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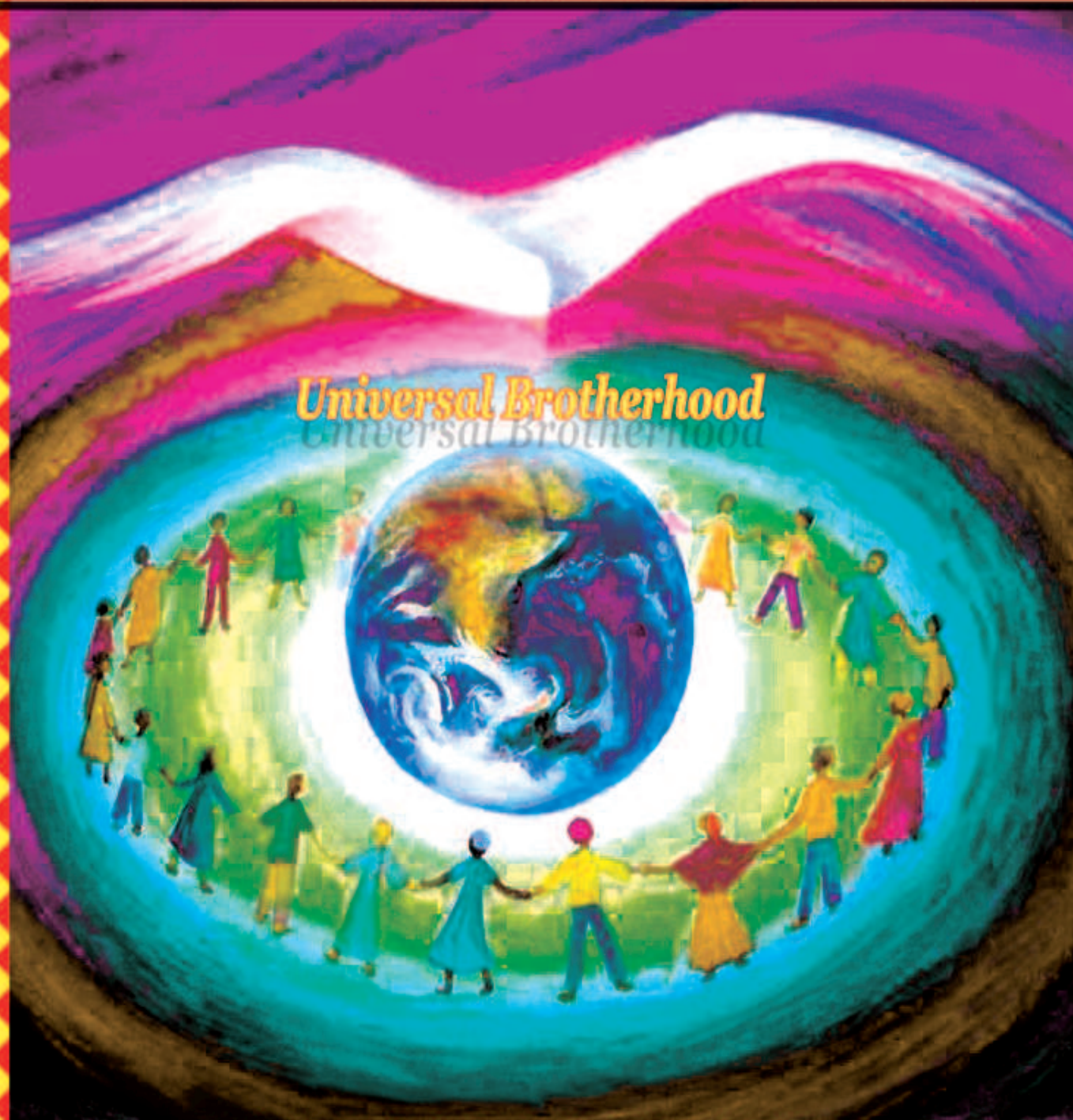
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HERITAGE EXPLORER

LET KNOWLEDGE COME FROM ALL THE SIDES

A Monthly News Bulletin

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1792-1867

Great French philosopher, educational reformer, and historian whose systematic eclecticism made him the best-known French thinker, and inspired philosophers like - Theodore Simon, Pierre-Joseph, Jules Barthelemy, Charles de Rémusat, Ralph Emerson and Jules Simon.

Victor Cousin

When we read with attention the poetical and philosophical monuments of India, **we discover there are endless truths,** and truths so profound, and which make such a contrast with the meanness of the results at which European genius has sometimes stopped, that we are constrained to bend the knee before **the philosophy of the East,** and to see in this cradle of the human race, **the native land of the highest philosophy.**

Source: *Hind swaraj and other writings*
by Mahatma Gandhi, edited by : Anthony Parel



1856-1939

Most eminent Irish poet, dramatist, essayist of twentieth century, who received the Nobel Prize in literature. Highly inspired by the Vedanta philosophy he also co-translated 'The Ten Principal Upanishads'.

William Butler Yeats

It was only my first meeting with the **Indian philosophy** that confirmed my vague speculations and seemed at once **logical and boundless.**

Source: *India and World Civilization* - by D. P. Singhal

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The title of the editorial may not be of interest for so many, as compared to the unfortunate and unpredictable incident that took place in a place called Dadri in U.P., where a person lost his life at the hands of a wild mob. Equally unpredictably it aroused a deep feeling among as many as 40 persons across the country, who were honoured at different times by the prestigious all India literary award Sahitya Academy Award for their brilliant works in their respective languages and fields of activities, which led them to return the Academy Awards. Two from Assam, as reported in the press, have returned, the award. One of them added that he is fed up with the fascist work and attitude of the central government. But more than a dozen of academy awardees of Assam did not join the way of protest by other compatriots.

One wonders how these brilliant personalities relate the Dadri incident to Academy Award, in that matter, to the govt. of India. Every year twenty scholars are awarded by Sahitya Academy. By now we have around 4000 such awardees. They very well could have formed a purely literary front with national and apolitical aspirations. From there they could have looked after the national interest. Individually even he or she has the power of pen (pen is mightier than sword) to express his or her resentment, disagreement through the present day powerful media. But instead they use this powerful media in a wrong way. Factually, out of 40, eight have returned the award in writing and one has returned the money.

They can return the memento of the award but how can they return the honour they received and enjoyed from the people of their states or region. Most interestingly these people did not go through the detail of Dadri incident. From the phone call of the victim, it is revealed that he seeing the mob and immediate danger called his friend Manoj Sisodia for help. Manoj in turn informed the police then and there and within 15 minutes reached his friend's home. He could not save him but rushed his wounded son to nearby Hospital. Police too came immediately to rescue the family and control the situation. Manoj himself is on threat of the trouble mongers.

Now, what these 40 personalities to say on Manojbhai?

All are mum. And this shows their political gimmick.

Kaviguru Rabindra Nath had returned his "Sir" title to British government in protest against Jallianabag Massacre. It is in TRUE SPIRIT. But sorry to say our these awadees, work resembles person blocking the road with tyre burning to place their demand before the government. The people traveling by the road has no sympathy or knowledge of the demand nor possess the power even to satisfy the tyre burners. Still they suffer and the other party get publicity and leadership.

The saddest part of the incident at Dadri is that it was made a political pilgrimage by many for party benefits even though the family of the victim requested them not to VISIT them and leave them in peace. The state government has taken care of the situation. The local M.P. has looked into the matter. And it ends there and then.

A research work on the motives and intention and political thoughts of these 40 personalities will be a socially important revelation. Stypothesis for Research : These academy awardees are more bent on left ideology than love and respect to the culture of Heritage the country. (prove or disprove it).

We condemn the mob, we express our deep feeling of sorrow to the family of unfortunate victim. We appreciate the state government and police for their sincere work and we praise Manoj Sisodia for his commendable work and his spirit that is inherent in Hindu Heritage.

But little remains to say good for the roaring forties of Indian literary world.

Editor

SANTERIA

What is Santería

Santería is a religious tradition brought to the United States by immigrants from Cuba in the latter half of the twentieth century. It originated among the Yoruba peoples of present-day Nigeria. The Yoruba were enslaved in large numbers in the first decades of the nineteenth century and brought to Cuba to labor in the island's expanding sugar industry. Perhaps as many as 500,000 Yoruba men and women came to Cuba, where they were called "Lucumi." The Lucumi established a strong ethnic presence in Cuba and created important cultural institutions that survived their enslavement and flourish today.

The word "santería" means "way of the saints" in Spanish and reflects the tendency of the Lucumi to correspond their deities from Africa, called "orishas," with the saints of the Roman Catholic traditions into which they were indoctrinated. This tragic history of forced acculturation has led some contemporary practitioners to reject the name "santería" as a colonial misnomer for an independent African tradition that might preferably be called "Lucumi religion," after its ethnic heritage, or "Orisha religion," after its deities.

The orishas are personal, cosmic forces that inhabit and energize the world of nature: mineral, vegetable, animal, and human. In theory, there are innumerable orishas—1,600 is a traditional number used to show the vastness of the pantheon—but in practice there are some sixteen that are widely known and venerated. Each orisha has a distinct personality, and is approached through its own songs

and dances with appropriate ritual foods, plants, and altar displays. The orisha Ogun, for example, is a hard, masculine deity, who as the cosmic blacksmith transforms the world through metals and tools. The orisha Oshun, by contrast, is a cool, feminine deity of the river, who works through the pliant, but no less powerful medium of water. Each orisha offers blessings and benefits to its devotees ranging from spiritual experience to practical assistance in finding jobs or maintaining health. The lore of the



orishas contains a very large pharmacopoeia and this tradition has been of inestimable aid in providing medical and mental health care to the urban poor. In the late twentieth century, hospitals in Miami and New York established cooperative programs with orisha devotees to try to meet the needs of people often poorly served by established health institutions.

Since its introduction to the United States in the latter half of the twentieth century, the veneration of the orishas has spread well beyond the original Afro-Cuban population. In the early years of the twenty-first century, Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, and other Latin Americans, as well as significant numbers of African Americans and

white Americans have embraced it. It is difficult to estimate the number of practitioners, as there are few public organizations or groups of congregations beyond the individual "houses," which typically claim twenty or thirty active participants. In the United States, the number of initiated priests and priestesses may number 50,000, while active participants are likely ten times that. As for those who might consult a priest or priestess for help, they number in the millions. Kindred orisha traditions are practiced throughout Latin America, particularly in Cuba, Brazil, Argentina, and Venezuela, making "santería" a world religion of growing influence.

