

Is Bihar ready to face the summer?

Newsdesk – None of the political parties fighting the Lok Sabha elections have given space in their election manifestos to the issues related with water, environment and ecological changes, said famed 'Water Man' Rajendra Singh on 15th April in Bhopal, while releasing with others the 'Election Manifesto of the people of India, Commitments of the political parties and present context, Lok Sabha Elections 2019' on behalf of 'Jal Jan Jodo Abhiyan.

Whether the ecological issues have found a place in the manifestos of the political parties is debatable. But it is a fact, at least in Bihar, that none of the issues related with water, shortage of drinking water, diminishing ponds and natural water-lands, drying and drying rivers or, even the problem of recurrent floods particularly in Northern districts of the state are finding any mention in the ongoing campaign for the elections.

In the Manifesto of the 'Jal Jan Jodo Abhiyan' it is stated that 362 districts of 16 states of the country is struggling with water shortage whereas 90% rivers have dried up; they carry water only in the rainy season - news portal of The Quint in Hindi, while reporting the function referred above, mentioned.

In Bihar, Chief Minister rang alarm in early November last year that Bihar may face water crisis from January-February this year as 275 of 540 blocks across 24 districts have been declared drought-hit, reported Telegraph on 6th November 2018.

And already, with the rising of mercury, news is coming from Gaya, Banka and other districts

about scarcity of drinking water in the villages. Recently a Facebook post by an individual political activist mentioned the increasing use of bottled water not only in small townships, even in some of the villages. This shows the vulnerable position of the families who cannot afford that and the situation they would be facing within week. Neither they have access to clean water, nor the system of public health is in track in those areas.

Strangely enough, the Chapter III, 3.2 about 'Water Resources in Bihar' the Economic Survey of the government of Bihar published in December 2018 happily declares the vast potential of its rivers and water resources and shows some concern about erratic rainfall. But not a word is there about its diminishing water bodies, drying up of rivers, challenges to make potable water available for the population...! Nothing!

About making the ground water decontaminated, drinkable and generally usable for household purposes, following position is being quoted from the Economic Survey of Bihar 2018-19, detailing works being done for 'Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation [Section 11.2]

"Out of 38 districts, 33 districts in Bihar are affected by arsenic, fluoride and iron(emphasis ours). Table 11.12 shows the number of wards in different districts where work has been started for elimination of contamination in domestic water. From Table 11.12 of the Economic Survey 2018 -19 Districts Mapping of Contamination (The figures in bracket represent the number of wards in which the work has

started)

Contaminant - Arsenic (Affected Districts14)

Begusarai (270), Bhagalpur (278), Buxar (96), Darbhanga (31), Katihar (43), Khagaria (206), Lakhisarai (147), Munger (75), Samastipur (181), Saran (46), Sitamarhi (4), Patna (26), Bhojpur (27), Vaishali (63)

Contaminant - Fluoride (Affected Districts11)

Aurangabad (26), Banka (690), Bhagalpur (234), Gaya (187), Jamui (444), Kaimur (99), Munger (158) Nalanda (208), Rohtas (333), Sheikhpura (135), Nawada (235)

Contaminant - Iron (Affected Districts11)

Araria (145), Begusarai (234), Bhagalpur (100), Katihar (407), Khagaria (43), Kishanganj (136), Madhepura (222), Munger (0), Purnea (610), Saharsa (217) and Supaul (149)

(Till date, 5.23 lakh households have been provided connection by PHED)

Source : Public Health Engineering Department; GoB



Arrest of Julian Assange

Wikileaks co-founder Julian Assange was arrested on April 11, 2019 from Ecuadorean embassy in London after Ecuador's president withdrew his asylum. The police said that he was arrested because he failed to surrender in court.

Since its inception in 2006, Wikileaks has assisted people fighting against US domination and intervention all over the world by providing so-called classified information about the covert operations of US state and its agencies.

Assange took refuge in the Ecuadorean embassy to avoid extradition over a sexual assault case. The case, as reported, has already been dropped. Whatever more be the facts, the issue has been nailed by veteran journalist John Pilger, "the action of the British police in literally dragging Julian Assange from the Ecuadorean embassy and the smashing of international law by the Ecuadorean regime in permitting this barbarity are crimes against the most basic natural justice." It is hoped by all that he will come out unblemished from any case standing against him or cooked to frame him.

among top companies, and while government companies make up just two percent of the CSR universe, they account for 30 percent of the overall CSR spend". And at the top of all the Report finds that, "Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Gujarat—just four states—are home to 54 percent of CSR companies. Conversely, states like Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, accounting for 23 percent of India's population, have among the lowest share of CSR companies—just 3.3 percent."

The Report observes that since companies appear to be guided by their state of registration, they locate their projects in-situ and some of the most populous and less developed states like UP, Bihar, MP, and Odisha, don't receive enough corporate attention.

On the other hand, when it comes to state-wise spends, CSR from government-owned companies is highest in Andhra Pradesh and Odisha, and from public limited companies in Maharashtra and Karnataka.

So the unevenness of market-driven development, to counter which the much-criticized 'License-

Behar Herald condemns the serial blasts in Sri Lanka on the day of Easter in which around 400 people died and more than 500 were injured. Behar Herald Condemns the religious extremism which caused it and condemns religious extremism of any kind.

