

Indira Gandhi Centre for National Integration  
VISVA-BHARATI

# National Integration Problems in Perspective



Editor :  
Pranabananda Jash

Joint Editors  
Ajay Mukhopadhyaya, Sasanka Sekhar Pal

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September 16, 1995



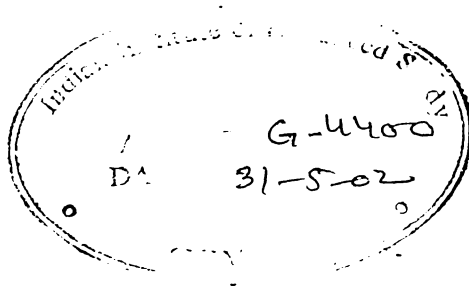
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To  
*The Hallowed Memory*  
of  
*Our Former Ācārya*  
*Rajiv Gandhi*



Sri Rajiv Gandhi

[ Our Former Āchārya ]

## PREFACE

This Volume on *National Integration : Problems in Perspective* is dedicated to the cherished memories of our late *ācārya*, Sri Rajiv Gandhi who sacrificed his virile, valient and viridescent life to the cause of harmony and peace in the country. He laid down the foundation stone of the Indira Gandhi Centre for National Integration in 1985 in order to pursue research studies for finding out the root causes of disintegration and disharmony, one of the most perplexing problems of the present day. On this occasion Sri Gandhi beautifully expressed his concept on the nature and salient feature of the physical and cultural aspects of the country. Inspite of its varied and vast differences in geo-physical or cultural aspects there flows an underlying subtle semblances and unity in all different phases of historical and cultural events and evolution or the ethos of the Indians. One way of achieving that goal is that India with all her diversity should be studied not by her geographical analysis or political commitments or even by her economic resources but only by looking inward where the everlasting psychic force of spirituality perpetually play its unique and indomitable role in ensuring moral and religious integration which can intrinsically be extended to the national level.

To inculcate and to disseminate such an unique idea to the people of our motherland, the Centre makes periodical attempts to organise Seminar/Conference/Workshop and to publish the out come of the deliberations and interaction of the distinguished participants of varied disciplines. It, of course, incorporates some of the papers discussed at the Orientation Course on National Integration during the year 1994-95. This kind of publication is of very much significant and relevant in the present time when the noble and subtle values of human life are fast disappearing and in their place gross values of greed, hatred, religious intolerance, selfishness, etc. are coming high up the horizen. To overcome these hard days of strife and struggle, of greed and hatred, of conflict, confusion and conspiracy, of despair and dismay, it is in need of a binding-force

which will guide to the true avenue towards the attainment of peace and harmony, of love and respect, of unity and integrity.

In such a context sixteen papers bearing diverse ideas and problems pertaining to National Integration are included in the volume for the interested and concerned people.

While editing this volume, I have received immense assistance and co-operation, directly or indirectly, from different segments of the University. It is not possible to provide an exhaustive list of all the names, but a few only. I am thankful to Professor Dilip Kumar Sinha, Upacharya, Visva-Bharati, for his valuable 'Foreward'.

Dr. G. Subbiah of the Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology, Visva-Bharati, suggested the title of the volume and Dr. Jayanta Chakraborty of the Kala Bhavana, Visva-Bharati, did the cover-design. I sincerely acknowledge their contributions and I offer my hearty thanks to them.

I would like to record my sense of gratitude to the contributors for their valuable writings incorporated in the volume. I am not sure whether I should formally thank Sri Pijush Kumar Mukhopadhyay and Sri Sasanka Sekhar Pal, Joint editors of the volume, for their uninterrupted in any phase of Publication matter. Adequate assistance and co-operation have been received from the office of the Indira Gandhi Centre for National Integration, particularly from Sri Abu Suffian, Sri Banshi Badan Mondal and Sri Gopal Murmu, I thank them all.

Finally, I thank Sri Tilak Das, Proprietor, Sri Lakshmi Press, Bolpur for printing this volume in record time.

16/9/95

Professor Pranabananda Jash  
Editor

## FOREWORD

The two words National and Integration conveying a totality are of recent coinage. Whether the juxtaposition of these two words are appropriate in that it reflects an organic character is still a matter of debate and discussion. It is meant to convey something mostly in the wake of communal tensions and disturbances. It is interesting to note that such tensions were there prior to independence but somehow they could be contained or hushed up playing on something which was, indeed, more overriding than anything else. I mean the freedom of the country. 'Nation' was the word used in pre-independence days ; the elderly community still recall the use of this word by the politician of the stature of Surendranath Banerjee, who wrote a book with a title using this word. Who made Indians a Nation, the Britishers or Indian themselves continues to be a serious question including their historical, sociological and political aspects. That there was disunity among the states, particularly the princely ones during the British days, is well known in history. That such dissensions could be escalated or removed to an enormous extent, by political forces is equally well known. The methodology was multifaceted but they played upon the concept of a nation. Harping on aspects, drawing upon salients of the concept of a nation used to be the forte of our freedom movement. This was successfully used not only by the political forces waging for independence but also by many who did without directly participating in the movement and thereby contributed to the concept in a variety of ways. Tagore's endeavour was singularly remarkable in this direction. The word 'Nation' could galvanise people and enabled them to close their ranks, be these in the shape of language or creed or caste and then to gird up their loins against the rulers of the country. It is fairly well known that the rulers of the country hardly minced any effort to drive a wedge between the communities on various occasions. In fact, there was in a way complementary moves on all fronts to see that the disruption on the score of communal passions which do not erupt despite provocations by the rulers and other forces. It is

historically true that the people succumbed to the sabotage by our rulers and the partition of the country, much to the dismay of Gandhiji. No one can foresee what Gurudev would have reacted on this ; perhaps, he would have come out with bitterness and resentment on the lines he did against Jaliwanabagh massacre.

The partition of the country, historically speaking, did not bring a full stop to communal activities. There might have been a lull for some years after the bloody days in the wake of independence in the erstwhile Bengal and Punjab. Then started the rise of the ugly heads of communalism in the sixties so that talk of integration at the national level became imperative. Then formation of the states on linguistic considerations did bring up causes of some discord but what happened later on between Hindus and Muslims defying semblances of national unity was far dreadful and pernicious. There was a theory used to be put forward, not excluding Nehru in the pre-independence day, that Hindu and Muslim communalism was basically manifestations for perpetuating properties and wealth by feudal forces. One could thus explain the emergence of Hindu Mahasabha and Muslim League. It is in many ways a good analysis but not fully correct. Shyamaprasad Mookerji and Md. Ali Jinnah belonged in their own ways to such parties but they hardly stooped to low forms of politics or even of social ethics which practitioners of later outfits of their brand of politics seem to do. The same is the scenario for others. So far a dilution of political culture is concerned the only logical conclusion, one may incontestably arrive is that there is a definite erosion of political culture throughout the country.

National Integration as a whole is being whipped up in contemporary times either in the wake of communal tension or on the eve of a possible threat ; it is more of a cliché than an ideal which is being banded about. It stands bereft of a conceptual content in course of its handling over the years by the political functionaries ; there could hardly be an attempt to provide a conceptual construct on National Integration. Even the Haksar Committee report could not be free from being loaded. U. G. C. took up the business but could not go beyond emphasising more on externalities than on something perennial. A positive development, emerging intrinsically through an evaluation of process can only ensue if the idea is pushed without politicising it. There are dominantly some political

aspects but if these are not tempered with the basic values and heritage of the country we can not make substantial strides. Grass-rootism in respect of National Integration has to be a pervading feature in our social policy. The functionaries which may make this a reality may have to be drawn up as Panchayat and NGO's, who are conscious and capable of looking beyond politics. Secularism has to be given a positive content rather than being fussy about it. An abiding character of National Integration ought to keep on unfolding itself because ours is a country with rich and hoary past which could iron out dissimilarities despite interventions and provocations.

I think that this publication which is essentially an outgrowth of a seminar on National Integration will trigger off new ideas and activities in this direction. Thanks to the organisers of the seminar and editor of the publication for the onerous work they have undertaken.

16.9.95

D. K. Sinha  
Upacharya  
Visva-Bharati

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Smt. Indira Gandhi  
[ Our Alumni and Former Achārya ]

## **‘National Integration’ : A Problem : A Query\***

Bhudeb Chaudhuri

Mr. Chairman, sir, and friends,

Mine is an extremely unenviable position this morning, and your lot is no less. This inaugural session was to be handled by an erudite personality, one most distinguished and fitted for this occasion. On his last-minute failure, organisers, out of desperation, have finally picked up this spent up old man as an inapt proxy. My compulsions are irrevocable ; yours, one of indomitable frustration. Yet, we have to put up with it. Excuse me for the ordeal, but not its perpetrators, the organisers of this mess.

Let us come to the theme proper, Esteemed teachers of the community, makers of the progeny, have assembled here, I am told, to deliberate on the problem of ‘National Integration’. Disintegration have been the norm of the day all over the politico-economic geography of the country. And, it has been advancing in leaps and bounds with every advance step of time. From Kashmir-Punjab to Assam-Nagaland- Manipur.—from Arunachal Pradesh to Uttarakhand at the latest, and where not—from East to West, North to South ! The people at the helm of affairs, the managers of the politico-economic scenerio, finally usurping the monopolistic power of dictating the whole benumbed people, have been gasping, indiscriminately, for a redress. The circle is zigzag, crooked, or even vicious ; and the search for an escape is intemperate. But the teachers, the thought-spring of the community, owe it to the whole people, to make a sober dispassionate introspection of the recoiling imbroglio, and offer an enduring way out ; at least a probable one.

The very theme ‘National Integration’ to me, poses a direct question. Can the fundamentals of the very concept of ‘Nation’

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\* Key-note address delivered by Professor Bhudeb Chaudhuri on the occasion of the Inaugural Session of the Fourth and Final Orientation Course for Higher Secondary and Secondary teachers held on February 24 to March 10, 1995. —Ed P. JASH

have any impact on the vitiating problem of disintegration, or in any way, to its dissolution, finally? A poor student of literature specifically of Bengali, I cannot claim to provide an answer to the knotty problem. There lies the crux of my personal inability. Yet, let me proceed, under the constraints, as I have said, with my meager resources.

Rabindra Nath Tagore delivered a series of lectures on the land of Japan in 1916, during the most tormenting years of the first world war; and the topic was 'Nationalism'. There he asserted that 'a nation in the sense of the political and economic union of a people' 'is the organised self interest of the whole people'. We can have a precise picture of the situation, in Bankim Chandra Chatterji's deliberations. Even today, he is acclaimed as a fostering father of Indian Nationalism. In fact, the concept of 'nationalism' is not indigenous to India. We derived it from our Western contacts. No equivalent synonym for the word 'nation' can be derived in the Indian languages. Bankim Chandra was the pioneering figure who caught the flame in its proper light and explained to his fellow people thus :—1) There are many nations in the world other than, as we are. It may so happen that things which help some other nations to flourish, may go against our interest. In that case, we will stake our all to obliterate their progress. 2) On the other hand, it may so happen that things leading to our interest may be detrimental to others. In that case also, we will go all out to achieve that. We shall certainly thrive, even if that be in total elimination of others.

That is the spirit of 'nationalism', and Tagore calculated the final, results :—'They (nations) have organised their power till they are not only reasonably free from the tyranny of Nature and human neighbours, but have a surplus left in their hand to employ against others'...

The spirit of 'nationalism' thrives in this 'surplus power' capable of annihilating all else. This is an innate propensity of grabbing every thing depriving all others. And the area expands interminably. The lust for self aggrandizement, both in money and power, knows no bound. And the confrontation proceeds from inter territorial boundaries even up to intra-territorial limits. The result is

Balkanization of territories in and out ; indiscriminate and endless. Let us have a look at the map of Europe today :—The already devastated Soviet Union fighting fervently for tinier fragmentations, the erstwhile Yugoslavia in endless turmoil, and so on. The process ends where, nobody knows. The situation is intoxicating, and suffocating too, for human existence proper. As Tagore said, 'The peoples are living beings. They have their distinct personalities. But nations are organisations of power.' They grind human personalities out of shape to suit their own grabbing lust. That, again, can be vouchsafed in the latest global economic reconstruction process of GATT, or WTO, or whatever new nomenclature that may assume.

So, the problem, really, is one of the mechanical blind process of self aggrandizement at all others' annihilation, as against the spontaneous emulation and expansion of the peoples' distinct independent personalities. And its root is dipped in to the very nature of intrinsic human dimension. Man's is an ever contradictory entity, always seeking amity out of a flagrant process of disunity. Man, as we all say and know, is a 'social animal'. A part of his identity, the basic one, is entrenched in his animality. Like all others, man also is a nature's creature, with his inordinate, exclusive physical propensities. The other aspect, the most vital one, of human identity, conforms to his social dimension. There the all-subordinated creature emerges in the glamorous role of a self-creator. Society, indeed, is the creation of man's mind. And that mental propensity is at the root of human dimension.

Tagore elucidated the position exquisitely :—'Creatures are separated physically. To thrive physically there is the struggle for existence. That leads to competition. On the other hand, man achieves unison, craves for unison, gets baffled when he fails to achieve unison ; that culminates into collaboration.' This second is the architecture of man's mind. Man can not exist without his physical entity. Man cannot achieve his perfection bereft of a mental satiety. The two are distinctly opposite to each other, yet the two are interdependant for man's existence, progress and perfection in this world process. And the final result depends on man's capability of synthesising the extreme opposites. Tagore stressed,

to impart 'unity in diversity' is the way of Indian life. That can again be a process of striking synthesis amongst, even, the opposites.

Politico-economic outlook of life is exclusive fundamentally. History has propagated its nature glaringly, and is even doing so today, all over the western world. The process is one of unity by annihilation of all others, as Tagore observed. In India, he stressed, the span of life is held on the social infrastructure. There men emerges in his total dimension. And Tagore felt, the edifice of Indian life is framed on the spirit of social obligation; 'samajik kartavyatantra' is the Bengali expression, he used. And Tagore underlined, 'politics, religion and all else' thrive simultaneously in that life pattern, in a co-ordinated manner. That is the process of synthesis. When this inner discipline of symmetry and proportions is lost, life becomes embroiled in endless turmoils. Politico-economic exclusiveness is leading the world towards that. Have we, the Indians, even not been caught in the trap?

Tagore may be discarded as a visionary though he was no less pragmatic than any activist of any time. Yet, to clear out of the polemics, let us turn to Subhash Chandra Bose, the vibrating activist of our time. While still in the ICS, and contemplating to resign immediately and definitely to serve the motherland, he projected the same outlook in the two earliest consecutive letters addressed to Chittaranjan Das. He was convinced, even in those preliminary days, that the Congress, to fight the most turbulent of the world's political powers, plunged all out with an exclusive politico-economic programme. He asserted that, to be able to derive a clear cut 'policy' after the attainment of 'Swaraj', the Congress must commence with an all-found 'constructive' programme from the very beginning. In fact, much later, as the president of the Indian National Congress, he conceived and formed the first Planning Commission of India. He had plans of further constructive expansion in academic, social, cultural and other fields, as I was reliably told. But that was not to be.

Thus when political independence came to us in an utter passive perspective, the receiving infrastructure was caught utterly unprepared. The people of India, their basic mental and temperamental propensities, so also the ultimate efficacy of the process, could

not be gauged in to a proper, sustained account. The formulation of the constitution, preferred for the country, was more an academic exercise, than the result of an intimate involvement with the specific human base.

Thus, the ideal of Western politico-economic concept of a secular democratic state, with different modalities sorted out from different constitutions, from those of the UK, the USA, to even that of the erstwhile Soviet Union, were incorporated, to be variously enshrined in ours. All initiatives, with exclusively incorporated power, had been usurped, in the process, by the 'State', the singular political institution. I was a young man in 1947, and I distinctly remember the day, a few years later, when the Somnath Temple was renovated by predominant effort of the State ; and the Head of the State rushed to inaugurate the sacred function. At this old age, I wonder, whether the process initiated thus, could have any impact on the dastardly Ayodhya event of the other day. Let us look otherwise even. The all found political infrastructure, today is trembling under pressures of regional 'organised self-interests'. There the questions of responsibilities and liabilities are seldom raised, almost never ; all, simply, are claims, and more and more unsatiated demands. The rest of the venomous exposures of the process is our every day experience. A vivid picture of 'national disintegration' in the language of the manipulators ; a flagrant enmity on politico-economic counts.

All these lead, again, to Tagore's observations. 'In premodern India', he said, and we can expand the span to the period of British rule as well, the king was responsible for the protection and defence of the State, as also imparting law and orders. The society, on the other hand, managed all welfare works from imparting education to even providing water for the people. And that was the basis of balancing of activities providing symmetry and synthesis. Politico-economic power provided physical strength to the community, while the society organised for innate mental solace. The social fabric is extinct in India today. So, during all exigencies the politico-economic masters are agog, with fervent controversies as for what to do or what not. And the people, rich or poor, are all mute, inactive, passive onlookers. In this context, we can remember

even the days of the Bengal-famine of 1943, one of the last in pre-independence era. The whole people, one and all, stood up in one, to emiliorate the distress of the hapless people, out of a catastrophe, caused by the men made, the then state sponsored, manoeuvres. And today ? The society as a whole is bankrupt, while all money and power accumulate in few hands, tilting totally, the fundamental balance of life.

Friends, we have come to the end of this strenuous journey, strenuous for both you and me, and all that due to this improper selection. We have seen two patterns of life. One exclusive, lustful self-aggrandizing. That shatters the social fabric of human existence, the base for a total unison, propounded on mutual amity, the off-shoot of the process of balance, symmetry and synthesis. The other is an all pervasive infra-structure built on the man-conceived social unison. There, politics, economics, religion and all the mundane and spiritual cravings of man thrive in due proportions, all in one. That indefatigable craving for human unison ! Hence, what we need today, as it transpires to an unwitty old fossil, is not the loud slogans of self-contradicting 'National Integrity', but an innate initiation to the process of social amity. That is, and that has been, the Indian way of life, as Tagore stressed time and again ; and also many others of our seers.

Let us turn to Tagore finally, 'However, whatever name our logic may give to the truth of human unity, the fact can never be ignored that we have our greatest delight when we realize ourselves in others, and this is the definition of love.'

Can it not be so that this 'love' and not mutual hatred, this 'unity' and not competition, not an exclusively politico-economic disintegrity, but an all embracing social amity, conform to the fundamental firmament of restructuring our present day Indian life in jeopardy ? Ladies and gentlemen, all of you, revered teachers assembled here, kindly ponder in your deliberations, over the prospects of this query from an out of date humble erstwhile teacher.

# **Conceptual Framework of Nation, Nationality and National Integration : An Approach to Taxonomy of Efflorescence.**

Mohit Chakrabarti

On the threshold of a new era of all round change, the concepts of nation, nationality and national integration are undergoing rapid changes, too. The modern world as it appears to be so, but—why not frankly admit?—not modern in the true sense of the term, necessitates a revaluation of the age old conceptual framework of all the three components viz., nation, nationality and nationalism ingrained in the spirit of integration. This is due to the fact that all these three components have undergone a radical change in exposition, analysis and evaluation either in relation to man as an individual being or as a social or global one. In fact, the importance of global interdependence closely allied to nation, nationality and national integration have opened out before us a vast canvas of human relationship, where we are yet to find out or evolve proper and appropriate, easy and unambiguous entry points. It is high time to admit our conservative and narrow approach to these essential components of humanism and eliminate all conceptual constraints related thereto. The one big family of mankind as the world stands for, necessitates an error-proof and all-embracing perspective of nation, nationality and national integration right now or never.

The stereotyped concept of nation encapsulating a country or a state or a group of states as the case may be often falls short of the essential components of a modern nation, which may be identified as

- a) its dynamic approach to be a partner to other nations,
- b) its ability to be in fusion with other nations,
- c) its ability to identify marks of individuality and excellence as a nation,
- d) its strategic aesthetics to highlight the typical nuances of Truth, Goodness and Beauty,

- e) its power to embrace the entire humanity with the spirit of sympathy and co-operation, service and dedication.

Apart from the fact that the conceptual framework of nation should be directed towards the essential components as identified and stated above, the process of orientation should start from the school stage because these diverse components require continual and sustained exercise in theory and practice. Again, the spirit of nation also encompasses one's identity with the eternal moral and spiritual values of mankind. These include nurturing of justice, equality and fraternity, tolerance, austerity and magnanimity. Undeniably, these are hardly to be *taught* but can only be *caught* by means of endless pursuit and devotion to global welfare of mankind. The concept of 'nation' thus enjoys a warmth of global kinship which, we are afraid, is terribly missing in an overcomputerized and mesmerized world of sham glory and utter ukase.

As regards nationality, the concept of nation overshadowed by the ills of pseudo-identities and mockeries of humanism has already overpowered its genuine connotation and ends-in-view. Being loosely and carelessly applied almost all the time, nationality, from the conceptual points of view, badly suffers from undesirable narrowness of vision and outlook. This can be spelt out very easily from our day to day experience. If anyone of us is asked to answer the question : What is your nationality ? We would categorically reply : 'An Indian'. Hardly any one would ever care to consider oneself a global citizen and adorn one's nationality in the eternal truth as voiced forth from time immemorial : *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*. Then, why not, reframe the concept of nationality with this global view of human relationship ? If we are ready to eliminate the narrowness of casteism, why do we fight shy of eliminating the narrowness of nationalism which highly stimulates each of us to write or speak : I am an Indian ? Why don't we warmly express : I am a global Indian or better 'I am a global national ?' Nationality right now should embrace and nurse the global relationship of mankind and christen us in global nationality. This is primarily because with the tremendous spurt in making the world our very own, today's world has come closer to us—thanks a lot to mass media and broadening of human relationship by means of expanded nationality.

The conceptual framework of nationality, therefore, necessitates incorporation of the following terms of reference :

- a) Nationality should, as far as possible, do away with narrowness of vision consequential to geographical location or other allied factors.
- b) Nationality should synchronize the finer elements of global tradition and culture with those of indigenous heritage and culture.
- c) Nationality should duly honour ethnicity with all its rich components contributing to global history and progress of mankind.
- d) Nationality should cater to the needs of better human relationship by judiciously eliminating differences between man and man so far as caste, creed, community, colour, society, religion, sex, rituals, culture and so on are concerned.
- e) Nationality should incorporate the finer aesthetic sensibilities like Goodness, Truth and Beauty in every one of us.
- f) Nationality should be so oriented as to pay greater interest to man's moral and spiritual development.

National integration, an expression perhaps utterly bruised and battered in misuse, is as our late revered Acharya Indira Gandhi rightly, and obviously painfully, terms 'fire fighting operation'. This, being so, betrays the proverb : United we stand, divided we fall. And conversely, if every one of us could have been worthy of national integration in the true sense of the term, we could have also been justified to our individual identity and role so far as national integration is concerned and equally, if not more, prove the truth that divided we *do* stand, and divided we do not *necessarily* fall. This also makes us aware of the present day sad state of affairs in the case of national integration which has almost forced us to gobble up the reality : united we do not stand, divided we do exist and do not fall. That national integration in its very conceptual framework has very intensely consolidated in 'fire fighting operation' and always awaits the fury of fire and orgy of violence to be doused for the time being is not merely a temporary means to fulfil narrow interests but is continually thriving in a cancerous humanity. Today's

concept of 'national integration', therefore, necessitates a down to earth and complete overhauling through the following parameters :

- i) It should always enable and stimulate in every one education of the right mind and approach to himself in relation to others and *vice versa*.
- ii) Through such education as referred to above it should always incorporate a broad-based view of nationalism and integration both in theory and in practice any time anywhere.
- iii) It should arouse a sense of metanoëia—a transvaluation of values among all with all differences in diverse dimensions.
- iv) It should be based on a certain sense of catholicity of mind and outlook which should always be geared to eliminate petty interests and selfish tendencies whatsoever.
- v) It should always consider the pros and cons of human relationship based on folk culture and tradition, customs and ways of livelihood.
- vi) It should always encapsulate rapid and foolproof programmes of action whereby untoward forces intrinsic as well as extrinsic be appropriately and judiciously challenged and cowed down, oriented and better utilized for national and global welfare of mankind.