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Why is It Called Santería?

Most practitioners of Santería prefer the name Regla de Ocha or the Lucumí religion. Although it's practiced today by people all over the world, Regla de Ocha is generally defined as an Afro-Cuban religion that originated in what is today Nigeria and Benin in West Africa. The word Santería comes from Spanish and loosely translates as devotion to the saints, or santos. Many practitioners of the Regla Lucumi refer to the Orichas, or the deities of the religion, as saints or "santos." This tendency to combine terminology and concepts from Catholicism and West African religions is sometimes

called religious syncretism.

Where Does Santería Come From?

Santería has its roots in the Yoruba people of West Africa. The slave trade brought many Africans to Cuba, Brazil, Haiti, the southern USA, Puerto Rico, Trinidad and other Caribbean basin nations. In Cuba, the slaves of Yoruba origin were called “Lucumí,” perhaps due to the mistaken belief that they all belonged to the Ulkumí tribe, or because the slaves addressed each other as Oluku Mi, meaning “my friend.”

Although most Africans were forced to convert to Catholicism upon arrival in the New World, many continued to practice their native religions at the same time. A common misconception is that Afro-Cubans blended the two religions into a single one, but a more accurate way to think about religious syncretism in Cuba is to say that the two systems continued parallel to each other in the minds of the Afro-Cuban people, who didn't see any contradiction between them. Practitioners of Regla de Ocha or Santería might describe themselves as Catholic, attend Catholic masses, and baptize their children as Catholic, while also practicing their African-based religion in their ilé, or Lucumí temple-house, in their own homes or in the home of a religious elder. While they know that the Catholic saints and the Lucumí Orichas are not identical, they find similarities between them, and they see no problem keeping a statue of Saint Barbara or the Virgen of Charity on a Lucumí altar, as another way of representing Changó or Oshún, two of the most popular Orichas in Cuba. For centuries, Santería was practiced as a somewhat “secret” religion as a way to avoid religious persecution or the negative social

stigma attached to Afro-Cuban culture in general. It survived as an oral tradition, passed down from one generation to another, through initiation ceremonies that created a tightly bound community and distinct lineages based on ancestors. As Cubans left the island, many took their religion with them, and Santería spread to the United States, Canada, Europe, and other South American countries.

Santería welcomes pope to Cuba with open arms

Dancing to the throbbing beat of sacred drums, the congregation circles a man lying face-down on the floor paying thanks to Babalu Aye, a deity in Cuba's Santería religion.

The African-rooted faith has existed in awkward overlap with Catholicism in Cuba since it was a Spanish colony.

But on Saturday followers are casting aside their differences with their strictly Catholic neighbors to welcome Pope Francis to the island with open arms.

The man at the center of the ceremony for Babalu Aye is 51-year-old Marcelo Zulueta.

As 20-odd fellow worshippers dance and sing around his prone body in the living room of an old colonial house in central Havana, he raises his head, shakes a maraca and gives thanks before a small altar covered in offerings to the deity.

Zulueta, a Cuban who lives in Germany, is holding this ceremony to show his gratitude for regaining his health after an illness.

He made the trip back to Cuba because he wanted to be here for Pope Francis's visit, but also to renew his ties to his Santería faith,

he said.

“It was very important to me to unite my Afro-Cuban and Catholic roots. They're very closely connected in my case,” he told AFP.

Around 70 percent of Cuba's 11 million people practice syncretism, the blending of traditional Christianity with African religions that arrived on the island with the slaves imported during colonial times.

Only about 10 percent describe themselves as Catholic, once the dominant faith.

The Santería tradition has survived both the hostility of the Catholic clergy and the state atheism the communist government decreed for more than three decades after the Cuban Revolution.

Today, many followers say they plan to turn out to greet the pope during his four-day visit.

“As pope, Francis has brought the honey that was missing in our lives,” said Juan Manuel Perez Andino, a “babalawo,” or Santería priest.

He said he has seen a subtle shift in the Church under the Argentine pontiff, even if the Vatican and the Cuban clergy still officially frown upon Santería.

“Now the Church lets us go there with the ‘iyawo’ (new initiate) to perform the ceremonies we need to,” he told AFP.

- Abstinence and animal sacrifice -

Santería has its roots in the Yoruba people of modern-day Nigeria.

Its adherents worship “orishas,” African divinities that have blurred over time with Cuba's most revered

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Chinese Duo Use 3D Technology to 'Resurrect' Bamiyan Buddhas in Afghanistan

Fourteen years after the Taliban blew up the world-famous Buddhas of Bamiyan, the giant statues were resurrected with 3D light projection technology in the empty cavities where they once stood.

The project is the initiative of a Chinese couple who used the technology to give new life to the statues in the cliff off the Bamiyan Valley by projecting Buddha's virtual images. The statues were located in Hazarajat, 230 kilometers northwest of Kabul.

The couple – Janson Yu and Liyan Hu – was saddened by the destruction of the two 16th-century statues. They obtained permissions from Afghanistan and

the UNESCO to bring the statues back for just one night.

The event, on June 7, saw projectors displaying huge holographic images of the exact size of the precious monuments that were damaged in the Taliban attacks. The display was accompanied by music.

"The projections were not widely publicized, but over 150 people came to see the spectacle. Crowds remained well into the night and some people played music while others looked on," a journalist who witnessed the show was quoted as saying by The Atlantic.

The statues of standing

Buddhas – measuring 115 feet and 174 feet respectively – were carved out of sandstone cliffs. They survived for more than 1,500 years. But the Taliban blew them up in 2001, as part of its campaign to remove all non-Islamic art from Afghanistan.

The statues were among the most famous cultural landmarks of the region, and the site was listed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site, along with the archaeological remains of the Bamiyan Valley.

Japan and Switzerland, among others, have pledged their support for rebuilding the statues.

(http://www.indiawest.com/news/india/chinese-duo-use-d-technology-to-resurrect-bamiyan-buddhas-in/article_130cecf6-133a-11e5-a296-5b4a1ee8a17c.html)

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SANTERIA

Catholic saints.

"I see them as being on the same level," said Zulueta. "I attach the same importance to Catholicism and Afro-Cuban religions."

The Virgin of Regla in Catholicism is Yemaya in Santeria, the goddess of the sea and fertility.

The Virgin of Charity, the patron saint of Cuba, is Ochun, the goddess of rivers.

Saint Lazarus is Babalu Aye, the protector of the sick.

Santeria's practitioners have traditionally been Cubans of African descent, but more and more whites are joining.

Novices must follow a strict one-year initiation ritual.

They must wear white from head to toe and observe a series of restrictions that include refraining

from touching anyone under any circumstances, including sexual relations.

Worshippers keep altars at home devoted to their favorite divinities, and unlike Christians ask them for immediate intervention in their lives.

When faced with difficulties, they consult their initiation godfathers or godmothers, who prescribe rituals to perform.

Often they involve sacrificing a chicken, a dove or a young goat.

Each ritual is different, whether it is to win back a lost lover, find a job, regain good health or harm an enemy.

Such rites can now be practiced in the open — a sea change from the years after Fidel Castro came to power in 1959, when he declared

the island an atheist state and unleashed a crack-down on both Catholics and "Santeros."

Those were the days when "we had to hide our saints. If they caught you, they punished you and you could lose your job," said Perez, who heads the Yoruba Cultural Association of Cuba, an umbrella group for Afro-Cuban faiths.

But in 1992, Cuba abolished official atheism and amended its constitution to embrace the freedom of religion.

Today, discrimination on religious grounds is illegal. "Why should we hide what we feel if it comes from our ancestors?" said Santeria practitioner Nancy Ferrer. "This tradition is centuries old. No one can force it to stop."

(<https://sites.google.com/site/theyorubareligiousconcepts/what-is-santeria>)

A Report on Resolution Adopted by ABVKA in its Annual Meet, 2015

Resolution No. 1. Make the Panchayat-PESA Act, 1996 Functional and Effective.

The Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) PESA Act, 1996 was enacted four years after the 73rd Constitution Amendment Act was adopted and Article 243 (M) was inserted in it in the year 1992 which is applicable in 10 states of the Scheduled Areas (SAs). These states are Rajasthan, Gujarat, MH, MP, CG, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Odisha, Jharkhand and HP.

Panchayats of these 10 SAs states under this Act were provided many special powers; making them institute of local self government to enable function on many issues of governance-administration. These Panchayats have been structured of 4 tiers while the Panchayats outside the SAs are of three tiers, namely (1) Village Panchayat, (2) Block or Taluka Panchayat and (3) District Panchayat. The fourth tier of Panchayats in SA is Gram-Sabha; which is the most powerful and autonomous. The Act itself has a speaking provision to the effect that the functions and powers vested into the lower Panchayat couldn't be delegated to the higher one.

Chairperson of the Panchayats at all levels would be only from the Janjati community as per this Act. Gram Sabha (GS) will have ownership right over the Minor Forest Produces (MFPs/NTFPs), will be consulted before land acquisition and rehabilitation of displaced persons; and 29

subjects like prohibition of any intoxicants, protection against alienation of Janjati land and restoration of illegally alienated land, manage minor water bodies and control over the money lending by non-Janjatis, control over all social institutions and its functionaries like schools, hospital and Anganwadis etc; control over local plans, selection of beneficiaries, issue of utilization certificates of expenses incurred over schemes, concessions and licenses of minor minerals, customary mode of their dispute resolutions, protection of their customs, traditions and cultural identity have been entrusted to the GSs. The greatest recognition of these powers of GS was given by the Apex Court in the famous Vedanta Niyamgiri (Odisha) case of 2013.

Sec 5 of the PESA Act made it obligatory for all these states to make necessary provisions in all the acts, rules and regulations within a period of one year of giving assent by the President to this Act. But none of them except Maharashtra and MP did so, though they adopted it de jure due to this compulsion by 1997, but de facto, this implementation work is still going on, even after two decades.