Superbugs from Sewage treatment

Newsdesk – Sewage treatment plants help cities to manage waste water. Physical, chemical and biological processes are used in these plants to remove contaminants from wastewater so that the treated wastewater can be released safely, whereas, the sewage sludge can be further treated to be used in land or disposed. But now, appearance of a danger has been signaled. In a story published in Down to Earth on 4th April 2019, the journalist Akshit Sangomla quoted Manish Kumar, assistant professor of Earth Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar as speaking 'on the sidelines of a conclave on sanitation organized by Delhi-based non-profit Centre for Science and Environment, "We found that pollution, whether in a lake or at a point of sewage

discharge into a river, induced multi-drug anti-microbial resistance in collected samples of E Coli bacteria possibly transforming it into what is known as a superbug." A strain of bacteria that is resistant to all antibiotics is called a superbug. Manish Kumar is the lead principal investigator of a project aimed to develop new water supplies in Ahmedabad, Guwahati and Colombo which would be adapted against the challenges posed by climate change and rapid urbanisation.

As part of the project, Kumar and his team collected water samples from lakes Kankaria and Chandola, the Sabarmati river and three effluent treatment plants (both in flow and outflow) in Ahmedabad. They then tested these samples with six different kinds of antibiotics like ciprofloxacin, norfloxacin, tetracyclin and kanamycin for antibiotic resistance.

Wikipedia says, "Most E Coli strains do not cause disease, but virulent strains can cause gastroenteritis, urinary tract infections, neonatal meningitis, hemorrhagic colitis, and Crohn's disease."

Which means, as the story published in 'Down to Earth' suggests, "Sewage treatment plants which are supposed to help cities manage waste water might be serving a very different and perhaps even a dangerous purpose. They might be inadvertently making disease

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News & comments

Uneven development, uneven 'philanthropy'

Recently the of Ashoka University, Sonapat, Haryana has released a report. It is first report of this kind in which answers to three questions - Is corporate India complying with the CSR mandate? When they do, how much do they spend on social projects? Which sectors do they invest in primarily? And how is their funding distributed among states? – have been attempted through study of the data available with the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India.

Before we go further, we may keep in mind that India is the first country in the world to make corporate social responsibility (CSR) mandatory following an amendment to The Company Act 2013 in April 2014. The amendment notified in the Schedule VII of the Companies Act advocates that those companies with a net worth of US\$73 million (Rs 4.96 billion) or more, or an annual turnover of US\$146 million (Rs 9.92 billion) or more, or a net profit of US\$732,654 (Rs 50 million) or more during a financial

year, shall earmark 2 percent of average net profits of three years towards CSR. This they can invest in areas such as education, poverty, gender equality, and hunger.

The report by has analysed the CSR spend of all 19,184 companies in 2015-16.

As the story at the site of Indian Development Review, idronline.org says, "When trying to calculate whether companies adhered to the mandatory-minimum two percent CSR spend rule, the report found that 10,674 companies—56 percent—out of 19,184 had not provided either their net profit or CSR spend. From the companies that did, just 40 percent have complied with the rule, spending two percent or more of their average net profit.

"In terms of number of CSR projects, 43 percent of companies implement the project themselves directly, but when you look at it in value terms, 37 percent of companies operate via implementing agencies".

They also found that "there is a large concentration of spending

Quota-Permit Raj' and concept of planning began in India during 50s of 20th century, has appeared in market-driven philanthropy as well!

Amartya Sen Chair in Inequality Studies

All aspiring students of economics dream to go someday to attend classes at LSE or London School of Economics, a world-famous institute for economic studies. And now, with an aim to honour renowned India-born economist Amartya Sen, the Institute has announced a Chair in Inequality Studies in his name.

Amartya Sen served as a professor in the economics department at the institute from 1971-82.

In the year 1998, Amartya Sen won the Nobel Prize in the field of Economics. He was one of the main architects of Human Development Report and Index now annually studied and published by United Nations. For his contributions to the Report, he was awarded National Humanities Medal in the year 2012. His main areas of work include welfare economics, social choice theory, development economics, political philosophy and economic theory. Amartya Sen advanced the theory

that lack of democracy and famines are interrelated and cited the example of the , stating that it only occurred because of the lack of democracy in India under British rule. Though famines do happen even under democratic rule, and there are critiques to point it out, the interactives of governance vis-à-vis people's initiative/movement and participation come under focus by Sen's theory.

As Financial Express Online reported, the institute aims to acknowledge one of the world's greatest thinkers on social equity by naming the chair after Amartya Sen. He by holding the position will also serve in the capacity as the Director of the International Inequalities Institute at LSE.

One million species risk extinction due to humans

Up to one million species face extinction due to human influence. The accelerating loss of clean air, drinkable water, CO2-absorbing forests, pollinating insects, protein-rich fish and storm-blocking mangroves — to name but a few of the dwindling services rendered by nature — poses no

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'Bihar ke Gaurav'

Brajkishore Smarak Pratishtan has now earned a fame for publication of important books related to the contribution of Bihar in building the province and the Indian Union.

Previously the institution has published first and second parts of 'Bihar ke Gaurav' in which short biographical sketches of freedom fighters associated with Bihar were drawn. The third part is on literature. The language of the collection is Hindi and it contain life and works in brief of 41 litterateurs in 7 languages who worked in Bihar and whose works appeared within the period from 1857 to 1947.

In English three writers Kali Kumar Sinha, Raghubir Narain, and Babu Awadh Bihari Lal have been taken in the purview.

In Urdu the lives and works of five writers and poets, Shad Azimabadi, Syed Imdad Imam 'Asar', Rashidatunnisa, Shaik Nimvi and Bismil Azimabadi are there.

