

Bankim Chandra

- Rabindranath Thakur



27th June 1838 - 8th April 1894

My first sight of him was a matter of long before. The old students of Calcutta University had then started an annual reunion, of which Babu Chandranath Basu was the leading spirit. Perhaps he entertained a hope that at some future time I might acquire the right to be one of them; anyhow I was asked to read a poem on the occasion. Chandranath Babu was then quite a young man. I remember he had translated some martial German poem into English which he proposed to recite himself on the day, and came to rehearse it to us full of enthusiasm. That a warrior poet's ode to his beloved sword should at one time have been his favourite poem will convince the reader that even Chandranath Babu was once young; and moreover, that those times were indeed peculiar.

While wandering about in the crush at the Students' reunion, I suddenly came across a figure which at once struck me as distinguished beyond that of all the others and who could not have possibly been lost in any crowd. The features of that tall fair personage shone with such a striking radiance that I could not contain my curiosity about him--he was the only one there whose name I felt concerned to know that day. When I learnt he was Bankim Babu I marvelled all the more, it seemed to me such a wonderful coincidence that his appearance should be as distinguished as his writings. His sharp aquiline nose, his compressed lips, and his keen glance all betokened immense power. With his arms folded across his breast he seemed to walk as one apart, towering above the ordinary throng--this is what struck me most about him. Not only that he looked an intellectual giant, but he had on his forehead the mark of a true prince among men.

One little incident which occurred at this gathering remains indelibly impressed on my mind. In one of the rooms a Pandit was reciting some Sanskrit verses of his own composition and explaining them in Bengali to the audience. One of the allusions was not exactly coarse, but somewhat vulgar. As the Pandit was proceeding to expound this Bankim Babu, covering his face with his hands, hurried out of the room. I was near the door and can still see before me that shrinking, retreating figure.

After that I often longed to see him, but could not get an opportunity. At last one day, when he was Deputy Magistrate of Howrah, I made bold to call on him. We met, and I tried my best to make conversation. But I somehow felt greatly abashed while returning home, as if I had acted like a raw and bumptious youth in thus thrusting myself upon him unasked and

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NEWS & COMMENT

Bihar in 'Health Index'

NITI Aayog has recently, in June 19 has released in collaboration with Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and World Bank a Report on the ranks of states and union territories under the envisioned programme of Healthy States Progressive India or the Health Index June 2019. Not at all satisfied with the progress made in the area of health, the Report comments in its Executive Summary "... health remains a critical area that needs improvement. When benchmarked against countries with similar levels of economic development, India is lagging on some critical health indicators. Moreover, there are huge disparities across States and Union Territories (UTs). The health outcomes of some States are comparable to that of some upper middle-income countries and high income countries (for example, Neonatal Mortality Rate (NMR) in Kerala is similar to that of Brazil or Argentina), while some other States have health outcomes similar to that in the poorest countries in the world (for example, NMR in Odisha is close to that of Sierra Leone)." However we are more concerned with our own state, Bihar. For Bihar the rankings are not good. Though Overall Performance gives it a performance category of

'Aspirant', the Incremental Performance (From 2015-16 to 2017-18) gives it a category of 'Not Improved'. Bihar, basically an economically backward state have so many challenges. To compare the situation with any other developed state will not be fair. Bihar has made improvements as well in so many domains of public health as they appear in annual Economic Surveys published by the government. But, negativity in some of the Incremental Indicator Performance for the period in various domains raise our concern. They are as follows:

	From 2015-16 to 2017-18
Neonatal Mortality Rate	(-) 1
Under five Mortality Rate	(-) 1
Sex Ratio at Birth	(-) 8
Proportion of Institutional Deliveries	(-) 1.09
Total case notification rate of Tuberculosis	(-) 2
Treatment success rate of new microbiologically confirmed TB cases	(-) 17.80
Proportion of MO positions vacant at PHCs	(-) 29.52
Proportion of Specialist positions vacant at District Hospitals	(-) 0.86
Proportion of facilities functional as 24x7 PHCs (one 24x7 PHC per 1,00,000 population)	(-) 19.79
Level of birth registration	(-) 3.50

The governments, the legislatures of the states causing their own irrelevance

The year has 365 days. A housemaid still works for almost all the days including Sundays, especially in smaller cities; even a day's absence due to her own sickness or sickness of her child is resented and alleged to be a lie by the housewife where she works. Worker in the unorganized sector works for more than 300 days; assuming their weekly off on Sundays and some casual leaves even with wage-cut. In organized sector, where there is Saturday-Sunday off and earned leave is there, it may be presumed that they work for around 225-30 days. This last group includes gazetted officers and non-gazetted employees of the central and state governments. Even shopkeepers or businessmen sit or (the bigger ones) at least visit their shops or establishments almost every day. But what about our legislators? Vidhayaks? Our supposed to be Jansewaks? It may be known by RTI for how many days the ministers visit and sit in their respective departmental chambers. But those who are not ministers? Or the members of the opposition? Of course, it is supposed that they will make frequent visits to their constituencies, but for how many days they sit together in the much revered Assembly hall to discuss the affairs of the State, to resolve, to legislate, with 61 items of State List and 52 items of Concurrent List in their charge, as per the Seventh Schedule of Constitution of India?