If this Act is allowed to take place in its true spirit, many of the issues of Janjatis could be addressed locally, the unrest could be minimized, and corruption controlled, development activities speedup and benefits of welfare schemes would reach to those the

schemes are meant for. The Second Scheduled Area and Scheduled Tribes Commission has also written a lot about it; but no action taken so far.

Considering all these things seriously, Kendriya Karyakari Mandal (KKM) of ABVKA demands all the concerning state governments that:

1. All the Rules-Acts related to 29 subjects given to Panchayats under this Act should be adequately amended at the earliest in their states to make the PESA functional and effective,

2. Functions and powers meant for the Gram Sabha; which have been entrusted to the higher Panchayats by many states, should be restored in favour of the lowest Panchayats, the Gram Sabha or the Village Panchayat as the case may be,

3. Maharashtra has notified separate Scheduled Area Village vide its GO dated 19th May 2015 to enable small Hamlets, Tola, Pada or colonies to give them status of separate Gram Sabha under the PESA Act. Similar notifications should be issued by all other remaining 9 states of this effect. In absence of such notifications, the Village Panchayats have replaced Gram Sabhas and functioning as such; resulting into non existence/development of separate Gram Sabhas to the small Hemlates/Tolas/Padas/Colonies in these 9 states as provided in the PESA Act. This will not only assure affective implementation of the PESA Act but will also be helpful

in implementing the Forest Rights Act effectively,

4. Similarly, all the SA states should constitute District level Convergence Committees for protection and management of CFR to assure affective implementation of the PESA and the FRA jointly in their states; as the Maharashtra has Notification vide its GO dated 12th June 2015.

5. All the ten Hon Governors of the SA States are also requested to initiate necessary actions in their governments in order to make the PESA functional and effective as the Hon President has urged them in the Governors' Conference held in February this year. The Constitution has given them special powers and duty of protecting the Janjatis; which should be entertained by them independently – discretionarily,

6. KKM demands Ministry of Tribal Affairs/Union Government to put in place a permanent system of call a separate joint annual conference of CMs, Tribal Welfare Ministers and Hon Governors of SA States to assure effective and time-bound implementation of PESA and other provisions of Fifth Schedule in these states.

Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram calls upon all its workers and urges all the social, political leaders of Janjatis and Voluntary-nongovernmental Organisations working among them; to aware, organize and educate the Janjatis and at all others at appropriate levels by time-bound programs for making this importan work a great success.

**Resolution No. 2.
Governments Should Stop
Deceiving the Forest Rights
Act to Assure Implementation of**

laws in Inclusive Spirit.

Almost a decade ago, the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 (FRA) was passed. Janjatis and other traditional forest dwellers are dependent on forest at large scale. The work of settlement-recognition of these traditional rights related with livelihood means are being perpetually neglected since the colonial time which continued till sixty years of independence. To remove historical injustice, as accepted even in the Preamble of the Act itself, this Act was enacted.

This Act was the result of long struggle of Janjatis, became target of deceiving since its inception and the Act enacted in early 2006 was made applicable in January 2007. This long gap of a year was used in establishing 34 Projects of Tiger Reserves to defeat provisions of the already enacted FRA. Later, the spirit of the Act was missing in the Rules notified under the Act which are still being amended. The state governments started implementation of this Act in an arbitrary way following which the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, the designated Nodal Agency for its implementation has been compelled to issue continuing guidelines-interventions. The sequence of accusing this Act as an obstacle in the way of development which commenced in the tenure of UPA 2 is still continued till now.

The interface which was between the Janjatis and the forest department against and due to this historic injustice prior to the enactment of this Act, has now been changed between the

forest ministry and the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA)-being designated Nodal Agency. News in media of this effect has become a common thing.

The PESA Act, 1996 is applicable only in 10 states having Scheduled Areas while the FRA is equally applicable in whole of the country. These both laws are supplementary to each other.

The debate of development versus Janjatis Rights-forest rights has reached a new height with the cases of POSCO and the Vedanta; and the deceiving Janjatis, their rights and step-motherly treating them and the MoTA by the governments have become more sharpen. Few such instances are being given as under:

1. Attempts to give ownership rights and control over minor forest produces (MFPs) and management; which are enjoyed by the Gram-Sabhas as of now, to the forest department in Maharashtra by summoning special Gram Sabhas (GSs) on 15th August last year,

2. Such attempts were observed in CG state in similar way by summoning Spl Gram-Sabhas on 15th August this year and directions to obtain No Forest Rights (FRs) Claims pending certificates from them in spite of the fact that no work of recognizing FR has taken place in 4 out of 18 districts. Moreover, the status of awarding Community Forest Right (CFR) is NIL in 16 out of 18 in the state. Same is the story of Jharkhand where they have fixed a deadline of 2nd October of this year for this work.

3. The agenda of the GSs

was dictated by the two states referred above which is solely the power and privilege of GSs, governments can simply suggest. Attempts of obtaining No FRs Claims pending certificates are ultra virus as there is no provision as such in the FRA. It is matter of relief that both states withdrew the impugned GOs due to immense public protests, timely intervention by the MoTA and Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram.

4. Notifications of Village Forest Rules, 2014 under the Indian Forest Act (IF), 1927 in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh are also in similar line and clearly violation of the FRA 2006 and the PESA Act 1996. The Parliament has passed legislations like Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, Biodiversity Act, 2002, Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, PESA Act 1996 and the FRA 2006 after independence. These legislations have reduced both utility and relevancy of the colonial law of IF 1927. Until and unless a new legislation of IF taking into consideration all the five enactments referred above is enacted to replace the IF of 1927, notifying rules and regulations under the IF 1927 contravening provisions of the 5 laws referred above, will be ultra virus and termed disregard to the authority of the Parliament. The forest department wants to recapture functions of forest settlement and management-Nistar, marketing of MFPs and dividends in profits through the Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMs); and into its own hands and control through the JFMs. All such functions and powers have now been vested

into the GSs and the Communities under the PESA Act and the FRA.

5. Government of India is moving towards not to go to Gram Sabhas for its consent in cases of diversion of forest lands for any project proposal if those are outside of Schedule Five or Six areas; and are subject to public hearing for Environment Impact Assessment (EIA). Whether the Public Hearing for EIA may be alternative of Gram Sabhas' consent? So many issues are related to livelihood means of Janjatis- their generations to come, their life-culture, grazing area and cremation ground etc on such forest land. Such forest land may be given subject to some conditions, given or not, all such issues are quite different with issues of EIA.

Attempts to obtain consent from Village, Block or District Panchayats instead from GS are another area of concern. Higher level Panchayats are always under constant pressure of the government and the administration, very distantly represented of the project affected persons and this reduces their negotiating powers as well.

Both the above steps are being taken simply through executive orders, without obtaining nod of the legislature which is unfair and ultra virus.

6. The Ministry of Environment and Forest (MoEF) has urged all the states in a recent circular asking them to lease 40% of their barren-forest lands to private sector for developing forests on it and the

produce of such developed forest would be utilized by them for their industries. Private Sector was trying hard for this venture since last two decades.

Though this is a new initiative; but the Janjatis have been restricted to avail just 10-15% of produce of such developed forest which is clearly a violation of the FRA.

7. The MoEF has hired services of two private institutes to suggest amendments in the environment laws and framework to implement recommendations of the T.S.R. Subramanian Committee. This Committee was constituted by the MoEF in August last year. Earnest and Young (E&Y) Mumbai; and Amarchand Mangaldas and Suresh A. Shroff & Co; these two Attorney Firms are to be paid Rs 1.33 crores for this contract.

The fact that E&Y is engaged in profession of providing facilitation services in obtaining EIA Reports to the Private Players. The said Subramanian Committee has been in controversy since its constitution due to its way of working, absence of any expert member and making recommendations going beyond the mandate given to it. One of such recommendations is to suggest amendment in the consent clause of the Gram Sabha under the FRA which (FRA), even doesn't include in the list of Six Acts given to the Committee by the MoEF for review. The Committee accomplished its task within three months!

The departmental Standing Committee of the Parliament

rejected the Report of the Subramanian Committee in July this year considering all the points mentioned above. The Standing Committee recommended that the Government should consider of constituting a fresh Committee for review of environmental laws.

The Kendriya Karyakari Mandal (KKM) of Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram (VKA) deeply considered all the facts mentioned above. This is also a fact that the work of implementing the FRA has moved very slowly even after passing a decade of its applicability; specially in implementing the Community Forest Rights; the progress of 10% of the desired work done so far.

The Hon PM directed the concerning authorities at centre to pace this work and complete it in a time bound manner. This was a welcome step on part of the PM, though might be intended to remove restraints and delays in clearance of the Projects proposed on forest lands. But the over enthusiastic system in states and at center tried to implement it in a haste and impractical way, violating the provisions of the FRA; as is clear by examples of Chattishgarh and Jharkhand mentioned in para 2 above.

VKA is of firm opinion that the Janjatis too dream for fast development, want to see the country developed very soon and wish even to be a part in it. But for this, all stake holders in development (including Pvt Companies) should deal them with the spirit of honesty, transparency and equality. Janjati

Society is simple, great hearted and a patriotic one. The deceiving and diplomatically treating them since last six decades should be stopped. We will be able in creating development friendly environment and thereby gearing up development tools faster if they too are made partners in development of the country.

KKM of VKA demands the central and all the state governments with this spirit that:

1. The implementation of the FRA should be trained done in a time bound manner and special campaign across the country, specially the work of recognizing the CFRs under Sec 3(1) (i) of the Act. The time frame of the campaign should be framed adequately practical, the machinery responsible for its implementation should be trained and their transfers should be avoided during the campaign,

2. Assure implementation of the FRA equally in 7 states of the NE and in the Protected Areas across the country. Many communities-Villages have ownership over forestland in many of the NE states. The provisions of compensatory afforestation (double of the land diverted for any project/non-forestry purpose has to be given in addition for plantation in such cases) as provided in the Forest (Conservation) Act (FCA) 1980 and directions of the Apex Court in this regard should be reviewed.