In Bengali section there are lives and works of seven writers and poets, Baldeb Palit, Kedarnath Bandopadhyay, Anurupa Devi, Bibhutibhushan Mukhopadhyay, Ashalata Singha, Banaphul (Balaichand Mukhopadhyay) and Satinath Bhaduri.

In Bhojpuri there are lives and works of Hira Dom, Mahendra Misir, Bhikhari Thakur, Principal Manoranjan and Master Aziz.

In Maghi various writers coming in the purview have been discussed in one article – 'Pramukh Magahi Sahityakar.

In Maithili, under discussion are Chanda Jha, Pandit Jivan Jha, Laldas, Pandit Jiwachh Mishra, Shyamanand Jha, Bhuvaneshwar Singh 'Bhuvan' and Brajkishore Verma 'Manipadam'.

In Hindi there are the lives and works of Ayodhya Prasad Khatri, Raja Radhika Raman Prasad Singh, Shiv Pujan Sahay, Anuplal Mandal, Mohan Lal Mahto Viyogi, Rambriksha Benipuri, Lakshmi Narayan Sudhangshu, Ramdhari Singh Dinkar, Nagarjun, Gopal Singh Nepali, Janki Ballabh Shastri, Nalin Vilochan Sharma and Phanishwarnath Renu.

The effort is very significant and it is first collection of its kind. If BKSP takes the decision to proceed further in this direction and the government provides fund then a supplementary volume for the period 1857-1947 should be prepared to include those writers and languages who or which may remain left out in the present volume. And after that, a collection for the period from 1947 to the present may be attempted.

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News & Comments

less of a threat than climate change.

The report prepared by United Nations will be released on May 6. But the draft, obtained by news agencies, painstakingly catalogues how humanity has undermined the natural resources upon which its very survival depends.

The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) report warns of "an imminent rapid acceleration in the global rate of species extinction".

The pace of loss "is already tens to hundreds of times higher than it has been, on average, over the last 10 million years," it notes. "Half-a-million to a million species are projected to be threatened with extinction, many within decades." Scientists estimate that Earth is today home to some eight million distinct species, a majority of them insects. A quarter of catalogued animal and plant species are already being crowded, eaten or poisoned out of existence.

The direct causes of species loss, in order of importance, are shrinking habitat and land-use change, hunting for food or illicit trade in body parts, climate change, pollution, and alien species such as rats, mosquitoes and snakes that hitch rides on ships or planes, the report finds.

There are also two big indirect drivers of biodiversity loss and climate change — the number of people in the world and their growing ability to consume, the authorities point out.

Once seen as primarily a future threat to animal and plant life, the disruptive impact of global warming has accelerated.

Think like Norway

The largest party in Norway's parliament, not the ruling but in opposition, has delivered a significant blow to the country's huge oil industry after withdrawing

support for explorative drilling off in the Arctic.

Lofoten islands, the beauty of which will make you gasp, are considered a natural wonder.

The move, by the opposition Labour party, creates a large parliamentary majority against oil exploration in the sensitive offshore area, illustrating growing opposition to the polluting fossil fuel, which has made the country one of the world's most affluent.

The country currently pumps out over 1.6 million barrels of oil a day from its offshore operations.

A story by Harry Cockburn, published on 9th April at the site of independent.co.uk says, "the leadership [of Labour Party] tries to reflect the population's rising environmental concerns, while also aiming to support workers' unions in the oil industry, which have been major backers of the party." It quotes the leader of the Labour Party, Jonas Gahr Store saying that his party would continue to support the oil industry, but oil firms in the country must commit to a deadline for making all operations emissions free.

Norwegian politicians and industrialists are confused as the stand by the Labour Party comes just after the government's announcement of its strategy for gradual divestment in fossil fuels. World over, the people are concerned with the pollution due to fossil fuels and trying to rely more upon alternative renewable energy sources.

But for the present, this refusal makes the point — no more vague assurances to conceal your greed for easy super-profits, you corporate-predators! Earth is ours. We shall have to save it!

World's first malaria vaccine launched in Malawi, Africa

The Hindu Net Desk reported on Apr. 25, along with a video from Malawi, Africa that the world's first malaria vaccine has been launched there, after concerted efforts of

From Hindi Portals

Bhagalpuri Bengalees as voters

On Bengali New Year day, Dainik Jagaran of Bhagalpur did a story on the Bengalees of Bhagalpur. The story quoted the leadership of the Bhagalpur branch of Bengalee Association, Bihar, Bhagalpur Durgabari, Bangiya Sahitya Parishad saying that in this Lok Sabha elections, 40,000 Bengalee voters of Bhagalpur will vote for the candidate who will make a promise to conserve and develop the social, educational and cultural heritages of Bhagalpur along with all around development of the city. The city has a history of association with the life and works of eminent personages of Bengal Renaissance and also of the modern period. Representatives of Bengalee community of Bhagalpur mentioned the names great social reformer Raja Ram Mohan Roy, great writer Sharatchandra Chattopadhyay, Manmohan Ghosh (elder brother of Aurobindo Ghosh), great educationist Rokeya Begum, famous writers Bibhuti Bhushan Bandopadhyay and Balai Chand Mukhopadhyay (Banaphul), famous actress Chhaya Devi, film producer and director Tapan Sen, immortal cine actor Ashok Kumar, playback singer Kishore Kumar

and the first woman to fly a two-seater plane in England in 1955, Mrinalini Sen (daughter-in-law of Keshab Chandra Sen and the lady who taught Bengali to Gandhiji). All these people had deep associations with this city. The representatives alleged that the memories related to these great people are left to decay in the absence of conservation by government administration.