National integration is nothing new or urgent just as national disintegration is nothing new or novel. The initial mistake committed more often than not is that there should be an ever-abiding spirit of national integration absolutely uninterrupted by any sort of incoherence or disintegration. Perhaps we fight shy of the truth that there cannot be true effulgence of light without darkness. And so, when we avert the darkness of disintegration, we vainly hope for the light of integration. That incoherence or disharmony, national, individual or otherwise whatsoever is always a thrilling challenge for the ascent and excellence of man is a crucial and telling truth yet heartily welcomed and generously accepted in our conceptual framework of national integration.

It is high time to eliminate the bureaucratic conceptual framework of 'national integration' that happily nurtures the psychosis of emotional sensibilities and abject sentimentalism, and welcome

good sense and sensibilities well synchronized with the global vision of mankind. Let nation, nationality and national integration be rechristened and recrystallized with the education of having, loving and being. *Ah noh bhadra kratava yantu visvatah*—Let noble thoughts come to us from every direction. Let the canvas of human relationship be so well spread by the spirit of nation, nationality and national integration as to allow ample room for enrichment and hearty acceptance of the following facts so foolishly and cruelly ignored by a super-computer happy camouflaged humanity :

- a) There is only one nation. It is the global nation.
- b) There is only one nationality for mankind. It is the global nationality.
- c) National integration by itself alone smacks of narrowness that continually eats up the core of the global vision of man. Let national integration be guided right from the genesis by the global vision of mankind.
- d) Integration, national or whatsoever, is always a diet as it were, and never a drug to be administered for curative purposes. It is not waiting for fire to be extinguished or for violence not to be erupted in full fury but ceaselessly striving for bringing about a behavioural change in right earnest towards the excellence of mankind.

In a modern world of utter bewilderment, thanks to technocracy and diverse predicaments of nation, nationality and national integration in particular, we are yet to accept the fact so characteristically expressed by Rabindranath Tagore that we can arouse the best in others by the best in ourselves. Let the following words of prayer by Tagore be the eternal guideline for our conceptual framework of nation, nationality and national integration :

O Almighty,  
 Give, give us glory  
 In the invitation of the impossible  
 In the pride of unbearable sorrow  
 Pull up from the pleasure of intoxicated ideas.

Rabindra Nath Tagore : “*Chhātrasambhāṣaṇa*” (‘Address to the students’), *Śikshā*, Visva-Bharati, 1973, P-259, [Translated by me.]

## **Conceptual Ideas on Nation : Nationalism : Culture and Integration**

Manju Mohan Mukherjee

Integration of the multicomplex heterogeneous communities into the general stream of a harmonious national life, is one of the most vital problems of a country like ours.

I intend to cast some reflections on the principal aspects of this vital problem from the standpoint of a social worker.

More specially the paper is devoted to examining :

1. The need for national integration and conceptual ideas of Nation, Nationalism and Culture of the Country.
2. The problems related to national integration and
3. The measures to overcome the counter force to achieving the goal.

India is a single nation with one constitution and yet starkly lacked national consciousness, the feeling of oneness. Let me ask you some Questions ?

What is the meaning of integration to the callous street of Calcutta where millions of hunger soul struggle for survival under the horrible shadows of want, squalor and death ?

What does “freedom and integration” mean to the oppressed and down trodden whose very existence shudder for security every time under the allied tyranny of landlords and police in the villages of Andhra and U. P.

### ***Concept of Nation and Nationality :***

The terms ‘State’ and ‘Nation’ are frequently identified both in popular usages and in scientific discussion.

The terms ‘National’ and ‘Nationality’ are used both as nouns and adjective sense.

The word ‘Nation’ is derived from the Latin word ‘natio’ which cannotes the idea of birth or race. Many writers also use the term ‘nation’ in the sense of ‘nationality’ while others identify

it with 'state'. The confusion is further increased by the differences of meaning between German and English words 'nation'. Many German writers used the word 'Nation' in its original cytological etymological ethnic sense, the English equivalent of which is "nationality" while the English word 'Nation' has acquired a political meaning which is expressed by the German word 'Volk'. The English equivalent of which is 'people'. The German usage is undoubtedly more scientific and accurate. Yet it would increase the confusion to disregard the established usages merely for the sake of conformity to etymological meaning.

**Nation :** The term 'State' and 'Nation' are frequently used as synonyms.

A nation is a union of masses of men bound together especially by language and customs in a common civilization which gives them a sense of unity and distinctions from all foreigner.

**Aristotle :** Defined the State as "union of families and villages having for its end a perfect and self-sufficiency life by which we mean a happy and honorable life "

**Cicero :** Defined the State (respublica) as "numerous society united by common sense of right and a mutual participation in advantages."

**Grotius :** Defined the State (Civitas) "some what similarity as a perfect society of free man united for the sake of enjoying the advantages of right and the common utility."

**Laveleye :** Has distinguished between a nation and a nationality. 'A nation, he said, is a group of men united under the same sovereignty while a nationality is a group of man united by identity of origin, race, language or by community of traditions, history and interests"

The term 'Nationality' is more difficult to define and various meanings are attributed to it by different writers.

**According to Lord Bryce,** "a nationality is a population held together by certian ties, as, for example language and literature, ideas, customs and traditions, in such wise so to feel at self a coherent unity distinct from other populations similarly held together by the like ties of their own.

A nation is a nationality which has organised itself into a political body either independent or desiring to be independent.

The truth is this thing which we call nationality and which is so difficult to define is in essence largely a matter of sentiment. Nationalism in its pure form implies love for one's own country.

If the people have acquired the character of nationalism, it is because they believe they have a consciousness of being bound together by strong ties and affinities, which distinguish them from their neighbours. They have a feeling of common interests and of ideals, their moral ideas are fundamentally the same, they have a common heritage of tradition and of memories of common sacrifice and suffering, or of achievement and glory and they share a common pride in great personalities and heroes.

Nationality or Nationalism is like religious is subjective/Statehood or Nationhood or objective :

Nationality is Psychological/Nation is Political ;

Nationality is a condition of mind/Nation is a condition in law ;

Nationality is a spiritual possession/Nation is an enforceable obligation ;

Nationalism promotes the feeling that every man owes his first and last duty to the nation and that the nation—state is the ultimate unit of human organisation.

Lala Lajpat Rai defined nationalism to mean, "one common name, a common ancestry and a common future."

#### *Character of Indian Nationality :*

Majority of Western Critics have sought to prove that India is not a nation. India can not claim identity of race, unity of language and sameness of religion. Besides, as between the communities themselves, the homogeneity or community of tradition which is the real mark of nationality is here conspicuous by its absence.

It is unfortunate that in discussing the question of Indian nationality, these critics unduly emphasize the importance of the centrifugal forces to the utter neglect of the centripetal.

True, in India, there are many races, spoken languages and religions but considering the historical antecedents and the size of country, these diversities may be taken to be natural and inevitable.

Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, all of them have played their part in time and have contributed to the growth of that sense of national unity which has gathered considerable strength during the course of its historical evolution. The Hindus and the Muhammadans have been living together for a long time in the past. Both the communities in many places have not only common languages but have developed common traits of character and common economic and cultural interests. The quarrel between them is of recent growth and is the outcome of manipulation by interested parties.

Besides the common system of education, common laws and common methods of administration prevailing in India during the British rule considerably helped the growth of a strong national consciousness throughout the country.

Throughout the ages Indians have been basically individualistic developing their own family pattern in thinking behaving and in every thing, so much so that no two families look the same type of food. The new bride takes a long time to conform to cooking and food habits of her new family and if she can manage to her husband separated from his family, it is for the husband to get used to the cooking and food habits by his wife to his new home.

You would hardly find a New York Hotel in San Francisco or a Texas hotel in New York but in a big city of India you will find a Gujrati hotel, a Bengali Hotel, a South Indian Hotel and a Punjabi Hotel.

In spite of all these diversities in tastes and habits, we have many common cultural patterns and find us all together. That is why a Kashmiri going to Kanyakumari or a Gujrati going to Manipur does not find it a foreign land.

### *Concept of Culture :*

Culture is a universal characteristic of human society. The society and culture and Social and Cultural are closely related concepts. There can obviously be no culture without a society—much as there can be no society without individuals. The converse, there can be no society without culture, holds for man ; a cultureless society is human, it would be even hard to imagine. All organised human life has both social and cultural components.

Actually, culture is the complex whole that consists of everything we think and do and have as members of a society. It is a total way of life. It is almost impossible to exaggerate the importance of culture in human life.

Man is both the carrier and the creator of culture. The houses we like, other clothes we wear, the food we eat, and the beverages we drink can be explained not by biological needs for shelter, warmth, food, drink but only by culture.

Charles, A. Valentine, defined "culture as an entire way of life followed by people which includes behaviour and sets for the members standards of perceiving, predicting, judging and acting."

Culture is transmitted by the processes of teaching and learning, whether formal or informal, by what has been cultured "inter-learning". The essential part of culture is to be found in the pattern embodied in social tradition of the group, that is, in knowledge, ideas, beliefs, values, standards and sentiments prevalent in the group. The next part of culture is to be found in the actual behaviour of the group, usually in its usages, customs and institutions. The essential part of culture seems to be an appreciation of values with reference to life conditions.

In short, culture is a collective name for all behaviour patterns, socially acquired and socially transmitted by means of symbols, hence a name for all the distinctive achievements of human groups including not only such items as language, tool-making, industry, art, science, law, government, morals and religion but also the material instruments in which cultural achievements are embodied and by which intellectual culture are given practical effects such as buildings, tools, machines, communications devices etc. It covers all language, traditions, customs and institutions. The essential part of culture seems to be an appreciation of values with references to life conditions.

No culture can remain uninfluenced by other cultures which surrounded it or with which it comes into contact. C. F. Andrews, as early as, 1989, pointed out that as a very ancient civilization, India has been along with previous treasure owing to the accumulations of the past and that in trying to get rid of the weeds the priceless growth also should not be lost. Indian civilization has assimilated elements of several influences both external and internal

like Vedic, Buddhist, Muslim and Western to mention some of the major areas.

Our success lies in absorbing the best parts of all outer elements and retaining the best of our own culture.

### NATIONAL INTEGRATION

National integration may be defined as a process that involves a general patriotic consciousness and nationally constructive efforts of different groups and sub-groups to attain common welfare and a maximum level of 'tile' including solidarity, identification and inactivement.

*One working definition implies :*

- a) That the need and urgency of integration as unquestionable.
- b) That the present system is rampant with hostile press responsible for malintegration.
- c) That it is not impossible to achieve this goal provided that the existing system is changed, and
- d) That these stresses and strains involved in the process of transplantation deserve careful study and immediate revolution.

*Anatomy of malintegration :*

Theoretically much has been done towards achieving integration but a perusal of the day to day practical problems unfold a painfully gruesome picture of disturbances, unrest, communal riots, linguistic hysteria, growth of militant senas, separatist tendencies provincialism and casteism on one hand, whereas the simultaneously growth of horrors of poverty, unemployment, disease, homelessness, want, hunger, malnutrition, corruption and ignorance on the contrary.

The problems have to be dealt with in their total togetherness for each one is inseparably related to the other and none is exclusive. It also signifies that the national resources—that also included vast population—have to be channelized towards the achievement of well-conceived and accepted goals motivated by the sincerity of efforts. Most unfortunately this has been lacking in our planning. Our failures are not entirely due to mass ignorance and poverty. The stronger sections of society including the powerful political parties

and governing institutions have not paid enough heed to create the pre-requisite conditions conducive to integration.

To develop the feeling of belonging to a community that is India it is essential that all factional and provincial loyalties be given up.

***Real Cause of Disharmony :***

Modern city life lacks personal intimacy and people experience emotional insecurity. They are lonely and lose the unifying values of life. The individual is forced to identify himself with vague amorphous crowds and is dissatisfied. The increasing specialization of roles under tends to make people narrow minded.

Those who try to win leadership exploit the situation. They point out the presence or activities of another section of the population as the cause of all evils and channel the aggressive impulses in the direction they want. When people are dissatisfied, it is easy to ignite them into action. The repressed tensions are released through riots and show downs. Any uncertainty with regards to one's economic security and consequent emotional imbalance may lead to a situation of crisis and trouble.

***Promoting Integration :***

One important step in promoting integration is giving special attention to it in education. Students should be trained not to judge people by their caste or community but according to their individual merit.

Our young men now travel more than what the older generation did. More and more of our young students go to western and also eastern countries for further studies. Their impact on our society is not negligible. Through their communications their families also get educated. They tend to receive new ideas from our cultures.

There should be more emphasis on religion in the curriculum. Gandhiji had spoken of the importance of spiritual education, but it has not been given proper importance in present day basic education.

A proper study of religion would give students knowledge regarding the essential unity of religions and engender respect for the other persons religions. More training should be given in civic sense should be fostered.

Steps should be taken to reduce the social distance among people. In many African countries, there is considerable religious freedom and tolerance. In the same family some members may be Muslim and other Christian. The husband and wife may believe in different religious.

A novel experiment of promoting national integration has been adopted by some schools. Small batches of students from one region go and stay in some homes in different state for week or so. Not only that they have found new homes in other region but their families have also forged new ties with each other. To my opinion, this type of cross cultural inter-action should be increased among schools and colleges in different regions.

#### *The Gift of Speech : Language Question :*

Let us take the question of language. The gift of speech is one of the most precious achievements of man and is the natural and only source of communication between man and man, without which man would be plunged into isolation. Yet what we do with it. Instead of cementing the bonds of brother-hood, it is turned into a weapon of strife. A group which speaks a certain language fosters' suspicion which soon turns into antipathy towards those who speak another language, Gradually a persecution mania gets generated.

The underlying, dominant feeling is one of fear, which comes of suspicion and leads to hatred. When these dark passions pile up violence is inevitable. We are fast losing that most precious and proud heritage of ours which was India's distinguishing hall mark for centuries tolerance. Said Gandhiji 'It we want to cultivate a true spirit of democracy, we cannot afford to be intolerant. Intolerance betrays want of faith in one's cause. Intolerance is a form of violence and an obstacle to the growth of a democratic spirit. Evolution of democracy is not possible, if we are not prepared to hear the other side.'

'We shut the doors of reason when we refuse to listen to those who differ from us, when intolerance becomes a habit, we run the risk of missing the truth.'

Writing on national unity Gandhiji once said, "what does this unity consist in and how can it be best promoted?" And he

answered himself, it consists in our having a common purpose a common goal and common sorrows. It is best promoted by co-operating to reach the common goal by sharing one another's sorrows and by mutual tolerance. Then he went on into further elaboration. The Union we want is not a patched up thing, but a union of hearts based upon a definite recognition of the ineluctable proposition that Swarj of India is an impossible dream without an indissoluble unions. It must be partnership between equals each respecting the other and the other's way of life. What we need is not to be one but to be able to tolerate one another and live in amity and place.

In short, the main characteristics of the social crisis are power-mind instead of service mindness, revolution in efforts, over consciousness of right, negligences of duties revolution in expectations, life of comfort without efforts, over consciousness of right, negligence of duties, decline in moral and social values, in seeking material benefits, aspiration for easy and quick success, increasing consciousness of poverty. Agitation mindedness of different pressure groups, increasing frustration, accumulating tension, growing social evils such as bribery, corruption, nepotism, red tapism regionalism, linguistic fanaticism, and communalism, decline in work motivation and false dignity of labour-all resulting in social chaos and disorder rendering man and his institutions ineffective and inefficient.

There is no wonder that social crisis of our times is a crisis in values and attitudes. To-day the student failed to attain a better standard of leadership as compared to others in society which is experiencing several trends of national disintegration. It is quite unfortunate that educated (teachers & students) instead of becoming a source of leadership and inspiration for the rest of society, they have been imitating the rest of society by imbibing the existing values and succumbing to the social climate.

The contemporary social climate is less conducive for hard work, right motivation, healthy outlook and good opportunity for merit. University, Colleges & schools, have average a war to reverse the unhealthy values and to establish right values. Conducive for development so that the students who are going to be the future leaders in different walks of life and can be moulded with good

conduct, character and idealism to shoulder the responsibility of national development.

The privileges of 'freedom' and the fruits of national produce will have to be shared with those unfortunately deprived people who constitute the Indian humanity without asking anybody's religion, caste, region and language. Each one's identity has to be recognised as an Indian—above all a human being—and nothing more and nothing less. This seems to be the only rational way of achieving integration.

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## Promoting Goodwill in Nation, Nationalism and National Integration : The Role of Education

Mohit Chakrabarti

In an emerging One World today, the concept of nation, nationalism or national integration is closely related to the positive and humanistic role of mankind. Today's man is always evaluated and identified in terms of 'men' and *vice-versa*. A single man as Rabindra Nath Tagore rightly reminds every one of us, is absolutely meaningless. He simply averts from being an inseparable member or citizen of the nation concerned. As a consequence, he contributes nothing to nationalism, and national integration to him remains a far cry. Ironically, the so-called modern world of today is exceptionally and terribly crowded with meaningless men. And, then, what about planning for re-orientation of this type of misguided personality? Eventually, a harmonized, integrated, well-cohered nation demands a balanced vision of the individual self in relation to the global self having, of course, an embracing role in the midway of efflorescence of the national self contributing sincerely to the promotion of nationalism and national solidarity.

With the broadbased vision of nation, nationalism and national integration, today's man is poised with the two fundamental problems that incorporate humanism : one, how far is a nation related to the individual and *vice-versa*? The other : What enriches nationalism so that national integration becomes a natural and spontaneous offshoot of the former? With regard to the first problem concerning the mutual relationship between the two concepts of nation and the individual, the following terms of reference demand our sincere attention :

- a) Any nation to be justified to its connotation cannot but pave avenues for the all-round progress of an individual—physical, intellectual, social, moral, aesthetic, economic and spiritual to be a real participant in national progress and prosperity.

- b) The diversified visions of a nation expanding its horizon to profusely contribute to the framing and sustaining of the spirit of the global nation and global nationalism so appallingly neglected in nurturing the caged aims and objectives of nation and nationalism are to be well-identified and disseminated in every one.
- c) The duties and responsibilities of an individual for the nation and, for that end-in-view, national integration necessitate a clear, specific and well-spelt out approach to translate these in real life situations. Mere understanding and appreciation of these from theoretical perspectives as most often done would hardly serve the genuine purpose of learning the role of a nation.
- d) The concept of nation in relation to the individual must be based on the point of excellence. Hence, the march of man and nation from the qualitative end-in-view of advancement.
- e) The concept of nation in relation to man must follow the principle of evolution. Man must exercise his own power of creative consciousness to amply contribute to the furtherance and progress of a nation. The process of evolution is a process of change—dynamic, specific, altruistic and humanistic, and the main architect of this process of evolution should always be man liberated from every type of bondage and artificiality.

As regards the components of nationalism that are closely connected with the progress of national integration, the following may from broadbased perspectives be referred to :

- i) **Education** : Education is the key point of nationalism and national integration. What type of education is necessary for this end-in-view ? What should be its theoretical and practical framework ? Who would formulate the operational strategies and what should be their actual role in the area(s) of operation ? Obviously, the educationists.
- ii) **Social and national values** : An identification, analysis and evaluation of social and national values contributing to social consciousness and national integration comes under the perview of understanding and appreciating social and national values.

This certainly creates an interesting and living atmosphere of knowing the nation in close association with whatever is good, true and beneficial to man and society.

What should be the ideal of a nation like ours in the context of the above? What should be the primary aims and objectives concerning promotion of the spirit of goodwill in the concepts of nation, nationality and national integration? How far should education be reoriented towards this direction? To negotiate all these vital issues, the horizon of human consciousness must be broadened by means of dissemination of education for communicated and conjoint living for harmony, peace and prosperity.

In the ember years of the twentieth century, it is imperative to recognise that it is not open to any single species to imagine its own arbitrary need, and to proceed to fulfil it, unmindful of the needs of others. This truth is valid between nature and man, as well as between man and man himself. It demands a considered prioritisation of need by the world as a whole and a collective resolve and means to address those needs, both human and non-human, with a well-balanced relative primacy between them. They should eschew arbitrary actions inconsistent with the tenets of civilized behaviour, such as the pursuit of conflict and war. They should seek, above all, to serve the common good, materially and spiritually, promoting humanism, equality and harmony.

This is the ideal that man yearns for. To dream of this in a universal scale, we need to begin here at home. We must reach to each other before we reach out to the world.

—P. V. Narasimha Rao : “Promoting Goodwill Among Nations For Peace And Prosperity”, speech delivered at the 6—15 Summit, Dakar, Senegal, November 21, 1992, pp 8-9.

Admittedly, nationalism should incorporate programmes of activities which should be essentially based on sound effective and dynamic education that has a thrust not only towards, nationalism and for that end-in-view, national integration but also international and global cohesion. With the world becoming a One Home One Family One Big Brotherhood of Mankind, education should be so oriented and channelized as to abundantly contribute to effective yearning of man to man. This will show the way to learning the

lessons of sympathy, patience, co-operation and inter-dependence all encapsulating the true spirit of global nationalism and global harmony. The education of the heart that forms an inseparable part of such type of nationalism is long overdue. Somewhere in the heartland of man harbours that concept of nationalism which allows every nation to be integrated not only nationally but internationally, and education should, therefore, explore and expedite that spirit in full swing.

Coming straight to India as a nation, what are the catchment areas of education to preserve nationalism and national cohesion? Concerning education in schools where the concepts of nation, nationalism and national integration should be imparted with all care and caution, the aim of education should be clearly and objectively spelt out. Refinement of physical, mental and vocational skills of pupils, elimination of narrowness of regionalism, communalism, religion, culture, values etc, acceptance and dedication of life and work to negotiate any challenge posed before the nation, improvement of standard of life, promoting the programmes of the education of being—all come under the purview of education as it should be in the primary context of nation, nationalism and national integration. In this connection, let us respectfully recall the invaluable words of Shrimati Indira Gandhi :

Education should not divide but bring people together. The aim of education, particularly of school children, should be to develop integrated personalities, and this is possible only if we have an integrated view of our own cultural traditions. No aspect of our civilization is the exclusive preserve of any one group. India's legacy of 5,000 years is the legacy of all humankind.

Education does not mean only refining manual, vocational and intellectual skills. Essentially, it is a process of deepening the spirit. Actually I wonder if it is right to think of education in terms of Muslim, Christian or Hindu education. One can have religious teaching and indeed the inculcation of certain moral and spiritual values is essential but the foundation of education should be national and of a high level.

Education is essential for all sections of the society. We can

have uniform development only when those who, for one reason or another, have been deprived are enabled to catch up with the rest.

One's education is not judged by what one knows but what one becomes.

—“Indira Gandhi : A Life Devoted to National Integration and Uplift of Poor”, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

Government of India, October 1994.

Undeniably, the role of education to promote goodwill among nation, nationalism and national integration is legion. It is the only vital and valuable means of translating the truth of nationalism and national integration that no Indian should feel unwanted or insecure, unwelcome or a second class citizen and everyone should be able to participate in the great task of restoring and enriching the unity of the nation where caste, religion, region and language do not act as constraints to national and global advancement. Education alone should be allowed to play its principal role in disseminating the fact that the diverse ideas, tactics and taxonomy of a vast country like ours teach the fundamental lesson that we are at heart and in spirit always united. This togetherness in the core where education maintains a justified and judicious balance allows us to sacrifice all narrowness of vision in the concept of nationalism and to uphold the spirit of Indianness everywhere as a positive outcome of integrated nationalism.