3. FRA 2006, PESA 1996, FCA 1980, Wildlife Protection Act 1972 and such many enactments have been made since independence due to which the

utility and relevancy of the Indian Forest Act, 1927 is mingled down. Hence enactment of new Indian Forest Act has become need of the new era, simply amendments in the IF 1927 will not serve the purpose. Unill such a new law is enacted, Village Forest Rules, 2014 under the Indian Forest Act (IF), 1927 in MH and MP should be scraped and no other state should enact any new law till then which may defeat provisions of the FRA and the PESA.

4. Center and the State governments should restrain in diversion of forestland through executive orders bypassing the provisions of the FRA and the PESA and should not tinker with the twos. Janjatis should be taken into confidence, made part of development; and address their due concerns arising due to projects by EIA and SIA, nation can be moved fast on the path of development, inclusive growth and everlasting sustainable development; which will be in the longer interest of the country,

5. Issue of handing over forests into private sector should be reviewed in all respects, specially giving due regards to the policies and laws like FRA and the PESA concerning livelihood means of Janjatis. Gram Sabhas should be consulted and consent obtained so that their interests related to MFPs and CFRs are protected in any way.

VKA calls upon all its workers, socio-political leaders of Janjatis and all Voluntary Organisations working among them to play their active role in all the above works.

Kids Fare Better When Taught in Mother Tongue

NEW DELHI: Studying mathematics scores of the same set of kids in multiple rounds of tests, a researcher has concluded that kids learn better in their mother-tongue. Data gathered on kids attends Telugu Medium in Andhra Pradesh - "on average perform significantly better as compared to English medium students" once factors such as native ability, household characteristics and "parental aspirations" are considered and "controlled for."

P Sree Kumar Nair of Division for Child Studies, Centre for Economic and Social Studies and UNICEF, used data collected as part of the Young Lives longitudinal study in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana from 2002 to 2011.

His paper investigates the "effects of medium of instruction on learning levels" in general, not just the ability to pick up languages. Mathematics scores from two rounds of tests administered in 2006-07 and 2009-10 to the same batch of 915 children born between January and June 2001 were considered. Though English-medium schools are now preferred to and are

proliferating, Nair argues that "learning levels of students can suffer at lower levels of schooling" if they have English as medium of instruction. This impacts the poor most as there is rarely any support from the family in learning English or basic concepts in it.

"I wanted to understand why there are variations (differences) in the achievements of the kids. With a big sample the impact of various factors on learning becomes evident and clear. Also, Data on the same students in multiple rounds can explain the variations," he says. While the final conclusion is on the medium of instruction, Nair used a wide variety of data covering "child, household, school and community characteristics" gathered by Young Lives through household as well as school surveys. Not all factors are equally significant.

The difference in the student-teacher ratios in English and Telugu medium schools is highly significant, with three stars (stars denote level of significance with three as the highest) as is the difference in the proportion of permanent teachers. Telugu-medium school teachers are

better paid in both rural and urban areas - as most are in government schools - but there are significant differences in weight, height, wealth and mother's educational levels with rural English medium schools performing better than Telugu ones. As Nair points out in most cases, the English medium schools are private.

As more such variables are factored in, the effect of medium of instruction becomes sharper.

Nair's analysis shows that "Telugu medium students at primary levels have performed better, as observed after controlling for children's nutritional and time use characteristics."

"The step towards transition of the language of instruction and its consequence in terms of perceived economic gains in the labour market is still unclear. Moreover, insistence on instruction in English is certainly a barrier for the poor, rural and lower caste students," writes Nair.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/education/news/Kids-fare-better-when-taught-in-mother-tongue/articleshow/49212516.cms>



A world-acclaimed book lunched by Governor and Education Minister of Maharashtra

A world-acclaimed book, entitled 'Great minds on INDIA' (Marathi edition) - authored by a Northeast-based writer/ researcher Shri Salil Gewali has been jointly launched yesterday (14th Oct'15) by the Hon'ble Governor of Maharashtra Shri Ch. Vidyasagar Rao and the Education Minister Shri Vinod Tawde at Raj Bhawan in Mumbai. The function was attended by several dignitaries and renowned scholars including the Joint Commissioner of Police Shri VV Laxminarayan, the former president of Reliance Industries Shri D. Murali, et al.



The Governor applauded Mr Gewali's research work and said that hardly a few Indians are aware of the fact that a galaxy of western giants were also inspired by the ancient wisdom of India. Through this book the whole world will know the contribution of India in the development of modern academia and philosophy. The Education Minister in his speech remarked that this eye-opening book by Mr Gewali will inform and inspire us all about how those greatest scholars from the West discovered the wealth of wisdom in the ancient literature which we have hardly acknowledged.

A research-based book of quotations assiduously pieced

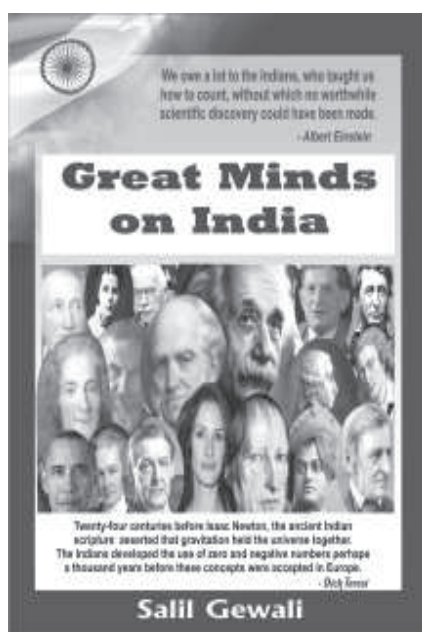
together by Mr. Gewali since 1988 is highly commendable that strives to highlight how the celebrated scientists, thinkers, writers, poets, statesmen such as – William Wordsworth, Friedrich Hegel, Voltaire, Johann Goethe, Ralph Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Werner Heisenberg - a co-founder of Quantum Physics, T. S. Eliot, HG Wells, Mark Twain, Bernard Shaw, Erwin Schrodinger - father of Quantum mechanics, Carl Jung, William Butler Yeats, got their intellectuals nourishment from the ancient literature of INDIA. The compilation has long been drawing the attention of many eminent writers and scholars from across the world. A note NASA scientist, Dr. AV Murali is the Chief Editor of the Book.

A US scholar Ms Sherrie Lake (Texas) claims - "Great minds on India?" is extremely enlightening. This book has inspired me to learn more about

India and her precious treasures of knowledge which are universal! Following the ancient wisdom I am on the right path and I am also proud to be a representative of the Universe now (not US, Texas), the idea I learnt from the ancient texts of INDIA". M Sherrie is an ardent follower of the classical of India

In the book, the world-famous Irish poet, dramatist, and recipient of Nobel Prize, William Butler Yeats asserts – 'It was only my first meeting with the Indian philosophy that confirmed my vague speculations and seemed at once logical and boundless.'

The Marathi edition has been translated by a noted Marathi scholar Smt Deepa Joshi and edited by the former Additional Chief Secretary of Maharashtra Smt Leena Mehendale. Gewali's book has already been rendered into Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Marathi, Gujarati, Malayalam, Kannada and Nepali.



ABAM declaration needs rethink and review

- T. Nukshi, Tuli

The ABAM declaration of intervening the Ao Traditional Customary practice of invoking divine judgement, published in Tir YimYim on 30th Sept 2015 needs Rethink and Review. As per the ABAM press release publication, we are now running nearly 150 years after the advent of the Christianity to Ao land. But many of the honourable Ao Traditional customs and practices are using with great respect and honour in the Socio – cultural, political and religious life of the Ao people at the village democratic republic till today. Even before the advent of the gospel of Christ to Ao land, our forefathers had a traditional religious faith and belief that there is an immortal God called Kodaktsüngba (God of Heaven) other than mojing (Satan) since the time of forefather the Aos believe that, Kodaktsüngba is eternal heavenly God who is just and truth in pronouncing judgement.

Thus since the time of forefathers, it has been a traditional customary practice of the Ao people to lodge a dispute case to the court of village Putu Menden. But when a case of serious dispute between two person or parties is found too complicated to pronounce the verdict (judgement) by the court of law, the last option is to invoke divine judgement by means of swearing on oath taking by both the dispute persons or the parties. If both the parties agree to settle the dispute case by taking the oath of invoking the divine judgement, they will sign a pledge in the court in presence of the

attorney or the legal authority.

A specific period is given by the court to observe taboo and fasting by both the parties till the stipulated date of taking the swearing on the oath of invoking the divine judgement. The divine judgement is invoked by means of eating earth by both the parties which is a symbolic act of swearing on the oath of invoking the divine judgement upon the guilty person or the guilty party.

This traditional custom of oath taking on invocation of the Divine judgement in making settlement of a sensitively disputed case has been honourably practised by Ao people from the time of our forefather till date. If the ABAM had been on the stand that the Ao traditional customary practice of swearing on the oath of invoking divine judgement is sinful and against Christian religious faith and belief, why the ABAM was sleeping silently for nearly 150 years from the date of the advent of Christianity to Ao land till the ABAM executive emergency meeting held on 29th Sept 2015. ABAM should have given constant guidance on the proper use of Ao traditional customary practice during all the appropriate times. But it is very surprising to see that the ABAM office convinced an executive committee emergency meeting on 29th Sept 2015 to take a sudden decision of ABAM intervention on the use of Ao traditional customary practice only on noticing the stipulated date of swearing on the oath of invoking divine judgement on a Milak Water dispute between two

villages. To my sincere opinion, decision on a critical case and complicated issue should be deliberately discussed in the ABAM Central Council meeting before making decision.

Further, I would like to state that since ABAM has its specific duties and functions to deal with church administration and spiritual development ministry, ABAM should not interfere in civil administrative affairs which is dealing by the village Putu Menden / Village Council, and state authorities basing on the Naga customary law and constitutional law of our country. In our village democratic republic, the village Putu Menden (Village Council) deals only with the public administration works and it does not interfere with the local church administration. The church administration and State administration are very distinctive. Therefore, we should maintain the sanctity of the ABAM office avoiding ABAM involvement in worldly dispute issue.

