

Founder of Calcutta Youth Choir passes away

Ruma Guha Thakurata passed away on 3rd June at the age of 85. She was suffering from ailments of age. As known through media reports, few days back she was brought from her earlier husband Kishore Kumar's house in Mumbai, where she lived with her son Amit Kumar, to her own paternal house in Kolkata.

Ruma Guha Thakurata was well-known actress and singer. She acted in 44 films, which included some Hindi and two English films as well. She also did playback singing in 11 films. But her outstanding contribution to Bengali music was founding of **Calcutta Youth Choir** in 1958 (as Wikipedia mentions, 'with Salil Choudhury and Satyajit Roy').

She was the daughter of Satyen Ghosh (Monty Ghosh) and her mother was singer Sati Devi. Her mother was a trained vocalist. However, Ruma began her girlhood as a dancer. Later she went to Almora Academy of Uday Shankar at Lahore to start her career as a dancer. She also started her early training in music in a school named Swarabitan in Kolkata established by her parents. In the later years she took training under Abdul Rehman Khan of Patiala gharana.

She was married to Kishore Kumar in 1951 and had a son Amit Kumar by this marriage. The couple got divorced in 1958 and she married Arup Guha Thakurata in 1960. The couple had two children.

Calcutta Youth Choir is known for its performance of folk and mass songs. The songs performed by choir under the direction of widely included songs from classic



21.11.1934 – 03.06.2019

individual genres of Rabindra Sangeet, Nazrulgiti, Dwijendragiti or songs of Atul Prasad Sen and Rajanikanta Sen, as also from modern lyricists, particularly associated with IPTA, including Bhupen Hazarika or Prem Dhawan and others.

In the year, July, 1974 20-member folk song and dance troupe of Calcutta Youth Choir led by Ruma Guha Thakurata, won the first prize in the Copenhagen Youth Festival. The choir also took part in the 25th anniversary of Independence Day of India in Delhi. Opening song by Calcutta Youth Choir welcomed Nelson Mandela in India in 1990 and ushered in the ceremony to greet Amartya Sen after he received Nobel prize in the year 1998. More than 5000 shows have been performed by the choir led by her. There are more than 300 members in the choir involved in various activities like singing, dancing, playing musical instruments, management, etc. On December 1994, Calcutta Youth Choir celebrated its 36th anniversary to celebrate 50 years of Ruma Guha Thakurata's association with music, dance and cinema where sitting chief minister of West Bengal Jyoti Basu, Bijoya Ray (wife of Late Satyajit Ray), Buddhadeb Bhattacharya, singer, Amit Kumar and many others were present.

Political donations by big business

Newsdesk - The Election Commission of India has made publication of details of donations above Rs. 20,000.00 made to political parties by companies individually or through registered trusts. The Commission keeps records of such contributions updated annually.

Truthful and transparent submissions by companies and political parties is one of the most important checks on harmful collusive behaviour by corporates and political parties. But that check does not appear to be working. Rather, the collusive behaviour have taken dangerous proportions for our democracy.

Recently, there was an article by Divya Guha, an independent Kolkata based journalist, published in the online news portal The Wire on 21.4.19. She writes:

"Corporate donations are in effect indistinguishable from bribes – security plans for future projects. The murky dividends may already be paying off as deals are signed ahead of elections.

"Donors' stocks get 'buy' signals on future gains by market analysts; and they enter the special league of politically-connected firms, offsetting any short-term liquidity crunch experienced by them.

"Indiabulls Housing Finance Ltd, with business tycoon Laxmi Narayan Mittal in its board of directors, put Rs 40 crore in the campaign war chest in 2014-15 through Satya Electoral Trust, a precursor of Prudent Electoral Fund.

"to play the multi-billion-worth Indian insurance market. The non-banking finance company is now eyeing a merger with Lakshmi Vilas Bank, which is

riddled with a large and hopelessly unredeemed housing debt portfolio like many public sector lenders. Concurrently, Indiabulls has launched a private equity (PE) fund to snap up bargains in the Indian housing market through bad bank debt portfolios. The Wire reported such a trend among PE funds.

"Another major donor, DLF Ltd shelled out Rs 45 crore in 2014-15 to the Satya Electoral Trust. It then gave Rs 52 crore in 2015-16 and another Rs 52 crore in 2017-18. ...DLF recently formed a joint venture with US-based property investment firm Hines for building a commercial real estate project in Gurgaon.... It will come up on 11.76 acres of land near the business district, CyberCity in Gurgaon, Haryana.

"Telecoms operator Bharti Airtel and Bharti Infratel pitched Rs 22 crore in 2016-17 and Rs 23 crore in 2017-18. It was this April given a 10-year licence to sell inflight and maritime broadband, after it lost mobile phone market share to competitor Reliance Jio.

"The Aditya Birla Group chipped in to three national parties from the AB General Electoral Trust.... The group's flagship firm, the miner Grasim Industries is in a Rs 5,872 crore dividend distribution tax dispute with the revenue office but was awarded an interim stay on payment this March, and ensured status quo.

"Gujarat-based sister firms Torrent Pharma and Torrent Power fronted Rs 30 crores in 2017-18 and Rs 31 crore in 2016-17 to Prudent Electoral Trust.... Torrent Pharma recently bought 28,000 sq yards of land for Rs. 350 crore in Hebatpur, Ahmedabad at Rs. 1.2 lakh per sq. yard. It also won a license for distributing electricity to Dholera

Special Investment Region (DSIR), a greenfield industrial city, 100 km from Ahmedabad last August.

