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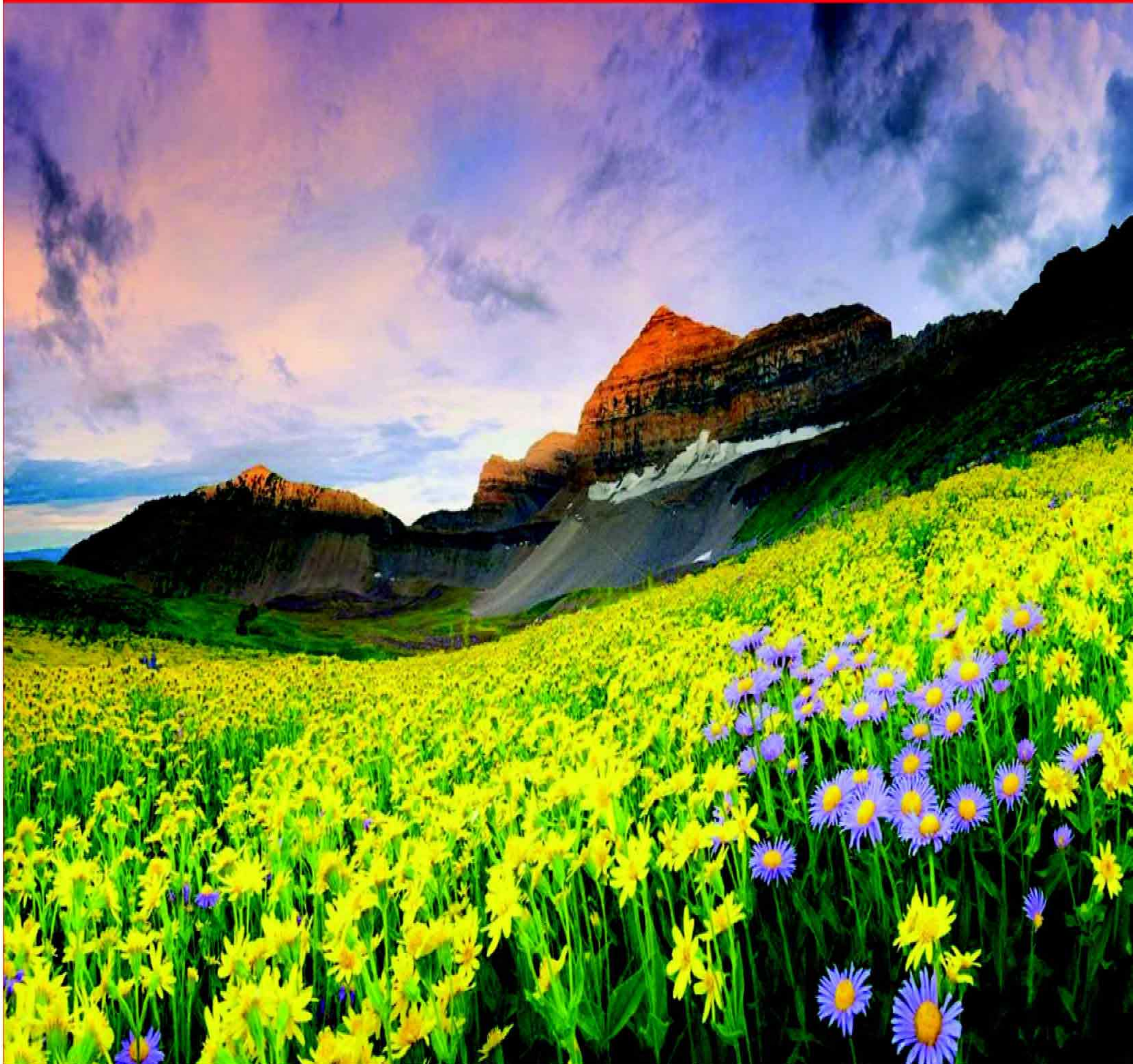
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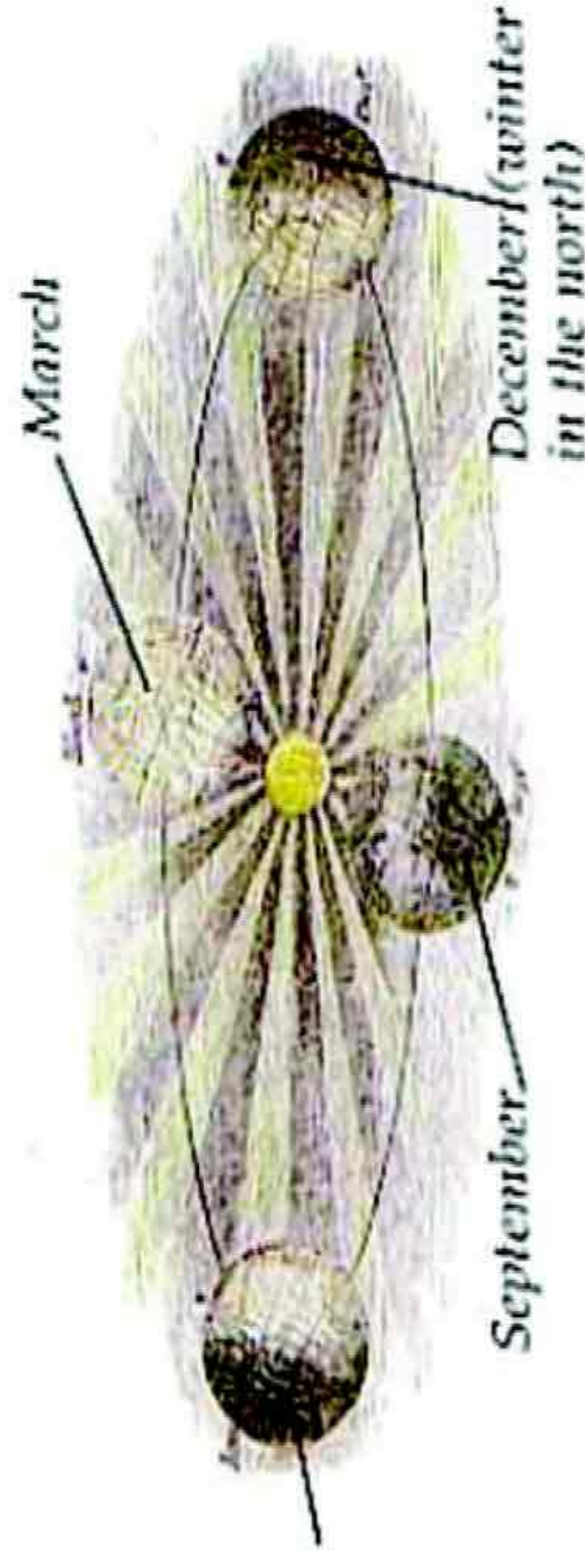
LET KNOWLEDGE COME FROM ALL THE SIDES

A Monthly News Bulletin

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India's
contribution
to the rest of
the world



Bhaskaracharya calculated the time taken by the earth to orbit the sun hundreds of years before the astronomer Smart.

Time taken by earth to orbit the sun: (5th century)
365.258756484 days

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International Day Of Yoga – Its Relevance

11th December, 2014 can be reckoned as a most memorable day for India, because on this very day the permanent representative of India at United Nations introduced a draft resolution in the United Nations General Assembly for earmarking 21st June as the International day of Yoga. The Draft text received unconditional support from 117 full member States; the highest number of co-sponsors ever for any United Nations General Assembly resolution and the text was finally adopted without a vote, on this day. It took less than three months to be declared as the World Yoga Day by the United Nations General Assembly after Sri Narendra Modi had called for its adoption on 27th September, 2014. The formal declaration was made on 11th December, 2014. It was the first ever in the history of UNO that the initiative of any country has been proposed and implemented in the UN Body within 90 days. The full credit for adoption of the World Yoga day resolution should go to our beloved Prime Minister Modi.

The Indian effort and the international support was nothing but extraordinary. Equally extraordinary was the day chosen for the purpose. 21st June is the longest day in the northern hemisphere and shortest in Southern hemisphere. From the perspective of Yoga the summer solstice marks the transition to Dakshinayana. Lord Shiva, the Adi Yogi, is said to have began imparting the knowledge of Yoga to the mankind on this day and thus became the first Guru, the Adi Guru. Dakshinanyan is also considered a time when there is natural support for those pursuing spiritual practices.

As we all know Yoga is a 5000 years old physical, mental and spiritual practice of India. It aims to transform both body and mind. Yoga, the union, reflects the union of individual

consciousness with that of universal Consciousness, a perfect harmony between mind and body, man and nature, a holistic approach to health and well being. Harmony and peace for humanity is the essence of Yoga. Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his address to the UN General Assembly stated that Yoga is an invaluable gift of the India's ancient tradition. It embodies unity of mind and body, thought and action, restraint and fulfillment, harmony between man and nature, a holistic approach to health and well being.

Prime Minister Modi has done what he could do for our country and the world in the true Indian spirit of *"SARVE BHAVANTU SUKHINA"*. Now it is our turn to follow the path of implementation of the yogic practices and make the world a place full of happiness and well being. We should also commit ourselves to fulfill the objectives of World Yoga Day by spreading the amazing message of the natural benefits of yoga and connect our brethren to the nature. It is also our duty to draw attention of the people worldwide towards the holistic benefits of yoga and help in reducing the challenge of life threatening diseases by making them aware of the physical and mental diseases and their solution through the practice of Yoga. We must remember that that humanity at large is today suffering mostly from life style diseases which require urgent reversal. This can only be done by educating the people about the unhealthy practices and promoting the good practices as prescribed by our ancient Yogic masters. No tablets, capsules or medication can do this. Regular Yoga practice is the only way to win over all the health challenges and restoration of the mental peace and balance. We should work unitedly and dedicatedly to achieve the aim of *'SARVE SANTU NIRAMAYA'*.