In Bihar, the 16th Assembly which was formed in the third week of November 2015, has this record:

Year	Duration (sessions)	Number of sittings
2015	9	6
2016	67	35
2017	72	38
2018	49	32
2019	10	7

Not only Bihar, such a situation is there in nearly all the State Assemblies. We have a bit older data from an article by Nidhi Tambi published The Wire on 7.3.18.

State	Number of days of Assembly sittings		
	2017	2016	2015
Gujarat	33	30	32
Rajasthan	25	25	31
Karnataka	40	35	58
Maharashtra	50	--	18
UP	17	4	27
Delhi	21	15	26
Kerala	151	53	40
Tamil Nadu	37	43	28
Telangana	33	30	21

Except Kerala, none have crossed or even neared 100 even in a year. Nidhi Tambi had given some suggestions which I shall quote at the end of this write-up, but the issue at present is the proposal of 'one nation, one election' raised by the present central government. Keeping apart the issue of Nationhood of India, which actually is the 'Union' (the Constitutional term) of various nationalities, linguistic and other, and of indigenous communities of people, we want to focus on the issue of performance of State Assemblies. Its deterioration over the years. Had these assemblies really been performing accessing

Any attempt to reduce the importance of these negative features by counterposing the other performances where the indicators show positive, will be wrong. These negative trends need to be taken care of immediately.

NRC imbroglio continues

On 26th June 2019 the State Coordinator for NRC in Assam released Additional Draft Exclusion List containing 1,02,462 names. These names were included in the draft citizens' list published in July 2018 but were subsequently found ineligible for inclusion. The State Coordinator stated in the press release, "The Additional Draft Exclusion List will not contain the results of claimants and objectees appearing for hearings held for disposal of Claims and Objections during the period 15th February 2019 to 26th June, 2019. The results of those hearings will be published only in the Final NRC to be published on 31st July 2019. Starting at 10am on 26th June, 2019, the hard copies of the Additional Draft Exclusion List will

be available for public view at NRC Seva Kendras (NSK), offices of the Deputy Commissioner/ SDO (Civil)/ Circle Officer during office hours."

People can access the list online at nrcassam.nic.in.

Further, the State Coordinator has assured that those who will be excluded will also be informed individually through Letters of Information (LOI) to be delivered at their residential addresses along with the reason of exclusion. They will have the opportunity to file their Claims which will be disposed through a hearing by a Disposing Officer.

"The submission of Claim and its disposal by the Disposing Officer through a hearing will happen together. LOI will mention the details of the venue of claim submission cum hearing. The hearings will start from 5th July 2019 onwards. The date of hearings will also be available online in the NRC website www.nrcassam.nic.in from 29th June 2019 onwards. All such Claims will be disposed thereafter and results of such persons will be declared in the Final NRC on 31st

July 2019." The State Coordinator said. The NRC draft list released in July last year had the names of 40 lakh people missing. Now it has come down to a bit more than one lakh. Is it? Or is it not? Everything looks so confusing when even now a retired official of the Indian Army finds his name missing. Or someone finds his name missed due to an error already noted by the authority to be 'a clerical error'. And then so many suicides over the last two years. Were they 'illegal immigrants'? Foreigners? And how many remain declared D-Voter? How many are suffering there in detention camps? Meanwhile the people in the state of Assam and growingly in whole of North-Eastern states have been bitterly divided.

full spread of their powers as per the Constitutional mandate, perhaps no central government could have dared to put the agenda of 'one nation, one election' in an all-party meeting at central level, so subtly, yet so casually. Proposal of 'one nation, one election' cannot involve the issue of cost curtailment as the lion's share of total expenses made in the campaign by the parties and candidates was by the party which formed the government. It is they who jacked up the expenses by legally prohibiting public scrutiny of the donations they are receiving from the country and beyond, and by legalizing peculiarly opaque electoral bonds. Proposal of 'one nation, one election' is to liquidate the historically evolved content of the federal structure of India, and minimal-performance of the state legislatures has a share to lend support to that proposal

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Lastly, the proposals made by Nidhi Tambi in her article to make the state assemblies more transparent and effective. 1. Live telecast all proceedings of all state assemblies: Lack of accountability to citizens emanates from the high degree of opacity of proceedings of state assemblies. Live telecast of proceedings will ensure their performance is monitored by citizens in real time, thereby improving the quality of legislation and debates on matters of public importance. With so much importance given to e-governance by the incumbent government at the Centre, one wonders how live telecasting of assembly proceedings has not

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Brutal June

This year the month of June was brutal. Around a hundred people died due to persisting wave of heat with no sign of monsoon clouds in the sky during first three weeks and more. They were locals to their districts of Gaya, Aurangabad, Nawada or Jamui and were not new for this climate. They were knowing about all the precautionary measures one should take to face the blistering heat of the sun overhead. Having enough food in the stomach, having enough water in the body, putting on a headgear or 'gamchhi', not keeping the back bare and take some rest in shadow if the heat appears to be suffocating you. More! DMs had issued prohibitory orders under Sec. 144 so that people may not be moving on the roads between 11.00 AM to 4.00 PM! But these simple rules most of them could not follow. Because they had to earn their bread! Or rush, having no time to care about the rules, somewhere due to some family emergency. They died because they were poor.