"Haldia Energy, bought from government-held utilities firm CESC by the RP Sanjiv Goenka Group, dished out Rs 6 crore, and through a subsidiary, Crescent Power, a sum of Rs 3.5 crore (to Prudent) in 2016-17."

Appears that a majority of donors are 'builders', or sectors where government regulation is fierce, such as the financial services, telecommunications, etc. It is a fact. They are also most influential donors in state assembly elections as well.

But there are other donors as well. Big corporate and foreign donors, whose numbers are smaller, but they are able to get major policy-tweaks and circumventions from the Union government.

As the same article begin with the lines:

"It has come to light that according to its profit and loss statement for the quarter ended March 2019, Tata Consultancy Services donated Rs 220 crore to an unnamed beneficiary.

"This makes the infotech consultant the single largest political donor.

"TCS has outdone Prudent Electoral Trust, which supplied a total of Rs 164.30 crore to political parties in FY2017-18...."

In the pages of Behar Herald, the dangers inherent in the secrecy clause of Electoral Bonds, in which the selling Banks are not obliged to inform the names of the purchasers to any authority, have already been dealt with.

Through an earlier article we come to know that a letter was sent by the then director (election expenditure) of Election

Continued on Page-2

NEWS & COMMENT

Theft of rivers

In fact, the sourced news was about one river. But the story is universal. A story was there on 5.6.19 in the portal of sanmarglive.com reported by Subhash Kashyap from Supaul that a river named Gajna is being 'stolen', bit by bit of its bed and the government remains unconcerned. The story says that before the construction of Kosi barrage number of streams of rivers fed and distributed the water of Kosi, which if managed properly could also manage the flood level of Kosi. Discussion on the possibility of that or rethinking about the barrage in some other way apart, more interesting is the names of the rivers the story mentions. Gajna, Gainda Sursar, Khairdaha Dhemura, Parmane, Tilawe, Thalha, Tilyuga, Chilauni ... all of them are either drying or being stolen by the land mafia.

It is the story everywhere. Is there any state-level record of all the small rivers, rivulets, tributaries and distributaries of big glacier-

fed rivers which were in existence in the districts of Bihar at the time of independence? Has there been any effort to undertake researches based on available literature, (gazetteers) and lore, to find out the track of vanishing rivers and think the ways to keep them alive? Natural shallow water reserves, swamps etc. have already been stolen by urbanization. Rivers are also being stolen. There is no proper record of their names and tracks of their beds for the posterity to know!

Women on engines

Applications to fill up vacancies for 27,795 assistant loco pilots (ALP) posts and 36,576 technician jobs in Indian Railways have been advertised. For which a total of 4.75 lakh women have applied. Number of men applicants are 42.82 lakhs. After Supreme court decision, this time 98 transgender persons have also applied for loco pilot and technician jobs. And these are not the initial number of applicants. They have already completed one stage of the recruitment process.

Encouraging are the number of women competing to enter the traditionally male domain of tough jobs of loco pilots and various machine operators.

As Arun Kumar Das, a senior journalist reported, published in The Wire:

"The maximum number from female applicants are from Bihar (72,817) followed by Uttar Pradesh (67,831), Andhra Pradesh (47,358), Maharashtra (43,833), Tamil Nadu (39,139), Madhya Pradesh (32,595), Kerala (22,799), West Bengal (21,625) and Rajasthan (21,340).

"While there are only 1,965 female candidates from Punjab, 14,416 have come forward from Haryana, 13,944 girls are from Odisha and 19,117 from Telangana. Jharkhand is also not lagging behind, as there are 17,513 women from this state who have applied.

"There are 2,393 women candidates from Delhi who have shown interest in becoming train drivers and technicians. Lakshadweep has a lone woman candidate, while four women from

Mizoram, 22 from Manipur, 24 from Meghalaya and 11 from Nagaland are in the race."

Loving evolution

Evolution of life is a complex and ongoing process. Its new branches go on growing in the dark and man discovers those to get better glimpse of the working of the tree itself and of the roots of his own physiological complexities. These again help to strengthen our future on earth.

Indian zoologists and botanists are also part of that world scientific endeavor. And that's why in the midst of gloomy pictures of an earth becoming unlivable due to blind human greed narcotized by the rule of capital, we feel proud that 224 new species of plants and 372 animal species were discovered in India last year.

A report by Shiv Sahay Singh published in The Hindu on 7th June says, "Scientists and taxonomists have documented 596 new species of flora and fauna from India in the year 2018. The details of the discoveries were made public on Thursday by

the Botanical Survey of India (BSI) and the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) in the publications Plant Discoveries 2018 and Animal Discoveries 2018.

Of the 596 species, 372 come under fauna (311 invertebrates and 61 vertebrates). The newly identified 224 plant species include seed plants, pteridophytes, bryophytes, fungi and lichen.

About 31% of the plant species were discovered in the Himalayas. In the case of animals, the Western Ghats remained a biological hotspot from where about 50% of the species were found."

Report also quotes Kailash Chandra, director of Zoological Survey of India saying that updated list of animal species in India has risen to 1,01,681 which is about 6.49% of all the species in the world and S.S. Dash, head of the publication of Botanical Survey of India saying that the number of plant species in the country has been updated to 49,441 which is 11.5% of all flora in the world. The news makes us feel rich.

Choice of Humanism as religion

Bethune College, the first ever women's college to be established in Asia, will now let UG and PG applicants choose 'manavdharma' as their religion in their form. This news has appeared in the media recently. As Shreesh Ghosh reported in Edex Live on 30th May, "The online application for the current academic year includes an option to choose 'Humanism' as your religion among others that you already see in any other application such as Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism and Jainism."

