throughout the polity in various organized institutions, which represent different constituencies of the polity. Power for Arendt implies

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the political action of citizenry in various organized bodies, like Panchayat system in the rural areas of India.

According to Arendt, a constitution which has a federated structure would ensure that power in the polity would not be dried up, as the very organization of institutions would ensure that in the polity there would be high level of participation from the people, not as a theoretical ideal, but as ways of being, for instance, if development of an concerned area depends on the local Panchayat or the Municipality, then there is no reason to suggest that the concerned populace of the area, would not be interested in the functioning of the mentioned institutions.

The people of the area would be interested in forming the agenda, which they would raise with the organized bodies, non-compliance with the collectively agreed agenda, would invite protests and eventual change in the electoral pattern of the concerned citizens. All these processes are collectively termed by Arendt as power.

A political constitution is power generating if it has provided spaces to its citizenry, where they could organize and manifest their collective strength. For Arendt, in this regard, the ideal constitution was the American constitution framed after the American Revolution.

The true objective of the American Constitution was not to limit power but to create more power, actually to establish and duly constitute an entirely new power centre, destined to compensate and confederate the republic, whose authority was to be exerted over a large, expanding territory, for the power lost through the separation of the colonies from the English laws. (Arendt 2006: 145).

Politics as theatre of appearance, power and freedom all are linked with each other in the thought of Arendt. As politics implies the coming of citizens in the public in various organizational modes, it could be when they rally behind a political party, when it raises certain demands or protest against the certain moves of the government, other organizational modes could be citizens forming certain residential

committees and approaching the concerned municipality or any other governmental body through these committees, the partisan agenda pursued through these organizational modes in the public domain, is considered by Arendt as politics, which always needs a public setting for its articulation.

The metaphor of appearance is employed by Arendt for politics, because the latter can never be pursued in isolation, it can only be performed in a space, which is open, where there are spectators, who would evaluate and judge the actions performed. The Arendtian metaphor for politics as appearance is apt as politics is always performed in the open and there are always spectators who judge on the desirability of the politics pursued by any organized group. In continuation with the metaphor of politics as theatre of appearance, Arendt also draws a similarity between politics and performing arts.

As Arendt argues, “the performing arts, on the contrary, have indeed a strong affinity with politics. Performing artists-dancers, play-actors, musicians, and the like- need an audience to show their virtuosity, just as acting men need the presence of others before whom they can appear; both need a publicly organized space for their ‘work’, and both depend upon others for performance itself” (Arendt 1998: 152).

Power for Arendt gets generated in the polity if citizens pursue politics while acting in concert. The pursuance of politics by citizens ensures the generation of power in the polity, which also provides vitality and strength to different political institutions, as the latter depends on the participation of people in various forms, for its continual existence. Likewise, we could argue that citizens’ engagement with politics generate power, which ensures the survival and flourishing of different political institutions.

As Arendt puts it, “In the sense of the creative arts, which bring forth something tangible and reify human thought to such an extent that produced thing possesses an existence of its own, politics is the exact opposite of art- which incidentally does not mean that it is a science. Political institutions, no

matter how well or how badly designed, depend for continued existence upon acting men; their conservation is achieved by the same means that brought them into being. Independent existence marks the work of art as a product of making; utter dependence upon further acts to keep it in existence marks the state as a product of action” (Ibid 152).

Lastly, freedom for Arendt being a political concept is possible only in the pursuance of politics, which generates power in the polity. Freedom for Arendt lies not in uninhibited private life, rather it lies, when the citizenry is capable of questioning all political constellations, which hitherto have been termed as necessary. As Arendt argues, “The *raison d’être* of politics is freedom, and its field of experience is action” (Ibid 145).

Indian Constitution, with its federated power structure, wherein power is distributed between the Central Government, the State Government and the Local Government in the form of Panchayats in the rural areas and Municipality in the urban areas, has theoretically provided the space for politics ensuing in power and freedom, but the Constitution all by itself cannot ensure a polity, in the affairs of which citizens participate, thus realizing their freedom associated with their politics, as has been argued earlier in the paper, all political institutions for their survival depend upon the actions of men.

And currently in India, the political actions of the ruling NDA (National Democratic Alliance) regime at the Centre under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi could in future seriously jeopardize the fate of politics, power and freedom in India, most significantly this is being manifested in their policy guiding slogan- *Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas* (Together with all, Development for all).

Undoubtedly, *Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas* apparently appears a benevolent slogan, which seems to be elucidating the noblest intentions of the Central government; nevertheless in actuality, it signifies a thoroughly anti-political stance of the leadership of the current Central government.

Prime Minister Modi often presents himself as a man, who is not motivated by any partisan agenda,

as if that his position does not merit to be politically analysed, as he is a champion of *Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas*, and the notion of development, which would drastically differ from region to region from one community to other, has mystically shred all the intensive differences, which it carries in its bosom, all the different meanings, which the word development would generate in individuals all has been sublimated in the figure of Prime Minister Modi.

It seemingly appears that perhaps Prime Minister Modi’s personality possesses some Spirit-like transcendent qualities, wherein all wayward differences, questions, disagreements, (politically desirable) finally attain their singular meaning by shredding their particularities and communing with the Spirit itself.

The above lines should not be read as polemics as Prime Minister Modi himself attempts to generate for himself such reverence. This manifests in some of the speeches, which Prime Minister Modi delivers, most notably the speech which he gave in the Parliament after being sworn in as the prime minister.

The Prime Minister said, “That for the first four years of the NDA’s rule in the Centre all parties should follow *Rastraneeti* and not *Rajneeti*.” Such a statement obviously carries in itself a narcissistic presumption that the moves, which the present Government would take, would not invite any political challenges from the Opposition parties and all parties should implicitly affirm all the decisions of the Central government on the pretext of national interest.

Political parties of any ideological persuasion or leaning, follow their own commonly agreed notion of what could be considered as national interest, the notion of national interest, which a particular political party advocates is also influenced by the constituency it represents, a party representing Schedule Castes would more strongly assert the question of social justice, by emphasizing that giving justice, to a historically oppressed community, should be the upmost priority of the country as the

question of social justice would lay the foundation for an egalitarian and strong India of the future.

Whereas a Party representing business community would more insist on the question of foreign policy, issues pertaining to globalization and the kind of trade relations, India should have with different countries.

Likewise, we could argue that any articulation of national interest in India cannot go unchallenged, because India being a differentiated polity with such a diverse citizenry, with different political parties representing different constituencies, with every constituency insisting on its own version of national interest, creates a fertile ground for a rigorous politicisation of all articulations of national interest.

Prime Minister of a democratic polity, by articulating and insisting on his non-partisan agenda, actually blocks the space for politics. If he would have articulated his partisan agenda, which instead of being universally benevolent, actually smacked of political calculations then that would have invited political contestations.

For instance, if the Prime Minister would have insisted that the resources of the government are scarce and the developmental decisions, which the government would take may compromise the interest of a constituency in favour of another constituency, whose needs the government considers to be much more urgent, such a realistic appraisal of the situation in which all the governments finds themselves, would not have met with benevolent sympathy by the citizenry, especially by those, whose interests would have been compromised by the governmental decision, as they would have pursued a fierce politics for meeting of their demands.

They would have raised the slogan of justice, and by pursuing this politics, to employ the Arendtian term, power would have been generated in the polity, the government would have been forced to strike a compromise, due to the politics pursued by the concerned constituency, the scales would have shifted differently then, the compromised community would have felt that they have extracted something

from the government, and it is precisely here that they would have experienced the freedom of being citizens of a democratic polity.

When a democratically elected government of any country puts forward the decisions it takes, as a result of political calculations rather than any divine love for the entire citizenry, then such a government engenders politics, which ensures the generation of power in the polity and the resultant experience of freedom by the citizens.

A government which is articulating its decisions on the lines of *Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas* is doing away with all the rigours of the democratic processes and jeopardizing the trinity of politics, power and freedom. All the decisions, which the present BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) led government is taking at the Centre, are based on political calculations. For instance, appointing a Non-Jat chief minister in Haryana, pursuing the politics of vote- polarisation in states like UP(Uttar Pradesh), only through regional leaders, with the Home Minister Rajnath Singh stating he is not aware about Love Jihad, though the issue of Love Jihad is relentlessly pursued by regional BJP leaders like Yogi Adityanath etc.

Notwithstanding all this, Prime Minister Modi continues to say *Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas*. The BJP is doing the shrewdest politics possible under the veil of universal benevolence, which seemingly is a strategy employed to reduce the political space for others. If the BJP had admitted the political nature of its decisions, then a space would have been created for other political organizations to pitch in and raise their concerns.

This is something which the democratic polity of India needs for the sustenance and nourishment of political institutions and to employ the already discussed Arendtian term, power would have been generated in the polity, which was the responsibility of BJP-led government at the Centre to increase rather than to reduce the possibility of power generation in the polity by taking recourse to fallacious universal benevolence.

Indeed, the present government at the Centre is also guilty of weakening of political institutions like

Parliament by bringing ordinances in the place of democratically arrived laws and the prime minister stating at one his rallies in Delhi organized on the occasion of impending elections for Delhi legislative assembly, “that those who are against the ordinances are against you (public).” What could be a more perfect example of clouding the political decision of the government under the veil of universal benevolence?

Prime Minister Modi, before becoming the prime minister when he was campaigning for the Lok Sabha elections 2014, had said in one of his interviews, “If Muslims meet me, then they would start to love me”.

Prime Minister Modi has been true to his words, not regarding Muslim community, but in introducing an absolute benevolent emotion in the political domain, which is articulated as *Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas*. Prime minister’s benevolent sympathy could very well hide under its most generous ambit the vote-polarisation strategy in UP through Love Jihad, and restrict the space for Muslim community to pursue their politics.

Arendt in her book, *The Human Condition* argues, “Love, by reason of its passion, destroys the in-between which relates us to and separates us from others (Arendt 1998:242). Further, “Love, by its very nature, is unworldly, and it is for this reason rather than its rarity is not only apolitical but anti-

political, perhaps the most powerful of all anti-political political forces” (ibid 242).

Prime Minister Modi through his apparent universal benevolence is destroying the in-between worldly relation, which in Arendt’s words, relates us and separates us from others, which is a constitutive condition for politics to happen. In other words, prime minister through his endeavours to directly identify with the populace at large is destroying the in-between which generates space for all possible politics to happen.

The agenda of a democratically elected government should evolve out from political contestations, negotiations and compromises; however, what we are currently witnessing in India is something which goes against all democratic ideals as here the Central government is pursuing its partisan political agenda under the veil of universal benevolence, which is effectively denying the political space to the other.

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Plight of Dalits in Bihar

Dr. Tapashi Bhattacharjee*

[Traditionally, Dalits were considered to be outside the Varna or caste system. They were considered as Panchama or the fifth group, beyond the four-fold division of Indian society. Dalit is a designation for a group of people traditionally regarded as 'untouchables' in Indian caste system. The word Dalit means suppressed, crushed or broken to pieces. Dr Ambedkar referred to them as outcaste. The British described them as Depressed Classes. Mahatma Gandhi designated them as 'Harijans'. They are also referred to as 'Asprishyas' or 'Namshudras' in various states. In Indian Constitution, they are known as 'Scheduled Castes' and 'Scheduled Tribes'. The term 'Dalit' is used interchangeably with the terms SCs and STs. They encompass casteless people, untouchables and all other historically disadvantaged communities.]

Dalits in Bihar are the most deprived lot as more than 50% of them are living below poverty line. According to 2001 census, Bihar's Scheduled Castes (SCs) population was 13,048,608 which accounted for 15.7% of state's 83 million population. Nearly 87% Scheduled Castes (SCs) live in rural areas, of which nearly 72% are agricultural labourers. About 11,34,564 lived in urban areas. (It may be noted that the proportion of Dalits living among the Scheduled Castes of Bihar is lower than any other marginalized communities in India – a mere 28.5% (male 40.2% and female 15.6%).

Dalits in Bihar belong to 23 castes, besides the unspecified castes such as Dom, Chamar, Dhobi, Dusadh, Mehtar or Bhangis, Musahars, Pasi, Nats, Swasi, Rajwar, Turi and other unspecified castes. In Bihar, chief minister Nitish Kumar divided the groups into Dalits and Mahadalits.

The state government also formed the State Mahadalit Commission in 2008 for the development of the most deprived amongst the Scheduled Castes. The Commission observed that out of 23 Scheduled Castes in Bihar, 20 are acutely deprived in terms of educational, economic, socio-political and cultural status. The Commission identified these

20 castes primarily on the basis of literacy rate. The literacy rate of Mahadalits is 16.7% in Bihar.