And then, more than one hundred fifty children died due to bizarre ailment called AES, Acute Encephalitis Syndrome, perhaps better expressed in its colloquial term, 'Chamki Bukhar'. It really looks to be bizarre, because still you are uncertain about the causes. You are supposed to be alert to delineate the symptoms. But what causes it? Virus, bacteria? The page of Wikipedia on AES says, "AES can be caused by different microorganisms including virus, bacteria, fungi, parasites and spirochetes, as well as chemicals and toxins." And viruses isolated were also of different types. And where from these things come? From unripe Litchi? Contaminated water? Again, Wikipedia says, "High temperature, humidity, malnutrition, poor hygiene and lack of awareness are known aggravating factors of AES." But one thing is sure. "Malnourished children lack a buffer stock of sugar as glycogen in the liver which puts them at higher risk of hypoglycemia." And, this hypoglycemia makes the disease deadly. Again, it is extreme poverty which leads the parents to let their children be exposed to risky infections, climate and disorders.

But extremely bizarre is this part of the entry in Wikipedia page, which however is true! "Awareness campaigns were carried out in March-April 2019 but were not conducted later due to the 2019 Indian general elections." And "The local administration was not watchful due to the few cases of AES in recent years." [i.e. in 2016, 2017 and 2018. In 2015 there were more deaths.]

The month of June of course has been brutal, but much more brutal for all the seasons every year will remain this hullabaloo of economic 'development' which breeds poverty every moment of its existence.

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unintroduced.

Shortly after, as I added to my years, I attained a place as the youngest of the literary men of the time; but what was to be my position in order of merit was not even then settled. The little reputation I had acquired was mixed with plenty of doubt and not a little of condescension. It was then the fashion in Bengal to assign each man of letters a place in comparison with a supposed compeer in the West. Thus, one was the Byron of Bengal, another the Emerson and so forth. I began to be styled by some the Bengal Shelley. This was insulting to Shelley and only likely to get me laughed at.

My recognised cognomen was the Lispng Poet. My attainments were few, my knowledge of life meagre, and both in my poetry and my prose the sentiment exceeded the substance. So that there was nothing there on which anyone could have based his praise with any degree of confidence. My dress and behaviour were of the same anomalous description. I wore my hair long and indulged probably in an ultra-poetical refinement of manner. In a word I was eccentric and could not fit myself into everyday life like the ordinary man.

At this time Babu Akshay Sarkar had started his monthly review, the Nabajiban, New Life, to which I used occasionally to contribute. Bankim Babu had just closed the chapter of his editorship of the Banga Darsan, the Mirror of Bengal, and was busy with religious discussions for which purpose he had started the monthly, Prachar, the Preacher. To this also I contributed a song or two and an effusive appreciation of Vaishnava lyrics.

From now I began constantly to meet Bankim Babu. He was then living in Bhabani Dutt's street. I used to visit him frequently, it is true, but there was not much of conversation. I was then of the age to listen, not to talk. I fervently wished we could warm up into some discussion, but my diffidence got the better of my conversational powers. Some days Sanjib Babu[54] would be there reclining on his bolster. The sight would gladden me, for he was a genial soul. He delighted in talking and it was a delight to listen to his talk. Those who have read his prose writing must have noticed how gaily and airily it flows on like the sprightliest of conversation. Very few have this gift of conversation, and fewer still the art of translating it into writing.

This was the time when Pandit Sashadhar rose into prominence. Of him I first heard from Bankim Babu. If I remember right Bankim Babu was also responsible for introducing him to the public. The curious attempt made by Hindu orthodoxy to revive its prestige with the help of western science soon spread all over the country. Theosophy for some time previously had been preparing the ground for such a movement. Not that Bankim Babu even thoroughly identified himself with this cult. No shadow of Sashadhar was cast on his exposition of Hinduism as it found expression in the Prachar--that was impossible.

I was then coming out of the seclusion of my corner as my contributions to these controversies will show. Some of these were satirical verses, some farcical plays, others letters to newspapers. I thus came down into the arena from the regions of sentiment and began to spar in right earnest.

In the heat of the fight I happened to fall foul of Bankim Babu. The history of this remains recorded in the Prachar and Bharati of those days and need not be repeated here. At the close of this period of antagonism Bankim Babu wrote me a letter which I have unfortunately lost. Had it been here the reader could have seen with what consummate generosity Bankim Babu had taken the sting out of that unfortunate episode.