It's a great opportunity for the students to choose their faith. It will also be a shake-up for the somewhat timid students while filling up the forms.

The report further explains, "So, what does that mean for the students who are filling in the applications? The Oxford Dictionary defines Humanism as an outlook or system of thought attaching prime importance to human rather than divine or supernatural matters. Humanist beliefs stress the potential value and goodness of human beings, emphasise common human needs, and seek solely rational ways of solving human problems. A student can choose to be humanitarian if they wish to and they do not necessarily have to choose the religion they were born into."

The report quotes Admissions Convener of Bethune College, Kolkata and Physics Professor Dr Kamal Kanti Som saying that over the years they have observed that a lot of students have opted to choose no religion while filling their forms. Maybe this was the reason why admissions committee and other officials decided to bring in this option. "However", Dr. Som added, "we have to send the entire student registration data to Calcutta University after all the applications have come in. We do not yet know if they will accept this change. We will have to wait and see or we might be required to put the students into the already existing ones."

We will also be waiting.

Continued from Page-1

Political donations ...

Commission of India Vikram Batra to the secretary of the legislative department of the Ministry of Law and Justice on May 26, 2017.

In the letter, the poll panel had noted how the amendments to the three laws (Income Tax Act, the Representation of the People Act, 1951 and the Companies Act, 2013) were retrograde as far as transparency of donations was concerned, how they would open the possibility of shell companies being set up only for the purpose of making political donations and cautioned that allowing firms to not show political contributions in its profit and loss statement will compromise transparency. [https://thewire.in/politics/centre-overlooked-ecs-concerns-on-changes-to-laws-on-political-funding]

The letter noted: "it is evident from the amendment which has been made that any donation received by a political party through an electoral bond has been taken out of the ambit of reporting under the Contribution Report as prescribed under Section 29C of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 and therefore this is a retrograde step as far as transparency of donations is

concerned and this proviso needs to be withdrawn."

Recently, in a case challenging the legal validity of such type of Electoral Bonds and constitutional validity of the amendments brought in the laws as mentioned above, being heard by Supreme Court, the Election Commission has also filed its affidavit in March 2019. In the affidavit it has strongly reiterated its opposition to the amendments.

And in the midst of all these we faced a Lok Sabha elections costing ...?

Business Standard publishes a Bloomberg report on 4th June 2019:

"Elections in the world's biggest democracy have become the most expensive too."

"Spending by political parties and candidates to woo 900 million voters in the just concluded polls cost them nearly Rs 60,000 crore (\$8.7 billion), more than double of 2014 polls, according to the New Delhi-based Centre for Media Studies. The report, based on field studies, analysis and estimation, found that they spent Rs 700 per voter or nearly Rs 100 crore in each parliamentary constituency."

Bengalee refugees settled in Panna, Madhya Pradesh

Newsdesk – Dainik Bhaskar reported on 31st May, 2019 from Panna, MP that the people of Bengalee community settled in Panna, suffering pains of being uprooted and destabilized, are still forced to struggle for their rights. The report says that the Bengalee people uprooted from their home and hearth were settled in Panna by the government in the years 1965, 1969, 1970 and 1982 firstly in refugee camps. Then the government of India gave these Bengalee refugees agricultural land for cultivation and housing. Firstly, it was a lease for 10-20 years. Then the lease was changed to ownership in most of the cases in the land record register or the Khasra. In the villages of Hirguwan, Babupur, Urki, Hatapur, Damchua names of 295 out of 351 Bengalee families

were recorded in the register. Names of the rest, more than 50 families are still not recorded. For 40 to 50 years they are farming in the land tracts given to them but all the benefits from the government administration are being denied to them.

The news in the Bhaskar Digital Desk says that the land given to the Bengalee families was totally barren. Labour and sweat of those families made the land arable and green. Now, since they do not have their names recorded and do not have the Patta, neither they get Kisan Credit Card nor they get seeds and fertilizer from the Society. For the last 20-25 years they are submitting their applications and complaints to all the authorities including Tehsildar and Collector but with no result till now.

In Memoriam Girish Karnad

Jnanpeeth awardee and
Padma Bhushan

"Karnad was perhaps India's most pre-eminent playwright. He was certainly something of a prodigy. It is a truism that Mohan Rakesh, Badal Sircar, Vijay Tendulkar and Karnad form the quartet that shaped India's post-independence theatrical canon. Karnad was the youngest by a decade. Rakesh's first great play, Ashadh Ka Ek Din, appeared in 1958, Sircar's Ebong Indrajit in 1962, and Tendulkar's Shantata! Court Chalu Aahe in 1967. Karnad's Yayati dates to 1961, when he was a mere lad of 22. Generally, playwrights take a little longer to mature as compared to other writers. Good dramatic writing is almost impossible to achieve without the experience of working in, or writing for, a real, active theatre. Having a director take your text apart and reassemble it, hearing actors speak your lines, observing scenographers imagine the setting, having a live audience respond to your text, all teach you as much, if not more, about playwriting as watching or reading plays.

"That he wrote Yayati without virtually any previous theatre experience is remarkable enough, but that he wrote it in Kannada makes it doubly remarkable. As Karnad recalled, when he set sail on a Rhodes Scholarship to England, he had fancied himself a poet who had 'trained myself to write in English, in preparation for the conquest of the West'. Karnad knew at least five languages — Konkani, Kannada, Marathi, Hindi and English — but in a sense it did take some 'unlearning' for him to re-discover the language of his

Kishanganj branch of Bengalee Association, Bihar reorganized



Newsdesk – A meeting of Bengalee community was held at Kishanganj Club in Ruidhasa, Kishanganj on 2nd June 2019. The community was enthused as by the end of the meeting in the evening they reorganised Kishanganj branch of Bengalee Association, Bihar and also elected a committee to run it.