We all know that there are some important Ao traditional customary practices and traditional belief which are honourably and strictly using till today by the Ao people without any intervention by the ABAM. For example; (1). Traditionally, Ao people believe that the unnatural death falling from tree, drowning in water, killing by animal etc, are the consequence of serious sin committed by the individual, parent or by the forefather and such unnatural death are

Contd. to Page 24

R.N. Ravi meets Manipur leaders

- Khelen Thokchom

Imphal, Sept. 11: Tore move doubts and assure confidence the Centre's interlocutor, R.N. Ravi, has "assured" civil society organisations of Manipur that care will be taken "not to hurt the sentiments" of the state's people while hammering out a peace deal with the NSCN (Isak-Muivah).

Ravi arrived here yesterday to talk to citizens' organisations on the Centre's peace process with the NSCN (I-M). His visit coincided with the start of a 15-day ban on all national and international projects imposed by the United Naga Council (UNC), a strong supporter of the NSCN (I-M) peace process, against the passage of three bills by the Manipur Assembly on August 31.

Ravi met chief minister Okram Ibobi Singh and representatives of the UNC, United Committee Manipur, All Manipur United Clubs Organisation and Committee of Civil Society Kangleipak.

He continued the consultation process today by meeting representatives of the Kuki Inpi Manipur, the apex body of the Kukis, and delegations of political parties and government college teachers.

"We urged Ravi to take into consideration the interest of various ethnic communities living in Manipur when making a

peace deal with the NSCN (I-M). Ravi assured us that the peace accord will be in the interest of all and will not hurt sentiments of anybody," M. Tombi, president of the JD (U)'s Manipur unit said.

Len Gangte, secretary general of the party, said they clearly told Ravi that any step for the betterment of Nagaland would be welcomed but any move to affect the neighbouring states would not be accepted.

C. DOUNGEL, former minister and a member of the Kuki Inpi delegation, said the delegation urged Ravi to do justice to all while settling the Naga issue.

Sheela Ramani, who was among the delegation of the Federation of Government College Teachers' Association, said the teachers urged Ravi to do "justice" to all communities living in Manipur.

While Ravi held the consultations, women vendors shut down Imphal city to protest the Centre's move to sign the framework agreement without informing the state government and the people of Manipur.

"When he returns to Delhi, Ravi should convey very clearly to the Centre the sentiments of the people here and also our demand that Manipur should not be broken up," Th. Rani Devi, a leader of the women vendors, said.

The women vendors also called a 24-hour Imphal city bandh today to protest the manner in which the framework agreement was signed.

During Ravi's stay in Imphal, construction of the Jiribam-Imphal railway line was severely affected because of the ban imposed by the UNC.

The UNC's move came after the passage of the Protection of Manipur People Bill, the Manipur Land Revenue and Land Reforms (Seventh Amendment) Bill and the Manipur Shops and Establishments (Second Amendment) Bill, which the organisation termed "anti-tribal". The UNC is also opposed to a recent Manipur Assembly resolution urging the Centre to give constitutional safeguard to Manipur's boundary.

Supply of essential commodities and vehicular movement along the Imphal-Dimapur highway (National Highway 2) was also affected after a joint action committee of the Sadar Hills imposed a 24-hour strike along this route from midnight last night.

The people of Kangpokpi in Sadar Hills, Senapati district, marched against the three bills yesterday.

(http://www.telegraphindia.com/1150912/jsp/northeast/story_42090.jsp#.VhtDc-yqqko)

S.C. on Citizenship Rights to Chakmas, Hajongs in Arunachal

The Supreme Court has Recently directed the central and Arunachal Pradesh governments to confer the citizenship rights on the “eligible” Chakmas and Hajong people coupled with steps to protect their lives and liberty and guard them against any discrimination.

Allowing the petition by the Committee for Citizenship Rights of the Chakmas (CCRC) of Arunachal Pradesh, a bench of Justice Anil R. Dave and Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel in their judgment said: “We direct the government of India and the state of Arunachal Pradesh to finalise the conferment of citizenship rights on eligible Chakmas and Hajongs.”

Directing the compliance of its direction within three months from Thursday, the court also directed both governments to “ensure compliance of directions a for protection of their life and liberty and against their discrimination in

any manner.”

The court said that the exercise for the grant of citizenship to Chakmas and Hajongs people may be “completed at the earliest preferably within three months from today”.

Stating that it found merit in the contention of the petitioner CCRC, Justice Goel, pronouncing the judgment, said: “It stands acknowledged by this court on the basis of stand of the government of India that the Chakmas have a right to be granted citizenship subject to the procedure being followed.”

“It also stands recognized by judicial decisions that they cannot be required to obtain any Inner Line permit as they are settled in the state of Arunachal Pradesh”, the court said.

Referring to history to drive the point that Arunachal Pradesh was an integral part of India since ancient times, the court said that

was “well known that the Chakmas and Hajongs were displaced from the area which became part of East Pakistan (now in Bangladesh) on construction of Kaptai Dam and were allowed to be rehabilitated under the decision of the government of India.”

Referring to the earlier decisions of the apex court, Delhi and Gauhati High Court, the judgment said, “they need to be protected and their claims of citizenship need to be considered as per applicable procedure”.

It further said that “they could not be discriminated against in any manner pending formal conferment of rights of citizenship. Their status also stands duly a acknowledged in the guidelines of the Election Commission of India”.

(http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/grant-citizenship-rights-to-chakmas-hajongs-in-arunachal-says-sc-115091701089_1.html)

Student Parliament in Delhi for NE, Tribals, Women

Tribal, women and northeastern students representing universities across India are set to take part in a Student Parliament in Delhi here to discuss issues faced by them and draw the governments attention towards the need for safety and development plans for them. The three-day parliament, which will be held between Oct. 1 to 3, is being organised by Akhil Bhartiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP). The event will be inaugurated by Union Tribal Affairs Minister Jual Oram. While first day



will be dedicated to tribal students at a seminar entitled, “Tribal Student-Youth Parliament”, the remaining two days will be for “Women Student Parliament” and “North East Student-Youth leaders Parliament”. “The agenda of the Parliament is to kick-start some deliberations among the students

who come from every nook and corner of the country,” ABVP National General Secretary Shrihari Borikar said in a statement here. The aim of the event is “to hammer out a feasible solution and place it in front of the government”. “The report on issues arising out of the discussions of the three parliaments will be handed over to the ministries concerned in the form of a memorandum,” he added.

(<http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/student-parliament-in-delhi-for-ne-tribals-women/1/486097.html>)

Neglected Xatras Battling Oblivion

When it comes to protecting xatra land from relentless encroachment, the Tarun Gogoi government has cut a sorry figure over the years. Even when the Congress was in power at New Delhi, the Prime Minister's Office in January last year had to ask for details from the State government about steps taken to clear encroachments from xatra lands. Nothing much came out of that missive, though the Axom Xatra Mahasabha has quoted government figures of a staggering 6,576 bighas of xatra land continuing to be under illegal occupation. Recently the Mahasabha has written to the Prime Minister's Office, urgently seeking a directive to get xatra land cleared of illegal Bangladeshi settlers. The likelihood of concrete measures on the ground remain slim, rather the issue may again be politicised in the assembly election by parties. It is a fact though, that many xatras are staring at bleak futures with little revenue for sustenance, highly vulnerable to their land being grabbed by hordes of settlers and unscrupulous developers, with no security at all against marauding gangs of criminals. The problem is particularly acute in Dhubri, Goalpara, Barpeta, Nagaon and Morigaon, though xatras in several

other districts too are under threat. The Xatra Mahasabha has also referred to the earlier report by Northeast Policy Institute (NPI) on xatra land encroachment, which had revealed disquieting figures. As much as 90 per cent and more land of Bordua xatra, Patekibori xatra, Rampur xatra, Bali xatra and Jania xatra were found under illegal possession three years back, so the situation must be worse now. Encroachers have grabbed 460 bighas of Barpeta xatra, 450 bighas of Adi Alengi xatra in Lakhimpur, 161 bighas of Vishnupur xatra in Goalpara and 195 bighas of Simalabari xatra in Bongaigaon, which are but a few examples of the worsening crisis. Even directives by the Gauhati High Court has failed to stir the State government to take action.

As if severe land encroachment is not enough, many xatras have also been hostage to gangs of thieves, dacoits and vandals. More than 800 xatras and thousands of namghars have been broken into and looted. Money and ornaments donated by devotees have been stolen from strongboxes, priceless manuscripts and religious artefacts have been destroyed in Somoriya, Patbausi, Ganakkuchi, Sundaridiya and many other xatras.

Xatradhikars who have protested this state of affairs, have in turn received death threats. Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi, in charge of the Home department, has time and again promised to strengthen the security of xatras and expedite probe into such criminal activities. All his promises have proved hollow, with the issue figuring in the Assembly to no avail. Criminals targeting xatras, namghars, temples and such other places of worship have hardly ever been identified, let alone nabbed. When the State government has never shown any urgency in protecting xatras from land-grabbers and criminals, its benign neglect comes as no surprise when several other xatras battle flood and erosion damage. The situation is parlous in Majuli and Barpeta, with 12 historical xatras in Majuli lost forever and 22 others relocated, while as many as 24 xatras swept into oblivion by the Brahmaputra and its tributaries. Devotees across the State may have celebrated the 567th birth anniversary of Srimanta Sankardeva on Wednesday with much fervour — but for concerned observers, the gradual descent into oblivion of many xatras cannot but evoke dismay.

(The Sentinel – 25/09/2015)

Indian scientists decode Tulsi plant genome

Indian scientists have deciphered the entire genetic make-up of Tulsi, a herb widely used for therapeutic purposes. The genome map will help in making new medicines using the plant. A multi-institutional team led by Sowdhamini Ramanathan from the National Centre of Biological Science, Bengaluru revisited the age-old knowledge of the plant and

its medicinal effects in their laboratories.

The plant synthesises a wide range of bioactive compounds, known for their anti-bacterial, anti-fungal, anti-pyretic and anti-cancer properties. These compounds are metabolites, compounds that are a by-product of plant metabolism, typically used for plant self-defence. These metabolites are very poorly

understood because of lack of genomic information. Sowdhamini and team have produced the first draft genome of *O. tenuiflorum* Krishna subtype, which is an important step in understanding and identifying the genes responsible for production of metabolites with medicinal properties.