In traditional Hindu society, even in Bihar, Dalit status was associated with such occupation which could be regarded as ritually impure as cleaning streets, latrines, sewers, leatherworks, butcher works, etc. They worked as manual labourers and their works and activities were considered polluting the individuals, especially of higher castes. They were physically segregated from their surrounding communities and in other way, we may say that they were banned from full participation in Indian social and religious life.

They were not allowed to enter the temples, to fetch water from public wells, to go to public schools, etc; rather they had to stay outside the village. Dalits were not even allowed to move freely on public roads as various examples have been given in G.S Ghurey's book regarding the plight of untouchables. They were not allowed to come out in afternoon as their 'shadows could pollute' the individuals. They also had to take broom with them and the streets were being washed and cleaned after they walked the streets or roads.

The fact is that the attitude of the people towards untouchables in village has not yet changed. Even in urban communities or cities, we still find the feeling

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of segregation. A recent example is that when former Bihar chief minister Jitan Ram Manjhi garlanded the statue of Ram Manohar Lohia, the statue was later on washed and cleaned and the garland was thrown by the activists.

In whatever parameters we measure, Dalits in Bihar seem to be at the very bottom of the society. The third largest Dalit community in Bihar, the Mushars seem to be the most deprived among the lot with only 2% literacy. No wonder Jay Prakash Narayan described the Mushars in 1970s as 'Subhuman beings'. 'Nats', a community living on the edge of life have no substantial benefit of any governmental welfare programmes, which is another example of extreme marginalization.

According to National Sample Survey 1999-2000, 90% Dalit families in Bihar are landless labourers. They are forced to work in the fields of land-owning upper castes for no fixed wages. It is often commented that bureaucrats and politicians are responsible for deteriorating agrarian situations in Bihar. According to 2014 survey, untouchability is still practised among 52% of Brahmins, 24% of non-Brahmin forward castes, 33% of communities of other backward classes.

Untouchability is also practised by the people of minority religions – 23% of Sikhs, 18% of Muslims and 5% of Christians. Most Dalits in India practice Hinduism. According to 61st round survey of National Sample Survey organization, 90% of Buddhists, 1/3 of Sikhs and 1/3 of Christians in India belong to SCs or STs.

A number of reports highlight the plight of Dalit Muslims. They have been deprived of their many rights and privileges. They are lagging behind in education, employment and social power in Bihar. 85% of Dalit Muslims still live below the poverty line. 90% of them are landless labourers and their literacy rate is only 5%.

Though the caste politics based on Dalit vote bank has always remained a political issue in Bihar, Dalit discrimination also exists in context of healthcare,

nutrition, education as well as participation in politics. Medical field workers do not visit 65% of Dalit settlements. The most common diseases due to malnutrition, poverty and pollution or uncleanness are diarrhoea, respiratory problem, tuberculosis, etc. Healthcare involves prevention of epidemics, food adulteration, health check-up and proper sanitation, which is generally not found in Dalit houses and in Dalit families.

Atrocities on Dalits in Bihar take several forms as house-burning, abduction, detention without trial and torture by police, killings, murders, and atrocities on women as harassment, abuse, treating them as witches, assaulting them and beating them up, rape and killing them. On the basis of daily media reports, publications of N.G.Os and Centre for the Study of Social Exclusion and Inclusion, it becomes discernible that many such cases have been reported from the districts of Muzaffarpur, Chhapra, Bhagalpur, Patna, Gaya, Jehanabad, Bihar Sharif, Munger etc.

In Bihar, atrocities on Dalits by police are common. Dalit prisoners are assaulted in jails and many instances of deaths have been reported due to torture in jails etc. Dalit women mostly live with the fear of indignity and humiliation. Many cases of human massacre have been reported in Jehanabad and Nawada by 'Ranveer Sena'.

Anti-Dalit prejudices exist in some groups as the extremist militia Ranveer Sena, largely run by upper caste landlords in Bihar. They oppose equal treatment of Dalits and have resorted to violence. Ranveer Sena is considered as terrorist organization by the Government of India. The overall picture of Dalits and other disadvantaged groups in Bihar presents a grim situation.

Dalits are discriminated and denied access to land and forced to work in degrading conditions and routinely abused at the hands of the police and the higher caste groups which enjoy state protection. In fact, not a single day passes without perpetration of atrocities on the Dalits.

Bihar occupies third position after Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan in regard to the number of atrocities on the Dalits. The record of Bihar in this regard can be said to be very poor as 18 percent cases of inhumanity against the Dalits are reported from Bihar.

Instances of violation of Dalit Human Rights are reported from various places in Bihar. Burning of Dalits' houses is reported from the districts of Muzaffarpur, Chapra, Bhagalpur and Patna. Abduction of Dalits in Bihar has also become a business for making fast and big money. Dalits were abducted from Saharsa, Biharsharif, Nawada and Munger districts. In Bihar, atrocities on the Dalits by the police are common. Dalit prisoners were assaulted in jails and instances of death due to torture in jails were also reported.

Land related class conflicts are common in Bihar. The creation of private armies (senas) by the powerful landed classes or castes are typical of Bihar. Some of these senas target the Dalits or conscript the latter's support to fight the middle castes. The Naxalites, with the support of poor peasants and Dalits, have formed Lal Sena and other groups to fight the senas organized by upper caste landlords. Instances of class conflicts by senas have been reported from the districts of Patna, Jehanabad, Nawada, Gaya, Muzaffarpur, Buxar and Lakhisarai. Massacres took place in the districts of Nawada, Aurangabad, Nalanda, Rohtas, Patna and Gaya.

During a visit to Patna, former Chief Justice of India J.S. Verma was asked to identify the main reasons behind the growing extremist violence in Bihar to which he said, "the state government's failure to implement land reforms". In Bihar, 65770.24 acres of land remains undistributed till date. Topping the chart are the districts of Kaimur, Gaya, Nawada, Aurangabad, East Champaran, West Champaran, Bhagalpur, Darbhanga and Madhepura where the total area of undistributed land ranges from 1516 to 12920 acres.

Reports about fight for land or land related sustenance, minimum wages, Naxalite movement

and so on frequently appear in the media. The woes of agricultural labourers, issues of acute unemployment and poverty are illustrated in such reports: killings in Panpur (Rohtas district), killing of 4 Musahars in a village in Chhapra, gunning down by Peoples War of 6 Dalits in Masaurhi (Patna), killing of 3 Dalits in a Gaya village, killing of three Dalits by Ranveer Sena, in Jehanabad, killing of 3 Dalits again in Jehanabad by MCC men besides the killing of three labourers in Nawada. Instances of shooting are: gunning down of 11 labourers on the Kiul river bed in Lakhisarai and 7 Dalits in Warisialiganj.

Further, violence against Dalit women has been on the increase in Bihar. Human Rights violation against Dalit women is indicative of the low status of women in general and of Dalit women in particular in the given caste order of Bihar. Dalit women live mostly with the fear of indignity and humiliation.

A number of reports point to several cases of human rights violation of Dalit women: for instance, the women are subject to discrimination based on gender, caste, community, religious affiliation and class. Despite many positive developments in securing women's human rights, patriarchy in Bihar still continues to have its strong hold. There is lack of interest in educating the girl child; poor Dalit families cannot afford to provide education to their children.

All the laws in India have not so far eradicated untouchability. There is a gulf between legal enactments and ground realities. Though the historical distortions of the Hindu society have divided people, the Indian Constitution has provided the tools in the hands of the people to assert themselves against the onslaught of the upper castes. People can approach the courts for the redressal of their grievances including violations of human rights.

Though there have been indication of Dalits fighting back atrocities meted out to them, they have not been able to get justice from the police or civil administration. A majority of the cases of atrocities

and caste violence were not registered by the police and if at all, only few cases were registered under Section 3 of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Prevention of Atrocities Act, 1989.

When human rights violations take place against Dalits, it seems the victims are focused by the media only for publicity and the tortures are forgotten. The victims are economically and socially very vulnerable. This is a national issue and the state must step in effectively. Time and again successive governments have failed to tackle large scale atrocities against the Dalits. The guilty are seldom punished.

That blatant atrocity on Dalits being continued is indicative of the failure of the government to implement the provisions of the law. The failure of constitutional safeguards to deter the torturers (mostly high castes) raise the pertinent question: Is the National Human Right Commission competent to contain violence on the Dalits, if not stop them altogether?

The World Conference against Racism Discrimination, Xenophobia (WCAR) held at Durban, South Africa in 2001 and related intolerance has generated lot of discussion on caste related discrimination in India.

Untouchables in India suffer from both intolerance and poverty. Traditionally, they are excluded from mainstream social and economic development and as a result they are found to be most vulnerable to hunger and poverty. Poverty is basically considered as the unavailability of sufficient food, clothing and shelter.

The primary poverty is when a bare subsistence minimum is available for physical efficiency. Secondary poverty is when adequate income is available but cannot be spent due to lack of knowledge and other factors. Now the concept has been totally appropriated by economists and several measures put forward by them to measure poverty. In India, poverty is officially linked to a nutritional base-line measured in calories. The Planning

Commission defined poverty line as per capita monthly expenditure of Rs. 49 for rural areas and Rs. 57 in urban areas at 1973-74 all India prices.

Dalit society and politics can be understood through the study of caste and politics. The relationship between caste and politics may be analysed at two levels i.e. how caste affects politics and how politics influences caste. To know this, we have to explain identification of caste and politics, the effects of caste on voting behaviour, etc. The effects of caste may be perceived as how politics is used by caste in rising social scale or achieving goal, i.e. 'politicisation of caste'.

Rajni Kothari mainly focused on the relationship between caste and politics and analysed voting in India is caste determinant. Caste and politics can never be separated in India. Casteism in politics is politicisation of caste. Social system in India is organized around caste structure and caste identities. Those castes which are at the bottom of hierarchy, may serve as a powerful subject in politics in a variety of ways.

Ambedkar's book on '*The Untouchables: Annihilation of Castes*', which proved instrumental in arousing consciousness among Dalits, is considered as a step forward for Dalit movement. Mahatma Gandhi was in favour of upliftment of Harijans for the establishment of 'universal brotherhood' in society. The Harijan Sevak Sangh was organized in 1932 to work for the removal of injustice towards lower castes.

Social disabilities of untouchables were an important item in Bardoli Programme of constructive work drawn up in 1922 under the inspiration of Mahatma Gandhi. After independence, the Constitution of India prescribed protection and safeguards for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes.

The avowed objective of these measures was to remove social disabilities and promoting their varied interests via abolition of untouchability, protection from social injustice and other forms of exploitation,

giving them special representation in Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha, setting up separate departments and advisory council to promote their welfare and safeguard their interests, prohibition of forced labour, etc.

In government services, special quotas are allotted to them not only in recruitments, but also extended to promotions for higher positions. There is relaxation in age limit, qualifications required and experiences. Dr. Bindeshwari Pathak's International Sulabh Programmes has also played important role in providing them free education and training facilities to improve and change the occupation and life style of Mehtars or Bhangis.

Scholarships are provided to them to continue their education. The government, N.G.Os, and the people of higher castes and classes in society have to give them the chance of a fair deal to live with honour and self-respect.

Bihar had two Dalit chief ministers – Bholu Paswan Shastri and Ram Sundar Das in the past, but they failed to carry forward the exclusive Dalit agenda and remained immersed in political mainstream. The powerful Dalit leaders, like Babu Jagjivan Ram, Ram Vilas Paswan, too failed to provide a foothold to surge a potent Dalit movement in the state.

Jitan Ram Manjhi, after resigning from his chief ministerial post, formed 'HAM' party and addressed various sabhas of Dalits and Mahadalits to make them realize their relevance in society and politics. He wants the Dalits and Mahadalits to feel participatory role in running the government and entering politics to give them their rights.

Dalits in Bihar seem to have come full circle from the agenda of annihilation of caste to secularization of caste i.e. many Dalits are now ministers and M.L.As and M.Ps and are in good position and working in higher posts. Many of them have changed their occupations. In Mahavir Temple of Patna and other temples, Dalit priest are found.

Dalit assertion or upsurge is still based on the principle of opposing the hegemony of upper castes

and fighting against their dominance. What is significant is that dynamics of Dalit politics is striving to force the upper caste to accept them as part of the majoritarian polity.

Regarding Dalits residing in cities or towns, the story is little different. They have generally moved to cities or towns in search of education, jobs or earnings and have benefitted from the affirmative policies of state governments in the last four decades. But still the emergent middle-class among the Dalit families continues to feel caste anonymity in urban centres.