A living spirit of nation is the spirit of consciousness in conquering alienation. Let us for the sake of nationalism and national place and coherence conquer the distance between one place and the other in this vast country. Let education be allowed to play such a role as to infuse the spirit of equidistance—a fact, however, not yet properly arrested in our plans and programmes of education at all stages.

Today's task for the teachers in schools specially in exposing, elucidating and infusing the concepts of nation, nationalism and national integration demands the following :

- a) To familiarize pupils with the concepts of nation, nationalism and national integration from an elastic and aesthetic spirit of goodness towards one and all.

- b) To Christen pupils with an open-minded vision of and awareness to nationalism and national integration with an earnest and vigorous application of the education of tolerance and extinction of personality.
- c) To allow pupils to explore and examine newer avenues of nationalism where each of them may substantially contribute to consolidation of and appreciation to the great upanishadic saying : *sarve sukhine bhavantu sarve santu niramaya*. Let everyone of us become happy and *sans* disease.
- d) To stimulate pupils to expand the excessively tailored horizon of nationalism and national intergration. In this respect, the role of ascent and excellence of the individual, which have, to a very sordid extent, been already sacrificed in the sentimental whirlwind of nationalism and national integration should be reconsidered and reinstated, encouraged and appreciated for nationalism and intergration as a nation in every possible promise of poignance and perfection.

It is high time to keep the avenues of the concepts of nation, nationalism and national integration wide open. Let sham emotion-alism and sentimentalism, slovenlydiscussed taxonomy of frayed romance must not, as we are, let us frankly admit, more often than not prone to, take the upper hand. Look at the hopeless past or even present (or should we allow our tuture, too ? ) with regard to the following :

- i) There is practically no awareness to introducing text books on nation, nationalism or national integration in the most appropriate perspectives of national development and national prosperity.
- ii) The problem of alienation between man and man, community and community, society and society in the nation is yet to be challenged through dissemination of dynamic and living education.
- iii) The significance of the nation related to the history and evelution from the standpoint of straggle for freedom by our illustrious freedom fighters and their invaluable contributions to national integration are a myth to the present generation learners in the absence of living documents either in a well-edited book-firm or any other form of communication in a well-graded, fool proof, objective, systematized manner.

When would goodness prevail ?

## **Economic Policies, Planning and National Integration**

Suman Sarkar

Economic planning or policy making in any country involves two types of choices. The first of these relates to the specification of ends. It is easy to see that the shape of an economic plan depends to a large extent upon the social and economic objectives that it aims to achieve. The second of these includes choices regarding the ways and means of attaining the chosen objectives. Furthermore, no economic plan or economic policy speaking generally, can be meaningful unless the same is shaped with reference to the basic social and economic characteristics and problems of a particular country at a particular stage of her economic and social development.

‘National Integration’ may be interpreted as a process of bringing together and achieving a harmony amongst the different segments of a country’s population not merely in the sense of peaceful co-existence but also in the sense of creation of conditions necessary for the growth of creative interactions among the people so that it may be possible for them to rise above their sectarian or parochial limitations to attain higher and higher levels of capabilities and wellbeing. Such a concept of national integration has broadly two distinct components, namely a basic goal or objective regarding the state of society that is sought to be achieved through integration and a view of the way in which barriers to the attainment of such a social state may be gradually overcome.

In India the problems of national integration on doubt, have historical, religious, anthropological, geographic educational and social and cultural dimension and as compared to many other smaller countries these problems are much more complex in India as a result of her territorial vastness and wide diversity of material and human conditions. Policy issues in the sphere of national integration should naturally take into account all the above mentioned aspects.

But it may not be wrong to argue that each of the different types of social relations observed in a country at a certain time has

an economic basis on which its characteristic features largely depend. If the economic structure of a country is associated with a significant extent of inequality in respect of distribution of income and wealth and if there exist significant extents of unemployment and poverty, then steps taken with a view to achieve national integration without adequate accompanying measures to solve the above mentioned problems may not be able to achieve the desired results. Poverty and inequality may give rise to communal tensions which cannot be alleviated only by steps to solve religious, cultural and similar social aspects of the problem.

When India became independent after a long period of foreign domination, the Indian economy was characterised by the existence of unemployment, poverty, lack of investible resources, significant regional variations in the level of development attained and various other features typical of a less developed economy. It was in this context that the Indian Constitution emphasised growth with social justice and equality. It was also thought that forces of uncontrolled market mechanism would not be able to change the structure of the Indian economy in a manner consistent with the requirements of solving the problems poverty and unemployment. Accordingly an active role of the state in promoting an allround economic development through planning was envisaged. Under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru the country aimed at achieving 'a socialistic pattern of society' through development planning under a mixed economy framework.

The development strategy which evolved during the early 1950s through collaborative efforts of experts under the leadership of P. C. Mahalanobis emphasised the need for increasing investment with a view to increase production and the level of per capita income. In view of the positive results obtained from the First Plan, confidence in planning increased and a long term development strategy emphasising the need for expansion of basic and heavy industries supplemented by expansion of small scale and cottage industries evolved. Under this strategy the latter group of capital-light industries were emphasised as sources of employment for the unemployed labour force existing in a disguised form in the rural areas and as sources of supply of consumer goods for the masses of the people. This development strategy was the basis of India's

Second Five Year Plan. In this plan the need for introduction of industrial development projects in the backward areas of the country was also emphasised.

As a matter of fact, during the 1950s speaking generally, transport, communication and irrigation facilities were improved. The Zamindari system was abolished and land reform measures were adopted to varying extents by the different state governments. Although the performance of planning differed significantly from state to state and from sector to sector, some of the preconditions for increased national integration were no doubt created to a certain extent.

It has already been mentioned that poverty and economic inequality may be looked upon as two important barriers to national integration. During the 1960s a number of research workers found from their empirical investigations that a very significant proportion of India's population was in fact living below the poverty line. The poverty line was defined in terms of minimum calorie requirements of an adult per day. In 1960-61 prices it was estimated that the minimum required 2250 calories could be obtained by spending around Rs 20/- per capita per month. Around 50% of India's population was found to live below the poverty line defined in the above manner. Although the estimates regarding poverty given by different researchers differed significantly, the Indian Planning Commission itself recognised the fact that a very significant number of people in India were actually living below the poverty line. Accordingly a number of steps were taken by the Planning Commission in the Fifth and Sixth Five Year Plans to generate employment in rural and urban areas. These measures included a number of projects for creating employment opportunities for landless agricultural labourers and labourers in urban areas. Apart from these measures the Fifth and the Sixth plans included Minimum Needs programmes designed with a view to provide the poor with the basic amenities of life such as drinking water, dwelling houses, roads etc. At the end of the Sixth plan poverty in India was officially declared to have declined to a significant extent.

However, from different empirical studies it has been found that the extent of absolute poverty is significantly associated with weather conditions. In years of drought poverty has been found to

increase significantly. Another problem relates to the estimation of poverty. Since there occurs a wide divergence in poverty estimates made by different research workers, it is difficult to know exactly to what extent the percentage of people below the poverty line has really been reduced.

Unemployment is another problem that has not been overcome even after four decades of planned development. In the case of unemployment also, one encounters a number of problems of statistical estimation. As a matter of fact one finds widely divergent estimates given by different official agencies.

As regards the Government's economic policy for development, in recent years there has occurred a big change. It is a well known fact that under the new economic policy industries are increasingly being privatised and the economy is being increasingly liberalised. While one can expect that as a result of liberalisation the markets for different products in the country may be integrated further, the extent to which such integration of markets can be helpful from the point of view of national integration depends on the extents to which these policies can be effective in solving the problems of unemployment and poverty and extent to which these new policies may be associated with a balanced regional development.

In this connection it may be relevant to note that from different research studies it is found that product as well as factor markets in India are incomplete in many respects and are characterised by various types of imperfections. These imperfections also seem to be associated with extreme inequality in the ownership of means of production. Under these circumstances it is easy to see that economic liberalisation measures alone can hardly enable the downtrodden people in the country to have a fair share of economic progress. There still remains a need for concerted policies and planning with a view to improve the conditions of the poverty stricken and the unemployed people and the less developed regions of our country. Planning with the above mentioned objectives may be looked upon as an essential aspect of 'national integration', in the true sense of the term.

## **Regional Disparities in Economic Development in India : Is it a threat to National Integration ?**

Sibranjan Misra

### ***SUMMARY :***

I. Balanced growth is necessary for the harmonious development of a federal state like India. India, of course, presents a picture of extreme regional variations in terms of such indicators of economic growth as per capita income, the proportion of population living below to normative minimum, working population in agriculture etc. A brief review of the development of the Indian economy reveals that Punjab, Haryana, Maharashtra and Gujarat are at the top in terms of per capita income ; while, U. P., Bihar and Orissa are at the bottom. The relatively developed states are incidentally also the states which rank higher on the basis of average daily employment per 1,000 population, per capita industrial consumption of electricity and per capita bank credit. Available figures also indicate that (a) there was a sharp increase in disparities in per capita agricultural income, (b) some reduction in disparities in non-agricultural income and (c) a slight increase in the degree of disparity in the distribution of overall per capita income.

II. Historically, the existence of economic disparities in India started from the British rule. The British helped the development of only those regions which possessed facilities for prosperous cultivation, manufacturing and trading activities. Further, under the land system of the British, the rural areas were continuously pauperised. The uneven investment in irrigation and the absence of effective land reforms during the British rule allowed the structure in most of rural India to remain inimical to balanced economic development.

III. Some regions are primitive and backward because to locational disadvantages, isolated from national market and socio-cultural base. Some Himalayan states, hill districts of U. P., Bihar, NEFA and desert areas have remained backward because of inaccessibility. Considerable investment by the Government have

been concentrated at a few places like Kanpur, Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi etc. on efficiency criterion. These areas act as 'suction pumps' pulling in more dynamic elements from the more static neighbouring regions experiencing outflow of people, capital and resources. The adoption of new technology in agriculture only by already better-off farmers in certain heavily irrigated tracts has also aggravated regional disparities. Dry farmers and non-farming populations of the countryside have been left out.

IV. Government has sought to tackle the problem of regional disparities in three ways :

a) the recognition of backwardness as a factor to be taken into account for a transfer of financial resources from the Centre to the states,

b) special area development programmes, and

c) measures to promote private investment in backward areas. But there are certain difficulties for solving the problems through transfer of resources from the Centre to the states. There is no guarantee that the resources transferred from the Centre to the states would be automatically used for the development of the backward areas. The area development measures do not cover some backward areas.

V. A serious complaint of some of the States is that the Centre has not used its fiscal dominance over states to correct regional imbalances and to achieve national integrity. In the absence of integrated approach to the development of the backward regions, location of the Central Sector Project and even the location of private industries through licensing policies have not created much of an impression on the problem of regional imbalance. In fact, regional disparities have grown under the plans.

The demand for State autonomy is often said to be consistent with the integrity of the country and will mark India an 'ideal federation'. State autonomy would liberate creative energies at present inhibited by constant Central interferences. But there is the fear that some of the States ideologically different from others might like to break away from the federation on some pretext or other. The regional political parties in India are very parochial in their outlook. Not all states perform their functions properly in some sectors like agriculture, irrigation and power, administration etc.

over which they do already enjoy considerable autonomy. They are not only reluctant to tax agricultural incomes but even have been abolishing land levies despite the gaping deficits in their budgets. And this is predominantly because of the fear that imposition of such taxes may antagonise the bulk of the electorate.

VI. In fine, for the unity and integrity of the country, a strong centre is essential. There can be no compromise on this score. However, a compromise will have to be worked out so that there is a powerful centre, on the one hand and reasonably autonomous states which do not always depend upon the generosity of the Centre, on the other.

# **Fostering the Spirit of National Integration among the Students of Secondary and Higher Secondary Stages in India**

Mano Ranjan Banerjee

## **A B S T R A C T**

The paper prepared aims at to find out the way how to foster the spirit of National Integration among the students of Secondary and Higher Secondary stages of India through a planned programme of Orientation (Courses) of the Headmasters/Headmistress/Principals and teachers of Secondary and Higher Secondary schools of India. Highlighting a short background profile of the basic issues of National Integration which is and urgent need for India today to safeguard Indian Unity and Solodarity for peaceful co-existence with irrespective of all diversities and decisive forces prevailed everywhere. Accordingly programmes have been chalked out for 15 days. Orientation programmes for Secondary and Higher Secondary school teachers and Headmasters/Headmistress/Principals for the purpose, so that the teachers are motivated and awared of the emergent issue like National Integration keeping in view the fostering the spirit of the National Integration among the school students of India.

### **1. INTRODUCTION :**

The greatness of Indian civilisation stands on the pure concentrated essence of the concept of modern nationhood. To survive as a civilised nation by treating with equal respect of all the different components of Indian nationhood. India is a land of diverged geographical as well as natural setup, a dozen different religious, a score of languages with varieties of dialects and abundance of castes and cultures. Each of these mentioned is recognised for its individual identity and significance. Since independence, no topic in India has been highlighted more elaborately then National Integration. The emergent problems of National Integration in India have been overshadowed Indian thinking and even Indian plans for socio-cultural, economic ; industrial, educational and scientific uplift on

which rests the solution of India's basic problems. On achieving independence in 1947, people of India at once become pledged to build up India into secular and economic justice. While efforts were afoot to achieve these adjectives, India faced with many diversified as well as decisive forces, narrow loyalties and cleaving tendencies, which began to swallow up the vitals of narrow unity and led to disruption in every sphere of life. It can also be said that the sense of National Integration has recently been under considerable strain because of diverse forces arising from castes, religious, and regional considerations. Therefore, there is a wide spread demand that effective counter measures must be taken to educate the Indian students about the Indian value system, the freedom struggle, the value of national movements, the danger of communal and caste consciousness and the need to strengthen the composite customs and culture of India. It is felt that the present scenario is an indication of the failure of the education system prevailed and at least from now onwards, every effort should be made to see that the coming generations will be immunised against fissiparous tendencies which are deeprooted in every corner of this sub-continent.

'Now, throughout the ages, the education of the young has been encouraged, so that the growing members of the human family may learn to adopt themselves to society, and so that they may be able to inherit the world of their fore fathers, develop it and live in it. Education therefore, is a basic institution of society. And the aims and ideals of any particular society determine the aims and ideals of the educational system which it maintains, the structure of that system and the context of the education which it gives its citizens.' So the present system of education based on colonial concept should be reorganised in the light of Indian needs and aspirations and the role of teachers specially engaged in school teaching will be taken into consideration in fostering the spirit of National Integration among the school students within the existing framework of school curricula.

The correct approach to the issue of the fostering National Integration could be served, not through the introduction as a separate subject, but through the introduction of the concept in the broad background of the total development process in all the disciplines and curricula structured. The effectiveness of such approach

depends on the teachers of the Secondary and Higher Secondary classes in various disciplines. The teachers engaged for the purpose have to realise the concept and the approach of the spirit of National Integration among the school students, while discussing the relevant topics of the syllabus in the class so that these may be inculcated by the students. It is with this purpose, necessary arrangements should be made to find out the relevant topics of the existing syllabi of the subjects of language group, science group and social science group, so that teachers teaching the subjects can be oriented accordingly, keeping in view the objectivity of the programmes to be chalked out.

## **2 *Factors of Disintegration :***

Following are the factors already mentioned earlier, threatening Indian Unity and Solidarity time to time :

- i) Religious Orthodoxy,
- ii) Varieties of Castes and Languages.
- iii) Social Insecurity,
- iv) Economic Insecurity,
- v) Inequalities in Distribution of Resources,
- vi) Provincialism,
- vii) Erosion of Indian Traditional and Cultural Values,
- viii) Illiteracy,
- ix) Unbalanced Growth of Population,
- x) Lack of National Consciousness,
- xi) Lack of Emotional Balance,
- xii) Lack of forbearance,

## **3. *Reorganisation of Education for National Integration :***

To foster the spirit of National Integration, keeping in mind to strengthen the unity and solidarity of Indian people the first and foremost duty of the teachers, educational leaders, social thinkers as well as political personalities is to reorganise the Indian present marks oriented educational system under the following dimensions :

- i) Evaluation of Indian History, and Culture,
- ii) Safeguarding Indian Constitution,
- iii) Erasing out the religious orthodoxy,
- iv) Acquaintance with different Indian languages,

- v) Simplifications of grammatical construction of different Indian languages,
- vi) Removal of economic insecurity,
- vii) Removal of illiteracy,
- viii) Eradication of deep rooted caste and class consciousness.
- ix) Proper use of mass media,
- x) Arrangement for population education,
- xi) Maintenance of good public relations,
- xii) Preparation of Need based text books,
- xiii) Strengthening the role of teachers and educators in the area educational fields,
- xiv) Proper management of human resources,

#### 4. *Need of Education for National Integration :*

National Integration requires a thorough reorganisation of present Indian education system. The ideal democracy of any country depends upon the training of its citizens in the most efficient manner through a planned educational programme. A true citizen of a democratic country must possess a genuine love for his/her country and country men irrespective of all castes, creeds, localities and language differences. He must be a patriot with a keen sense of the value of national unity and solidarity. India is a land of varieties and diversities not only in physical features and climatic conditions, but also in respect of language, religion, manners, customs, traditions and folk ways, different modes of life etc. Colonial bureaucracy during the foreign rule, jeopardised Indian education. So the reconstruction of Indian national life in all the spheres, India needs efficient leaders, trained man power and above all national unity. The process should be started at the very beginning of the emotional development of a child when they are very soft minded and when they can be moulded according to the aims of education. So here the role of efficient, skillful, well trained as well oriented teachers are highly needed to foster the spirit of the human values, national aspirations and overall National Integration among the school students in every sphere. Education in India must therefore, take into consideration to solve the problems of National Integration emerged, keeping in view fulfilling the following aims of education like :

- i) Achievement of knowledge,
- ii) Retention and transmission of culture,
- iii) Building of Character,
- iv) Realisation and practice of higher values of life,
- v) Development of personalities,
- vi) Development of Social efficiencies,
- vii) Maintenance of emotional balance,
- viii) Following the concept of integral view of man,
- ix) Formation of a cultivated society,
- x) Accept the concept of secularism,

On the other hand it can be said that education is the process which transforms students from one state to another. Education brings about a change in mental and physical behaviours of students. To bring about this change teachers must introduce the students to information, concept which seem relevant to their lives. Now, one of the important aims of education is to help students develop into responsible citizens of their country, those who have imbibed the spirit of mutual understanding and respect and who have the country's interest at heart first and foremost.

##### *5. The ways out—approaches :*

As a first step One Handbook on the Basic Issues of National Integration will be required and accordingly this may be prepared under the following head lines—

- i) General Introduction to Area of Consideration,
- ii) Meaning and concept of Integration,
- iii) Meaning of National Integration,
- iv) Problems of National Integration,
- v) Factors of Disintegration highlighting the basic issues like—
  - a) Diversities,
  - b) Languages,
  - c) Region,
  - d) Food habits and dress,
  - e) Attitudes towards regionalism,
  - f) Economic imbalance,
  - g) Varieties of social groups
  - h) Ethnic differences,

- vi) A very short profile of the Attempts made by the Govt. and Semi-Govt. organisations,
- vii) Need of National Integration,
- viii) Role of education for National Integration,
- ix) Role of teachers teaching different subjects at Secondary and Higher Secondary stages,
- x) Reorganisation of education for National Integration,

As a second Step Two Sets of Handbooks may be prepared One for Secondary School Teachers and the other for Higher Secondary School teachers keeping in view to show the role of the following different subjects in fostering National Integration among the Indian school students :—

- a) Mother tongues for both the stages
- b) English language ”
- c) Geography ”
- d) History ”
- e) Life Science ”
- f) Physical Science ”
- g) Economics for Higher Secondary stage
- h) Civics/Pol. Sc. ”

On the basis of the following Key Points the above mentioned hand books—handbooks on different subjects in separate form of each subject—may be structured by the subject specialists/the teachers teaching the subjects in different classes :

a) A general introduction of the objectivity of the programmes initiated by the IGCNI, Visva-Bharati, highlighting the meaning and concept of National Integration ;

b) Role of Language/History/Geography/Life Science/Phy. Sc. /Economic/Civics or Pol. Sc. education,

c) Identifications of the basic Plug Points through which teachers can accept their share of responsibility in promoting National Integration among the student,

d) As Exemplar Materials one or two lesson plans on each above mentioned subject may be prepared on the key points identified within the existing syllabus, so that the concerned teachers can teach the subjects of National Integration among the School students.

### 6 *Role of Geography Education : An Example :*

Teaching of geography leads to the development of National Integration admirably and the better appreciation of the life of people of the different parts of the country. While teaching this subject the teacher should emphasise the point such as the variety as a source of national strength, wholeness of the country, similarity in the life and living, regional interdependence, richness of resources, wide distribution of job opportunities, man's adjustments to the different geographic conditions, land-man relationships and etc.

The curricula activities should be such that the pupils are brought together and made to work together. Planned excursions, inter-state camps, India-vist programmes and field trips should be introduced periodically for pupils for developing greater understanding of the diversities of the country like India. Class wise lesson plans on the concerned subject may be prepared for the purpose.

### 7. Proposed 15 Days' Orientation Programme :

i) Three Days' Motivational Programme with the above mentioned Two Set up of Handbooks can be arranged for Headmaster/ Headmistress/Principals of the respective educational Institutions so that they can further motivate, co-ordinate as well as co-operate with the subsequent programmes to be assigned for the subject teachers.

ii) Two Days' Motivational cum Awareness programme for Language teachers of Secondary Schools.

iii) Same as for Higher Secondary School teachers.

iv) Two Days' Motivational cum Awareness Programme for History and Geography teachers of Secondary School teachers.

v) Same as for Higher Secondary School teachers.

vi) Two Days' Motivational cum Awareness Programme for Economics and Pol. Sc. teachers of Higher Secondary Schools.

vii) Two Days' Motivational cum Awareness Programme for Secondary and Higher Secondary teachers teaching Life Science and Physical Science.

### 7. *Conclusion :*

No separate subject like 'National Integration' in India should be introduced in school sections. Experience says that if it is done the students will be over burdened with the additional subject. As

the sametime, the spirit of the objectivity of the programme may be failed due to the examination oriented newly introduced subject.

The only solution in this regard, I think, is to orient and motivate the teachers of the respective school subjects so that the spirit of the concept as need for National Integration in India can be percolated in the minds and hearts of the school students of India through the existing course and curriculum.

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## **Formation of Linguistic States and Autonomous Council**

Manju Mohan Mukherjee

Integration of the nation is a problem of tremendous significance and it concerns every body. This obviously needs a comprehensive treatment.

Generally, the unity of a nation consists in the will of the people to consider themselves as one and united. It is more psychological than external or organizational. It is a subtle unity of culture and a way of life which often defies analysis.

India is a mosaic of faiths, mixture of races, various languages, countless dialects and innumerable customs prevail throughout the whole of India.

It is reported that foreign traveller in India found a Punjabi, a Tamil, an Oriya, a Bengali etc. but he found it difficult to find an Indian was almost a rare biological specimen.

Let me refer to Professor Toynbee's phrase 'linguistic nationalism' that he used in 1959 in the course of his Azad Memorial Lecture. He said that while linguistic nationalism can be a disintegrating force it is fair price that we have to pay for the introduction of democracy. In a country of 400 millions if we really want to reach these millions through our administration and through our education we have to give the fullest scope to these languages. These are good languages. Therefore there is enormous scope for their development and they can be developed only if they become the vehicle of our education.

No language can be a dividing force but if each and every Indian tries to stick only to his own mother tongue and regards it as the best language of the country and does not care to learn other languages in this country. Particularly Sanskrit and at least one regional language, I think we will be laying wrong foundations of our education.

The Govt. of India has decided to introduce the three language formula—the mother tongue, Hindi or one modern Indian language

and as an international language—English. I am sorry to say that it is not being properly implemented. Some States try to avoid precisely what they should not.