Editor

Ethno Tourism And Beyond

Dr Ranga Ranjan Das

Last week I was browsing the TV channels catering movies. I kept on switching from one movie to another and may have seen most of them on offer. Finally I tuned myself to a previously unseen movie *Rock on 2* and kept on watching the same for a while. The movie was in fact the second edition of an earlier hit "*Rock on*": - a musical thriller. As the movie progressed, I found it very interesting due to a very important reason. The places, plots and the people of the picture appeared to be familiar to me. The location of movie was none other than a place of our neighbouring Meghalaya. It is a known fact that the Bollywood film makers prefer to shoot their films at outdoors locations of foreign countries. However, in the movies like *Koyla*, *Rangoon*, attempts were made to rely on the locations within our country. It is not totally unknown to our film makers that states of Assam, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Tripura, Mizoram, and Nagaland including Sikkim are blessed with abundance of natural beauty and scenic landscapes. The evergreen forests, undulating hills, turbulent streams and mighty rivers and lakes are aplenty in the region. The literal connotation of the names of some of the states carries the enigma of 'Red River and Blue hills', 'Rising Sun' and 'Abode of clouds' etc. But for reasons unknown the north east region failed to get the deserving preference of our film makers.

The exceptional natural beauties, climatic condition, the unique cultural practices of the matrilineal society have been attracting people to Meghalaya since quite some time past. Perhaps, British liked the climate of Meghalaya and so Shillong was chosen as capital of undivided Assam. The kith and kins of British family liked to visit Shillong as tourists. This preference still continued during post Independence period. Both domestic and foreign tourists regularly frequent Shillong and Cherrapunjee, a few kilometres away from Shillong in Meghalaya. One can have a glimpse of paradise on earth from the beauty of the cascading waterfalls beneath the clouds, the pleasant progress through the undulating hills, the silence of the roadside forests, unending rows of different varieties of pine trees, patches of jhum field growing seasonal fruits

& vegetables, simplicity and friendly nature of the local population, heavenly smiles of the innocent local kids and the purity of air & water. It is not the case of Meghalaya or Cherrapunjee only, rather entire north east states of our country. The entire region has tremendous tourism potential which is yet to be explored fully for one reason or the other.

Tourism is a growing industry across of the globe today. Every human being has an inherent desire to visit new places, new localities. The choice of location varies from people to people. Availability of the resources, hotel and transport infrastructure, and socio-political situation are some of the factors which influence the choice.

In these days of globalization, people never like to visit any place without knowing the prevailing situation of the place and the country they wish to visit. Choice of the place to be visited is often influenced by the speciality of that particular area. Tourism experts and promoters have classified tourism into different categories viz. eco-tourism, heritage tourism, medical tourism, cultural tourism, religious tourism etc. The North East region of our country offers immense prospects for eco-tourism, cultural as well as religious tourism. Apart from these, there is another variety of tourism, aptly named as. 'Ethno tourism', which is quite popular with national and foreign tourists. This particular term may not be used in the literatures of tourism but it is found to be more appropriate in a broader perspective so far as north east Bharat is concerned. Often the various aspects of cultural tourism are discussed that can well be linked to with ethno tourism.

Ethno tourism, consisting two words have interesting dimensions. The meaning of tourism need no explanation while 'ethno' means people. Look at the diversity of various ethnic groups residing in the region. Their unique socio-cultural events, folklores, folk song, folk dances have attracted the attention of both domestic and international tourists. In Assam, we have seen *junbeel mela* (Jun Lake fair) few kilometres away from Jagiroad in Morigaon district. This is a unique festival of Tiwa tribe of Assam that exhibit age-old

glory of traditional barter system as well as an occasion to have a glimpse of the royal members of traditional Tiwa kingdom. In these days of modernization and market economy, the fair is significant as it promoted cashless exchange of goods and articles. While we are now trying hard to promote cashless economy through digitization in our country, the continuation of *junbeel mela* has attracted the attention of the world. This attraction is quite visible during the fair time. Tourists, scholars, researchers from far and near, who have participated in the fair, have in voice expressed that the ethno tourism is one of the best means for promoting tourism and brotherhood. The various governments of the north east region have got the message and are trying to organise similar events in their respective states. They are trying to build necessary infrastructure to increase the number of tourists besides sponsoring events. There are various reports of government sponsored events aimed at showcasing the uniqueness of the rich socio-cultural heritage of the indigenous population of North East. The Horn Bill Festival at Kisama village of Nagaland where uniqueness of the diverse culture of Naga tribes are exhibited can be cited as an example in this regard. Assam government has also made an attempt to attract tourist by organizing *Namami Brahmaputra* festival this year (see previous issue). Such attempts are always a boost for cultural tourism. The perspectives for ethno tourism are little bit different from the cultural tourism. Here tourists like to stay with a community and observe their life styles, their food habits, their cultural practises and their festivities from a very close quarter. Similar programmes such as educational exchange programmes and joint research activities are also being promoted by the Government as well as by the corporate. Nowadays many of our scholars are visiting foreign universities and taking part in programmes of their choice and interest. Similarly foreign scholars are interested to visit north east due to the presence of enormous areas of research on ethnic diversity. Our colonial administrators were good ethnographers who sowed the seed of ethno tourism in the region. Their works reveals their close association with various indigenous communities of the region. We should capitalise on their legacy and build upon it.

The process of ethno-tourism is operating at

various levels. Sometimes, it comes to notice and often remains unnoticed due to its being a small scale affair. Here, the role of a tourist is not merely an observer rather a participant. Recently, it was reported in the media that a British boy became a *Khakhi* (an Assamese term signifying ceremonial friend of the bride groom) in a village of Majuli. It was reported that this British youth can fluently speak Assamese and participates in community activities with outmost sincerity. He has been pursuing some research work with the communities of Majuli. Lot many people come to Majuli to help local communities fight natural calamities and upgrade their livelihood expertise. These outsiders do not need modern amenities to sustain themselves and can manage themselves with very few basic needs. They can also adjust to any situation and work with total dedication. They are in search of a new destination where there is no duplicity, everything is pure and serene. There is no better place than north eastern region for such an utopian location. Simplicity, honesty, sincerity, hospitality are the hallmark of the culture of the people of this region. They accept people easily. A guest is always entertained with food and shelter according to their capacity. People of this region always appreciate the effort of sincerity and honesty and try to reciprocate at the best of their ability.

No doubt that the indigenous people of north east are passing through the difficult phases of transition and transformation due to various factors but the socio-political situation, crisis of identity and economic backwardness have made them understand their shortcomings. During last few years the region appears to have discovered the pathways to peace and harmony. The ethno tourism needs an environment of peace and harmony where there is no threat to life or assets. The ethno tourism is the only human friendly activity which allows a tourist to work without any distraction and become a part of the local society and thus provide their inputs for the betterment of the host community. The movie "Rock on 2" mentioned in first para of this article is unique in itself for it highlights the participation of the hero in the internal affairs of a remote village of Meghalaya. This is quite interesting, encouraging and reflects the true intent and spirit of ethno-tourism.

Science Of Sanskaras

Dr Karanam Nagaraja Rao

Ours is a culture which always thinks of imparting values to children and making them great personalities in life. We have naturally given lot of prominence to education. But at what age do children learn? At what age should we teach them? These are the questions that revolve in minds of all the parents. Current research studies indicate that children learn a few things even when they are in the womb of their mother. They call it pre-natal learning. This has been experienced and experimented by our forefathers even from the times of Mahabharata. We have a plethora of stories from our culture as to how the children grasp things at prenatal stage. The story of Abhimanyu is well known to us. It is said that he had heard the conversation of his parents when he was in his mother's womb. Arjun had discussed the art of positioning of soldiers in 'padmavyuha' (a type of systematic positioning of the armed forces which look like a lotus) with his wife Subhadra. For some reason he stopped further conversation and Abhimanyu could know only how to enter padmavyuha and could not know the art of returning from it. From Mahabharata, we also come across one more story from Vana Parva which relates to Ashtavakra (Adhyaya 132.34). Ashtavakra is very famous for his Vedantic magnum opus, Ashtavakra Gita. Ashtavakra's father was Kahula. Ashtavakra had listened to his father and grandfather reciting Vedas with lot of concentration. It is said that on one occasion he highlighted a lapse committed by his father in the recitation of Vedas. As Kahula was surrounded by his disciples also, he felt insulted and cursed his son. We know from the story that the boy was born with eight vakras (angles) and so he was known as Ashtavakra. In due course of time, he became a great scholar and with the blessings of his father he became normal human being, and thus goes the elongated story.

The other Puranic story which is familiar to us is that of Prahlada. When Hiranyakashipu, the father of Prahlada was doing tapas (penance) in a forest, the king of Gods, Indra attacked the demons. After successfully defeating the demons, he learnt that the wife of Hiranyakasipu was pregnant. Apprehending that the son that is going to be born would also be a demon, he got possession of the

lady as a prisoner. But he released her when Narada told him that the son would become a great disciple of Vishnu (Vishnu Bhakta) and he would be instrumental in the demise of Hiranyakasipu. Then Narada took her to his abode (ashram) and taught Vishnu Bhakti (devotion to God Vishnu). We read in Bhagavatam that the child in the womb heard the song of Vishnu Bhakti from Narada and eventually became a great bhakta of Vishnu.

We have one more story of Kapila who became a Jnani (realised soul) remembering the samskara of his previous birth. Bhagavata describes Kapila as the direct incarnation of Vishnu. Devahuti is the mother of Kapila. Immediately after his birth, Kapila teaches the intricate topics and doctrines of Vedanta to his mother.

We have one more story which describes that the children would be shaped as the parents strongly desired with conviction. This story is from Markandeya Purana (Adhyaya 21-22). Ritudhwaja was a King with a dharmic bent of mind. His wife was Madalasa, daughter of a Gandharva King. Ritudhwaja's intention was that his two sons, Vikrantha and Shatru Mardhana would also become great warriors with dharmic bent of mind. Madalasa, on the other hand, intended them to be great Vedantins and used to sing lullabies that denote Vedantic thought process. While putting them to sleep she used to tell them that the names given to them were of general mundane nature; and the fact that they were no different from the Nirakara Brahma. She used to tell them that the body-mind complex is only a limitation and the Atma (Self) is beyond this limitation. The children grew sanyasins (renounced from the grihasta dharma) and left for forests for meditation. The king felt unhappy and so, after the birth of one more child he restricted Madalasa from relating Vedanta from childhood. Madalasa also respected the words of the king and began singing that the child would become a great warrior etc while swinging the cradle. As they wished, the child, in due course of time became a Great Emperor.

From the above stories, we could see that the children could comprehend things from early

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Challenges To Reconnect With Nature

Pandurang Hegde

Since 1972 World Environment Day is celebrated over the world to raise awareness about forests and wider issues of environmental protection. The theme of this year's World Environment Day is 'Connecting People to Nature'. It implores us to get outdoors and into nature, to appreciate its beauty and to take forward the call to protect the Earth that we share.