The traditional belief of untouchability is found to still persist among Hindus in the country. Further, the atrocities on the Dalits have increased during post-Independence period. The Dalits in India are more vulnerable to the adverse effects of globalization as they are discriminated in all spheres of life and do not possess any durable assets to sustain dignified living. The restructured safety nets without land reforms, Dalit-oriented subsidies and positive discrimination will make the Dalits the most deprived in general in the region and in India in particular. It will further aggravate the situation due to the political players of the region, which seeks a stake in such measures.

In accordance with the constitutional provisions, many measures have been initiated by the government for providing protection to untouchables (SCs). These are both protective and developmental. In protective sphere, untouchability is legally abolished and the practice is forbidden by Anti-Untouchability Act of 1955. The act was reviewed in 1970. To make it more effective and stringent, the Protection of Civil Rights Act was passed. In 1989, the government enacted Prevention of Atrocities Act.

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The Rohingya Crisis

Dr. Neeru Sharma*

[The Rohingya people have been described as “among the world’s least wanted” and one of the most persecuted minorities around the globe. They have been denied Burmese citizenship since the 1982 citizenship law was enacted. They are not allowed to travel without official permission and were previously required to sign a commitment not to have more than two children, though the law was not strictly enforced.]

According to Amnesty International, the Rohingya people have suffered from human rights violations under the Burma Junta since 1978 and many have fled to neighbouring Bangladesh as a result. Their freedom of movement is severely restricted and vast majority of them have effectively been denied Burmese citizenship. They are also subjected to various forms of extortion and arbitrary taxation, land confiscation, forced eviction and house destruction, and restrictions on marriage.¹

Despite early efforts by the UN, the vast majority of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh are unable to return due to the 2012 communal violence. Even Bangladesh government has reduced the amount of support for Rohingyas to prevent an outflow of refugees to Bangladesh. Then thousands of refugees fled to Thailand. There have been charges that Rohingyas were shipped and towed out to open sea from Thailand.

In February 2009 Thai army towed a boatload of 190 Rohingyas refugees out to sea. A group of refugees rescued in February 2009 by Indonesian authorities told that they were captured and beaten by Thai military, and then abandoned at sea.²

In 2011 the new government of Burma, also known as Myanmar, agreed to take back registered Rohingya refugees. About 1, 00,000 Rohingya have fled Rakhine in west Burma since 2012, when communal violence erupted and Muslim villages were razed in nearly all the township across the state. Hundreds have died in mob violence and 1, 40,000

Rohingya are now living in internally displaced person (IDP) camps, where food, medicine and adequate housing are scarce. They are rendered vulnerable to being sold into forced labour or sex work.³

Due to international persecution and ‘atrocities crimes’ the Muslim Rohingyas have become desperate to take dangerous voyages to countries within the reach in search of safe shelters in particular. Deadly violence and genocidal massacres in Arakan since June 2012 have been instrumental in swelling their exodus to alarming proportion to Bangladesh, Thailand, Malaysia and other countries.⁴

On 29 March 2014, the Burmese government banned the word ‘*Rohingya*’ and asked for registration of the minority as ‘*Bengalis*’ in the country’s first census in three decades.⁵ Now again they are suffering humiliation at the hands of authorities. Now Myanmar has refused to give citizenship to these Muslims. Even Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand governments have banned the entry of Rohingyas in their territories.⁶

Up to 8,000 Rohingyas are believed to be held up at Thai, Indonesia and Malaysia coasts, and those who made it to shore have suffered violence and starvation. These migrants speak of horrors at sea, of murders, of killing each other over scarce supplies of food and water, of corpses thrown overboard. In this situation, UN has warned of a ‘massive humanitarian crisis’ because no government in the region is willing to take them in.⁷

It is a sad paradox that the partial liberalisation of Myanmar in recent years has released both

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genuinely democratic forces and a popular chauvinism, particularly an anti-Muslim chauvinism, within the Buddhist majority which undermines those forces.⁸ Police, Navy and Army officials have been working directly with transnational crime syndicates by escorting boats to international waters, providing rations or extorting bribes from passengers, many of whom are forced to hand over cash or jewellery as payment.⁹

The United Nations refugee agency (UNHCR) has more than 1,50,000 refugees under its care, but more than 90 percent of them are from Myanmar. Thousands of migrants are estimated to be still out at sea, trying to make landfall. More than 1000 were detained at a depot in northern Malaysia after the smugglers abandoned the boats. One of the boats packed with Rohingyas was found stranded off the coast of Langkawi (Malaysia) and was sinking (in May 2015). The maritime enforcement agency towed it to safety, and the people were rescued.¹⁰

Arakan Rohingya National Organisation (ARNO) calls for immediate help of the regional countries and international community to rescue and save the lives of the thousands of abandoned Rohingya and Bangladeshi boat people floating off the coast of Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia.¹¹ These boat people consisting of women and children fleeing large-scale persecution and mass atrocity crimes are in distress and trauma.

Facing starvation, they are in danger of being lost and deserve all assistance and shelter, well in time, in accordance with Article 98 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The issue is, no doubt, an ASEAN issue particularly when refugees have reached in these ASEAN countries. The issue must be discussed in ASEAN for a regional solution to be found out in cooperation with other affected countries and international community.

The UN should constitute a commission of inquiring to know exact number of deaths of trafficked people.¹² It is disappointing that Rohingya issue was not discussed in the recent 26th ASEAN summit held on 26-28 April 2015 in Malaysia.

Recently the United States declared that it is willing to take in Rohingya refugees as part of international efforts to cope with Southeast Asia's stranded boat people. Spokeswoman Marie Harf said that US is prepared to take a lead role in any multi-country efforts organised by United Nations Refugee Agency to resettle the most vulnerable refugees.¹³ Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak had ordered Malaysian navy and coastguard to conduct search and rescue operations for boats carrying Rohingya migrants.¹⁴

Though UN General Assembly adopted resolution on 29th December 2014 and urged Myanmar to grant full citizenship to its Rohingya Muslim minority and grant them equal access to services, but nothing concrete has been done for these people. Until and unless the international community puts pressure on Myanmar to improve the lives of the Rohingya community nothing can save these people because ultimately it is only Burma which can solve this problem.

Safeguarding human security and human rights is the best way to prevent conditions that force people to become refugees or stateless persons. States, which have created these displaced persons, should share the responsibility to reduce level of violence and repatriation of these persons.

Above all, lead roles by world's richest and most powerful states regarding humanitarian crisis can solve refugee/displacement problem. For this international consensus is required to create a desire for world peace. In 21st century where human rights issue have become the concern of all; any violation of human rights of refugees or displaced persons is contrary to human spirit.

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Examining Hannah Arendt’s Concept of Power

Ngoru Nixon*

[This essay seeks to examine Hannah Arendt’s concept of power and to underline how it is different from the prevalent views on power. Arendt does not subscribe to the teleological view on power and attempts to disassociate power from the terms like force, authority, strength, violence etc. Power, for her, emerges when people come together and act in concert. To pursue and examine this, the essay can be divided into three sections. The first deals with the idea of ‘political’ in Hannah Arendt, which provides an essential background in examining her concept of power. Arendt’s view on power is examined in the second section. Finally, the essay argues that the relevance of Arendt’s concept of power can be more persuasively grounded in the understanding that instrumental purpose underlies the coming together of the people.]

The term ‘power’ conveys or induces a certain sense of ‘helplessness’ for those who do not possess it. Consequently, power is desirable and it is worth ‘keeping’ it. Nevertheless, like any other concepts, power remains as ‘an essentially contested concept whose meaning and criteria of application are and must remain forever unsettled’ (Ball, 1988: 80). Therefore, there have been debates and disagreements primarily evolving around the questions: what constitutes as power? Where is power located? And how is it generated?

Popularly, power is expressed in terms of teleological model of action and coalesces together with terms like force, domination, violence, authority etc. The instrumental understanding of power could be traced back to Thomas Hobbes, according to whom, ‘power is, in sum, the ability of an agent in a relation of conflict to alter his and/or others’ situation so as to promote his individual interest’ (Ball, 1988: 82-83).

Hobbesian notion of power has also found resonance in the contemporary time. Robert Dahl describes ‘power as the subsets of relations among social units such that the behaviours of one or more units depend in some circumstances on the

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behaviour of other units' (Dahl, 1986: 40). In a similar way, C. Wright Mills asserts that 'by the powerful we mean those who are able to realize their will even if others resist it' (Mills, 1959: 9). For him, violence is the ultimate kind of power. All these definitions of power evince coercive understanding and command-obedience relationship.

The idea of the 'political' in Arendt

Hannah Arendt's idea of the 'political' is important in our discussion because her concept of power unfolds within the sphere of the 'political'. For her, it is in the realm of the political that power can be effectively realized. In formulating the idea of the political, Hannah Arendt invokes Aristotelian concept of praxis. 'Praxis' according to Aristotle meant the most human activity, the realization of which was only possible in the polis, in the human community where speech and action were not only acquired, but most significant, could be best actualized.

Building on Aristotle's idea, Arendt identifies, out of all the activities necessary and present in human community, only two essential activities i.e. speech and action, are deemed to be political (Arendt, 1958: 25). She considers speech as an important activity because it is what makes a man a political being. Speech is also essentially vital for inter-subjectivity: 'Men in the plural, that is, men in so far as they live and move and act in this world, can experience meaningful only because they can talk with and make sense to each other and to themselves' (Arendt 1958: 4).

Arendt traces her idea of the political to the ancient Greek understanding. The emergence of the polis heralded the emergence of the public realm i.e. the political, as against the private realm i.e. the household. In Arendt's understanding, 'Public is almost synonymous with political, but political is not to be equated with governmental; instead it concerns action in a community of peers' (Pitkin, 1981: 328).

Situating political in public realm means that 'the emphasis has now shifted from action to speech,

and to speech as means of persuasion rather than the specially human way of answering, talking back and measuring up to whatever happened or was done' (Arendt, 1958: 26). It follows that 'to be political, to live in a polis, meant that everything was decided through words and persuasion and not through force and violence' (Arendt, 1958: 29).

The polis was carried on through speech and reason, which is also a realm of freedom and equality. Activities like forcing people by violence, commanding rather than persuasion, domination are pre-political ways characterized outside the polis, in home and family life.

Arendt also precludes economic from the realm of political. The explanation is that economic concerns put men under the absolute dictates of the bodies and hence it is antithetical to freedom and capacity for action. In other words, 'economic relates to the life of the individual and the survival of the species, and hence is non-political, house affair by definition' (Arendt, 1958: 29). Moreover, economic problems are viewed as "matters of administration, to be put in the hands of the experts, rather than issues which could be settled by the two-fold process of decision and persuasion" (Pitkin, 1981:334). The concern of Arendt is to establish the 'equality' of men in the political so that the only what they can 'battle' each other is through speech and persuasion and that their economic status will not influence the outcome of the battle.

Arendt's idea of the political is clearly limited to the public realm, which only permits non-coercive means like speech and persuasion. All the coercive-related actions like force, violence, domination etc. are pre-political whose suitable place is in the private realm and should never be permitted to diffuse into the public realm i.e. the political. The sanctity of the political is also maintained by fortifying it from the economic concerns. Now it is against the backdrop of the political, the realm of speech and persuasion, that she conceptualizes power.

Arendt's Concept of Communicative Power

Arendt's understanding of power represents a paradigm shift from the popular views on power.

As it has been mentioned, the popular views tend to describe power in instrumental way and project power in term of force, violence, authority, domination etc. Here, the actualization of power is measured through the outcome. In other words, it is the end itself that constitutes power i.e. teleological understanding of power.

The popular views also suggest that power involves inducing some individuals to act as a means in order to fulfil the desires and interests of others. So the notion of consent or agreement based on speech and persuasion is precluded for it would amount to diminishing the possibility of usurpation of power. That is why force, violence and other coercive methods have to be inevitably and invariably employed to attain power as well as to prevent others from competing.

In sharp contrast, Arendt visualizes power from different vantage point. She debunks idea of force, violence, authority and strength from the definition of power. For her, communications between men, done through speech and persuasion corresponds to power. As she clearly states: “Power corresponds to the human ability not just to act but to act in concert. Power is never the property of an individual; it belongs to group and remains in existence only so long as the group keeps together. When we say of somebody that he is ‘in power’, we actually refer to his being empowered by a certain number of people to act in their name” (Arendt, 1970: 44).