The president of Bhagalpur branch of Bengalee Association, Bihar Dr. Ratna Mukherji, who was also professor, proctor and dean in Bhagalpur University was quoted demanding conservation and renovation of Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, Adampur, Durgacharan Primary and High School and Durgabari.

Ex-president of the branch, Dr. Amita Moitra, who is professor of zoology in Tilka Manjhi Bhagalpur University said that the present generation is unaware that this city was the place of work of great Bengali litterateurs. She demanded that the residences of Bibhuti Bhushan Bandopadhyay, Sharatchandra Chattopadhyay, Rokeya Begum and Banaphul be declared as national heritages.

For Uttam Debnath, Secretary of Durgabari Management Committee, Masakchak, weaknesses of infrastructure, absence of air-service and traffic-jams in the city are impediments

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over 30 years to protect children from the deadly disease that claims over 435,000 lives globally every year.

The vaccine is a complementary malaria control tool -- to be added to the core package of WHO-recommended measures for malaria prevention, including the routine use of insecticide-treated bed nets, indoor spraying with insecticides, and the timely use of malaria testing and treatment.

Though India has succeeded in significantly reducing malarial deaths and infections during last two decades, yet it remains on the map of this dreadful disease. A vaccine will further boost its five-year National Strategic Plan for Malaria Elimination launched in 2017, that shifted focus from malaria "control" to "elimination" and provided a road-map with targets to end malaria in 571 districts out of India's 678 districts by 2022.

Caesarean deliveries

Caesarean deliveries are increasing in India. WHO recommends the rate of caesarean delivery to be 10-15% of all deliveries, but in India the percentage was 17.2 during the period from Jan 2015 to 2016. In a related story, the online news portal scroll.in refers to the survey by Lancet and gives the percentage figure to be 18.5 in 2015.

The percentage of caesarean deliveries was just 9 in 2000. So, the increase clearly indicates that with rapid privatization in health sector, families are being given the easy option of 'painless childbirth' in the clinics and nursing homes through caesarean delivery. Because they know the mindset of families with paying capacities. This trend was there in earlier periods also, but marketisation of public-health has made it pronounced, because it is expensive, involves purchase of more medicines and surgical materials. Longer stay in the nursing home is also required and hence, more money can be extorted from the patients' families.

Whereas, The Hindu of 6th April refers to a report by Lancet published in 2018, which points out that the prevalence of maternal mortality and morbidity is higher after caesarean than after vaginal birth. The mother after a caesarean operation, bears increased risk of uterine rupture, abnormal placentation, ectopic pregnancy, stillbirth and preterm birth. "Many studies have pointed out that the babies born via C-section have less bacterial exposure, which in turn alters their immunity and gut microbiome diversity. Children tend to have increased chances of allergy, asthma and childhood obesity. Around ten lakhs ASHA workers are working in Indian villages since last 14 years. So many awareness campaigns are there in rural areas and also in towns. Yet this is the situation! Of course, as the story in The Hindu says, "researchers found that the rate of C-section was as small as 4.4% among the poorest group to 35.9% among the richest quintile". But in the middle fall the huge crowd of not-so-poor families, newly-weds, particularly in urban areas, who easily become prey to opt for caesarean delivery. Those mothers and new-born children should be saved.

The battle of Bilkis

On 3 March 2002, Bilkis Bano was gang raped and 14 members of her family murdered in one of the worst episodes during the Gujarat riots in 2002.

Bano was 19 years old and pregnant with her second child. Her three-year-old daughter was killed before her eyes. As local policemen went to extraordinary lengths to cover up the horrific crime, Bilkis started receiving death threats. For the next several years, her family led a nomadic existence, moving from place to place for their safety, but continued their fight for justice.

It took six years for 11 men to be sentenced to life in prison for rape and murder. One policeman got a sentence of three years in prison

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Superbugs from ...

causing micro organisms resistant to antibiotic drugs, which are used all around the world for their containment, creating a possible public health scare."

[Inputs with courtesy from : <https://www.down.toearth.org.in/news/water/sewage-treatment-plants-can-turn-e-coli-into-superbug-63830>]

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Letter by Rabindranath ...

The Poet-Laureate was disturbed by Rabindranath's relinquishment of the title awarded by King, when Rabindranath was invited to deliver a speech in Oxford in 1920. When the organizers of the event requested Bridges to speak something, he refused. I have a copy of the letter Bridges did write to Rabindranath in this matter. When, after that tour Rabindranath returned from Europe, he permitted me to make copies of some more letters, written to him by various intellectuals of Europe, and keep with me. I am quoting some lines from that letter by Bridges:

"... and am sorry that I do not feel able to accept the invitation, which I have just received, to speak at the meeting in Oxford on Friday..."

"I am writing, especially as I never sent any answer to your several communications since the late disturbances in India. I began a long letter but I feared that you might misunderstand it even more than you could misinterpret my silence, and in England we could not at first rely on the press reports of events."

[Continued]

for tampering with the First Information Report (FIR). It took ten more years for five other policemen and two doctors to be convicted for attempting to cover up the crime.

Now, 17 years later, Bano's lawyer asked the Supreme Court to award exemplary compensation to her and for disciplinary action against the convicted policemen.