Over the years the alienation of people from nature is increasing both in urban and rural areas. The lives of modern person are ever busy and their minds are even more busier. Under such circumstances, it is very important that we reconnect with nature to calm our minds. The green spaces available in the cities, especially trees and parks provide opportunity to reconnect people to nature.

In order to reconnect with nature, the Ministry of Environment and Forests has launched National Environment Awareness Campaign (NEAC) at national level. Under this programme financial assistance is given to NGOs, educational institutions, women and youth organisations for conducting awareness programmes on environmental issues. About 12000 organisations are involved in conducting some action programmes related to nature protection and solving environmental problems.

Traditionally the pilgrimage centres are mainly located in the natural surroundings, especially in the mountains or banks of the rivers. The Char Dham Yatra in Himalayas is an excellent example of how our culture provided opportunity to people across the country to enjoy the beauty of nature with reverence to the trees, rivers and mountains. The bridge path that started from the banks of Ganga river in Rishikesh lead the people to the origins of Yamuna and Ganga rivers, that are the holy pilgrimage sites visited by millions of people.

Pilgrimage routes to Amarnath caves in Jammu and Kashmir and to Kailash Mansarovar in Tibetan plateau in China are also places of extraordinary natural beauty that has deep spiritual value to common man. These pilgrimage routes are one of the main ways to reconnect with nature and reflect

on the interconnectedness between man, nature and spirituality.

Similarly the Narmada Parikrama is another traditional pilgrimage route on which people walk along the banks of Narmada River and learn to appreciate the beauty of the river and the natural surroundings.

The existence of 166 National Parks and 515 wild life sanctuaries consisting of 2 percent of the total geographical areas of the country provides excellent opportunity for common people to enjoy and reconnect to the nature, wild life and the green space of the country.

In order to create awareness about nature conservation the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation has initiated steps towards promoting greenery in public spaces in cities and reducing waste generation of all kinds. The craze of paving the roads and open spaces with asphalt and cement in urban areas has alienated younger generation from nature. Felling old trees to broaden the roads, and allowing more space to vehicles than for those who walk or cycle leads to further alienation of urban citizen. Urban ecology can be maintained with active participation of all the stakeholders and involvement of the community.

Reconnecting with nature helps to reduce the modern day stress and brings harmony in the lives of individuals and the community. The greenery not only reduces the noise and sound pollution but it also helps to reduce the temperature, adding in mitigating climate change.

The Government of India is launching a massive waste management campaign in 4000 cities across the country on World Environment Day. Under this campaign waste bins of blue and green colours would be distributed in these cities along with the awareness drive to educate common people to adopt a life-style that inculcates the culture of cleanliness.

"I have a firm belief that we will develop a culture and the new steps that we take towards achieving cleanliness will continue. Only then will we achieve

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The 'Last Mile' Challenge

Dipok Kumar Barthakur

The United Nation's Development Programme (UNDP) has announced the 2030 Agenda which committed to "leaving no one behind, and to meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for all nations and all peoples and segments of society". This has thrown up a huge challenge to countries like India to come up with new approaches that specifically ensures the "last mile" is delivered successfully i.e. the marginalised and peripheral sections of the society, the people, places and small and unorganised enterprises that have been traditionally underserved and excluded are explicitly targeted and prioritised.

In economic parlance, the "last mile" is the final distance of service delivery; in International development terms, reaching the last mile, are the successful outreach of programmes and public services to the remotest of communities. Reaching the last mile therefore has become the latest *mantra* in poverty alleviation and equitable development. Government policies and services are often delivered by a top-down administrative structure. What is often overlooked are circumstances and reasons that block delivery of the last mile to some or many of the schemes' or services' intended recipients.

Very often the last mile is where the breakdown occurs. In a recent speech Prime Minister Narendra Modi while answering questions on good governance, the economy and the health sector, said, "Last mile delivery is as important as policies. The benefits must reach the intended beneficiaries". Policy makers need to make certain that development is more inclusive and relevant to the lives of all our citizens and communities, and programmes and strategies address the barriers of socio-economic environment or structural hurdles that prevent equity and participation in development. Delivery priorities in development include material infrastructure like roads, power, water and sanitation systems; they also include services like education, healthcare, and security.

Assam and the Northeast has historically suffered from issues of access, poor infrastructure and development lag which forms a vicious cycle

resulting in poverty and deprivation. Majority of Assam's population still live in rural areas with insufficient access to education, healthcare, clean water and sanitation. A disproportionate ratio of our children do not have access to proper schools, school dropout rates are high and many more of our children are likely to die before their fifth birthday in comparison to rest of India. Despite almost two years of "Swachh Bharat Abhiyan" the practice of open defecation is still prevalent. Investment in rural areas, despite programmes like MNREGA, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, several rural housing and power distribution schemes, Project Golden thread and other self-help schemes, has been slow on actual grass root effectiveness. Agricultural investment, which most rural families depend on, has not kept up with growing demands for food or in terms of technology up gradation. In Assam, we very often know the broad policy directions that we should adopt to reduce poverty and build prosperity. But we are not sufficiently getting the results we want. For every Government, budget after budget, the greatest challenge has been delivery.

The difficulty in reaching the last mile in a state like Assam is the lack of infrastructure, manpower and financial resources on one hand, and the leakages in the system on the other which allows for only a proportion of the development monies and services reaching the actual beneficiary. Moreover many schemes, interventions and services are not designed or equipped to the needs of the diverse environments and population cohorts they are intended for. In order for effective last mile delivery, we must address challenges specific to low-resource settings, we must move away from "one size fits all" solutions.

Very often, our centralized schemes and plans are well intended but fail to ensure actionable programmes and adequate quality control and monitoring to ensure effective implementation; or in many cases once these schemes are announced their execution and monitoring, beyond the contract stage are simply non-existent! Systemic leakages, grafts and intentional wastage

(Contd. to Page 10)

Inauguration Of Rani Gaidinliu Tailoring Training Centre – A Report

The Rani Gaidinliu Tailoring Training Centre was inaugurated on 19th May 2017 by Chief Guest, Shri Ramesh Babuji, Shradha jagaran Pramukh, ABVKA in the presence of Shri Sandeep Kavishwarji, Kshetriya Saha Sangathan Mantri, Kalyan Ashram, Uttar Purva Kshetra and leaders and members of Pailei Baudi, Nagaland. The inauguration ceremony was organized by the Pailei Baudi, Nagaland.

The programme was anchored by Smt. Lamzune, General Secretary, Pailei Baudi (N). Programme started with Ribbon cutting by Shri Ramesh Babuji, followed by opening song “Cheriu Puinai tingbang kehu”. Immediately thereafter Smt. Aningiu, Shradha jagaran Pramukh, JVSJ read out her report on the tailoring Centre and its functioning. Chief Guest, Shri Ramesh Babuji then delivered his speech and said that he considers himself very fortunate to be able to take part in the programme

and feels very happy to meet the members of the Heraka women society of Nagaland. In his speech the Chief Guest stressed on the importance as well as the benefits of Tailoring profession for the livelihood of rural as well as urban population. He also offered his advice and suggestions for successful operation of a tailoring unit.

On conclusion of the speech by the Chief Guest, Smt. Itinkole, Vice President of Pailei Baudi (N). Offered vote of thanks all stake holders. She also offered special thanks to the Badridas Bhagwande Modi Seva Nidhi, Kolkata, who donated the sets of Sewing Machine and essential accessories. She also thanked Shri Sandeepji and workers of Kalyan Ashram who extended all support for promoting the welfare and development of the women of the area. The ceremony came to an end with closing song “He Herapui Toipung Lenai” followed by congregational prayer “Din kiu Ming”.

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The ‘Last Mile’ Challenge

are major constraints that we face today in delivery of government services. Tax payer’s monies are not given the due respect it deserves; it is treated as an intangible commodity to be spent without accountability. The use of technology and innovation to plug systemic leakages is through unavoidable reasons, graft or neglect, has become increasingly important.

Our Government should map and identify the consistent barriers and issues that come up in programme implementation at the last mile. And they should develop targeted approaches that will overcome these challenges, develop the monitoring frameworks to track progress, and put together the resources to turn plans into action which are tracked and evaluated for outcomes and results. Reporting mechanisms should be strengthened and technology enabled; it should not be a tick box exercise to merely utilise budget allocations.

Last mile challenges will be different in different places and environment. “If you want to deliver a last-mile solution, the best way is to ask those affected how they might do it”—Onno Ruhl, World

Bank Country Director said in a press interview. Our Government should tailor interventions to the specific last mile context and empower local authorities (with suitable oversight) to adapt interventions and services increasingly to the environment and context they are operating in. Thus, interventions at the last mile need to be flexible and adaptive to local needs. This would include empowering and working with local authorities to make certain programme evaluation and monitoring become part of their routine activities. This is where probably decentralised planning also has an important role to play. As Assam and India makes a paradigm shift in the way we set our development goals and agenda, co-operative federalism needs to go one step further to embrace the village, block and districts in each state in this planning process.

(Writer is the Vice Chairman, State Innovation and Transformation Aayog (SITA). The views expressed are the author’s own.)

(The Assam Tribune, 04/06/2017)

Inauguration Of Pou N.C Zeliang Computer Training Centre – A Report

On 20th May 2017, in the presence of Shri Ramesh Babuji, Shradha Jagaran Pramukh, ABVKA, Pou N.C Zeliang Computer Training Centre of Zeliangrong Heraka School, Tening was inaugurated.

The programme began with the unveiling of computer training Centre's banner by Shri Ramesh Babuji. After unveiling of the banner, the ceremonial lamp was lit by Shri Atum, Veteran soldier of Rani Gaidinliu army in the august presence of N.Kuzie, President, ZHA (Nagaland), Sandeep Kavishwarji, Kshetriya Saha Sangathan Mantri, (ABVKA) NEI, Gopalakrishna, Sangathan Mantri,

JVSN, Heraka Leaders, Teachers and students of ZHS.

In his address, Shri Ramesh Babuji spoke about the importance of computer and internet in our lives. He also said that it is necessary to acquire adequate knowledge of Technology to compete with the present challenges of the world. Shri Gopalakrishnaji in his speech briefed about the Badridas Bhagwande Modi Seva Nidhi, Kolkata, the donors of ten sets of computers and peripherals.

The ceremony ended with vote of thanks extended by Miss Talamsi Newmai, Asst. Headmistress, ZHS.