The Actualization of Power

Arendt declares that power springs up wherever people come together and act in concert. The legitimacy that it derives is from the initial getting together rather than from any action that may follow. So according to her, the actualization of power does not need the help of force, violence etc. Rather, ‘power is actualized only when word and deed have not parted company, where words are not empty and deeds not brutal, where words are not used to veil intentions but to disclose realities, and deeds are not used to violate and destroy but to establish relations and create new realities’ (Arendt, 1958: 300). This implies that power does not in any way

exist within a single individual and in the absence of the people’s support.

The indispensable factor, for Arendt, in the generation of power is the living together of people. Because of the peculiarity of the power that actualize only when people come together, it is never fully materialized – power is to an astonishing degree independent of material factors, either of numbers or means. Ipso facto, power vanishes and passes away the moment the people disperse.

This establishes that ‘a comparatively small but well-organized group of men can rule almost indefinitely over large and populous empires, and it is not infrequent in history that small and poor countries get the better of great and rich nations *who are not as well-organized as the former*’ (Arendt, 1958: 300, emphasis added).

Arendt also maintains that instead of the institutions having overarching commanding position, which made it seemingly powerful, the effectiveness of the institutions of a country is actually because of the people’s support that lends power to it. Henceforth, ‘all political institutions are manifestations and materializations of power; they petrify and decay as soon as the living power of the people ceases to uphold them’ (Arendt, 1970: 41).

The actualization of power in Arendt is possible only when people come to act together. In clear contrast to the popular view, power, according to her, could never become a reality if force and violence is used. Instead the use of coercion signals the end of power.

The sustention of power

If power is the outcome of the people coming together to act, what keeps the people together after this fleeting moment of action has passed? In Arendt’s conception, power is an automatic result when people join together and by remaining together what they keep alive and produce is power. Not only that, it is power again that keeps the people together after the initial gathering. Hence so long as men live so close together and that potentialities of action are always present, can power remain with them.

Thus, for her, 'power is boundless in a sense that it has no physical limitation in human nature rather its only limitation is the existence of other people' (Arendt, 1958: 201). However, she believes that this limitation is not accidental because human power corresponds to the condition of plurality to begin with.

The existence of plural 'human community' might introduce the interplay of powers with their checks and balances. Hannah Arendt deflates any sort of threat to power by claiming that 'power can be divided without reducing it and it is even liable to generate more and more power so long as the interplay is alive and does not result in a stalemate' (Arendt, 1958: 201).

For power to exist, it has to be done only through its actualization. What first undermines and then kills political communities is loss of power and final impotence (Arendt, 1958: 200). It cannot be stored up and kept in reserve for emergencies. If power is lost, the impact is not limited to itself rather it would also amount to the demise of 'vibrant' political communities wherein the people act together by persuasion through speech.

According to Arendt, the extinction of political communities heralds the rise of totalitarianism. In a totalitarian state, 'the more visible government agencies are, the less power they carry, and the less is known of the existence of an institution, the more powerful it will ultimately turn out to be' (Arendt, 1967: 403). Hence power is no more 'produced' in public sphere. Instead it is relegated to the private realm in the form of secret police, concentration camps away from the 'gaze' of the public.

It might seem paradoxical for Arendt to declare that power too exists in a totalitarian state where all the power concentrates in one person. However, she maintains that even a totalitarian ruler needs numbers, a power basis e.g. secret police and its net of informers. In totalitarian state, it is unsurprising that the existence of power in the private area effectively deters the free speech in public realm and thereby inducing the decay of the vibrant political communities.

The distinction of power from violence

After examining how power occurs through coming together of people, Arendt tries to dispel the 'consensus'¹ on the notion that violence is the most flagrant manifestation of power. For her, power and violence do not overlap. In contrast, they constitute two different things and that 'they are opposites: where the one rules absolutely, the other is absent' (Arendt, 1970: 56).

According to Arendt, the contrast between power and violence is distinctly clear. Since the actualization of power is only possible when people 'gather' together, then it is very obvious that power stands in need of numbers. This implies that power can never be the property of an individual.

Whereas violence, according to Arendt, is distinguished by its instrumental character and relies on implements that eventually increase and multiply human strength. What ensues is that violence does not necessarily depend or belong to a group. The underlying principle that power harps on numbers while violence depends on implements constitutes 'one of the most obvious distinctions between power and violence' (Arendt, 1970: 41-42).

To stress the point more explicitly, Arendt succinctly declares that 'the extreme of power is All against One, the extreme form of violence is One against All, which is never possible without instruments' (Arendt, 1970: 42). She further asserts that 'power is the essence of all government, but violence is not' (Arendt, 1970: 51). A government which is exclusively based on power will definitely sustain while no government which is solely based on the means of violence can prolong and in fact has ever existed.

To reiterate the point, Arendt views that even the totalitarian ruler, whose chief instrument is torture has to rely on his power basis i.e. secret police and its net of informers. Also, power needs no justification since it is inherent in the very idea of political communities and it derives its legitimacy from the initial getting together of people rather than from any action that might follow eventually. While Violence will never be legitimate and though it can

be justifiable, as she observes, its justification becomes more remote and its intended end recedes into the future.

Despite declaring that power and violence are distinct phenomena, Arendt concedes that 'power and violence usually appear together' (Arendt, 1970: 52). For example, superiority of the government manifested through violence against the violence of revolution lasts only as long as its power structure is intact. When power and violence are combined, it is the former which is the primary and predominant factor. But she points out that in a situation, where an impotent government or a nation unused to the exercise of political power is invaded or conquered, it is not impossible for violence to overcome power.²

Rule by sheer violence comes into play where power is being lost. It is through 'acquiring the means of violence, one man can exert force against his fellow men' (Arendt, 1958: 202). Arendt declares that though violence can destroy power, it is utterly incapable of creating power. In other words, power can never be derived from its opposite i.e. violence. She argues that even if violence can destroy power, it has to create power base again to support its domination. So it is power alone which can elicit legitimacy and provide sustainability to the governments.

Assessment of Arendt's Conceptualization

In conceptualizing power, Arendt enormously stresses the importance of political drawing from Aristotelian concept of praxis i.e. speaking and acting together of individuals. She, further, excludes socio-economic issues from the ambit of the political. Habermas has found this understanding of political associated with Aristotelian praxis absurdly inadequate in modern societies.

According to him, Arendt's concept of communicatively generated power can become a sharp instrument only if it can be extricated from the clamps of an Aristotelian theory of action. He accordingly identifies three reasons for the absurdities of the Arendt's thought in the modern societies: i) she screens all strategic elements, as

force, out of politics, ii) she removes politics from its relations to the economic and social environment in which it is embedded through the administrative system; and iii) she is unable to grasp structural violence (Habermas, 1977: 14).

Habermas problematizes Arendt's contention that strategic action is necessarily violent and falls outside the realm of the political. According to him, it would be naïve to exclude the element of strategic action from the concept of the political particular so when it has become intrinsic part of the working of modern societies. For Habermas, the strategic competition for political power can be less associated with force than one embedded in the unconstrained communication. This is in addition to his understanding about inbuilt structural violence in political institutions which Arendt fails to consider.

Habermas conceives structural violence not in terms of force but in terms of restriction of free flow of communication indispensable for legitimization. Restricted communications render subjects susceptible to the ideological illusion. It is against the backdrop of this conception that he distinguishes between illusionary and non-illusionary convictions, the possibility doubted by Arendt. Habermas thereby locates the basis of power in the rational discourse of communicative action.

However, a crucial question still remains: why should the people come together in the first place at all? Isn't the coming together of people an act itself? People might converge together with the prior aim of attaining strategic end. In this case, we can make an observation contrary to Arendt that the coming together of people and their acting in concert has a strategic purpose behind it.

The purpose is to produce power in order to achieve a particular set of goals and aims. So power is not strictly an end in itself as Arendt conceives. The coming together of the people can hardly be said as constituting power *per se*. On the contrary, power would be understood in term of whether strategic set of goals and aims have been achieved.

Concluding Remarks

Hannah Arendt's concept signifies a clear reorientation in the understanding of power. Power has been understood in terms of prevailing over some individuals and inducing them to act as a means in order to fulfil the desires and interests of others. Here even an individual depending on his/her capability induces others to act according to his/her whims by intimidating with violence and force.

Arendt debunks this understanding by arguing that power never exists with an individual and also 'retrieve' power from the mooring of force and violence. Instead power needs the people to come together and act in concert. She conceives power as end-in-itself such that it does not depend on the result to determine its actualization. Rather power automatically springs up whenever people act together in concert. Through this conception, Arendt attempts to escape the teleological understanding of power, which conceived power in terms of whether it has achieved success and targets.

However, it remains possible that the people might strategically act together in concert primarily to achieve a particular objective. Then power cannot be understood as an end in itself but in terms of whether it has achieved the intended objective. Therefore, Arendt's location of power in the people acting together in concert can be more meaningfully understood in terms of strategic action while still dissociating it from force and violence.

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Notes

- 1 This is to mean the general acceptance by the popular views on power which see violence, force, and domination as essential in realizing and maintaining power.
2. See the example she gives on the clash between the Russian tanks and non-violent resistance of the Czechoslovak people, Arendt, 'On Violence', pp.52-53.



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Scourge of Naxalism

Sumeet Thakur* & Khyal Chand**

[The history of evolution of the Naxalism in India is described by the likes of Sumanta Banerjee and Bela Bhattia in their works as fragmented and tortuous process which ended with the merger of the two principal groups, the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) CPI (M-L) [People's War] and the Maoist Communist Centre of India (MCCI) in 2004.¹ Naxalism has its immediate origins in the debates within the Indian communist movement of the 1960s about the 'correct' strategic line to be taken in order to establish communism in India's particular circumstances.]

The movement took off in May 1967 and is named after a village in the far north of the West Bengal where a group of revolutionaries, who repudiated the approaches of the major communist parties as 'reformist', launched an armed uprising of poor and landless peasants to drive out landlords.

In many cases, however, action degenerated into indiscriminate violence following the injunction of Charu Mazumdar, who had emerged as the Movement's leader to undertake 'annihilation of class enemies'. Scholars like Dilip Simen have argued that the blatant use of violence has served the interests of the petty-bourgeois intellectual comrades who have led this movement which gave them the license to instigate the murder of any person by declaring him as class enemy.²

This point is also brought forward by the Aditya Nigam, "The adivasis cannot represent themselves; they must be represented, it would seem. They must be represented either by the agents of the state or by the revolutionaries and the voice of the revolutionary is almost always that of a Brahman/upper caste Ganapathy or Koteswara Rao or their intellectual spokes persons. So we have a Maoist-aligned intelligentsia vicariously playing out their revolutionary fantasies through the lives of adivasis while the people actually dying in the battle are almost all adivasis."³

This clearly illustrates that there is a need to empower the tribal population so that they can represent themselves and raise those issues which have relevance in their lives rather following the directives of the Maoist leadership which cherish their own ideological dreams. Naxalism in the early 1970s met with the violent retaliation from the state. Because of the suppression from the state the entire Naxalite movement started to disintegrate into different groups.

Liberation group decided to create mass fronts and they ultimately participated in the parliamentary system. In 1972 Charu Mazumdar died in the police custody which virtually brought an end to the first phase of this movement. Although the Naxalism lost its intensity but still as an ideology and movement it survived in India and it was provided fuel by the continuing denial of justice and human rights to the Dalits and tribals across the country.

In the 1980s, Naxalism entered the second phase as is explained by Sumanta Banerjee in his work, *In the wake of Naxalbari: A History of the Naxalite Movement in India*.⁴ He says that a rethinking took place on the part of some survivors of the first phase who favoured participation in the parliamentary politics and trade union activities.

On the other side were those who stuck to the line of the armed struggle while at the same time they also helped in nurturing the mass mobilization through the setting up of open fronts. CPI (M-L), Party Unity in Bihar, and People's War Group in Andhra Pradesh emerged with the very strong foundation

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and these organizations also tried to spread their influence in to the other states like Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Orissa.

In his work *Agrarian Radicalism in South Asia*, Bouton has noted that there is a sharp division of opinion among the scholars on the issue of peasants' revolts and revolution in South Asia. At one extreme is Barrington Moore, who has argued that peasants' revolts in India have been ineffective, and with rare exceptions such as Telangana in 1948.

At the other extreme is Kathleen Gough who has compiled a list of 77 peasant revolts from the end of Mughal rule to the post-Independence period to support her view that there is a vital revolutionary tradition in India and a basis for revolutionary tradition has not been properly exploited by contemporary radical parties.⁵

The most significant aspect of Gough's long list is the support it provides for the Stokes' argument that the most important peasant revolts have occurred among clan and caste communities. Eric Stokes strikes home the point that most of the Maoist-led radical conflicts happened among the communities which were predominantly clan and caste based which provided the left radicals with an easy source for mobilization.