The campaign to reorganize the branch was going on for last few months. Now the Bengalee community of Kishanganj is happy that problems rising now and then, particularly related to their community will be taken care of by the newly elected leadership.

As Dainik Jagaran reported on 4th June 2019 from Kishanganj, Ashish Kumar Ghosh was elected president of the committee, while Rabishankar Majumdar, Jugalchandra Roy, Pradip Kumar and Bishwajeet were elected vice presidents. Shubhojit Shekhar and Chittaranjan Sharma were



19 May 1938 - 10 June 2019

childhood.

"But clearly the ambition to conquer the West never quite left him — he not only translated his own plays into English, he also wrote original plays in English and translated them into Kannada.

"And yet, for most of his playwriting career, Kannada purists scoffed at Karnad's writing, considering it, and the author, too Anglicised. It was only when he wrote Talé-Danda, about the medieval poet revolutionary Basavanna, in a north Karnataka dialect, that finally the murmurs went down.

"Karnad's playwriting oeuvre is so substantial and varied, both in form and content, that it is impossible to reduce it to neat generalisations. For instance, he is generally thought of as someone who worked with material drawn from mythology and folklore, as well as history, initially, and only turned to an entirely different style with contemporary urban settings in his late work. However, he wrote Anju Mallige, set in England and about an incestuous relationship between a brother and sister, in an entirely naturalistic style, early in his career."

– Sudhanva Deshpande

[Extracted from an article 'Playwright against the right', Published in The Hindu on 12.6.19]

[Sudhanva Deshpande is an actor and director with Jana Natya Manch, Delhi, and an editor with LeftWord Books]

Newsdesk – A meeting of Bengalee community was held at Kishanganj Club in Ruidhasa, Kishanganj on 2nd June 2019. The community was enthused as by the end of the meeting in the evening they reorganised Kishanganj branch of Bengalee Association, Bihar and also elected a committee to run it.

The campaign to reorganize the branch was going on for last few months. Now the Bengalee community of Kishanganj is happy that problems rising now and then, particularly related to their community will be taken care of by the newly elected leadership.

Newsdesk – A meeting of Bengalee community was held at Kishanganj Club in Ruidhasa, Kishanganj on 2nd June 2019. The community was enthused as by the end of the meeting in the evening they reorganised Kishanganj branch of Bengalee Association, Bihar and also elected a committee to run it. The campaign to reorganize the branch was going on for last few months. Now the Bengalee community of Kishanganj is happy that problems rising now and then, particularly related to their community will be taken care of by the newly elected leadership. As Dainik Jagaran reported on 4th June 2019 from Kishanganj, Ashish Kumar Ghosh was elected president of the committee, while Rabishankar Majumdar, Jugalchandra Roy, Pradip Kumar and Bishwajeet were elected vice presidents. Shubhojit Shekhar and Chittaranjan Sharma were elected secretary and treasurer respectively. Ratna Ghosh, Gopal Dey and Dipankar Karmakar were elected asst. secretaries. Prasenjit Sarkar, Subhashis Samajdar, Pabitra Biswas and Priyaranjan Sharma were elected joint secretaries. Observers from the Central Committee of the Association were Prashanta Chakrabarty, Ajay Sanyal, Tarashankar Chatterji and Amit Kumar Bhattacharya. Elections were held unanimously. Shambhunath Mitra, Anindya Sundar Dutta, Hari Prasad Singh, Dipak Kumar Sah, Prahlad Sarkar, Sudipta Das, Ashutosh Sarkar, Biswajeet Majumdar, Nilesh Chandra Ghosh and Arnab Lahiri and many others were present in the meeting. The meeting was seriously concerned that with changing times the Bengalee community is on the verge of losing their culture and heritage. This in spite of the fact that Bengalees have been accorded the status of linguistic minority in the state. The meeting also expressed their faith that the Association along with its newly formed branch will help the community to save its language and heritage.

Jharkhand Bengalee Association decides to launch movement

Newsdesk – The Central Committee of Jharkhand Bengalee Association met at Ranchi on 29th May. The meeting was presided by its president Bidroha Kumar Mitra. As reported by Prabhat Khabar, Ranchi edition, dated 30th May, members expressed their anguish on the occasion, that though Bengali has been given the status of second official language in the state of Jharkhand it is still a victim of neglect by the government of the state. Meeting was attended by Prem Sundar Karmakar, Bimal Bhushan Guha, Subhash Saha, Pradip Majumdar, Aditya Mandal, Arun Bikash Chakraborty, Asim Sarkar, Jyotirmoy Choudhury, Raja Sengupta, Bablu Sen, Tapan Roy, Bikas Mitra, Sanjay Poddar and others. The meeting unanimously decided to go for movement on the following demands:

1. Bengali text books must reach regularly to the Bengalee students studying in schools;
2. Appointment of Bengali teachers for primary level to higher classes must be made regularly;
3. Arrangements must be there in all the government and non-government schools to make Bengali a compulsory language-subject for the Bengalee students;
4. The names of government buildings should be written in Bengali as well, along with other languages;
5. The properties of Tagore Hill at Morhabadi, Ranchi, of Nandan Kanan at Karmatar, Jamtara and of the residence of Jagdish Chandra Bose at Giridih be declared Heritages;
6. Ensure regular availability of funds for Bengali Academy;
7. Take immediate steps to renovate Bengalee Dharmashala of Deoghar on a priority basis.