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Science Of Sanskaras

childhood. Apart from the stories above, there is a deep discussion about this aspect in many other places also in our scriptures. In the same Bhagavata, when Kapila taught Vedanta to his mother (Skanda 3, Adhyaya 31), he also described as to how the embryo grows in different stages in the womb of the mother. This portion of Bhagavata describes different stages of development and formation of the limbs of the body very vividly. The same subject matter is also found in Garbhopanishad wherein we come across the description of the growth phases of the embryo into human form. In the chapters of Garbha Samskara and Garbhini Vyakarana from the age old Ayurvedic texts, there is a vivid description of what food a pregnant lady should take, what type of things she should see, how she should keep her mind agile and lively, what good books she should read and what type of classical music she should hear and the like.

Till recently, perhaps a generation back also, parents used to make their children learn famous slokas of Bhartrihari, the motivational verses and the verses that appeal to the intellect of the children. The concept of Shataka (One hundred slokas) is unique to our culture. These slokas professes that 'a person with a determination to achieve something will not count adversities at any point of time in life'. Also a person with a resolute mind does not abandon the set goal ever. For comprehending and crossing many hurdles in the pace of human life, these verses are highly useful. As the children grow into mature human beings they can easily acclimatise and assimilate the essence of these verses into their lives.

The suicidal tendencies due to paternal deprivation, alienation and the materialistic culture that perpetuates individualism could be obviated if only our generation of people look back to our culture and start imparting children the morals of life from early childhood. Alas! The advent of 'mummy daddy culture' with meaningless nursery rhymes has deprived the current and future generation of kids from understanding the depths of our cultural thoughts and perspectives that could instil confidence in them in all walks of life.

Then what is to be done? It is essential that parents should set an example for the children. Children, in their younger days, look upon their parents as if they are the heroes and heroines on the face of the earth. They try to emulate their parents and set them as role models. It is the role of the parents to read the scriptures like Mahabharata, Ramayana etc and tell those stories to children instead of telling film stories. Motivational shlokas should replace the nursery rhymes. Each and every child born in Bharat should be groomed as an ambassador for the country capable enough to transmit the cultural values that the country possesses. When the entire world is looking deep into our ancient education process for proper adoption, it is ordained on us to protect our culture and preserve it for moulding the future generations of people into strong and sustainable human beings.

(The writer is a professor in Alliance University, Bengaluru)

(Organiser, May 21, 2017)

HOLY Month Of Ramadan But UNHOLY Attacks On HUMANITY

Salil Gewali

“Ramadan” is a holy month for Islam which all must respect. More so when it’s observed with the rigorous austerity, renouncing the material indulgences, dedicating this to the Almighty who is “common” to all. True, always through the “austerity” one’s mind, heart and soul can be cleansed that finally raises one’s spiritual level. Throughout the holy month those who fast should not at all be hurtful to anyone, even the non-human creatures whether through the speech or action. Also, the mind must not harbour anything that precipitates the negativity.

But when this holy month is desecrated by the gory incidents of blasts — the most ungodly acts, how could we link it with the holy Islam? Is it a prelude to a bigger mission that it started with the Manchester’s suicide explosion on 22nd May, 2017 that shattered the euphoria of the concert-goers leaving 23 people dead, 129 others grievously injured? This is followed by the May 26 episode when scary masked gunmen attacked a bus carrying Christians. The incident left 26 men dead, including many children in Egypt’s Minya. After a brief lull of four days, on May 30, a car bomb hit an ice-cream shop in Baghdad killing 15 wounding at least 30. Then immediately the next day a massive blast tore apart the diplomatic quarter in Kabul near the German embassy, killing about 90 people, sources put the injured count at whopping 460. Then followed another deadly carnage early Friday morning in the Philippines when a

gunman burst into Manila hotel, which later he set on fire, that left 36 people dead due to suffocation and at least 54 severely hurt. Then on May 3 at London bridge three vicious attackers with lethal knives killed 6 civilians grievously injuring 30 others. The killer had boldly shouted – “this is for Allah”. Again on May 7 at least twelve people have been killed in Iran’s parliament attacks. Now how many more horrendous tragedies will happen until the end of Ramadan? Peoples are worryingly apprehensive.

One very intellectually enlightened friend of mine from Mumbai — Mr. M. Nazeer, in a sorrowful tone, laments – “These all are the heartless attacks on humanity which only sink the holy spirit of the true believers of the Allah, we are not feeling safe on our own”? I guess he is right. Of course, no one can disagree that the principle teaching of the Quran or the Bible or the Gita — ‘Love all and serve all’ should ever be allowed to be misinterpreted and harm the humanity? One strongly feels that those who kill and those who get killed, are both created by the “One Almighty”. What is our maximum life span on this moral world? Not more than 100 years. Then why is there bad blood among us and brutal hostility? One feels that we should first practice to believe that we all are the children of the same GOD. The time is ripe that we all must introspect with all sagacity and human compassion. The merciless killing is never the way to the Almighty.

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Challenges To Reconnect With Nature

the dream of Gandhiji, achieve the kind of cleanliness that he had dreamt of,” Prime Minister Modi said in his monthly radio programme ‘Mann Ki Baat’.

The government is aiming to change the attitude of people to segregate waste at its origin, dry and wet waste and to treat them accordingly. This will be the basis for cleaning up the cities that will be more nature friendly and provide the basic hygienic conditions for living. This is the logical follow up of

the Swatch Bharat Abhiyaan(SBA) under which there is need to address the issue of waste generated in urban areas is creating mountains of waste that has adversely impacted the ground water and the quality of the air around the waste dumps. This is a challenging task as there is need to change the habits of people, in which they become the agents of change from each family by performing the duty or dharma of segregation of waste.

(The Sentinel, 05/06/2017)

Climate Change: Time For India To Lead The Mission

Shibdas Bhattacharjee

The US President Donald Trump has announced his decision to withdraw from the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement. Donald Trump in his address at the White House said that the existing agreement is against the interests of the Americans, particularly the controversial job-related issue in the United States. The Paris agreement commits the US and 187 other countries on keeping rising global temperature below 20 degree centigrade at industrial level and endeavours to limit it more if possible. There is widespread condemnation across the world regarding the announcement made by President Trump. The UN officially called it very disappointing and the European Union termed it as a sad day for the world. However, Trump said that he is prepared to renegotiate and re-enter in a new agreement on improved terms. Naturally, his indication is that Washington is no longer ready for funding an accord that does not serve the American interest. Thus, America has been unmasked yet again. In the American lexicon of power politics at the international level, Washington can sell even its soul.

But the rising global temperature is a matter of grave concern for the entire world. It directly or indirectly impacts the larger interests of every nation. Terming it as in favour of some countries or against a few is a wrong interpretation of the fact that sabotages global interests and, more particularly, the interests of the upcoming generation. But unfortunately, environment issues have always been seen through the prism of narrow politics at the international level. The reality is that as far as the issue of growing ecological imbalance is concerned, the lion's share of the responsibility must be shouldered by the developed nations of the West, especially the United States. But the American President's logic is different. According to him, the financial benefits that come through funding to keep the environment clean go to China and India and, hence, the Americans are not ready to continue with this.

But the issue of climate change has always been an issue of larger implications for India. As per the *State of Global Report*, in 2017, 40,25,000 people died across the world out of which more than 2,10,000 people died in China and India because of environmental degradation and related causes. The

economic order accepted by India in 1991 resulted in massive environmental degradation in the name of infrastructure building and rapid urbanization as a part of market economy. Statistical reports reveal that from 1991 to 2017, the rising rate of pollution in India has increased to 48% against the global rate 22%. Naturally, climate change because of pollution and environmental degradation is far more concerning factor for India than any other nation, even China.

This demands India to be proactive. This may be coincidental that President Trump's announcement came at a time when Prime Minister Narendra Modi was on his Europe trip. The Indian Prime Minister made fresh efforts to revive the India-Russia ties and better engagements between India and the important nations of the European Union like France and Germany. Modi clearly stated India's position in this context during his Europe visit and engaged in talks with the leaders of the European Union. Modi has made efforts to touch the base in three of the four European capitals that matter – Berlin, Paris and Moscow. He stated that India will “go above and beyond regarding the Paris Agreement”. Speaking after holding wide-ranging talks with the newly-elected French President Emmanuel Macron, Modi said that “the Paris climate agreement is a shared legacy of the world. It will benefit the future generations as well, our duty towards protecting the Earth and our natural resources. For us, this is an article of faith.”

But India has some problems as well. This is not only about taking forward a global mission without the participation of the US but the strenuous relationship between China and India. Things turned around differently in case of Europe as China is also focusing the same spot that has become vacant after the United Kingdom had withdrawn from the EU. Chinese leader Xi Jinping arrived in Europe just a few days after the Indian Prime Minister. But the valid point is: Will India and China come together regarding the Paris agreement after the announcement made from the White House?

What provides India strength is the present relationship of New Delhi with the important nations of Europe. The policy of rebuilding relationship with

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Restoring Ancient Glory

Neera Misra

It is a feeling of national pride when one notices that the capital city, Delhi and the nation have become important global attraction. Every prominent world leader has been visiting Bharat or inviting our Prime Minister and the President to his country. Even citizens from different parts of Bharat are frequenting the capital more often. This reminds us of the glorious time of ancient Indraprastha, when the coronation of Yudhishthira was attended by leading kings from Aryavarta. The city of Indraprastha needs to reclaim its ancient pride.

“Ancient Dilli was founded on the site of Indraprastha, once the capital of a powerful empire, this opinion is supported by Abul Fazl, and in the account of the early Muhammadan kings, Purana Qil’ah is also called Qila Indrapat.” (Carr Stephens, Archaeology and Monumental Remains, 1876). Till date, Purana Qila is known as ‘Pandavon ka kila’ and ‘Indra ka khera’. During Commonwealth Games, Delhi was publicised as having a history of 5,000 years. The capital city is the ‘face and window’ of our nation. It is embedded in our memory since the time immemorial, providing us cultural and spiritual strength.