On Tuesday, the court ordered the Gujarat government to pay Rs 50 lakhs as compensation to Bano, a house in a place of her choosing, and a government job. This is the highest compensation ever given to a rape survivor in India.

"The Supreme Court has acknowledged the pain that I have endured for 17 years," Bilkis said on Wednesday. "That is important to me."

Following this landmark judgement, *HuffPost India* spoke to Gupta, the Supreme Court advocate who has represented Bilkis since 2003.

Gupta, who runs her own law firm in Delhi, does a lot of pro-bono work. She has fought for juvenile justice reform, reducing water-logging in the capital, and better food quality in midday meals.

While this is a landmark judgement, Gupta told *HuffPost India* that the compensation granted to Bilkis should have been higher.

"The compensation you are granting should be monumental. It should be loud and clear. So loud that it resounds in everybody's ears. A figure of one crore would have rung loud and clear. For the victims, it would say don't worry we are here. For the perpetrators, it would say don't you dare to do it again. For all state governments, it would be a note of caution," she said.

[Introduction to the interview of Shobha Gupta, the Supreme Court advocate who fought for Bilkis Bano, by Betwa Sharma for *Huffpost India*]
 Courtesy: https://www.huffingtonpost.in/entry/bilkis-banos-compensation-gujarat-police-modi_in_5cc2816be4b08846403c06d0?ncid=fbclinkinimg00000001&fbclid=IwAR2w8zHYxqb5E1YOKn4UraoHJZ5pwMC1b3pdLqVpezymrCGoh2nG1nnQFY

The year 2019 is the centenary year of Jallianwala Bagh Massacre of 13th April 1919. On the pages of Behar Herald, we intend to publish from the archives, various materials related to it. In the last issue, we published Chapter 51, 'Rowlatt Act' of the 'Story of my life' by Mahatma Gandhi. In this issue we begin serializing an article by Amal Hom, famous journalist of those days, published in Sharadiya Desh (1355)

Letter by Rabindranath after Jallianwala bag Massacre

- Amal Hom

[Continued from last issue]

Not only the small Englishmen of this country, who, incensed with the return of Knighthood by Rabindranath, wrote in their newspaper Englishman:

"It will not make a ha'porth worth of difference. As if it mattered a brass farthing whether Sir Rabindranath Tagore approved of the Government's policy or not! As if it mattered to the reputation, the honour and the security of British rule and justice whether this Bengalee Poet remained a knight or a plain Babul!"

Not only them, – even the big Englishmen of England were not disturbed any less. I have seen a letter written to Rabindranath by Robert Bridges, the Poet Laureate of England and an admirer of our Poet. He also, could not forgive Rabindranath*. And when during those days, in 1920 Rabindranath went to USA, Henry Nevins exposed in Nation, the famed newspaper of London, how detectives were engaged by the British Embassy to follow the Poet.

'The letter by Rabindranath after the Jallianwala Bagh massacre' was not only a story of great pride for his own life, but also an unforgettable chapter in the history of Indian freedom struggle. The pain of subjugation and insult of the country was not felt by anyone else in this way, and none else could make it vain the way he did.

But the poet did not rest after returning his knighthood – he did not think that he has done whatever there was to be done by him on the issue of Punjab. He repeatedly went on writing letters to many of his sagacious friends – informed them about the lawlessness and tyranny of the British Rule, the humiliation of his countrymen in its hands. Kalibabu, my editor Kalinath Roy, remembered with gratitude for his whole life, what Rabindranath did for his release from jail. Late professor Nepalchandra Roy of Shantiniketan once told me that Rabindranath left none of the authorities to write a letter for Kalibabu. The letter written to me by Rabindranath is witness to this fact:

Shantiniketan
27.7.1819

Dear Amal,

Received your letter a few days back.

Read in today's newspaper that Tribune has started publication once again – through your hands. I'm happy but a fear lurks in. The crooked frown of the authorities is still there. I wish that you carry this burden with caution.

I remain anxious hearing the news of failing health of Kalinath Roy in jail and have requested in writing to Montagu and Lord Sinha both, for his release. What else can be done except waiting? Do not be much hopeful.

What Sankaran Nair did? To meet him once would have been better. Perhaps, it won't be in your convenience now to go to Shimla. Andrews will go after some days. Then to Lahore. He has informed you perhaps. You will get all the news from him. 'Saheb' is raging. He knows that this blot of Punjab on the British will never go. Take my blessings,

Yours,

Shri Rabindranath Thakur

Tribune was off the press for three months. Only after that I could get the permission to resume its publication. Hence, I really could not go to Shimla. Sudhir Mukhopadhyay, the lawyer of Lahore and friend of Kalinath during his bad days, met Sir Sankaran Nair. When none of the lawyers and barristers of Lahore Chief Court could muster the courage to defend Kalibabu, when the famous British barrister of Calcutta Mr. Norton had to return from the gates of Punjab by the order of martial law administrator Colonel Frank Johnson – he was not allowed to enter to be defense lawyer in Kalibabu's case – only Sudhirbabu took that responsibility fearlessly and made good arrangements for defense. When with a petition to the Governor General for condoning or lessening the punishment of Kalinath Roy, Sudhirbabu went to Sankaran Nair for advice, Sir Sankaran said, showing him a letter written by Rabindranath, "By good luck, Chelmsford doesn't know that Tagore has pleaded in this matter". However, finally the Governor General had lessened the jail-term of Kalinath. He was released after some days.