(The Sentinel: 15/09/2015)

Developing North-east

The DoNER Ministry, which was set up to expedite the fledgling development process of the remote and backward North-east, has fallen short of delivering the goods expected from it. This is because it lacked a focused thrust on the critical developmental needs of a region beset with ills stemming from decades of neglect. Vision and long-term planning will be integral to the success of the DoNER, and for this to happen, there is an urgent need for tapping the natural and human resources of the North-east. That the region has remained underdeveloped all these decades despite its vast resources is a pointer to the lack of vision of successive governments at the Centre. It is only now that the region is starting to figure in the Centre's scheme of things. The last UPA regime saw liberal flow of funds to the region but it failed to translate into tangible development. This, again, is a poor commentary on long-term planning and transparent implementation. Prioritizing the needs of the North-

east and preparing a roadmap of development on its basis has never been as urgent as it is now. And this is precisely here that the DoNER Ministry has a key role to play. Boosting agriculture and allied activities is imperative to the region's progress. Endowed with favourable geo-climatic conditions, the North-east's immense potential in this sector has remained untapped largely due to the absence of technological interventions and market linkage for the farming community.

Harnessing natural resources in a sustainable manner and generating employment, including self-employment avenues, are two urgent needs to tackle the deep-rooted underdevelopment plaguing the region. Of equal importance is to ensure protection to the unique biodiversity and forest wealth that the region possesses. Regrettably, the management of this vast treasure has been amateurish with the consequence that much of the natural heritage now lies degraded. Power is another critical need of the North-east, and grandiose plans are

already afoot to harness the region's huge hydropower potential. This warrants extreme caution on the part of the Centre and the respective State governments, because such a massive intervention on the geologically and ecologically fragile Eastern Himalayas is likely to be catastrophic. A single mega dam in the form of the Lower Subansiri hydel project has understandably generated a lot of heat, with its opponents voicing grave concern over the likely adverse fallouts. With the expert committees still re-viewing the project, drawing a final conclusion in haste would be unwise. And even if the Lower Subansiri project is cleared by the expert panels subject to certain modifications in dam height and structure, the plan for harnessing 60,000-odd MW power from 100-odd big dams in Arunachal Pradesh is something totally uncalled-for. There can be absolutely no need and justification for the North-east to jeopardize its own survival just to feed power to the rest of the country.

(The Assam Tribune: 06/09/2015)

Bengal to declassify 64 files on Netaji

West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee on Friday announced that 64 files on **Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose** lying with the state's home department would be declassified and put in public domain from next Friday.

Acknowledging that there was a long-standing demand for the declassification of the files on Bose, Banerjee said there might be one or two more files in the

possession of the government.

"A total of 64 files are there with us. There may be one or two more files also. After properly reviewing all the files, we have decided to put them in the public domain from next Friday," she said.

"We decided to release the files so that everybody can see them. We don't feel that there is anything related to internal

security in the files. Everybody wants to know about what happened to Netaji. He was a brave son of our soil and he was from Bengal," she said.

The chief minister also announced that the record of the freedom struggle from 1937 to 1947 would be digitized in order to preserve history.

(The Times of India: 12/08/2015)

Missing Panchen Lama living 'Normal Life': China

BEIJING: A young Tibetan who vanished two decades ago after he was chosen by the Dalai Lama as the second-highest figure in Tibetan Buddhism is "living a normal life" and does not want to be disturbed, a senior Chinese official said on Sunday.

The remarks are a rare admission of the fate of Gendun Choekyi Nyima, now 26, who was six years old when he was taken

away after exiled spiritual leader the Dalai Lama named him as the Panchen Lama.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the disappearance of Gendun Choekyi Nyima, whose fate remains of deep concern to many Tibetans. "The reincarnated child Panchen Lama you mentioned is being educated, living a normal life, growing up healthily and does

not wish to be disturbed," said Norbu Dunzhub, a member of the Tibet Autonomous Region's United Front Work Department, in response to a question from Reuters at a press conference.

He denounced the Dalai Lama for declaring the boy as the reincarnation of the Panchen Lama, saying the selection "ignored historical customs and destroyed religious rituals".

(The Times of India : 08/09/2015)

India tops Asia in sending scientists and engineers to US: Report

WASHINGTON: Among Asian countries, India continues to be the top country of birth for scientists and engineers who have made the US their destination for key research and development, latest data has revealed.

With 950,000 out of Asia's total 2.96 million, India's 2013 figure represented an 85 percent increase from 2003, according to a new report from the National Science Foundation's National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES).

From 2003 to 2013, the number of scientists and engineers residing in the US rose from 21.6 million to 29 million.

"An important factor in that increase over the same time period, the number of immigrant scientists and engineers went from 3.4 million to 5.2 million," the report noted.

Of the immigrant scientists and engineers in the US in 2013, 57 percent were born in Asia while 20 percent were born in North America (excluding the US), Central America, the Caribbean or South America.

"While 16 percent were born in Europe, six percent were born in Africa and less than one percent were born in Oceania.

"Immigrants went from making up 16 percent of the science and engineering workforce to 18 percent," the NCSES statement read.

In 2013, the latest year for which numbers are available, 63 percent of US immigrant scientists and engineers were naturalised citizens, while 22 percent were permanent residents and 15 percent were temporary visa holders.

Since 2003, the number of scientists and engineers from the Philippines increased 53 percent and the number from China, including Hong Kong and Macau, increased 34 percent.

The NCSES report found that immigrant scientists and engineers were more likely to earn post-baccalaureate degrees than their US-born counterparts.

In 2013, 32 percent of immigrant scientists reported their highest degree was a master's (compared to 29 percent of US-

born counterparts) and 9 percent reported it was a doctorate (compared to 4 percent of US-born counterparts).

"The most common broad fields of study for immigrant scientists and engineers in 2013 were engineering, computer and mathematical sciences, and social and related sciences," the report revealed.

Over 80 percent of immigrant scientists and engineers were employed in 2013, the same percentage as their US-born counterparts.

Among the immigrants in the science and engineering workforce, the largest share (18 percent) worked in computer and mathematical sciences, while the second-largest share (eight percent) worked in engineering.

Three occupations - life scientist, computer and mathematical scientist, and social and related scientist - saw substantial immigrant employment growth from 2003 to 2013.

(<http://www.siasat.com/news/india-tops-asia-sending-scientists-and-engineers-us-report-848148/>)

Hindi A Link Between Ancient Civilisation & Modernity: President Pranab Mukherjee



President Pranab Mukherjee on described Hindi as a link between the country's ancient civilisation and modern progress and hoped that it will soon get recognition as the official language of the United Nations.

Addressing a function organised on the occasion of 'Hindi Divas', the President said Hindi has achieved a number of milestones since Independence and it is credited to be the vehicle of Indian thought and culture.

"The language is also a link between our traditional knowledge, ancient civilisation and modern progress. Our efforts should be to increase the use of Hindi in science and technology, so that participation of all, including the rural population, can be ensured in the progress of the country," he said after conferring awards to individuals and government organisations for taking special efforts for promotion of Hindi.

Mr. Mukherjee said Hindi has its own imprint on the fast

changing global economic scenario as millions of Indian diaspora around the world are using Hindi as a link language and this has given a new identification to Hindi at the international level.

"I am sure that with our joint effort, Hindi will soon get the recognition of the official language of the United Nations," he said.

The President said it was essential that simple translation of literature pertaining to technical knowledge is made available in Hindi and other Indian languages.

He said he was happy to note that in offices, the use of Hindi in Information Technology is increasing.

The President congratulated the award winners for their commendable work in Hindi and urged everyone to come together to propagate the use of Hindi.

Speaking on the occasion, Home Minister Rajnath Singh expressed concern over Hindi not getting prominence in various spheres of life the way it should

have got.

"We have not given the kind of respect we should have given to Hindi. Some so called intellectuals still continue to try to promote English," he said.

Mr. Singh said he has nothing against any particular language but Hindi is the only language which connect every part of the country.

"75 per cent people in the country either speak Hindi or understand Hindi. In every village of the country, people either speak their mother tongue or Hindi, even if little. But they don't know English. Demand for making Hindi official language came first from non-Hindi speaking leaders like Bal Gangadhar Tilak," he said.

The Home Minister said big technology companies have been giving stress to promotion of Hindi in a big way and as per a survey, among all languages, the maximum 94 per cent content is generated in Hindi while just 19 per cent content is generated in English.

"No doubt they are promoting Hindi for commercial reasons but they know the reach of Hindi," he said.

Mr. Singh said even though Tamil is considered to be the oldest Indian languages after Sanskrit, the reach of Hindi is widest and hence it is considered the eldest sister of all Indian languages.

(<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/hindi-a-link-between-ancient-civilisation-modernity-says-president-pranab-mukherjee/article7651707.ece>)

Concept of universal brotherhood

- Nivedita Bhide

September 11, the day Swami Vivekananda spoke in the Parliament of Religion in Chicago, has been celebrated as Universal Brotherhood Day. Eknathji who started the Vivekananda Kendra as a thought movement, wrote: "The remedy for the ills of our country lies in launching a mighty movement of right thought sweeping the entire country. It has to be a two-pronged move. On the one hand, it is to be aimed at transforming our people's inherent God-wardness into the right spiritual urge rising out of the teachings of the *Upanishads*, namely, (a) each soul is potentially divine and (b) faith in God.

It was these *Upanishad* principles which Swami Vivekananda propounded in the West in front of the elite of the world. When the elite in the West appreciated his exposition, the elite in our country also valued these principles. As per Swami Vivekananda, brotherhood is possible if it is based on principles and not personalities.

Diversity is the rule of nature. So how can mankind be brought together into brotherhood? It is only in the unifying principle which lies beyond the apparent diversity that humanity can be made to come together. Swami Vivekananda said, "I have become used to hear all sorts of wonderful claims put forward in favour of every religion under the sun. 'Let me lay before you my reasons why I think that it is Vedanta, and Vedanta alone, that can become the universal religion

of man, and that no other is fitted for the role. Every one of the great religions in the world excepting our own is built on historical characters but ours rest upon principles... It is in vain... to gather all the people of the world around a single personality. If it ever becomes possible to bring the largest portion of humanity to one way of thinking in regard to religion, mark you, it must be always through principles and not through persons."