I also feel that we should go a step further and try to spread the knowledge of the southern languages, particularly the four languages in the northern area.

It is not enough for the Hindi speaking people to learn Gujrati or Marathi or Bengali. We should try in a systematic manner to learn at least one of the four southern languages. Then only I think Hindi will be really respected in the south. It will be very difficult for us to teach Hindi to the southern people unless we can make them feel that their language is also being imbibed by the north.

### *Gift of Speech :*

It should be accepted as an incontrovertible fact that no child is born with a knowledge of any language. Every child has to learn a language through a more or less laborious process. Naturally the language that is learned first and most easily is the language, the mother speak. If by chance the mother lost and the child is adopted by parents that belong to a different community or country, naturally the language that the child learns is the language of its new adopting parents.

The gift of speech is one of the most precious achievements of man and is natural and only source of communication between man and man without which man would be plunged into isolation. Yet what we do with it. Instead of cementing bonds of brotherhood, it is turned into a weapon of strife. A group which speaks a certain language forsters supicion which soon turns into antipathy towards those who speak another language. Gradually a persecution mania get generated.

No less serious than casteism is the problem of linguistic communalism or the conflict between groups speaking different languages. The extent and variety of the linguistic conflicts and problems can be easily understood by reference to 'language riots' in Assam and Bombay, the violent disturbances in Madras State, the demand for the recognition of Urdu as a regional language in U. P. and Bihar, the border disputes between Maharastra and Mysore, the

demand for creation of a separate Mizo State. the activities of Shiv Sena in Bombay, the D. M. K. agitation against the imposition of Hindi, the adoption of English as the State language by the Nagaland Assembly.

The re-organisation of States on a linguistic basis as had been apprehended, failed to solve and gave rise to some new conflicts and tensions specially relating to the rights of linguistic minorities the claims of various States on areas of bordering States, and how the role of Hindi as the official language of the country. Linguistic loyalties, almost bordering on Chauvinism, demanding the use of the regional language not merely for the purposes of administration but also as the medium of education at all levels—primary, secondary and post graduate and the vehicle of local culture. The linguistic tension and conflicts have a popular basis in the fears, hopes and aspirations, the pride and prejudices of communities and regions concerned the deep attachment of the people to their own language and literature, their anxiety about or fear of being submerged and assimilated and / or of being at a disadvantage in new linguistic set up.

### *Principal Languages :*

India has 18 official recognised languages ( Konkani, Manipuri and Nepali were added to the official list of 15 in 1992 ). The 1961 and 1971 censuses has listed 1652 languages as mother tongues spoken in India

The Indian languages of today have evolved from different language families corresponding more or less to the different ethnic elements that have come into India from the dawn of history. They may be divided into 6 groups as under : 1. Negroid, 2. Austric, 3. Sino-Tibetan, 4. Dravidian, 5. Indo-Aryan and 6. Other speeches.

These languages have interacted on one another through the centuries and have produced the major linguistic division of modern India. Among the major groups the Aryan and Dravidian are dominating family. They have influenced each other and have in turn, been influenced by Austric and Sino-Tibetan tongues. It is easy to spot—Sino-Tibetan and Austric borrowing in the Aryan and Dravidian languages and mutual borrowing of Aryan and Dravidian groups.

*Indo-Aryan :*

The Indic branch of the Indo-European family came into India with the Aryans. It is the biggest of the language groups in India, accounting for about 74 per cent of the entire Indian population. The important languages in this group are Western and Eastern Punjab, Sindhi, Hindi, Rajasthani, Gujarati, Marathi, Assamese, Bengali, Oriya, Pahari, Kasmiri and Sanskrit and other regional language of Hindi belt.

Hindi or Hindustani has produced two great literatures, Urdu and ( High ) Hindi. Both have the same grammar and the same basic vocabulary. They differ however in script and higher Vocabulary. Urdu uses the Perso-Arabic script. Hindi uses the Nagari script and has preference for purely Indian words in contradiction to the numerous Arabic and Persian words borrowed by Urdu.

Sanskrit the classical language of India, represent the highest achievement of the Indo-Aryan languages. Although hardly spoken now-a-days, Sanskrit has been listed nationally accepted language in the VIII Schedule to the Constitution.

Dravidian languages form a group by themselves, and unlike the Aryan-Austrian or Sino-Tibetan speeches, have no relations outside the Indian subcontinent, i. e., India, Pakistan, Bangladesh. The Dravidian family is the second largest group in India, covering about 25% of the total Indian population.

The Dravidian language came into India centuries before the Indo-Aryan. It split into three branches in the Indian subcontinent (i) The Northern branch comprises Brahui spoken in Baluchistan and Kurukh and Malto in Bengal and Orissa, (ii) The Central branch is composed of Telugu and a number of dialects spoken in Central India-Kui, Khond, Holani, Konda, Gondi, Naiki, Parji, Koya, and others ; (iii) The Southern branch is made up of Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, Tulu, Badaga, Toda, Kota and Kodagu.

The outstanding language of Dravidian group are (i) Telugu, the State language of Andhra Pradesh, numerically the biggest of the Dravidian language ; (ii) Tamil, the State language of Tamilnadu, apparently the oldest and purest branch of the Dravidian family ; (iii) Kannada, the State language of Karnataka, another

ancient Dravidian language that has developed individually ;  
(iv) Malayalam, the State language of Kerala, the smallest and the youngest of the Dravidian family.

India never had a common language which was intelligible to the masses every where in India. For many years, Sanskrit remained a common medium. But it was the language of the educated classes and not of the masses. Under the British rule, English became a sort of lingua-franca. Here again, it was restricted to the educated few.

Of the 1652 mother tongues listed in the census, 33 are spoken by people numbering over a lakh. The following Table shows the names of mother tongues and the number of speakers.

(Source : World Almanac, 1993)

Mother Tongue	Estimated World Figures Mid 1992 (Million)	Mother Tongue	Estimated World Figures Mid 1992 (Million)
Hindi	383	Sindhi	17
Telegu	71	Assamese	23
Bengali	189	Santali	5
Marathi	67	Kashmiri	4
Tamil	67	Gondi	2
Urdu	95	Konkani	4
Gujrati	39	Dogri	1
Malayalam	35	Nepali	14
Kannada	43	Bhili/Bhilodi	3
Oriya	31	Kurukh/Oraon	2
Punjabi	89	Tulu	2
		Ho	1

***Common Language.—National Language :***

With independence the question of a common language naturally came up. The Constitution Assembly could not arrive at a consensus in this matter. The question was put to vote and 'HINDI' won on a single vote—the casting vote of the President.

“The Nation without a mother tongue cannot be called a nation. The defence of one’s mother tongue is a more powerful barrier against the intransigent of foreigners than even the national barriers of rivers and mountains”.

( A famous poet of Ireland, Thomas Davis).

The Indian National Congress had advocated the formation of linguistic provinces. The acceptance of this policy involved the statutory recognition of all the major regional languages.

The Constitution therefore recognised Hindi in Devanagiri script as the official language of the Union (Art 343) and the regional language as the official languages of the states concerned (Art 345). English was recognised as the authoritative legislative and judicial language Art 348). A Schedule—8th Schedule was added to the Constitution to indicate all regional languages statutorily recognised.

The Schedule originally contained 15 languages as follows :

- |               |               |                |              |
|---------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|
| 1 — Assamese, | 2 — Bengali,  | 3 — Gujarati,  | 4 — Hindi,   |
| 5 — Canada,   | 6 — Kashmiri, | 7 — Malayalam, | 8 — Marathi, |
| 9 — Oriya,    | 10 — Punjabi, | 11 — Sanskrit, | 12 — Tamil.  |
| 13 — Telegu,  | 14 — Urdu,    | 15 — Sindhi.   |              |

By the 77th Amendment of the Constitution, Konkani, Manipuri and Nepali were added to the list in 1992.

### *Profile of Indian Languages :*

**Assamese :** An Indo-Aryan language is the official language of Assam State. More than 57 per cent of the population of Assam speak Assamese has developed as a literary language from the 13th Century.

**Bengali :** One of the leading Indo-Aryan language, is the official language of West Bengal. It is spoken by 181 million people, the majority of whom are now in Bangladesh, formerly East Pakistan. Bengali emerged as a separate language around A.D. 1000. It is now one of the most advanced languages of India.

**Gujarati :** A member of the Indo-Aryan family is the official language of State of Gujarat. Gujarati started out as an independent language around A.D. 1200. It has progressed at rapid pace and is now one of the most developed Indian languages.

*Hindi* : Numerically the biggest of the Indo-Aryan family is the official language of the Government of India. Among the various dialects of Hindi, the dialect chosen as official Hindi is standard Khariboli written in Devanagri Script. This was originally spoken in Delhi and some western U.P. districts. From the literary point of view, the term Hindi covers not only the Khariboli form, but also a number of other dialects like Brajbhasha, Bundehi, Awadhi, early Marwari of Rajasthan and the Maithili and Bhojpuri of Bihar.

Being the official language of seven states including Delhi, today Hindi is receiving high patronage. This patronage and support has encourage the development of Hindi as a great literary language languages of India.

*Kannada* : The official language of the State of Karnataka, belongs to the Dravidian family. The majority of its speakers is found in Karnataka where they form more than 65 per cent of the population Kannada, as an independent language, dates from the 9th century. It has rich literary traditions.

*Kashmiri* : Kashmiri a language of the Indo-Aryan group, is often mistaken as the State language of Jammu and Kashmir. Urdu is the State language of Jammu and Kashmir.

Kashmiri speaking population in Jammu and Kashmir comes about 55 per cent of the total population. Kashmiri literature goes back to A.D. 1200. It is comparatively a developed language. It is written, at present, in the Perso-Arabic script.

*Malayalam* : Malayalam a branch of Dravidian family is the official language of the State of Kerala. Malayalam struck out on its own by the 10th century A.D. It is one of the most developed

*Marathi* : Marathi belonging to the Indo-Aryan stock, is the official language of Maharastra. Through Marathi separated from the main Indo-Aryan stock at a very early date, its literary career began only in the 13th century. Since then, it has made great progress. It has today a fully developed literature of modern type.

*Oriya* : Oriya a branch of the Indo-Aryan family is the official language of the State of Orissa where Oriya speaking population comprises some 82 per cent of the population. Oriya is found recorded as back as the 10th century. But its literary career began on in the 14th century.

**Punjabi :** Punjabi belongs to the Indo-Aryan family and is the official language of the State of Punjab. Punjabi though very ancient language, turned literary only in the 15th century. From the 19th century Punjabi showed vigorous development in all branches of literature. It is written in the Gurumukhi Script. Gurumukhi literally means from the face of the 'Guru'. It is the name given to the script devised by the Sikh Guru, Guru Anand, in the 16th century. The Gurumukhi is based on the old Sharda script, which is related to Nagri script.

**Sanskrit :** The classical language of India is also one of the oldest languages of the World—perhaps very oldest to be recorded. It starts with Rigveda, which appears to have been composed around 2000 B.C. Early Sanskrit is known as Vedic Sanskrit and covers the period between 2000 and 500 B.C. Classic Sanskrit covers the period between 500 B.C. and A.D. 1000.

**Sindhi :** Sindhi is a branch of the Indo-Aryan family. It is spoken by some 16 million people whom 5.5 million live in Sind (Pakistan) and the rest mostly live in India. Sindhi has preserved some of the archaic features of the old Indo-Aryan language. Sindhi uses the Perso-Arabic script in Pakistan. Speakers in India use mainly the Devanagiri script. Of late Sindhi has developed noteworthy literature also.

**Tamil :** The oldest of the Dravidian languages, is the State language of Tamil Nadu. Tamil literature goes back to centuries before the Christian era. In originality, though not extent, Tamil literature stands by itself. It represents certain new literature types which are not found in Sanskrit or other Aryan languages. The language is spoken by 64 million or more. Judging by its modern publication it is advancing at fast pace.

**Telegu :** Telegu numerically the biggest Dravidian language in the State language of Andhra Pradesh. Next to Hindi, it is the biggest linguistic unit in India. Telegu is found recorded from 7th Century A. D. But it was the only the 11th Century that it broke out into a literary language.

**Urdu :** The state language of Jammu and Kashmir is spoken by the more than 28 million people in India (1981 Census). The name Urdu is derived from "Zaban-e-Urdu-Muala" which means the language of the exalted court here means the camp or court of the ruling sultans of Delhi.

Urdu and Hindi have proceeded from the same source, that is, from the Khariboli speech of Delhi and surrounding areas. The Khariboli was a spoken language which prevailed around Delhi; since the 13th Century.

In the 19th century when the Delhi Sultanate disappeared and the British became the rulers, Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan (1817-1898) started a revival of Urdu, as the language of the Muslims in India. Modern Urdu was thus born.

Urdu has produced an extensive literature. Muslim speakers of Urdu use the Perso-Arabic Script while Hindus use the Devanagiri Script. Urdu is also written in Roman characters.

Article 343 of the Constitution provides that a period of 15 years from the commencement of the Constitution the English language shall continue to be used for all official purposes of the Union.

It was expected that after the expiry of the stipulated period (that is after 1965) Hindi would displace English as official language of the Union. Subsequent developments have turned the current in favour of continuing English as an additional official language, no definite date being fixed for its elimination and replacement by Hindi.

As matters stand, the languages listed in the Constitution remain the official languages in the respective States, while Hindi and English continue to be used for inter-state correspondence and for all India use generally.

#### *Sahitya Akademi :*

Since its inception 1954, the Sahitya Akademi has been propagating the idea of cultural unity by using slogan, "Indian language is one though written in many languages". This aphoristic statement is honestly questioned by thinkers who point out that literature is language based and hence it is intrinsically linked with the language in which it is written.

The Sahitya Akademi (the National Academy of Letters) has approved not only these 15 languages but also English and six more Indian languages (viz., Dogri, Konkani, Manipuri, Maithili, Nepali and Rajasthani) for its activities.

Let me conclude with—"India stands before the civilized world as an embodiment of the idea of unity through diversity"—Rabindranath Tagore.

## **'Reservation' And National Integration In India : An Evaluative Analysis**

Anil Baran Ray

The issue of reservation for the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes in India has been one of the most difficult ones tormenting the nation in recent times. The following is an attempt to analyse with reference to the relevant provisions of the Constitution of India some of the dimensions of this issue and its impact on national integration in India.

### **I**

Before I go into a discussion of Constitutional provisions and safeguards for *reservation*, I should like to point to certain disabling social practices which led the framers of the Constitution to think in terms of special protection to be given to backward classes in India, generally known as the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.

It is well-known that untouchability had been a scourge of Hindu community for a very long period of time. This age-old social practice reflected a certain attitude of the high-caste Hindus towards the low-born or lower caste Hindus. The high caste attitude was one of looking down upon the so-called lower-caste people on account of their birth and thus excluding them or disabling them from having any kind of interactions with people belonging to the so-called higher castes.

Certain examples of the exclusive and discriminatory attitude of the high-caste Hindus would be revealing of the spheres in which the scourge of untouchability operated :

- a) the 'untouchable' were refused admission to public institutions granting medical facilities such as hospitals and dispensaries ;
- b) they were denied access to shops, public restaurants, hotels and places of public entertainment ;
- c) they were denied the facilities of using water reservoirs such as wells, tanks, bathing ghats, and taps or such sources of water ;

- d) in some cases they were denied even the use of roads and places of public resort (such as a park). In certain parts of the country, for example, they were either totally prohibited from making use of certain roads meant for the use of general public or they were required to hang a bell around their neck which rang automatically as they walked, thereby cautioning other people to keep a distance so that even the shadows of their bodies did not fall upon the high-caste people negotiating the Road and thereby 'pollute' the latter ;
- e) they were prevented from worshipping or offering prayer in any place of public worship such as a temple. This disabling social practice was so deeply entrenched in certain parts of the country that Mahatma Gandhi had once to undergo a fast unto death to get the doors of certain temples opened to the Harijans.

Gandhiji sincerely believed that discriminating against the so-called untouchables a crime against God and it was, in order to drive home this point emphatically, that he called the members of depressed classes Harijans or the children of God. By giving them such an appellation he meant to say that they were as much the children of God as others were, that all, high or low, were brothers as children of the same God and that discrimination against one's brothers in this sense was tantamount to committing a crime not only against one's own fellow-men but also against God.

## II

Once India became independent it became the sacred task of the framers of the Indian Constitution to remove not only the evil of untouchability but also to promote the ideal of equality among all citizens of India, irrespective of their caste, class, creed or religion. This ideal found its embodiment in the Preamble to the Constitution which promised to secure to all the citizens of India *justice*, social, economic and political as well as *liberty, equality and fraternity* and thereby ensure the *unity and integrity* of the nation.

A direct attack on the evil social practice of untouchability which divided the Indian society on caste lines was made in Part III of the Indian Constitution dealing with the Fundamental Rights of citizens. Article 17, a key article of the chapter on Fundamental

right, provides for the abolition of the evil of untouchability in the interest of the furtherance of social equality. It declares in unequivocal language that "untouchability" is abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden. The enforcement of any disability arising out of 'untouchability' shall be an offence punishable in accordance with law. In order to give teeth to this constitutional provision, Parliament of India passed the Untouchability (Offences) Act, 1955. Under this Act certain acts (such as those mentioned in the third paragraph of this essay) have been designated as discriminatory and offensive of untouchability and any person indulging in such offences against a member of a Scheduled Caste is liable to be punished by a court of law.

The abolition of untouchability was, no doubt, a long overdue step and the Constitution of India did the right thing in doing away with it at the earliest available opportunity. But by itself such a step could not go very far in ensuring full justice to Scheduled Castes or backward classes or in infusing confidence and goodwill in them. It was such thinking on the part of the framers of the Constitution which led them to extend protection to backward classes through various other provisions of the Constitution.

Among the constitutional provisions safeguarding the interests of the backward classes, the following deserve a special mention. While the Clause 1 of Article 15 prohibits the State from making any discrimination against any citizen on grounds only of caste, race, religion etc., Clause 4 of the same Article, nevertheless allows the State to make "any special provision for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes". This means that despite the constitutional prohibition of discrimination on the ground of caste, the State shall be entitled to make special or preferential treatment of the socially and educationally backwards, in particular the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes if it thought that such treatment in favour of them was necessary for their advancement. It should be noted that Clause 4 was not a part of the original Constitution. It was added to art. 15 by the Constitution (1st) Amendment Act. 1951, the object being to make it constitutional for the State to *reserve* seats for backward classes of citizens,

Scheduled Castes and Tribes, in the public educational institutions, as well as to make such other special provisions as may be necessary for their advancement.<sup>1</sup>

If Article 15(4) authorised the State in general terms to make special provision for the socially and educationally backward classes of citizens, Article 16(4) was specific in terms of giving protection to the economic interests of any backward classes of citizens by making provision in their favour for *reservation* of posts of or appointments in the services under the State. To quote the relevant portion of the article, "The State may reserve any post or appointment in favour of *any backward classes of citizens* (emphasis added) who in the opinion of the State, are not adequately represented in the services under that State". This provision means that though the State is committed under the Constitution to guaranteeing equality of opportunity to all citizens, irrespective of caste etc., in matters of public employment, the State shall, nevertheless, in consonance with its policy goal of uplifting the backward classes of citizens be entitled to make exceptions in the form of reservation of jobs for them.

It is to be noted that while Article 16(4) accords preferential treatment in the form of reservation of jobs under the State to *any backward classes of citizens*, that is to say, backward classes in general, Article 335 provides for such treatment only to members of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes who form a specific category of backward classes. To quote the article, "The claims of the members of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes shall be taken into consideration, consistently with the maintenance of efficiency of administration, in the making of appointments to services and posts in connection with the affairs of the Union or of a State". A noteworthy feature of Art. 335 is that it requires the State to make an adjustment between the claims of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes to jobs under the State and the maintenance of efficiency of administration, Art. 16(4) does not subject the State to any such requirement.

Besides reservation in respect of seats in public educational institutions and jobs under the government, the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes have been granted reservation in respect of

seats in the House of the People and in the Legislative Assembly of every State under the terms of Art. 330 and Art. 332, respectively. The purpose of such reservation is to guarantee a minimum number of seats to members of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

The Constitution did not rest satisfied with merely guaranteeing such safeguards as mentioned above. It made provision in Art. 338 for the appointment by the President of a Special Officer for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes with the duty to investigate all matters relating to the safeguards provided for them under the Constitution and to report to the President upon the working of those safeguards at such intervals as the President may direct. The Constitution imposes an obligation upon the President to lay all such reports before each House of Parliament. Further, the President has been authorised by the Constitution in Art. 339 to appoint a Commission to report on the administration of the Scheduled Areas and the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes in the States. The Constitution has also empowered the Union Executive to give directions to the States as to the such schemes for the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes, the Constitution has provided for the giving of grants-in-aid by the Union to the States (Art. 275(1),

The above-mentioned provisions for the welfare and upliftment of the backward classes are guided by the general directive contained in Art. 46 of the Constitution that "The State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and, in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation".

### III

An interesting point about the constitutional provisions enjoining the State to extend special treatment to certain categories of citizens is that they use as many four expressions to designate them, e. g., (a) the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Art. 15(4), (b) the '*socially and educationally backward classes of citizens*' (Art. 15(4), (c) 'any backward classes of citizens' (Art. 16(4) and (d) the weaker sections of the people (Art. 46). It is obvious from such designations that the Constitution of India thought that

the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes formed only one category of 'backward classes' and that there were backward classes other than the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. Since the Constitution nowhere defines 'backwardness' in precise terms, there has been heated debate and controversy over the determining criteria of backwardness. The Constitution seems to say in Art. 15(4) that backwardness should be determined on the basis of simultaneous existence of *social* and *educational* backwardness in a class of people who are also stand *low* in the caste hierarchy of Hindu society or who are somewhat similarly circumstanced as the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.

While educational backwardness could be objectively determined on the basis of the rate of literacy in a class of people which should be below the State average, "social backwardness is in the ultimate analysis", as D. Basu very pertinently points out, "the result of poverty and may be aggravated by caste".<sup>2</sup> This means two things : (1) that caste *alone* should not be the basis of determining backwardness and (2) that caste apart, there should be an economic criterion as well of backwardness.<sup>3</sup>

Apart from the controversy over the criteria of *backwardness*, there has been bitter acrimony in recent times on the *size* of the quota or the percentage of job reservations in favour of the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes. In its report submitted to the Government of India in 1980 the Mondal Commission recommended that 15 percent of all jobs under the Central government be reserved for the Scheduled Castes, 7.5 per cent of such jobs be reserved for the Scheduled Tribes, and that 27 per cent of these jobs be reserved for Other Backward Classes (O. B. Cs). When the National Front Government led by Shri V. P. Singh announced its intention in August 1990 to implement the recommendations of the Mondal Commission, a section of students and youths of the country threw themselves into anti-reservation movements in some parts of the country, fearing that this would make the scarce central government jobs even more scarce for youths belonging to the upper castes of the Hindu community.