*One could get a hint of the extent to which Robert Bridges,

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Derozio

– Pallab Sengupta

It is often surmised that the initial streak of modernism in idea and practice of the Indian social polity started emerging during the early decades of the nineteenth century. With the establishment of a new educational system modelled after the European (to be more precise, English) academic institutions, a new generation of intellectuals came into being mainly in the major urban settlements of British India. An educated middle-class gentry evolved as the obvious corollary of this new solo-economic pattern. Calcutta, being the premier city of the country and the capital of British India, became the epicentre of an unprecedented upheaval, social as well as cultural, which had its origin in the newly emerged economic scenario, developed primarily to serve the interests of British colonialism.

But the cloud of colonialism had at least one silver lining. Though the economic infra-structure was rigidly set-up by the colonial rulers to serve their interests, yet, by the same token, the corresponding new administrative structure did require a modern academic orientation and a new stratum in the Indian social edifice, so that the administration could be run quite smoothly.

This new stratum, i.e. the intelligentsia, was the vanguard of a number of social reformation movements, such as the abolition of the 'Sauce', initiation of the remarriages of Hindu widows, and putting an end to polygamy, and so on. Against this backdrop a number of stalwarts pioneered the movements of social progress in Bengal. Henry Louis Vivian Derozio, a younger contemporary of Raja Rant Mohan Roy and a forerunner of Pandit Ishwarachandra Vidyasagar, Michael Madhusudan Dun and Bankimchandra Chatterjee, was one of the stalwarts of modernism in the history of our nation. As a teacher, as an intellectual, as a poet and also as a social avantgarde, this young man who lived even less than twenty-three years made a lasting contribution to our cultural and intellectual heritage.

[The Preview of the book on Derozio by the writer, published by Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi]

The Young Bengal

- Susobhan Sarkar

Derozio and his pupils started in 1828 the Academic Association, our first debating club, which discussed topics like free-will and fate, virtue and vice, patriotism, arguments for or against the existence of god, the shames of idolatry and priest-craft. The long weekly meetings were presided over by Derozio whose exhortations were cherished, while the debating talents of the youthful members attracted attention and drew many celebrities in the city to the exciting sessions. The Hindu College boys started the Parthenon magazine (the Athenium, according to Sibnath Sastri) on 15 February 1830 wherein were mooted subjects like women's education, necessity of cheap justice, and the curse of superstition. This organ of the "Hindu by birth, yet European by education" was suppressed after two issues by order of the college visitor, Dr H. H. Wilson. By arrangement with David Hare, Derozio delivered a course of lectures on metaphysics in his school "attended by some four hundred young men", many of whom were delving deep in the new thought of Bacon, Locke, Hume, Smith, Paine or Bentham.

In this atmosphere there was surging up a wave of radical sentiment. In the India Gazette of 12 February 1830, a Hindu College student argued against the current colonisation scheme by an array of historical precedents from ancient to modern times. On 10 December 1830, 200 persons attended the July revolution celebration in the Town Hall. On Christmas day of the same year, the tricolour flag of the French revolution was hoisted on the monument, apparently by unknown people.

Orthodox society was deeply alarmed. It was rumoured that some Hindu College boys, when required to utter man-tras at prayers, would repeat lines from the Iliad instead; that one student, asked to bow down before the goddess Kali, greeted the image with a "good morning, madam". A poor Brahmin, Brindaban Ghoshal, carried to society leaders the daily gossip, spiced richly with scandal-mongering about Derozio and his pupils. Newspapers like the Sambad Prabhakar and the Samachar Chandrika raised a hue and cry about religion in danger from the "atheist beasts" who aped the "vagabond Firingis". In April 1831 the former printed a letter, "reflecting in very unbecoming language upon the character of the teachers of Hindoo College", against which the college committee was constrained to remonstrate.

Clearly, the provocation was not entirely on the side of the Derozians.

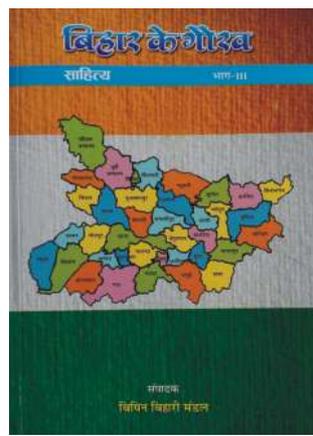
[From 'Bengal Renaissance and other essays' by Susobhan Sarkar, People's Publishing House, New Delhi]



18th April 1809

26th December 1831

Release of 'Bihar ke Gaurav' (Bhag III, Sahitya) and Kavi-sangat



Newsdesk – On 25th of April, there was a modest function of book-release at Braj Kishore Smarak Pratishthan, Near Kurji Hospital, Patna. The book 'Bihar ke Gaurav' (Bhag III, Sahitya) was released by eminent Hindi poet, famed writer of Bihar Geet, Satyanarayana. The Chairman of BKSP, Prem Prakash Verma and its Secretary Dr. Bipin Bihari Mandal were present in the occasion. Others present

were eminent poets and writers of various languages.