Continued from Page-3

We and our police

should prepare such a panel for all Tehsils and Districts as well.

IX. Copies of all the documents including the memo of arrest, referred to above, should be sent to the Magistrate for his record.

X. The arrestee may be permitted to meet his lawyer during interrogation, though not throughout the interrogation.

XI. A police control room should be provided at all district and State headquarters where information regarding the arrest and the place of custody of the arrestee shall be communicated by the officer causing the arrest, within 12 hours of effecting the arrest and at the police control room it should be displayed on a conspicuous notice board.

Behar Herald Bank A/c details :-
BENGALEE ASSOCIATION
BIHAR-UNIT : BEHAR HERALD
A/c No. - 35819082022
IFSC : SBIN0000152
SBI, Patna Main Branch

Co-operate to continue publication of this New Series of Behar Herald
Kindly become :-
Advisor-cum-Patron-cum-Life Member - Rs. 10,000/-
Patron-cum-Life Member - Rs. 5,000/-
Life Member - Rs. 1,500/-
Annual Member - Rs. 150/-

Guru Charan Samanta

- Bidyut Pal

(Continued from last issue)

At Soura Kutir, Kadamkuan

Eminent Bengalee social activists were keeping close touch with this energetic brilliant young man. Dr. Ajit Kumar Sen, (popularly known as A. K. Sen) a highly qualified and learned physician was a member of the Communist Party of India, a man of

the people till death and a strong patron of all cultural and sport activities of the youth. Three times he was the Member of the Legislative Assembly from Patna. Naturally he knew this dedicated worker. Secondly, Dr. Sharadindu Mohan Ghoshal, another learned and most popular physician at Patna, (more known as 'Pagla Dactor'), the indomitable spirit behind cultural activities of Bengalees here came to know him.

He was also acquainted with Gopal Haldar, famed novelist and cultural historian, who used to come and stay at Patna quite frequently as his wife Aruna Haldar was a teacher of Philosophy at Patna Women's College. Gopal Haldar's elder brother Rangin Haldar was also at Patna – he was a teacher of psychology in B. N. College.

But best of all he liked Dipendra Nath Sircar (Mantuda), who was having his Press Sulekha Printing Works just where the road of Guru Charan's residence met the main road near Kadamkuan bazar. Behar Herald was being printed in that press. Whenever Guru Charan found time he went to the press to gossip with Mantuda. Mantuda or Dipendra Nath Sircar was erstwhile private secretary of P. R. Das (Prafulla Ranjan Das, Barrister and brother of Deshbandhu Chitta Ranjan Das, who founded Bengalee Association, Bihar in 1938).

Some more peoples were there, Such as Prabhu Mukherjee (Prabhuda), a kind hearted businessman and President of Bihar Chamber of Commerce for some time and ardent patron of activities of the Bengalees. These names somehow complete the core of those cultural minds who also felt the urge to organize bengalees of Bihar to fight in defense of their linguistic and educational rights enshrined in the Indian Constitution, yet they faced erosion by a rising evil trend of politics in the state and at the centre. For that they were also having a platform at hand, the historic Bengalee Association, Bihar which was to be revived.

Slowly the fighter political bent of young Guru Charan's mind impelled him to show more interest in organizing the Bengalee people for their linguistic, educational and demographic causes. The persons, elders named above, also found in him a widely informed, ardent organizer.

With Guru Charan's help and commitments to work for the organisation if it is revived, they revived Bengalee Association, Bihar. Guru Charan undertook the task of making extensive tours and re-activating more than hundred branches of the Association in the state (which included present Jharkhand as well). He was also included as a second man in the Editorial Board of a literary quarterly of the Association, 'Sanchita'. First editors of Sanchita were, Dipendra Nath Sircar, Guru Charan Samanta, Sanjib Ghosh, Bhagoban Prasad Majumdar and Shishir Basu. Though avowedly a literary journal, in the very first issue it editorially declared that it is not just another literary magazine, it appeals to the Bengalees in Bihar to organize as a linguistic community for their linguistic and educational rights on a non-political basis and with a spirit of co-ordination with other communities.

Bengalee Association, Bihar

To know Guru Charan Samanta one will have to know something about Bengalee Association, Bihar. This organisation was formed in 1938. As a write-up by Bhakat Prasad Majumdar (renowned professor of history in Patna University) and Guru Charan Samanta himself, published in 1998, in the 60th year celebration souvenir of the Association quotes first secretary of the Association Shailendra Nath Dutta saying in his speech during 1st Annual GB held on 8th April 1939:

"The problems of the Bengalees in the Province are not of recent origin. Ever since the separation of Bihar from Bengal, it became more and more acute, specially since 1918 when the system of domicile certificate was introduced. The matter came to a head when the Congress assumed the reins of the Government in Bihar in 1937. The Bengalees were denied their fundamental rights regarding service, education and commerce, the lofty ideal of the Congress notwithstanding. The air was thick with reports of hardship and injustice inflicted not only on the Bengalees from the neighbouring

Provinces, who had settled here, but also on the Bengali-speaking autochthons of the Province. Despite the fact that it was not they who had come to the Province but the Province had come to them. The only possible course for us to meet the situation was to form an organization for the purpose of protecting our rights and privileges.