In order to allay the fears of those who belonged to the upper castes, the Congress (I) Government at the Centre, under the Prime Ministership of Sri Narasimha Rao announced in September 1991

that in addition to 49·5 per cent reservation for S. C., S. Ts and O. B. Cs (15 per cent for S, Cs+7·5 per cent for S, Ts+27 per cent for the O. B. Cs) there would be 10 per cent reservation of posts in favour of other economically backward sections of the people who are not covered by any of the existing schemes of reservation. Since this decision meant that more than 50% of the total number of jobs under the Central government would come under the category of reservation, this was challenged in the Supreme Court. In a judgment delivered in November, 1992 the Supreme Court upheld the 27 per cent reservation in favour of Other Backward Classes, but observed all the same that job reservation in its totality should not exceed the 50 per cent limit.<sup>5</sup>

Be that as it may, a State like Tamil Nadu has meanwhile gone ahead with raising the quantum of reservation in respect of governmental jobs and seats in public educational institutions to as high as 69 per cent by passing a law to that effect in the State legislature. The Madras High Court struck down the Tamil Nadu legislation of 69 per cent reservation on the ground that it exceeded the limit of 50 per cent. Pending the detailed consideration of the Tamil Nadu legislation the Supreme Court issued a stay order on the implementation of the Tamil Nadu law. Sensing that the Supreme Court would keep to the 50 per cent limit that it fixed itself and thus uphold the Madras High Court judgment, the Tamil Nadu government appealed to the Central Government for the protection of its legislation. Accordingly, the Central Government got the Parliament to pass "the 85th Constitutional Amendment Bill, allowing the Tamil Nadu government to continue with 69 per cent reservation, by including the Relevant Act under the purview of the Ninth Schedule and, thereby, insulating it from legal challenge".<sup>6</sup>

The Central Government's action in giving Constitutional cover to Tamil Nadu's 69 per cent reservation seems to have opened a Pandora's box. It has inspired some other State governments to do what the Tamil Nadu has done. Shri Mulayam Singh Jadav, the former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister, for example, has sought the Centre's clearance, through Constitutional amendment on the same lines as those of the Tamil Nadu legislation, for 62 per cent reservation in the State. He has demanded 2 per cent reservation for the hill

people in Government jobs and 10 per cent for the poor among the upper castes, in addition to 50 per cent reservation already granted to the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes, which brings the total reservation to 62 per cent, as per his demand.

Surely, there is an element of populism in all this. The following example makes this clear. The Andhra Pradesh Government issued an executive order on August 25, 1994 including 14 communities, including Kapus, Muslims and 12 other communities in the State Backward Classes and providing them with reservation in educational institutions and in all government jobs. The reservation for these fourteen communities was in addition to the quantum of reservation available to the castes and communities already included in the list. This executive order was promptly challenged in the High Court on the ground that it was beyond the jurisdiction of the State Executive to issue such an order, because, as per law only a commission appointed for the purpose had authority to decide whether a new community should be included in the list of backward classes. The other contention of the petitioners was that the executive order was issued "with an eye on the coming Assembly polls".<sup>7</sup> With the Andhra Pradesh High Court granting interim suspension of the Government order, the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh joined the issue by contending that "if necessary, the Backward Classes Reservation Act would be amended, with the Government appealing to the Centre the way Tamil Nadu did".<sup>8</sup>

It seems as if there is a race among the State Governments to outdo one another in reservation. With two orders issued on April 20 and July 25, 1994, the Government of Karnataka raised the reservations for the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes first to 73 per cent and then to 80 per cent. When the Constitutional validity of these two orders were challenged in the Supreme Court on the ground that the orders were violative of the 50 per cent limit on reservation as laid down by the Supreme Court in the *Mondal* case,<sup>9</sup> the State Government said that the two pieces of order would not be given effect to. Subsequently, however, the State Government of Karnataka got the Karnataka Assembly to pass the Karnataka Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other

Backward Classes Act, 1994 providing reservation of upto 73 per cent for members of the Scheduled Castes, and Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes in educational institutions and State Government services.

This act was challenged in the Supreme Court “on the basis that once the scope and ambit of the provisions of the Constitution are interpreted by the Supreme Court, any law enacted in contravention of the provisions is unconstitutional and void”.<sup>10</sup> In its interim judgment delivered by a Division Bench on November 11, 1994, the Supreme Court stayed the operation of the Karnataka Act. The language of the Bench used in delivering the judgment deserves to be specially noted :

We have laid down the law and we want it to be complied with by every authority. We will not permit more than 50% reservation.<sup>11</sup>

The Bench also expressed its strong resentment over the fact that the State government had come up with the legislation to “circumvent” the orders of the highest court.<sup>12</sup>

Whether the Government of Karnataka appeals to the Central Government in the Tamil Nadu way and whether the Central Government gives its legislation the same protection as it did to the Tamil Nadu legislation is a thing that remains to be seen. But what can be seen very clearly is this that the general and predominant trend in respect of politics of reservation in India today is towards ‘reservation and more reservation’. More and more communities (including the religious one are clamouring today for admission to the category of backward classes and the more the governments both at the Centre and in the States—go on increasing the quantum of reservation in order to satisfy the newly emerging demands the more they are faced with such demands. Whether the State policy and practice have encouraged such demands or whether they have been responses to the emerging (spontaneous or otherwise) demands or whether it is a mix of both is a question worth researching on. An important dimension of this question, as the examples cited above demonstrate, is the conflict or potential conflict between the executive and the judiciary. *This* too is worthy of the time and attention of a serious researcher.

## IV

While no sensible person can question the need for giving special protection in the form of reservation to the S. C.s, the S. T.s and the Other Backward Classes in India who were neglected for centuries and therefore deserve special treatment in the interest of bringing them up to the national level<sup>13</sup>, a moot question is whether reservation has fulfilled the larger objective of national integration in India.

Our reflections on this question make us observe sadly that reservation has intensified the rivalry among castes in India. While the anti-reservationists belonging mostly to the upper castes in India argue that reservation is anti-meritarian, that it deprives the meritorious students of their legitimate share of seats in educational institutions, that it hampers the efficiency of the administrative system of the country, that it has created a vested interest of the creamy layer of the backward classes misappropriating all the fruits of reservation, their main fear underlying all these arguments has been economic in nature.

They are afraid that more seats for the S. C.s, the S. T.s, and the O. B. C.s in public educational institutions mean less avenues of career advancement for them, that more governmental job for the S. C.s, the S. T.s and the O. B. C.s mean less or even 'no—job' for them. Their fear has been intensified because there is no ceiling or limit either over the size of the quota or over the time period up to which the system of reservation of seats in educational institutions and posts in the services under the government will continue. Had it been a time-bound programme like the reservation in the case of seats in the House of the People and State Assemblies (up to 25 January, 2000 under the terms of the Constitution (62nd) Amendment Act, 1989), the agitation against the system of reservation might not have been as intense and it might not have generated as much rivalry among castes as it has done in recent times.

How long will this system of tutelage continue — the anti-reservationists ask in frustration. They point out that to the extent the quota system denies jobs to economically poor among the high castes who are meritorious but otherwise disqualified because of

their belong to the so-called high castes, the system amounts to 'reverse discrimination' and thus constitutes a denial of social justice to such elements. What good is it to excel?—they ask in frustration, if it brings forth the response that achievements have no worth because there are other criteria of acceptability.

They also advance the psychological argument that a system of tutelage is self-defeating because far from promoting a spirit of independence or self-motivation it generates a culture of dependence among those who continue to enjoy benefits from the system. The argument is that if you spoon-feed a person, the fed person will like always to eat from your hand rather than try to be self-supporting.

## V

There is some amount of logic in the arguments mentioned above. Our policy-makers, therefore, will be well-advised to make a periodic review, say, every five years, of the actual working of the policy of reservation, keeping in mind that the policy of reservation is only a temporary palliative for the wrongs historically suffered by India's backward classes and that a permanent cure of under-development of a section of people lies not in perpetuating the system of reservation but in developing them through comprehensive socio-economic and educational planning. Enlarging the size of the 'cake' to be distributed among the people is an important as developing through the right kind of education the sense of inner strength and the sense of national identity among the people.

Equally important is re-orienting the attitude of political parties. Where their politics of caste votes is lending us to and with what effect on national integration finds a graphic description in the following observation made in 1985 by the then Chief Justice of India :

Whatever the initial motivation of our great patriots and constitution-makers was, and, indeed at the time they were laudable, reservations have now degenerated into a political manoeuvre for capturing vote banks to gain or retain power. It has affected the health of the country and has not achieved the desired results. Instead, it has created conflict between different sections and become the vested interest of a few who hang on to reservations as their privilege.

Only a few members of the reserved classes derive benefits while the large majority is deprived of enjoying the advantage. All this impedes the oneness and unity of India. While reservation in favour of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes is designed to bring them up to the national level and afford them social justice, reservation for other backward classes had become a racket.

In a way this happens because the determination of what is a backward class for the purpose of conferring on it certain benefits and advantages has become inextricably enmeshed with the motive of deriving immediate political advantages. As a result it becomes difficult for the State to keep itself free from political pressures and party in power from the compulsions of winning elections.<sup>14</sup>

If the obsession with the kind of politics as described in the quotation given above continues it cannot but have an adverse effect on national integration. The only way to end the ill effects of politics of reservation as well as the unhealthy competition among states to outdo one another in reservation is to have a national consensus on the limit of 50 per cent on reservation. "When the Supreme Court placed the limit of 50 per cent on reservation, it tied to balance the needs of lower and backward castes against the talent that the country required for development. The judgment upheld the principle of equitable distribution."<sup>15</sup>

We must remember that we cannot have *justice* and *equality* the two ideals of the Indian Constitution—without *fraternity*, a feeling of brotherhood among the people—an ideal equally enshrined in the Preamble to the Constitution of India. The national integration can only follow the national consensus in this regard.

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Note :

1. The immediate occasion for the passage of the Constitution (1st Amendment) Act, 1951 adding clause 4 to Art. 15 was the striking down by the Madras High Court and then by the Supreme Court of the Madras Communal Government Order which apportioned seats in the Madras professional colleges on the basis of communities, prescribing that out of every fourteen seats, six must go to non-Brahmin Hindus, two to backward Hindus, two to

Brahmins, two to Harijans, one to Muslims and one to Anglo-Indians and Indian Christians. Since the Clause 1 of Art. 15 prohibited discrimination between citizens on the ground of caste and since Art. 29(2) provided that “no citizen shall be denied admission into any educational institution maintained out of state funds on grounds only of religion, race, caste, language or any of them”, the Madras High Court and subsequently, the Supreme Court in the case of *State of Madras V. Champakam* (1951) held that the Madras Communal Government Order was violative of Art. 15(1) and Art. 29(2) of the Constitution. In the context of this decision of the Supreme Court, the Constitution (1st Amendment) Act, 1951 was passed adding clause 4 to Art. 15 which enabled the State to give special protection to backward classes of citizens or the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes in the matter of admission to state owned or state aided (public) educational institutions by reserving seats for them in such institutions.

2. D. Basu, *Introduction to the Constitution of India* (New Delhi : Prentice Hall, 7th edition, 1978), p. 343.

3. The Government of West Bengal seems to have recognized this. While specifying a list of the backward classes under the West Bengal Commission for Backward Classes Act, 1993, the government has made it clear that reservation shall not apply to son(s) and daughter(s) of—(a) persons having gross annual income of Rs. 1 lakh or above or possessing wealth above the exemption limit as prescribed in the Wealth Tax Act, 1957 (27 of 1957), for a period of three consecutive years ; (b) persons in Categories I, II, III and VA [ as specified in the Government Order ] who are not disentitled to the benefit of reservation but have income from other sources of wealth which will bring them within the income wealth criteria mentioned in (a) above.” See the Calcutta Gazette, July 13, 1994, Government of West Bengal, Notification No. 346-TW/Ec and Order No. 347-TW/Ec  
M-6/82(I) M-6/82(I)

We can point out by way of comment that here is an attempt to identify the “creamy layer” among the socially and educationally backward classes so as to exclude them from reservation.

4. A commission was appointed by the Government of India in 1979 under the Chairmanship of Mr. B. P. Mandal, the Former Chief

Minister of Bihar, to study the question of reservation of jobs under the government for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes and other backward classes and make recommendations to the Government on the subject. Appointed on January 1, 1979, the Commission submitted its report to the Government of India on December 31, 1980.

5. For details, see M.M. Mulchandani, *Mondal Judgment Highlights of Sepreme Court on Reservation* (New Delhi : Daulat Publications, 1992).

6. The Rajya Sabha passed the Bill on August 24, 1994 while the Lok Sabha did it on the following day. The Rajya Sabha passed the Bill with 148 votes in favour and 2 against while the Lok Sabha passed it unanimously. See *The Statesman*, August 25, 1994.

7. See *The Statesman*, August 30, 1994, p. 1

8. *Ibid.*

9. The Court held that "50% shall be the rule". In *Balaji V. State of Madras* (1963), and in *State of Kerala V Thomas* (1976) the Supreme Court took a similar stand. Thus, it seems that the decided cases of the Supreme Court have laid down as a rule of caution that the percentage of reservation should not exceed 50%. For details, See N. M. Mulchandani, *op. cit.*

10. *The Statesman*, November 12, 1994, p. 1.

11. *Ibid.*

12. *Ibid.*

13 According to the 1981 Census, the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes constituted 15.75 per cent and 7.76 per cent respectively of the total population of India. While the national average of literacy according to the same Census, was 41 per cent, it was 21 per cent for the S. C.s and 16 per cent for the S. T.s. The educational attainment of members of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes was mostly of the primary level and only to a small extent up to the secondary level.

The Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes together constitute 52 per cent of the population of India. It

can be seen from the annual report of the Department of Personnel of the Government of India, 1988-89 that these people (Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes) together occupy about 19 per cent of the total number of jobs under the Government of India. The share in the first, second, third and fourth class jobs is 5.59 per cent, 19 per cent, 24 per cent and 24 per cent, respectively.

14 *The Statesman*, May, 19, 1985.

15 Kuldip Nayar, "Quota Politics Before Polls", *The Statesman*, September 7, 1994, p. 9.

# **Status of Indian Women**

Maitreyi Chaudhuri

## ***1. INTRODUCTION***

By National Integration we mean peaceful co-existence of different communities within a nation. Indian society is differentiated mainly by caste, religion, language and income classes. National integration is not possible if the fruits of development are distributed inequitably among the citizens of a nation. If we accept this as one of the conditions for National Integration, we shall find that Indian society is differentiated not only by caste, religion, language and wealth but also by sex. A large section of population, e. g. women are generally deprived of many amenities of life that are enjoyed by men.

Ancient period in India marked the dawn of our civilization. This period was the period of the Vedas and the Upanishads. During this period women used to enjoy considerable freedom so far as political, social and educational activities were concerned. They enjoyed a status and prestige in the society. Many women in those days had written Vedic hymns. They also acted as teachers and used to take part in scriptural discussion and debates with men. After this came the medieval period, a period of gradual decline of the status of women. During the last few hundred years the position of women deteriorated further. A country cannot prosper if half of its population remains neglected and deprived in various spheres of life.

Gandhiji championed the cause of Indian women in his writings and speech. He had great faith in the inner strength of Indian women. Now a days a greater attention is being paid by the government organisations to the betterment of the conditions of women. However, the achievements are not up to the mark. Much remains to be done. A large number of problems still haunt the life of general Indian women.

## 2. PROBLEMS

2. 1 *Sex Ratio* : The sex ratio of Indian women has been diminishing continuously over years. By sex ratio we mean the number of females per thousand (1000) males. According to the rules of probability theory the total population of a country should comprise 50% males and 50% females. Again, according to biological theory females are physically stronger than males. So the lower sex ratio of women may be regarded as an outcome of severe injustice to and discrimination against women from their childhood days. The table—1 gives the sex ratio of Indian population over the last ten census years. The sex ratio has come down gradually since 1901.

Table—1. Sex Ratio of Indian Population.

Year	Sex Ratio
1901	972
1911	964
1921	955
1931	950
1941	945
1951	946
1961	941
1971	930
1981	934
1991	927

The sex ratio of Indian population also varies over different states and ethnic groups. Punjab is the state with the lowest sex ratio and Kerala with the highest one. In Kerala the females outnumber the males. Now let us consider the ethnic groupwise variation in sex ratio. From table—2 it is clear that the Scheduled Tribe (ST) population has the highest sex ratio as compared to both the Scheduled Caste (SC) population and the population excluding the SC and ST groups. The next position is occupied by the SC group (Excepting the year 1991). Thus it may be conjectured that the ST and SC women enjoy better status as compared to other general caste women in India. The ST women are, however, in the best position.

Table—2 : Ethnic Group-wise Sex Ratio of Indian Population.

Population Categories	Year		
	1971	1981	1991
Total population	930	934	927
SC	935	932	922
ST	983	983	972
Population excluding SC and ST groups	925	930	923

[ Source—Table—1 and 2 : Census of India 1971, 1981. Series 1 India Part-II B, i, ii, iii. Census of India 1991, Series 1, India. Final Population Totals ]

Sometimes it is argued that the general sex ratio of any population at a particular point of time may be influenced by migration. So it is better to consider the sex ratio of the children below age 0. Sopher (1980) has analysed 1971 census data on sex ratio of children below age 10 and found that the sex ratio is the lowest in northwest India and increases as one moves towards south and east. The practice of female infanticide in north and northwest India may be one of the reasons for low sex ratio in that part. There may be other reasons also.

Analysing the rural household data collected by the National Council of Applied Economic Research, Rosenzweig and Schultz (1982) have found that the chance of survival of a female child improves with higher female employment rate or with lower male-female earning differentials. If the mothers are independent earners, they can take a greater care of their children. As a result, daughters are less discriminated in such families. In all the states of east and south India (except Karnataka) the predominant crop is paddy which is relatively intensive in female labour as compared to wheat and other dry-region crops. Transplantation of paddy is mainly done by women. Female labour also plays an important role in weeding, harvesting, threshing and various kinds of processing of paddy. The northern and north western states are mainly wheat producing dry cultivation areas where males are more useful for cultivation (Bardhan 1974). Hence the employment prospect of women in these regions are relatively low. This may be one of the

reasons for less importance of women and hence lower sex ratio in north and north western states of India.

Let us now consider the data in table-2 once again. Why do the ST and SC population enjoy a higher sex ratio as compared to the total population as well as the population excluding the SC and ST population of India? This may also be explained through employment criterion. ST women, being free from many of the inhibitions of the caste society generally take part in many types of economic activities e. g. construction of roads, buildings, excavation of ponds etc. They work in brick factories and are capable of doing hard work. They also migrate to distant places in search of work. As a result their employment days increase. This leads to higher earnings of the ST women and less male female differential in total earnings. SC women also have higher employment days as compared to general caste women in India. Indian census data reveal that female work participation rate is the highest among the tribals and the second position is occupied by the SC women for a majority of states. So ST and SC women are expected to enjoy better status in their society as compared to general caste women. The cultural factors cannot, however be ignored. The absence of any dowry and the presence of bride price among the tribals may also be partly responsible for more independence and better status of their women.

**2.2 Nutrition:** A United Nations Development Project report shows that in Punjab the expenditure on boys' nutrition and medical care is nearly twice as much as that on girls. Malnutrition of children has adverse effect on morbidity, mortality and life expectancy. It leads to stunted growth, functional impairment and diminished productivity. Sen and Sengupta (1983) made a study in the villages of Kuchli and Sahajapur of Birbhum district, West Bengal. They show that at every level girls are systematically more under-nourished. Nutritional status of the girls has been found to be positively related to mothers' literacy.

**2.3 Female Infanticide:** Killing of newly born female babies was in vogue in Northern and North-Western states of India. Now-a-days a technique of determining the sex of a foetus has been invented. This technique is known as amniocentesis. Sex determination leads to abortion of female foetus in many cases. This shows the social stigma attached to a female birth in India.

**2.4 Literacy :** According to 1981 census, the literacy rate in India was 36.2. Male literacy rate was 46.9 percent and female literacy rate was 24.2 percent. Thus literacy rate is almost double for males. For every 100 boys attending school there are only 55 girls. Enrolment of girls of age 6—11 years is only 68 per cent in the primary level. In the age group 11—14 years only 29 percent of girls attend school as against 54 per cent of boys. In higher education there are only 40 girls for every 100 boys and in the case of professional higher education there are 15 girls for every boys. (vide Devasia and Devasia 1991).

Literacy rates among the SC and ST women are still lower. The general literacy rate among the SC group in 1981 was 21.3 percent while it was only 10.9 per cent among the SC women. The female literacy rate among the ST group was 8.0 per cent in 1981 and that for the ST women was only 0.93 per cent.

**2.5 School Dropouts :** According to 1981 census, 80 per cent of the non-enrolled children in the age group of 6-14 years were girls. According to Chanana (1990) in 1981-82 the dropout rate for the girls at the primary level was 55 per cent and at the middle school level the rate was nearly 78 per cent.

There are a number of adult education centres in our country. But after a days hard toil in the field and the factory and also within the household, women do not find much time and energy to attend the centres. Even the girl children cannot attend schools regularly since they have to perform the household chores and look after their younger brothers and sisters when their parents are out in the field or in the factory. Hence the dropout rate for the girls increases at the middle school level. In rural areas we have also come across households where the girl children had to discontinue their studies because of poverty. The boys from these households are, however, continuing their studies. When interviewed the parents said that during the marriages of the girls dowries are essential. Moreover the girls will go to their husbands' houses after marriage and will not be in a position to help their parents financially. So the parents do not find any justification to spend more money for girl children's education.

**2.6 Girl Child Labour :** In India girl children form a cheap source

of labour in a variety of jobs. They are employed on farms, in factories, cottage industries, middle and upper class houses as maid servants for long as fifteen hours a day in subhuman condition and for a pittance as wage. In match factories, fire works and glass factories they work in hazardous situations. They work as carpet weavers and sleep at their looms (Burra 1990). Many of them are exploited mentally and sexually by their employers.

**2.7 Dowry Death :** Dowry death is another curse in the life of women. Though there is antidowry act, it is seldom implemented in actual life. In most of the cases costly gifts and even a lumpsum of money in the form of a dowry is taken from the girls' parents and the girls, even if educated, do not refuse to marry in such cases. Inadequacy of gifts and dowry often leads to insult, physical torture and even death to the women.

**2.9 Age at Marriage :** Even if the official age at marriage in India is 18 years for girls, this is never followed by the poor in rural areas and also in urban areas. This creates problems. The girls become mothers even before they are physically mature. They become sick after repeated pregnancy and cannot bring up their children carefully. Moreover, marriage at lower ages also intensifies population problems.

**2.10 Rape Victimization :** In India rape victimization is not unique to a particular age or caste group. A survey show that the proportion of rape victims is the highest in the age group of 7-16 years. Nearly 57.6 per cent of the victims were below 16 years. The percentage of the rape victims is the highest among the Harijan girls. (Vide Devasia and Devasia 1991). Legal acts against rape exist but many victims are not aware of these acts and the acts are quite complicated and confusing.

### 3. REMEDIAL MEASURES

So far we have discussed some of the problems that are responsible for the poor status of women in our country. In order to raise the status of women the first and the foremost necessity is education. Women should be educated properly so they are able to discriminate between right and wrong.

Many decisions at the household level are taken by women. Mothers play a crucial role in food distribution, in sending children to schools, in discontinuing the education of children, in approaching medical facilities in cases of illness of children and in premature stopping of medical treatment when they are accessible.

Preliminary education is generally imparted to the children by mothers. It has been observed that the children of the literated mothers are generally literate. Discipline and habit formation are also taught by mothers. Moreover, if the mothers are properly educated to be free from superstitions and prejudices, they can also educate their children accordingly. Educating a mother means educating a family.

Literacy and education alone cannot solve all the problems of women. Women need to be economically independent. So employment for women is essential. Indian Government has been introducing various rural development programmes for the poor women and also for the women belonging to the weaker sections of population. It has also made special provisions for women in different ongoing programmes. Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) is one such programme where 30% of the target beneficiaries should be women. The same provision exists for the tribal women in Integrated Tribal Development Programme (ITDP). The programme entitled "Training of the Rural Youth for Self Employment" (TRYSEM) provides vocational training to its beneficiaries. Here also one third of the beneficiaries should be poor women and women from the SC and ST groups. The programme "Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas" (DWCRA) is meant only for women who have received training under TRYSEM. There are also other programmes for women. Most of these programmes give loans and subsidies to women to set up cottage industries or start small trade. Loans are also given for cultivation, animal husbandry, dairy, poultry, bee keeping etc. The objective of such loans and subsidies is to make women economically self sufficient and develop entrepreneurship among them.