After release of the book and brief speeches by Shri Satyanarayana and editor of the book Dr. B. B. Mandal a Kavi-sangat was held. This part of the event was also chaired by Satyanarayanaji. Poets of various languages read their poems and sang their compositions. Names of the poets are, Satyanarayan, Bhagwati Prasad Dwivedi, Dr. Vijay Prakash, Hrishikesh Pathak, Rani Srivastava, Bidyut Pal, Kumar Amarendra, Awadhesh K. Narayan, Bhavna Shekhar, Aradhana Prasad, Mahamaya Prasad Vinod, Ravi Ghosh, Ram Bhagwan Singh, Indra Kant Jha, Jitendra Verma, Anil Bibhakar, Mukesh Pratyush, Nikhileshwar Prasad Verma, Dr. Pranav Parag, Dr. Amrit Pandey and Yashvant Kumar Singh,. The audience intently listened to each of the poets and poetesses.

Continued from Page-2

Bhagalpuri Bengalees as voters

for the progress of Bhagalpur. Due to absence of air-service medical practitioners and silk garment exporters are unable to attend seminars etc. in Delhi, Mumbai or Bengaluru. On the other hand, big traders are unable to come here, which is harming the silk industry. The candidate whom they would prefer to vote, must take care of these issues.

The Secretary of Bhagalpur branch of Bengalee Association, Jayjit Ghosh said that the candidate should promise to establish a museum and picture gallery in the premises of Durgacharan Primary School where Sharatchandra took his primary education. He also demanded recruitment of Bengali teachers in the state in sufficient numbers and naming of the section of road from Manik Sarkar Chowk to Ghantaghar in the name of Sharatchandra Chattopadhyay.

Anjan Bhattacharya, litterateur and secretary of Bangiya Sahitya Parishad demanded renovation of Bangiya Sahitya Parishad building (established in 1905) to develop a modern library with all the facilities. He also asked for the development of Bhagalpur Institute Club because Rabindranath Thakur and eminent personages had come here in the past. As the story of Dainik Jagaran reported, he also expressed the necessity to establish a Bihar Bangla Sahitya Academy and demanded installation of life-size statue of Sharatchandra Chattopadhyay at Manik Sarkar Chowk or some other prominent place.

Continued from Page-4

Attack on Mainland Labourers

incident, walking all the way from Bathu Basti to the IP&T parking lot where they gathered. The labourers were led by Mr. Prakash Adhikari, ex-president Bangla Joint Action Committee.

Racial profiling, which was not known to people of these Islands has become a reality now. Earlier few months back the BJAC had organised a massive rally against attacks based on racial profiling in Andaman.

"We are ready to show our identity proof to anyone from law enforcing agency, why should we show identity proof to anyone else. We want justice and demand strict punishment for the accused. They should not be released on bail," said an angry labourer.

Talking to Andaman Sheekha, Mr. Prakash Adhikari, ex-President of BJAC said that the accused have no right to disturb people of certain linguistic groups, people like them must be identified and should be punished, who are spreading disturbance in society. "There are people who are spreading hatred in society they must be identified and should be dealt accordingly as per law," said Mr. Adhikari. Meanwhile, according to highly placed sources both the accused have already been arrested yesterday and were sent to Judicial Remand today. Sources said both the accused were under influence of liquor when this incident took place.

Courtesy: http://www.andamansheekha.com/2019/04/22/attack-on-mainland-labourers-triggers-massive-rally-for-justice-two-arrested/?fbclid=IwAR37CY4xtEjO9pxxwJKv0IA4BTCKHlNGDuiWxe-aRC3Yr6G4UcUQ_C-61w

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Samastipur Branch, Bengalee Association, Bihar

An Appeal for Donation

In the year 1949 Bharatratna Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, an unparalleled physician of twentieth century in India, great visionary, illustrious political thinker, brilliant educationist, and four-time Chief Minister of West Bengal, formed a Trust in his parental house and his birth place at Khazanchi Road, Patna, with the specific purpose of imparting education to under-privileged children (specially girls) without tuition fees and named the school as "Aghore Prakash Shishu Sadan" in loving memory of his parents Shri Prakash Chandra Roy and Smt. Aghore Kamini Devi. Since then, Aghore Prakash Shishu Sadan has been imparting education to students (primarily girls) from weaker sections, irrespective of caste, creed and religion without tuition fees. The school runs primarily on public donations.

The Government of Bihar has declared the school a "Linguistic Minority Institution" in 1995 and has sanctioned posts of six teachers with salary. All the six sanctioned posts are lying vacant. In spite of the repeated request by the Managing Committee of the School, the vacant posts have not been filled up. The government, however, provides mid-day meals, cycle, dress etc. to the students and a paltry amount of Rs. 12,000/- per year for maintenance of building.

The school has over 400 students studying from class - 1 to class - X. They are taught by 12 teachers whose monthly salary varies from Rs. 4000 to Rs. 5000. In spite of such a measly amount, their teaching capability gets reflected in over 90% pass-out results in matriculation examination which is much higher than that of the state average.

The ancestral house of Dr. B. C. Roy where the school is located is over 150 years old and is in dilapidated condition. It needs thorough repair urgently.

As an effort for restoration of this school to its prime glory, We, on behalf of the Managing Committee of the school, make humble appeal for your noble support and co-operation by way of donation/ sponsorship to save this Heritage School from becoming a dilapidated House and unsuitable for teaching.

A separate account in the name of "Aghore Prakash Shishu Sadan" in Bank of India has been opened exclusively for the purpose (The Account No. 440810110007445, IFSC: BKID0004408). We assure that every amount donated by you would be recorded and be available for public scrutiny.

Please help us to save this school and future of students coming from under-privilege families.