[54] One of Bankim Babu's brothers.

[Ch. 40 of My Reminiscences by Rabindranath Thakur]

In Memoriam

Md. Salam, our friend is no more



5.1.1965 – 19.6.2019

Newsdesk – Md. Salam, a friend of Bengalee Association, Bihar died on 19th June 19 in New Delhi after protracted ailment of Kidney. He was lately the Chairman of Food Commission Govt of Bihar. And in that capacity also he had participated in the programme of Bengalee Association last year. That is not because leadership of the Association knew him as erstwhile Chairman of Minority Commission and had an old acquaintance, but because he considered his duty to be of help to the causes of minority community, be it religious or linguistic, irrespective of his post. Bengalees, as linguistic minority community of Bihar never in the recent times, found a political leader with so much a vision to work for the minorities. He, when he was the Chairman of the Minority Commission, for the first-time structured meetings in various districts with the District Magistrates, having his full Commission (all the Vice Chairmen of the Commission) sitting on one side while the officers under the DM on the other side to report. DMs were informed beforehand about the issues and it was supposed that the concerned officers will come in the meetings with their homework on the updates. Such meetings he held in Bhagalpur, Darbhanga, Betiah and since Dr. D.K.Sinha was one of the vice chairmen that time hence the issues of Bengalee community, status of Bengali minority schools, problems of refugee colonies and many other issues were discussed. Whenever he went to his hometown Munger, he always found time to meet the Bengalee community there in their meetings or in celebration of birthday of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose and other personalities.

Bengalee Association, Bihar mourns his untimely death and prays for the peace of the soul.

Dr. Dilip Kumar Sinha adds -

He has been called back little earlier

It was 1st July 2017. Dr. B.C. Roy's Birthday was being celebrated in his birth place, since 1958, a school, named Aghore Prakash Sishu Sadan. Honourable Education Minister was Chief Guest. Representatives/teachers from different Minority schools were invited to attend and present their representation to Education Minister to find a solution of problems of Minority Schools of our state. Nearly 100 students were standing in a queue to receive prizes from Chief Guest. Education Minister was due any moment. I was rehearsing the welcome address. My mobile rang. Phone from PA of EM informs me that due to unforeseen emergences Education Minister is rushing to his village home, so he is not reaching. I did not know how to tackle this sudden crisis. When I was just fumbling to get a hold on the situation, I got a call from Md. Salam, Ex Chairman Bihar State Minority Commission. He asked me how the programme was shaping up. I informed him about the crisis. After a few seconds of silence he informed me that he can reach within half hour if that solves some of my problems. I realised that he was my best available option. But I also knew that he was not well. Yesterday only I did spend whole day with him for different investigations for his kidney problem. He has been advised to go to Delhi urgently for check up. I said 'No' and kept the phone down. I proceeded to the press people to explain the circumstances leading to postponement of the teachers meeting. I was nearly half way through the press briefing, when someone came running and said Salam Sahib has reached and proceeding towards the dais. I ran to receive him. He caught my hands and said, "please do not tell me to go back, believe me, Dilip Bhai, I am better today, so I came. I know today's meeting is very important for solving the problems of Minority Schools. I will be happy if you let me be a part of it and allow me to prepare a special note for Education Minister. I have taken consent from him. I wish your effort is successful." I had no answer.

Today, 19th June 2019 also, I am speechless. Salam Saheb had a natural penchant for standing shoulder to shoulder to any problem of any minority. He should have stayed little more.

I feel he has been called back little earlier.

Blood Donation Camp by Bhagalpur branch



Newsdesk – This year also, observing Blood Donation Day on 14th June, Bhagalpur branch of Bengalee Association, Bihar organized Blood Donation Camp in the Regional Blood Bank of Medical College campus at Mayaganj. 19 persons donated blood. Donors were Arup Chatterji, Shreyasi Pal, Tinku Yadav, Tania, Manoj Upadhyay

and others. Leadership of the Bhagalpur branch of the Association were all present on the occasion



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Yet 'refugees', after 70 years

Newsdesk – It is a piece of news from Kodarma, Jharkhand, published in Dainik Jagran, local edition of 20th June 19. The story has been done by Anup Kumar. It informs that in the Charadih panchayat of Kodarma block (Kodarma dist.) the then Bihar government had acquired 14.69 acres of land to settle Hindu Bengalee families coming from East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). Gazette notification was also issued informing acquirement of land for the purpose of refugee camp. In total 17 families were settled there. But even after 70 years neither the families have been given the 'parcha' for the land nor ownership right and 'bandobasti' was established in their names. Hence even now they do not get residential certificates on that land.