Maoist cause was further helped by the marginalization of these clan and caste based communities within the Indian democratic set-up which has failed over the years in providing these communities with the basic institutions for democratic participation.⁶ It is especially noteworthy that the largest proportion of revolts in Gough's list, somewhere between a third and a half, were either exclusively tribal in origin or contained a significant tribal element. Another very large proportion occurred among specific castes groups and religious minorities.

Thus, most of the peasant revolts under British rule occurred either among tribes, which are a small minority in the subcontinent as a whole, have suffered from especially severe discrimination and oppression, and are often outside the basic structure of Hindu village agrarian organization or among

ethnic or religious groups whose solidarity could not be explained satisfactorily in class terms alone and did not extend beyond the members of their own group.

When one scrutinizes the post-independence period, the case for the existence of a tradition of 'peasant uprisings' which were primarily class struggles is based upon seven episodes, all directed by one or another of the several Communist parties in India. Some of the most prominent peasant uprising was Tebhaga, Telangana, Naxalbari, Srikakulam and Andhra movement (1969-1971) after the Independence, majority of them have been mostly tribal in nature.

Paul Brass says that the two most impressive movements, Tebhaga and Telangana, occurred at the time of Independence and became enmeshed in the broader communal and nationalist trends which initially gave added force to them, but ultimately doomed them. All, these movements were localized in nature which spread in a particular linguistic zone. He has given four reasons which have fuelled the Naxalite or Radical leftist movements in India.

- i. Heavy involvement of the tribal populations which has greater degree of cohesiveness and are prone to exploitation by the stronger sections.
- ii. Situations of dispossession or other kinds of exploitation of the peasants, sharecroppers and labourers by the large landlords and commercial farmers from the outside the local area holding massive illegal farms.
- iii. Locations of several incidents in border and forest areas outside the centres of traditional, settled village agriculture.
- iv. A strong connection with unimplemented land reforms or outright violations of the land reforms laws.⁷

The nature of the Naxalite warfare is unconventional in nature. Indian state will have to understand the nature of their warfare before charting any strategy to tackle this ever increasing danger on national security. Even the nature of this movement has over

the years has witnessed continuous transformation. It started as a struggle of landless peasants against the repressive landed elites and repressive state, but now it has gained more strength in the natural resource rich regions of India which are predominantly tribal majority regions. The very nature of the revolutionary warfare is very different from the conventional warfare.

David Galula in his book *Counter Insurgency Warfare* illustrates that the insurgents usually adopt a long term strategy which will involve protracted warfare because the insurgents don't have the wherewithal for the direct conflict. The creation of the significant power which could help in knocking out the enemy may take many years therefore the insurgents favour the protracted and indirect guerrilla warfare.

The ultimate aim of the guerrillas is, of course, the capture of the state power in order to transform completely the social-political structure and economic organization of the nation and it is this motive which differentiates it from the civil war. This kind of war aims to subvert the very nature of existing structures of socio-economic relations, therefore, it is also known as the subversive warfare. There is no frontline in such a war. The front is everywhere, and the guerrillas strike anywhere and everywhere.⁸

The main motive of the guerrillas is not to inflict severe defeat on the enemy but it is to confuse, harass and frustrate the enemy. The guerrillas do not engage in conventional battle until the last stage of the war because they are too weak to engage in that. In the guerrilla warfare the violence at the physical level must play second fiddle to the psychological impact of war which is more important.

The main motive is to break the spirit of the enemy to fight. This can be attained by inflicting defeat on the enemy one after another and once the army loses its determination to fight it starts to act in desperation which forces it to commit mistakes. These mistakes can be like harassing the local population which can lead to further alienation from the local population without whose help it will be next to impossible to win the conflict.

Mao believed that although the guerrilla warfare may at times seem militarily primitive and their weapons may not match up to the technological sophistication of the Western world. Politically, however, guerrilla warfare is "more sophisticated than nuclear war or atomic war or war as it was waged by conventional armies, navies and air forces."⁹

A successful response to the problem posed by guerrillas (Naxalites in the current context) is neither simple to plan nor easy, chop, and quite to carry out. Basically, the problem is a political one, to attempt to understand it in purely military terms is the most dangerous kind of over simplification. Guerrillas are a symptom rather than a cause. Lasting success requires a viable political settlement and even operational success over a period of time demands the proper political framework for effective action.¹⁰ Therefore, the counter-guerrilla or counter-revolutionary warfare thus must also rely upon the political and psychological effects of military actions.

The first requirement is, of course, to impose military actions. The guerrillas/Naxalites need victories to maintain their morale, discipline and momentum, and continual defeats are bound to have a serious impact. Moreover, the civilian population, witnessing these defeats and no longer sure that Naxalites may win, will tend to become less cooperative. Such defeats can best be inflicted by the government if the counter-guerrilla forces divide the country into a number of areas and flush the guerrilla/Naxalites out of the area.

Once the area has been cleared and the local cells of the Naxalites have been uprooted, military must guard this recovered area with the help of militia and regular troops. The military must be highly professionally trained in the unconventional warfare and mobile enough to chase out the enemy. The British in Malaya, for instance, used squads and platoons that lived in the jungles for months, gathering their own intelligence, ambushing enemy patrols, and cutting supply lines. At the same time, the British held out amnesties to guerrillas who surrendered and a number of guerrillas feeling beaten did accept the amnesties.

But no counter-revolutionary war can be won by conventional military means alone; a purely military solution is an illusion. It is interesting to note in this connection that the successful guerrilla and counter-guerrilla leaders of the past two decades have largely been non-military men. In China, Mao Zedong, a student and librarian and subsequently a professionally trained revolutionary, defeated Chiang Kai-shek, a professionally trained soldier.

In Indo-China, Ho Chi Minh, a socialist agitator, and General Giap, a French-trained history teacher, defeated four of France's senior generals, including a marshal. Castro was a lawyer and Magsaysay, who led the counter-guerrilla war in the Philippines, was an automotive mechanic who became a politician. In short, the orthodox military officer by and large has been unable to cope with the unorthodox nature of guerrilla warfare.

A second requirement in anti-guerrilla warfare is to separate the guerrillas from the population. One technique by which this can be accomplished is to resettle the latter so-called strategic hamlets. Because people do not enjoy being uprooted from their homes and villages, they rarely go freely. The major task of entire anti-revolutionary warfare is fundamentally political in nature. The success of the anti-revolutionary warfare lies in finding the politically best solution which then must be backed by the military and other coercive measures.¹¹

It is found that districts where Naxalism has grown have some unique characteristics i.e. High share of ST/SC population, Low literacy rate, High infant mortality, Low level of urbanization, High forest cover, High share of agricultural labour, Low per capita income, Low per capita food grain production, Low level road density, Store house of mineral, High share of rural households without specified asset and banks accounts.

The major task of anti-revolutionary warfare is fundamentally a political one. Naxalites are only the barometer of discontent and there is the need to address the causes which are the real reason for the rising discontent among the tribals in India who are the main strength of Naxalites movement. The reason for this discontent lies in the nature of the

developmental model being followed by the Indian state which prioritizes the search of natural resources over the genuine empowerment of the tribal population of these mineral resources rich regions.

Conclusion

This is clearly illustrated by the failure of majority of states in implementing the provision of the PESA Act, 1996 in majority of schedule areas wherein lies the mineral wealth of the rapidly industrializing India. It is the failure of Indian democracy that it has not been able to provide democratic institutional forums in the shape of empowered and autonomous Panchayati Raj Institutions which could have provided protection to the interest of these marginalized sections.

These regions are suffering from the wealth curse because the amount of wealth generated from these regions is siphoned off by corrupt politician, bureaucrats and companies. Even the so-called revolutionaries also participate in this loot for different reasons like for the purchase of weapons and for amassing personal fortunes.

In some of the regions there has been covert nexus of politicians, companies and Naxalites in perpetuating this exploitative nature of economic development. The native population is helpless because they have been totally bypassed in such kind of model of development and it is they who suffer most of the negative externalities of this kind of growth model. This situation is made worse because of the low socio-economic position of the native people.

Tribal population belonging to these regions has one of the worst developmental indices and this makes them unable to fight for their rights according to the modern political methods, it creates opportunities for the mediators like Naxalites, corrupt politicians and bureaucrats to misrepresent their grievances according to their own selfish interests. Creation of empowered local governing bodies coupled with spread of education and by making the current mineral exploitation policy more inclusive by sharing profits with tribal population may help in the eradication of this curse at the superficial level but

at the heart of this problem is the model of development.

Even the creation of so-called empowered Panchayats is not going to bring genuine empowerment. Empowerment does not happen in vacuum it needs legitimization of the empowered authority which can only come from knowledge because knowledge is the source of power. It is becoming impossible to attain the legitimization of the knowledge and authority of the tribal people because the agenda of development has been appropriated by the capitalistic –materialistic conception of development.

This kind of appropriation of tribal resources for the fulfilment of wants of the mainstream society has happened throughout the long history of Indian sub-continent. Emergence of Mauryan, Guptas, Delhi Sultans and Mughal empires are historical example of this process. Modern Indian democratic Republic of India is also following the footsteps of these empires.

But the nature of exploitation is different on two counts – firstly, the current size of Indian non- tribal society is very humongous which will require huge piles of natural resources to fulfil its wants and secondly, after the adoption of policy of liberalization the exploitation capacity and appetite for natural resources has really increased.

The core issue is not of compensation to the tribals or their subsequent rehabilitation rather it is the existence of two different civilizations and world views. So-called modern view is based on exploitation of natural resources and even their subsequent appropriation will be based on purchasing power rather than on needs and on the other side lies the world view which demands striking a balance with the nature by living in consonance with it.

The problem is that modern consumption-based civilization can calculate the mineral wealth of these forests but it fails to understand the existence of the tribal civilization and its method of evaluation of wealth. Entire project of modernization with its instrumental reasoning does not accept any

alternative form of knowledge, what is required is a communicative dialogue between the two civilizations.

In order to make this happen what is needed is empowering these communities to determine the course of their own future. This empowerment requires acceptance of their alternative local knowledge for the use of the resources and subsequent power of autonomy to determine their own fate. It is essential for any agreement claiming to be democratic to fulfil these twin goals in order to establish long term peace in these regions.

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Working of Panchayati Raj in India

Dr. Arif Saeed*

[Panchayati Raj is the name of the present system of rural local self-government institutions. In the wake of the recommendation of the Balwant Rai Mehta Study team, the structure of the Panchayati Raj system has undergone a considerable change. It comprises three-tier system with the village Panchayat at the base, Panchayat Samiti at the intermediate (Block) level and Zila Parishad at the District level.]

The first 'rural local institution' introduced in 1869 was a small, quasi-official committee, and a new era began when rural local government came under the control of elected Indian Ministers in 1919 following a resuscitation of village Panchayats. Indian Panchayats were given a statutory basis and were established in a large number of Provinces. However, the progress remained extremely slow.

The Janata Party Government appointed a high level committee on Panchayati Raj institutions, comprising 14 members, belonging to different parties, under the Chairmanship of Ashok Mehta in December 1977. The report of the committee, submitted in August 1978, contains eleven chapters spreading into 300 pages. The report suggested a new approach towards panchayati raj which favours a two-tier system of these institutions, namely, the zila parishad at the district level and mandal panchayats (a unit of cluster of villages) at the grass-root level.

Model of Panchayati Raj Institutions

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There are three notable patterns of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in India which emerged in three successive stages. The pioneering states of India were Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh, which emerged in the initial stage on the lines as suggested by Balwant Rai Mehta Study team; the genuine and substantially decentralised pattern of Panchayati Raj as exemplified by Maharashtra and Gujarat represent the second and more radical states.

The Present Panchayati Raj Structure in India is as follows:

1. Village Panchayats form the base of the structure and members of a panchayat are elected at large by the adult residents of the village. Seats are reserved for women and scheduled castes. The President and vice-president are usually elected by the Panchayat members themselves but in some states they are elected directly by the village residents. The terms of Panchayats vary between 3 to 5 years. There are almost 203,049 Panchayats in the country.
2. The Panchayat Samiti is the next higher authority. Its jurisdiction is coterminous with that of the Community Development Block. About one-half

of the intended number of Panchayat Samitis have been set-up, these are in the States which have already adopted and implemented legislation establishing Panchayati Raj Institutions.

3. Zila Parishad is the apex body. It is coterminous in most cases with the old revenue district of which these are about 300. The members include the Presidents of the samitis, members of the Lok Sabha. The role of Zila Parishad varies considerably among the states In Rajasthan, Madras, Punjab at is an advisory and coordinating body.