Our field experience shows that rural extension work of the government is very poor. Monitoring is not done by the government at all. The women are not also properly trained to get the

full benefit of such programmes. The process of application for loans is lengthy and the time lag between the submission of application and sanctioning of loan is large. The marketing infrastructure is inadequate to market the goods produced by women. If the women are to enjoy the fruits of the development programme the rural extension, and monitoring need to be strengthened.

If the status of women improves the entire population may progress jointly one step further in their fight against all social, moral, cultural and economic evils that stand in the way of National Integration.

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## **National Integration In The Light of Sufism**

**Md. Sirajul Islam**

India is a multi-religious and multi-lingual country. There are various differences in thoughts, languages, religions and cultures. "It comprises myriad of cultures, about 16 major languages between 250 to 2000 dialects, a dozen ethnic groups, 7 religious communities, fragmented into many sects, castes and sub-castes, that inhabit its 68 socio-cultural sub-regions"<sup>1</sup> Therefore, there exists a crucial problem in India to maintain unity between various groups and communities, all of them holding a distinct view on their thoughts, cultures and religions. In such a situation, it is a very essential task, not only for the Indians, but for mankind in general, to maintain National Integration as well as unity in this diversity. In this state a question may emerged : what do we mean by national integration ? National integration means co-hesion but not fusion, unity but not uniformity, reconciliation but not merger, agglomeration but not assimilation "<sup>2</sup>

India is a country which has an inherent ability of absorption and agglomeration of other cultures from time immemorial. Historically, India has been a laboratory of cross fertilization of various thoughts, ideas, cultures and religions. Even Sufism and Islam, though alien to India, were accepted in such a way that it became a part of this land. We know from the history of India that she has absorbed not only Islam but many other religions, cultures and peoples as well, viz., the Aryans, the Kushans, the Parsis, the Sakas, the Huns, the Pathans, the Greeks, the Britishens and so on<sup>3</sup>. This unique capacity of absorption and composition has helped in the fusion of the Islamic or Sufi ideology with Indian culture and society. In the initial stage of this amalgamation, there was no significant hostility between Islam and Hinduism. In course of time their rivalry tendencies developed due to various other causes, e.g. political, economic etc. though a religious tinge was added to it. However, Indian history furnishes a striking description of the impact of

various divergent cultures and civilizations which gradually transformed into a mutual assimilation and integration.

A Bengali verse comes to mind ; and I quote  
 “Maha maitrir barad tirtha punya Bharatpure  
 Pujar ghanta mishichhe harase namazer sure sure  
 Annikh yetha suru haye yai Azan belar majhe  
 Muajliner udas dhaniti gagane gagane baje  
 Jape Idgahte tasbi faqir, pujari mantra parhe  
 Sandhy-ushai vedavani jai mishe Quraner svare  
 Sanyasi ar pir mile geche heta, mile geche heta mandir  
 Masjid” (Jibananda Das)

This is what it means :

In the generous pilgrimage of this (land of) great friendship, throughout virtuous Bharat, the bell of worship chimes to the melody of the ‘Namaz’. Where the ‘Annikh’ ritual tinges itself with the call to the people to pray to ‘Allah’ and the solemn voice of the ‘Muazzin’, (the Azan call) resonates in the sky. where the ‘Faqr’ counting his rosary in the Idgah and the Pujary recites his mantras, the slokas of the Vedas mingle with the tunes of the Koran. Here Sanyasi and Pir mixed together, and mosque and temple are equal.

Sufism is known as Islamic Mysticism, where the finite soul always aspires to control itself by the process of sincerity, purity and unsurpassed love and by this a devotee establishes a friendly and loving relationship with Divinity. Though this relationship established between the finite and infinite Entity, the love between them is not confined here only. On the one hand, Sufis are the lovers of God and their inter relationship is called ‘ashiq wa Mashuq’ (lover and the beloved). On the other hand they are the lover of human beings as also of all creatures. They love all and sundry without any discrimination. Sufis love is generally considered as ‘Ishq’ or unconditional love. They lay great emphasis on it, so they declare “Har Ke ra Ishq nist, Iman nist” i.e. he who has no love has no faith.<sup>5</sup>

Though the aim of Sufis is to unite their finite soul with the Infinite Being, nevertheless they do not cut themselves off from the society and believe that love everywhere :

Ishq hai ishq Jahan dekho  
Sare alam me phir raha hai Ishq"

i.e. Behold, Love is everywhere

Love is pervading in the world.<sup>6</sup>

The service to mankind is one of the ideals as well as duties of the Sufis. In the 13th century A. D. we noticed, that Sufis established their Khanqahs (hospices) and opened their doors to all, irrespective of castes, creeds and religions. Their egalitarian attitude, broad mindness and sympathetic outlook attracted the Indian people. So all the discriminations and distinctions which were forcibly imposed upon the lower classes, in particular, broke down. All the people, who came to the Khanqahs, lived, slept and ate altogether without any ethnic distinction. The holy book and scriptures were open and accessible to all. Even women enjoyed the same rights and conveniences as men.<sup>7</sup> To transcend the caste classifications, Sufi faqir Lalan proclaimed :

"Sab Loke Kay Lalan Ki Jat Sansare

Keo mālā Keo taṣbih gale

tatee ki jat bhinno bale ?

gawa kimba asar kale Jater chihno roy kothā ?"

i.e. everybody ask : To which caste does Lalan belong in this society ? Some use the garland and some use the rosary. So does that make any difference to (my) caste ? Where remains the signs of castes at births or deaths ? How far they extended their eclectic and sympathetic attitude may be determined by the following utterance of Khwajah Muin-al-din chijhti :

"Awwal sankhawati chun sekhawt-e-Darya ; Doam shafqati chun sefqat-e-Aftab ; sewam tawazui chun tewazui chun tewazu e-zameen"

i.e. "a generosity, like that of the Ocean ; secondly mildness like that of the Sun ; and thirdly, modesty like that of the Earth"<sup>8</sup> In India, Sufis of this order were very popular and achieved extraordinary success due to the humane and philanthropic outlook of its saints. Their tenet of universal brotherhood was based on 'Khidmat-i-Khalq' (service of fellow beings), and is elucidated by the following couplet of the venerable poet Shaykh Saadi : "Tariqate bajuz Khidmat-i-Khalq nist ; batasbih wa sajadeh wa dilaq nist" i.e. The

path of a Sufi is nothing but service of humanity. It is neither in a rosary, nor on the prayer carpet, nor in the garment of the Sufi darwish.<sup>9</sup>

One of the eternal glories of the chishtiya Sufi order is that it produced great spiritual luminaries, like Khwajah Muin-al-din chishti, Shaykh Qutub-al-din Bakhtiyar Kaki, Shaykh Farid-al-din Ganj-i-Shakr, Hadrat Nizam-al-din Auliya and so on. Nizam-al-din's humanistic attitude was lofty beyond comparison, so he has said . 'devotion to God does not mean detachment from the mundane world. highest form of devotion to God is removal of misery of the distressed, extension of a helping hand to the helpless and the feeding of the hungry.'<sup>10</sup> He has also said that human submission to God is of two kinds : necessary (lazmi) and communicable (mutaadi). The former implies the benefit of those who obey the Shaniah (Islamic law) and later is related to the advantage and comfort of the others.<sup>11</sup>

Sufis believe that all human beings are the creatures of one and the same Deity. In the Medieval period we find that, they were very eclectic, and so, they showed interest in the teachings of the Yogis and adopted the reasonable and humanistic aspects of their practices without any hesitation. Hindu Yogin and Siddhas also frequently visited the Khanqahs of the Sufi saints. From the 11th century onward, the impact of Sufism on Yoga and Tantrism increased more and more. The various Ba-Shara (with law) and 'Be-Shara (without law) Sufis were influenced by the wandering Yogis<sup>12</sup>. The various other Sufis, like, Shaykh Nasir-al-din-chirag-i-Delhi and Baba Farid had close contact with Yogis and Siddhas. It is said that Baba Farid's beliefs were practised by the Hath Yogis and Nasir-al-din's disciples have preferred to call themselves as 'Rishi' and not 'Sufi'.<sup>13</sup> To what extent they were eclectic will be apprehended by the sayings of Hadrat Nizam al-din Aulya.

'In Hindu brathar-e man ast'

i.e. This Hindu is my brother.<sup>14</sup> In this context a Sufi says,

"Aai Ke taneh zi but be Hindu bary

Ham amuz az wai parastish gari"

i.e. "O you ! who sneer at the idolatry of the Hindu

Learn also from him how worship is done"<sup>15</sup>

By the process of close contact with the Yogis and Rishis, Sufis have adopted some practices and cultures into their Silsilahs (orders), viz., bowing before the Shaykh, Shaving the heads of the novices, chillah-i-Makus etc.<sup>16</sup> The pir-o-Murid relationship may be considered as an equivalent of the Hindu 'Guru-chela' system. The chillah-i-makus (40 days vigil in a lonely cell) has a keen affinity with the Yogic 'Urdhamukhi Yoga'.

The Sufi Dargahs (Shrines), which are found all over India, are regarded as an important representation of Hindu-Muslim unity and a significant instance of National Integration. During the period of 'urs' (festival), countless people of various castes and religions assemble and pay their homage to the reverend soul of that Sufi Shaykh by sacrificing animals and offering sirnee (sweet), which they have vowed previously. The people of India have always accepted the pirs as not only the property of Muslims but that of all. Therefore, particularly in Bengal, both Hindus and Muslims adored Khidhr Pir, Manik Pir, Satya Pir, Madari Pir and Dariyar panch Pirs, etc. Both Hindus and Muslims celebrate their relative festivals on the same day.

Sufis of medieval India believed in a pacific and non-violent approach towards all Indian people and society. Sufis also advised their followers to maintain patience and endurance. So, they said, anger should not be suppressed, it should be eliminated by forgiving the sinners.<sup>17</sup> They advocated a friendly and loving relationship towards all. This attitude of Sufis is beautifully epitomized in the following lines :

"Har Ke Ma ra Yar na-buad,  
Izad U ra Yar bad  
Wa an-keh ma ra ranjeh darad  
ra hatash bisyar bad  
Har ke u dar rahe ma khari  
nahad az dushmani  
Har gule-e kiz bage umrash  
bishgufad bi khar bad"

i.e. "He who is not my friend, may god be his friend ; and he who bears ill will against, me, may his Joys increase. He who put thorns in my way on account of enmity, may every flower that blooms in the garden of his life, be without thorns"<sup>18</sup>

One of the most striking features of the Sufi mystics was its impact with the people of other castes through literature. A very important result of this cultural contact was the birth of a common language of the masses known as 'Khari-boli' on the Hindustani language. Sufis of India felt the need of preaching in regional languages from the very beginning ; so unhesitatingly they used various Hindustani terms in their writings. Sufis, in the thirst of knowledge, wrote a large unnumber of books and translated many Hindu scriptures and texts. We know that outside India, mainly in Iran and Iraq, numerous Sufis composed and compiled Sufi poetries, Ghazals, Qasidahs etc. The names of Saadi, Hafiz, Rumi, Attar are most prominent among them. In India, Amir Khusrau, Gesu-Daraz and Dara-shikoh's writing activities attracted all classes of people. The mystical movement and literary activities of the Sufi saints aimed at the unification and harmony of both Hindus and Muslims. One of the remarkable qualities of the Indian Sufis is that some of them had great attraction for Indian languages, history and philosophy. Amir Khusrau, a poet and the most powerful exponent of Indian Sufism, tried to establish the essential unity between different religions. His poems are highly lyrical and he laid emphasis on the Love of God as well as mankind. He wrote numerous books and hence, got the appellation 'parrot of India.' So far as we are concerned, he is the first among Indian Muslim writers who used many Hindi terms and idioms in his writings. He was a man who respected equally all religions without any bigotry or hesitation ; so, he declared ;

"Nist Hindu ar cheh ke dindar chumh  
Hast basy jaiy baqarar chuma"

i.e. Though a Hindu is not faithful like me  
He often believes in the something as I do<sup>19</sup>

Another Sufi poet as well as writer was the Emperor Shah Jahan's eldest son Dara-Sikoh. He was a scholar of outstanding merit. He was well versed in Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit and made a notable contribution in the literary field and compiled several books on philosophy and Sufism. His great work is the Upanisad's translation from Sanskrit to Persian and the translation of the Bhagvat Gita and the Yoga-Visista, which is called 'Sir-i-Akbar' (the greatest mystery). His most striking achievement is the composition of

‘majma-ul-Baharain’ (the mingling of the two Oceans), where he has tried to show that Hinduism and Islam are only the two paths, but that their goal is the same.<sup>20</sup>

Sufis of medieval India earnestly desired to spread education for the common people, for this purpose they founded many educational institutions where numerous students studied irrespective of caste and religion. It is significant that in the reign of Ibrahim Lodi, Hindus, particularly Kayasthas, took instructions in the Persian language and studied literature in Islamic institutions.<sup>21</sup> The Sanskrit work ‘Amrit Kunda’ (the reservoir of nectar) was translated by Qasi Ruknuddin Samarqandi into Arabic and Persian under the title ‘Hauz-ul Hayat’. Another writer Sayyid Sultan composed ‘Jnana Pradipa’ and ‘Jnana Chautisa’. In Northern India Chishti Shaykhs Benhan Qutban and Malik Muhammad Jayasi, were highly influenced by Sufi thought of Love and composed ‘Mrigavat’ and ‘Padmavat’ respectively.

In the Medieval period Sufism came into contact with Bhakti philosophy. In that period some Bhakti saints, like Kabir, Dadu, Nanak, have preached for all, Kabir the notable champion of Bhakti Philosophy proclaimed : ‘I am the child of Allah-Ram’. Once he also stated ;

“Mai Ko Kaha Dhundo bande,  
Maitotere pas me  
Na myai Deul na Masajan,  
na Kaabe—Kailash me.”

i. e. where are you searching me ? I am within you.

I am neither in the temple nor in the mosque, neither in Kaaba nor in Kailash.<sup>22</sup> In Bengal one of the Sufi Shaykhs used Vaisnava thought and word to pray to God :

“Par Karo mor naiya Kannai”

i. e. O boat man Kanai ! take me across.<sup>23</sup>

How liberal the Sufi poets were to establish a mutual relationship with Hindus may be gauged from the following lines of the poet, Lal Mahamud :

“Hindu Kimba hauk Musalman  
Tomar Pakshe sabai saman,  
Kehatomai bale Kali, Kehabale Banamali,  
Keha-Khoda Allah bali tomai dake Sarotsar”

i. e. whether (one is) Hindu or Muslim is immaterial to you  
 Some call you Kali, some Banamali  
 Others Khuda—Allah ;  
 You are the supreme Being.<sup>21</sup>

To maintain the integrity of our Nation a Jalali Sufi also called  
 out Loud :

“Hindu PuJanti Kastha Pasane  
 Musalman PuJanti Khodai  
 Punya rekh nai”

i. e. The Hindus worship wood and stone  
 The Muslims worship Khoda  
 There is no difference in virtue.<sup>25</sup>

In conclusion, we may indicate that this, here and now, before  
 it becomes too late, is the moment for reflection, agglomeration and  
 synthesization, so that the various communities can come together  
 and tie a single knot. Bengali translation of a verse of the reputed  
 poet Umar Khaiyyam comes to mind. And I quote :

“Mandire aar Masjide bhed-abhed kichhu nai,  
 Ubhay griha-i-bhakta ganer upasanar thain,  
 Kusher prati kosha-kushi kimba Japa-mala,  
 Phul-chandan dhoop-dhuna aar chirag-bati Jala,  
 Sabi to sei k Janer puja upachar,  
 Bishwa Jurhe archana hai bhinna prathay Jar”

i. e. There is no difference between Mandir and Masjid,  
 both houses are the abode of worship of the faithful,  
 The implements of Puja-Kosha-koshi, or the strings of beads,  
 Flowers, sandel paste, Joss-sticks or incense and lighting of  
 the earthen oil lamp.

Are all the arrangements for the worship of the one.  
 To whom homage is paid the world over, though  
 only in different ways.

So, if we may unite ourselves once again and will live mutually then.  
 ‘Bharat abar Jagat sabhay srestha asan labe’

i. e. Our India will resume her past glory and reputation once again.

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## COMMUNALISM

Pujush Mukhopadhyay

Even after 47 years of independence India is still thinking over the national integrity. The world has come close to us. A great visionary who created this university, was not ready to think the human being splited in small apartments. He said during the evolution of the Nation "the moral culture of brotherhood was limited by geographical boundaries because at that time those boundaries were true. Now they have become imaginary lines of tradition divested." But the real picture is different. India's advancement towards a modern nation is frustrated, due to a conspiracy of circumstances conditioned by internal and external forces. The atmospher of secular national state marching towards the 21st Century is retarded by indigenous vested interest and propertied class. Their manoeuvres for power, privilege and unbridged hegemony in the plans for national development remain a grave impediment in that march. India fought for freedom of that India which was once ruled by Asoka, Akbar and Aurengzeb. During the entire period of our struggle for freedom we, never dreamt the freedom of this India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Did the Musalmans first want partition? Indian Muslims wanted their homeland. They believed that as they are minority they would be suppressed by the majority. They wanted safeguards. Hindus and the Muslims the "twin shall never met and there was the partition." Was the partition a solution? Certainly the answer is a big not.

"It was naively believed by some people that the partition of the country would bring about a lasting solution of the problem of communalism in India and that in the post partition period we would be able to leave without this much dreaded legacy. However, it was a false hope except for a short period during the fifties, we could not live in communal peace." This is the opinion of Asghar Ali Engineer. His opinion can not be denied. It bears some truth; but at the same time it is not whole truth as the idea of the national

leaders were not to fight more. They desired peace, they desired freedom so they agreed upon the proposal of partition.

So the criticism is too harsh and unkind.

Our National leaders were sincere to overcome the situation, whatever criticism we can make of our national leaders regarding their limitations but we can not challenge their honesty.

Let us think over the ideas of Muhammad Ali Jinnah. At present we are turning the pages of books and going through the new researches to establish that Jinnah was a nationalist. It is to be said that his conception of Pakistan was not theocratic.

Remember his speech of August 11, 1947.

“You are free, you are free to go your temples, you are free to go to your mosques or to any other place of worship in the state of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed that has nothing to do with the fundamental principle that we are all citizens of *one state*. Now, I think, we should keep that in front of us as our ideal and you will find that in course of time, Hindus will cease to be Hindu and Muslims will cease to be Muslims not in the religious sense, because, that is personal faith of each individual but in the political sense as citizens of the state.”

Can there be a more progressive idea about the secular state ?

The object of the Indian Constitution was also to declare India a secular state. The Preamble to the Constitution says “We, the people of India, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic .... ”

Though presently Bangladesh declares her an Islamic state yet at the time Sk. Muzibar Rahaman ‘Bangladesh’ was a secular state. None likes to be communal, no one desires that man should kill man in the name of religion. But what happens. Thousands of people are killed in the communal riots, properties worth crores of rupees are destroyed. Why this happened ? The answer is the communal problem.

Communal problem in the present form did not exist even in the Muslim period. I do not wish to mean that inter religious-war was uncommon. In those days when a particular religion was patronised by the king, the non-favoured religion was against the royal authority ; not against the community to which the king belongs.

The present form of communalism has its origin with the loss of the authority of the native rulers in India. To be more precise we should say that it came with the colonial rule. It is "one of the by products of colonialism. The colonial character of Indian economy which created colonial underdevelopment is the foster-mother of colonialism. In recent days it has become prominent as the economic condition has failed to develop the economy and the society."

Colonialism has also another child in India and that child is nationalism. In fact Nationalism and Colonialism are the twin brothers. "Communalism emerged as a consequence of the emergence of modern politics which marked a sharp break with the politics of the mediaeval or ancient or pre-1857 period." (Bipan Chanda).

What is the nature of modern Communalism ? It is a sense of feeling ; feeling of oneness. As one belongs to a particular religion, the entire population belonging to that religious community is his kith and kin. Not only that ; the interest of the community, be it a religious social economic or political in nature is his interest. It is simply not the difference of religion ; it is the difference of interest. Linguistic unity or geographical homogeneity even cultural similarities do not unite them.

Jawaharlal Nehru remarks "One of the best test of its (Communalism) true nature is what it bears to the national struggle, that is the actual, historically. specific, struggle, against foreign domination that was going at the time. And there is no doubt that this relation was highly negative."

Certainly it was negative and the result was the partition of India. Our national leaders thought that partition will bring peace and harmony. But peace was a temporary lull.

The genesis of communalism was in the struggle for freedom. Nationalism was a new idea. It prompted the struggle for freedom. This struggle was a long-time war against the colonialism. There were hours of expectations and realisation that the Indians imbued with the spirit of nationalism are ready to fight against the foreign rule. But these hours were temporary illusions. So the struggle for freedom was one sided in a country where majority population was

divided into two major communities that is the Hindus and Muslims. The Indian National Congress which lead this struggle for freedom never spoke only for the Hindus. They fought both for the Hindus and Muslims and they were secular in nature yet the unison was disturbed by the note of discord of the disunity between the Hindus and Muslims. This has been nicely expressed by Mushirul Hasan. "The use of the expression secular nationalism in the context of India's nationalist struggle may be contested on the grounds that nationalism and its secular dimension was associated with an amalgam which ranged all the way from Gandhi to Savarkar. I have consciously used the expression because in theory at least, the Congress and its allies in the left parties and groups subscribed to secular society a legacy bequeathed to the makers of India's constitution." But Congress was never able to be the only plat-form for all the people of India. Muslim League championed the cause of the Muslims and the victory of the two nation theory was the result.

Question is why this happened while the Hindus and Muslims lived together for centuries. Syed Ahmed Khan once said "Centuries have passed since God desired that Hindus and Muslims may share the climate and produce of this land and live and die on it together. So it appears to be the will of God that these two communities may live together in this country as friends or even live two brothers." But the God's desire is not fulfilled, though they are still living and no amount of force is able to drive away either of the community.

At the root of this disharmony lies the disbelief. In fact the minority community has lost its faith on their Hindu neighbour ; they are afraid that the vast majority of the Hindu population will over flood the religion, the culture of the minority community. The Hindus from their end made no attempt to allay their fear. They are proud of their own culture and heritage. Combined effect to create a harmonious culture was not made. We can describe the situation in the language of Tagore "আর মিথ্যা কথা বলিবার প্রয়োজন নাই। এবার আমাদের স্বীকার করিতেই হইবে হিন্দু মুসলমানের মাঝখানে একটা বিরোধ আছে। আমরা যে কেবল স্বতন্ত্র তাহা নয় আমরা বিরুদ্ধ।

আমরা বহু শত বৎসর পাশে পাশে থাকিয়া এক খেতের ফল, এক নদীর জল, এক সূর্যের আলোক ভোগ করিয়া আসিয়াছি ; আমরা এক ভাষায় কথা কই আমরা

সুখে দুঃখে মানুষ ; তবু প্রতিবেশীর সঙ্গে প্রতিবেশীর যে সম্বন্ধ মনুষ্যোচিত ; যাঁহা ধর্ম বিহিত তাঁহা আমাদের মধ্যে হয় নাই। আমাদের মধ্যে হৃদীর্ঘকাল ধরিয়া এমন একটি পাপ আমরা পোষণ করিয়াছি যে একত্রে মিলিয়াও আমরা বিচ্ছেদকে ঠেকাইতে পারি নাই। এই পাপকে দৈশ্বর কোন মতেই ক্ষমা করিতে পারিবে না।

... ..

We speak of Hindu-Muslim unity. In fact that unity is so fragile that it breaks with the first strike. It is no denying fact that attempts were always made to unify these two major communities. This attempt was not at the grass-root level. When the struggle for freedom was intensified then we talked about the unity and that talk was with the leaders. We may describe these talks as bargaining. Here the question was always the question of loaves and fishes. It came either in the form of Lucknow pact or it thought in the terms of forming coalition forming governments. Leaders of both the communities made pacts who were elites and the general people were not taken in confidence one.