Even 'lagan' receipts were issued in their names as 'raiya's'. Now it has stopped. To solve the dispute, the DDC had written for guidelines from Revenue and Land Revenue department of the present Jharkhand government. Mentioning the gazette notification No. 1260 REP dtd. 3.3.1951 it asked whether the process of acquirement was complete, because no evidence is available for that. But nothing came out. The families have even met the Chief Minister in darbar when he arrived in Kodarma.

Around 250 members are there at present of those 17 families settled here 70 years ago. Now they may again face the danger of being uprooted from here as widening of Barhi-Rajauli NH 33 may need acquiring of the land here at Charadih panchayat. Already a notification has been published in the gazette to acquire land adjacent to NH where seven families have their households, shops etc. The problem with the settled refugee families is that even in the case their land be acquired they perhaps will not be getting any compensation since they are not having the title of the land till now.

Blood Donation Camp organized in Kishanganj

Newsdesk – Newly reorganized Kishanganj branch of Bengali Association, Bihar has started work full steam. On 14th June 19, inspired by the work of Bhagalpur branch they observed Blood Donation Day by organizing a Blood Donation Camp in which 20 units of blood were donated. The president of the branch, Ashish Ghosh also donated blood though his age is now 61 years.

Guru Charan Samanta

- Bidyut Pal

(Continued from last issue)

The write-up sketching the history of Bengalee Association, Bihar, quoted above, also records that from 1948 to 1966 the Association remained inactive. In 1967 it was activated by the people mentioned earlier (Dr. Sharadindu Mohan Ghoshal, Dipendra Nath Sircar, Prabhu

Mukherjee and others) and Guru Charan Samanta became the young, energetic motivator of this team.

He proved his mettle as a man of organisation. Untiringly, walking mile after mile with flaked rice and molasses in his bag, he built up the rural branches of Bengalee Association, Bihar in the districts of Singhbhum, Santhal Parganas, Manbhum, Dumka, Ranchi etc. (at that time the number of branches of the Association in undivided Bihar was more than 100). As his student Padmapani Chakraborty says in recollections about his teacher:

"After doing research work [with Prof. Samanta, as he was the Guide – present author] for a while again he was called by the organisation. Both of us began our journey to Ranibahal. Conference of Bengalee Association, Bihar will be held there. On a cold, wintry midnight we left the train at Deoghar. Neither was there any rickshaw available, nor any coolie. Without wasting time he lifted the luggage himself as much he could, rest he asked me to carry. Simmering in irritation and anger I began walking. Understanding the state of my mind, he was saying things to pamper me while walking.

After a long walk we reached the house of Baidyanath Mustafi. Entering the gate we crossed the garden and then went on the verandah. All the windows were closed. It was dead of night. After much shouting a boy showed his face opening one shutter of a window. He made it known to us that Baidyanathbabu has gone to Dumka. So, what to do now? Gurucharanda introduced himself and asked the boy to open the door. A question came, "who is there with you?" Gurucharanda retorted, "as Baidyanath exploits you, I exploit him. The boy listened and then said, "I do not know any of you and hence I will not open the door." He closed the window. So we spent the night on that open veranda. Without delay Gurucharanda spread his bedroll and fell asleep. I could not decide what to do. Remained sitting for a while on a broken chair. Then I followed the footsteps of my Guru.

"Next day we reached Ranibahal. We were taken aback. The conference was to be held just a day after but there was no preparation. Gurucharanda had some breakfast. Then asking me to remain there went away, I never knew where. He came back in the afternoon. A few persons were accompanying him. Like magic, Gurucharanda and the persons accompanying him constructed the conference stage and completed other arrangements. Next day the programme began in time."

Along with this task of painstakingly building the organisation he was also active in Sanchita (after the death of Dipendra Nath Sircar he became the editor). Within few months of publication of Sanchita, he wrote three articles, published in Sanchita consecutively, which till today amaze the readers by the depth of his grasp over the problems of Bengalees in Bihar. Name of the first article was 'Bangla Shikshar Samosya' (Problems of Bengali education). The next one was "Bihare Bangla bhashar bhabisyat'(Future of Bengali language in Bihar). The third was 'Rajniti O Bangali' (Politics and Bengalee people).

Concluding the last article he wrote: "If we do not accept the part of our responsibility in the governance and in determining the policies of the state in which we live, and just shout hoarsely crying 'unjust', 'injustice', never shall we get justice even if we wait for ages. Those Bengalees who are thinking that others will take the risk of doing politics, undertake the labour associated with it while earning a 'bad name' etc. and when 'fruits' would be distributed, they will come to our homes and give us our due share, I do not believe that their hopes will bring anything – neither in near future nor in a distant one."

Doing the works of the Association Guru Charan Samanta identified two distinct challenges and played pioneering role in both.