Delhi’s capital antiquity dates back to several thousand years, yet what we see today is medieval forts and graveyards which are only few hundred years old, all creating a false sense of history. We know history speaks and repeats itself. It is time we should find out the truth. It is indeed a fact that any national or international tourist, when visiting Delhi, is shown around the Qutub Minar, Humayun’s Tomb, the Red Fort and Purana Qila and he thinks of Delhi as having a history of not more than 500-600 years old. Little is told about the antiquity of Purana Qila that it is at least 3,000 years old, if not more, because ancient Indraprastha lies within, unexposed and unpreserved. This in spite of the fact that some of India’s best archaeologists have excavated Purana Qila and various parts of Delhi and found the cultural sequence of different rulers, from Painted Grey Ware (PGW), associated with Mahabharata period, revealing sequence of rules of various periods like Sunga, Kushan, Gupta, Post-Gupta, Rajput and Sultanate periods.

In management, we say right time and place are necessary for success and impact. The importance and need of showcasing Delhi’s history through ages

cannot be timelier than now, and Purana Pandav Qila being intrinsically linked to ancient times, the ideal place. It actually represents the history of Bharat. We have many museums, but no world class interpretation site museum to tell us the antiquity, glorious history and journey of our capital from Indraprastha to Delhi, Indraprastha being the first planned city here. Purana Indrapat Qila (as per revenue records, gazetteers, etc) and Delhi’s, antiquity and history of most ancient times has been revealed by excavations here in 1954-55, 1960’s, ‘70’s, latest being in 2013-14.

Delhi needs a Museum to tell its own untold tale. Purana Qila having the ideal location, space and ambience is thus the most appropriate for a magnificent museum, telling tales of centuries of heritage via latest technology, and archaeological walk of the excavated site here. It will tell us its own story, through an ‘experiential’ interactive interpretation of its civilisation journey, revealing rich antiquity of thousands of years, which is not shown in any of the varied museums of Delhi. It is important to present this history for better understanding and appreciation of our deep roots, but more significantly for other reasons too. The Byrappa Report shows how in the 70’s a committee was especially formed for this very purpose.

It is noteworthy that a very large amount of PGW was found at Humayun’s tomb. (Dr. B R Mani, Delhi: Threshold of the Orient). There was also an ancient mound there, which shows that the archaeologists claim has been destroyed.

Worse is the fact that the objective of the upcoming Humayun’s Tomb Interpretation Centre states, “The Centre will serve as a window into the history of the site, narrating its evolution over an unbroken history of seven centuries of building activities and cultural confluence, with royal families ranging from the rulers of Slave Dynasty to the Mughals and finally the British.” This is precisely what the booklet on Humayun’s tomb, sold at the ASI shop at Purana Qila, also presents “Delhi is just about 1,000 years old, as Indraprastha never existed, and Purana Qila is just Dinpanah, even though current structures are of Shershah’s Shergarh.” This is what almost three lakhs students per year, as claimed by the booklet, visit this tomb learns. Is this not

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Anshu Strives For Adventure Sports Institute

World-record holding mountaineer Anshu Jamsenpa, who met Narendra Modi in New Delhi on Monday, has asked the PM to help in setting up an adventure sports institute in Arunachal Pradesh.

The 37-year-old mother of two from Bomdila, who had scripted a world record recently by scaling Mt. Everest twice within a span of five days - on May 16 and May 21, 2017 - has also submitted a memorandum to the PM and Union minister of State for Home Affairs Kiren Rijiju on the matter.

"I have asked the Prime Minister to help in setting up of an adventure sports institute in Bomdila in Arunachal Pradesh. I believe this will be of great help for the entire region and for the country. As my state is blessed with wonderful hills and mountains, I think

we can use it to the best possible way if such an institute is set up," Anshu, who has climbed the world's highest peak a total of five times, told TOI.

She said a plot of land in Bomdila has already been allocated to the Arunachal mountaineering and adventure sports association by the state government, but nothing else has been done so far. "It's been several years now. But nothing has been done. I'm hopeful that the PM will listen to our request," Anshu added.

On June 5, PM Modi formally flagged in Anshu's expedition in New Delhi, which had been flagged off by Tibetan spiritual leader Dalai Lama on April 4 in Guwahati.

(The Times of India, 09/06/2017)

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Restoring Ancient Glory

misrepresentation of Delhi's history, confining it to a limited period, swallowing ancient linkages of the tomb's place.

The problem with the Western historiography is its sectarian and limited approach to study. Recently, there was a lecture by an Asst. Prof., Dept of History of Art and Architecture, University of Pittsburgh, USA on Building History, wherein she talked about five prominent buildings of Delhi, including Qutub Minar and Purana Qila. She based her study on Delhi's archives of British era, attacks 'hegemony of archives' stressing that the British documented them due to pressure from local communities. She actually raised doubts on the demolition of hundreds of temples and ancient identity of Purana Qila. What one can say when scholars make such bizarre claims without even bothering to study records of pre-Mughal or even Mughal period, leave alone ancient. Pity is that an Indian scholar was sharing her 'limited' approach with other Indians, and the worry is that this foreign university professor will publish, disseminate information and would get accolades for creating misperceptions about Indian history.

The situation becomes worse when a section of the very 'secular' scholars dole out volumes on these structures, without the slightest mention of the actual history of place where these tombs and forts now stand. This creates an impression that prior to these

400-600 years old buildings Delhi kings lived probably under trees.

Very smartly books are titled Chandani Chowk: A Mughal City. How can one call Chandani Chowk a Mughal City in this age and time, just because it has some buildings of that era? The subtle art of creating misperceptions about history of any place flourishes with generous multilevel support from vested interests, national and international, and keeps them 'secular'. Soon after we scheduled the First Indraprastha Festival we approached INTACH, the generously funded organisation to present a paper. They agreed, but within a few weeks time they announced big plans for Heritage City Walks highlighting Sultanat/Mughal era cities, and Indrapat Qila as only Dinpanah! It is surprising that hugely rich culture trusts never ever go into ancient history. To create a better understanding and appreciation of our capital's history, should we not introspect and listen to our own history and do our bit to at least tell the world about the actual history of Delhi evolving from ancient Indraprastha? Our history is all encompassing for humanity, and for each to learn from it, not to promote a specific race, caste, sect or region.

(The writer is the Chairperson of Draupadi Dream Trust)

(Organiser, June 4, 2017)

India Is A 'Guru' And We Are Followers: Dalai Lama

Calling himself the messenger of ancient Indian values and knowledge, the Dalai Lama said, "India is a guru and we are chelas (followers), we are reliable chelas, because we have preserved your ancient knowledge."

"I also consider myself as the son of India as every part of my brain cells are filled with ancient Indian knowledge and my body is because of Indian rice and dal."

Deprivation from social justice in the name of caste was not from religion, but it was from existing societal systems like feudal system, the Dalai Lama said speaking at the state level seminar on 'Social Justice and Dr. BR Ambedkar' in Bengaluru.

He said culturally it was a negative aspect that exists in our society and it must be removed. Even in the name of religion and religious systems, there were some feudal practices and "it should not be there".

Stating that through education caste related injustice could be wiped out, the Dalai Lama said through education the sense of inferiority feeling that was present in certain sections of the people must be wiped out.

"...so that there is a sense of equality, so that they can build self confidence. Through self confidence, hard work and education one can achieve equality," he said.

On ancient Indian values and knowledge, the Dalai Lama said it must be revived in the country, as "it is not ancient, but most relevant".

He said ancient Indian knowledge and values along with modern technology can do great for the

country as one can attain mental comfort with ancient knowledge and physical comfort through modern knowledge. "...ancient knowledge and values side by side with modern science is worthy for the society," he said.

Noting that everybody wants to be happy and they have that right, he said, "if we consider rest of the humanity as brothers and sisters, there is no chance for exploitation.

Buddha dharma is Indian dharma as most of its teachings and knowledge came from the country, he said pointing out that ancient Indian values like karuna and ahimsa had reached millions of people across the world with the spread of Buddhism.

Pointing out that like in many other religions, Buddhism had also different philosophies originating from different schools of thought, he said, "we need different philosophical views." Wonderful people with great teachings have come from diverse faith and philosophical backgrounds, but with a common message of love and compassion, as also good 'karma.'

"Any activity which brings happiness is a positive karma and that makes us uncomfortable is negative karma," he added.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and leader of Congress party in Lok Sabha Mallikarjuna Kharge participated in the seminar organised by the Social Justice Department of Karnataka government to commemorate Ambedkar's 125th birth anniversary.

(<http://www.worldhindunews.com/2017/05/26/58911/india-is-a-guru-and-we-are-followers-dalai-lama/>)

32nd Rungong Elites Forum – A Report

On 7th June 2017 at the Community Dere of the Kerang -1 village of Kaying circle under Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh, the cash relief distribution to the fire victims of the Kerang Village was conducted by the 32nd Rungmong Elites Forum in collaboration with Kebo-Gambo Welfare Society.

The voluntary contribution by the various Philanthropists generated an amount of Rs. 5, 30,300.00 (five lakhs thirty thousand three hundred) only. The representative of the 32nd Rungmong Elites Forum Sri Tate Pado, General Secretary, Kebo-Gambo Welfare Society welcomed the philanthropists who contributed the amount and some other materials. Dr. Tarik Talom, pioneer of the 32nd Rungmong Elites Forum advised the villagers to adopt

modern model of housing, health, hygiene and rural tourism and distributed mosquito nets to all fire victims along with his generous cash contribution. Sri Taro Darang, ASM Kerang – 1 village and Sri Tado Palon ASM Kerang-2 Village highly appreciated the noble efforts of the Philanthropists and 32nd Rungmong Elites Forum. Sri Tapor Mibang, Principal of Govt. Secondary School, Kaying presided over the ceremony and distributed Rs. 20,000.00 to each fire victim on behalf of the 32nd Rungmong Elites Forum. All the fire victims highly appreciated the noble gesture of the 32nd Rungmong Elites Forum and its collaboration with Kebo-Gambo Welfare Society. An amount of Rs. 10,000.00 was kept in reserve for common fire victim welfare efforts.

Bhupen Hazarika National Award for Yeshe Dorje Thongchi

Eminent writer from Arunachal Pradesh Yeshe Dorje Thongchi has been awarded the fifth Bhupen Hazarika National Award 2017 by Sarhad, a Maharashtra-based NGO.

Sarhad has been honouring a person from the Northeast for rendering outstanding work at national and international level with its most prestigious 'Bhupen Hajarika Award' every year since 2012.

The award is aimed at creating a strong bond between Maharashtra and the Northeast. The award consists of Rs 51,000, a memento and a certificate.

In the first year, it was awarded to Film Director Jahnu Barua (Assam), during second year to actor Professor Ratan Thiyam (Manipur), the third year to journalist Samudra Gupta Kashyap (Assam) and for the fourth year in 2016 to musician and singer Lou Majaw of Meghalaya.