History proves that the communal problems were frequent when the national movement was not in high spirit.

The communalism is surely to be eliminated and to do it we must create a composite Indian culture. In that culture all the religious sections will be blended. It will be a composite culture. It will have such a solid political structure which will provide a fear-less attitude. Some one may have pessimist attitude to-wards it. But an optimist will never loose his spirit. We must say in the language of Arnold Toynbee "At this supremely dangerous moment in history, the only way of salvation for mankind is the Indian way—Emperor Asoka's and Mahatma Gandhi's principle of non-violence and Sri Ramkrishna's testimony to the harmony religions. Here we have an attitude and spirit that can make it possible for the human race to grow together into a single family and, in the Atomic Age, this is the only alternative to destroying ourselves."

We are thinking about national integration and that can be achieved by our joint effort.

## **Problems And Prospects Of National Integration**

Sisir K. Mukhopadhyay

It is a pleasure for me to be associated with you all at this seminar on Problems and Prospects of National Integration organised by Visva-Bharati Indira Gandhi Centre for National Integration in this morning of early summer.

I felicitate the Co-ordinator, Shri Pujush Mukhopadhyay and all other members of the Organising Committee for being able to organise the seminar on the topic of great national importance of the present day.

I am glad to see that many of our colleagues and ex-colleagues are present here. This is an added pleasure to me.

At the very outset, I would raise the question "Why are we talking these days too much on National Integration?" "What precisely the elements we want to integrate by these kind of efforts for National Integration?"

Now, India is a country surrounded by three sides with sea and one side by the high rise mountain, the great Himalayas.

Down the ages, groups of people originally in some form of invasion came to India. Some of them stayed back and became a part of cultural web of the time old civilization. Some of them became rulers of India as Indians revealing the glaring example of the history of India to assimilate the diverse people of diverse culture in its being. This Indian-ness, the true spirit of India, we find expression in Tagore's poem Bharat-tirtha (Indian pilgrimage). "Aryans, Non-aryans, Dravidians and Chinese, Sakas, Huns, Pathans and Moghul all have merged and lost themselves in one body (Hethàya Ārya, hethàya Anàrya, hethàya Draviḍa Cīna I Śāka Hūna dala Pāthāna Moghala Eka dehe hola līna)

This is depicted more elaborately by Tagore in his famous essay *Bharat Barsher Itihas* (History of India).

However, there existed in-fighting between rulers of different groups eg. Vijaynagar-Bahamani, Marathas and Nizam, Mughals

and Marathas etc. But the very fact remained despite this infighting, India was one country. There was no question of disintegration of India in separate countries.

This boils down to remind us the basic fact that this vast country, India, of a size of subcontinent, has inherent diversities :

- i) different religions—Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists
- ii) different cultures in different parts
- iii) So many different major languages, races, castes, creeds etc.

But underneath all these, there is existence of strong current of “One-ness” a unique example of “unity in diversity”.

Clashes between different religions or different regional factions occurred before the British rule but the question of disintegration of the country as a whole did not arise.

But when the British came and ruled India, they took advantage of these situations of local differences and diversities. To keep their power and to continue their rule in India they took the policy of “divide and rule”.

To be precise: there were clashes no doubt between Hindus and Muslims before the British rule. But what is remarkable is that during British rule, the rulers made these clashes in the form of “Organised riot” and thus sowing the seed for real disintegration of the country which resulted ultimately the partition of the country (India and Pakistan).

Nobody really wanted partition, the idea was created and planted in the minds of Indian by British. That History of arrival of Stafford Cripps, the manoeuvring of Lord Wavel, the extra-ordinary shrewd Mountbatten and then cutting the country by Redcliff by physical considerations without any consideration of the culture of the regions.

After British left, it was felt by many people that the great problems of frequent riots by Hindus and Muslims was solved by partition although very pathetically. But the unfortunate part is that even after partition in the present independent India, we are to talk now of National Integration.

Why are we forced to talk now of National Integration? Because we are in reality facing various types of problems of

National Integration. What are the major problems we are primarily facing :

In India now we are confronted with some movements of feelings of disintegrations and these are very much on the rise namely, Khalistan Movement to get separated from India to have a separate country. Another type of disintegration is not to have claim for a separate country but a separate state on the basis of ethnic groups namely the Jharkhand, Uttara Khand, Gorkhaland, Kamtapur etc.

All these have resulted in growing fear of possible disintegration of our country,

Some of the problems which stood on the way of National Integration are : i) Absence of sense of belonging to India as a whole, one should be first Indian (Bharatiya) be then a Bengali, Behari, Marathi, Oriya etc.

- ii) Danger of casteism
- iii) Wrong interpretation of religion by fundamental forces
- iv) Mixing religion with politics
- v) Economic disparity of people
- vi) Uneven or unequal development of different regions of the country etc.

These evil forces have swallowed the very foundation of one-ness.

It is now obvious that it is high time to think and act seriously to have in the first place the feeling of "ONE-NESS" in the country.

Whatever may be our faith or belief (religion, caste etc) they are all personal to us.

We are to make the people aware that India has a long history of Integration of religion or faith. The deeds, doctrines or preachings of Moghul Samrat Akbar, Ramakrishan, Vivekananda, Netaji Gandhiji and Rabindra Nath Tagore all led to visualise India as a land of integral synthesis of various culture.

We have great prospects. We are to create awareness among people, the unique sense of Indian-ness.

This kind of seminar is one such endeavour in this line. I wish the seminar a success. I have great pleasure in inaugurating the seminar.

Thank you all, Namaskar.

## **National Integration : Some Reflections On Modern Indian Religious Trends**

Pranabananda Jash

It is a great pleasure for me to profess some of my ideas on the modern religious trends in India, especially Hinduism. The trends of religious reform are only a continuation of the work done by mediaeval reformers like Kabir, Dadu, Nanak, Tulsidas, Sri-Chaitanya and are intended to purify Hinduism, emphasising its essentials and denouncing some of its later accretions and separating its essentials from its non-essentials.

Let me begin with a few remarks on the history of Indian religious system right from the time of the Vedic period down to our age. It is a common impression that each and everything under the sky pertaining to socio-religious phenomenon has the injunctions of the Vedas. But that is not so. Indian religion is a conglomeration of various faiths and cultures of different ethnic groups in different periods. In it we find the contributions of various peoples with their multifacades of religious and cultural rites and rituals, doctrines, tenets and philosophy. The age of the Buddhists and the Jainas, —later development of sectarian religious system in Hinduism, myths and mythology in the Purāṇas and epics, incoming of the Śakas, Yavanas, Hūṇas, Muslims-Sufism vis-a-vis emergence of neo-Bhakti-vāda, all these evolved indelible transformation of Hinduism.

Integration means bringing together several individuals and groups, or their thoughts and ideas. The process of integration not only human but all beings will never succeed unless there is recognition of the one-ness of all things in the supreme self which is non-dual. It is the one-ness of all that finds its reflection in the transcendental level and it works on the empirical level as integration. An indepth analysis of the modern Indian religious trends exhibits a conspicuous harmony, synthesis and integration of diverse thoughts and traditions. Against this background I attempt to focus upon the key religious personalities and movements of pre independent India.

The pioneer of reform in modern Hinduism was Rājā Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833). Born in a Hindu family, whose ancestors served under the Muslim rulers of Bengal, he received instruction in many languages, viz., Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic. His versatile knowledge in languages even at early age reflected in the composition of a book in Persian with Arabic introduction entitled *Tuhfat-ul-muwahiddin* or gift to Deists, emphasising that Truth consists in the worship of the one Being, who is the source of all that exists and its governor. At the age of twenty six he began to study English, Greek and Hebrew. He was a Revenue Officer under the East India Company in between 1809 and 1814; but he resigned this office in 1814 and applied himself to the study of Hindu Religion and Islamic mysticism. In the same year he started a society for the worship of the one indivisible God as inculcated in the Vedas and the Upanishads. Between 1815 and 1819 he published translations of the Upanishads in the English language.

Ram Mohan came into contact with the great European Orientalists like William Jones, Colebrooke and Wilson and became an admirer of Christianity. With the interaction of these scholars he wrote a book styled the 'Precept of Jesus : A Guide To Peace And Happiness' (Published by the Unitarian Society of London). In 1828 was started the Brahmo Samāj, for the worship of the One True God. In the formative stage of the foundation of the Brahmo Samāj he received the unflinching support from Prince Dwarkanath Tagore, grand father of Rabindranath Tagore. The prayer hall of the Samāj was opened in 1830 and in the Trust-deed it was laid down "that no sermon, preaching, discourse, prayer or hymn be delivered or made or used in such worship but such as have a tendency to the promotion of the contemplation of the author and preserver of the universe, to the promotion of charity, morality, piety, benevolence, virtue and the strengthening of the bonds of Union between men of all religious persuasions and creeds". An analytical study of this Trust-deed reveals the influence and impact of Upanishadic idea and Islamic tradition in the philosophical and doctrinal concept of Brahmo Samāj. In 1831 he went as an envoy of the Moghal Emperor to England where he died on 17th September 1833. But his thoughts and ideas have enough impact on the resurgent and reformation of the neo-Hinduism of the present day.

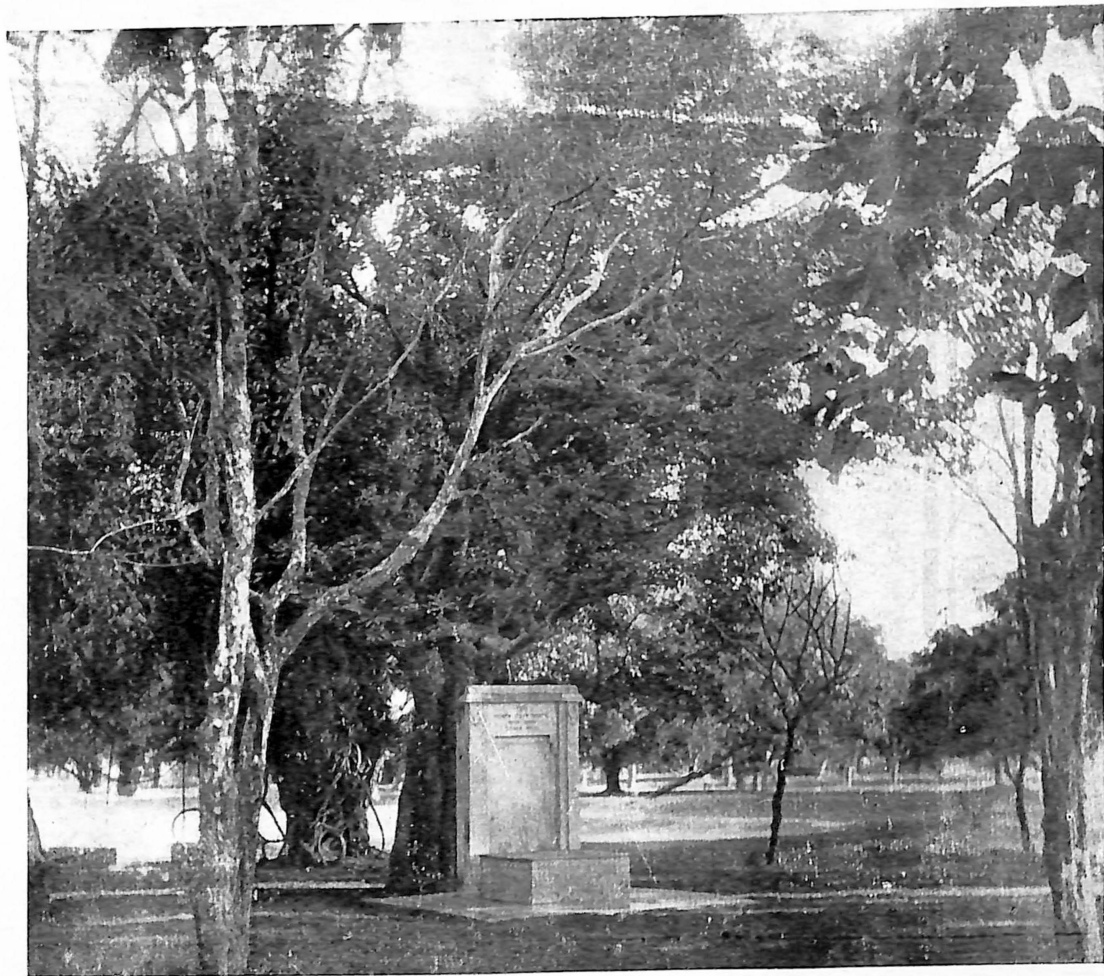
In fact, he was the first to propagate the message of national integration of India and also of internationalism. He possessed a cosmopolitan character which he inculcated by absorbing the essences from the Jewish, Christian, Islamic and other scriptures. During his age he could visualise the Hindus, Muslims and Christians with his vision of truth enlightened by the principle of unity as enjoined in the Upanishads. He did not reject either of them. On the contrary he could realise the spiritual identity in all its clearness. Ram Mohan was not only well-acquainted with the rationalistic democratic idealism of the west, he could make it his own. His vision stretched to the extent horizon of universal humanity.

The next great personality in the history of the Brahmo Samāj was Maharshi Devendranath Tagore (1817-1905), father of Rabindranath Tagore. After his initiation as a Brahmo in the year 1842, Devendranath devoted himself for the ultimate realization. He was a great mystic, profoundly influenced by the teaching of the Upanishads—*iśā vāśyam idam sarvam*, to see whatever there is in the world as being the Abode of God, and to consider God, as Father, Master, dearer than sons, dearer than Health and dearer than all. He retired to the Himalayas between 1856 and 1858 and spent the time in divine contemplation, deeply absorbed in ecstatic bliss, loudly repeating the lines of Hafiz.

“Do not bring lamp into my audience hall today  
To night that full moon my friend is shining here”.

He tells us how he obtained the beautiful vision—“I saw God, not with fleshly eyes but with the inner vision from these Himalayan hills.” “Henceforward I shall radiate light from my heart upon the world, for I have reached the sun and darkness has vanished.”

Devendranath, as we all know, spent the last years of his long life in meditation at Santiniketan—the abode of peace. Here on the cement seat (at *Chhatim-Talā*) which Devendranath Tagore occupied are inscribed the words—“*Tini āmār Prāṇer ārāma, maner ānanda, ātmār śānti*” i.e. the play of life, the satisfaction of mind and the peace of soul. The solace and sylvan place under the fostering care of his son Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) developed into the Visva-Bharati, a centre of world culture—where the world meets in a single nest. Over the door of Santiniketan runs an



Chhātim-talā  
[Meditation site of Maharshi Devendranath Tagore]

—

inscription—"In this place no image is to be adored and no man's faith is to be despised." Here we find Tagore as the inheritor of the traditions of Rāmānanda and Kabir and other mediaeval mystic saints of India. In 1912 Tagore visited the United States of America and delivered a course of lectures at the Harvard University, on *Sāadhanā* or the realisation of life. Absolute self surrender to God in devotion and service, in goodness and love, is the means of realisation. We are taken across to the other shore, when we are able to say, "All my work is thine." Then alone God reveals Himself to us and all the conflicts and contradictions of life are reconciled and knowledge, love and action are harmonised.

Tagore is a symbol of the undying spirit of man an embodiment of human race as a whole. He believed in the unity of the human race, a unity enriched by diversity. Co-operation and Cross-fertilization are necessary for the complete and harmonious development of the human race. According to him—"As the mission of the rose lies in the unfolding of the petals which implies distinctiveness, so the rose of humanity is perfect only when the diverse races and nations have developed their distinct characteristics to the perfection yet all remain attached to the stem of humanity by the bond of brotherhood."

Although initiated in Brahmoism by his father, he withdrew from it in his later life and stood for a higher universalism to which he gave expression in his novel—*Gorā*, "Today give me the *mantram* of that deity who belongs to all, Hindu, Musalman, Christian and Brahmo alike, the doors of whose temple are never closed to any person of any caste whatever, he who is not only the God of the Hindus but who is God of India itself."

The principle of integration and harmony which pervades Tagore's whole philosophy of life has attained a glorious maturity in a humanistic attitude to the people of the world. On the eve of the national awakening of the country he thus unfolded in all brightness the heritage of the glorious *Sāadhanā* of India through the composition of the famous poem—*Bhārata-tirtha* :

He mora citta puṇyatīrthe Jāgore dhīre ।  
Ei-Bhārater mahāmānaver sāgoratīre ॥

In the scenerio of the contemporary religious trend, the role of the Prārthanā Samāj of Bombay which is an off-shoot of the Brahmo Samāj, was most significant. The greatest of those who joined it was Justice Ranade (1842-1900) who emphasised that “the theism of the Brahmo Samāj and the Prārthanā Samāj was nothing new and that it was organically related to the older theisms in the bosom of Hinduism,” Ranade was regarded as a sage, inspired by a deep love for humanity, ready to help all who sought his help. The Brahmo Samāj and the Prārthanā Samāj were eclectic in character and appealed to the intellectual classes only.

Similarly, the Ārya Samāj, whose founder was Dayananda Saraswati (1824-1883) aimed at a new and virile Hinduism. Dayananda, a profound Sanskrit scholar, maintained that monotheism was the creed of the Vedic religion. He criticised the view that the Vedic worship was nature worship and declared that the Vedic hymns refer only to one Supreme God-head : *Ekam Sat*, the one true God, who himself takes the form of many gods and bears many names (*Ekam sadviprā bahudhā vadanti*). He demolished the caste system and converted non-Hindus to Hinduism. He also introduced a system of national education, based on the teachings of the Vedas. The Founders of the Theosophical Society met Dayananda in 1877 and were highly impressed with his learning and eloquence.

At this point it is necessary to add a few words about the origin of the Theosophical Society. Madame Blavatsky (1831-1891) was a Russian by birth. In 1873 she went to the United States of America where she met her co-worker, Col. H. S. Olcott. In 1875 the Theosophical Society was formally founded with Olcott as its life President. The object of the Society was “to form a nucleus of the Universal brotherhood of humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, castes or colour, to encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science and to investigate un-explained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man.” To the Theosophist every religion is an expression of the Divine Wisdom and they prefer its study to its condemnation, and its practice to Proselytism. In 1882 Adyar near Madras was made the Headquarters of the Society.

In 1887, Annie Basant came into contact with the Theosophical Society. She landed in India in 1893 ; and after the death of Col. Olcott in 1907, she became the President of the Society. From 1893, until her death in 1933, she worked heart and soul for the renaissance of Hinduism.

Another important movement in modern Hinduism is that of the Ramakrishna Mission. Its Founder, Vivekananda (1863-1902) was a disciple of the great saint, Ramakrishna Paramahamsadeva (1834-1886). Ramakrishna was born in a Hindu Brahmin family but method of worship was entirely his own. He had not gone through the scriptures or any religious texts, yet he echoed the essence of Vedantic ideas in his discourses. Besides Hinduism, he experimented with Islam and Christianity and arrived at the same truth and felt the same ecstasy of ultimate realization. The great lessons taught by Ramakrishna were to avoid the lust for woman and the lust of wealth. He used to preach wealth as dust and woman mother. His great teaching was that no one should be hurt, and that all religions should be regarded as different paths leading to the same goal. To attain that goal what is needed is spiritual vision and not mere book knowledge. Ramakrishna was the embodiment of renunciation and religious universalism. "His life was an object lesson in non-violence. His love knew no limits, geographical or otherwise", wrote Mahatma Gandhi in 1924. Vivekananda represented Hinduism at the Parliament of Religions in Chicago, U.S.A. in 1893. There, he declared that "each religion must assimilate the spirit of the others and yet preserve its individuality and grow according to its own law of growth". Swamiji was also very conscious about the magnitude of national integration. According to him—"The problems in India are more complicated, more momentous than the problems in any other country. Race, Religion, language, government—all these together make a nation. The elements which compose the nations of the world are indeed very few, taking race after race compared to this country. Here have been the Aryan, the Dravidian, the Tartar, the Turk, the Moghul, the Europeans all the nations of the World as it were, pouring their blood into this land. Of language the most wonderful conglomeration is here ; of manners and customs, there is more difference between two Indian races than between the Europeans and the Eastern races." With

this background in view, we may easily understand the philosophy of Vivekananda. The philosophy of Swamiji is an integral part of Indian spiritualism with an element of co-terminity with it. But as far as national integration does, it is an aspect of spiritual integration, a concept inherent in Indian spirituality.

His follower and disciple, Sister Nivedita (Miss Margaret Noble) became the first nun of the Ramakrishna Order and gave herself to a life of service to India. Through the professed aims, objectives and activities of the Mission she felt rather proud that a universal outlook permeated a religion she had inherited—a religion which embraced all streams of thoughts and ideas even the atheists. Like her guru, she also believes that religion is universal. In her eyes the Hindu religion reveals the basic unity of man in spirit.

The greatest of modern Indian mystics was Sri Aurobindo (1872-1950). After a long period of meditation and contemplation he was able to reach the intuitional level of consciousness, and what he has seen through the organ of spiritual sight, he has given expression to in his monumental work, *The Life Divine*, the greatest philosophical work which has been produced in modern India for centuries. In this work he maintains that the ills of the present world can never be overcome by new political, social or economic arrangements. They can be overcome only a new race of men in whom the higher spiritual powers have been brought into operation.

Human unity can be attained only when the whole of society has come to consist of individuals of the new species, the “gnostic” beings, as he calls them, whose whole way of life is governed by a vast universal spirituality. They see God in all being and in all things. To them God is the beginning, the middle and the end. He is the enjoyer as well as the object enjoyed. He is the high. He is the low. He is the knower and the known. He is the word spoken, and he is the breath which speaks it. He is the manifest, and He is the unmanifest.

A thorough knowledge of the present day activities at the Pondichery Ashrama disseminates the training in soul-development, the highest reward of which is the capacity to rise to that supramental level of being or *vignána*. Once we are able to rise to that level, we will be able to obtain that light and power that can entirely transform our being.

‘To be in the being of all and to include all in one’s being, to be conscious of the consciousness of all, to be integrated in force with the universal force, to carry all action and experience in one self and feel it as one’s own action and experience, to feel all selves as one’s own self, to feel all delight as being one’s own delight of being is a necessary condition of the integral divine being”.

Aurobindo was the man of contemplation : Gandhi (1869-1948) was the man of action. In him was exemplified the principle of returning good for evil and love for hatred. He has profoundly shaken the sense of values of the modern world and made every one think of the pattern of values that ought to prevail if humanity is to survive the threats of atomic warfare. Arnold Toynbee’s observation is very relevant in this connection. According to him—“the catholic-minded Indian religious spirit is the way of salvation for human beings of all religions in an age in which we have to learn to live as a single family if we are not to destroy ourselves.”

Gandhi is said to have continued what Buddha had begun. The part he played in rousing the mass consciousness of resurgent India is a marvellous phenomenon. This is due to the combination of social, religious, economic and political methods in his programme of action. No one has done so much for the removal of social evils sanctioned by religious tradition, like the removal of untouchability and the abolition of child marriage. He believed in the *Bibl* and the *Korān* as much as in the *Gītā*. Gandhi said—“I hold that it is the duty of every cultured man and woman to read sympathetically the scriptures of the world. A friendly study of the world’s religions is a sacred duty.” We must have the richness of our various traditions. We are the heirs of the heritage of the whole of humanity and not merely of our nation or religion. He regarded all the saints of the world as one. His Hinduism was the religion of Truth, Non-violence and Love.

I would like to end this discourse with an observation of S. Radhakrishnan, one of the greatest exponents of Indian religion, relating to modern Hinduism. He has shown how Indian thought has never been rigid but has been “a movement, a process, a growing tradition of the god-ward endeavour of the human spirit continuously enlarging the ages.”