Bengali Text Books and Syllabus

Perhaps, among those states where Bengali speaking

people constitute a minority, Bihar is the only state where Bengalee students get text books for Bengali prepared and printed at Bihar, not borrowed from Bengal. Bihar Text Book Committee (the designated government body) arranges meetings of the syllabus committee for Bengali if needed and then text book are written, printed and distributed. Bengalee Association, Bihar played a pioneering role in this decision of the department of education. Text books those days carried the copyright page print line, "with the help of Bengalee Association, Bihar". Here it also must be mentioned that in late 70s, when Bihar Text Book Committee was being formed, the then Secretary of Bengalee Association, Dipendra Nath Sircar was also a member of the Committee because the government was informed about this necessity. And Sircar not only fought for Bengali inside the Committee; he and he alone also fought for Oriya, Santhali, Mundari, Ho and other languages. BTBC can take pride that it printed text books for all these languages then!

Guru Charan Samanta was an excellent writer of Bengali primers. He also explored and collected a team of writers. He knew where the children, growing in an overwhelmingly Hindi speaking society would face the problems. The primers and some higher text books, printed those days by BTBC, written by Guru Charan Samanta show the reader how he dealt with the problem and made study, oral pronunciation and writing easier for children. The books contained fine poems for children written by him. The illustration artist knew what this teacher wanted and illustrated that way. Sometimes, if required, Guru Charan Samanta himself did some drawing for the book as well and they were quite good. The artist in him was living.

Regarding preparation of syllabus, Bithika Sarkar, ex-staff of Bihar Text Book Committee reminisces in 'Guru Charan Samanta Smarak Grantha' about a meeting of the Syllabus Committee in Ranchi. She was amazed to see that Guru Charan Samanta was not only being sought by Bengali, but the syllabus makers of all the other subjects due to his knowledge of the method of preparing syllabus and the principles of pedagogy.

Census

The censuses after independence were showing reduction in Bengalee population in the state of Bihar particularly in the districts where there wasn't any reason for population to reduce. Bengalee Association raised the issue. They pointed out that unknowingly and sometimes even knowingly, deliberately the language column in the census form was being filled with 'H' instead of 'B'. Guru Charan Samanta explained the mechanism and also the evil intention behind it. At times he argued to the point of quarrel with the census authorities. Sometimes he got printed leaflets, handbills for distribution to arouse Bengalee community and he himself distributed them. The handbills asked the families to demand proper form from the census worker, not to give details in their notebooks and fill up the language column themselves with a

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The governments ...

become a norm already.

2. Citizens should collectively demand mandatory disclosure of the text of legislative debates and questions on assembly websites by all states under the RTI Act, 2005.

3. A constitutional amendment: To fix the minimum number of days assemblies must sit (in days) in a year.

4. Bilingual websites and documents: All government resolutions at the state-level, including assembly websites, should be translated into English and be available along with the vernacular language of the state, to ensure more readability and hence more civic and media engagement with state policies and actions.

5. Involvement of various stakeholders and beneficiaries during the drafting of state laws: Unlike the Centre, where draft bills are often shared by ministries for public comments, the process of conceiving, deliberating and passing of state laws is rather obscure. All states must practice inclusive policy-making.

- Bidyut Pal

[The views expressed in this article are author's own; the Editorial Board of Behar Herald is not responsible for those]

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We and our police

the court. The court will look at the seriousness of the offence, whether you will run away if released on bail, whether you will

threaten witnesses or tamper with the evidence. If the court feels that you will not do any of the above then it will grant you bail.

101. Does that mean I am now free?

No. You will still have to face the trial during which time the court will decide whether you are guilty or innocent.

[Concluded]

Remembering Begum Sufia Kamal



Born: 20 June 1911, Barisa, Bangladesh
Died: 20 November 1999, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Newsdesk – This year, on 20th June, Google had a doodle to the memory of great poet, writer, organizer, feminist and activist, Begum Sufia Kamal from Bangladesh. Sufia Kamal was born to a nawab family in Barisal. Although raised within strict purdah, that denied her of academic education, she was self-educated in Bengali, the ostracized language for the nawabs, with the encouragement of

her mother, brother and a maternal uncle. While stealing into the literary works of Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain, Begum Sara Taifur and Begum Motahera Banu, at the safe haven under the beds of the nawab palace, the young Sufia aspired to be a writer herself.

Sufia became known more as a poet. She received acclamations from both the maestros of Bangla literature Rabindranath Tagore and Kazi Nazrul Islam. In fact, it was the progressive Nazrul, a strong believer of women's emancipation, who, after coming across Sufia's work assisted and encouraged her to write poems regularly for Saugat, a renowned magazine from Kolkata. Sufia Kamal became the first editor of Begum, when this pioneer weekly magazine for Muslim women started its journey in 1947.

Her apprenticeship at social work began in 1925, when she joined Barisal's Matri Mongol society as the only Muslim member. Later, she became a member of Begum Rokeya's Anjumane Khaowatine Islam, a social organisation and was nominated the first Muslim woman member of Indian Women's Federation in 1931. Surviving through the difficult times of 1930s, after her first husband's death, she again committed herself to social cause. During the riots of Kolkata, she conducted a shelter centre at Lady Brabourne College. From leading the Martyrs Day march in February 1952 to the Sanskritik Swadhikar Andolon in 1961, she continued to challenge state-imposed oppression. She was elected as the founding president of the renowned cultural organization Chhayanaat that emerged out of the movement.