"A representative meeting of the Bengalees of Bihar was accordingly convened by our President. In response to his call, an inaugural meeting of the Bengalees leaders of almost all the important stations in the Province was held on the 12th February, 1938 at the Anglo-Sanskrit School Hall at Patna and the Association was formed." (Annual Proceedings Book 1938-1947)

So, this was the reason to form Bengalee Association, Bihar of which the first president was Prafulla Ranjan Das, Barrister, who was fighting the case against draconian rule of Domicile Certificate in the Imperial court. The Association was registered on 7th April 1938. In the year 1974 a translation for the english name 'Bihar Bangali Samiti' was provided. It contained in its emblem two words – 'Samhati' (unity) and 'Samanvay' (co-ordination); Unity of Bengali speaking people and co-ordination with other linguistic communities.

As a parenthesis it may be added here that ownership and publication rights of Behar Herald, one of the first English weeklies published in India and definitely first from Bihar (published by Guru Prasad Sen on 2nd March 1875), was handed over to this newly-formed Bengalee Association, Bihar by the then owner of the weekly Raibahadur Mihir Nath Roy. Since then it was published as the organ of the Association. On 21.12.1974 it was converted as a platform and voice of the minorities. Tag line of Behar Herald is 'Secularism and democracy is our motto'.



Speaking in a seminar on 'Role of Bengalees in the development of Bihar', held by Bengalee Association, Bihar on the occasion of Golden Jubilee of independence of India, Pic. Unknown (Received from Purnendu Mukherjee)

Continued from Page-4 We and our police

register.

II. That the police officer carrying out the arrest shall prepare a memo of arrest at the time of arrest and such memo shall be attested by at least one witness, who may be either a member of the family of the arrestee or a respectable person of the locality from where the arrest is made. It shall also be counter signed by the arrestee and shall contain the time and date of arrest.

III. A person who has been arrested or detained and is being held in custody in a police station or interrogation centre or other lock up, shall be entitled to have one friend or relative or other person known to him or having interest in his welfare being informed, as soon as practicable, that he has been arrested and is being detained at the particular place, unless the attesting witness of the memo of arrest is himself such a friend or a relative of the arrestee.

IV. The time, place of arrest and venue of custody of an arrestee must be notified by the police where the next friend or relative of the arrestee lives outside the district or town through the Legal Aids Organization in the District and the police station of the area concerned telegraphically within a period of 8 to 12 hours after the arrest.

V. The person arrested must be made aware of his right to have someone informed of his arrest or detention as soon as he is put under arrest or is detained.

VI. An entry must be made in the diary at the place of detention regarding the arrest of the person which shall also disclosed the name of the next friend of the person who has been informed of the arrest and the names and particulars of the police officials in whose custody the arrestee is.

VII. The arrestee should, where he so requests, be also examined at the time of his arrest and major and minor injuries, if any present on his/her body, must be recorded at that time. The Inspector Memo must be signed both by the arrestee and the police officer effecting the arrest and its copy provided to the arrestee.

VIII. The arrestee should be subjected to medical examination by the trained doctor every 48 hours during his detention. In custody by a doctor on the panel of approved doctor appointed by Director, Health Services of the concerned State or Union Territory, Director, Health Services

From the Media

The shaming one experiences for speaking one's vernacular is established (and propagated) by schools and society and peers

A Braj-bhasha speaker breaks the myth of Hindi belt

- SURAJ P SINGH

When one fine day a Union minister rises to say: "It is our misfortune that we give too much importance to English medium," and that we should learn, "the rashtra bhasha Hindi as most people in the country speak this language," he says that with complete ignorance of the politics of the Hindi belt that he blindly used to win that chair, and also of how this identity of the Hindi-speaking majority was created and is nurtured.

The only reason we speak Hindi in the North is because it was developmentally coerced down our throats. We never loved it or thumped our chests while speaking it. We cribbed about it, the same way some of the people now crib about English, that how it is being forced on you, or how speaking it is erroneously considered a sign of refinement or education, and how it must be stopped.

That is exactly what was done and is still being done in all the villages and towns of the so-called Hindi belt.

I have grown up in Mathura, and have lived in Gajipur, Bareilly, Chandigarh, Ganganagar and nowhere have I spoken what you might call Hindi; until I and others like me were reprimanded and caned regularly in our schools for speaking our mother tongue, our matri-bhasha.

It continued until we started speaking Hindi with such fluency and clarity that anyone meeting us for the first time could immediately recognise that we belong to the Hindi belt. But in reality we never actually did.

My mother tongue is Braj bhasha, the same tongue Meera sang in and the disciples of Kabir and Rahim wrote down their couplets in. It's the same language Krishna grew up speaking or Khuro fell in love with.

It has got its own culture, its own music, art and literature. I grew up in the Braj region, and I spoke Braj and so did my family and my relatives and my friends and everyone I knew around. I didn't speak Hindi.

When I came to school, that was a big problem. Speaking any regional language, be it Braj, Khadi Boli, Nepali or Bhojpuri, is considered a sign of illiteracy and lack of refinement in modern India.

In the small-town schools, we went to study in, we were the uncultured lot who came from uneducated homes; we were desperately waiting to be groomed. The first part of grooming was to erase the touch of our own languages from our baby tongues.

In a similar way, even today many a language is dying in our small towns under the influence of Hindi. Every day the number of people who speak the diaspora of languages which are the inherent tongues of North India are shrinking, because unlike as for Tamil and Odiya, nobody fought for them.

The shaming one experiences in this country for speaking one's vernacular is not only established (and propagated) by schools and the society, but is also viciously thrown in by peer groups.

When I, a young boy in my first and second standard, would utter words like "bussat" (for shirt), "choon" (for flour), "piyau" (for water stations) – which were quintessentially vernacular, my friends would look down at me as if I came from an obscure tribe that they couldn't recognise.