The Sanatana Dharma, as it is practised by the Hindus and so also is called as Hindu Dharma is based on *Upanishadic* principles which are compatible with the science, with the rational aspirations and convictions of the modern man. Vivekananda said, "...The second claim of the Vedanta is that, of all the scriptures in the world, it is the one scripture the teaching of which is in entire harmony with the results that have been attained by the modern scientific investigation of external nature."

Swami Vivekananda explains in one of his lectures how in the world history the search for One was always there whether in religion or in science. Swamiji asserted, "And I am sure, most of you know the amount of bloodshed, of tyranny, and of brutal savagery that this religious conquest entailed." As we know, this assertion that 'My God alone is True' and 'The way I pray is the only right way of praying' is still causing bloodbath in the world, whether it is the wars in Iraq, Syria or Israel or the senseless bomb

blasts and terrorist attacks in Mumbai or Punjab. The search for the One, the greatest God, has gone wrong. The claim of only One God being true cannot bring peace or brotherhood.

In India, too, the search for the greatest God started and fortunately for India and even for the whole humanity, the sages here did not conclude that only one God had to be the supreme most and so its authority had to be established. They saw it was One which has manifested as many. It was the greatest discovery for the survival and brotherhood of humanity Swamiji says beautifully, "India alone was to be, of all lands, the land of toleration and of spirituality; and, therefore, the fight between tribes and their gods did not take place here. For one of the greatest sages that was ever born found out here in India even at that distant time, which history cannot reach and into whose gloom even tradition itself dares not peep, in that distant time the sage arose arid declared, *Ekam Sat Viprah Bahudha Vedanti* (He who exists is One; the sages call him in different names.) This is one of the most memorable sentences that was ever uttered, one of the grandest truths that was ever discovered. And for us Hindus, this truth has been the very backbone of our national existence."

Apart from this wonderful principle that 'God is One but appears as differently and can be invoked in various ways', the man though having separate body-

mind complex is sharing same spiritual Oneness with all. It is that One which has expressed as many and, therefore, though apparently we are different, spiritually we are one. The real nature of each one of us is divine, i.e., *Ishvara*. In this realization, there is not just brotherhood but Oneness with all: This great principle of Vedanta is for the world for ushering in Universal Brotherhood. We have to apply this principle within our country to raise our masses, to be one with them who were neglected for centuries during foreign invasions. Vivekananda said, "The other great idea that the world want from us today is the eternal grand idea of the spiritual Oneness of the whole universe... It is the one great life-giving idea which the world wants from us

today, and which the mute masses of India want for their uplift, for none can regenerate this land of ours without the practical application and effective operation of this ideal of the oneness of things."

Brotherhood is possible if everyone behaves responsibly and with concern for others. The fear of Satan or the commandments of any personage cannot perpetually make man moral and ethical. Swami Vivekananda said, "The rational West is earnestly bent upon seeking out the rationality of all its philosophy and its ethics; and you all know well that ethics cannot be derived from mere sanction of any personage, however great and divine he may have been. Such an explanation of the authority of ethics appeals

no more to the highest of the world's thinkers; they want something more than human sanction for ethical principle of truth as the sanction of ethics. The infinite Oneness of the Soul is the eternal sanction of all morality that you and I are not only brothers but that you and I are really one. This Oneness is the rationale of all ethics and all spirituality"

Religious awakening means experiencing the presence of God in one's own self and in the world and not exploiting the world or bombing innocent women and children out of existence. Understanding of spiritual Oneness makes one conscious of the divine within and urges him to work for its manifestation and enables him to grow spiritually.

(The Assam Tribune: 11/09/2015)

A Success Story

Milestone for ISRO

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is justifiably basking in the global acclaim of its Mars spacecraft completing one full year on Thursday, even as it is set to cross half century mark in launching foreign satellites soon. Till date, India has commercially launched 45 satellites for other countries, and it is gearing up to launch six more foreign satellites by next week. On September 28, a PSLV rocket is scheduled to soar into orbit to position the country's first dedicated multi-wavelength space observatory ASTROSAT, as well as four satellites of the US and one each from Indonesia and Canada. Over the next five years,

ASTROSAT will observe the universe through optical, ultraviolet, low and high energy X-ray components of the electromagnetic spectrum, which is expected to help in understanding the universe. As for Mangalyaan, it has already completed 120 orbits around Mars in one full year, sending back stunning images of the Red Planet. Pronounced a hundred per cent success, Mangalyaan has enough fuel to move in the Martian orbit for 15 years more. The fact that India fast-tracked its Mars mission by putting Mangalyaan in orbit within 18 months of its inception, and at the unbelievably low expense of Rs 450 crores with no cost or time overruns - has set a benchmark

other countries will struggle to emulate. As of now, India is in the exclusive Mars club with US, Russia and the European Union. Interestingly, the ISRO is now leveraging the resounding success of its Mars mission to get a better look at the Moon with the Chandrayaan-2 mission, planned to have an orbiter, lander and rover to study the lunar surface and atmosphere. The mission is expected to go full steam once the technology of ISRO's cryogenic engine matures sufficiently, which will be at the heart of its heavy-duty GSLV launcher. With the latest four successful launches of the GSLV rocket, ISRO is right on course in its journey to space.

(The Sentinel: 25/09/2015)

Statistically Around 250 Indian languages disappeared since 1961

- AJIT PATOWARY

GUWAHATI, Sept 10 - Of the around 1,100 languages India had in 1961, around 250 have disappeared. As every word is a dictionary by itself, since it contains so much of history, it is very important for us to retain our historical memory in order to conserve our languages.

This observation was made by noted scholar Prof Ganesh N Devy. He said emphatically, "We have to conserve our languages."

Prof Devy launched the People's Linguistic Survey of India in 2010 to know the number and health of the Indian languages. Prof Devy was talking to his correspondent here.

The world today has around 6,000 living languages, as per the UNESCO estimation. Scholarly studies are indicating that nearly 4,000 of these languages will disappear within the next 30 years.

He said several reasons are there for such a development. For

instance, in the process of evolution of the human brain, radical changes are taking place in the neurological structure, which is a major cause for this development. Again, creation of the artificial memory chips is affecting language structures, he added.

If we go on increasing artificial memories, we will be losing our languages, warned Prof Devy. The linguistic survey initiated by Prof Devy is complete now. The findings of the survey are now being published in English (50 volumes), Hindi (33 volumes) and in other regional languages (12 volumes) of the country.

The survey covered 780 Indian languages. It is assumed that there are around 850 languages in India now. Around 3,000 volunteers took part in the survey all over the country. They included the people ranging from the best of the linguists to the village farmers.

It needs mention here that after

the Linguistic Survey of India, conducted between 1896 and 1924 by the late Sir George Abraham Grierson (1851–1941), the survey led by Prof Devy was the first such survey conducted in the country. Thus, there is a gap of around 100 years in this area. It needs mention here that Sir Grierson had obtained information on 364 Indian languages and dialects.

Prof Devy was a teacher of English literature in the MS University of Baroda. He also won the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1994 for his work in the area of literary criticism and literary philosophy. He left MS University in 1995 to work with the tribal communities of Western India comprising the States of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. In these four States there are around 80 tribal communities and Bhils constitute the majority among them, Prof Devy said.

(<http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=sep1115/at055>)

Chinese Varsity Sends Bamboo-based Admission Letters

A university in China's Zhejiang province is in the spotlight for their admission letters made from bamboo.

According to the Zhejiang A&F (agriculture and forestry) University, researchers at the school have developed technology to cut bamboo into ultrathin slips. The slips are pieced together and turned into

soft, flexible paper after processing, reports Xinhua news agency.

Miao Lujia, an official with the university, said the new material is easy to preserve and can help ease the shortage of wood.

"The bamboo-based paper is eco-friendly, considering the fast growth rate of bamboo. Hopefully the letters will not only impress the

new students, but also heighten their sense of environmental protection," he said.

Besides, bamboo is a material with rich cultural connotation, since bamboo slips were used as a main writing material in ancient China, he added.

(<https://in.news.yahoo.com/chinese-varsity-sends-bamboo-based-admission-letters-113802068.html>)

Politicians in India Appease Muslims which Annoys Hindus: Taslima Nasreen

-Tarun Khanna

New Delhi, October 18, 2015: Reinforcing the need to end pseudo secularism, noted Bangladeshi writer Taslima Nasreen has questioned the double standards of writers protesting against 'growing intolerance' in India.

In an interview to the Times of India, Nasreen said that when her book was banned in West Bengal and when five fatwas were issued against her, most of the writers chose to remain silent. Indeed, some also went further to appeal to then CM of West Bengal Buddhadeb Bhattacharya to impose ban on her book.

"They have decided to raise voice against injustices by

returning their awards. There is nothing wrong with it. Sometimes somebody gets an idea, others like it. But,

"Most secular people are pro-Muslims and anti-Hindu."

many writers are guilty of double standards when it comes to dissent," TOI quoted her as saying.

When asked about her views on secularism in India, Nasreen said most secular people are anti-Hindu.

"Most secular people are pro-Muslims and anti-Hindu. They protest against the acts of Hindu fundamentalists and defend the heinous acts of Muslim fundamentalists. Politicians appease Muslims for votes. This annoys many Hindus. In Canning, a Hindu village in West Bengal, was burnt down by Muslim fanatics in 2013. If Muslims were brutally persecuted in India, they would have left India for neighbouring Muslim countries like Hindu minorities have been leaving Bangladesh and Pakistan since Partition.," she further added.

(http://zeenews.india.com/news/india/most-secular-liberals-in-india-are-pro-muslim-anti-hindu-taslima-nasreen_1811269.html)

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ABAM declaration needs rethink and review

hereditary. The dead body of such victim is not allowed to bring into the village. But the dead body is buried out side of the village grave, all the material things belong to the victim are treated abominable and the material things and commodities including the dwelling house are abandoned and thrown out as a symbolic act of purification, and clearing from the inherited sins and that the victim's family members would not face such unnatural death again in future.