Sufia Kamal never became a member of any political party. She, nevertheless, was close to left politics. She supported Soviet Union during the Cold War and was elected as the chairperson of Pak-Soviet Friendship Society in 1966.

During the liberation war, Sufia Kamal stayed in her house at Road-32, Dhanmondi under the watchful eyes of the Pakistani Army. This did not stop her from helping the freedom fighters secretly and sending her two young daughters to the war. Concerns from the international community about her safety, forced the Pakistani administration to air her interview where she appeared only for 90 seconds saying, "I am not dead." She did not answer any other question neither did she show her face. And Sufia Kamal did not heed to any – be it Ayub, Mujib, Ershad, Khaleda or Hasina or any other political figure. She kept her dignity high and silently went on doing what her conscience demanded of her, all through her 88 years of life.

One of her poems is presented here.

That love of yours

I've taken possession of that love of yours that fills the earth's vessel till it overflows, filling my eyes, filling my heart, and filling my two hands.

How unbearable is this joy, that this love is so intense.

With the touch like arrows of its golden rays the inner bud blooms, as quickly as grass.

Illumined in my heart, it brings jewel-inlaid riches; that's why I'm wealthy, my joy will not perish.

With images ever new, this world has gratified me, given as it is to praise, to perfumed blossoms dripping honey.

The diurnal light of sun, at every watch of the night, merging hour by hour with your love's every letter, will set.

Ever-new messages I hear; my heart is overcome - so in love I compose my answering letter.

Warmed from the Sindhu's expanse of river, these clouds upon clouds of gentle moist air ever bring these love letters, then carry them afar.

The eager heart grows devoted as an unmarried girl, so it longs to compose scores upon scores of ever-new messages of love and amours.

The heart fills with joy, grows voluble, so I've gathered hence, from the mortal earth, from the horizon's expanse: impassioned, illumined, that love of yours.

[Translated by Carolyn Wright with Ayesha Kabir]

<https://www.poemhunter.com/poem/that-love-of-yours/#content>

With best compliments from -

Dr. Supriyo Mukherjee

Secretary

Samastipur Branch, Bengalee Association, Bihar

To Prevent 'Climate Apartheid Scenario' Where Rich Escape and Poor Suffer, UN Report Issues Urgent Call for Global Economic Justice

"While people in poverty are responsible for just a fraction of global emissions, they will bear the brunt of climate change, and have the least capacity to protect themselves." **[Published on Tuesday, June 25, 2019 by Common Dreams]**
by Jake Johnson, staff writer

A scathing United Nations report released Tuesday warned that the world is hurtling toward a "climate apartheid scenario" in which the wealthiest members of society will be able to buy their way to safety while hundreds of millions suffer from environmental catastrophe.

"Economic prosperity and environmental sustainability are fully compatible but require decoupling economic well-being and poverty reduction from fossil fuel emissions." —Philip Alston, U.N. special rapporteur

"Perversely, while people in poverty are responsible for just a fraction of global emissions, they will bear the brunt of climate change, and have the least capacity to protect themselves," U.N. special rapporteur Philip Alston, author of the new report, said in a statement.

Even if warming is held to 1.5°C by the end of the century, Alston said, "tens of millions will be impoverished, leading to widespread displacement and hunger."

Alston's 21-page report (pdf), which will be presented to the U.N. human rights council on Friday, predicts that millions of people across the planet could "face malnutrition due to devastating drought" over the next few decades due to the climate crisis, "and many more will have to choose between starvation and migration."

To prevent this nightmare scenario, the report calls for "a fundamental shift in the global economy" aimed at protecting vulnerable populations from climate impacts while dramatically slashing carbon emissions.

"Maintaining the current course is a recipe for economic catastrophe," Alston said in a statement. "Economic prosperity and environmental sustainability are fully compatible but require decoupling economic well-being and poverty reduction from fossil fuel emissions."

"Climate change... could push more than 120 million more people into poverty by 2030 and will have the most severe

impact in poor countries, regions, and the places poor people live and work," Alston added. "We risk a 'climate apartheid' scenario where the wealthy pay to escape overheating, hunger, and conflict while the rest of the world is left to suffer."

The report specifically calls for a "robust social safety net and a well-managed transition to a green economy" and points to growing support for the Green New Deal in the United States and other nations as a positive development.

But there is alarming evidence that many countries are moving in the wrong direction. The report highlights U.S. President Donald Trump's efforts to roll back environmental regulations and Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro's deforestation in the Amazon as two prominent examples.

"Time is running out to limit global warming," the report warns, "and states are failing to meet even their current inadequate commitments."

Alston closes his report with a harsh assessment of U.N. human rights bodies, which he accuses of pushing "forms of incremental managerialism and proceduralism which are entirely disproportionate to the urgency and magnitude of the threat."