Born on June 13, 1952, at village Jigaon in West Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh, Yeshe Dorjee Thongchi first went to the Government Primary School at Jigaon and then passed his Class X final from Government Higher Secondary School, Bomdila. He later did his BA from Cotton College, Guwahati and MA from Gauhati University.

Thongchi began his literary pursuit from his childhood days. Although his mother tongue is Sherdukpen, a language spoken by barely 6,000 people, he started writing in Assamese because it was then the medium of instruction in schools in North-East Frontier Agency or NEFA, as Arunachal was earlier known.

While his first poem called Jonbaai (The Moon) appeared in an Assamese children's magazine by the same name in 1967, he tried his hand at various genres including plays, short stories and novels, excelling in all of them.

Thongchi has so far written about a dozen novels, numerous short stories and plays, all in

Assamese, a language over which he has wonderful command. His most important novel is Mauna Onth Mukhar Hriday (Silent Lips, Murmuring Hearts) which won the Sahitya Akademi award in 2005, and tells the story of how simple tribal people discover the outside world as they engage in construction of a road into the mountains.

Another novel Sav Kata Manuh (Man who cuts corpses) vividly describes the tradition of how human bodies are ritualistically cut into over 100 pieces before being disposed off in the river.

Thongchi, who writes mostly about little-known communities of Arunachal Pradesh, is said to be the first author to have actually taken their stories to the outside world.



Many of his works have been translated into Hindi, English and other languages. Awards other than Sahitya Academy that have come his way so far include the Harihar Choudhury Award (Asam Sahitya Sabha, 1970), the Phulchand Khandelwal Samhati Award (Golaghat Sahitya Sabha, 2001), the Bishnu Rabha Award (Asam Sahitya Sabha, 2002), and the Bhasha Bharti Award (Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysore, 2005).

Yeshe Dorjee Thongchi joined Arunachal Pradesh Civil Service in 1977 and was elevated to the IAS in 1992. After having put in more than three decades of dedicated service he was first nominated as State Information Commissioner and then as State Chief Information Commissioner till 2015.

Founder and President of Arunachal Pradesh Literary Society, Thongchi not only leads the literary movement in Arunachal, but is also a source of inspiration for hundreds of young writers who want to tell the story of the little-known frontier state to the outside world.

(The Sentinel, 16/06/2017)

Communal Attacks On Tripuris In Bangladesh

The indigenous communities of Tripura have been protesting against the large scale communal attacks against their brethrens in Longudu in Rangamati Hill District in Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh by the Bengali speaking illegal Muslim settlers. The illegal settlers actively aided by the Bangladesh army and police attacked the indigenous Jummas including Chakmas and Tripuris. About six Chakmas were killed and over 300 houses were burnt down in the communal attacks.

A huge peaceful protest rally was recently organised by Chakma Samajik Rajya Parishad and Twipra Students Union of Tripura before the Bangladesh Consulate at Agartala,

The “Chakma Samajik Rajya Parishad” (CSRP), is an organization recognized by the Government of Tripura as the authority on the Chakma customary laws. The Twipra Students Federation (TSF) supported by CSRP raised their voice against the Longudu communal attacks and demanded full implementation of the CHTs Peace Accord of 1997, immediate withdrawal of the military from their camps to the cantonments, punishment to the culprits and proper rehabilitation to the Longudu attack victims. The Borok Peoples Human Rights Organisation (BPHRO), Tripura Chakma Students Association and

the Chakma National Council of India also participated in the protest.

Attacks against the Jummas in Longudu in CHTs was equally condemned by both the factions of Indigenous Peoples Front of Tripura (IPFT). Condemning the attacks, IPFT (NC Debbarma) youth delegation submitted a memorandum to the Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina through the Bangladesh Assistant High Commissioner at the Agartala consulate. In its memorandum the IPFT have expressed its serious concern on the incident of large scale atrocities committed upon the innocent indigenous peoples and urged the Bangladesh government to provide adequate compensation and early repatriation of the affected/displaced persons. Tripura State of India and the CHTs of Bangladesh are homeland of indigenous peoples like Borok people/Tripuris, Chakmas, Marmas etc.

The IPFT (Rana Kishore and Rajeshwar Debbarma) faction in its Central Committee meeting held at Agartala recently while expressing serious concerns and passed a resolution for submission of the same as a memorandum to the Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina seeking justice for the Jumma victims of communal attacks at Longudu.

(<https://www.theapolitical.in/india/tripura-indigenous-peoples-protest-attacks-brethrens-bangladesh>)

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Climate Change: Time For India To Lead The Mission

different nations connecting India's ambitious Make in India project considering the investment prospect in India has already reshaped India's relationship with the economic powerhouses across the world. Similarly, the foreign policy prerogative of Modi is also guided by shared values, particularly democracy. India has projected the country's democratic set-up as a strong point. This increases acceptability of India in larger global affairs related to the interests of the common rank and file of all the nations resulting in formation of special relationship between India and Japan, India and European nations and others. Present Europe is passing through a difficult situation after the Brexit. Major governments across the world are assessing the direction the European Union will go in the coming few years. All are calculating things depending on how the EU's senior members decide to redefine the

role of Europe and the way out from the state prevailing in Europe that has punched the continent well below its weight globally. In this context credibility of both India and China is a big issue for the European leaders.

This is where India can trigger the spot and present itself strongly. India has the ability to lead the brigade that supports the Paris agreement. This will bring about manifold benefits for New Delhi, addressing the issue of pollution in India, getting fund and making China compelled at least to be a part of it. It will be better if India analyses the future course of action regarding the Paris accord from a strategic point of view which demands a policy to be chalked out to lead the unaccomplished mission of climate accord signed in 2015.

(The Assam Tribune, 09/06/2017)

Act East Policy: Are We Looking At A Myth?

Swapnanil Barua

There is immortality in the sayings of William Shakespeare, which find relevance not only in literature, but also in life. His famous quote may now apply to the Act East Policy of the Government of India, especially with relation to the north-eastern States. As the quote goes, "There is a tide in the affairs of men, which taken in a flood leads on to fortune. Omitted, all the voyage of their life is bound in shallows and in miseries. On such a full sea are we now afloat. We must take the current when it serves, or lose our ventures

India, or rather the NE States, did not take the current, when it served and must now row out to the sea, against it. All this talk about using the Look East or Act East Policy has come to naught, because we did not start in time, nor were guided, in a clearly thought out manner as to how to benefit from this initiative. Even today, the talk about the North-east being a Gateway to the South-east Asia has not seen much of action on the field by way of development of international highways, airports or water-ways to send our products to those countries. Whatever exports are happening to those countries are happening through the existing facilities, which are not much of a benefit to the North-east.

Yet the Look East initiative began from the North-east in 2004, with the ASEAN car rally, which was flagged off for the international component, from Guwahati on November 22, 2004 by the then Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh. The purpose of the rally was to show the possibility of road connectivity from India's North-east to as far as Batan, Indonesia. The road distance was 8,000 km traversing through Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia. It was felt that the North-east would be opened to those emerging countries and trade would be promoted between the countries of the two regions. In fact the reverse has happened, in a sense that tourists from the North-east are now flocking to these countries, with virtually no return visits. The ethnic affinity quotient has also not borne fruit as our region still continues to be unknown in those countries and we are clubbed with the rest, as being from India or confused as locals. In the last 16 years, the Look East Policy has been a name only, now with a changed name of Act East. Neither

industry nor governments of the region know what is on the anvil or how to go ahead in the matter, however attractive the name may sound. The only happening has been a second car rally which started in Indonesia on November 26, 2012 and ended in Guwahati on December 17 that year.

India missed out on the cheap labour component within this period since 2004 and today. Bangladesh has in the meanwhile established itself as a leading apparel manufacturer, with all the leading popular brands of the world now having manufacturing facilities in the country. Their apparels are not only available in leading international supermarkets, but even in the Reliance stores in the North-east. Similarly Vietnam has become the leading place in the world for manufacture of popular sports shoes, feeding the international market. Some days ago, a huge consignment of smuggled Vietnamese shoes was seized in Manipur. Cambodia also has developed as an apparel manufacturing centre with leading brands like Marks & Spencer setting up factories there. Myanmar has become a leading cigarette manufacturing country with its lax health laws. The North-east is a major consumer of their produce, all being imported illegally. Laos has started growing and processing agar wood-based products, creating a competition for Assam in the world market. The South China Sea waters have been used for artificial pearl culture, while India still uses our sea water for rearing prawns and shrimps. Even in neighbouring Sri Lanka, there is no presence of India manufactured products, except for a few buses, autos and Nano cars. The level of economic and industrial activity in Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia is well ahead of our country.

The problem is that if four of the nine countries in our ASEAN radar are better off than India and two more are beating us to the post, what do we sell to them? The IT advantage is on its way out as 3D printing and automation taking it over. So also the cheap labour myth about India is losing sheen. The ASEAN countries have a more open attitude to the inflow of Chinese capital, which is floating around seeking investments. Even for poor and labour

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Key Facets Of 'Stand Up India' Scheme

Ujjaini Sharma

A new proposal titled 'Stand Up India' for financing Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST) and for women entrepreneurs has been initiated by the Government of India to be implemented through the Rural Self Employment Training Institute (RSETI) of banks. The objective of the novel scheme is to ensure smooth progress of bank loans between Rs. 10 lakh and Rs. 1 crore, to at least one SC or ST borrower and at least one woman borrower per bank branch for setting up a Green Field (New) Enterprise. This Green Field enterprise may be in manufacturing, services or in trading for non-farm sector, which includes agro and food processing units also.

Under the Stand Up India Scheme, the eligibility criteria for securing loans for the SC, ST or woman borrower is above 18 years and that loan for the scheme is available only for green field project. In this context, Green Field signifies the new venture of the beneficiary in the manufacturing, service or trading sector. Moreover, in case of non-individual enterprises, the SC, ST or woman entrepreneur should hold at least 51 per cent of the shareholding and controlling stake. But the borrower in no way should be found in default to any bank or financial institution.

The nature of loan will be composite (inclusive of term loan and working capital) between Rs 10 lakh and up to Rs 100 lakh. However, subject to certain conditions, the need based finance of stand-alone nature, that is, only term loan, cash credit or overdraft will also be available under 'Stand Up India' scheme. Besides, the purpose of the loan is to set up new enterprise in manufacturing, trading or service sector by the beneficiaries through applications received by bank in the format with detailed check list. Furthermore, area of operation of the loan is in all rural, semi urban, urban and metro branches of the bank and each branch will sanction two proposals during the current financial year.