The observation of taboo and fasting for 3 to 6 days by bereaved

family and closed relatives after the funeral day, and the washing and bathing of the bereaved family members on the 3rd or 6th day as a symbolic act of separating the alive from the death by water is still practising by the Ao community. Shutting the village gate (Inkishipang) discommunicating between the people of two enmity villages on certain disputes, observing untouchnability and abominably between the two village people are still in practice. The Ao traditional religious practice of observing Moatsü Festival invoking blessing

from Lijaba Tsüngrem, Anüngtsüngba, Kodaktsüngba in the first week of May, and the observation of Tsüngremmong Festival as thanks giving to Lejaba tsüngrem still practising annually by the Ao people. Thus, if all the aforesaid Ao traditional customary and traditional religious practices are not able to intervene by ABAM, it should rethink and review its declaration of intervening the Ao traditional customary practice of swearing on the oath of involving divine judgement.

(<http://www.nagalandpost.com/PostMortem/PostMortemDetails.aspx?p=UE0xMDA2NDAy>)

The Lion, the Camel, the Jackal and the Crow

There was once a jungle that was ruled by a lion called Madotkata, who had a leopard, a jackal and a crow at his service, along with other animals.



As they did regularly, they were wandering about the jungle one day, when the lion saw a camel at a distance. This camel had separated from its caravan and was feeding itself on the green grass of the jungle.

The lion took a fancy on this animal that he had not seen before, "Let us go and ask this extraordinary animal, where he comes from."

The crow, who flies to far-off places was aware and replied, "Master, it is called a camel and this animal lives in villages. The flesh of this animal tastes good, let us kill it and eat it."

But the lion disagreed, "He does not belong to the jungle, so

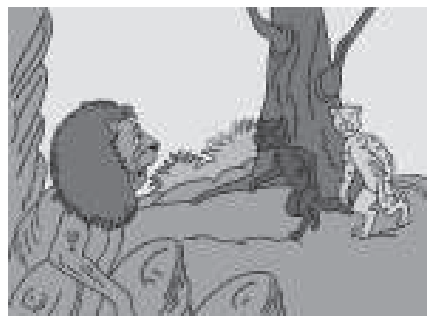


he is our guest. I will not kill it. Please go and assure him that no harm will be done, and bring him to me".

As per the lion's instruction, they went to the camel and assured him that they were to bring it to the lion. They won its confidence, and they brought the camel to the lion.

The camel stood before the lion and bowed. He also narrated how he had gotten separated from his caravan and how he had reached the jungle.

On hearing this, the lion said, "Oh Camel, if you return to the village you will be made a beast to carry burden again. Stay in the



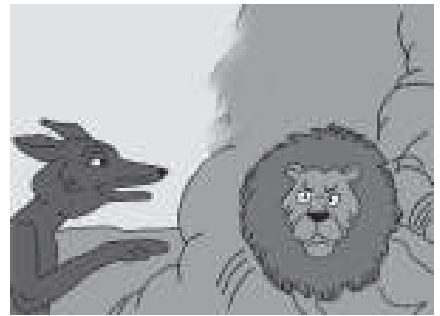
jungle under my kingdom instead. You can feast on the abundant green grass of the jungle without any fear."

The camel accepted the offer, and they began to live together in peace.

Later one day, the lion got severely wounded in a fight with a mad elephant. Such were his injuries that he could not take a few steps, let alone go out of his for hunting.

Due to lack of food, the lion

became weaker. The animals who served him were also starving since they were dependent on the lion for their food.



When the lion could not bear anymore, he called them and said, "Go and find any animal that I can prey upon even in my weak condition. This way I can provide food for you, and also for myself."

All the animals wandered about the jungle without any success to find such an animal. On their way back, the jackal had a plan.

He said to the crow, "There is no point wandering about the jungle when the food is right in front of us. The camel can provide us with the food for all of us for a long time."

The crow replied, "Indeed, what you say is correct. But the master has assured the camel of his safety under his rule. He will refuse to kill him."

The jackal said, "Leave that to me. I will influence the master in a manner that he will agree to feast on the camel. You wait till I return after a discussion with the lion".

The jackal met the lion and



said, "Master, we have been looking all around the jungle but could not find an animal for you. All of us have not had food for so long that we can hardly walk properly. Under this circumstance, if you agree to kill the camel, his flesh can provide food for all of us".

The lion disagreed, "Shame on you! How can I kill the camel when he has my assurance that his life will be safe under my kingdom. It is a sin to think likewise."

But the jackal continued, "Master, it would indeed be a sin to kill him after you have given him the assurance of his safety. But if he offers himself as your food by himself, it would then not be a sin to kill him and accept his offer."

The jackal continued, "What good are we, if we cannot be of our master's service in his time of need. Please kill one of us for yourself, and the others to save the rest of us from dying of hunger."

The lion failed to justify the jackal and said, "Please do what you think would be in the best for all of us."

After this, the jackal returned to the other animals and declared, "Our master is sick and weak. If something happened to him, there would not be anyone

to protect us. We have failed to get any animal after wandering throughout the jungle. The only way now to repay our debts to our master would be to offer ourselves to him. This way the rest of us would be saved from dying of hunger too."

As planned, all of them stood before the lion and bowed. They informed the lion that they did not succeed to find any animal for their food.

The crow said, "Master, we could not find an appropriate animal for your food. So, I offer myself. Please eat me to save yourself from hunger."



The jackal interrupted, "You are too small to provide flesh for the master. Even if he agrees your offer, it will not be enough for his survival. Indeed, you have proven your devotion and by offering yourself, you have already freed yourself from the debts of the master."

He turned to the lion and said, "Please accept my offer instead."

The jackal stood humbly before the lion, "Master, please eat me to save yourself from hunger. If you accept my sacrifice, I will be honoured with a place in heaven".

On hearing this, the lion shook his head in refusal. This way, the

other animals started offering themselves, but the lion kept refusing to accept their offer.

The camel who was observing all this thought, "All of them speak beautifully about offering themselves, but the master refuses to kill any of them. I shall seek to impress the master in a similar fashion."

Thinking such, the camel said to the other animals, "You have offered yourself, but the master cannot eat you because all of you are carnivores and belong to the same category as the lion himself. Stand by, for I shall offer myself".

With this, the camel came forward and bowed before the lion.

He said, "Master, you need not kill any of these animals. Please eat me instead. I offer myself in return to your debts. I shall find my way to the heaven, if you may please accept my offer".

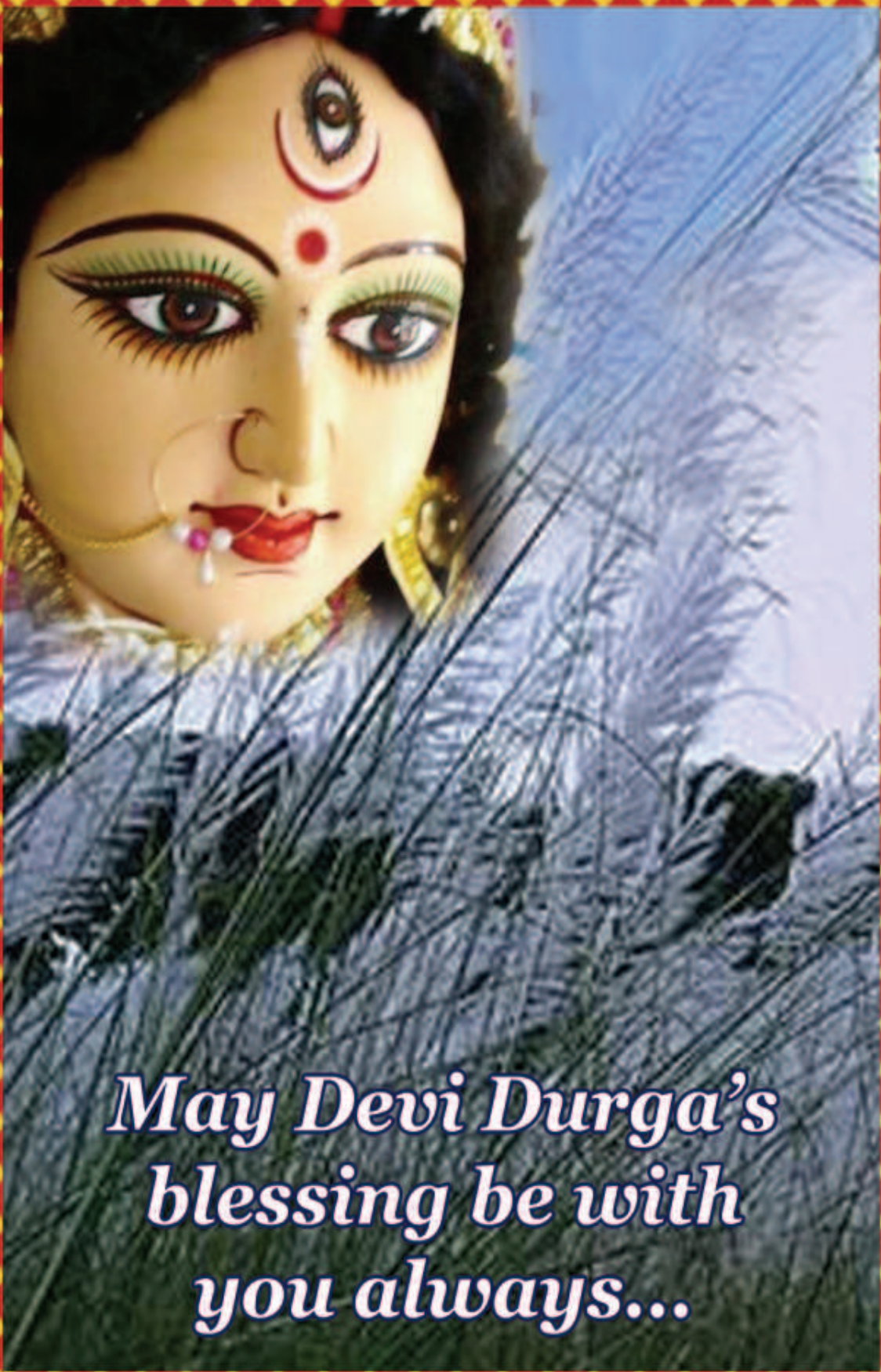
No sooner had he made the offer, the other animals cheered. Having already been influenced



by the jackal, the lion jumped on him. He was killed, and eaten by all the animals together.

The wise indeed say:

Always be on guard when you are in the company of wicked people. Do not be taken in by their sweet words.



*May Devi Durga's
blessing be with
you always...*



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