That shaming is then imbibed by the kids leading to a lifelong aversion of talking in the vernacular, as if as it will break away the sheen of their class. Hindi in the rural and small towns was the modern Sanskrit, the sign of intelligentsia and elitism. The same space as we moved to larger towns and cities was replaced by English.

Hindi zealots fight that Hindi is a combination of all these regional languages. That it's the mother of all these dialects, that Braj-bhasha is just another form of Hindi, and that's how it binds us all. Sorry but, no!

My language is Braj, and if I start speaking Braj the way it's spoken back home you will not understand a single iota of the whole conversation. Similarly, if a girl from Haryana starts speaking in any of the multiple dialects of her state, the only thing you'll say in reply is "kya (what)?" Then tell me, what is this Hindi Belt or the Hindi Heartland that we repeatedly refer to?

Even if all these vernaculars use the same grammatical rules, it doesn't turn the area into one homogenous language group. You might call it an ethnic group, but that would only go on to show how hollow this Hindi fanaticism is. And if you dare call all these languages "Hindi", then what actually is Hindi?

Also, why in censuses I, a Braj-Bhasha speaker, am considered a native speaker of Hindi even though it is a second language to me? While people speaking Tamil or Malayalam are not counted as the native speakers of that language.

Hindi is not our national language or even a state language. It's just a good political language and that's how it has always been used, initially to bind people in a movement, later to morph a large chunk of a votebank. The same way a religious identity of Hinduism is being created around a religion which is actually a loose segregation of sects, and for some a chamber of horrors.

Even the fact that 41 per cent of the population speaks Hindi as per the 2001 Census is a mass illusion created by clubbing all the numerous dialects, all of which are very much distinct from each other.

That's why there's no Hindi Belt. There is no one string going through all the hearts of North Indians and tying them in one lovely community of Hindi speakers. We are not Hindi. Digest that. Take your time.

Published on: 10-07-2017

Courtesy: https://www.dailyo.in/voices/imposition-of-hindi-belt-politics-regional-languages-braj-urdu-malayalam-english/story/1/18271.html?fbclid=IwAR3XRqzN0ucKtI-Bb8DA8fDDY_PSCfLFQ4jqlsXva65iQLYU5n25SCx8l

With best compliments from -

Dr. Supriyo Mukherjee

Secretary

Samastipur Branch, Bengalee Association, Bihar

Continued on Page-2

Can the Scheduled Tribes of Jharkhand be called 'Peasants'?

- Professor B. B. Mandal

(Continued from last issue)

With the establishment of British Rule in India, the process of interaction with higher culture was pronounced. The non-tribal in large numbers penetrated in the tribal villages to earn a fortune in money lending and trade. Later on, the missionaries came there with the purpose of propagating their religious persuasions. The influx of non-tribals brought about change in the life of the tribal population. It transformed the uni-ethnic villages into multi-ethnic/ caste communities. It opened up new avenues of exploitation and asymmetrical power relations.

The non-tribals with their usurious money lending and trade brought the innocent tribals into their subjugation. They usurped tribal land for non-payment of debt and commanded control over the village resources. Their colossal exploitation compelled the Santhal to rise in rebellion in 1855. The rebellion was crushed and their unscrupulous activities went on as usual. More and more tribals were alienated from their land. Such cases day by day became so rampant that the government had to take cognizance of the fact and passed "The Tribal Tenancy Act, 1885". In subsequent years other Acts were passed to counter the process of land alienation. These laws, due to their faulty enforcement and the abuse of legal provisions, could not stop the alienation completely. In the wake of industrialization in and around Ranchi, Hatia, etc., such activities were especially boosted. According to 1965 Census survey, Ranchi P.S. alone had had 752 illegal alienation cases during 1955-56 which involved 662 acres of land. The Government efforts, after the promulgation of emergency in June 1975, could bring back a large number of tribal families to the land which went to money lenders as distress sale years ago.

Studies undertaken by Anthropologists about five decades ago show that the tribals of some areas are almost indistinguishable from the Hindu villagers. The Oraons, for example, have forgotten their past tradition and the Mundas have begun to lose faith in the power of their "Bongas". The Gonds of some areas have become "part-society as a caste". The Bhumijis exhibit caste-like characteristics. In 1961 Census 72% of the tribals enumerated themselves as Hindu. In 2001 Census, nearly 69% call themselves Hindu and about 40% recorded themselves as Hindu tribes.

The settled agricultural tribes have not only been influenced by the mainstream culture but also adopted Hindu religious beliefs and practices. They propitiate Hindu deities such as Kali, Durga, Lakshmi etc., and celebrate Hindu festival Phagua, Dashahara, Diwali, Makar Sankranti, etc.

They have adopted the "value orientation" or ethos of peasant life. Although the peasants' ethos of life varies over regions; there are certain values which transcend time and space. A cluster of three values may be considered to illustrate the case.

The tribal cultivators, like the Hindu peasants have an intimate and reverent attitude toward the land. They consider land not only as a means of subsistence but look on it suffused with religious feeling. It gets reflected in the observance of several agricultural festivals such as Buna puja, Asarhi puja, Naya khana etc. It is due to this fact that occasional migration, draught, famine or other reasons have not been able to detach them permanently from their land. It is also due to this that they rose in rebellion against land-hungry Mahajans who displaced them from sacred anchorage in land.