"Ticking boxes," the report states, "will not save humanity or the planet from impending disaster."

<https://www.commondreams.org/news/2019/06/25/prevent-climate-apartheid-scenario-where-rich-escape-and-poor-suffer-un-report>

Dharna by Jharkhand Banglabhasha Unnayan Samiti



Newsdesk – Jharkhand Banglabhasha Unnayan Samiti led by its founder president Bengu Thakur organized a dharna on 3rd June 19 at Randhir Verma

Chowk of Dhanbad to protest the act of vandalism happening in Kolkata on 13th May, in which a statue of Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar was razed to ground. As the leadership explained, the dharna was delayed due to Lok Sabha elections.

Kalyan Ghosh, Raghunath Ray, Sushobhan Chakrabarty, Kalyan Bhattacharya, Kalyan Roy, Raju Pramanik, Ajit Sengupta and many others from Jharkhand Banglabhasha Unnayan Samiti were present in the dharna. They condemned that none has been arrested (till the date of the dharna) and demanded installation of another statue of Vidyasagar there. Dharna also condemned the fact that in spite of the announcement of the state government five years back that Bengali would be taught in every school of Jharkhand nothing has happened till date.

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We and our police

We, the common people get scared whenever something happens which require us to go to the police. Their experiences give them reasons to be scared. Even the police department knows about it and they try to be friendly and easily approachable to the people in need. But we need to know about this civil security force as well. Behar Herald is serializing the question and answers in its issues to get the readers informed and also aware of their rights as citizen. The material being published here are available at the website of Maharashtra Police.

(Continued from last issue)

96. Can the police do their jobs of arresting the guilty with so many restrictions?

First of all it is not the job of the police to decide who is guilty or who is not. The police are only to apprehend or catch suspects and accused people. But they cannot behave as if the person is already guilty and they have the right to punish them.

That is a job for the courts. Meanwhile, people in custody must be given every protection from false accusations and mistreatment. That is why the "restrictions" are there. Actually they are not restrictions at all, but just procedures designed to make sure that everyone has a fair chance before the courts.

97. But aren't there too many rights for the accused person? What about the victims?

A lot of people think that no one is looking after the victim. But actually the whole might of the state is behind the victim. It is on behalf of victims that the state goes about looking for the criminal. It is on behalf of the victims that the state appoints a prosecutor to argue before the court. It is on behalf of the victim that the state punishes the guilty. But the accused stands alone. He may not be guilty at all. So to balance the power of the state against one individual who has to defend himself, the law has created safeguards and given facilities like free legal aid to those who cannot afford it.

98. Can I get bail from the police?

It depends. If you have been arrested for a bailable offence then you can get bail from the police. But if you are arrested for a non-bailable offence then the police cannot release you on bail.

99. Is it important to know what is a "bailable" and "non-bailable" offence?

Yes. Bailable offences are less serious offences in which bail is a right. In such cases you must get bail immediately from the police. Non-bailable offences are serious offences where bail is a privilege and only the courts can grant it.

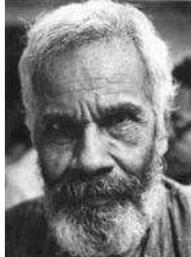
100. Will I never get bail if I am accused of a non-bailable offence?

No, not necessarily. You can get bail even for non-bailable offences. You have to make an application for bail before

Continued on page - 3

Remembering 'Baba'

Great Hindi poet
Nagarjun



30 June 1911 – 5 Nov. 1998

Faith in me stands vindicated

(Excerpts)

With Kaartika setting in

The milky white buds of Agahani paddy plants

Rich laden with dewdrops of the closing night...

The soft touch of the rising Sun's beams

Will make them eloquent in beauty.

I'm on my stroll towards the bank of river Parmaan

Moving on and on by the sides of paddy fields.

I've returned to my days of childhood

After decades, the morning Sun of autumn

Would accord me a reception!

And would shine for a few moments or so

On the drut-vilambit waves of the river Parmaan.

And my unencumbered pair of feet

Shall indulge in fun and frolic across the sandy banks.

They will leave traces of shallow gray footprints

And I would begin to laugh within myself

As I would come down immediately into muddy wetland

The signs of heavy foots of animals already beckon me.

And my head would bow down in memories of milk-

blessed buffalos...

Lo, somewhere after, in the midst of sheesham trees

Has appeared the graceful Neelkantha.

Will it move away or rest nearby?

Just behind the twig of a young Pakar tree?

Or on the aged Peepal tree's grotesque fringe

Or will it soar on and on,

Till it reaches the front-yard of a temple around

Vishnupur

Only to disappear in the midst of thick-leaved twigs of the

Moilishree tree

And rest there!

Translated by Manoj Kumar Jha

Courtesy: <http://pratilipi.in/faith-in-me-stands-vindicated-nagarjuna/>

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