

President's Window

It is a common saying that Bengalees love to form Associations, Kali Mandirs or Durgabaris to the extent that if three Bengalis meet on the South Pole they will first form either an Association or a Kali Bari. So it is not a wonder that there are innumerable Associations or Kalibaris in our country. Some of them in Bengali dominated areas; some are in places where Bengalis are real minorities, or even at places where they are countable in fingers. The aims of these Associations are divergent and varied, may be religious, political, cultural, linguistic, social or any aspect of life which needs three persons to think together.

Bengalee Association, Bihar is completely different from them.

Bengalee Association, Bihar is a by product of India's freedom struggle. Bengals division followed by reunion and then scooping out Bihar and Orissa from Bengal in 1912, created a historical paradox for Bengalees living in Bihar. All of a sudden the 'sons of the soil' became minorities and unwanted. British administration too left no stone unturned to create a disharmony between a Bengali speaking and Non-Bengali speaking person of Bihar. In this unfriendly situation, Bengalee Association, Bihar was formed basing on the principle of Harmony and Solidarity (Sananway o Sanghati) that is in an inclusive environment to retrieve the basic rights of Bengali speaking population of Bihar'. This Association was established by the famous Legal luminary of Patna High Court, Barrister Prafulla Ranjan Das (P. R. Das) and was registered as per Societies Registration Act on 7th April 1938.

In this last 81 years Bengalee Association, Bihar has seen many ups and down. In the year 2000 Jharkhand state was carved out of Bihar and taking out 70% Bengali speaking population along with it. Now we constitute 3% of voting population.

Today Bengalee Association, Bihar is the central organization representing 14 lakh Bengali speaking population of Bihar. It maintains to be a non-political, non-religious organization and deals with only those aspects of Bengali Speaking population where their Constitutional rights e.g. Article 29, Article 350 or Rights given by the State (the status of Linguistic Minority) or the basic social rights, intersect with the policy of the Government.

In the Parliamentary Election of 2009, we dared to call for "Vote Boycott" for Bengali teachers, rights of displaced persons from erstwhile East Pakistan, and compel the Government to sit on negotiation table.

In 2015, we can send more than 100 Bengalees to Gram Sabhas and Gram Panchayets. We have our representative as Vice Chairman of Minority Commission. Though Association does not do any Puja or regular cultural function as such, but remain vigilant at all these places. We sit down with SCRT officials and help to create Bengali Books for Govt schools. When Govt fails, to print books, Association make photocopy of books and send to Bengali reading boys at distant villages. Today any Bengali student passing Matriculation in First Division gets Rs 10,000 as Incentive from Govt of Bihar.

Instead of Prabashi Bengalee (Non resident Bengalee) we prefer to identify ourselves as Banglashashis of Bihar and have completely unified with the socio-political fabric of Bihar.

Our activity is not bounded by socio religious or geo political boundaries. Bengalee Association, Bihar pledges its voice and whole hearted unconditional support to any struggle done in any state of our country for regaining the constitutional rights of Banglabhashis and Bangla Language. We will cherish a Pan Indian Bengali Brotherhood.