This intense attachment to land has given rise to another value: emphasis on agricultural industriousness. This emphasis is supported by three principal considerations – security, respect and religious feeling already discussed. The third value is restraint on individual desires in favour of family need: a ready labour force. This is why marriage norms stress on economic consideration. Marriage is usually solemnized by the parents. Even when the boy selects his partner, he is required to obtain the approval of his parents for marriage. Laziness and infidelity of wife is often a cause for divorce. Several children are welcomed as more hands mean more earning in the family.

The tribals are in asymmetrical power relations not only with the non-tribals but also within a community. Every tribe had established pattern of traditional leadership. Among some tribes it existed at the village level and in others it had pyramidal form. The tribals have sacerdotal and secular leadership. The sacerdotal leader was considered to be superior to secular leader. In course of time secular leader has "arrogated to him most of the power". The village headmen such as Parha Raja, Manki, Munda etc., were vested with government authority. They, however, well-exploited their privileged position and formed an endogamous upper stratum of their community. They became "a caste within a tribe". The author's study on the

impact of industrialization in 1980s also reveals breakdown of cultural moorings of the tribal communities. With introduction of statutory panchayat and democratic election process, traditional power structure has been withering away and is being replaced by formal power relations which commands more respect of the people of tribal communities. The democratic process and other avenues of economic security had led to the emergence of tribal elite which have snapped away social relations from their own brethren.

Agriculture is the main stay for the bulk of tribal communities of rural Jharkhand. All those living in rural areas are engaged in agriculture or agriculture related work. It is needless to say that the cultivators are not homogeneous in terms of landholding. The 1961 Census Sample Survey of 20% households of STs in Bihar (now Jharkhand) shows wide disparity in the size of their landholdings. Nearly 67% of the cultivating households have up to 5 acres, 28% 5 to 15 acres and 4% 15 to above 50 acres of land. Presuming that a family of two or three adults can cultivate up to 5 acres of land by its own labour, the majority of the tribals can be considered family-farmers. In rural Jharkhand, mutual exchange of labour among families is also in practice. However, they, like non-tribal peasants do not affect market system, though they may be in contact with the market places.

The large segment of agricultural tribes in Jharkhand fulfils economic, political and social characteristics to be called peasants. Besides the heuristic value of the attempt as is made here, it has relevance for policy formulation. It calls for reconsideration whether existing programmes for the STs ensure development of the peasant section among them.

The Government is now keen to transfer the development benefits to the poor and disadvantaged sections of the population in the country. For achieving it, the peasant section of the tribal communities of Jharkhand, should be identified, and area-specific and community-based programmes exclusively for them need to be designed. Such programmes should also be undertaken for all poor and deprived section of the tribal communities in all other areas in the country. This would not only ensure improvement in the quality of their life but also create more equitable social order.

The historical scenario warns us against the mistake committed so far in the country which has led hiatus in heterogeneous relations between groups of rural population and wide-spread social conflict. The failure to understand the peasant sections of tribal communities in the country would be detrimental to peace and tranquility in tribal belts in the country, symptoms of which are already pronounced.

[Concluded]

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)

91. What use is a "memo of arrest" to me?

It is a safeguard against illegal detention. The

memo of arrest must have your name, time, date and place of arrest, reasons for the arrest and what the suspected offence is. It has to be signed by the police, two witnesses and you to make sure that the record gives a truthful account of the facts. It is given to the magistrate and when the magistrate meets you for the first time he will double-check if what has been said is correct. The police also have to make up an "inspection memo".

92. What is an inspection memo?

It is a short description of your physical condition when you were taken into custody. It is expected to record your general physical condition and note major and minor injuries. Again, it has to be signed by you and the arresting officer and a copy is given to you. But the difference between this memo and the memo of arrest is that you have to request for it. Otherwise it need not be done. This procedure is meant to ensure that there is no beating or torture in custody. But it is not clear who has to examine you. If the arresting officer himself is examining you there is little protection that a piece of paper can give. However, since an approved doctor's certificate has also to be given to the magistrate with all the other papers at the first appearance, a doctor must examine you and make a statement about your physical condition before you are first produced before a magistrate.

93. How am I supposed to know all this?

By law, at the time of arrest the police are supposed to inform you of all your rights. In addition, the guidelines mentioned above, which are sometimes called the D.K. Basu guidelines* after the Supreme Court case that shaped them, have to be displayed on boards in all police stations and chowkis.

94. Can the police officer beat me in custody?

No. He cannot beat you, slap you, threaten or intimidate you in custody. It is against the law and the police officer can be punished for it.

95. Can the police officer force me to make a confession?

No. The police officer has a right to question you but he cannot force you to say anything you have no information about, anything you do not want to say, or confess to some crime that you have not committed. A confession made to a police officer will not in any case be admissible in court.

* GUIDELINES LAID DOWN BY THE HON'BLE SUPREME COURT IN D.K. BASU CASE

The Hon'ble Supreme Court, in D.K. Basu Vs State of West Bengal, has laid down specific guidelines required to be followed while making arrests:

I. The police personnel carrying out the arrest and handling the interrogation of the arrestee should bear accurate, visible and clear identification and name tags with their designations. The particulars of all such police personnel who handle interrogation of the arrestee should bear accurate, visible and clear identification and name tags with their designation. The particular of all such personnel who handle interrogation of the arrestee must be recorded in a

Continued on page - 3

Standard Industries

35, New Market, Patna - 800001

Telephone No. : 0612-2222343
e-mail : amitmu1947@gmail.com;
standard7864@gmail.com



High Quality Leather Accessories

STUDIO 11
salon & spa

बेहतरीन
ब्राइडल मेकअप
पैकेज



1st Floor, Hira Place. ©9835234853, 7766903940