Remodelling of Gram Panchayat

The demographic size of the gram panchayat is very important for determining the economic viability of the unit and economizing in various services rendered to the villagers. Reviewing of the village boundaries for efficient working of the village unit with live panchayat has been debated since inception of the planning in India.

A cluster of villages with a population of about 5000 may be the unit of integrated area planning subject to its economic viability. The Ashok Mehta Committee (1978) expressed the view that an unsound resource base of most of the panchayats was mainly due to their size and structure. The L.M.Singhvi Committee (1986) also pointed out that “Village may be recognized. In order to make for more viable village panchayats, enlarged villages should continue to be the primary and homogenous unit of self-government with a measure of direct democracy.”

This Committee also subscribed to the views expressed by the Ashok Mehta Committee when it said that the demographic size of the area is no doubt relevant for effective transfer of technology, organization of services in respect of health, education, agriculture & Industrial sectors & other welfare activities.

The Strategy of Rural Government

Rural development and poverty alleviation in India has always been one of the main objectives of Planning since its inception. But till the Third Five

Year Plan, the emphasis was on the growth in GNP and it was assumed that it would trickle down to the masses and enhance their income levels. But it did not happen as assumed.

The green revolution had also by-passed both the poor and the backward areas. Even today about 27% of the rural population is subsisting below poverty line. As poverty is an indivisible phenomenon, a multi-pronged strategy in terms of creation of entitlements and building capacities of poor people in order to enhance the pace of rural development and reduction of poverty have been introduced in Five Year Plans.

This strategy may be categorized into six groups of programs in a following manner: Self employment, wage-employment, special-area development programs, minimum needs programmes, institutional & legal reforms, and social security.

Panchayat has been an integral part of rural life in India since time immemorial. The British government ruthlessly destroyed panchayats during their Raj in India. In the 20th century, it was Gandhi who for the first time wanted to revive the Panchayats and it was due to him that Panchayats were made part of the Constitution under Article 40 of Directive Principle of the State Policy.

A committee was established under the chairmanship of Balwant Rai Mehta, which submitted its report on the 24 November 1957. This Committee had laid down the foundation stone of the Panchayati Raj in India. However, the apathy towards Panchayats remained.

The Udaipur Seminar was hailed as having provided a new ‘concept’ of Panchayati Raj. Within six months, the Consultative Council on Panchayati Raj, a non-official advisory body attached to the Union Ministry of Community Development, Panchayati Raj and Cooperation, constituted a committee consisting of 11 members with Balwant Rai Mehta as Chairman.

The committee in an interim report endorsed the general principles formulated by the Udaipur Seminar and drew up five lists detailing the powers and functions of each of the three tiers on the basis

that 'each tier of the panchayati raj should be entrusted with those functions which it can discharge efficiently and effectively on its own'.

After two decades in 1978 Ashok Mehta Committee, after evaluating the progress of the panchayats, had recommended constitutional status to the panchayats, participation of political parties in panchayats' elections, adoption of a two tier system at district and mandal levels and establishing a finance body like Panchayati Raj Finance Corporation for providing credit to the panchayats.

In 1986 the L.M.Singhvi Committee, among others, had also recommended constitutional status to the panchayats. The Ashok Mehta Committee had offered a balanced appraisal of panchayati raj in the context of these two schools of thought:

"Panchayati Raj should not be viewed as a God that failed; it has many achievements to its credit, the more important of which may be identified here. Politically speaking, it became a process of democratic seed, drilling in the Indian soil and making an average citizen more conscious of his rights than before."

"Administratively speaking, it bridged the gulf between the bureaucratic elite and the people. Socio-culturally speaking, it generated a new leadership which was not merely relatively young in age but also modernistic and pro-social change in outlook. Lastly, looked at from the developmental angle it helped a rural people cultivate a development psyche."

PRIs in India: Objectives

The Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI) in India is a unique administrative system at the grassroots level. The PRIs are the effective means of inculcating political consciousness, imparting education and promoting development. It is necessary that the machinery of panchayati raj should be accountable at the lowest level of administration.

Rajasthan was the first state in India to adopt panchayati raj. Rajasthan government passed the Rajasthan Panchayati Samiti and Zila Parishad Act, 1959 and Panchayati Raj was formally inaugurated

by Pt. Nehru at Nagour on 2nd October, 1959. In this Act, three-tier system of Panchayati Raj was created. Zila Parishad at district level, Panchayat Samiti at block level and gram panchayat at village level were constituted under this act.

The idea of 'Democratic Decentralization' was first mooted by Balwant Rai Mehta committee, which was hailed as a 'Charter of democratic revolution' embodying a masterly media for the fulfilment of the needs of democratic government and economic development at rural local level.

Panchayati Raj: System Variations

The proposal for 'Democratic Decentralization' in its institutional form has come to be known as Panchayati Raj. The original idea has taken different institutional forms in various states. In fact, the country is so large and panchayati raj (democratic decentralization) is so complex a subject with far reaching consequence that there is the fullest scope of trying out various patterns and alternatives.

However, Rajasthan, the first state to implement the recommendation on 'Democratic Decentralization', resorted to minimum variation and patterned its three-tier system of panchayati raj, more or less, on the model suggested by the Balwant Rai Mehta Committee. The other states which followed suit viz. U.P, Punjab, A.P, also did not introduce any radical variations.

This view, in fact, had been expressed by the then Bombay Government before the Balwant Rai Mehta Committee also which had explicitly stated that it had no objection to it.

Decentralisation as Basis of Good Governance

Decentralisation is one of the most popular terms used in the literature of development planning in the Third World. Decentralisation can have several forms: For example, it might be horizontal or vertical. In horizontal decentralisation, dispersed power is among institutions of the same level. In this kind of decentralisation, a government's spending decisions might be spread across different ministries instead of being concentrated in an all powerful finance ministry.

Vertical decentralisation, which is more important, allows some of the powers of central government to be-delegated downwards to lower tiers of authority in federal countries, states and then further down to regional and local governments, or even to village associations. It can take three forms:

De-concentration: This is limited to passing down only administrative direction to local offices of central government ministries. Although it does result in dispersal of power, few decisions can be taken without reference to the centre.

Delegation: This involves passing some authority and decision-making powers to local officials. But central government retains the right to ignore local decisions and can, at any time take these powers back.

Devolution: It is the strongest form of decentralisation; granting decision-making powers to local authorities and allowing them to exercise full responsibility without referring back to central government. This includes financial power as well as the authority to design and execute local development projects and programmes.

Administrative decentralisation is one of the major dimensions of decentralisation. It essentially means de-concentration of functions and some powers from the headquarters of the national government departments and agencies to their respective field offices. It may also mean divesting of some responsibilities to corporate institutions. It encompasses a wide range of structure, planning, personnel, procedural and managerial issues, of which all are administrative in nature.

Administrative decentralisation is a necessary but not sufficient component of decentralisation for any country. It enables the various governmental sectors to descend the critical spatial levels in the sub-national hierarchy and to provide greater 'access to the government's services and delivery systems to a large part of population. The concept of administrative decentralisation tends to give prominence to development planning.

Regarding the benefits associated with administrative decentralisation, Conyers in his study stated: (a)

greater popular participation in planning and development; (b) make plans more relevant for local needs; (c) facilitate co-ordination among integrated planning; (d) increase the speed and flexibility of decision-making; (e) generate additional resources and encourage more efficient utilization of existing resources is most often 'territorial' i.e., in territorial hierarchy geographically closer to service providers and clients.

However, transfer can also be made 'functionally' i.e., by transferring authority to an agency that is functionally specialized. Such transfer is of three types. First, when the delegation is within formal political structures, second, transfer within public administrative structures and third, transfer from an institution of the state to non-state agency.

The state, with its multitudinous activities, tends to be monolithic and impersonal in dealing with development aspirations and expectations of people, which are diverse. There is, therefore, need to empower people in each area/locality to possess the Power to decide; Authority to act; and Responsibility and accountability to results achieved in the planning and development of their respective areas/localities.

This was realized at the time of the formation of the Constitution and a specific provision was made to create local self-government. Article 40 states, "the State shall take steps to organize village Panchayats and endow such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government."

As a follow up, many states created democratic institutions at district level decades ago. Experience, however, shows that there has been no uniformity in the structure of decentralisation. Also, these institutions existed as national entities with no executive authority; as states generally created parallel bureaucratic units, for planning, implementation and monitoring of development programmes at the district level.

Democratic Institutions exist to facilitate self-governance at the grassroots level (district and below). The recent changes in the Constitution

through the 73rd and 74th Amendments purport to improve and streamline local self-government.

The concern about administrative reform is not new, what is new is the context in which it is being talked about today. During the planning period, the role of States and their administrative agencies were considered crucial in implementing programmes of social and economic changes. The defining themes of contemporary administrative reforms have been the achievement of the objectives of economy and efficiency within the context of good governance.

The term 'governance' has replaced the conceptualization associated with public administration and now envisages wider meaning that replaces the concept of government as well. Globalization has not only revolutionized the political

and economic spheres but through political and economic changes its impact is felt on the social relations. With globalization, the needs of the society have undergone a tremendous change, its aspirations transformed in tune with the fast changing global environment.

As such, the management of such a changed society requires an entirely new set of governing mechanism and it is perhaps here the notion of good governance with its attributes of transparency, accountability and flexibility can better serve the current requirement of the society. However governance, in order to be good and effective, requires a decentralised administrative set-up so that the institution at the grassroots level enjoys the autonomy and flexibility required for growth and development in the overall process of Good Governance.



Women Leaders in Panchayat Raj

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[Women constitute about half of India's population. The social, economic and political roles of women in Indian society are essentially structured by age-old institutions of family, kinship and caste, traditional beliefs and values and customs and by the process of socialization. The structured roles of the members of the society are essentially gender-based. Gender plays a crucial role in shaping the ways in which the men and women participate in the economic, social and political activities.]

Gender-based discriminations have not only led the woman to a lower social status in all walks of life, but have also made them victims of discriminative social practices. This is more so in rural area than the urban areas. Efforts have been made through reform movements, the constitutional safeguards and the development programmes to accord equal status and opportunities to women. However, these benefits have largely gone to the urban women, but unfortunately the rural women continue to live a distressed life without hope for improvement.

Further, the development programmes launched in rural India have mostly neglected the development

of women. Even if there was some place for rural women in these programmes it remained only as targets for social development but never as participants in the social development process. Unless women are included in the development process, effective economic, social and political development of the country cannot be realized.

However, of late women have been regarded as the focal point of development the world over, especially since the International Women's Year 1975. Thus intensified action has been initiated in India as well, to promote equality between men and women and to ensure the full integration of women in the total development efforts.

Although women have contributed significantly to the socio-economic development of the country,

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their participation in political life is not felt essential as the political participation is believed to be a male prerogative. Thus women's participation in political life is vicarious. They hardly visit nearby towns, know little about burgeoning bureaucracies and are largely ignorant of political activities taking place at different levels.

Political participation of women as persons holding high office in political organizations, as candidates for some elective position as well as campaigners, has been very negligible. The major obstacle to women's full participation in politics is a traditional social attitude which confined women to their homes to carry out household chores and look after the children.

Panchayat Raj

The panchayat raj institutions, which have responsibility to bring democracy to the doorsteps of rural people and to formulate and to implement development programmes, do not have much significance for women. This is mainly because of the insignificant representation given to them.

Realising the inadequate scope for the role of rural women both in development and political process, the Karnataka Government made provisions for reservation of seats for women in its reviewed panchayat raj institutions, namely Zilla Panchayats, Taluka Panchayat and Gram Panchayats, thus, to reserve relatively a large percentage of seats for women in Panchayat raj institutions. Gram Panchayat is the democratic tier next to zilla panchayat serving the group of villages.

Gram Panchayat has statutory autonomy for decision-making in local planning and implementation of development works in almost all the spheres of village with active involvement of people and with the technical assistance of extension agencies. Gram Panchayat as a grass-root elected body has immense significance in providing organic link between gram sabha on the one hand and zilla panchayat on the other.

Keeping in view the significant role of gram panchayats in rural development and the provision of reservation of seats for women in them, an

attempt is made in the study to understand empirically as to what extent and how effectively the women members of the gram panchayat's have participated in the various activities of the gram panchayat.

The Study

There have been few studies analysing the role of women leaders in the gram panchayats. The present study was conducted in 10 gram panchayats in Bijapur district as random sampling method was adopted. A survey was conducted by the social work students and the conclusions are made about the 'Modernisation of Women leaders in Panchayat Raj-An Analysis'. The study attempts to understand the role of women leaders of gram panchayat in the light of their political status and modernization. The study was confined to the women leaders of the gram panchayats of the developed and backward taluks in rural areas.