The margin for the scheme will be calculated in a way that minimum margin will be 25 per cent

of the project cost inclusive of term loan and working capital. Although the loan is expected to cover 75 per cent of the project cost, it will not apply, if the borrower's contribution along with the convergence support from any other schemes, exceeds 25 per cent of the project cost. The borrower in this case, as such, shall be required to bring in minimum of 10 per cent of the project cost as own contribution.

Under the scheme, the interest rate will be linked to marginal costs of funds based lending rate, while the loan should be repaid in 7 years or less with a maximum moratorium period of 18 months.

Significantly, the credit appraisal for the loan includes due diligence of the applicants, analysis of basic financials, examination of technical feasibility, economic and financial viability of the scheme, managerial competence, local competition should also be carried out as per the lending policy of the bank. Likewise, viability even needs to be examined on case-to-case basis, scheme wise, financial and other parameters for sanction of new proposals as per lending policy should be strictly monitored. The repaying capacity of the borrower should be critically assessed with regard to earnings from the business or profession.

The loan will be sanctioned by the Branch Manager, HUB, RLCC under discretionary power as delegated by the bank. The MSME proposals of Rs 1 crore will be disposed by MSME Loan Processing Centre at the head office. The loan for the scheme may be secured by collateral security or guarantee of Credit Guarantee Scheme for Stand Up India (CGSSI) besides primary security. But the entrepreneur cannot offer collateral security or third party guarantee. The loans will be guaranteed under CGSSI for collateral free or without third party guarantee credit facilities of over Rs. 10 lakh and up to Rs. 100 lakh inclusive of working capital from National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Limited (NCGTC).

However, guarantee is not available in case of credit facilities in respect of which risks are

additionally covered under a scheme operated or administered by the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation or the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), to the extent they are so covered; any credit facilities in which risks are additionally covered by government or by any general insurer or any other person or association of persons carrying on the business of insurance guarantee or indemnity; any credit facility which does not conform to or is in any way inconsistent with the provision of any law or with any directives or instructions issued by the Central Government or the RBI, which for the time being may be in force; any credit facilities granted to any borrower, who has availed any other composite loan covered under this scheme or other schemes stated above but has not repaid any portion of the amount due to the Trust or by any default on the part of the borrower in respect of that composite loan; any credit facility which has been sanctioned by the bank against collateral security or third party guarantee and any credit facility which has been sanctioned by the bank which is not conforming to the Stand Up India Scheme.

For availing the guarantee coverage, branches of the bank shall apply for guarantee cover in respect of credit proposals sanctioned in the quarter of April to June, July to September, October to December and January to March, prior to expiry of the following quarter, that is, July to September, October to December, January to March and April to June, respectively. All such sanctioned cases which have been disbursed (fully or partially) will only be eligible for applying for guarantee cover in quarterly batches. The branches will send information to respective Regional Office regarding sanction of loans under guarantee coverage within 7 days of complete quarter without making any delay. The branch will remit risk based guarantee fee of the sanctioned amount as decided. Such fee will be paid on pro rata basis for the first and last year and in full for the intervening years on the credit facility sanctioned (comprising term loan or working capital facility).

The branch may involve the guarantee in respect of Stand Up India credit facilities within a

maximum period of two years from the date of NPA if NPA is after lock-in period or within two years of lock in period.

The NCGTC shall, in case of credit facility above Rs. 10 lakh up to Rs 50 lakh, provide guarantee cover to the extent of 80 per cent of the amount of default, subject to a maximum of Rs. 40 lakh. Similarly, for credit facility above Rs 50 lakh and up to Rs.100 lakh, Rs.40 lakh + 50 per cent of amount in default above Rs.50 lakh subject to overall ceiling of Rs. 65 lakh of the amount in default.

The upfront Guarantee Fee linked to differential risk premium plus applicable service tax or any such charges as decided by the guarantee implementing authority is to be borne by the borrower subject to yearly renewal till liquidation of the credit facilities availed under Stand Up India Scheme.

The documents to be attached at the time of application for the loan include Demand Promissory Note, Letter of Continuity (in case of Cash Credit / Over Draft facility), Hypothecation of goods, Book debts and plant machinery, Deed of Hypothecation for Transport Equipment (where vehicle is financed), Equitable Mortgage of Land and Building (wherever applicable), and agreement of term loan. Execution of documents should be complete in every respect as per extant guidelines of bank issued from time-to-time considering type of finance. In addition, loan application, original invoice and stamped receipt are to be obtained. Other usual formalities of documentation are also to be executed as per extant guidelines of the bank.

Comprehensive insurance policy with bank clause should be obtained for assets charged to bank. Additionally, service charges like processing charge, documentation charge and inspection charge are to be realized as per extant guidelines. Finally, loans under the Stand Up India Scheme will be categorized under Priority Sector (PR) in CBS. Subsector codes relevant to activity of the borrower is to be selected properly.

(The Sentinel, 05/06/2017)

Mamang Dai Awarded Luminous Lummer Dai Literary Award

The Arunachal Pradesh Literary Society (APLS) has conferred the 2nd 'Luminous Lummer Dai Literary Award' on noted journalist-turned-author-poet Mamang Dai for her outstanding contributions to the world of literature.

Instituted after the name of luminary Lummer Dai, the prestigious award comprising a specially designed trophy, a citation and a cash award of Rs 10,000, was presented to Mamang Dai by APLS president Y D Thongchi on the occasion of late novelist Dai's 77th birth anniversary at his Naharlagun residence on Thursday, 1st June, 2017.

Paying rich tributes to 'Sahitya Surya' Lummer Dai, APLS president Thongchi, while citing the appreciation the late novelist got from Assam, remarked that there are very few people who are remembered after death and he (late Dai) is the only person from Arunachal Pradesh after whom an award has been instituted.

The Sahitya Academy Awardee also mentioned that he drew inspiration for writing from none other than Lummer Dai during his college life. In her

acceptance speech, Mamang Dai, also the recipient of State Verrier Elwin Award for her non-fiction work 'Arunachal Pradesh: The Hidden Land', said, "I am deeply honoured to APLS for conferring me this award instituted after the great novelist Lummer Dai."

She also paid rich tributes to late Dai, who became a household name in Assam for his immense contributions to the field of Assamese literature. Mamang, who left the lucrative Indian Administrative Service to pursue a career in journalism and writing, also had words of advice for the established as well as budding writers to write in one's own mother tongue.

The globe-trotting poet has donated the entire award money for a noble cause – construction of a memorial at Lummer Dai's birthplace, Siluk village in East Siang district. Before handing over the amount to the Director of Health Services Dr Alok Yirang, who hails from Siluk village, she said, "I am donating the award money to the people of Siluk for erecting a statue of 'Pi' (uncle) Lummer."

(The Sentinel, 03/06/2017)

Proposed Population Policy Creates Stir

Satraajit Palchoudhury

The proposed draft population policy of the Assam Government has robbed the 'so-called secularists' of their sleep. The AIUDF supremo Maulana Badruddin Ajmal has even threatened to challenge this policy in Supreme Court.

It is widely known that a large number of illegal intruders from Bangladesh have made Assam their home. During the heydays of the Congress regime illegal Bangladeshi infiltrators were allowed in a big way as the Congress embraced them to preserve its 'vote bank.'

The incumbent Sonowal-led BJP regime in Assam has at least made the first move. They should be lauded for initiating this process.

In the name of secularism the country has seen appeasement for the past 70 years. Unfortunately the self-declared secularists have seen only their own political pockets and dashed the dreams and aspirations of the indigenous people.

The Assam Government's draft population policy is surely going to open a Pandora's Box. This policy, if implemented, will serve as an eye-opener for the entire country. It should not be looked from the prism of 'religion and community.' This is for the all-round

development of the entire state. The time has come for us to get out of the ghetto of vote bank politics and start the process of reform. The Muslim community badly needs it. The Muslim women are being treated shabbily and are being used as a robot.

Assam has made the first move. The other states should now start thinking on this line. For a government no citizen is untouchable. It should provide justice to all. The incumbent BJP regime is exactly following this culture.

The Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal has been emulating the footsteps of Modi and has been trying to give a clean and transparent government.

He has initiated various policies for the overall development of the state. The draft population policy which is still at a nascent stage shows both the attitude and the vision of the Chief Minister. The time has come for the intelligentsia to wake up from their deep slumber. The time has come for them to see the new rising sun. The teeming millions are waiting for a new dawn. They want a life of dignity.

(Organiser, May 21, 2017)

Crimes Against Women Rising In Assam

Increase in crimes against women has become a major concern in Assam. Despite stricter laws in place, the official figures from State Police on violence against women are alarming.

According to police records, in 2016, there were 1,723 cases of rape, 75 cases of trafficking, 150 cases of dowry deaths, 9,327 cases of cruelty by husbands, 4,997 cases of kidnapping of women and girls, and 3,416 cases of molestation reported in the State. In 2017 up to February, 225 cases of rape, 7 cases of trafficking, 17 cases of dowry deaths, 1,384 cases of cruelty by husband, 851 cases kidnapping of women and girls, and 554 cases of molestation have been reported.

In Assam, the problem has been aggravated due to a less responsive support system, which ought to have done much more to provide quick help to women in distress with result-oriented measures.

Besides police, the Assam State Commission for Women, which was constituted to provide a platform for realising the expectations of lakhs of women and give them an opportunity to work hand in hand with men in the State's development, can play a proactive role in dealing with the incidents of crimes against women, but the Commission is beset with its own set of problems. It is now being run without seven of its members and the government hasn't taken any steps to fill up these vacant posts till date.

It may be mentioned that all the members of Assam State Commission for Women are appointed on 3-year terms.

Commission Chairperson Chikimiki Talukdar said, "Due to non-appointment of seven members in the Commission, my work burden has increased considerably. Due to shortage of members, I personally visited places like Baithalangshu, Jorhat and a few others to take stock of the situation recently, after incidents of crimes against women were reported from these places."

"Crimes against women are still taking place but the positive side is that now-a-days, many such cases are being brought into public domain by media and even by a section of victims," Talukdar said, adding, "to check such crimes, number of police personnel should be increased, and police patrolling be made regular and cover newer areas. The strengthening of village defence parties (VDPs) can add to the proper maintenance of law and order in rural areas of the State."