In this context it is also very relevant to point out the comment made by him elsewhere—“under the influence of the universal experiences of religions and modern science and technology, mankind is being moulded into a single community. The common man has to discover what is uncommon in him and learn to live as a citizen of a world community. Science will triumph over ignorance and superstition and religion over selfishness and fear and nations will come together to build a great future for humanity, the brotherhood of man which has been the vision of the prophets since the beginning of time.”

At the end of my lecture I am rather tempted to pronounce that like Aurobindo, Radhakrishnan also believes that divine life will emerge out of human life, as human life has emerged out of sub-human life. Writing in 1928 on “The religion we need,” he said, ‘if the kingdom of God on earth is the ideal destiny of mankind .....it can be achieved by strong religious souls whose patriotism knows no limits of geography or history but only those of justice and Truth, freedom and fair play, God and Humanity.’ In short “a more vivid, a deeper sense of the one universal God is the profoundest need of our Age.”

## Prize Distribution Ceremony of the Essay Competition [ Held on 15th August, 1995 ]



*From Left :* Sri Pijush Kumar Mukhopadhyay, Co-ordinator, IGCNI, Visva-Bharati  
Sri Dilip Kumar Sinha, Upāchārya, Visva-Bharati  
Sri Pranab Kumar Mukhopadhyay, Minister for External Affairs and Deputy  
Chairman, Planning Commission, Government of India,  
Sri Pranabananda Jash, Karma-Sachiva, Visva-Bharati.

## Prize Winners in the Essay Competition

[National Integration : Vision of A Poet]



*From Left :* Smt. Swati Datta, Sri Somen Ghosh, Sri Sobhanlal Mukherjee

## ভারতবর্ষের জাতীয় সত্তা ও সংহতি

### সুনীতিকুমার পাঠক

আগে নামকরণের দিকে দৃষ্টি আকর্ষণ করি। ১৯৪৭ সালের ব্যাডলিন্গের রোয়েদাদ বাটোয়ারায় ভারতবর্ষের মানচিত্র ছোট করে ভারত করা হয়েছে। ভারতবর্ষ এখন বাংলাদেশ, পাকিস্তান ও ভারত। তাছাড়া পাশেই সাগরের বুকে সিংহলদ্বীপ শ্রীলঙ্কা। বলতে পারি মানচিত্র শুধু নয় দেশের উপর নিয়ে কাঁচি চালিয়ে বিভাজন করা হয়েছে।

এতবড় একটা নির্মমতাকে আমরা সবাই মেনে নিয়েছিলাম। তার ফলে ভারতবর্ষ থেকে ‘বর্ষ’ কাটা পড়ল। হোল ভারত। কবি বিজেন্দ্রলাল রায়ের গান “যে দিন সুনীলজলধি হইতে উঠিলে জননী ভারতবর্ষ।”

আজ তা অতীতে বস্তু—অবসোলিট।

‘সিঙ্কুরটিপ সিংহলদ্বীপ’ আজ ভারতের মাথার ঘা।

জাতীয় সত্তার দিক থেকে ভারতবর্ষের সবাই কিন্তু একজায়গায় অভিন্ন। কবির কথায় বলি,—

নানানভাষা নানাবেশ নানা পরিধান।

বিবিধের মাঝে দেখি মিলন মহান্।

আজ এসব কি কবির কল্পনা নয়? তা বোধ করি নয়।

ভারতবর্ষের ইতিহাসের দিকে একবার তাকানো যাক। যাকে সিংহাবলোকন বলি।

ভূবিজ্ঞানীরা বলেন, ভারতবর্ষের জন্ম হয়েছে সাগরের বুকে থেকে। তাঁদের মতে একটা প্রচণ্ড ভূতালের পরিণামে সাগরের জল ছিটকে গড়িয়ে যায়। দাক্ষিণাত্যের গ্রানাইট মাঠভূমি জেগে ওঠে। মাঝখানে টেখিস সাগরের জায়গায় সুউচ্চ হিমালয় গজিয়ে ওঠে। সেই হিমালয়ের বুক বেয়ে মানসসরোবরের থেকে একদিকে সিন্ধু অপর দিকে ব্রহ্মপুত্র ছুটে চলেছে। তাদের মাঝখানে গঙ্গা, শতদ্রু ইত্যাদি নদীনদ।

এত জটিল ভূবিজ্ঞানের তত্ত্ব সাধারণ মানুষের কাছে পুরাণের কাহিনী হিসাবে বলা হয়েছে শিবের জটা থেকে গঙ্গা, ভগীরথের সগরবংশের গতির জগ্না গঙ্গা আনার গল্প। মাঝখান থেকে এই বিশাল দেশ নদীমাতৃক হয়ে উঠেছে ভারতবর্ষ।

সেই গভিয়ে ওঠা দেশে বদবান শুরু হোল। অনেকে আসতে শুরু করল। তারা কারা? সবাই বলে আমরা! তাদের কয়েকটা নাম আমাদের দেশের ইতিহাসে আছে। বলে রাখি, ইতিহাস বা হিষ্টোরি বলতে যা বুঝি সন তারিখের হিসাব নিকাশ মত ঘটনার বিবরণ, ভারতবর্ষের ইতিহাস তা সবটা নয়। কেন না। নানা ঘটনা ঘটেছে, সাধারণ মানুষের কাছে তার সন তারিখের হিসাব নিকাশ জটিল হয়ে উঠতে পারে। তাই উপাখ্যান, আখ্যান, কথা ও কাহিনীর ভিতর দিয়ে প্রাচীন পুঁথি পুরাণের পাতায় লোকমুখে দন্তকথায় চলে এসেছিল। যেসব লোকজনের পরিচয় মিলে তাদের ভিতর শবর, পুলিন্দ, কিরাত, কিন্নর, যক্ষ (রাক্ষস) ইয়াবা (যক্ষ), ভূত, পিশাচ, পুলিন্দ, গন্ধর্ব, তামিল, আর্য, যবন (গ্রীক), ইত্যাদি।

তুলনায় এদের ভিতর আর্যেরা ও যবনেরা দেখতে অনেকটা স্থশ্রী, উন্নতকায়, দীর্ঘনাসা, আয়তনেত্র স্থঠাম দেহের লোক। অতএব আর্যেরা বাকী সবাইকে আর্যেতর গোষ্ঠীর বলে একটু খাটো করে দেখতে চেয়েছিল। আর্যদের অবয়বের মাপকাঠিকে আর্যেতরদের ভিন্ন করে দেখার ফলে গোষ্ঠীদ্বন্দ্ব। এমন কি সংঘর্ষ বেধেছিল। রামায়ণের কাহিনীতে সেই সংঘর্ষের চিত্র স্পষ্ট। চিরদিন শক্তিমানের জয়। শারীরিক বলের চেয়ে বুদ্ধির বলের জয়গান।

আবার মহাভারত হোল ভিন্নভিন্ন আর্য ও আর্যেতর গোষ্ঠীর বাহুবল ও বুদ্ধি কৌশলের প্রয়োগের অভিনব ইতিহাস; যদিও তা কাহিনীমূলক। সেই গোষ্ঠীর সন্ধে গোষ্ঠীর সংগ্রাম থেকে ভারতবর্ষের জাতীয় সত্তা দানা বেঁধেছিল। তাই ঐ বিপুল গ্রন্থসম্ভারের নামকরণ মহাভারত। তার সীমানা আজকের ভারতের বাইরের অনেকখানা অংশ জুড়ে বিস্তৃত ছিল।

আজ অ্যাটম ও ইলেকট্রনিকের সূক্ষ্মশক্তিপুঞ্জের আবিষ্কারের ফলে পদার্থবিজ্ঞান অগ্নিবিন্দুর সাক্ষাৎ পরিচয় দিতে পেরেছে। মহাভারতের গোষ্ঠীতে গোষ্ঠীতে সংগ্রামের ভিতর জাতীর সত্তার অগ্নিবিন্দুর উদ্ভব ও ভবিষ্যতের সম্ভাবনা। ভীষ্মপর্বে ও শান্তিপর্বে তা উপস্থাপিত হয়েছে। শান্তিপর্ব ও ভীষ্মপর্বের বিষয়বস্তু মনে করিয়ে দিই। ভীষ্ম শরশয্যায় শয়ান। যুদ্ধ স্থগিত রেখে উভয়পক্ষ মায় কৃষ্ণ, যুধিষ্ঠির দুর্ব্যোধন সবাই উপস্থিত। ভীষ্ম তাঁর বাস্তব জীবনের অভিজ্ঞতা বর্ণনা করে আসন্ন যুদ্ধের প্রতীক্ষা করেছেন—তার সারসংক্ষেপ হোল ব্যাক্তি ও সমাজের নিবিড়তার উপযোগী কর্তব্য নিক্রপণ।

সেই সূত্রটি এককথায় চারিত্রধর্মের মূল্যায়ণ। ইংরাজী ম্যাক্সিম মনে করিয়ে দিই। তার তর্জমা এইরূপ—

“পয়সা কড়ি হারিয়ে গেলে কিছুই খোয়া যায় না,  
শরীর স্বাস্থ্য হারিয়ে গেলে অনেকটা যায় খোয়া।  
চরিত্র গুণ হারিয়ে গেলে সবকিছু যায় খোয়া।”

তাই চরিত্রগুণের মহিমা সব দেশে সব যুগে স্বীকৃতি পায়। চরিত্রগুণ নিয়ে মানুষের যে জীবনযাত্রা তাকেই বলা হয়েছে চারিত্র ধর্ম। মহাভারতের ভাষায় বিদুরনীতি।

ধর্মশব্দ ভারতবর্ষের সাহিত্যে বিশেষ অর্থপূর্ণ। যা কিছু ধরে নিয়ে ভারতবর্ষের মানুষ বলে তাই তাদের ধর্ম। বিবেকানন্দ সেই শব্দটা আরও স্পষ্ট করে বলেছেন, জাতিধর্ম। এখানে ধর্ম রিলিজিয়ন নয়। সর্বপল্লী রাধাকৃষ্ণন যাকে বলেছেন ওয়ে অফ লাইফ-বাংলায়, জীবনযাত্রার গতিনিয়ামক পথ। গৌতম বুদ্ধ আরও স্পষ্ট করে বলেছেন সম্যগ আজীবের মার্গ। মার্গ কথাটার পিছনে ‘খুঁজে নেওয়া পথ’ এই অর্থের ইঙ্গিত রয়ে গেছে।

ভারতবর্ষের জাতীয়সত্তা ঐ চারিত্র ধর্মের সন্ধান আর তার মূল্যায়ন। এই দৃষ্টি নিয়ে ভারতবর্ষের বিভিন্ন নরগোষ্ঠীর মানুষেরা নিত্যনিয়ত জীবনযাত্রার ঘাত প্রতিঘাতের ভিতর চলেছে। অথচ তার মূল্যবোধের পরিবর্তন ঘটলেও জাতীয় সত্তার অস্তিত্ব বিপন্ন হয় নি। দেশ কাল ও বিষয় অনুসারে মূল্যবোধ বদলে যাবে, তা নিত্য পরিবর্তন ধর্মিতা। কিন্তু মূল্যায়নের প্রক্রিয়ার নিত্য নূতন প্রণালী বদলাতে পারবে অথচ মূল্যায়ন চলবে। মূল্য এবং অয়ণ দুটি শব্দ নিয়ে মূল্যায়ণ। অয়ণ মানে গতিধর্মিতা। মূল্যায়নের ভিতরে মূল্যবোধের গতিধর্মিতা রয়ে গেছে।

সেই দৃষ্টিতে ভারতবর্ষের ইতিহাসে বহুজাতি, বহু ভাষাভাষীর জনেরা, বহুবিধ কৃষ্টি বা কালচার, বহুধরনের ধর্মবিশ্বাস, বৃত্তি ও জীবিকার বিভিন্ন উপকরণ, বিচিত্র ধরনের বেশভূষা ইত্যাদি বিভেদ থাকলেও চারিত্রের ধর্মের মূল্যায়ণে সমগ্র ভারতবর্ষে একতা মিলে। সেই মহাভারতের যুগ থেকে তা বিকশিত হয়ে চলেছে। ভারতবাসী জগৎসভায় একদিন জ্ঞান বিজ্ঞান, শিল্পকলা স্থাপত্য ভাস্কর্যে আপন মহিমায় আপনার জাতীয় আসন পেতেছিল। রবীন্দ্রনাথ তার নাম দিয়েছেন ঐক্যতান।

তারপর সেই চারিত্র ধর্মের অবক্ষয় ঘটেছিল—পরপর বিদেশীর কাছে ভারতবাসী পরাধীন হয়েছে। ধীরে ধীরে ভারতবাসীর অর্থসম্পদ বিদেশীরা ভারতবর্ষ থেকে নিয়ে গিয়েছে। রবীন্দ্রনাথ মিস রথবোর্গরকে লেখা চিঠিতে তা স্পষ্ট করে উল্লেখ করেছেন। প্রায় পঞ্চাশ বছর ধরে আর্থিক ও রাজনৈতিক পরাধীনতা থেকে মুক্তির জয় আন্দোলন হয়েছে। কতো তরুণ জীবন তাদের দেশের মুক্তিপণে অগ্নাহুতি দিয়েছেন। ১৯৪৭ সালের ১৫ই আগস্টের পর ভারতবর্ষ তার নূতন নামকরণ পেয়েছে—ভারত, বাংলাদেশ ও পাকিস্তান।

ভারতবর্ষের জাতীয় সত্তা বিপর্যস্ত হয়েছে। তার কারণ, ভারতবর্ষের রাজনীতির তব ও প্রয়োগ কৌশল, পশ্চিমী রাজনীতির তব ও প্রয়োগ কৌশলের থেকে ভিন্ন। অথচ পশ্চিমী ইংরাজদের বিরুদ্ধে ভারতবর্ষের রাজনীতির প্রয়োগ স্থান ও কাল বিশেষে অতটা কার্যকর ছিল না বলে দেশের তৎকালীন নেতৃত্ব বোধ করেছিলেন। পশ্চিমী গণতন্ত্র ও সমাজতান্ত্রিক ধাঁচের কাঠামো এই দেশে প্রবর্তন করা হোল। বাদ পড়ল জাতীয় সত্তার মূলস্ফূর্ত। চারিত্রধর্ম ও তার স্থানকালও বিষয়গত মূল্যায়ণ উপেক্ষিত হয়ে গিয়েছে। সমস্তার কেন্দ্রবিন্দুতে ঐ উদাসীনতা।

তার চারদশকের মধ্যে উৎকট ভাবে তীব্র হয়ে উঠেছে। বিভেদের ভিতরেও মিলন রক্ষার যে বৈশিষ্ট্য একদিন সারা পৃথিবীর কাছে আদর্শ ছিল, তা আজ ভারতবাসীর ভিতর নেই। মূল্যবোধ স্থান কাল ও বিষয় অনুসারে বদলে গেছে কিন্তু সেই পরিবর্তনকে বাধা দেবার মত সামর্থ্য কারুর নেই। ফলে বিভেদকামী শক্তি আজ ব্যাপকভাবে সারা ভারত, বাংলাদেশ, পাকিস্তান ও শ্রীলঙ্কাকে গ্রাস করেছে।

ভারতবর্ষের আয়ুর্বেদ বৈজ্ঞানিক। সেখানের মূল বিষয় চারটি উপপাঠে প্রতিস্থাপিত। ব্যাধি, ব্যাধির উদার বা কারণ ব্যাধির নিদান কারণকে বিশ্লেষণের দ্বারা নিরোধ। অবশেষে নিরোধ বা ব্যাধি উপশমের উপায় অর্থাৎ প্রায়োগিক চিকিৎসা। এই সাধারণ উপপাঠ অনেক ক্ষেত্রে প্রয়োগ করা যায়। বর্তমান প্রসঙ্গেও।

বিভেদকামী শক্তি সক্রিয় হবার প্রত্যক্ষ ও পরোক্ষ কারণ আছে।

কারণ থাকলে তার নিরাকরণের সম্ভাবনা আছে।

অতএব নিরাকরণের আছে।

এই বিশ্লেষণ প্রণালী দিয়ে জাতীয় সত্তার অবক্ষয়জনিত বিভেদকামী শক্তির উদ্ভব ও বিকাশ সার্বক্ষণ করতে হবে। তাহলেই তার কারণগুলি স্পষ্ট হবে। সেগুলি সম্ভবত এইরূপ (ক) বিদেশী সরকার ভারতবর্ষের অষ্টাদশ শতক থেকে বিংশ শতক অবধি বিভেদকামী শক্তিগুলিকে পরিপালন করেছিল। (খ) তারা ভারতকে স্বাধীনতা দেবার সময় ঐ পরিপুষ্ট বিভেদকামী শক্তিগুলিকে প্রতিষ্ঠিত করে যায়। (গ) অর্থ-নৈতিক দুর্বলতার জন্ত জাতীয় সরকারের প্রশাসনিক শিথিলতা। তাছাড়া পদাধিকার ও ভোটে জেতার মানসিক প্রবণতা আছে। (ঘ) জাতীয় চারিত্রের ধর্মের অবক্ষয় ও মূল্যায়ণে বিভ্রান্তি। এগুলির ভিতর শেষের কারণ সবচেয়ে গুরুত্বপূর্ণ। জাতীয় একতার চেতনা বিদেশীদের বিরুদ্ধে সংগ্রামশীল অবস্থায় যতটা উদ্বোধিত হয়েছিল, তা ১৯৪৭ সালের ১৫ই আগস্টের পর থেকে দ্রুতগতিতে ঘান হয়ে গেল। জাতীয় চরিত্র আরোহ ক্রমে উদ্বোধিত হতে পারে। কোন ক্ষেত্রে অবরোহ ক্রমে হতে

পারে। ভারতবর্ষের ক্ষেত্রে অববোহ ক্রমে উদ্বোধিত হয়েছিল। রাজা বা শাসকের কর্তব্যনিষ্ঠা ব্যক্তিগতার্থ ত্যাগ, প্রজাকল্যাণের প্রয়াস, সবাইকে আপন আপন মর্যাদাদান ইত্যাদি চারিত্রধর্মের নীতি ভারতের রাষ্ট্রনীতিতে মিলে। প্রজাপ্রিয় রাজা বা শাসক তা প্রয়োগ করে সফলকাম হয়েছিল। যে রাজা বা শাসক প্রজাপীড়ন করেছিল সে উৎখাত হয়েছিল। অতীতকালে প্রজাদের ব্যক্তিচরিত্র ও সামুহিক মূল্যবোধ সমাজ ও রাজ্যকে সমৃদ্ধ করেছিল। তবে পরস্পরের প্রতি বিরোধ ও বিভেদ ছিল না, এমন নয়। তার কারণ পশ্চিমী রাষ্ট্রবিজ্ঞানের এক জাতি গঠনের চেতনার এক ধরনের জনগণের ঐক্যভূতরাষ্ট্র গঠনের চিন্তা ভারতবর্ষের মাটিতে সম্ভবপর ছিল না। এই বিশ্লেষণ পশ্চিমী জাতি গঠনের চেতনার পরিপোষক। অতএব বিভেদকামী শক্তির সক্রিয় হবার কারণ অনুসারে ঐগুলি নিরাকরণের উপায় অবলম্বন করলে জাতীয় সত্তা পুনঃ প্রতিষ্ঠা লাভ করবে। জাতীয় সংহতি যথার্থ হবে। ঐ উপায়গুলি সম্ভবত এইরূপ—

(ক) সমাজের সকলস্তরের মানুষের চারিত্রিকধর্ম ও তার মূল্যায়ণ জাগিয়ে তোলার জন্ত সমাজের বিভিন্নস্তরের নেতৃস্থানীয় ব্যক্তি ও আধিকারিকে নিজের নিজের চারিত্রধর্মকে সবার সামনে আদর্শরূপে উপস্থাপন করতে হবে।

স্বতন্ত্রের আকারে লেখা সোজা হলে এর বাস্তবিক প্রয়োগ কঠিন। ভারতের সমাজের স্তরবিশ্বাস এখন দু'ধরনের—এক জনস্বতন্ত্রের অধিকার নিয়ে জাতপাতের স্তর বিশ্বাস। অতীতকালে আর্থিক ও পদাধিকারগত স্তরবিশ্বাস। এখানে দ্বিতীয় স্তরের উপরে প্রাধান্য দেওয়া হোল। কেন না এদেশের শিক্ষাব্রতীরা সমাজের বিভিন্ন স্তরের সঙ্গে সবার চেয়ে বেশি জড়িত হন। অবিশিষ্ট আজকাল বিদ্যালয়ের অবস্থানগত অবস্থা ও আর্থিকবৃত্তের সামাজিক স্থিতি অনুসারে শিক্ষাব্রতীরা কোন কোন ক্ষেত্রে নিজেরাই বিভিন্ন হয়েছেন। সামগ্রিকভাবে ছাত্রছাত্রীদের সাম্নিধ্য শুধু নয়, অভিভাবকদের সাম্নিধ্য থাকার ফলে শিক্ষাব্রতীরা আপন আপন চারিত্রধর্মকে সবার কাছে অকপটে তুলে ধরতে পারলে উদ্দেশ্য তখনই সফল হবে।

সমাজে অথ সবাই যেখানে জাতীয় চেতনায় উদাসীন সেখানে শিক্ষাব্রতীদের এই ধরনের চিন্তাভাবনা ও জীবনযাত্রা কি উপহাসের হয় না। তা সত্যি হয়। তবুও কাউকে না কাউকে তা এই অবক্ষয় থেকে পুনর্গঠনের চেষ্টা করতেই হবে। সে দায়িত্ব শিক্ষাব্রতীদের উপর বর্তায়। কারণ শিক্ষাব্রতী নূতন প্রজন্মের মার্গদেশক। নিষ্ঠার সঙ্গে যত্নসহকারে আপন আপন পারিবারিক দায়ভার বহন করা আবশ্যিক। তেমনি তাঁদের প্রতিদিনের গতিবিধির নিষ্ঠাবান অনুসারকের সামনে অকপট চারিত্রধর্ম উপস্থাপন করা ও তার সময়োপযোগী মূল্যায়ণ করাও একান্ত দরকার।

রাজনীতিকের সামাজিক পরিধি আরও ব্যাপক। তাঁদের আচরণবিধির উপরে সমাজের বৃহৎ অংশ অন্ধভাবে নির্ভরশীল। অথচ দুর্ভাগ্যের কথা, ভোটাধিকারের প্রয়োগ আজ দুর্নীতিগ্রস্ত, একথা অল্লবিস্তর সবাই জানি। স্মরণ্য শুধু শিক্ষাব্রতীদের উপর এই দায় বর্তায় না, রাজনীতিকদের উপর আরও বেশি দায়ভার এসে গেছে। শেষে একটা কথাই বলতে হয়—বড় মাপের মানুষ, মহাজ্ঞানী মহাজনেরা যে পথ অনুসরণ করেন, তাঁদের অনুগামী ছোটমাপের লোকেরা অন্ধভাবে তাঁদের অনুকরণ করেন। জাতীয় সংহতি সেখানেই বিঘ্নিত।

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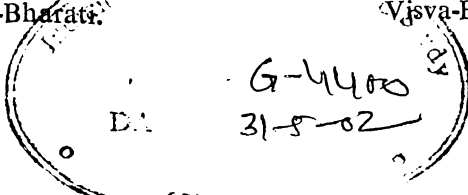
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The human world is made one, all  
the countries are losing their distance  
every day, their boundaries not offering  
the same resistance as they did in the  
past age. Politicians struggle to exploit  
this great fact and wrangle about  
establishing trade relationships. But  
my mission is to urge for ~~the~~<sup>a</sup> world-wide  
commerce of heart and mind, sympathy  
and understanding and never to allow  
this sublime opportunity to be sold in the slave  
markets for the cheap price of individual  
profits or be shattered away by the unholy  
competition in mutual destructiveness.  
Pam  
May 3. 1930 Rabindranath Tagore