Political Status of Women Leaders

Political status of women leaders was assessed in terms of their political awareness, political linkage and political participation. Besides, the method of selection of women leaders to the gram panchayats, motivation for them to contest election as well as factors that contributed to their success in election were also analysed in the study.

The study reveals that, women leaders had shown awareness about most of the political aspects, particularly those concerned with local and state level. The contacts of women leaders with higher level leaders were found to be fairly extensive, particularly with party workers the zilla panchayat leaders and the MLA of the area where involvement in the grass-root development was intensive. The analysis of linkage of higher-level leaders with women leaders reveals that it was only the zilla panchayat leaders and the party workers had extensive contacts with women leaders.

Modernisation of Women Leaders

Leaders with modern outlook and dynamic personality play a crucial part in the effectiveness of group performance. Hence, modernization of women leaders was assessed in terms of their exposure to

mass media of communication such as radio, television, movies and newspapers, attitudes towards certain socio-economic aspects such as marriage, position of women in family, political participation of women, caste and socio-interaction, education for women, religion and development programmes.

The modernity of women leaders was also assessed in terms of their knowledge, awareness about modern innovations in the field of agriculture, health and family planning as well as about the social legislations and development functionaries.

All the women leaders favoured development programmes for improving living conditions and promoting equality in the rural society. Quite a few women leaders were aware of social legislations concerning compulsory primary education, prohibition of untouchability, prohibition of child marriage and abolition of dowry and only a few educated women leaders know about the land reforms-tenancy and land ceiling legislations, legislations relating to widow remarriage, medical termination of pregnancy, debt relief and abolition of bonded labour system.

Women leaders had a fair knowledge about development functionaries such as Agricultural Officers, Revenue Officers, BDO, Rural Development-Agricultural Field Officers of banks, Education Officers at local and taluk (level)

Conclusions

The findings of the study reveal that the women in rural society will be responsive to the changes taking place in the material and non-material aspects of life. But how well they respond to the changes depends very much upon the positive or negative influences of their surroundings. One of the ways to encourage women to the changes in society is of involving them in development oriented organizations like panchayat raj bodies.

Reservation for them in different positions in the panchayat raj bodies in all the states is imperative. This provides opportunities for women members to improve upon their organizing abilities through the conduct of various activities of the respective bodies.

There must be provisions for women's representation in all the standing committees of the panchayat raj bodies. At present there is a statutory provision in few states to involve at least one woman member in the social justice committee. This provision should be extended in respect of other committees also.

A number of social legislations are enacted from time to time for promoting development of weaker sections of the rural community. A working knowledge of these legislations must be provided to the leaders of the panchayat raj bodies in general and women leaders in particular. This would enable them to be more informed and effective in carrying out their development roles.

The lady panchayat extension officers must be appointed and kept in charge of a group of gram panchayats. Since these extension officers are trained they can understand the difficulties of women members of the gram panchayat and guide them suitably. Besides, they can also create awareness among rural women about significance of the panchayat raj bodies in the rural development and encourage them for active participation in development activities.

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Teaching the Teacher!

Mohd. Moshahid*

[Education plays a pivotal role in over all development, and the teacher is the topmost academic and professional person in the educational pyramid around which all the educational programmes rotate. For strengthening the educational system and in turn shaping the future quality of a nation, it is essential to have good teachers. But, good teachers can be produced only if we have a good system of teacher education. Teaching is the most difficult and challenging profession which demands a lot of hard work and dedication because it deals with the mind of the student, having various faculties. Hence, someone who is entrusted with nurturing the mind is definitely a person of great importance. It is an established fact that qualitative improvement of school education which is the foundation of the entire education system directly depends upon the qualified, skilled and able teachers produced by the teachers training institutions.]

The pace of technological revolution and emergence of knowledge-based society in the globalised world has changed the traditional role of the teacher and the students. The teacher's role and responsibilities have increased tremendously, paving the way for a global standard of living beyond geographical boundaries, leading to a multi-cultural environment or global living.

Consequently, teaching methodologies, teaching resources, and tools have too changed to meet the emerging requirement. Students are no longer confined to learning within the four-walls of a classroom. Aided by technology, today's teachers are constantly upgrading their own knowledge and are using innovative teaching methods to carve out global citizens.

In this context, the teacher education assumes prime importance so that they are better equipped to impart knowledge to the students and mould them into model global citizens. Apart from having the requisite qualifications, teachers should also be subjected to periodic training programmes that are structured to empower the teacher with the latest knowledge and skill. Training should be a continuous process as it enhances the teacher's ability.

According to Verma (2010), a teacher plays a significant role not only in class teaching learning situation but in social engineering too. Society gives a respectable place to teachers who are really perspective empowered. This empowerment is not in terms of physical perspective. It is in academic, intellectual, social, and national perspectives. It should not only prepare the teacher to the present but also for the future.

Various Commissions and Committees on education have expressed their concerns about the teacher education programme. The University Education Commission (1948-49) stated that people in this country have been slow to recognize that education is a profession for which intensive preparation is necessary as it is in any other profession. Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) pointed out that there is a need to make teaching profession sufficiently attractive and emphasized that the period of teacher training programme should be of two academic years.

The Education Commission (1964-66) exhorted that in absence of quality, teacher education becomes not only a financial waste but a source of overall deterioration in educational standards. The Commission also stressed for two year secondary

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teachers training programme. National Policy on Education (1986) emphasized that the status of teacher reflects the socio-cultural ethos of the society and stressed on the launching of centrally-sponsored scheme for quality teacher education.

The NCTE (1995) also brought out a discussion document on curriculum framework for quality teacher education (1998) in order to give a new look to teacher education. The National Curriculum Framework (NCF, 2005) and the National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE, 2009) also showed their concern regarding qualitative improvement of teacher education. In spite of recommendations of various commissions and committees and measures taken by the government regarding cosmetic changes in the system, there has been failure to bring out any substantial change or improvement in our teacher education programme.

Objectives of the study

The objective of this paper is to identify the expected roles and responsibilities of a teacher, drawback of the present teacher education programme and to suggest possible measures to improve the quality of teacher education programme necessary for the changing scenario.

Prerequisite Qualities for Prospective Teacher in Changing Scenario

Advancement in knowledge in different subject areas and revolution of information and communication technology are placing new demands on the professional competence of teachers in changing global society. The role of teachers in contemporary societies is diversified and multidimensional and ever changing. Teachers can perform their changing roles efficiently and effectively only if they continue to update and upgrade their professional competence. Prospective teacher is supposed to possess the following qualities in order to justify his/her profession in the changing global society.

- Effective communicative skill is the first and foremost prerequisite quality of an effective teacher.
- The second important thing for a good teacher is to have mastery over subject matter along with sense of responsibilities to impart the same.
- The teacher is required to develop skills in the selection and use of appropriate teaching methods and teaching aids according to need, interest and abilities of the students.
- He/she should be well versed with the modern technologies to be used in the teaching- learning process.
- Prospective teacher is expected to develop skills in handling large classes and ability to deal with the heterogeneous group of the student.
- Prospective teacher is required to exhibit dedication and devotion towards his profession which demands to be hardworking and innovative in his attitude, reflective and flexible in his approach (Verma, 2002).
- The teacher is expected to help the students to develop basic skills and attitudes for proper and overall development of the personality.
- He should have the ability and art to search out the talent and creative abilities of the students and nurture them accordingly.
- He should be emotionally stable, honest, sincere and punctual along with social and civic values as enshrined in Indian Constitution.
- Prospective teacher is required to indoctrinate among students a receptive outlook, an objective spirit, a sensitive heart, broad vision and an open mind for the human needs and problems.
- The teacher is expected to guide and counsel the students in selection of their future courses and professions as per their abilities, interest, aptitude, resources available and job prospects.

These are the few important desired qualities of the prospective teacher to meet the challenges posed by the changing global society.

Weaknesses of the Present Teacher Education Programme

If we go through the views and concerns of various commissions, committees, researchers, policy makers and teacher educators regarding drawbacks in present teacher education programme, following points are of noteworthy importance.

- Admission process fails to select the genuine person having real teaching aptitude.
- Inadequate academic, professional and pedagogic preparation and insufficient level of knowledge and the skills of the prospective teachers.
- Traditional methods of teaching, outdated knowledge and information and lack of skills, attitude and aptitude pose difficulties in coping with the fast changing ICT and new intellectual challenges being thrown up by the changed global context.
- Supervision of practice teaching is perfunctory, biased and subjective. Practice teaching period allotted is not adequate in terms of duration and experiences to be gained.
- Lack of proper training in organization of co-curricular activities, question paper setting, evaluation of answer sheets, preparation of time table, case study and action research etc.
- Most of the teachers training colleges adopt the lecture method technique and expecting prospective teachers to adopt child-centred approach in their own class rooms is not realistic.
- Lack of audio-visual aids, science lab in schools, sitting arrangements, proper lighting, ventilation

and demonstration tables etc. also pose great difficulty in achieving desired objectives.

- Lack of coordination and cooperation between the schools and teachers trainings institutions.

Measures to Improve the Quality of Teacher Education Programme

Keeping in view the weaknesses of the present teacher education programme, the following suggestions may be worthwhile to develop the quality and competence among prospective teachers.

- The selection procedure should be such which selects only the candidates who possess real aptitude in teaching.
- Compulsory internship along with teaching practice for the sake of actual school experience like- conducting morning assembly, maintaining students' attendance register, organizing co-curricular activities and preparing time table etc.
- Basic computer skills should be made compulsory for prospective teachers for making teaching-learning more effective, forceful and interesting.
- There is an urgent need to improve the infrastructure and quality instructional material for enhancing the standard of teachers training institutions.
- Adaptation of objective and transparent procedure for granting the recognition to teachers training colleges, especially self-financed institutions.
- Emphasis should be given to modern technologies in day-to-day teaching-learning process for creating interest among the students. Therefore, educational technology must be integral part of teachers training programme.
- Implementation of compulsory attendance rule for all institutions to ensure quality teacher education programme.

- Practice of continuous and comprehensive evaluation procedure for overall personality development of the prospective teacher.
- The accreditation of the teachers' training institutions must be made compulsory to maintain quality of the teachers.
- Launching of regular supervision and inspection by the university authorities may improve the functioning of the teachers' training institutions.
- Human rights and peace education should be incorporated in teachers training programmes to train the prospective teachers about the peace, human rights and universal values.

Conclusion

It is necessary, therefore, for the teacher education programme to articulate effectively the concerns and commitment of education as a social reconstruction. It must address seriously the functionality and excellence at national and international levels so that the concept could be translated into precepts and theories into practice. It is important for the education system to make parallel changes in order to fulfil its objectives in preparing students for the world beyond the classrooms.

There is a need for the teacher educators as well as prospective teachers to keep burning their desire of learning and become acceptors and not receptors of the change in order to keep pace with the changing scenario.

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If by gaining knowledge we destroy our health we labour for a thing
that will be useless in our hands.

— John Locke

Women Prisoners and Justice in India

Harpreet Singh* & Maninderjit Kaur**

[In this jointly authored article based on the empirical data analysis of the female criminals undergoing imprisonment in the Central jail of Amritsar (Punjab), the authors have been able to dig deep at the causes of female crimes vis-à-vis the role of the police. Findings show interesting aspects of police behavior towards female criminals and prevailing scenario calls for drastic reforms in the police force. Ed.]

Crime is a social and universal phenomenon, but as is well known, every crime is committed in a particular set up, in a particular situation of life and for a particular purpose. The social background of every criminal plays a very important role in shaping his/ her attitude towards society. Many of the criminologists are of the view that “criminals are not born but made” (Chakrabarti, 1997).

Female criminality is the outcome of the interaction between her personality system and the environment in which she functions. As the society is undergoing changes so the family roles are also undergoing changes. Women are fast indulging in crime in a modernized society. The norms and values in the contemporary society are changing rapidly which is affecting the female behaviour and their attitude towards family and society (Kamini, 2008).

Many factors such as biological, social, economic and cultural are responsible for women participating in crime (Rani 1987). Woman in a present competitive world does not consider herself inferior to men so does in the field of criminology too. They are no more confined to the four-walls of the home. Her emotional, caring and protective behaviour towards her family and in-laws is now getting converted to an aggressive and frustrated behaviour in the serious situations which results in the killing of near and dear ones.