On the rise in domestic violence incidents, many of which are not reported due to social stigma, the Commission Chairperson said, "It is observed that patience and tolerance level of people has drastically reduced these days. So, people should change their mentality. I feel that social media is casting a bad influence on society."

The Guwahati chapter of the Commission receives around 200 complaints per year and also takes suo moto cases.

The Commission has a Legal Advisory Committee. As per rules, the sitting of the Legal Advisory Committee should be held twice a month and the complaints are heard and disposed off by the Committee. The Committee should have a lady doctor as one of its members, but this post has been lying vacant since long time past.

Some of the statutory functions of the State Commission for Women are: To investigate and examine all matters relating to the safeguards provided to women under the Constitution and other laws, to present reports upon the working of those safeguards to the State government, to make recommendations for effective implementation of those safeguards for improving conditions of women of the State, to review from time to time the existing provisions of the Constitution and other laws, and recommend amendments thereof.

(The Sentinel, 05/06/2017)

Karbi Anglong Issue Raised At United Nations

Writer, activist, Binalakshmi Nepram successfully raised the Karbi Anglong issue at United Nations headquarters in New York on Thursday, the 1st June, 2017. The Manipur writer and activist and a friend of the Karbi people took a memorandum sent by Karbi people and met Dr Chandra Roy Henriksen, Chief of Secretariat, UN Permanent Forum on indigenous issues at UN headquarters in New York.

Nepram appraised the impressive history of the struggle of the people of Karbi Anglong. She also presented the UN with a traditional Karbi scarf which was received with great joy. Nepram told that people of Karbi Anglong have a rich history, heritage and culture and this must be protected and nurtured

positively by all concerned. The UN Convention on Indigenous People's Rights was passed in 2007 to protect indigenous people's lands, territories and their future. The UN Chief of Secretariat thanked Nepram for bringing the important issue of the people of Karbi Anglong to UN. In a statement Nepram stated, "Ever since I visited Karbi Anglong in January this year I knew how beautiful and special people they are. I also saw how much suffering they had to bear there. People of Karbi Anglong need to live in peace and dignity and we can support them in a positive manner. Taking up of the issues to UN is a humble step in this direction and I wish people in Karbi Anglong my very best."

(The Sentinel, 03/06/2017)

(Contd. from Page 19)

Act East Policy: Are We Looking At A Myth?

intensive countries like Laos and Cambodia, the Chinese are coming and building roads and infrastructure with Chinese labour and capital. With its economic clout, China is using its power to dictate, but the smaller countries are taking advantage of the Chinese money and technology, for their benefit rather than oppose the giants in an uneven battle. This Chinese presence is a deterrent to Indian investment and trade with the ASEAN countries and any hope to enter the markets of those countries which has a dominant Chinese presence, would be very difficult. India is yet to decide on a policy to make it easy for mainland producers to manufacture and sell in the ASEAN countries. One can well imagine the Himalayan difficulties that lie for the NE manufacturers to gain access to those markets.

Another aspect emerging in the South-east Asian countries are that they are not burdened by the past. India is still steeped in our freedom struggle and its martyrs, but Vietnam and Cambodia, who lost 20% of their population in American bombings and civil wars, have left that all behind. They don't talk about it nor do the ravages of war form a part of the tourist package. They are using international investments, particularly American investments, to rebuild their war-ravaged country and are progressing in leaps and bounds. Swank luxury cars and international

high lifestyle brands are common sights in communist Vietnam. Cambodia and Vietnam are using their World Heritage Sites of Angkor Wat and Ha Long Bay to get tourists in millions. Sam Riep, the city near Angkor, of the size of our Nagaon town, has 60-odd five star hotels and the whole region lives off tourism. These countries have realized that they don't have a comparative advantage in industry and have therefore concentrated on tourism. The benefits of tourism development have been best seen in Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia and Malaysia. While industry may shift to the country of cheapest labour and facilities, tourism will stay. This is a lesson for us.

How the Act East Policy will be activated is not known as yet, but not to lose the time advantage, the NE States must not wait for Delhi to formulate an action plan. They should get together and decide on what needs to be done, with clear results to follow in mind, and go ahead. Assam with its manufacturing advantage must take the lead as to how to produce and sell in ASEAN and South-east Asian markets and ask South Block and the Commerce Ministry to set up the required links, financial and physical. It's already late and it must not be too late.

(The Assam Tribune, 30/05/2017)

NE Ultras - China's Proxy War Tools?

R Dutta Choudhury

Chinese agencies are trying to launch a proxy war with India by using the militant groups of the North East region and some of these plans came to light after a hardcore United Liberation Front of Asom (Independent) cadre laid down arms recently. Meanwhile, police also came to know about a plan of the militants to create trouble in Guwahati through a former ULFA cadre's wife.

Highly placed police sources told The Assam Tribune that the inputs available with the security agencies indicated that some Chinese agencies are desperate to launch a proxy war with India by engaging the militant groups of the region. Sources said the major militant groups of the region came into a common platform only after pressure from the Chinese agencies and they have started operating together.

The militants were given the task of targeting the Indian Army and police forces, following which, a few attacks took place in Nagaland, Manipur, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. The ULFA(I) is also planning to target the security forces with the help of Manipur-based outfits and members of the NSCN(K). Though the Army and other security personnel are the main targets of the ultras, the possibility of them planting explosives in other places, in order to make their presence felt, cannot be ruled out, sources said.

The recent surrender by hardcore militant Ron Asom is a major success as he is aware of the situation in the militant camps in Myanmar and the

routes frequented by ultras to enter India from their bases in the neighbouring country. Though Ron Asom gave a figure of the number of militants staying in the Myanmar camps, police said the figure would have to be cross-checked. "He did give us a figure, but as per our information, the number should not be that high. We will have to verify whether he is telling the truth," sources added.

However, the surrendered ultra gave some vital information and one such revelation led to a successful operation in Mon district of Nagaland on the night of June 6, 2017 in which three hardcore militants were killed. The militants, armed with sophisticated weapons, were planning to attack a camp of the Assam Rifles in Tizit in Mon district. But, after receiving information about the routes frequented by the ultras from Ron Asom, the security on such routes was tightened, which led to the successful operation by the forces.

Meanwhile, commenting on the reports of a security threat to Guwahati during the ensuing Ambubachi Mela, the sources said that the police would take no chances although no specific input has been received. However, according to the inputs available, hardcore militant Nayan Medhi is in touch with the widow of an ULFA leader who was killed during the Bhutan operation and they are apparently planning something in the city. "It may be a plan for extortion, or something else. We are still not very sure," sources admitted.

(The Assam Tribune, 09/06/2017)

IF A COUNTRY IS TO BE CORRUPTION
FREE AND BECOME A NATION OF
BEAUTIFUL MINDS, I STRONGLY FEEL
THERE ARE THREE KEY SOCIETAL
MEMBERS WHO CAN MAKE A
DIFFERENCE. THEY ARE THE FATHER,
THE MOTHER AND THE TEACHER.

A.P.J. ABDUL KALAM

YOUR BODY IS A WEAPON AND
CONSIDER IT VERY STRONG.
CONSIDER YOUR MIND TO BE VERY
STRONG AS ONLY WITH STRONG MIND
AND BODY YOU WILL BE ABLE TO
CROSS THE OCEAN OF LIFE. HAVE A
STRONG FAITH IN YOURSELF, YOUR
BODY AND MIND.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

The Greedy Cobra And The King Of Frogs

Gangadatta was a king among frogs. He ruled over a group of frogs that lived in a well.

His relatives were always nagging to him over small things, and he was fed-up with them. One day, he climbed up the water-wheel and left his kingdom.

He sought revenge on his relatives, due to whose constant torment; he had to leave his kingdom. Just then, he saw a cobra entering his cobra. He thought of a plan of having his relatives eaten up by the cobra.

He went to the entrance of the hole, and said, "My friend, I have come to make friends to you. I am the king of frogs!"

On hearing this, the cobra realized that it was not the voice of his kith or kin, but his natural enemy. He decided not to leave his hole and come out, for he suspected some foul reason. He suspected someone might be trying to catch him through mantra (magic spell), or maybe flute, or even herbs.

He answered cautiously, "Who are you? Why do you talk this nonsense about friendship? Can timber and fire ever be friends? You are my natural enemy!"

The king of frogs replied, "Indeed, your words are true. But I seek revenge on my relatives who have tormented me for years. I ask your help. I can lead you to the well, that is my forsaken kingdom, and you can eat as many frogs as you want"

The cobra enquired, "A well is built by layers of stone. I have no legs. How can I possibly get into the well? And even if I manage to do so, where will I be able to sit and eat the frogs? Go away!"

The king of frogs assured, "There is a nice comfortable hols at the edge of the water, where you can sit and eat. I will lead you to the inside of the well, and to the comfortable hole. But you will have to promise me that you will eat only my annoying relatives and not my friends."

The cobra thought of his old age, and this offer

was not good to be turned down. The greedy cobra agreed to the friendship and followed the frog. He went into the hole as promised. Once there, he would eat one frog whenever he would feel hungry. As days went by, the number of frogs went down and finally all annoying frogs were exhausted.

One day, the cobra called out to the king of frogs and said, "There are no more frogs to eat here, only your friends remain. Please give me some more food. You are my friend, and it is you who have led me here, so you are responsible for my food."

The king of frogs realized his mistake for the cobra wanted more, so he could do nothing but watch the cobra eat all the other frogs. Even his close friends , and his son were eaten. He was hungry and wanted the king of frogs to send some more frogs.

The king of frogs realized, that only he among the frogs remained alive. He assured the cobra that if he let him leave the well, he will bring frogs from other wells, so that the cobra would be able to satisfy his hunger.

The cobra got greedy, and let the king of frogs go. But even after his anxious wait for several days, the king of frogs did not return.

After a long time of waiting, the cobra requested a female lizard that lived in the walls of the well, to request the king of frogs to return, as he could not bear the separation of his dear friend.

The lizard conveyed the message to the king of frogs, who replied, "Madam, please convey to him that I will never return to the well again. He is starved, and a starving person can be cruel, and go to any extent of sin."

Thus, the king of frogs saved himself, and the greedy cobra had to perish inside the well without any food.

The wise indeed say:

Fight your own battles; else you will surely be destroyed.



Kaziranga National Park



Living Root Bridge of Meghalaya



Lohtak Lake Manipur