Dr. B. B. Mandal **Dr. (Capt.) D. K. Sinha**
Hon. Secretary President

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)

76. Can the police use force in breaking up a street meeting or procession?

Yes. Whatever the police do has to be reasonable. They are not there to punish people. They are there to ensure public safety and that law and order are not breached. So the rule is that the police must only use force as a last resort in controlling a crowd. If it must be used at all, it must be minimal, proportionate to the situation and discontinued at the earliest possible moment. In fact, the police cannot use any force without the executive magistrate okaying it. The magistrate has to be present and give the order to use force. Then the police will decide how much force is needed.

77. Can the police fire at will?

Not at all. Deadly force is meant to be used in only the very rarest of instances when all other means of control have been tried and exhausted. Again, there must be a magistrate present who approves such action.

78. So what can the police do if the crowd is unruly and throwing stones or damaging property?

The police have a duty to protect life and property but there is a sequence to how they must go about their actions. First, plenty of warnings to the crowd to disperse must be given with time for the crowd to obey. Then teargas may be used or a lathi charge resorted to after another warning. Lathis cannot rain down blows on head and shoulders but must be aimed below the waist. If the police are going to have to resort to firing there has to be a clear and distinct warning that firing will be effective. Here too the rule is to use minimal force. So firing must aim low and at the most threatening part of the crowd with a view not to cause

fatalities but to disperse the crowd. As soon as the crowd show signs of breaking up the firing must stop. The injured must be assisted to the hospital immediately. Of course, every individual officer has to make a report of his role for the record.

79. Can the police hold me in a secret place or not tell anyone that they have got me?

No. The police are known to do this often but this is against the law. As soon as the police take you into their custody, your physical well-being and the protection of your rights becomes their responsibility. If you come to any harm or your rights are not respected but violated in any way the police are responsible. This is an important legal point to keep in mind.

Next, the fact that the police are duty-bound to make a record of all those who come to the station in their station's general diary will indicate what time you were brought in for questioning and when the arrest was made. This will also be in the case diary of the investigating officer. The police control room must also display an updated list of all those arrested in the last 12 hours.

Finally, the fact that you are entitled to a lawyer during your interrogation means, at a minimum, that the place of custody must be known and accessible to friends or relatives.

80. Can the police officer hold me at the police station or can I leave when I want?

Unless you have been formally arrested for good reason you cannot be held in custody against your will. If the police have summoned you for questioning you have a duty to cooperate with them and help them with their inquiries. But the questioning has to be prompt and efficient and cannot go on and on. The police cannot make you wait endlessly at the police station. In any case, you can leave when you want.

From the media

Attack on Mainland Labourers triggers Massive Rally for Justice; Two Arrested

APRIL 22, 2019 Roni Antony & Avinash Shahi
Port Blair, Apr 22: Thousands of mainland labourers of the Bengali community staged a peaceful march this morning from Bathu Basti to the IP&T parking lot in demand of justice against the manhandling of two labourers by two locals at Shiv colony in Dollygunj yesterday.

According to reports on 21st April morning at around 7:30 AM when a contractor named Jagannath and an old man were going out for their works, two people on Motorcycle named Abdullah Kutty and Nabeen, who are not a resident of Dollygunj area, suddenly stopped for asking an address. When Jagannath and the old man with him were unable to tell them the address the people of the motorbike demanded for the Identity proof of the labourers and when they denied saying that they don't have the authority to ask for identity card, Mr. Abdullah Kutty and Nabeen, reportedly started beating the old man and Jagannath.

Afraid of the attack when Mr. Jagannath and the old man started to run, the bikers hit Jagannath with a wooden block and kicked the old man on the chest. Jagannath was referred from Garacharma hospital to G B Pant where he received 13-14 stitches on the head.

Today labourers of the Bengali community staged this march in demand of justice against the

Continued on Page-3

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In Memoriam

[In the last issue as a token of observance of the foundation day of Bengalee Association, Bihar we reproduced the biographical sketch of its founder-president, the renowned barrister of Patna high court, Prafulla Ranjan Das written by Shyam Prasad Mukherjee some decades back. In this issue we observe his birthday, 29th April and reproduce two of his poems from an old collection of Indian English verses]

Two poems by Prafulla Ranjan Das
(29th April 1881 – 3rd September 1963)

A Lament.

Alas, alas!—the roses cried despairing,
That leaf by leaf our glory should decay!
That all our splendours should be earth and clay,
And dream-like fade for all our crimson daring!
No more the winds our raptures wide are bearing,
—No more our fragrance doth uplift the day,
And passionate pilgrims now no more do stray,
Around us dreamless, death's dark splendours wearing!
Yet shall we sigh and raise the mournful wail,
Because our Beauty now has ceased to be!
Nay, tho' to-day our youth and glory pale,
What is to-day to all Eternity!
For in fresh raptures of this radiant earth
Dead roses come again to crimson birth!

Youth and Age.

Do you remember, how one night,
When never rose a star on high,
We stepped into the dubious light
Beneath the silence of the sky,
—You wondered,—so did I!

Your life was of the sun and flower,
But mine was of the autumn leaf,
And we imagined every hour
Would take us farther from our grief,
Forgetting time, the thief!

And yet the thief was on the wing,
And caught me gray—but you, pure white!
And now because life's splendours cling
Unto the freshness of your light,
I wonder, was I right?

[From The Bengali book of English verse, 1918, Selected and arranged by Theodore Douglas Dunn with a foreword by Rabindranath Thakur, Pages 98-99]





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