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Woman has become independent by entering into the outer world of men where she imitates men in every field and thus has enhanced her status in the society (Padhy, 2006). She has become economically secured. Women in the present society tolerate male dominance to some extent. Stressful interpersonal relationships within the family give rise to serious conflicts and thus results in different types of crime.

Crime is an anti-social behaviour which a group rejects and to which it attaches punishment. Throughout history people have tried to explain why a person would commit crimes. Some consider a life of crime better than a regular job at least until they are caught (www.law.jrank.org/pages//2004/causes_crime.html).

Some of the criminologists found the origin of criminality in broken homes, unhappy childhood and uncomfortable home conditions. Some attributed the origin of criminality to emotional maladjustment, psychological characteristics and lack of proper socialization (Mangala, 2000).

In accordance with the data of the present study, the women criminals have been classified into two categories i.e. convicts and under-trials. The convicts were facing sentence while the under-trials were facing imprisonment and waiting for the final hearing of their cases. The offences, *inter alia*, included various kinds of crimes such as murder, dowry deaths, kidnapping, thefts, fights, involvement in business of narcotic drugs etc.

Nature of Crime Committed

The women who committed the maximum crimes were from Jat Sikh caste. It is clear from the data shown in table 3.1 that 47.69 per cent women who committed crime were Jat Sikhs.

Most of the women from Jat Sikh caste committed murder (16.92%), dowry death (9.23%), narcotic drugs (12.30%), fight (6.15%), theft and kidnapping (1.53%). The women belonging to Khatri caste constituted 13.84%. They were mainly arrested under dowry death cases (6.15%).

The women from lower castes were Mazabi (10.76%), mainly arrested for murder (6.15%), Jheer 4.61%, Chimba 3.07%, Sansi 4.61%, Julaha, Kumhar and Chamar 1.53%. The nature of crimes committed by women from lower castes, *inter alia*, included murder, dowry-death, rape, kidnapping, smuggling of narcotic drugs, theft, dacoity and vagrancy.

The women from Brahmin caste accounted for 4.61 per cent. They were facing imprisonment under fight case 1.53 per cent and Narcotic drugs case 3.07 per cent. The 3.07% of women belonged to Gujjar caste and were arrested under cases narcotic drugs (1.53%) and fraud (1.53 %). The 1.53 per cent of women who were facing imprisonment under theft case belonged to Ramgariha caste. The 1.53 per cent of women arrested for committing fraud was Bengali.

The above Table 3.1 indicates that female crime is on the rise among the Jat Sikhs, which is very high in percentage as compared to other castes found in Punjab. The rural areas of Punjab are densely populated with Jat Sikh caste. The reasons behind committing crime by Jat Sikhs are firstly their proportion is very large and secondly strained interpersonal relationships in the family give rise to marital maladjustments.

Table 3.2: Nature of crime committed by female offenders

Nature of crime	Convicts	Under trials	Total
Murder	17 (26.15)	2 (3.08)	19 (29.23)
Dowry death	8 (12.32)	4 (6.16)	12 (18.47)
Rape	-	2(3.08)	2 (3.08))
Kidnapping	2 (3.08)	2 (3.08)	4 (6.16)
Fight	2 (3.08)	3(4.61)	5 (7.69)
Narcotic drugs	4(6.16)	10(15.38)	14(21.54)
Theft	-	3(4.61)	3(4.61)
Dacoity	1(1.53)	-	1(1.53)
Vagrancy	-	3(4.61)	3(4.61)
Fraud	1(1.53)	1(1.53)	2(3.08)
Total	100	100	65(100)

(Figures in brackets are column-wise percentages) Majority of the offenders committed murder and constituted 29.23 per cent. The percentage of murder also includes dowry deaths. The women

convicted for and facing trial for dowry death accounted for 12.32 per cent and 6.16 per cent respectively and a total of 18.47 per cent of women were charged under dowry death cases. Besides,

6.16 per cent of women prisoners were involved in the case of kidnapping, 7.69 per cent arrested under fight case, and 4.61 per cent under charges of theft.

Very small proportion of the female offenders, 1.53 per cent and 3.08 per cent, was involved in dacoity and fraud case. Majority of the women were arrested under narcotic drugs case, and they constituted 21.54 per cent. The women charged under rape case were 3.08 per cent. The women did not commit the rape, but they were facing imprisonment only under the charges of rape.

Police Behaviour with Women in Custody

The unpleasant police-offender relationship is of universal nature, the degree of bitterness varying from time to time. It is a matter of common knowledge that arrested women are often put to physical torture in police stations in violation of all norms of human dignity. Such harsh treatment results in serious injuries which in some cases prove fatal.

There are so many incidents in which police personnel have been involved causing unprecedented sensation and these indicate the extent to which sometimes the members of police may go. There was Bhagpat episode in which a married woman of a respectable family was alleged to have been made to walk nude through the town after her husband and another man were killed by the police just because the deceased had protested to the teasing of woman by a police officer (Siddique, 1983).

The Punjab police are reported to have usually violated the basic human rights of citizens and especially the rules relating to custody of women. They do not obey the Government instructions and directives of High Court and Supreme Court relating to gender justice and protective discrimination. It will be clear from following Tables.

Arrest of Women

In case of arrest of a woman, government had given instructions to police that her submission to custody should be presumed and no policeman should touch

her. Table 3.5 shows that more than 70 per cent of the arrests were made by both male and female police. 29.33 per cent arrests were made by only male police.

Table 3.5: Arrests of women made by male/female police

Arrests made by	No. of women arrested	Total
Male Police	19 (29.33)	19 (29.33)
Both male and female police	46 (70.77)	46 (70.77)
Total	65(100)	65 (100)

(Figures in brackets are column-wise percentages)

Interrogation of Arrested Women

When a person is arrested he/she is interrogated by the police. It is laid down by law that women arrested must be interrogated in the presence of women police. Table 3.6 shows that 43.07 women were interrogated by male police only and 56.93 women were interrogated by female and male police jointly.

Table 3.6: Interrogation of women arrested by male/female police

Arrests made by	No. of women arrested	Total
Interrogation by male police only	28 (43.07)	28 (43.07)
Interrogation by male and female police jointly	57 (56.93)	37 (56.93)
Total	65(100)	65 (100)

(Figures in brackets are column-wise percentages)

Nature of Maltreatment

More than 80 per cent of the women complained of maltreatment in police custody. Maximum women

(26.15 per cent) complained of abusing and vulgarism by police men. Indecent behaviour by both male and female police was reported by 15.4 per cent and 6.15 per cent women complained of rape.

Slapping and beating up persons in police custody is also usual. The women who complained of indecent behaviour by both male and female police accounted for 15.4 per cent. The 24.61 per cent women complained of slapping, 10.76 per cent reported that they were seriously beaten up with sticks and straps, and 7.69 per cent said that they were tortured by roller treatment. Roller treatment is given in which a heavy wooden log is rolled over the arms, thighs and legs of the individual being interrogated. Some 9.24 per cent women had not undergone maltreatment by the police personnel.

Table 3.7: Nature of maltreatment complained of by women in police lock-ups.

Nature of Maltreatment to women in police lock ups	No. of women arrested
Rape	4 (6.15)
Indecent behaviour	10 (15.4)
Abusing	17 (26.15)
Slapping	16 (24.61)
Beating by sticks/straps	7 (10.76)
Roller treatment	5 (7.69)
No complaint	6 (9.24)
Total	65 (100)

(Figures in brackets are column-wise percentages)

It is clear from the above Table that the prisoners in custody are tortured by the police. There are interrogation centres of police, which are specially meant for torture and there are special methods to treat the persons in custody. Viewed in a broad perspective, the mode of punishment for women criminals has undergone change with the rise in industrialization and modernization.

To conclude, the women facing imprisonment were living in a ray of hope that one day their sentence would be over and they would return to their dear ones. They would be able to start their journey from hell to heaven. The behaviour of the police towards the women was found inhumane. The women were interrogated by male police and during interrogation abusing and slapping were the common treatment given to them. Few of the women were interrogated brutally by the police as a result of which they had become medically unfit.

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Legislators' Perceptions about Democracy in India

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[India is a democratic country where all the citizens are equal under the law. Our Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of state policy, specifically state that each citizen is equal in every way. People cannot be discriminated against on the basis of differences of caste, religion, language, and culture. The fact that legislators are elected to the legislature through a democratic process where people exercise their franchise and choose them as representatives of their respective constituencies is of central importance for the constitution of any legislature.]

It is to be assumed that in the perception of the legislators the institution of democracy would be of great importance. As India is the largest democratic country of the world, it was deemed necessary to form an idea about the views the legislative leadership had about democracy.

Three questions were put to the respondents with an aim of finding out their opinions on the subject. In the first question, they were asked to specify the merits and demerits of India as a democracy, 2nd they were then asked whether in their opinion India was a truly democratic country or not, and 3rd whether they would like to suggest some changes in Indian democratic system.

Theoretical Foundations of Democracy

Democracy should not be understood as merely a form of government. It is a type of state as well as an order of society. Even the champions of democracy have at times interpreted democracy to mean only a form of government. A democratic government implies democratic state, but a democratic state does not necessarily mean a democratic government. As Hearn Haw remarks, 'Democracy as a form of state is merely a mode of appointing, controlling and dismissing a government.'¹

It is a commonplace observation that the world today is not as optimistic about democracy as it was in the previous generations. Its attitude is one of caution, if not of criticism. H.G Wells is convinced

that there has been a growing distrust and discontent with politicians and political methods evolved by parliamentary democracy.

World War I, in the words of Woodrow Wilson, was fought to make the world 'safe for democracy.'² The word democracy has been used ever since the time of Herodotus to denote that form of government in which the ruling power of a state is legally vested, not in any particular class or classes, but in the members of the community as a whole. No other method has been found to be as efficacious for determining peaceably and legally what is to be deemed the will of a community.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness that to acquire these rights, governments are instituted, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed" (American Declaration of independence, 1776).

"Men are born and continue equal in respect of the rights. No one ought to be molested on account of his opinions, even his religious opinions" (Declaration of Rights of Man made by the National Assembly of France, August, 1791).

These two declarations³ delivered authoritatively by two bodies of government at two moments of far-reaching historical importance; contain the fundamental dogmas, a sort of apostle's decree on democracy. They are the truths on which it claims

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to rest and they embody the appeal it makes to human reason.

However, latter day thinkers like Lord Bryce, who has researched the idea intensively in his monumental work on modern democracies, treat it as only a form of government. Macpherson too reiterates this

more pragmatic attitude to democracy when he writes: “Democracy is merely a mechanism for choosing and authorizing governments or in some other way get laws and political decisions made.”

Following Table-1 focuses on the legislators’ opinions on the relative importance of different merits and demerits of democracy.

Table 1

Perception of Legislators about the Democratic System

Response	1997 (34)*	2002 (34)	2007 (34)	2012 (34)	Total (136)
Merits	(48)	(48)	(54)	(54)	(204)
Less possibility of revolution	16.6 (8)	18.7 (9)	14.8 (8)	25.9 (14)	19.1 (39)
Govt. is based on liberty, equality and fraternity	16.6 (8)	14.5 (7)	12.9 (7)	9.2 (5)	13.2 (27)
Govt. is based on public criticism	16.6 (8)	18.7 (9)	14.8 (8)	12.9 (7)	15.6 (32)
Based on the will of people	18.7 (9)	22.9 (11)	20.3 (11)	24 (13)	21.5 (44)
It brings efficiency in administration	16.8 (8)	12.5 (6)	22.2 (12)	14.8 (8)	16.6 (34)
Socio-political and economic reforms	14.5 (7)	12.5 (6)	14.8 (8)	12.9 (7)	13.7 (28)
Demerits	(27)	(37)	(26)	(28)	Total (118)
More important in quantity rather than quality	11.1 (3)	18.9 (7)	30.7 (8)	25 (7)	21.1 (25)
Govt. controlled by rich classes and expensive	33.3 (9)	24.3 (9)	34.6 (9)	21.4 (6)	27.9 (33)
Careerism in politics	25.9 (7)	32.4 (12)	11.5 (3)	25 (7)	24.5 (29)
Negation of popular government in political emergency	29.6 (8)	24.3 (9)	23.0 (6)	28.5 (8)	26.2 (31)

Source: Personal Interview.

* Multiple Response table

Merits of Democracy

Democracy can promote the welfare of the people in a better way than it can be done by other forms of government. Theoretically, democracy provides a basic guarantee that the will of everyone in the

community shall be duly considered, and that no one shall be neglected in the functioning of the government. Democracy is considered a rational form of government, since it is built upon the rational premise that no man is infallible. This government is run by the consent of the people which finds expression through periodical elections.

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